

Linton, Morebattle, Hownam and Yetholm Stated Annual Meeting

Monday 22nd March 2010 at 7.30pm
Yetholm Church

1. Constitute
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of 2009 Annual Stated Meeting - below
4. Matters arising:
5. Ministers Report
6. Session Summary
7. Presentation of Accounts
8. Attached Reports
9. Benediction

Refreshments

LINTON, MOREBATTLE, HOWNAM & YETHOLM CHURCH Stated Annual Meeting held in Morebattle Institute on Monday 30th March 2009 at 7.30pm.

CONSTITUTE - The Moderator constituted the meeting with a reading and prayer.

SEDERUNT - there were twenty-six members present.

APOLOGIES - apologies were received from Mrs C Butler, Bell, Miss Gentry; Messrs Lees, McIlroy, Tokley and Wilson.

MINUTES OF STATED ANNUAL MEETINGS

The Minutes of the Stated Annual held on 26th March 2008 was approved.

MINISTER'S REPORT – The Rev Robin McHaffie informed the meeting that the Session are now the Trustees of the Church and it is the Session that approves the accounts, not the Annual General Meeting nevertheless, members could still ask any questions.

He reported that he was pleased to be back to work and thanked Rev Ian Clark and the worship committee for the support they had given him during the year.

SESSION CLERKS REPORT – During the year an adjustment was made to the number of services being held. Currently there is one service only per month in both Linton and Hownam Churches. The worship group and the Rev Ian Clark have been assisting with services.

The Session met five times during the year and the various committees met on a regular basis. Communion was celebrated eight times during morning worship with evening communion ten times in the various churches.

The Roll was attested as 442 members and 63 adherents, a total of 505 on 31 December 2008.

The finance and property committees do not have convenors, the Minister is currently convening both and this situation cannot be allowed to continue.

TREASURERS REPORT – The Treasurer explained the accounts to the meeting and answered questions. She then presented the budget for 2009 which was showing a deficit of £7500. The Minister thanked Mr Denis Wilson, the previous treasurer who has retired as convenor of the finance committee, for all the work he did amalgamating our finances when we united.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following reports had been circulated: -

- a) Session Clerk.
- b) Finance.
- c) Communications.
- d) Pastoral / Healing.
- e) Children & Youth Ministry.
- f) Property.
- g) Mission.
- h) Worship.
- i) Ways & Means.
- j) Presbytery.
- k) Yetholm Guild.
- l) Morebattle Guild.
- m) Morebattle Music.
- n) Yetholm Church Choir.
- o) Linton Kirk Heritage Appeal Fund.
- p) Yetholm Wednesday Club.
- q) Kelso Churches Together.

Those present had the opportunity to comment and ask questions on the above.

The above reports are filed with these minutes.

The meeting closed with the Benediction.

REPORTS

SESSION

Worship has continued as in the previous year with one service only per month in both Linton and Hownam Churches. There have been a number of Sundays when there was only one joint service, this has proved successful.

The Session met five times during the year and the various committees met on a regular basis. Communion was celebrated eight times during morning worship with evening communion ten times in the various churches.

The Roll was attested as 459 members and 44 adherents, a total of 503 on 31 December 2009.

The Minister has added the Ways & Means Committee to his convenorships but it is expected that this will change during the coming year.

D W D Thomson

FINANCE

The finance committee assist the treasurer in the day to day running of the churches finances including recording gift aid and weekly offerings. The committee meet regularly during the year to discuss any issues that may arise, the greatest concern in 2009 was the 60% increase in the insurance premium for our buildings. We have met jointly with the Property Committee on a couple of occasions to help understand the financial commitments of our buildings and the resources available to attend to them. We are aware that we need to encourage the congregation to greater levels of commitment to attend to a running shortfall in balances. The accounts have been audited by Rennie Welch and approved by the Trustees; copies are available from the Treasurer or at the website www.cheviotchurches.org. The budget will be presented at the annual stated meeting.

The committee along with convenors have been involved in looking at stewardship within the congregation and that committee reports separately.

Robin McHaffie

Stewardship

We are in the early stages of a long term stewardship programme. The aims at the outset were agreed by the Session as:-

Objective

1. To develop and recruit new leadership within the congregation
2. To encourage greater participation and involvement from the membership within the life and worship of the congregation.
3. Thereby and in the process tackling current shortfall.

A new members evening was arranged and considered a great success. A Members booklet is in preparation and this will be distributed during the year.

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY

Cool Club has continued in Yetholm and Morebattle schools, and Holiday Club, Showstoppers, was held in Yetholm this year with the Joint Sunday Service sharing the theme to follow. The After School Clubs attract between 12 and 20 younger children. The programme follows the lectionary so that we all are looking at the same material. This makes it easier to engage in Sunday Worship and the children have contributed to a number of services through the year and there is potential for developing this. A number of children came to the Awayday to Coldingham and enjoyed a good time. When possible tea/juice is arranged on these occasions, so that some dialogue with the congregation can take place. Blythswood shoeboxes were collected in the schools and churches in October.

Five young people have been started to be involved in committees and projects as Junior Leaders within the congregation;- Jennifer Cessford, Tamara Mallen, Guillian Di Lorenzo, Ciera Haig and Greg Cessford. We look forward to their contributions. They are very enthusiastic and with some support are organising a COSY (Church of Scotland Youth) evening in Morebattle on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. This is for young people from primary 6 upwards and gives them an opportunity to chat together over hot chocolate and play games in safe surroundings. This is proving very popular and is a lesson for us in empowering a few young people to make something happen.

There have been a number of National events we have tried to encourage children to attend but dates haven't been suitable this year. However Ciera Haig was able to attend the National Children's Assembly on Iona in October and had a wonderful time which included

meeting children from Malawi, Zambia, Hungary and New Zealand. Rebecca Pringle and myself and visited Malawi in July, which proved to be a very interesting and enlightening time.

Our safeguarding co-ordinator Moira Keddie carries out her duties diligently as do the whole team who give their time to children and youth ministry.

Linda Fleming

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications have developed considerably over the last year, especially through our church web site, offering historical, devotional and current material for all.

The Wee Yett is now available online, and more recently we have added a members page where the various church committees and reports can be accessed.

Church of Scotland online newsroom picked up on our online worship when Robin held worship on the church website during the Big Freeze. This received hits world wide, and quite a number of members downloaded the file and participated in the service.

Photographs from the parish featured on the Scotsman weather map.

Life and Work published a Remembrance prayer written by Robin, and more recently he was interviewed by local and national press distributing symbolic knots to farmers in the parish, regarding the Make the Promise campaign by the HSE, as reminders to take care in an attempt to reduce farm accidents.

We continue to publicise events through Radio Borders, What's On booklets, the local press, and by distributing posters.

This year we intend to have a Church stall at Yetholm Show.

Grateful thanks to all who give their time and talents to Communications.

Carol Butler

MISSION

During the year we were asked to study two documents sent down by the General Assembly of 2008. The first concerned a report 'future focus'. On examination we reported that this was more aimed at the urban church and suggested that if we continued to work our way through the pack, God's Own Country, we would find that the issues raised in the Assembly report were met in a rural setting and could be studied through this tool. In fact we had used this to start a rural toolkit which then fed a community mapping exercise that engaged with Cheviot Heritage Project and local schools in a very creative piece of work that highlighted the assets of our parishes. This also encouraged us to engage with the Year of Homecoming and Ancestral Tourism and Diane Gittus has been pursuing means of making the churches welcoming by physical means and literature. We would want to maintain this momentum and also have some interpretive material in the churches for visitors. The second document concerned what is known as the emerging church. We also looked at the report on the emerging church and reported to the session on this. This concept looks at patterns of being the church and has lifted up examples of radically different models successfully employed in the United Kingdom. Here is a little of the report to the Session;- *Creating the Space – If we take this seriously we will begin by praying, observing, listening and seeking the Spirit. Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries and Councils will recognise that as well as debate there is a vital*

role for walking the streets and talking to people, listening for the whispers of God and trying to see through God's eyes, so that we begin to discern where God is working and how God wants us to participate.

Nurturing the young shoots

As we take a step back from sederunts, agendas and policy papers we will discover signs of new life among unexpected people and in unlooked for places. Where it is least expected we will realise that people are encountering God, gingerly forming communities, reaching out to those around them, while trying to form some kind of relationship with other churches. Some of these new beginnings will have a short life span, but others, with appropriate encouragement and nurture, may develop."

We engaged with a Back to Church Sunday at Easter and Harvest of the lambs. Every household was circulated with an invitation and while the response was not great we felt that this exercise following the St Andrew's day invitation (2009) was allowing an engagement with members in a different way.

We continue to prepare and give to elders the Welcome Pack for people new to the area.

PROPERTY

We have a substantial portfolio of property;- Four Churches and a chapel that grace the Parishes with wonderful places to stop and pray or worship or simply notice in the passing and reflect upon God's presence amongst us;- We also have a Manse and an ex Beadles Cottage and Linton with outbuildings there too.

The remit of this committee is

- The annual maintenance and servicing of buildings and utilities
- Projects for improvements
- Major works
- Emergency works

The Session set a policy towards our buildings recently;- To continue to renovate and then upgrade Yetholm to be a church suitable for the 21st century; to maintain Morebattle as it stands as a living village church; to maintain the other 3 buildings of Linton, Hownam and Hoselaw within reasonable limits and reflect carefully on any substantial works before proceeding. To maintain and keep up to date the Manse appropriately.

Members;- George Lees, Andrew Bell, Jimmy Fleming, Robin Butler Albert Kellington, Archie Hunter David Lang, Robin McHaffie(Temporary Convener)

During the year we have reviewed the major work before us as follows;- Progress the repairs and renovations of the windowing at Yetholm including surrounding stonework. Granting will be sought for this and the ring fenced restoration fund is still available to assist here. At the same time we are pursuing the formation of a project that will attend to the renovations needed internally and upgrade the facilities to meet modern standards. Funding for this will be sought when details known. The progress of a screen entrance and new cover for the Tympanum stone at Linton is still waiting for permissions. On the subject of Linton there was a suggestion that some hard standing be sought for the parking area at Linton. This was taken to Community Council who gave support for a small budget work to attend to this and Council agreed. However it has not happened at the time of writing. Repairs to windowing at Morebattle were completed with repainting during the year. The Beadle's cottage at Linton was renovated and upgraded.

During the year the properties were revalued on behalf of the General Trustees resulting in substantial increases with an increase of towards £3000 in insurance costs:-

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|--------------------|----------|
| - Linton Kirk | £1200000 |
| - Linton Outhouses | £ 270000 |

- Beadle's Cottage £ 190000
- Morebattle Kirk £1530000
- Hownam Kirk £ 900000
- Hoselaw Chapel £ 420000
- Manse £ 875000
- Manse Outbuildings£ 260000
- Yetholm Kirk £3100000

A walk round the churches took place recently and this will help us provide the material we need for a 10 year Management Plan for our property – a requirement now of granting bodies and common sense to have. The walk round has also informed us of a number of maintenance or minor repair issues to deal with.

During the year the committee was enhanced with new members and the temporary convener is most grateful for the knowledge and input received.

Robin McHaffie

WAYS & MEANS

The usual fund raising events went ahead in 2009 with no special activities. Instead we concentrated on laying out a programme for 2010 as follows:-

Dates of 2010 events

- 17th January Souper Sunday (Collaboration with Worship)
- 5th February Burns Supper
- 13th February Yetholm Sinfonia
- March or April Spring Fling for Children (To collaborate with Youth Group)
- 28th March Palm Sunday Walk (Collaboration with Worship)
- 29th May Yetholm Guild Coffee
- 3rd July Hownam Sale
- July Golf Day
- July Auction
- 28th August Yetholm Sale and
Yetholm Sinfonia
- October Harvest Lunch

Concern was expressed by the committee that not so many people were supporting events across the villages/churches as once did.

Robin McHaffie

WORSHIP and PRAYER GROUP

During 2009 we noted the results of a study into communion practice and that the Session had accepted recommendations for some minor changes. The Cradle Roll services were reintroduced successfully at Linton with more planned for 2010. A series of special services where couples could celebrate and reaffirm their vows was mooted and these will take place in May 2010. We prepared 2 back to church Sundays at Easter and at Hownam's Harvest of

the lambs. Invitations were distributed to households and there were a few responses. Our Away A Day trip took us back to Coldingham and we borrowed the Abbey for a lovely service before going to spend the afternoon on the beach. Our retreat day to Holy Island was in a different Centre this year and the different accommodation allowed a more homely feel to the day. We agreed that a retreat to Iona be pursued for 2010. It was felt we should recommend continuing with the current pattern of worship for another year with the following observations being made;- The effect of Morebattle graciously going to Linton on the 1st Sundays has greatly enhanced worship there and strengthens the continuation of Sunday worship in Linton. Due to the few numbers gathering in Hownam it was felt this should be kept under review. We attended to arrangements for a number of special Sundays and would again say how pleased we are to be Kirking the Morebattle Games Queen. During the second half of the year the Prayer Committee merged with the Worship Committee and Margaret McTavish now reports here as Prayer Promoter. We arranged a special evening service for All Saints day as the 1st November was a Sunday. This was worth doing and also reminded us of the number of connections with our after School Club or Holiday Club at Sunday Worship. This has been a most valued part of our Worship programme. We particularly enjoyed the preparations for the family Harvest Service on the Saturday prior. We discussed concerns that the Harvest Sundays are clashing with other events/holidays/clearing Yetholm Show. A survey is suggested of what would be best dates On Remembrance Sunday we reintroduced a short service at Hownam with Ian Clark sharing the day. This was appreciated by the Kale Valley. This point gives us the opportunity to again thank Dr Clark for the gift of his talents and time to the worship of the congregation. He now sits in on the Worship Group. The suggestion of a Palm Sunday Procession service has been put to us and this will be followed through. We have noted the recruitment of 5 young people as leaders and will use them as appropriate for planning of events.

Robin McHaffie

PRESBYTERY – JEDBURGH

Jedburgh Presbytery met in different locations for 8 ordinary meetings and for two inductions. In June the Rev Douglas Nichol became minister of Hobkirk & Southdean linked with Ruberslaw and in December Rev Michael Scoular was inducted as minister of Cavers & Kirkton with Hawick Trinity. This latter after the purchase of a new Manse. The Presbytery Plan had its annual tweaking but there was little movement on parish groupings. Concentration was on use and importance of buildings and in this connection insurance was mentioned and the importance of having enough. Members of our session through Presbytery have been involved in vacancy committees and in visitations to other congregations. Visitations are intended as a health check and encouragement to congregations and indeed members of Presbytery have visited our congregation and its' organisations over recent months. Presbytery was active during the year on the situations regarding local post offices and in supporting the building of a crematorium within the Borders. A coffee morning for Borders Women's Aid organised by the Church and Nations Committee raised £282.

Trish Gentry

MOREBATTLE MUSIC

Choir

We start on a sad note as at the beginning of 2009 we lost one of our members Mrs Isa McNulty who died quite suddenly and unexpectedly. Isa had been a very faithful member of the choir for several years making her valued contribution in a quiet and undemonstrative way. She was well loved by us all and we miss her.

Our numbers however remain at 13, as we were very pleased to welcome a new member in Celia Kimber who joined us during the course of 2009. Celia has joined the alto section and we are delighted to have her with us.

The choir continues its weekly practices here in the church on Thursday evenings. We prepare for Sunday worship as well as for any joint events in the united parish to be held in Morebatttle, and continue to explore new material from CH4 and elsewhere. We have been pleased to learn several new tunes from CH4 and to introduce them to the congregation.

Over the year we have enjoyed regular weekly worship here in Morebatttle. The choir once again took part in the annual Guild Carol Service in December, which was held in Kelso North Church, and we had our own service of lessons and carols in Morebatttle church just before Christmas.

Kirk Handbell Ringers

No change. We are not operating as a team at the moment.

At the end of the year our balance in the bank stood at £786.81.

D. Brown

YETHOLM CHURCH CHOIR

The choir with 12 members continues to meet for practise on Wednesday nights at 6.30pm. As always this is a very important part of the choirs role in the Church's worship.

Introducing new hymns is always great progress and often the choir are asked to sing a verse through so that the congregation can become familiar with the tune.

Having 4 very enthusiastic male singers is an added bonus to the choir and I am grateful to all the members who give of their time so regularly.

I must say a very special thank you to Stella and Rita for keeping the choir practises and Sunday mornings going while I was recovering from my operation. Many thanks to them.

I pray that the choir continues to make its tremendous contribution to the Sunday Services

Netta Harvey

MOREBATTLE GUILD

Morebatttle & Hownam Guild meet on the first Thursday of each month from January to March and October to December. The Guild Coffee morning takes place annually on the last Saturday of March, using some of the money for Guild funds and normally, donating the rest to the Church. However, in 2009 a donation was sent to C.H.A.S in memory of little Connor Thomson who had died in Rachel House.

In January Linda Fleming and Rebecca Pringle spoke of their experience at the General Assembly. The February meeting had to be cancelled because of snow but the two ladies from "Charity Begins At Home" in Kelso who were to speak were able to come in October. In March members took the meeting on the theme "He restores my soul" and in November, we were joined by other Guilds and were entertained by the group "Schiehallion". In December we had a social evening and Dinner in the Templehall Hotel and the choir took part in the Guild Service of Lessons and Carols in Kelso.

At The Annual Guild Meeting in Dundee in September the new three year strategy was launched with the theme for the first year being "Called to Act Justly". In Guild Week in November the Guild took part in the Church service in Morebatttle.

YETHOLM GUILD

The first half of 2009 saw the Guild complete the final year of the theme 'He restores my soul---through 'caring' with a talk by Sheena Sangster on the Guild Leprosy Mission Project in Nigeria,through 'contemplation and Celtic spirituality'led by David Ward from the Northumbria Community and through 'sharing and laughter' led by Rev. Dr. Ian Clark. In September three of the members of the Guild Leadership Team attended the Annual Meeting of the Guild in Dundee, Kathleen Bates,Trish Gentry and Sheena Sangster. They very much enjoyed the day and brought back information about the very successful fundraising for the Guild Projects (£779,385.88 over three years) and introduced the new 3 year theme. This is taken from Micah Ch. 6. 'What does the Lord require of you---to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God'

In October we opened our new session with our Dedication Service followed by our first Guild Meeting later in October on the theme of 'justice' led by our Minister Rev. Robin McHaffie. In November we heard Mr. E.Richards speaking on the injustices of trade and how 'Fair Trade'seeks to address this and in December our 'Christmas Special'was led by Captain Carol Skene and colleagues from Berwick Salvation Army.The colleagues also included some very amusing puppets which made us laugh a lot! It was a very enjoyable evening.

Attendances at Guild meetings averaged 18-20 men and women.

We had a successful Guild Sale and Coffee Morning in May and also took the opportunity to provide refreshments at the Charities Fair in November, raising £98.70 for Guild Projects.

There have also been visits to other Guilds, notably Kelso North and Morebattle which were much enjoyed.

YETHOLM WEDNESDAY CLUB

Although we have fewer members this year we have maintained good levels of attendance. We are on a sound financial footing and would like to take the opportunity to thank the the organisers of the Plough Hotel Quiz for the donation to our funds.

We have had a varied programme and have travelled to China Africa and Eastern Europe without leaving our chairs in the Wauchope Hall!

Our Xmas party was held in the hall when we were well entertained by Schiehallion

The bad weather earlier this year caused some disruption but we enjoyed a fish and chip lunch at the Plough and a games afternoon in the hall

Our session finishes at the end of April with a lunch party at a local hotel. We resume at the end of September.

Ann Beveridge

KELSO CHURCHES TOGETHER

We maintain our fairly light involvement with the Kelso Churches.

Of note:

Youth Project meetings are being held regularly, and Rev. Jenny Earl will progress a "street pastoring course" the idea being that this would take place on Friday and Saturday evenings between the hours of 10pm and 2am.

Regretfully there is no longer a Sunday service in Kelso Hospital

It is hoped that we could have a fair trade stall at St. James Fair in 2010.

We have purchased an updated version of the churches in the wider Kelso area and these booklets can be obtained from our churches.

We continue to publicise our Christmas and festival events through KCT.

LINTON KIRK HERITAGE APPEAL FUND

The appeal benefits from Gift Aid Support, the sale of Linton Booklets and this year once more from a legacy.

Balance at the last audit (5th April 2009) £84360.12