



## Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 23rd January 2025 at 121 George Street

<b>Present</b>	Convener	Andrew McLellan	
	Vice-Convener	Ian Alexander	
	Secretary	Carol Miller	
	Minutes Secretary	Jacky Harkness	
	Members	Maureen Jack	Tom Watson
		Alison Jack	Val Brown
		Douglas Simpson	Trish Archibald
	Calum MacSween	Jamie Erskine	
Minister	Rev Dr Stewart Gillan		

	Item	Comments	Action
1	Opening	Andrew welcomed everyone present and started the meeting with a lesson and a prayer.	
2	Apologies	Apologies were received from Rev Muriel Pearson, David Coulter, Kenny Roger and Rebecca McGonigle.	
3	Minutes	The Minutes from the Committee Meeting held on 24th September 2024 had been pre-circulated and were agreed by the Committee. There were no matters arising from the Minutes.	
4	Convener's Update	Andrew's report had been pre-circulated. Since the meeting with Brigadier Davies and Rev David Anderson at 51 Infantry Brigade & HQ Scotland, Rev David has been posted. The Friends will make contact with the new Senior Padre once he is in post.  Jim Francis will shortly be retiring from the Army. It was suggested Carol should write to him to ascertain his position on remaining on the Committee.	Carol
5	Ministers' Updates	<u>Stewart</u> Prior to the meeting Stewart shared his report for the Committee to read. He reflected on the recent ceasefire between Israel and Palestine and the strongly divided reactions of the local communities to it.  Unable to celebrate St Andrew's Day this year, Muriel and Stewart held an interfaith event, calling it Prayers of	

		<p>Lamentation and Hope. Attendance was down to 55, but it was important to bring people together. There is a high level of expectation each year for the St Andrew's Day service and reception and it certainly enforces the Church's profile within the local and ecumenical community. The £1k received from The Friends towards the event was greatly appreciated.</p> <p>The donation of £2000 agreed at the last Committee Meeting was distributed as follows:</p> <p>i) £1000 to the Scots House Hotel for war-related staff support. Acknowledgement and thanks have been received from Lilian, Manager.</p> <p>ii) £1000 to DSPR for humanitarian aid to Gaza.</p> <p>It was asked whether or not the Treasurer receives acknowledgement of donations given by The Friends. Carol will write to Elaine requesting the information.</p> <p><u>Muriel</u> Muriel's report was circulated before the meeting.</p> <p>Andrew thanked both Ministers for their excellent reports and updates.</p>	Carol Treasurer
6	Strategy	<p>Following the suggestion of developing a future strategy for the role and function of The Friends, Ian has produced and circulated a paper taking into account the ideas of Committee members. This was circulated before the meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that a working group should be set up, which would report back to the Committee at the next meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> March. The group will be Ian, Val, Tom and Stewart.</p> <p>It was reported that there is a strategic review underway on the future of the Church of Scotland in Israel/Palestine, which will be presented to the General Assembly in May. The Friends' Committee needs to be mindful of this review and how it will affect the work of The Friends. Muriel will be at the General Assembly.</p>	Ian, Val, Tom, Stewart  Muriel
7	Event	<p>Stewart will be presenting on 13<sup>th</sup> February in St Matthew's Church, Perth at 2.00pm. It is a joint event with Christian Aid. Val updated the Committee on the arrangements and requested, at the earliest opportunity, a title and small</p>	Stewart

		<p>introduction from Stewart to be used in promotional material. It was suggested "Light Shining in Darkness" could be the title.</p> <p>The event will be live streamed and on available on YouTube; it will be widely advertised using combined connections of The Friends and Christian Aid.</p>	
8	Reports	<p>i) Finance</p> <p>The financial statement was pre-circulated.</p> <p>There have been no scholarship grants this year, but it is still an aspiration to make grants in the future.</p> <p>Tom drafted a letter (dated 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024) seeking donations and had requested Muriel and Stewart comment on it before sending it to members. He has not heard back from either Minister. Carol offered to resend the request to both Ministers.</p> <p>In light of the strategy review, Tom will update the letter and reflect on the right time to send it to the members.</p> <p>It was agreed that the second £2000 grant, agreed at the meeting in September, should be deferred. Ministers are asked to propose what the grant could be used for before the next Committee meeting.</p> <p>ii) Scholarship</p> <p>On 17<sup>th</sup> December, Rev Trish Archibald was ordained and inducted as Assistant Minister at Stirling North Parish Church. Andrew congratulated Trish on the Committee's behalf and reiterated the power of the scholarship programme.</p> <p>Clark Muir has repaid £245 of the £457 he owes.</p> <p>iii) Newsletter</p> <p>Calum requested contributions and ideas for the next and subsequent newsletter. The deadline for the current one is 31<sup>st</sup> January.</p> <p>iv) Facebook</p> <p>The report was circulated before the meeting. There were the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has been shown that fewer posts get a stronger reaction, so the number of posts could be reduced.</li> <li>• The need to be careful as to what is posted in The Friends' name.</li> </ul>	<p>Carol Stewart Muriel</p> <p>Tom</p> <p>Carol Stewart Muriel</p> <p>Maureen</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In response to her request for back-up on Facebook, it was agreed Maureen can approach Sandra Horne, a member and regular Facebook follower, for a 2-month trial assisting her as an administrator. Maureen will still be responsible for what is posted.</li> </ul> <p>v) Website The report was circulated before the meeting. The Committee agreed the website is a very important part of The Friends' presence. Carol will continue to update it.</p> <p>vi) Promotional Initiatives a) Donor Contact. Committee members have been encouraged to check the list of original sponsors of St Andrew's Jerusalem and to make contact with any church or presbytery with whom there may be historic link. b) A short snappy promotional video, about 5 minutes long. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction by the Convener (Andrew or Ian)</li> <li>Film footage of the two churches (already available)</li> <li>Key aspects of what the churches are doing (Stewart and Muriel)</li> <li>Introduce The Friends and explain why people should join.</li> </ul> The estimated cost of the video is £340 with the majority of the funding being privately donated, and the Maltinghouse is on stand-by to assist in its production. Carol will follow up.</p>	<p>Carol</p> <p>Douglas/ Andrew/ Ian Stewart Muriel/Carol</p> <p>Carol</p>
9	Membership	<p>A break-down of the membership was pre-circulated. 4 members donate by standing order every month and there is a donor who gives £50 a month.</p> <p>Prominent membership signs and leaflets need to be visible at every event to advertise The Friends, particular emphasis on the support for the ministers and their partners.</p>	<p>Carol</p>
10	Committee changes	<p>Jamie will be retiring at the AGM and it was agreed that Val should take over as Vice-Convener.</p> <p>David Coulter has asked to stand back from the Committee for now.</p> <p>Andrew agreed to approach Carol Finlay to ask if she would like to join the Committee.</p>	<p>Andrew</p>

		Kirsty Gilchrist, a member with expertise in strategy, was asked if she would agree to be considered join the Committee. Although she declined, she has volunteered to assist with the Strategy Review from June.	Ian
11	St Andrew's Day Services	The report on the 2024 Edinburgh service and Muriel's blog on the Jerusalem service were pre-circulated.  The 2025 St Andrew's Day falls on a Sunday. A decision needs to be made at the next Committee meeting as to whether to hold the service on the Sunday or a weekday.	All
12	AGM	The AGM is on Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> May at 11am in Augustine United Church (St Cuthbert's was already booked).  Ian offered to invite Archbishop Hosam Naoum to speak at the AGM as he is scheduled to be in Edinburgh for the General Assembly. Since 2021 he has been President Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East and since 2023 he has been president bishop and primate of the province.	All  Ian
13	Date of Next Meeting	Wednesday March 26 <sup>th</sup> at 14.00 in 121 George Street.	All
14	Closing	Andrew thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting with the benediction.	