

Annual Reports

2018



St. Cuthbert's SEC

1. A Brew and a blether
2. Badminton Club
3. Choir
4. Christian Aid
5. Communications Group
6. Eco congregation
7. Flower Ladies
8. Foodbank
9. Garden Team
10. Lay Representative
11. Leprsoy Mission Scotland
12. Open Forum
13. Pastoral Visitors
14. People's Warden
15. Phoenix Group
16. Property Group
17. Rector's Warden
18. Protection of Vulnerable Groups
19. Sacristans
20. St. Raphael's Prayer Group
21. Shalom

22. The Sign
23. Support Worker for the Elderly
24. Verandah Club
25. Website
26. Young People
27. Youth Alpha

A Brew & A Blether

The first Brew & Blether was held in the hall on 4 September 2014. Since then it has gone from strength to strength.

We meet, not just for tea and cakes, although they are always welcome and enjoyed, but to socialise, to make new friends and to spend a pleasant couple of hours in each other's company.

This year we have had Angela's dancing girls entertain us, the community police helping us to "Beat Doorstep Crime", a strawberry afternoon tea and an outing to Dobbies for Christmas shopping and yet another afternoon tea.

If you would like to join us you would be most welcome. We meet, in the hall, on the first Saturday of each month from 2-4 pm.

Christine, Hilary, Joan and Margaret

Badminton Club

When a club has existed for over 70 years, inevitably its membership will vary over time. We have had our low points but happily our evenings are currently well-attended and membership looks more certain than the nation's future after Brexit. We are not particularly competitive but we do

enjoy good games in a friendly sociable club of moderately competent players – our contribution to Outreach in the Community.

Archie Clark

Choir

In the last year the choir has witnessed the retiral of Donald Mackintosh from organising the music and organist rotas for St Cuthberts. The Choir, music and most importantly the worship at St Cuthberts has been enhanced by Donald's diligent contribution over the years. Donald continues to give valiant service through singing in the choir.

February saw my appointment as Music Director. Some of you may remember me from when I sang in the choir as a child. I believe the role of the choir is to facilitate and enhance the worship of St Cuthberts through the gift of music. Most notably through leading music during worship, the singing of anthems, and the Good Friday Liturgy, Advent Carol Service and Nine Lessons and Carols. On the occasions when the choir is unable to furnish a full complement of singers, we are always grateful when members of the congregation allow their arms to be twisted to come and sing in the choir.

Before the Harvest Festival we invited you all to 'Come and Sing'. We again would like to thank everyone who came and

joined our ranks. We had a wonderful time singing a combination of hymns and anthems. Everyone thought the augmented choir sounded absolutely fabulous.

If you were inspired by the choir's glorious sound, or couldn't make it on that Saturday the choir is always looking forward to welcoming new members even if it is on an ad hoc basis.

Julian Jefferson

Christian Aid

The Christian Aid Committee consists of 4 people from St Cuthbert's, 4 from the Parish Church and 1 unattached.

In the past year we have raised funds for the Christmas Appeal (*Everyone should have enough to eat this Christmas*), for the Christian Aid Week Appeal (*Stronger than the Storms*), and for our on-going link partner project in Ghana, GEOP (*Growing Economic Opportunities for Sustainable Development Project*).

We have organised Carol Singing in Bonaly, a Quiz Night, the May Door-to-Door collection in Colinton which involved 65 collectors covering about 80 areas of differing sizes. Our final event before the AGM will be a Gin Tasting at the Colinton Inn, a new venture which will, we hope, extend our our profile into the wider community.

With almost £2000 given at the Parish Church Christmas services, and a donation of £1000 from one person, we have raised about £11,300 this year.

Patricia Brignall

Communication Group

The group comprises seven people, including the Rector, Wardens and Church Administrator, who meet seven or eight times a year to look at how best to communicate with both the congregation and the wider community.

The use of the website and Facebook, and the updating of notice boards are constantly evaluated and extra publicity is prepared for such new initiatives as Play Church and big congregational events such as the Open Church for the Harvest weekend and the Armistice celebrations.

The new Data Protection Act has meant a review of our policies on collecting and storing personal information and the use of photographs. Special thanks are due to Joan Smith for keeping the magazine going and to Marie Neil for taking over this task.

Hilary Pritchard

Eco Congregation

The Eco-congregation initiative in Edinburgh continues to encourage and promote action and information on a wide range of subjects concerning us all locally, nationally and internationally.

Climate Change is now always on the agenda and Eco-congregation is part of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, lobbying the Scottish Government to put in place a Climate Change bill with targets to reduce carbon emissions significantly. Leaflets from Christian Aid about this are at the back of the church.

There are resources and ideas for encouraging wildlife around church gardens. We already have a dedicated meadow area and there are some things we could do to provide shelter for hedgehogs, bees and insects for example – and indeed plant more seeds and bulbs.

From 1st September to 4th October each year is “Creation Time” and an ecumenical writing group produces resources to focus on the creation theme.

That, and the next Eco-congregation Annual Gathering (in Dundee) with the theme ‘Energy’ on Saturday 30 March 2019 – are dates for the diary.

Rev. David Coleman, a URC minister and member of the Iona Community, was inducted as the new Environmental Chaplain in September 2018, and the new manager since October 2018 is Stephen Curran. The website is www.ecocongregationscotland.org.

Finally, I wonder if there is any one in our congregation who would like to join me in taking Eco-congregation forward at St Cuthbert's, working out how St Cuthbert's fits into all of this. Please let me know!

Kay Dalley

Flower Ladies

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

Foodbank

This has been the sixth year in which we have supported the Foodbank at Holy Trinity Wester Hailes. We made food collections on the first Sunday of each month and provided one or two volunteers to help every Tuesday afternoon when the food was being distributed. Over 200 people have been helped there with food parcels each month.

Although we collect a good amount of food every month, the quantity has gone down slightly over the years.

However, another way to help is by giving them cash to pay for food. The amount of cash donations, from St. Cuthbert's, has gone up slightly over the years as some members find it easier to give money rather than goods.

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, please speak to me.

Susan Clark

Garden Team

The last year has been one of unusual warmth and very little rain. The church garden with so many trees and mature shrubs has rather suffered from the dry summer, and the sloping thin soiled “nursery” beds behind the hall where we keep the seasonal spring bedding has been a bit of a failure. However there have been much fewer weeds until the recent rain.

All successful gardens are a work in progress, and we continue to gradually improve the borders by removing old and overgrown plants and replacing them.

Looking ahead the eastern border adjoining the Rustic Cottages is now a very high mass of mature trees, and sooner or later will need some major surgery.

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

Lay Representative

As Lay Rep I have attended Vestry meetings and I represented the congregation at the October Diocesan

Synod. I was unable to attend the Synod in March, and I am very grateful to Vivien Bremner who, as Alternate Lay Rep, went in my stead. Both Vivien and I wish to thank Margaret Kieran, who was at Synod in a different capacity, for writing the Synod Report for the Sign.

There have been no South Area Council meetings since I became Lay Rep. Indeed, the Area Councils in Edinburgh seem to be suffering a general malaise. Bishop John is, however, keen that new life should be breathed into them. I would like to thank Vivien for her help.

Patricia Brignall

Leprosy Mission Scotland

Our church has continued to support the work of TLMS during the last year.

I have sent 3 cheques this year for money collected from the Blue Tubs and generous donations from members of the congregation, amounting to over £900.

Thank you for your support of the work done by TLMS to help people suffering from Leprosy. I hope you will be able to continue to put your loose change in the Blue Tubs in the coming year.

Barbara Tatlock

Open Forum

The Open Forum met monthly throughout the year with about 15 participants, who discussed the relation of the Christian faith to the modern world. During the first three months we continued to use a book by Adrian Smith, a Roman Catholic priest, called “Tomorrow’s Christian” and talked about a Christian as someone who grows more like Jesus, who is continuously exploring the meaning of faith and who is prepared to take the risk of exploring and restating Christian tradition in new ways.

Between May and August we thought about sin as a failure in love; Judgment as being something happening throughout life rather than at the end of it; the origin and understanding of the Creeds in the light of present knowledge. For October onwards, we selected six topics from a book called “Ethics in the Real World”, by an American philosopher named Peter Singer, and are attempting to relate our faith to these: Racism; eating fish; our relationship with and our treatment of the natural world.

From January we shall continue with ‘Why vote?’; Doing good and Euthanasia. It should go without saying that anyone who is prepared to think about our faith with an open mind (and anyone who is not!) is welcome to join us on the second Sunday of each month at 9.15 a.m. in the small room at the back of the Hall.

Canon John Hampton

Pastoral Visitors

Since the beginning of the year, we have had a team of 8 pastoral visitors who were invited to the role. All have PVG clearance and received a basic introduction to the role before beginning to visit. Between them they are visiting 14 congregational members who are housebound or sick.

All visitors have ongoing contact with me and we meet every three months. Sometimes this is for specific training, (as Mary led a session on Dementia in the autumn), or otherwise it is for peer support and supervision.

This group has been a great support to me as I continue to try to visit everyone on the membership list (which is going to take a long time). I also continue to take Communion to most of those who have a pastoral visitor but not all wish to receive the Sacrament.

Revd Nicki McNelly

People's Warden

I never expected to have to do another report for the AGM booklet and am not quite sure how to begin, except to say that it was a privilege to have been asked to take on the role again and I hope that I can justify your confidence in me.

It is an exciting challenge to work with Nicki, trying to help her to make her wonderful ideas and initiatives happen.

However, this is not a role just of one but a team and I would like to thank the Catering Crew of Christine, Hilary, Joan, Judith and Mary and the ever-willing soup makers and dish washers, Susan, Julia and Patricia, not forgetting Robin who is always ready to put raffle tickets into straws, move furniture and generally just be there, ready to help.

With gratitude

Margaret Holmes

Phoenix Group

The Phoenix Group provides an opportunity for women in the congregation to meet together from time to time on an informal basis and usually in a 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 event is our popular Christmas Lunch held, in recent years, at the Royal Scots Club. Our delicious lunch there last December was a great success in all respects. We are going there again this year and thank Jean Myers for organising it so well. We also had a lovely lunch in August at the Spylaw Tavern in Colinton. The staff in both places were

very helpful and both lunches were most enjoyable and convivial.

A small group of us very much appreciated the Sogetsu Ikebana (Japanese Flower Arranging) Exhibition and Demonstration at the Braid Hills Hotel last November suggested by Irene Harkness. The displays were beautiful and it was amazing to see how they were created. In December, a group of us met at Margaret Temple's to make some Christmas wreaths. Margaret had sourced some reusable willow to which we added holly and ivy and other decorations. Margaret kindly provided drinks and snacks and it was a delightful afternoon.

We organised two very interesting, insightful and informative talks in February and April by Dr John Gooding entitled "Russia: 1917 and Now". These fascinating talks were given in the church after the 10.30 service and were open to all. John has such a comprehensive knowledge of that subject and is such a good speaker.

We plan to visit the new V & A Dundee early next year. We would welcome suggestions for future gatherings, talks or activities.

Margaret Kieran

Property Group

1 INTRODUCTION

The congregation through Vestry is responsible for the care and maintenance of the Listed church buildings and 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 our 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. The Committee's last formal meeting was in May 2015, since when its activities have been undertaken by a small Property Group comprising the convenor, the property manager, and Gavin Wye. Others have been called upon for assistance when needed.

The Property Group's activities have been reported for every vestry meeting. Professional guidance in terms of fulfilling the Quinquennial Survey recommendations and major projects has been provided by David Willis (CLWG Architects). Detailed building condition surveys of the church and rectory buildings fabric, and agreed repair works were undertaken by LBC Building Services. Electrical works have been undertaken by Sentry Electrics, and gas heating works, servicing, and repairs by Thomson Home Services.

Smaller repairs required at short notice may be undertaken by others as necessary (eg joinery, locksmiths, and plumbing work). Other regular checks such as maintenance of the alarms and fire safety equipment are undertaken under annual contracts. Portable appliance testing, and testing of electrical circuitry and lightning conductors are undertaken by contractors when required.

The Property Committee comprised the following members during the year:

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
Russell Philp	Vestry member	ex officio
Bob Pritchard	Property Manager	from Dec 2004
Gavin Wye		from Sept 2014

2 SUMMARY OF ACTIONS OVER THE PAST YEAR

- **Health & Safety** No notifiable incidents have been recorded.
- **Church/Hall Yard** The yard drains and roof gutters required clearing only rarely since the large Cupressus was removed over a year ago.

- **Routine servicing and repairs** The church 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.
- **Lighting** Light bulbs in the corridor and “store” have been replaced with LEDs.
- **Toilets** The basin support in the baby change room was repaired.
- **Kitchen area** A minor infestation of church mice was dealt with.
- **Baptismal font** Frequent visual inspection and manipulation of the mechanism continues. The bowl of the baptismal font was treated to prevent further powdery deterioration of the surface.
- **Church and hall roofs.** Regular inspections and reporting by Jim Lyster continued and repairs were carried out where necessary to the roof coverings and rainwater goods.
- **Rectory works** Two additional internal smoke alarms have been fitted to comply with landlord regulations and diocesan advice. The electrical circuitry has been tested and certified according to the five-year plan.
- **Hall floor** No work was undertaken this year, but a further assessment will be made in spring 2019.

- **Choir vestry roof** Vestry has approved plans for a new roof and cupola, and the architect's proposal has received statutory planning consent. A minor rainwater leakage was repaired. This project is "on hold" for a later time.
- **New glazed main entrance to the church** This major project was completed satisfactorily, together with associated changes to the organ speakers.
- **Gardeners' store** A new up-and-over door has been fitted.

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.

(a) Space Audit Group "fitness for purpose" outcomes
This audit of the current uses and abuses of the various spaces available within the church and hall buildings (to which the property manager contributed) was requested by Vestry and was not part of the Property Committee's remit.

(b) The 2018/19 Quinquennial Survey and Report
The next Quinquennial Survey will need to be procured in 2018 for reporting early in 2019. Two tenders have been received, and are being assessed (as at November 2018) before reporting to vestry.

(c) 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 footpath at the west end of the church has been disturbed by root growth; the gardening group have attended to this.
- **Lighting upgrades** Legislation means that many of the church interior spotlights (GU10 and MR16 halogen type) will need to be replaced with LED equivalents. Technical advice and a cost estimate have been sought (October 2018) and the work is expected to proceed as soon as possible subject to costing.
- **A new garden shed** for the rectory is being investigated.
- **The church bells** Groups of bell ringers have visited during this and the previous year. The bells and their supporting frame are reported as basically sound and safe, but if more use is to be expected of this feature of our church, some maintenance work is going to be necessary. Professional advice may be needed. In addition, the access stairway, handrails, and trapdoors will need to be improved.
- **Portable appliance testing** this will be arranged for the coming year.

Bob Pritchard, Property Manager

Rector's Warden

This, my last Warden's report, gives an opportunity to reflect on the year since the last AGM but also to consider how we are now beginning to plan ahead for the future.

In Nicki's first full year with us much has been done. In thinking about this piece I covered a side of A4 just jotting down all the activities, events, courses and new things that have happened throughout the year. The magazine for November was yet again full of information about many different ways to participate in the ongoing work of our community, to worship, to learn, to give and to have fun!

So where to start?

This year with our Rector Nicki firmly established the Vestry has been able to move forwards and begin to look ahead. At the beginning of the year there was a Vestry Training Day when we considered the role of members of the Vestry, we recapped on what we had done after the Big Conversation but more importantly began to think about mission and the vision for St Cuthbert's. This was followed by a "discussion" day in the summer when we focused on priorities both small, possible in the short term, and large, requiring more time and more thought. You will already have noticed some changes in the service sheet which arose from our discussions that day, our new hymn books, and, the glazed doors which we decided must now be completed! Thank you

Property team for seeing this through – and for all your other work for us. A group is now working to consider how the space in church is used and what has to be done to bring our buildings up to the standards required for the needs of a church community in a 21st century world. My personal thanks to all the Vestry members I have worked with as Warden. It has been a privilege to share the challenges, and to have had the input and practical support of so many wonderful and dedicated people.

The all age service on the first Sunday of the month is now very familiar. Since the Autumn we have had the Diocesan Play Church, with the wonderful Fischy Music to welcome it here on a lovely sunny Sunday afternoon! Each week Play Church has been used to give our children more insight into what happens in church and then, of course, to tell us about it. This has been a great success and we hope to make our own version to carry on this work. Youth Alpha continues to meet on the last Sunday of the month and in the course of the year they have tackled a wide range of topics with candour and good humour.

It has also been a great delight to have Baptisms and a Confirmation (shared with Merchiston).

Many thanks to Megan Emmerson and to her helpers for all the hard work behind the scenes in engaging our children and young people.

As well as the ongoing Shalom and Open Forum there have been many opportunities to reflect, discuss, and learn. During Lent the Mission Shaped Intro course was led by Annie Naish, and there were additional thoughtful services. In the Autumn was a Praying with the Heart course supported by the Epiphany Group, now a new venture of a weekly group on Wednesdays has arisen from that experience, and, following the Welcoming of the Light on 1 December an Advent group will study An Advent Pilgrimage. The Tuesday Pilgrim course is currently running led by our student Harriet. There was also lots of encouragement to talk at the Grave Talk day in August. Those who attended the St Cuthbert's Lecture enjoyed a most interesting insight into The Apocryphal Gospels.

It is so very heartening to see the different ways in which we are being challenged to think, pray and indeed look to the future not only for ourselves but also for the church. Such ventures do not happen without planning and we must thank all those who have been involved.

We have enjoyed many events, sharing together and eating good food: a Scottish Evening, our wonderful Harvest Festival weekend, the mix of celebration and Remembrance in November; the church on both these occasions was transformed by many, thanks go especially to Margaret Temple and Christine Nimmo for all their work making Remembrance very special this year. Brew and Blether have provided Strawberry Tea, entertainment from Angela's

young dancers, an outing to Dobbies and a useful visit from the Community Police, as well as every month tea and cake and a chance to talk. Margaret Holmes and her teams of caterers, and flower ladies, have had much to do with these – thank you Margaret.

What else has happened ?

A new team of trained pastoral visitors is established and extending our work with those who need additional support. There is revived cooperation with the Parish Church, especially at the Thursday Service.

Our music is now led by Julian Jefferson and we have enjoyed some good musical events; as well as festivals, the moving Good Friday afternoon, Choral Evensong at Harvest and, of course, the joyful Songs of Praise at Pentecost – singing a selection of some more modern favourites.

We were delighted to welcome Marie Neil our new Church Administrator. Very quickly Marie became part of our community and her expertise has been a wonderful asset to everything we are doing here as well as lightening the load of volunteers. Her work is evident all around us and our thanks go to her for all that she is doing.

This is just a flavour of what has been happening during the past year.

I am sure that I must have missed something - perhaps you will have your own particular memory - and I have not mentioned everyone by name... but to all those who have contributed to our life together both for special occasions and regularly every week – thank you.

Finally as I finish my last Warden’s report my particular thanks go to the three People’s Wardens I have worked with Jayne Churchill – we saw the vacancy through together – Cliff Dalley and Margaret Holmes. My prayers are with the new “team” as they, and Nicki, go forward.

Joan Smith

Protection of Vulnerable Groups

In February I attended the Diocesan safeguarding training to ensure that all aspects of safeguarding at St. Cuthbert’s are compliant with the SEC procedures.

Several members of the congregation are now registered under the PVG Scheme with regard to their various new duties within the Church. I have attended a Vestry meeting to give a report on my activities, and reintroduced myself to the Sunday School.

Christine Nimmo

Sacristans

This is one of the many behind the scenes jobs in the church. Each week the sacristans ensure that everything required for services is prepared, clean and ready for use. We change linen and frontals when required and from time to time do some extra polishing of silver and brass. These are not onerous or high profile tasks but they are important. There is something special about making preparation for the Eucharist and for other services.

This year we have been looking at our elderly linen. We are fortunate to have been given some gifts, one in kind and another to replace our forward Altar cloths. We are very grateful to the donors. No doubt these will be used for many years to come. At present there are only two sacristans, we do need some help to undertake these simple but important duties. If you would like to know more please speak to Jan or Joan.

Joan Smith & Jan Shepherd

St Raphael's Prayer Group

This small group continues with its good work of offering prayer for the sick, those in need and their carers and making personal contact or sending cards or flowers as appropriate.

Our meetings are on the first Wednesday of each month at 4pm lasting for approximately one hour. We end our time of discussion and prayer with a Eucharist.

Judith Mackintosh

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.

Shalom usually meets on the last Saturday morning of the month although towards the end of this year various adjustments had to be made. Our original vision was to use the Lady Chapel as our sacred space. This has been challenging with its different levels and being a busy thoroughfare but we hope we have filled this space with prayer. In the winter we try to remember to request heating and by bringing chairs in from the South Transept we have a space in which to reflect.

Everyone is welcome to suggest ways of exploring, sharing and praying together and this year different members have led our session. We now have about 15 people attending our meetings although not all are able to attend every month.

During Lent we participated in Evening Prayer. On 28/3 we joined in the Big Day celebrations. 6th October saw us participate in the Harvest Open Day and on 1st December we will be part of “Welcoming the Light”.

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

The Sign

Joan very kindly kept The Sign in publication as no volunteers were forthcoming from last year's appeal. Marie took on the responsibility once she had settled into her role as administrator.

The Sign continues to inform us of duties, forthcoming services and events, what's going on in the local community along with wonderful photographs of events that have taken place.

Thanks to everyone for their contributions and photographs making The Sign an informative and colourful church magazine.

You will have seen in November / December's Sign that the cost has had to increase to cover printing costs.

This decision was not taken lightly but I think we get value for money. If you don't already subscribe, please consider doing so to make sure you are up to date with everything happening at St. Cuthbert's.

Revd Nicki McNelly

Support Worker for the Elderly

During this last year I have visited 40 members of our community, a few on a very regular basis, some monthly, and others as need arose.

In some years, no one that I regularly visit dies, but this year six have: Jean Oakley, Sue Cheales, Mark Ball, John Campbell, Douglas Yeoman and Jean Gillespie. I was honoured to take Mark Ball & Jean Gillespie's funerals and very sorry to miss my dear friend & colleague Douglas Yeoman's one as I travelled back from Iona this summer – may they all rest in peace after long and fascinating lives.

During this year on the 2nd of February 2018 I completed 20 years of working with St. Cuthbert's and was delighted to be presented, on Sunday the 18th of March, with a diocesan St. Cuthbert's medal – somehow you managed to keep it secret until the day!

The Thursday Service continues to thrive, and many thanks go to those who help, with lifts, teas, welcoming and

especially music (Donald, Jan & Julian) and those who have taken the service – an ever growing band this year including myself, Nicki, Rolf, Moira Shirreff, Bryan, Joan, Mary McMahon and recently at considerable personal effort Christopher Davies. Thank you all so much and my apologies if I have missed anyone out!

I also took a few Wednesday morning services and had the opportunity to preach on Sunday 11th February, and have taken 2 of the monthly care home services in Cairdean and Thorburn.

During the year Nicki has set up a Pastoral Visiting Group, and recently I had the opportunity to share some material developed in my work with Faith in Older People, on understanding dementia, its cause and effects, and how we as visitors or fellow worshippers come over. The work with Faith in Older People grew out of my ministry here and was both informed and guided by one of your previous Rectors, Malcolm Goldsmith, and I'm glad to have had the chance to share some ideas with the Pastoral Visiting Group.

We are often conscious of the first time we try something in life, but less frequently aware when it may be the final time we do something. On the 18th of October I cheerfully took the Thursday Service on the topic of "Letting Go" – inspired by the trees and their ability to let go of their fruits and leaves. I encouraged us all to consider what we should be "letting go" of and it seems I must take my own advice and

let go of my work here in Colinton. For years I have enjoyed visiting and accompanying the older members of this community in their later, or last laps of life – and now I must go and help my own 93 year old mother. It has been a privilege and a blessing to work with this congregation for so long.

Mary Moffett

Verandah Club

A team of 12 volunteers from the church has continued to staff the cafe in the Royal Edinburgh Hospital over the last 12 months. £10,000 raised from the sales of drinks and light snacks and from the boutique has gone to back to the wards to provide, among other things, outings for patients, materials for art and craft activities and extra money for Christmas treats. We know that what we do is much appreciated by patients, staff and visitors as well as being enjoyable.

This year several long-term volunteers have had to stand down for family and health reasons and we now struggle to ensure that we can always cover our afternoon, so any new volunteers are especially welcome.

Hilary Pritchard

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.

Last year our website was migrated from one hosting site to another and now has fewer issues and is more secure than the previously.

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

Young People

This year we have 6 children of Primary age for whom we run sessions each Sunday in term time during the service. We have 7 children of Secondary age who meet with Nicki and Joan on a monthly basis on a Sunday evening and have been following the Youth Alpha course. All children are keen to participate in the All Age Worship on the First Sunday of the month by reading, doing intercessions, carrying the

elements and acting as Ministrants.

In the Spring term we looked at Old Testament stories. The Summer term saw us using Playmobil to retell the Easter story (the photographs of each scene are on the wall on the hall). Since September we have been very excited to have hosted the Diocesan Play Church and have used it to explore what happens in church through the year and at special services such as Baptism, Marriage and Confirmation. The children like being 'Nicki' best of all, although Charlotte had greater aspirations when she dressed as a bishop to meet Bishop John in October.

There are children of crèche age in the congregation and it would be great to offer a service for them. I have been exploring toys with a Biblical theme which would suit the 2-5 age group and would welcome any one who would like to volunteer to supervise the Creche during Sunday services in term time on a rota basis.

Megan Emmerson

Youth Alpha

Over the past year we have met once a month over pizza to discuss what it means to be a Christian. To help us with this we have watched videos with questions which aid in starting a conversation where we are all able to express our own views and opinions. We have discussed topics such as the

holy spirit, the bible and who Jesus is. This has allowed us to build on our understanding from Sunday school and have a better knowledge of what being a Christian is to us. The group provides a place where we can develop our own interpretation of the bible along with others of our own age which creates a non-judgmental environment. Nicki and Joan have helped along the way and the pizza has been delicious.

Kate Emmerson