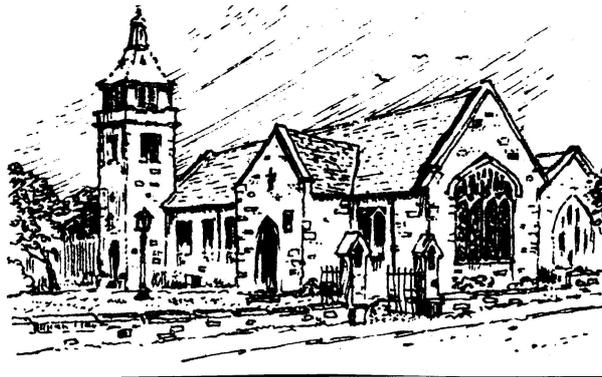


**ST CUTHBERT'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
COLINTON**



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

10 DECEMBER 2017

ST CUTHBERT'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, COLINTON

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AGENDA

Opening Prayer.

1. Apologies
 2. Remembrance of those who have died during the past year.
 3. Acceptance of Minutes for 2016 Annual General Meeting
 4. To receive the Report and Accounts of the Vestry
 5. Appointment of Independent Examiners
 6. To receive the Report of the Property Committee
 7. To receive the Reports of:
 - a) The Lay Representative
 - b) The Wardens
 - c) Support Worker for the Elderly
 - d) Children and Young People
 - e) Protection for Vulnerable Groups
 - f) The Choir
 - g) St Raphael's Prayer Group
 - h) A Brew and a Blether
 - i) The Good Grief Group
 - j) Shalom
 - k) Open Forum
 - l) The Sacristans
 - m) The Flower Arrangers
 - n) The Garden Team
 - o) "The Sign"
 - p) The Church Website
 - q) Communication Group
 - r) Eco-Congregation
 - s) The Archivist
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- t) Christian Aid
 - u) The Verandah Club
 - v) Leprosy Mission Scotland
 - w) Food Bank
 - x) The Phoenix Group
 - y) St Cuthbert's Badminton Club
8. Election of two members of the Vestry
 9. Election of Lay Representative and Alternative Lay Representative
 10. Any other competent business
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ST CUTHBERT'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, COLINTON

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD 11 DECEMBER 2016

The Annual General meeting of St Cuthbert's Scottish Episcopal Church, Colinton was held on Sunday, December 11 at 12.00 in the church hall. The meeting was chaired by the Rector's Warden, Joan Smith, and attended by office bearers, members of Vestry and 60 members of the congregation. The curate, Sarah Shaw, opened the meeting with a prayer.

1 Apologies: Bob Bent, Patricia Brignall, Peter and Amelie Bullough, Frances Davies, Irene Harkness, Julia Roberts.

2. In Memoriam. The meeting stood in memory of four members of the congregation who had died during the year:

Barbara Cockburn

Hazel Davies

George Griffiths

Jacqueline McKenna

3 Acceptance of minutes of the 2015 Annual General Meeting .

Archie Clark asked what had happened to the plan to start a Kids' Philosophy Club. It was explained that this had been a project favoured by the previous Rector and was now in abeyance. The adoption of the minutes was proposed by Bryan Dale, and seconded by John Davies.

Before moving on to the main business of the meeting the Chair read a prepared statement .She explained that the Vestry had met the Bishop in June to start the preparations for the search for a new Rector following Maurice Houston's retirement in August. At that meeting ,which was minuted , the Bishop agreed that the vestry could proceed without undue delay, recognising that the congregation had recent experience of two vacancies and that it had undergone a major consultation which had resulted in a mission plan in 2015. In September the Dean and Interim Pastor met Vestry. The Dean gave additional advice and agreed that

Vestry could proceed without delay. By the beginning of October, after some consultation with members of the congregation representing different perspectives a first draft of the congregational profile was sent to the Bishop and Dean for approval. It was also made available to any members of the congregation who wished to see and comment on it. A small number did so. Early in November some members of the congregation expressed concern about the process and a meeting was arranged quickly to ensure that these concerns might be voiced and Vestry made aware of them. Nine members of the congregation attended the meeting and an additional three who were unable to attend sent written comments. The profile already under redraft took into account some of the views expressed. In early November the Dean and Bishop returned their comments on the draft profile and the Rector's Warden had a lengthy and encouraging meeting with the Dean. The profile was resubmitted and in the second week of December final comments were received. The Dean, Bishop and Interim Pastor had all agreed the time frame was acceptable, given that small changes needed to be made and a satisfactory advertisement prepared. The advertisement would be placed if at all possible around the second week in January, and advertised more widely than before. It should be available for three to four weeks with an agreed closing date. Replies would go direct to the Bishop and he would forward to Vestry all suitable candidates (excluding any whom he cannot appoint). Interviews, depending on actual timing, would be held in late February or early March. If, and only, if a suitable candidate was found the new rector should be in place by July. The means of selection had yet to be confirmed by Vestry but the firm intention was to include people who were not on Vestry to give the widest possible representation to the congregation.

4. To Receive the Report and Accounts of Vestry.

The treasurer opened his report by suggesting that at future AGMs the congregation might prefer to be given a summary document rather than the full accounts. This was supported by those present

and the treasurer agreed to consider the matter for the 2017 AGM. He then directed the meeting to pages 3,4 and 5 of the accounts and highlighted the fact that the total percentage of income collected directly from the congregation had fallen to under 50%, leaving the church reliant on investment income and hall rental to balance the books. The same point was highlighted on page 12, paragraph 2. On page 6 it was noted that the loss from unrestricted funds was £548.00 , but with the income from investments the surplus amounted to £80,000.00. Under expenditure it was noted that the removal of the curate meant no further expenditure was required on the rental of her flat. Attention was drawn to note 13 on page 17 where a possible contingency liability of £6000.00 was detailed after a recent HM Revenue and Customs ruling against the SEC. Under expenditure the Treasurer commented that the amount set against the curate was the contribution from St Cuthbert's to her stipend, not her full salary, and that expenditure reflected the lack of a rector. He concluded his account with thanks to Robin Holmes, Ian Macdonald and Barry Tatlock for all the work undertaken by them. Bryan Dale praised the SEC Unit Trust Scheme for their good investments which had resulted in a 25% return. He questioned the leaving of £30,000.00 in RBS earning little return. The treasurer explained he was waiting for a period of stability before re-investing the money and also needed to keep some in reserve for the proposed church door.

Bryan also asked that the curate be given her travelling expenses from home to work as happened in another church. The treasurer explained that the Bishop had vetoed this request but the meeting felt that there should be other ways to make a payment. Following another question it was explained that the Bishop had felt that such payments created a dangerous precedent. The Treasurer agreed to revisit the problem.

John Davies asked whether the SEC was the only church to be targeted by HM Revenue and Customs. It was explained that the

Church of Scotland was a single charity unlike the SEC where every charge is a separate charity.

John Hampton asked who the employees were and was told the Rector, Curate, Elspeth Miller . Mary Moffett and the organists.

Morgan Jones noted that the accounts did not allow for expenditure on the proposed glass doors.

Following a question from Sarah Shaw the rise in expenditure on administration was explained by a one-off item.

Archie Clark questioned variations in council tax charges. It was explained that the church no longer had to pay council tax on the curate's flat and that the charges for the Rectory were reduced while it was vacant

Morgan Jones proposed acceptance of the report and accounts and this was seconded by Rosemary Yeoman.

5 Appointment of Independent Examiners.

Johnson Smilie were reappointed as Independent Examiners, proposed by John Davies, seconded by Sarah Donaldson.

6. Property Report.

Archie Clark questioned why work on the choir vestry roof had not been undertaken. The Property Manager explained that although the copper sheeting was brittle the roof was not leaking and, given the planned work on the church doors, it was not advisable to be managing two major projects simultaneously.

Archie Clark felt that Vestry should reconsider these priorities and the matter was referred back to Vestry for discussion.

7. Reports.

All received with no questions raised.

8. Reappointment of treasurer as a member of Vestry.

Susan Clark proposed that Martin Fairley continue as Treasurer, seconded by Veronica Jones.

9. Election of Vestry Members.

Julia Roberts and Hilary Pritchard stepped down from Vestry and with three vacancies on Vestry the following members were elected:

Patricia Brignall, proposed by Rosemary Yeoman, seconded by Barbara Tatlock

Cliff Dalley, proposed by Frances Davies, seconded by Judith Mackintosh

Russell Philp, proposed by Susan Clark, seconded by Hilary Pritchard.

Hilary Pritchard agreed to remain as Vestry Secretary with no voting rights on Vestry

10. Election of Lay Representative and Alternate Lay Representative.

Jan Shepherd and Margaret Kieran were thanked for all their work as Lay and Alternate Lay Representatives. Since no nominations had been received the Chair said that a special congregational meeting would be held after the 10.30 service on Sunday, January 8 2017 by which time it was hoped that nominations would have been received.

11. Re-election of People's Warden.

Jayne Churchill, proposed by Hilary Pritchard, seconded by Joan Smith, agreed to remain as People's Warden.

Joan thanked all who worked so hard for the church: the property team , especially Gavin Wye for his constant attention to general maintenance; Mary Moffett for her care of the elderly; Margaret Holmes for events organisation; Susan Clark for the work on the website; Donald Mackintosh for the choir and music organisation; and to all who helped on a regular basis with teams such as the coffee rota and sound team. A final thanks was given to Vestry members . The Chair expressed her gratitude to Fred Tomlinson, Interim Pastor, for his calm and wise support and especially to Sarah Shaw for all the extra duties she had undertaken since the Rector's retirement and for her grace and efficiency. She concluded by asking the congregation to pray for a suitable person to lead the church.

Jayne Churchill thanked Joan for all that she had done, especially with the extra burden placed on her during the interregnum.

12 AOCB

a. Pauline McLaren asked that Vestry consider a donation to LINKS when the annual charity donations were being discussed.

b. Arnold Sidebotham asked that at the 2017 AGM the sound system be used and Jean Haskell suggested that consideration be given to ways of reducing noise levels in the hall during coffee.

c. Margaret Temple suggested that consideration be given to providing more child-friendly space.

All comments were noted for discussion at Vestry.

The meeting closed with the Grace.

TO RECEIVE THE REPORT AND ACCOUNTS OF THE VESTRY

Treasurer's report for the year to 30th September 2017

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS

It is recommended that Johnston Smillie be reappointed as Independent Financial Examiners .

PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT

I INTRODUCTION

The congregation is responsible for the care and maintenance of the church building and its associated rooms and hall, the rectory.

The property committee's remit is, in broad terms, to plan and implement the maintenance of, and repairs and improvements to, the fabric of these properties. All such work is of course constrained by the annual budget allowance or funding otherwise authorised by Vestry, and by any relevant statutory and Diocesan planning requirements.

No minuted meetings of the committee have been held since May 2015. Since that time, the committee's remit has been managed by a core group of non-ex-officio members comprising the convenor,

the property manager, and Gavin Wye. Activity reports have been issued before every vestry meeting. Professional guidance in terms of fulfilling the Quinquennial Survey recommendations continues to be provided by David Willis (CLWG Architects). Detailed condition surveys of the church and rectory buildings fabric and agreed repair works are undertaken by Jim Lyster (LBC Building Services). Electrical works have been undertaken by Sentry Electrics and gas heating servicing is by Gavin Thomson (Thomson Home Services). Masonry work has been undertaken by JMS Stonemason. Smaller repairs needed at short notice may be undertaken by others as necessary.

Although the committee has not met formally for some time, the following were nominal committee members. Communication is largely by email and word of mouth.

Rev Nicki McNelly	Chair	from July 2017 ex officio
Bob Bent	Convenor	from Feb 2009 (ex officio pre 2009)
Martin Fairley	Church Treasurer,	ex officio
Joan Smith	Rector's Warden	ex officio
Jayne Churchill	People's Warden	ex officio
Bob Pritchard	Property Manager	from Dec 2004
Gavin Wye	Health and Safety	from Sept 2014

2 SUMMARY OF ACTIONS OVER THE PAST YEAR

- **Health & Safety** One incident was recorded after a young person slipped in the hall and required medical attention. No clear cause has been identified and the incident was reported to the Church's insurers for the record.
 - **Church/Hall Yard** Gavin Wye continued to remove tree debris from the yard drains. As a result of the removal of the large cupressus (see below), this work will now only rarely be required.
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- **Routine servicing and repairs** The intruder and fire alarms and fire extinguishers were serviced under contract. The church and rectory heating apparatus (rectory in April, church and hall in October) were serviced and repairs carried out as required. A new programmable timer has been fitted to the church kitchen water heater. (NB repairs to the dishwasher are managed by others).
 - **Lighting** Dead light bulbs were replaced as required. A schedule of church and hall lighting, and the stock of spares, has been prepared. A new photocell controlled external lamp has been fitted in the yard.
 - **Toilets** Minor problems with the lavatories were dealt with.
 - **Baptismal font** Frequent visual inspection and manipulation of the mechanism continued.
 - **Church and hall roofs.** Regular inspections and reporting by Jim Lyster continued and repairs were carried out where necessary to coverings and rainwater goods.
 - **Rectory works** Repairs to roof coverings were undertaken, and rotting access hatches were repaired. A survey of the back garden boundary walls was undertaken and the need for repairs has been identified to ensure their stability and safety in the longer term. The external security lighting has been renewed. External paintwork on the south and west elevation has been refreshed and some internal redecoration was undertaken. The kitchen worktop was replaced and a new gas fire was fitted in one of the first floor rooms. All the internal lighting now incorporates LED bulbs.
 - **Hall floor** No work was needed this year, but a further assessment will be made in spring 2018.
 - **Choir vestry roof** Vestry has approved plans for a new roof and cupola, and the architect's proposal has received
-

statutory planning consent. The project has been “on hold” for some time.

- **New glazed entrance to church** This project has received planning consent and Canon 35 consent has been obtained. Tenders have been sought for construction (but see below). Advice has been obtained concerning the organ loudspeakers.
- **Rectory Security** The coded lock on the rectory main door has been reprogrammed.
- **Garden trees** – Extensive lopping and trimming of the church garden trees was undertaken by a professional company to ensure the safety of the public using the adjacent footpaths, roads, and church garden. Overgrown trees in the rectory front garden were taken down to ground level and other trees and bushes trimmed to improve the lighting and enhance security.

3 LOOKING FORWARD

The following items are subject to Vestry’s agreement and authority to proceed, in addition to any other outstanding statutory and Diocesan consents. Two planned projects in particular, the choir vestry roof refurbishment and the glazing of the church main entrance, have each been delayed as a result of the 2016/2017 interregnum, when an effective moratorium was imposed on taking forward any new works. Vestry is aware that the timing of these two major projects could be demanding on the Church’s resources.

(a) Church organs (as before)

Removal of the pipe organ console (but not the pipes array) and relocation of the electronic organ into the chancel was a popular project identified during the “Future Concepts” presentation and questionnaire. The relocation would release useful space in the south transept and in the tower. This project has been shelved.

(b) Lady Chapel – alternative use of the space and reordering (as before)

This project has also been shelved (it is closely related to (a) above).

(c) Choir vestry

This project is currently scheduled for the summer of 2018. Vestry will also be asked to consider refurbishment of the internal space. All hall users will need to be informed. Considerable disruption of church-based activities can also be expected and more information will be publicised when details are known.

(d) New church glazed main entrance

Canon 35 consent has yet to be applied for in connection with replacing the organ loudspeakers. Obtaining competitive tenders for the works has been problematic and has resulted in slippage in the desired progress. It is hoped that the project will proceed to construction as soon as possible. The congregation will be kept fully informed when a tender has been accepted by vestry and a programme has been identified. The church Architect will oversee the contract works on behalf of St Cuthbert's, including health and safety matters.

(e) The 2014 Quinquennial Survey and Report (as reported previously)

Although much essential work followed on from the 2008/2013 Quinquennial, and has been addressed, some works remained outstanding, and further items of maintenance and repair work have been identified for action over the five years to 2019, as well as some works which might safely be delayed until a subsequent quinquennial period. The indicative costs of “urgent” and “necessary” works to the church and rectory were estimated at around £87,000 with the majority of this sum being in relation to the rectory (much of this work has been completed, and at lower cost). A further estimate of around £130,000 related to

“desirable” works, again mostly concerning the rectory (including for example around £88,000 to strip and re-slate the entire roof). These works could be taken forward in due course subject to vestry approval, budget, and planning constraints. Meanwhile, we continue to carry out more localised maintenance and repairs as needed to keep the buildings weather-tight and safe. The next Quinquennial Survey will need to be procured in 2018 for reporting early in 2019.

(f) Other matters to be addressed

- The church garden boundary walls are showing signs of distress in several places due to pressure from tree roots. We are monitoring this situation.
- The bowl of the baptismal font will be treated to prevent further deterioration of the surface, which is decaying.
- The three lengths of the rectory rear garden walls are badly in need of attention; some work will require the agreement of neighbours.
- The very tall cupressus tree at the west end of the hall has been removed. Ideas are invited by vestry for appropriate use of the remaining stump. Short organised tours of the stump can be arranged on request.
- Lighting upgrades (as before) Legislation means that many of the church spotlights (GU10 and MR16 type) will need to be replaced with LED equivalents in the very near future as their sale is no longer permitted under EU legislation. This will be done before our extensive stock of spare bulbs is used up.
- Following advice from the Diocese concerning the latest Housing Act, advice will be sought from the Fire Service concerning the current provision of fire alarms in the rectory. The electric supply circuitry is to be checked and certified.

Bob Pritchard, Property Manager
November 2017

REPORT FROM THE LAY REPRESENTATIVE

I was elected Lay Rep at the last AGM and in that capacity I have attended Vestry meetings and represented the congregation at the March Diocesan Synod. This was in some ways a 'baptism by fire' since we were debating and voting on changes to Canon 31 which would, among other things, allow same-sex marriage to be solemnised in church.

I was unable to attend the Synod in October.

The regular meetings a few years ago of the Edinburgh South Area Council seem to have fallen into abeyance. Lay Reps used to exchange Church magazines, but most have decided to stop as the magazines can be found online.

I would like to thank Jan Shepherd for help and advice when I first became Lay Rep, and Margaret Kieran for her guidance at Synod.

Patricia Brignall

REPORT FROM THE WARDENS

What a difference a year makes. As we make preparations for the Annual General Meeting of our church much has changed since this time last year.

We began 2017 thinking and praying and working towards the appointment of a new Rector. Many people were involved, members of the Vestry and others invited to participate in the selection interviews. In March, after due discussion, and with the support of Bishop John, we invited Nicki McNelly to be our Rector. I should like to thank all those who participated in this most important task in the life of our church for their diligence and the serious attention and time they gave to ensuring that, as Bishop John said, it was a "text book" selection process.

July brought a week of celebrations as we said goodbye to Sarah Shaw, our Curate, and welcomed Nicki as our new Rector.

Sarah finished three years with us, during which she endeared herself to all. She took on the unexpected task of being our minister and pastoral support after Maurice retired and with the help of our Interim Pastor Fred Tomlinson ensured that the

congregation were very well served during the vacancy. Not content just to keep things going she put forward new initiatives, such as Pray and Play, developed awareness of and work with refugees and encouraged joint ventures such as the Passion Play and the Art Exhibition. Around 90 people attended a special lunch to wish her, and Willie, farewell and a bus full from St Cuthbert's attended her Institution at Christ Church, Falkirk in August. Our thanks must go to Sarah for all that she did here.

It was a delight to welcome Nicki and her family into our midst, beginning with a wonderful Institution service in which several members of the congregation, including our young people had special roles. It has been a pleasure to work with Nicki over the last months as she gets to know us and we all begin to look forward.

Even in times of change the work of our community continues. Particular highlights include: The Passion Play, a joint venture with the Parish Church and the All Nations Fellowship which we hosted on Good Friday; in March, the Art Exhibition, how the church was transformed, and a good sum of money was raised for the Our Neighbours project in Zimbabwe; the ongoing work with refugees and the wonderful day hosting the Weekend Project when refugee families, mainly from Syria were able to enjoy some time out in Colinton Dell and a special meal here in our hall. We enjoyed a Burns Evening and a lovely Harvest lunch. Thank you to all who were involved in these events and whose hard work made them happen.

It has been good to see some new families and children in church. The first Sunday of each month is now a family service and a special thanks to Megan Emmerson who works so very hard to ensure that week by week there are interesting things for our children to do. A Young Alpha course has begun with the older young people, a new venture to encourage open discussion.. and to enjoy pizza! As always this time it is important to recognise all those in the congregation who freely and unstintingly give their time to ensure the smooth running of the church. I am only too aware of their

efforts and to all who take on tasks – thank you! I am also conscious that it is increasingly difficult to replace those whose expertise and behind the scenes activity we sometimes take for granted. If we wish to continue to keep our property safe and sound, our finances in order, our magazine published monthly... and other activities running we do need those who are prepared to volunteer and learn and take us forward.

This year special mention must go to:

the Vestry and church officials, this has been an exceptionally demanding time with all that the interregnum and a change of Rector involves. I am so grateful to everyone on the Vestry who have been so willing to talk and work together for the benefit of us all. Hilary Pritchard has been an exemplary Vestry Secretary and a wonderful support throughout this year; Martin Fairley a reliable, knowledgeable Treasurer, always ready to give advice and help and, of course, Jayne Churchill our People's Warden who retired at the end of September. It has been a privilege to be a warden with Jayne whose supportive, thoughtful calm good sense never faltered. St Cuthbert's has been well served.

the Property people. As well as the usual round of activity they have had much additional work to do in the Rectory during the vacancy and in preparation for Nicki's arrival. The Vestry receives a property report every month and we must thank Bob Pritchard and Bob Bent, as well as Gavin Wye our Health & Safety Officer for their diligent and thorough attention in looking after our buildings.

Margaret Holmes, Margaret not only ensures that we have beautiful flowers in church each week but also plans all our events. This year we have had many and in July Margaret masterminded both Sarah's lunch and the refreshments for the Institution in the space of one week! Thank you Margaret and your teams of helpers.

This year as every year we enjoy the music in church, Donald Mackintosh quietly arranges the organists, (with the Hymn group) plans the music for weekly services and for special events, of which there have been several in the last twelve months. He also plays at

the Thursday service as well as “tinkling the ivories” at Brew & Blether. Our thanks go to Donald and all the organists and choir who turn up faithfully and enhance our services.

Although I have perhaps picked out just a few for special mention in this report, this booklet is full of the work of St Cuthbert's, all are important and all are appreciated.

We now look forward, with Nicki as our Rector, to a new chapter in the life of St Cuthbert's.

Joan Smith, Rector's Warden

SUPPORT WORKER FOR THE ELDERLY

20 years ago when my daughter started school, I thought to myself, right I had better get a part time job . Little did I realize when Malcolm, Douglas and Gwen appointed me to do 12 hrs a week with particular remit to care for the older members of the congregation, that I would still be here 20 years later! My work still revolves around the 2 midweek services, and it is just as rewarding and engaging as ever.

This year there have been a dozen people who have had regular weekly or fortnightly visits- 2, alas, have died, Frances Gardner and Arthur Ross. Another 16 have had monthly, or “as required” visits, perhaps during a spell in hospital or during and after moving house; and another dozen are souls I keep an eye on and would check up on if I didn't see them at a midweek service for perhaps a month. I am part of the ‘Good Grief Group’, the St Raphael's Prayer Group, and the Pastoral Care Group, and have also had great pleasure attending Advent and Lent poetry groups hosted by Faith or Jan and Clyne.

I have taken several Wednesday morning services with reserved sacrament and a special thanks go to Janet McKinnell for the service books to make it easy for all of us on those occasions when we lack ‘the benefit of clergy’!

I have on 3 occasions taken the services held every 2nd Wednesday of the month, at Cairdean and Thorburn Care Homes, once at 2 minutes notice, which fairly sharpens the mind and makes me

thankful every time I have the luxury of preparing properly for a service!

I've taken 29 Thursday Services , and am always pleasantly surprised when people come back for 'even more on the psalms' . My special thanks go to Bryan Dale for his regular monthly turn on Thursdays and also to Sarah, Rolf ,Clyne and now Nicki for their help too. Thanks also to the musicians, Donald, Jan and Marion, tea makers , lift givers and David who helps set up weekly. It continues to be a very supportive group, and recently the age range has lowered significantly, and I don't just mean when Cora's occasional and very welcome attendance is included !- so please don't think you are too young to join us and share the singing, stories, and often very splendid teas.

I'm sure I echo many other reports when I say how sad I was to see Sarah go and move on to Falkirk- she was such a blessing and a pleasure to work with. But also it is wonderful to welcome Nicki to be the Rector,(my 5th since I took up this post) and I look forward to developing a continued and deepening pastoral care of this congregation and the area we find ourselves called to work in.
Mary Moffett

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This year we have 6 children of secondary school age, 3 children of primary school age and one of nursery age who attend on a fairly regular basis.

It is no longer possible to cater for all age groups in one class so we have two distinct groups. The older children worked on the journeys of St Paul in the first two terms of the year – researching his travels with the Bible and an atlas and writing a script for a play telling the key stories. The wooden spoon puppets which were used for our Christmas Presentation in Dec 2016 were repurposed as Paul, disciples and Pharisees. After the summer we decided we couldn't cover two groups on a Sunday morning so the older children now take an active part in the service on the First Sunday of the month. They also meet with Nicki on the evening of

the last Sunday of the month to discuss Youth Alpha. Some of our youngsters have continued to help in the Wester Hailes Food Bank during their holidays.

It has been lovely to see younger children arriving to breathe new life into The Sunday School. In the first two terms this year we looked at parables and miracles using The Mick Inkpen books as our starting point. The Autumn term sees us looking at Old Testament Stories. We are trying to display some of our work on the wall of the Church Hall so please take a few minutes to look at coffee time.

We have welcomed families and their guests to Sunday School during baptisms this year and usually cover the story of John baptising Jesus, baptise a doll, talking about what will happen in church, followed by a dove craft – making 3D doves and icing dove biscuits have both been fun (if sometimes a little sticky).

Our Christmas presentation last year was to sing the Twelve Days of Christmas using wooden spoon puppets with the photographs of as many church members as possible as heads. Each day of Christmas covered a different aspect of volunteering in the church – it was great to see visually and in song how many different groups of volunteers there are.

Social bonding is also important. The older children enjoyed a problem solving trip to Escape the Room and Pizza Express in the summer. In September we welcomed all our families old and new with a b-b-q in the church garden after the service. Marks and Sparks mini burgers and mini hot dogs were declared the tastiest b-b-q food of the season!

I have now been involved with Sunday School since Ben was one (he has just turned 18). From time to time I run out of steam and ideas so I would welcome any input from anyone in the congregation would like to offer to the Sunday school- do you have an artistic talent you could share with the children and run a week for us? Is drama your forte and you have an original way to explore a theme? Just get in touch 😊

Megan Emmerson

PROTECTION FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

All aspects of safeguarding under PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) are compliant within the framework of the Scottish Episcopal Church. There have not been any major training sessions during the year, but I have kept abreast with any developments from the Communicant, which is issued fortnightly by the Diocesan Office.

Protection Officer Christine Nimmo

THE CHOIR

During this year, the state of the choir has remained the same - new members needed! While our team of organists, once five strong, has been much reduced.

Philip Rossiter is taking a long sabbatical while he waits for hip surgery, David Turner has become the organist for the Parish Church and I can no longer play on a Sunday owing to eyesight problems.

Still, we shall all try our best to continue to support the congregation worship with our music.

Donald Mackintosh

ST RAPHAEL'S PRAYER GROUP

The Group continues with its good work of offering prayer for the sick and needy and making personal contact or sending cards or flowers as appropriate.

Our meetings are on the first Wednesday of each month at 4pm. We are a small group and would be pleased to meet any others who feel moved to join us.

Judith Mackintosh

A BREW AND A BLETHER

A Brew and a Bletcher is the name for an informal get together on the first Saturday of each month in the hall from 2.00 to 4.00pm.. Tea and cakes are served and activities vary from a chat to playing scrabble and occasional special events such as a strawberry tea, a

display by Angela Watson's dancers and a talk by John Peacock on his new book. All are welcome.

Hilary Pritchard

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT - *The Good Grief Group*

The Good Grief Group has continued to meet throughout this year. We have recently agreed that the task Maurice set us two years ago of supporting recently bereaved following the loss of a spouse, has been achieved. Seven of us joined the group and over the last 2 years we have shared many delights – such as our wedding stories and tales of when we first met our partners - and of course some of our sorrow. You get to know each other pretty well if you shares joys and sorrows like this, so we plan to continue to meet socially for the foreseeable future. We hope that other singles will feel free to join us to socialise over coffee or lunch or an outing. More anon, via the Sign or the Pew Sheet.
Marion Goldsmith, John Hampton, Mary Moffett

SHALOM

Our “mission statement” is -

We seek to provide a 'sacred space';

a space to reflect, to pray;

a space to find peace, stillness and refreshment.

This we have continued to do throughout the year. We usually meet on the last Saturday morning of the month. We take it in turns to lead with the occasional invited guest. We usually meet in the Lady Chapel from 10 to 11am.

We now have about 17 people who attend our meetings although not all are able to attend every month.

Everyone is welcome to suggest new ways of exploring, sharing and praying together. It's an enriching part of the life of the church and a way of encouraging one another to grow in our spiritual lives.

Jean Myers

OPEN FORUM

The past year, 2017, the seventh in the existence of the Open Forum saw a continuation of the regular monthly meetings. Our activities are dedicated to seeking a deeper understanding of the fundamentals of Christianity, in the context of contemporary society and life. In doing this our objective is to help us to direct our faith towards a more effective participation in resolving current issues in a fast changing world, whose values are largely based on secular standards against a multicultural backdrop.

For most of the year we explored the Beatitudes, Christ's statements in the Sermon on the Mount. . This required us to consider their meaning and impact when they were first uttered, and how we should apply them in the 21st century. We have now moved to consideration of the book "Tomorrow's Christian" (Adrian B. Smith), an attempt to define a framework for a Christian in the present time These considerations have yielded insights, ways forward rather than solutions. Indeed, the strength of the Open Forum is that we are learning to debate issues constructively, to listen and benefit from each other, without the imperative to find answers.

We are about 16 regular participants, there is no pressure to speak, just come and listen if you wish. We do not think we have the final word but strive to explore and move in the right direction. If you wish to come along, you will be welcome.

Christopher Davies

SACRISTANS REPORT 2016

Some of the sacristan's duties may seem a little mundane. Laundering linen, counting out wafers, washing silverware, making sure we do not run out of candles or wafers or wine, but there is also something very special about preparing the altar in quiet church or polishing the silver ready for a festival. It is not an onerous role but an important one and needs to be carried out every week ensuring that all is in order for the Rector and ministrants on Sundays, and for other services. We only have two

Sacristans at present so if anyone thinks that this is something they would like to do, please speak to Joan or Jan.

Joan Smith, Jan Shepherd

THE FLOWER ARRANGERS TEAM

Almost every week there are flowers in the church, with special displays done for the church festivals of Christmas, Easter and Harvest. These arrangements are produced and provided by a group of dedicated ladies.

But, you may have noticed in the Sign, that there are often weeks when there are no volunteers on the list. Our numbers are dwindling. We would welcome anyone, male or female, who would like to join us, particularly if you would be willing to do an arrangement, or if you would not mind popping into church to water the flowers.

With thanks and appreciation to all those who have given of their time during the past year to ensure that the church always looks beautiful, and to all those who have so generously made donations to the Flower Fund.

Margaret Holmes

THE GARDEN TEAM

The garden team continues to meet at 10 a.m. for 2 hours on the second and fourth Mondays of the month between March and October.

The major event of last year was the removal of the large conifer in front of the hall, which has done nothing but good for the nearby beech hedge, and the thinning out of the canopy of some of the larger marginal trees.

No garden stands still and we continue to replace shrubs and herbaceous perennials in the borders and keep the grounds reasonably weed free. The lawns which used to be a moss infested eyesore continue to improve every year. The largely unseen area behind the church and hall which we use as a seed bed and gravel area are gradually becoming less labour intensive as we have now

got on top of the weeds and piles of junk which used to be their main feature

My sincere thanks go to Ross Addison, Vivien Bremner, Nick Brignall, Mary Dale and Margaret Holmes who have worked hard to make our grounds an attractive community resource.

Bryan Dale

“THE SIGN”

The Sign has been maintained during the last year as a medium to convey information about our church and its activities to our own congregation and the wider community. I am immensely grateful to all those who regularly submit articles, details of events and keep our essential rotas up to date.

I had intended that my time as collector and compiler of this information would be short however despite best efforts unfortunately no one has come forward to take on this role. Ideally there could be a small team with different skills who could begin to enhance the magazine and ensure that the current 10 issues per year can continue into the future. It does require some basic computer ability, although that could easily be learned and a little time mid month to gather and put together a magazine.

Elspeth is invaluable in providing the “middle pages” of rotas Calendar and Readings. During my tenure she has also printed the copies and with the help of John Peacock, who does all the labelling and sorting, they have both ensured the magazine gets to you on time. I should like to thank Elspeth and John without whom the magazine would probably not have continued as it is.

As with other church activities if we decide that we do want to have a magazine and that it should be published throughout the year then please do think carefully if you might have the enthusiasm to take it forward. If we do not find willing helpers then the Vestry may have to face decisions about the nature of this kind of communication and whether a magazine as we have known it is appropriate and sustainable.

Joan Smith

CHURCH WEBSITE

The website team continue to try and keep the website as up to date and informative as possible. The Pew Notes are updated weekly, Forthcoming Events regularly and latest News is on the Welcome Page.

In October the Dioceses migrated our website from one hosting site to another; this caused a few problems with our links to PDF's (e.g. The Magazine and Sermons). But in the long run this hosting site should be a much more secure than the previous one.

The success of the website is dependent on the web team being given up to date information and the team would encourage church members to consider supplying material and to suggest items for inclusion which are not currently being covered. Good photographs of Church activities, with permission to put on-line, are particularly appreciated. Susan Clark - Web Manager

COMMUNICATION GROUP

The Communication Group consists of 6 people who meet every two months to plan publicity for different church events, such as special services. We look at communication within the congregation through the magazine, pew notes and the website, as well as to a wider audience through face book and the various banners and notices on the external notice boards. We continue to search for someone to take over the task of coordinating articles for The Sign and hopefully setting up a small editorial group.

Hilary Pritchard

ECO-CONGREGATION REPORT

St Cuthbert's has been an Eco-congregation since 2008. The scheme is ecumenical, administered from the Church of Scotland George Street offices. It operates as a network raising awareness of current issues and sharing news of many different churches' activities in the area of global environmental stewardship.

Particular issues which have been highlighted include fracking, energy saving and the ongoing question of climate change.

To achieve this, the church had to list and assess its activities taken and ongoing in making the link between the Christian faith and environmental concerns, to satisfy Award criteria, which they did. The actions have included an energy audit to conserve energy and regulate heat within the church buildings; managing the church grounds with a view to wildlife conservation; regulating waste by using china cups rather than disposable; replacing paper towels with electric hand driers. In the wider picture, in 2016 we began supporting the Woodland Trust Centenary Woods project, and Trees for Life, charities which plant trees, to offset our carbon emissions.

The plan for the doors and glass porch will also contribute to energy conservation, cutting draughts.

A new Award has recently been introduced to encourage churches to further this work. St Cuthberts at present are not applying for another award, but as an Eco-congregation will endeavour to keep abreast of the network's activities and have an active interest and awareness of environmental concerns.

Kay Dalley

THE ARCHIVIST

The archives contain the records and correspondence of our church from its very beginning to the present day. Most of our early records are contained in books. Today, with the use of word processors, the material is produced in sheets. My predecessor, Sylvia Prior, organised these into box files. The archivist has to file vestry minutes, the annual accounts, copies of The Sign magazine and many other material related to the running of the church.

The diocese have presented us with the archives of St Hilda's, Oxfangs. I have placed these in our archive.

The archives are store in the Rectory. Before the institution of Nicki some reorganisation took place in the rectory. I would like to thank Joan Smith for all her help in moving the archive from the small back room into the large study at the front of the house. In order to assist with the development of The Sign at a difficult

time I have produced a series of articles based on material found in our archives. With the editor's permission I am hoping to produce a new series for 2018.

John Peacock

CHRISTIAN AID

The Colinton Christian Aid Committee is made up of people from the two churches. Those on the committee from St Cuthbert's are Wendy Pearson, Margaret Temple, Jean Wood and

Since the last AGM we have held a Wine Tasting, gone Carol Singing, served mulled fruit juice at the Parish Church, squeezed 76 people into our hall for the Quiz Night (the 21st!), knocked on most of the doors in Colinton, and recently enjoyed a performance of Tolkien's *Leaf by Niggle* – we are very grateful to Richard Medrington, a professional actor, who gave his services free.

We continue to take part in the Christian Aid Week Door-to-Door collection. Although volunteers are thinner on the ground and people are not so willing to give at the door, we are thankful that here in Colinton there is still the determination to keep going. Despite the problems we collected a fantastic £7,650 in one week, a sum which we could never raise by other means.

We would like to thank the many people in St Cuthbert's who give their time and money, generously and cheerfully to help the poorest and most vulnerable all over the world.

Patricia Brignall

THE VERANDAH CLUB

On Thursday afternoons, a team of 13 volunteers from St Cuthbert's on rota kindly give their time and energy to staff the café at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital. The café provides a friendly meeting place, where a hot drink and snack can be purchased at low prices. We know that what we do is much appreciated by patients, staff and visitors as well as being enjoyable. The money raised provides much needed funds for the wards (we are able to give several hundred pounds each month and currently have 6

wards who apply for help) for basic extras such as a new fridge or kettle, replacing board games and simple extras at Christmas and Easter to make these times special. Our donations enable some of the patients to be taken to the cinema, or to a café for a coffee. In 2017 a small group were taken to The Edinburgh Tattoo. Financial help is also given to the Hospital Spiritual Group. The development plans at the hospital will affect us in the coming year as we shall have to move premises but we hope that we will continue to staff the café and new volunteers for this are always very welcome.

Julia Roberts

THE LEPROSY MISSION SCOTLAND

Our church has had a long association with TLMS. If you wish to support the ongoing work of helping people suffering with Leprosy, please take a Blue Tub from the shelf by the Font. I send a cheque to TLMS twice a year for the accumulated money collected from these tubs. The total sent this year from the Blue Tubs and donations is £570. You can read updates on the work of TLMS in the monthly magazine.

Barbara Tatlock

THE FOOD BANK

In our fifth year of support, to the Foodbank at Holy Trinity Wester Hailes, we made twelve food collections delivering them on the first Monday of each month.

Over 200 people are helped there with food parcels every month.

On every Tuesday of the year, when food is distributed,

St.Cuthbert's provided one or two volunteers to help keep the food parcels topped up as they leave the store, some of our young people were part of this volunteer team too; more volunteers for Tuesday afternoons always welcome.

Some members of our church, instead of giving food, give cash on a regular or occasional basis; this allows the Foodbank to buy food items they are short of. Angela Thomson and other members of

Holy Trinity Church really appreciate that we support them on a regular basis throughout the year. If you would like more information do speak to me. Susan Clark

THE PHOENIX GROUP

The Phoenix Group provides an opportunity for women in the congregation to meet together from time to time in an informal and social setting. Although a group of us organise various gatherings and events, we have no membership as such and all activities are open to all women in the congregation and sometimes to all.

Our main social event is our well attended Christmas Lunch, which, in recent years, has been held in a private room at The Royal Scots Club. Last December we again enjoyed a delicious lunch at the Club with convivial company and much good conversation and laughter. We are very well looked after by the staff there and it is a lovely beginning to the festive season. We are going there again this December.

In March, Jean Myers gave a very interesting talk with great slides on her cruise round the south of South America and to the Falkland Islands. It was fascinating and good to hear how much Jean and her friend had enjoyed it all. We were grateful to Jean Haskell for organising a most informative guided tour in May, open to all, at the National Museum of Scotland, where we looked at and learned about some early Christian, Viking and Celtic exhibits.

There was much interest in an introductory talk by Julia Roberts in April on the Alexander Technique. Julia, a fully qualified practitioner, kindly offered to give 4 free sessions for a group of 12 or so of us. These took place in October and November and were excellent and very much appreciated by those who attended.

Irene Harkness has kindly arranged for a group of us to go along to an evening Exhibition and Demonstration of Sogetsu Ikebana (Japanese Flower Arranging) in November at the Braid Hills Hotel. We have also organised a talk open to all the congregation by Dr John Gooding in November entitled "Russia: 1917 and 2017". We

are grateful to John for offering to do this.
We welcome suggestions for future gatherings/activities.
Margaret Kieran

ST CUTHBERT'S BADMINTON CLUB

Last year, we were sorry when two of our longstanding members decided to hang up their racquets. This year, we were pleased to see some local people respond to our advertisements and come to try us out. It remains to be seen whether this will result in the club being able to look forward with more certainty than we have been able to in recent years. But we live in the hope that our emphasis on providing a friendly sociable club of moderately competent players – which is what these new players have been looking for – will see this well-established club continue into the future.

Archie Clark
