

**Stated Annual Meeting of Laggan and Newtonmore Church of Scotland
Held on March 8th after a joint morning service in Laggan Church**

Rev. Catherine Buchan welcomed the Congregation and opened the meeting with a prayer.

Present: 37 members of the Congregation.

Apologies: Anne Moore

Minutes of Stated Annual Meeting of 17th March 2019: These were approved at Session Meeting of 28/5/19 (as proposed and agreed at the SAM meeting on 17/3/19)

Finance Report and Explanation of the Accounts: Roy explained the accounts had been approved by Kirk Session on 27th January 2020, and the relevant excerpts had been available to the congregation from last Sunday. They have also been independently examined. These were the first to be prepared following the Union on 1st January 2019, so the comparative figures in the Receipts and Payments account and in the detailed expenditure of the Charitable Activities only represent what was in St.Bride's accounts for 2018, so comparisons this year are not relevant.

The Receipts and Payments Accounts brings in the funds held by Laggan Church at 31st December 2019 and the funds transferred from Laggan Community Association towards the upkeep of the public toilet in Laggan.

Following the linkage with Kingussie some expenditure relating to minister's expenses, pulpit supply and manse costs is now shared on a 50/50 basis.

Various overdue fabric repairs to the manse and both churches will be progressed in 2020 and there should still be a working balance, but without new givers there could be problems in the future. Roy reminded us we could leave legacies to the church.

Answers to questions asked clarified that on p4 of the excerpts under charitable activities there should be a space after note 3 with the amount being £48,315. Restricted funds are those that can only be used for specific purposes like Messy Church and Laggan toilets. Catherine explained the Church were running the toilets for now but did not own them.

Property Report: George advised he was giving the report on behalf of the other members of the group who all contributed to the work. Actions in 2019 included new outside noticeboards in both churches, property inspections of St. Brides Church and Laggan Church and the Manse, and the installation of a log burner in the Manse living room.

Work planned for 2020 is the outside work on all 3 buildings which will be done by one contractor, with the possibility of maintenance contracts. The St. Bride's vestibule will have the floor repaired and a new floor covering. In Laggan Church there is going to be a feasibility study on the possibility of installing a toilet and kitchen.

Session Clerk's report: Alison recounted how over the last year we have been settling in to a union, entered a linkage with Kingussie, changed service times and not had Catherine every week. Its been encouraging to see how everyone has been supportive of this.

Throughout the year there have been various happy community events organised by many of the congregation ranging from the Ardverikie picnic to Christmas events. Thanks were given to the effort so many people also put in each Sunday, playing music, bringing colour to the church with flowers, being part of duty teams, and also all the work of the financial and property teams and other Session groups.

Catherine celebrated 10 years of being minister here in the summer, and it is obvious she is held in high regard by church goers and the wider community. This 11th year has been challenging, having to cope with all the arrangements of 3 churches, and thanks were expressed for all the enthusiasm and vision she has put into this.

Minister's report: Catherine reflected on the state of the union and expressed her thanks for all those in the congregation who are helping it grow and strengthen. She was very happy with the great support for all the Christmas services and is looking forward to the same support for Holy week and Easter.

The Messy Church team works well together, sharing God's love with whoever comes. Thanks were expressed for Colin and Liz's efforts in the kitchen, and for Nat Robertson taking over until she leaves in a few months when another volunteer will be needed. It has been good to have the worship team taking more services and they will be working across not just the linkage but the union as well.

One concern is the reluctance of some people to leave their usual church to participate in joint services. It is important to understand that we do not worship the building, but the God who called us.

We are still on a path of renewal, and although this is the last of the three years of coaching, the path will continue by deepening our roots in God and reaching out to others in new ways of service and worship.

We are now not just a union but also part of a linkage. The linkage has been challenging as it has been a whole new way of working. Kingussie is very keen to embrace the linkage and hope to have many joint events.

At the General assembly in May a Radical Action Plan was agreed which is going to reduce the number of presbyteries from 40 to 12. Highland Presbytery will take in the area covered by Highland Council and the Western Isles. There is a lot of planning to be done as this comes to fruition over the next 2-3 years.

In Badenoch and Strathspey there are now 4 ministers in post and Barbara Black will be a part time pastoral assistant in Tomintoul, Glenavon and Inveravon. The current Presbytery Plan called for 3 or 4 more part time Mission workers, but it is now proposed that permission is sought from the Faith and Nurture Forum and the Presbytery Planning Task Group to appoint 2 workers one in Badenoch and Aviemore and one in Strathspey to work at developing fresh expressions of church.

The meeting then closed in prayer.