

St Margaret's Parish Men's Group**Draft Minutes of Meeting – Thursday 17th October 2024**

Present: Tom Scott (Chair), John McIllduff (Treasurer), Martin Wilkinson (minutes), Pete Seath, Ken Ritchie, Bob Creaney, Frannie McNicoll, Martin McNicoll, Paddy Mallan, David Hambley.

Apologies for absence: George Connolly.

Minutes of the meeting of 5th September 2024 accepted as correct and can be posted on parish website

Finance. Current balance is now £133.11 following £250 donation to St. Margaret's One World Group for sponsorship of the recent One World Breakfast.

Spiritual activities

For Advent there was support for running the weekly scripture discussion group of the previous style. This is not a service or devotion that might be organised by another parish group and such activities should also be encouraged, hopefully to run on a different night to our scripture sessions. Tom will contact Fr. Syriac to seek approval for this plan and to suggest four weekly sessions hopefully to run on Wednesday evenings from 27 November to 18 December if there is accommodation available in the crypt or Lady Chapel. Tom will also look out suitable material for this year's scripture discussions.

Social activities.**Since the last meeting.**

- The One World Breakfast after 0930 mass on 13th October was sponsored by the Men's Group with a £250 donation. Donations from those attending gave the OWG a further £190. About 50 people attended and Tom Scott gave a good talk on what our group does. The audience was largely made up of regular attendees so we did not get much interest from potential new members but did get 2 new names on our circulation list.
- Visit to Kinghorn lifeboat station on Saturday 28th September by 8 members. Another lifeboat being retired was visiting stations around the Forth and there was a barbecue which our party joined. The Kinghorn lifeboat crew were wonderful, friendly people. A donation of £100 was made.

Proposed Activities.

- Visit to the Royal Yacht Britannia is now likely to be organised in 2025. The previously planned date was unsuitable.
- Frannie still awaiting a reply about a stadium tour at East End Park. Suggested that an alternative might be a visit to Celtic Park. Pete Seath has a potential contact there.
- Annual Dinner with Partners will be Friday 8th November at Garvock House. The number of attendees is sufficiently large that a private room has been allocated. This results in a different and more expensive menu. Diners will pay for their own pre-dinner drinks but wine costs for the meal will be shared. TS will email prospective diners with menu and other details.
- Christmas night out for the group is a meal. Agreed on a date of Thursday 5th December but venue still to be decided. A suggestions was Namaste.
- St Andrew's Night in the Crypt will be on Saturday 30th November. We can have access to set up after the afternoon group leave at 1430. Fr. Chris will be able to supply musical entertainment with support of Frannie and Elaine. Stewart Abercrombie may also play piano – perhaps he can use the keyboard from the choir. Advertise 3 weeks in advance from 2 November and start selling tickets from 9 November. £5 per ticket. As our funds are now low we should have a raffle.
- Visit to Perth Museum, Stone of Destiny exhibition. Deferred to 2025.

- St Margaret's themed tour of Hungary on hold. Difficult to find suitable material on all the sites that might be visited but work is progressing. Suggested that Margaret Johnson may have some information about this.
- Children's Christmas Party. On reflection this might be better organized by the Children's Liturgy Group than by the Men's Group.
- Hogmanay in the crypt. Tom Scott will contact Fr Syriac to ask if we can restart this session which was halted owing to lockdown. It is a social evening for all parishioners on 31st December which means nobody needs to see in the new year alone.

Help for the Fabric Committee.

Paddy Mallan explained a number of the activities going on with the maintenance of the church, particularly pointing out the need for help.

Most tasks are being carried out or overseen by Paddy and Mike Pendlowski. Both of these are ageing and we need to get more help from younger parishioners. There are activities in maintenance which need difficult access for older people such as crawling through tunnels carrying services under the church and dealing with scaffolding. Paddy and Mike have accumulated considerable knowledge of the difficult service provision in our old buildings but they need younger people to whom this can be passed on.

There should be a verbal invitation after weekend masses to the parish to become more involved. It is possible that in the wider ethnic make up of our parish there are considerable skills but it may be that the newer parish members may be afraid to volunteer unless specifically invited.

There are two matters needing attention soon. One is help in setting up the Christmas Tree in the church. This is difficult task needing many volunteers. The Men's Group will help when information on the arrangements is passed on.

The other urgent task is concerned with response to fires. The recent fire awareness sessions which many active parishioners attended was only the start. We now need to go through the arrangements for when a fire alarm sounds during a service and evacuation is necessary. We need to train people in the procedure and appoint and train specific fire wardens. This is a diocesan requirement where this parish has been noted as not complying.

Help to parishioners. There is a Bonnie Brew guest in the flats in James Street who is a visually impaired and vulnerable adult that needs ground floor window frames painting. There was some discussion to see if anyone knew of a suitable painter.

Upcoming parish activities and dates. There is to be a retreat in the church on St Margaret's feast day, Saturday 16th November. This will take the form of two half day activities, starting or finishing with mass. Details will be given in church and group members are encouraged to attend. Fr Syriac will have been with us for 3 years on 23 November.

Next Meeting: Thursday 14th November in the Crypt.