

The Vestry Voice

December 2009

Welcome once more to the Vestry Voice.

1. Opening word

Sam read for us from Luke chapter 4 and verse 18. He challenged us to seek the guidance of God's Spirit in the face of important decisions on the future direction of the parish in terms of ministry, finances and the upkeep of our property. Please read this verse yourself and seek God's will for the personal decisions you must make in the coming days and weeks.

2. Financial report

Please note that further financial details are available by contacting the treasurer Paul Bailie.

Our finances are continuing to improve:

1. From January to October our income was £176,648 and our expenditure £152,756 giving a surplus of £23,892.
2. Our overdraft will have been halved to £30,000 by the end of the year.
3. The annual donations to charities by the Select Vestry came to a total of £16,000.
4. Special Collections — Harvest £1,100 to Mongo School, Sudan
5. Sudan Lunch £3,000 sent with Billy & Jenny to the VTC in Yei.
6. The Coffee Morning proceeds from 12th December will be sent to an emergency appeal for Sudan.

We have also paid for a significant amount of planning & preparation for developing the Rectory site and are on target to complete the work to the Cathedral & be debt free on completion.

3. Glebe Report

Our discussion centred on the issue of the Rectory and repairs to the church.

If we wish to avail ourselves of the environmental heritage and other grants then the repair work to the fabric of the church must commence shortly. Of course this still entails significant costs on the part of the cathedral and large sums must now be brought together to enable this work to go ahead.

Over the last number of years the vestry and in particular the glebes committee have been looking for ways to generate new income from the extensive Rectory property whilst improving the facilities for our current and future incumbent.

The outline of the scheme adopted by the vestry is as follows:

- The left section of the plot has been sold raising £290k. This is a very good return on the site at a difficult time for site sales!
- A new property will be constructed on the right section of the plot according to our current plans. This will cost £350k leaving a shortfall of £100k.
- Sell the current rectory raising £500k and leaving a profit of £400k.

Drawings for the new layout of the rectory grounds are available in both porches. Please feel free to address any questions to any member of the vestry or the rector or curate.

4. Chairman's Business

The rector and the entire vestry would also like to send out a word of thanks to both David Whyte & Jim McAdam for their tireless work on maintaining the church notice boards.

5. Any Other Business

Christians Against Poverty, (CAP)

Our WOT evenings in 2008 highlighted several issues of importance to the congregation and the wider community. One of these was to provide ministry through debt counselling to families in severe poverty. The diocese in conjunction with CAP and the church of St Paul's, York Street are currently researching the possibility of setting up a centre in Belfast.

As a follow on to our WOT evenings Sam has opened discussions with the Bishop and St Paul's concerning ways of involving the Cathedral in this initiative. Please be aware that are at a very early stage and hopefully more details may be forthcoming in our next issue.

Health and Safety

If any parishioner is working with young people or children within the church and has not received this training then they should contact the organization leader. The Cathedral is committed to the Safeguarding Trust initiative for better protection of both our young people and helpers. For more information on Safeguarding Trust please see the Church of Ireland website:

<http://www.ireland.anglican.org/index.php?do=information&id=160>

Additional safety signs have been posted around the church buildings at key areas; please look out for these important safety notices.

And once again can we wish that the grace of God, the love of the Lord Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.