

West Kirk of Calder Annual Stated Meeting

Sunday 18th March 2018

Minutes

The Congregation of the West Kirk of Calder met in the Church at close of worship on Sunday 18th March 2018, with the Rev Dr Jonanda Groenewald, Minister, in the Chair. The Chairman thanked all of those who had stayed to participate in the Annual Stated Meeting.

1. The meeting was constituted with prayer by the minister.
2. The minutes of the 2017 Annual Stated Meeting were approved without further revision.
3. **Minister's Report for 2017, Rev Dr Jonanda Groenewald**

I would like to make use of this opportunity to thank God for calling me to be the Minister of the West Kirk of Calder. 2017 was a busy and exciting year for our Congregation. We welcomed new people in our midst, but sadly had to say goodbye to some well-loved members of our Congregation as well.

As the Minister, I do my utmost best to represent the Church in the community and to fulfil all my duties to the best of my abilities – leading worship on Sundays, conducting funerals and weddings, leading “Church without walls” services, chaplaincy, involvement with the children and young people in the Congregation, moderating Session and Board meetings, attending Presbytery meetings, serving on the Church and Society Committee, Religious Observance Steering Group, and doing house visits.

During 2017 I conducted 2 weddings, 17 baptisms (of which 5 were adults) and 21 funerals in the West Kirk.

I think our Church is at the heart of our community, and I would like to thank all the members of the West Kirk, as well as the Board and Session, for all their support and commitment. A special word of thanks to the Session Clerk, Clerk to the Board, Treasurer, Property Convenor, Sunday Club Leader and Secretary for all the time they put in to make this Church the amazing place it is.

May God bless our Church. To Him be the glory for ever.

There were no questions from the congregation

4. **Session Clerk's report for 2017, Mr Stewart Macrae**

For the first time in many years our membership has shown an increase. There are 248 members on our congregational roll, 26 on the supplementary roll and there are 23 adherents.

In my report last year I said that we were waiting on the report on the local church review by Presbytery's Superintendence Committee which took place in 2016. The committee's report was submitted to Presbytery by the convener, Rev Ian Maxwell early in 2017 and contained the following deliverances, which I thought you may like to hear.

That Presbytery:

- (1) receive the report of the Superintendence Committee on the Local Church Review carried out at Polbeth Harwood and West Kirk of Calder.
- (2) commend the minister for her faithful and encouraging leadership.
- (3) commend the office-bearers and congregations for their vision and ambition to promote God's kingdom in their parishes.
- (4) commend the congregations for their structured approach to Stewardship.
- (5) commend the congregations for the priority given to involvement in their respective local communities.
- (6) encourage the minister, Kirk Sessions and congregations in their commitment to developing worship and the use of audio visual facilities in their respective congregations.
- (7) encourage the leadership of West Kirk in their plans to modernise the hall.
- (8) note that the Safeguarding Schedule (SG11) has been completed confirming that both Kirk Sessions are pursuing the Church of Scotland Policy and Code of Good Practice on Safeguarding;
- (9) encourage the office bearers to be aware of the work load being placed on the minister in view of the further developments being planned.

It was a very encouraging review of our church.

In the early part of the year our Stewardship Campaign was focussed on money and we had an exhibition and breakfast in the church hall. This resulted in an increase in our offerings.

We were involved with a number of community events which included services in the village for the Burngrange Disaster, the Battle of Arras and Remembrance Sunday. We also took part in the Easter and Christmas Fayres in the Square and we held a film show on Scotland's Oil here in the church. This led to a short series of films being held in the church over the first 3 months of this year.

In September we held a very successful Garden Fete and the proceeds went into the fund for a new church hall. Many other events and activities took place throughout the year and these are mentioned in the reports that can be found with the Treasurer's report.

My thanks again go to Nanda, the elders and members of the congregation who continue to support the church in so many different ways.

There were no questions from the congregation

5. Clerk to the Congregational Board's Report 2017, Mrs Alison McNaught

In February we undertook our annual Stewardship campaign which focussed on Money and thus was of particular concern to the Board. During the month our displays in the hall aimed to educate the congregation about where our money comes from and where it all goes to. We also aimed to increase the level of Gift Aid we can reclaim and to increase our level of freewill offerings as that had fallen back during the previous year. Hopefully you will hear later from the Treasurer that to some extent this was successful.

The Annual Stated Meeting for the year 2016 was held on 19th March 2017 after morning worship. From the congregation the only new Board member from 1st April 2017 was Karen Elliot, our Treasurer, who replaced Jean Pringle. Both Alistair Farquhar and Margaret Greenhorn were re-appointed for a further period of three years. Three Session members, George Stott, Alan Jessiman and Alison McNaught were also reappointed for a further three years.

Despite the fact that our minister does not live in the manse we continue to have to maintain it to an appropriate standard. The most significant project still to be completed was the

refurbishment of the bathroom and shower room. Our property convenor has progressed this with the tenants but the work is yet to be completed.

In the church itself the most significant project was the installation of the Audio Visual system during the summer. You have all seen how successful that has been and the extent to which it has enhanced our ability to introduce variety to worship. Thanks must go to Alan Jessiman for driving this activity to its conclusion.

In the early summer the Trustees ie the Board and Session agreed to take forward the provision of a new church hall. Inevitably this is a long and convoluted process and I am grateful to those who volunteered to join the project group. Unfortunately for the time being our application to Presbytery to go ahead with this has been turned down because the whole Presbytery Plan has been suspended until such time as a new one can be agreed some time later this year. This happened just a couple of weeks ago and as such is not strictly part of my 2017 report however I thought you would wish to be aware of the current situation. We have been advised that we can resubmit our application once there is a new Presbytery Plan.

One other significant programme of work was the draining and resurfacing of the car park to the rear of the church. This was completed at the end of the year and so far would seem to have been successful in reducing the flooding we experienced previously.

In addition to these more significant matters there have been the usual minor repairs and activities resulting in another busy year for the Congregational Board and in particular the Property Convenor, Alistair Farquhar, whose tireless efforts are much appreciated. Thanks must also go to all the other Board members who have worked in the background to ensure that we continue to have a beautiful church, functioning hall and habitable manse.

There were no questions from the Congregation.

6. Treasurer's Report 2017, Mrs Karen Elliot

I think the most important thing you want to hear is that we're still solvent! From a financial point-of-view, 2017 was another busy year, and I would like to highlight a few points:

Our M&M Contribution remains our highest expense. For 2017, our M&M Contribution was: £34,603 (£3,460.30 per month over 10 months). In 2018, our M&M Contribution is increased by just under 2%.

Freewill offerings increased by just over 12% in 2017 compared with 2016, from £33,025 to £37,042. The majority of Members pay by Standing Order and this is greatly appreciated. The FWO envelopes cost £223 last year. Bank Mandate Forms are available in the vestibule, should you wish to pay your free offering by this method.

Under the Gift Aid and Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme claims are submitted periodically, and in 2017 we re-claimed £6,380 relevant tax paid from HMRC.

Costs in relation to the Church, Hall and Manse remain significant at £11,514 in 2017 (which included the cost of the new AV System, at £7,697), down from £13,002 in 2016.

Heating & lighting costs for the Church and Hall were £2,937 in 2017, down slightly from £3,213 in 2016.

We were grateful to receive legacies in 2017, £91,325 from Bill Russell's estate, and £19,072 from Hetty MacIntyre's estate.

Investments have been purchased with these legacies, and we receive dividends on these in May and November annually, which are to be placed in a savings account until sufficient funds are there to purchase additional higher interest investments.

The Candy Bars continue to be a significant source of income for the Church, with £6,198 being raised in 2017, compared with £7,223 in 2016.

The Garden Fete and Fringe raised £5,347 in September, and investments have been purchased with this money, via the Church of Scotland, and we'll receive dividends on this in May and November annually.

Other fundraising events (including the fayre in the square, night of music and entertainment, etc.) raised £1,005 In 2017, compared with £989 in 2016. We received £249 from easyfundraising in 2017, compared with £83 in 2016 – so if you use the internet to shop / search, please consider registering and assigning your “good cause” as the West Kirk of Calder to help us to raise more free funds from this source.

Facility lets (e.g. from weddings, funerals and hall hire) raised £6,061 in 2017, compared with £5,455 in 2016.

We donated £1,645 to Charities during 2017, to the Church of Scotland Crossreach project, Christian Aid, Borderline (Homeless Scots in London), Poppyscotland, Erskine, Guide Dogs for the Blind (Scotland) and Diabetes UK.

The Annual Accounts & Report 2017 have been approved by the Congregational Board, Kirk Session and the Independent Examiner. A copy will now be submitted to West Lothian Presbytery for review and approval and also 2 copies to the Church of Scotland at 121 George Street, Edinburgh. On approval from West Lothian Presbytery, they'll be submitted online to Scottish Charity Regulator, OSCR (this needs to be completed by September).

Thank you to the Kirk Session and Congregational Board for their support throughout the year and to you for your continued support. Please do not hesitate to contact me direct should you have any questions.

There were no questions from the Congregation.

7. Election of Congregational Board Members

This year the annual rotation of non-session Board members indicates that Stephen Elliot is due to either step down or stand again for re-election. Stephen has indicated that he willing to stand again. As there were no further nominations Stephen Elliot was duly re-elected to serve for a further period of three years.

8. Close

There being no further business the meeting closed with the saying of the Grace together.

Chairman: **Clerk:**

Date: