

*St Mary's Cathedral,  
Glasgow*

*Annual Report  
2016 / 17*

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## Agenda – Annual General Meeting, 12 noon, Sunday 26 November 2017

1. Opening prayers and memorial for the departed
2. Apologies for absence (Please indicate on the paper that will be circulated for that purpose)
3. Acceptance of AGM minutes of 20 November 2016
4. Governance:
  - 4.1 Achievements and performance (Trustees' report)\*
  - 4.2 Treasurer's report
  - 4.3 Appointment of independent examiner
  - 4.4 Vestry secretary's report\*
  - 4.5 Leadership group report\*
  - 4.6 Core Group report\*
  - 4.7 Property group report\*
  - 4.8 Compliance group report\*
  - 4.9 Music Director's report\*
5. Releasing the Mission Scoping Project Update
6. Elections
  - 6.1 Lay representative / Diocesan Synod and West End ACTS representative
  - 6.2 People's warden
  - 6.3 Alternate lay representative / Diocesan N E Regional Council representative
  - 6.4 Vestry members (five vacancies)
7. Group and network reports\*
8. Questions arising from reports
9. Provost's remarks
10. Closing prayers

\*Reports all taken as having been read

**ST MARY'S EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL, GLASGOW  
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
HELD ON SUNDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2016**

**Chair:** Agenda items 1-6: The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth (Provost)

Agenda items 7-10: The Rev Cedric Blakey (Vice Provost)

**Secretary:** Jim McKillop      **Treasurer:** Roger Mackenzie

**Present**

Brian John Aitken, Ella Aitken, Neil Aitken, Susan Anthony, Irene Ballantine, Pat Bennett, Anthony Brown, Peggy Brown, David Burness, Matthew Cavanagh, Sue Champion, Anne Chowanec, Dan Cruickshank, John Curtice, Lisa Curtice, Muriel Draper, Taylor Driggers, Frank Ewing, Karen Ewing, Michael Gammie, Elspeth Gibb, Alan Grant, Graham Hair, Greta-Mary Hair, Anne Halliburton, Ian Halliburton, Andrew Heatlie, Jackie Heatlie, John Gerrard, Victoria Henderson, Olanna Horhut, Christina Hughes, Tony Hughes, Jean Inch, Hazel Jolly, Anne Jones, Aine Kennedy, Bob Leslie, Mandy Lewis, Kit Lindsay, Monica Long, Christine Lowther, Gordon Lowther, Matthew Maasdorp, Robyn Marsack, Franny Mawditt, Robert Mawditt, Robert MacDonald, David McFadyen, Kathryn MacFarlane, Stewart MacFarlane, Steven McIntyre, Catherine Mackenzie, Caroline McKillop, Lisa McLeman, Elizabeth Moles, Bruce Montgomery-Smith, Eleanor Montgomery-Smith, Alex Perry, Sandy Peterson, John Riches, Catherine Riches, Christopher Riches, Nena Riches, Alan Richmond, Pam Richmond, Joanna Russell, Wolfgang Schlegel, Derek Smith, Jinty Stewart, Andrew Kapok Tam, Hety Varty, Kenneth Varty, Caitlin Wakefield, Frikki Walker, Daniel Williams, Andy Winter.

**1. Opening Prayer and Memorial for the Departed**

The Provost led the opening prayer, offering to God all the work done at the Cathedral and the influence members of the Cathedral had across the world. He gave thanks for our founders and predecessors. He remembered the members of the congregation who had died in the previous year: David Kerr Greenlaw, Roger Hannah, Mary Hunter and Dugald Robertson.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Honor Brogan, Margaret Brown, Nelson Connelly-Smith, Ivan Draper, Roger Edwards, Joan Fairweather, Simon Freebairn-Smith, Sandy Fraser, Margaret Gerrard, Michael Hitchman, Lisella Hutton, Isobel MacNaughtan, Migeun Park, Beth Routledge, Graham Skellern, Gail Smith, Gordon Smith, Suet-Lin Teo, Robin Webster, Gill Young.

**3. Acceptance of AGM minutes of 22 November 2015**

The minutes, without amendment, were approved unanimously as a true record of the 2015 meeting and signed by the Provost.

**4. Governance: Achievements and Performance (Trustees Report), Treasurer’s Report & Acceptance of Accounts, Appointment of Auditor, Vestry Secretary’s Report, Leadership Group, Property Group, Compliance Group and Music Director’s Reports.**

The Provost noted that the Reports had been circulated with papers for the AGM well in advance of the meeting. Therefore, most of the reports would be taken as read though questions could be raised regarding any of them.

**Treasurer’s Report**

The Provost indicated that the Cathedral draft accounts were presented for comment only. The Vestry, as Trustees of the Cathedral charity, would approve the finalised accounts in the New Year before submission to OSCR. Comments could be made now or by e-mail to the Treasurer later.

The Treasurer noted that the investment results were incomplete as full information has not yet been received on the performance of the Brewin Dolphin portfolios. Overall the Cathedral finances were healthy.

In response to a question from Ian Halliburton about the increase in pledged income, the Provost replied that this was due to both an increase in the number of pledgers and increased giving by existing pledgers. He thanked Andrew Heatlie for all his work in overseeing the pledging scheme and gift aiding.

Daniel Williams asked how much we knew about the companies invested in via unit Trusts. The Treasurer replied that the SEC pool has strong policy on ethical investment so we did not track the specific companies within the pool. Our own investments, conducted through Brewin Dolphin, were controlled by a policy similar to that of the SEC. Details of companies within our Brewin Dolphin portfolio could be made available on request.

John Curtice noted there was a surplus of £8,000 this year compared to circa £50,000 last year and asked if the planned budget for 2016 – 17 showed a surplus? The Treasurer replied that it did and noted that variation in year-end surpluses was mainly due to expenditure on the church fabric.

The Provost thanked the Treasurer and the Finance Group for their diligent and constant work throughout the year.

**Music Director’s Report:**

Frikki Walker spoke about the poor state of the organ and the problems and frustrations this caused for the organists and the choir. Recently, he had been alerted to the availability of an organ built at about the same time as our own organ by the same company. This was being investigated and offered the possibility of a great solution at a much lower cost than a rebuild of our own organ.

Tony Hughes suggested because of the urgency of major work on the organ this should go ahead soon and not wait until any building work could be agreed on.

The Provost replied that the Core Group and Vestry would be look at the proposal as soon as firm details were available.

## 5. Releasing the Mission Scoping Project Update

Wolfgang Schlegel, convener of the Releasing the Mission Core Group, said that he wished he could report that we were now at a stage to begin fund raising for a major building project. Delays by Glasgow City Council (GCC) and Historic Environment Scotland (HES) in issuing reports and issues raised in those reports meant that we were not.

The Core Group had met regularly throughout the year working on the foundations of the business plan and fund raising. There had also been a number of meetings with Richard Murphy Architects, GCC and HES. A further meeting with a more senior planner at GCC would occur next week. He agreed that the pressing need for work on the organ did not fit with the longer timescale of the building project. The Core Group would consider this and make recommendations to Vestry which made the decisions.

There were no questions for Wolfgang. The Provost thanked him and the Core Group for their engagement with this work and for keeping the releasing the mission vision at its heart.

## 6. Elections

### Lay representative

One nomination had been received. Beth Routledge (proposed by Stewart Macfarlane, seconded by Jim McKillop) was declared elected.

### Alternate Lay Representative

One nomination had been received. Isobel MacNaughtan (proposed by John Curtice, seconded by Franny Mawditt) was declared elected.

### Vestry Member

Two nominations had been received for the one vacancy:

- (1) Pam Barrowman; proposed by Gordon Smith, seconded by Lea Shaw
- (2) Wolfgang Schlegel; proposed by Lisa Curtice, seconded by Michael Hitchman.

Following a ballot Wolfgang Schlegel was declared elected.

### People's Warden

One nomination had been received. Jim McKillop (proposed by Pam Richmond, seconded by Beth Routledge) was declared elected.

## 7. Group and Network Reports

These had been circulated with the AGM reports and were taken as read.

## 8. Questions arising from reports

Stewart Macfarlane drew attention to the archiving work done by Roger Edwards and others. He suggested setting up a history and archive group. The Provost thanked Stewart for his suggestion and would ask Vestry to discuss it.

John Gerrard commented on the lack of reports on the considerable interfaith work

going on. The Vice Provost suggested that in the future this might fit well as a subsection of the Justice and Aid Network report.

Kate Mackenzie asked about progress on the purchase of new vestments for which money has been given. The Provost apologised for the lack of progress. He had been unsure how to proceed though the Leadership Group had considered the matter. He would meet the sacristans in the near future to discuss the way forward.

Pam Richmond, as People's Warden thanked all those involved in the work covered in the reports. That was just the tip of the iceberg of all that was happening. She was constantly amazed by the dedication and commitment of so many people who worked to deliver the Cathedral's mission. There were now more than 100 volunteers who regularly contributed. She offered particular thanks to Jo Russell, the office manager, for being unfailingly kind and helpful and to Anne Jones, the Provost's Warden, who had been wonderful to work with and was the embodiment of someone who did so much behind the scenes. As she stepped down as People's Warden she thanked the congregation for their support, understanding and interest. It had been a privilege to work with the Provost and Vice Provost who formed an inspiring and creative partnership.

Lisa Curtice thanked Pam for her work and achievements as People's Warden. Pam had displayed generosity of spirit, great commitment to St Mary's and great attentiveness to the care of others in her activities.

## **9. Provost's remarks**

The Provost said he had recently celebrated his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and 10 years as Provost – making him the longest serving Provost at St Mary's since the 1950s. He still enjoyed the role and found the growth and life of the cathedral immensely moving. The Cathedral was a festival place celebrating the joy of God and he thanked all who contributed to that. He noted that 2021 would be the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cathedral and he was already beginning to think how we could celebrate that in appropriate style.

He reappointed Anne Jones as Provost's Warden for the coming year and thanked her for all she did for the Cathedral.

## **10 Closing prayers**

The Vice Provost closed the meeting with a prayer asking that we might go on building a living house of prayer which was open, welcoming and inclusive.



## Achievements and performance (Trustees' report)

### Treasurer's Report and draft accounts

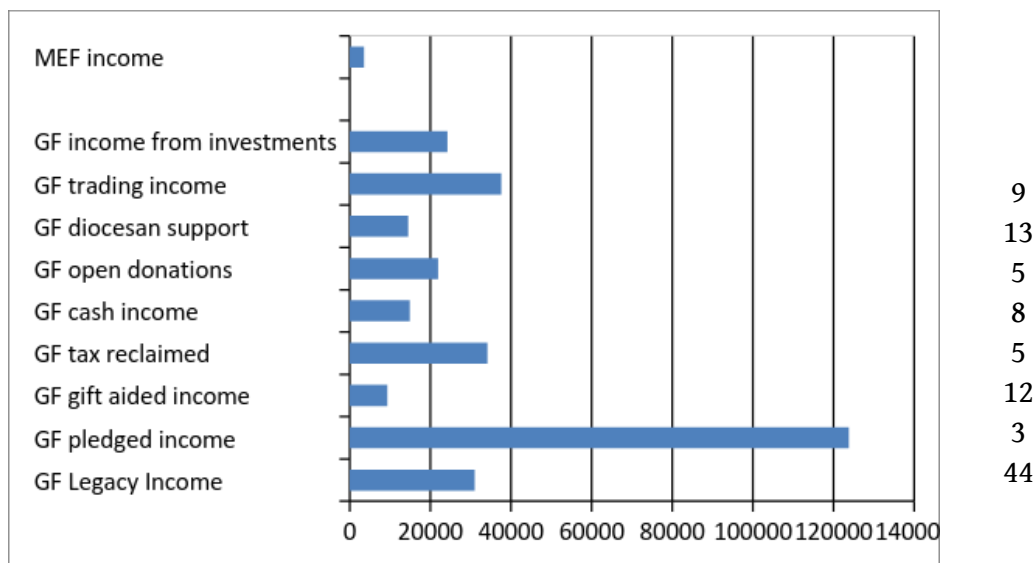
At the time of writing the Vestry is close to appointing a new financial examiner on the retirement of Ernie Turner from BDO LLP. His retirement means Ernie no longer has access to the facilities he requires to perform the examination task. It is anticipated that the new examiner will be announced at the AGM. Immense thanks are due to Ernie for fulfilling this role over decades (too many years to count, at least on my fingers and toes).

The usual 'broad brush' form of commentary which follows is based on a graphical presentation of our income and expenditure. The picture is generally similar to previous years but there have been some exceptional events which I will later draw to the reader's attention.

Below are two charts generated from the cash book data for the financial year 2016/2017. The data has been simplified by combining details to allow a reasonably uncluttered presentation. General fund income and expenditure now includes income and expenditure previously described as Restoration Fund. Both these funds have been unrestricted for several years. Restricted Music Endowment Fund income is shown separately in these graphs.

#### Cathedral Income 2016/2017

The right hand numerical column in the chart below shows the percentage of the unrestricted fund income represented by the bar shown to the left. The graphing happily still shows the usual significant contribution of pledged giving to our overall income. The money received as pledges along with the associated tax reclaimed on the bulk of it represents about 56% of our total income this year.

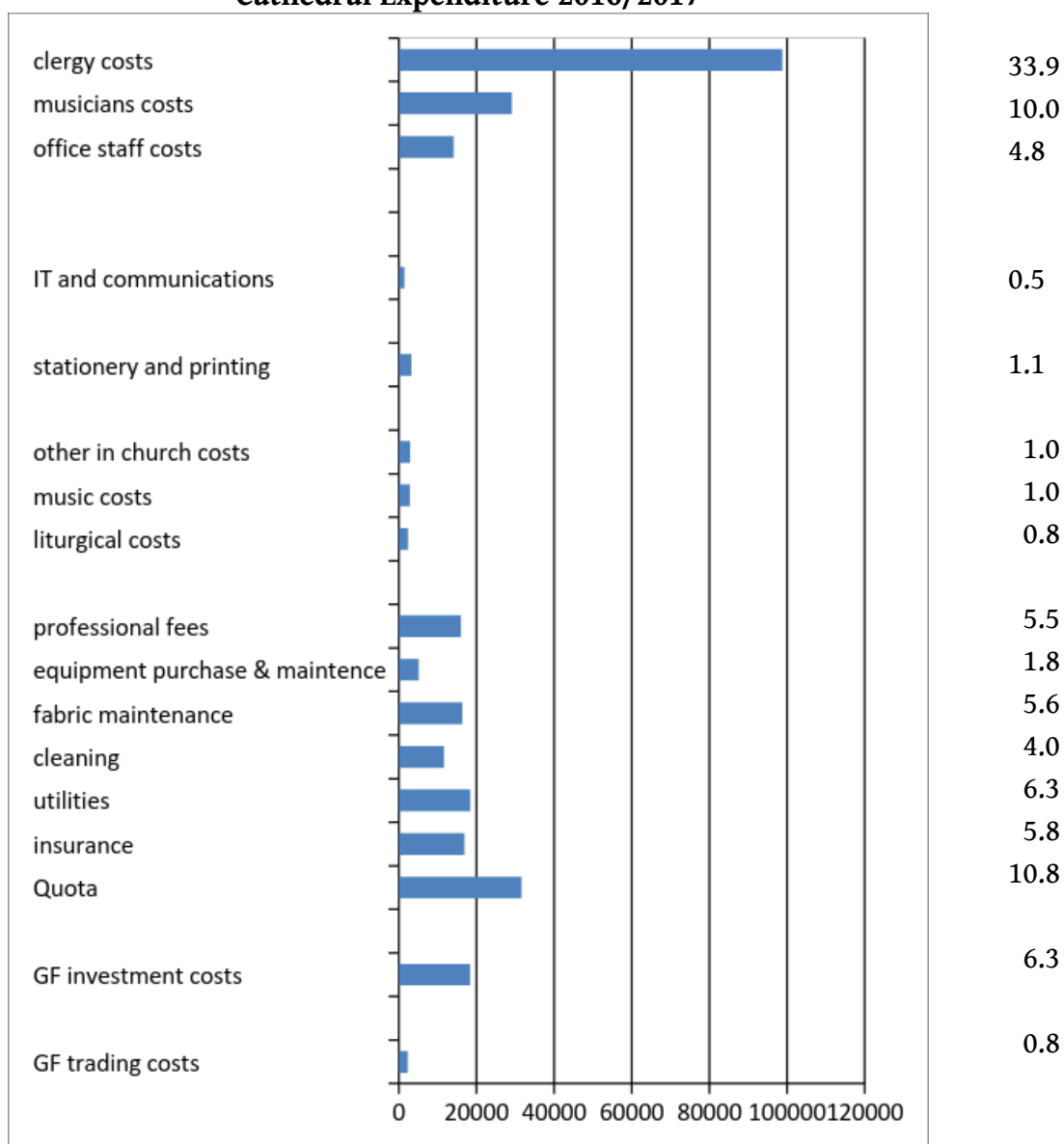


The key feature of this income is that it is reliable. There are several other reliable sources of income, primarily phone mast rentals and Diocesan support, which means we

can plan on the basis that around 70% of our income is ‘guaranteed’, at least in the short term. Of course the other income will never go to zero in any year and we are very grateful for it. We continue to receive significant support from AllChurches Trust which is owned by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Company who provide property insurance and various liability protections to the Cathedral and its employees. I have included as I did last year the income generated from our investments in the SEC Unit Trust Pool though currently this is all reinvested in buying further units in the pool.

The one key income item this year that stands out at the foot of the chart is legacy income. £31,000 has been received from 3 sources and in one case the estate settlement is not complete and a significant additional income is recorded as a creditor in the annual accounts. Please see the accompanying draft balance sheet for an overview of this income.

**Cathedral Expenditure 2016/2017**



You can see from the above chart that salaries – people – are a very significant part of our outgoings amounting to around 49% of our overall expenditure this year. Buildings and their maintenance account for around 23.5% of our outgoings this year. Included in these costs is a 200% increase in cleaning costs arising from a decision to extend cleaning hours and to include cleaning over the weekend when obviously the main use of the buildings takes place. Additionally toilet facilities have been improved in relation to the disposal of sanitary and baby wear articles.

Like our income, much of our expenditure is predictable and not subject to significant variation from year to year. There are of course a few categories of expenditure that are inherently unpredictable, fabric maintenance being the most obvious one. This year has seen an accelerated completion of necessary building maintenance – a catch up exercise – and therefore expenditure on this this category is up around 100% to ~ £13,000 from ~ £6,500.

I will comment here on only four further expenditure categories. Quota is what we pay to the Scottish Episcopal Church at Provincial and Diocesan levels. This category of outgoings is not all give and no take and I refer you back to the Diocesan support element of our income. The provision of new music is an on-going investment in our musical life. The preparation of service sheets accounts for most of the copying/printing expenses. Finally some £16,000 has been spent this year on professional fees. This represents work over the last two years on developing the scoping project aimed to refurbish the organ and to establish the feasibility of extending the Cathedral accommodation to better support our corporate life and responsibilities. This is part supported by the Diocese.

Cash flow of course is not the whole picture but it is satisfactory to state that our cash at bank situation has improved over the previous two years. In this year this has been due to the legacies we have received, otherwise as you would expect with the additional expenditure highlighted above would have seen a significant reduction in our cash at bank position.

We have financial assets in the shape of portfolios of investments with the Scottish Episcopal Church Unit Trust Pool and with Brewin Dolphin. Obviously the value of these assets varies with the state of the stock market. At the moment the total of these assets is around £650,000 (last year £575,000) due in large part to the unit value of the SEC UTP. Additionally we own the top floor flat at 5 Napierhall Street valued at around £250,000 (last year £310,000). This loss on revaluation is somewhat surprising and it should be born in mind that property valuations like much else in life are just opinions. The final monetary value of the flat is only known should we sell it. The purpose of these reserves is primarily to cover the provision of clergy property should that be required in the future and in this light the sums involved are probably barely adequate.

St Marys Cathedral - SC006225

Balance Sheet detailed

	As at 30/09/2017	As at 30/09/2016
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
BDGF: Brewin Dolphin General Fund Investments	128,822.01	119,149.02
BDMEF: Brewin Dolphin Music Endowment Fund	67,239.94	63,170.46
FLAT: 5 Napierhall Street	250,000.00	306,898.00
OFFICE: 3 Napierhall Street	96,000.00	96,000.00
SECUTP: Scottish Episcopal Church Unit Trust	523,756.00	457,856.04
<b>Total Fixed assets</b>	<b>1,065,817.95</b>	<b>1,043,073.52</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		
CASHBOX: office cash box	235.83	65.09
CHOIR: choir current account	1,666.24	1,563.89
DEPOSIT: cathedral savings account	30,802.71	22,103.88
GENERAL: cathedral current account	51,522.69	61,365.37
PAYPAL: PayPal account	1,544.81	1,606.14
RESERVE: cathedral reserve account	36,434.47	35,334.47
Z05: Accounts Receivable	89,391.34	3,151.32
<b>Total Current assets</b>	<b>211,598.09</b>	<b>125,190.16</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
6699: Agency collections	(1,393.95)	0.00
Z04: Accounts Payable	1,260.07	2,639.59
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>(133.88)</b>	<b>2,639.59</b>
<b>Net Asset surplus (deficit)</b>	<b>1,277,549.92</b>	<b>1,165,624.09</b>
<b>Reserves</b>		
Excess / (deficit) to date	104,033.60	0.00
Z01: Starting balances	1,165,624.09	1,165,624.09
Z02: Other gains/(losses)	7,892.23	0.00
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>1,277,549.92</b>	<b>1,165,624.09</b>

Represented by Funds		
Unrestricted	1,206,800.16	1,102,272.81
Designated	0.00	0.00
Restricted	0.00	0.00
Endowment	70,749.76	63,351.28
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,277,549.92</b>	<b>1,165,624.09</b>

## Vestry secretary's report

The Vestry met on five occasions since the last AGM (30 January, 3 April, 3 July, 4 September and 23 October) and also had an away day meeting on July 1 to consider strategic issues.

As in previous years, most of the detailed work was carried out by the Leadership, Finance, Compliance, Property and Core Groups. They report their activities to each Vestry meeting, highlighting topics which require discussion and/or decision by the full Vestry. This has proven to be an efficient and effective way of ensuring that Vestry can devote its time at meetings to those issues which matter most. Reports from the Groups appear elsewhere in the AGM papers.

Vestry has also regularly considered matters relating to Protection of Vulnerable Groups.

Jim McKillop

## Leadership group

The cathedral constitution (2010) provides for a Leadership Group, comprised of the two Churchwardens, Vice Provost and Provost. The remit is to provide general oversight of the life of the Cathedral with particular reference to the preparation and monitoring of group and network remits, the appointment and resourcing of group conveners and key personnel, and the development of ministry and mission strategy. It meets roughly on a six-weekly basis. It submits a report to each Vestry meeting. These reports detailing the work of the group and the achievements and activities of St Mary's as a whole are posted on the notice boards in church and Synod Hall after the Vestry meeting. The experience of exploring possibilities and addressing problems collaboratively continues to be an enriching, supportive and challenging experience of shared responsibility. This is pertinent not least in providing consistency of oversight and mutual support.

Anne Jones is standing down as Provost's Warden at this AGM. She has served seven years in this capacity. Her long and distinguished experience of church life in the province, diocese and Cathedral, her personal expertise, along with her dogged commitment and care for the clergy and the congregation have been extraordinary.

The Leadership Group supports and monitors St Mary's groups and networks. This is to foster appropriate accountability, support and guidance for them and their conveners. Succession management remains a priority, especially in respect to key roles undertaken by volunteers. The "Whose Who at St Mary's" leaflet has been updated twice during the year to enable members of the congregation to be aware of where current responsibilities lie. This accompanies the Cathedral monthly prayer cycle.

Indicators continue to point to numerical growth of the congregation at St Mary's. In 2016 Christmas services saw 909 attending Christmas Eve and Christmas morning (872 attending in 2015, 995 in 2015, 943 in 2014, 805 in 2012; 743 in 2003). Ash Wednesday launched Lent with increased attendances of 184 (163 in 2016, 122 in 2015). 1,272 attended Holy Week and Easter services also greater (1,172 in 2016, 1,159 in 2015, 1,233 in 2013; 1,067 in 2012; 619 in 2004). Regular Sunday worship attendance has seen growth, not least in the six weeks summer school holiday period (average 197) where a doubling of numbers has been calculated over the last 10 years. There is now no "quiet period" of the year at St Mary's.

How else will 2016-17 be remembered? A 21% increase in attendance at worship is recorded in the months following Epiphany, 6 January 2017. Here is a summary of what happened for the record.

After meeting Javed Ali, administrator of the Andalus Centre, St George's Cross, and having worked with him at an event during Scottish Interfaith Week 2016, the Vice Provost invited him to offer a reading from the Qur'an at one of our services in the near future. The Provost proposed the Epiphany Eucharist, since we had had similar recitations at Christmas Carol Services in 2014 and 2012. On coming to rehearse on 5 January, Javed proposed that his daughter, Madinah Javed do the recitation. A translation was offered and was included in the liturgy. The service proceeded without incident, other than warm comments afterwards.

All was well until Sunday 8 January when it became evident that Madinah had posted a video of her recitation on Facebook. Unlike in 2014 when the Shia Muslim society posted a similar video after their Imam recited at the Carol Service, this attracted the attention of people, in the first instance it seems in the USA, then the UK, who took offence at the recitation, and then made a point of saying that the recitation included controversial verses following these verses which can be understood to deny the divinity of Christ. (Javed Ali subsequently acknowledged that Madinah had simply recited further verses of the "chapter". We accept that this was inadvertent.) There was a social media explosion targeting the Provost, as well as St Mary's Cathedral and the Scottish Episcopal Church. Kelvin posted a blog attracting further extreme vitriol it soon became evident that this was becoming a recordable hate incident and that in some cases hate crime was being committed. Cedric contacted Chief Inspector Shaheen Baber in the Safer Communities Specialist Crime Division whose staff took evidence and offered welcome advice.

Security of the staff and congregation was a chief concern. Again the local police were very helpful and have provided advice and discreet presence on the following two Sundays. Apart from the social media onslaught, stream of emails, and phone calls, there was no cause for alarm. Indeed services following Epiphany until Easter 2017 were very well attended - an average of 21% above the attendances in the equivalent Sundays in 2016. (The Ash Wednesday Eucharist achieved a 50% increase.)

The Primus, after speaking with the Provost on the phone on Friday 13 January, issued a statement on 14 January which we found profoundly unhelpful.

Apart from what appears to be extreme right wing attack, there was considerable comment from conservative evangelical Christian individuals and groups, including appeals to "GAFCON", the global association of conservative evangelical Anglicans. The first comment was from the retired bishop of Rochester, Michael Nazir Ali. They basically objected to the inclusion of any reading from another faith in the context of Christian worship, and charge St Mary's Cathedral with being disrespectful, naive and causing gross offence to Christians the world over. Further waves of comment followed the BBC Radio 4 Sunday Programme (15 January 2017) interview with the Rev Gavin Ashenden who announced his resignation as an honorary chaplain to the Queen over this and other issues.

We did however received very positive support from some quarters, including individuals, Church leaders, other cathedrals and local interfaith organisations. One apposite comment offered to Kelvin by one person was "St Mary's does not do syncretism, it does hospitality".



The Bishop of Wolverhampton The Rt Rev Clive Gregory, and his Area Interfaith Enabler Rev Ray Gaston, wrote on 26 January 2017:

“We wanted to write to express our strong support for the excellent work being done to build bridges between Christians and Muslims at St Mary’s Cathedral. We were dismayed to see the criticism from fellow Church of England clergy of your action. But were impressed to see that Surah Maryam had been recited at the Epiphany Eucharist and also to hear in your blog of the roots of this event in longstanding relationships and previous recitations in the Christmas season. The way you outlined the experience and how it was received both by congregants and your Muslim dialogue partners, demonstrates to our minds some of the best type of Christian inter faith engagement – a practically radical hospitality within a doctrinally generous orthodoxy.....”

The issue is far from over. In the Province the Standing Committee withdrew the invitation offered to Sheikh Razawi to address General Synod 2017 by the Vice Provost. The then Primus (who retired in June) attempted to arrange for a day consultation involving some members of the Faith and Order Board and CRPOF in the summer to discuss the boundaries of interfaith activities in relation to worship. This did not however take place. The new Primus has taken a more generous line and plans to arrange a theological consultation once a new academic paper has been published in 2018\*. So there are to be further reflections on this incident locally and provincially. The waves of concerted and vitriolic attack on an international scale are a development to which progressive organisations and individuals must now be prepared for, and it requires some understanding and preparedness in our time. The Vice Provost is asking: 1) how can Christians best model a breaking free from the fear that the right wing wish to cultivate? And 2) how do Christian leaders and Christian communities best take risks to espouse Christian hospitality and prophetic witness that Christ offers the world? \*Once the paper commissioned by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland has been published it will be made available to members of the congregation who are interested.

The AGM must be aware how much time and energy this experience took from the clergy and from the Office Manager. All three of us took a little extra time off and we also sought professional support from different sources.

The other major event this year that has become something of a paradigm shift for us was the final approval to the amendments to Canon XXXI which allow for the marriage in church of people of the same gender. This took place at the June 2017 General Synod. The Provost and Vice Provost are now registered as approved celebrants of such marriages by the Scottish Registrar General.

The Provost celebrated his 11th anniversary of appointment and Frikki Walker his 21st as Director of Music. Lorraine Darlow having been appointed to a fixed one year part time post as Children’s and Family Development Officer in June 2016 was only able to work part of the time due to surgery and her daughter Raegan’s critical illness and protracted treatment. The Rev Canon Audrey O’Brien Stewart has been on maternity leave. St Mary’s groups and networks continue to evolve, and their reports are contained in this 2017 Annual Report. Open Church has seen a good number of people visiting the Cathedral. We were not official entrants in the 2017 Doors Open weekend.

There was a St Mary’s retreat at Millport with one of our own congregation, Pat Bennett, as leader. Prayer for healing was offered with the anointing of oil at the St Luke’s Day said Eucharist on 18 October. The labyrinth has been much appreciated and used when set out.

The Vice Provost continues work as convener of the provincial interfaith committee and a member of the provincial Church in Society Committee and Committee on Canons, and as a trustee of Interfaith Glasgow. David Kenvyn (Verger) serves as convener of the provincial Overseas Committee.

Also outward looking, the Justice and Aid Network is considering the current context of needs in the world and the city. St Mary's hosted Westminster parliamentary hustings gathering on 22 May, chaired by Prof John Curtice. The Network will report separately on its other activities.

Future growth and development of St Mary's Cathedral is always at the top of the leadership group business. The Releasing the Mission core group has worked hard with the appointed scoping study architect as will be reported elsewhere.

We are delighted that Sr Helena and Sr AJ of the Companions of St Luke joined the congregation at Easter 2017. Sr Helena (The Rev Dr Ellen Barrett OSB) now has the Bishop's permission to officiate as a priest.

The Vice Provost is on sabbatical leave and so is not present at the AGM this year. Cedric has undertaken a walking pilgrimage to Lindisfarne, has had a holiday and three weeks in Jerusalem. He has been to Sarum College for a short course in spirituality and sexuality, and is currently on retreat. The sabbatical will end as he takes part in a consultation at St George's House Windsor on the language Christians use pertaining to the Holy Land. He will return to work on December 12.

The Rev Canon Neil Heavisides, a member of this congregation, has been undertaking extra duties during this time, and we are profoundly grateful to him.

There is much to do, but there is good heart and much good will in St Mary's Cathedral is sustained. Generosity in giving of prayer, time, talents and money continues to be very evident and many of the achievements this year are due to this blessed and positive spirit.

The Leadership Group continues to share with the whole congregation deep appreciation of all who volunteer their generous gifts to the glory of God in the Cathedral's life.

Cedric L. Blakey

## **Releasing the Mission Core Group**

The Releasing the Mission Core Group was established by Vestry to make recommendations to Vestry. Releasing the Mission is a process that has been running at the Cathedral for several years, with the initial consultation of the congregation dating back as far as to AGM 2013. Recommendations made by the Core Group focused on the improvements and possible expansion of the built environment of St Mary's, based on the results of the 2013 consultation along with extensive research into the use of available space and the congregation's development over the past few years.

Wolfgang Schlegel convenes the group. The other members of the group are Lisa Curtice, John Gerrard, Jim McKillop (as Secretary), Hunter Reid and Robin Webster. The group met 7 times since AGM 2016.

Following a tender in late 2015, Vestry commissioned architect Richard Murphy from Richard Murphy Architects to produce a Scoping Study for St Mary's. His report is now



complete and Vestry has been presented with several ideas for improved use of existing space and options for new buildings and/or changes to buildings on St Mary's grounds. A summary of Richard Murphy's report will be presented to the AGM for consideration. With the presentation at the AGM, the Core Group will have fulfilled its remit.

Wolfgang Schlegel

## Property group

The Property Group is a team of six made up of Vestry and congregational members. A list of tasks is kept on a Property Issues Log and over the last three years the number has increased from 59 to 158, and during the same period the number of completed jobs has gone up from 50% to over 80%; currently there are 28 outstanding tasks.

Over the last year a number of major projects has been dealt with. These include acting on the Quinquennial Review (QR) of the cathedral. Of eleven items recommended to be undertaken as soon as possible, nine have been completed or work has been started. Of the four tasks recommended for completion within twelve months, three are underway. One major QR recommendation was to carry out a detailed survey of all the roof areas. A four phase programme has been set up, and the first phase has been completed. The cathedral is currently watertight.

Now that is the case, repainting and refurbishment of interior walls can be done and that will be started early in the New Year by an internationally award winning decorator; some of the work will be paid for by a telecoms company that damaged the external drainage system which led to the deterioration of plaster and paintwork. Another QR recommendation was to have the condition of the stained glass windows assessed. A free evaluation is currently being carried out.

Apart from QR issues, a considerable amount of time has been spent this last year on seeking to improve the lighting at the west end of the cathedral in order to provide safer access and to give better illumination over the doorway. This has been fraught with difficulties, with two lighting architects being unable to produce adequate solutions. A new approach has now been initiated and is being worked on.

There are a number of matters to be dealt with in the Bell Tower. First, the wooden louvres have to be removed and refurbished. When they are taken out the wheels that the bell ropes go round have also to be repaired and they can only be got out of the tower through the space occupied by the louvres. After the wheels go back, the louvres will be replaced, and finally a new sound attenuation system will be installed. Sound measurements for the present arrangement have been made, and we are investigating sound control systems that have been used in other churches in various places. Outline plans for St Mary's are being considered.

Numerous smaller tasks have been completed. For all the property-related achievements we have to thank a good number of dedicated and talented helpers who have given freely of their time and energy to support the cathedral. It would be invidious to mention by name all who have helped with a wide range of tasks. I have to say, though, it is so encouraging to always get such positive responses when I ask for help with property matters, and I find it a joy and delight to work with those who do so much out of love for St Mary's and for their Lord

In the coming year the Property Group will continue to work with the Vestry on decisions about priorities and expenditure. We will also work closely with the Finance Group to ensure that we operate in a business-like and professional manner. Information has been provided to the Finance Group about sources of financial support for repairs and improvements to church buildings; nearly 50 sources have been identified.

Michael Hitchman

## Compliance

The role of this group is to ensure the wellbeing of everyone at St Mary's through attention to health and safety, arrangements for the employment of lay staff and any other relevant matters. The Convenor reports to the Vestry and the group meets for an evening once every other month. Issues, actions and progress are tracked using an action log. The Convenor is grateful to the group members, including those who retired during the year and newly co-opted members, for their diligence and good humour.

This year, following considerable concern being raised about the arrangements then in place for the cleaning of the Cathedral, the Synod Hall and the Office, a new specification for our requirements was drawn up and put out to tender. Only companies who would pay the Glasgow Living Wage were invited to respond. Following the receipt of quotes and interviews with shortlisted contractors, a new contract was awarded. This process has resulted in a significant increase in expenditure on cleaning as we now have a two hours per day, seven day a week service (previously the contract was for one hour, five days a week). The contract is monitored by Compliance and liaison on a daily basis is provided by the Verger.

Effort has also been devoted during the year to supporting the handling and counting of cash, primarily the cash donated through collections during services. With the support of the Treasurer, the procedure has been teased out and written up. Hopefully the Gift Aid Recorder and the Treasurer now get the information about cash receipts in the form that they need and we can demonstrate the good practice that St Mary's follows, including having cash handled at all times by at least two people and a Vestry member present at the count. I am very grateful to the cash counters for their commitment, careful work and patience.

Other matters dealt with have included the testing of electrical equipment. For the coming year the Compliance Group will be assisting with the implementation of a policy on continuing professional development for lay staff and the development of a risk register for St Mary's.

Lisa Curtice

## Music Report

This year the Cathedral Choir celebrated the 10th year of children being re-introduced to the choir. What a wonderful thing this has been for the life of the choir and of the cathedral! After more than 30 years as a purely adult domain, the Choristers were set up in 2007 thanks to a generous gift from Peggy Brown, in memory of her late husband, David Brown. What a fabulous legacy, and we are so grateful to them both for their huge support of the music at St Mary's over many years. Celebrations lasted a week and more with two celebratory services, the first on our Dedication Sunday on the morning of 22nd October, and the second, a fabulous Choral Evensong on the 29th, following a choristers' party in the afternoon! There was even more cake than usual at the Thursday night choir practice between, as celebrations continued, (and combined with the Director of Music's Birthday), and all was rounded off with an outing for the choristers to a Trampoline centre!

But week in, week out, the choristers have taken part in services, BBC Radio and TV broadcasts, recordings and concerts, learnt a huge amount of music from all genres and ages, as well as developing their musicianship and vocal skills through the guidance of myself, Christine, Steven, and lately, Sarah, one of our original choristers, who you may have spotted conducting the choir recently!

This might be an appropriate time to reflect on some of the achievements of the 50 or more children who have passed through the choir.

- A myriad of RSCM Voice for Life awards, including nearly 30 Bronze awards, nearly 20 Silver awards and 2 Gold awards
- Three choristers have gained places to study singing at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, one at the Guildhall School of Music, and one at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Another is studying stage management at the Guildhall, too!
- Choral Scholarships have been gained to Jesus College, Trinity College, Gonville and Caius College in Cambridge, Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, and Gloucester Cathedral
- Choristers have gone on to gain places and scholarships in the Chapel Choirs or Chambers Choirs of the Universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, St Andrew's and Durham.
- Three choristers have now featured as soloists singing "Walking in the air" from the "Snowman" with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra
- Several choristers are, or have been members of the National Youth Choir of Scotland, National Girls Choir and National Boys Choir
- Several choristers have gained parts or places on courses with Scottish Opera
- One chorister was a finalist in the BBC Radio 2 Chorister of the Year competition

I am hoping we can continue to develop this aspect of the choir's ministry, so please do let people know we are here, we always welcome new choristers, and we learn a lot, have lots of cake, and generally have a great time!

I am also very grateful to all the parents who also help so generously in so many ways with the logistics of running the choir!

The adult Cathedral Choir also continues to flourish and grow. Many choir members (as always) have come and gone, but, generally, the membership of the adult choir remains

at a pretty constant pool of about thirty-five or so adult singers, as well the 15 or so young choristers.

The choir continues to be as busy as ever, not only singing twice every Sunday, but also taking part in many special services and broadcasts (Morning Worship and Daily Service on Radio 4, catch us soon, on St Andrew's Day), as well as a highly acclaimed residency for a week in Portsmouth Cathedral in the Summer Holidays. In April we will be singing in Manchester Cathedral for a weekend, and we are now just beginning to plan our first foreign tour.

In May we combined with the Glasgow University Chapel Choir and the choir of Glasgow Cathedral to sing a Choral Evensong for Trinity Sunday in the University Chapel.

This November is especially busy as the choir has already sung the Duruflé Requiem for All Souls, a concert with Glasgow Cambiata (boys' choirs from the RSNO, Bearsden Academy, Glasgow Academy and the High School of Glasgow) in aid of Calum's Cabin, and will sing on a live broadcast of Daily Service on St Andrew's Day. December begins with the Advent Carol Service on Sunday 3rd, and preparations for Christmas.

After Christmas, as well as our Holy Week services, we will be singing at our Assistant Organist's wedding in Dunblane Cathedral, and then haring down to Manchester to sing for the weekend in the Cathedral there. We also hope to be taking part in a concert of music celebrating the centenary of the little-known Scottish composer Cecil Coles.

We continue to face the challenges of lack of storage and rehearsal space, but are aware that these issues are being considered as part of the scoping exercise that is nearing completion, and we very much look forward to hearing the results of that.

So, as ever, lots of familiar people and lots of new people, lots of familiar music and lots new music, and lots of ongoing challenges, and lots of fresh challenges, all of which are indications of a choir in good heart and good health.

### **Music Endowment Fund**

I am delighted to report that this fund has reached and exceeded its target. A huge thank you to everyone who has donated large and small amounts, and to those who have engaged in activities to raise funds, too many to mention by name. Thank you all so, so much.

I am hoping that the MEF may eventually fund an organ scholarship, too, once we get the organ sorted out.

### **Library**

Thank you as ever, to Christine Walker, and to all our choir members who help with the music library. We are also grateful to members of the choir and congregation who donate sets of music to us, keeping our repertoire varied and up to date, and who help us to buy extra copies as our choir continues to grow!

However, storage space for our music collection continues to be a serious issue.

## Organ

I have now met with the vestry and with our organ builder of choice, Harrison and Harrisons, to explore the options for rebuilding or replacing the organ.

### Brief history and evaluation

The organ in St Mary's was built by William Hill in 1871 and it was subsequently rebuilt and enlarged in 1909, by Harrison and Harrison, and then rebuilt again in 1967 and 1990, by Hill, Norman and Beard. In 1909, it was one of the largest three-manual organs in Britain, and contained the first ever 32' reed stop to be built by Harrison and Harrison, which was the first ever stop of that type to be installed in an organ in Scotland.

Although basically a fine instrument, the organ has suffered over the years from the changing fashions of organ design, and is now something of a mish-mash of styles and sonorities, with a stop list reflecting both the wide-scaled sonorities of 1909, and the narrow-scaled quasi-Continental pipework of 1967.

My first report on the organ was in submitted to the vestry 2003. I have reported on the organ at every AGM since 2004. I really feel the time has come to make a decision. In all this time the organ has become more and more difficult to manage. Most of my long tenure here (21 years!) has involved watching this instrument deteriorate, and battling with it as it does so, whilst also trying to develop and maintain the musical standards of our worship.

Any organ that is used as much as this one should expect to be overhauled every 25 years.

So, what is actually wrong with it?

### The problems

The main problem facing us now is a combination of wear and tear, workmanship of dubious quality in the last restoration, and the increasingly rapid disintegration of the transmission system.

The transmission system is the "brains" of the organ, the means by which the console speaks to the pipes. Its deterioration manifests itself in various ways:

- notes not playing
- notes playing permanently when you draw a stop but no key is pressed
- the pistons which bring out combination of stops for the player, either don't work, or bring out a different set of stops than programmed, or just cancel everything! (It is the equivalent of when driving your car, you might operate the control to indicate a right turn, but, instead of a light coming on, the door flies open, or the windscreen wipers operate instead!)
- The Swell box doesn't operate properly, making subtle expression nigh on impossible which means it is very difficult to effectively or sensitively, accompany the choir
- Pedal action is getting slower making much of the organ repertoire impossible to play
- Different parts of the organ speak at different speeds

- The action gets ever more sluggish and uneven, making playing rhythmically and evenly extremely challenging.

The transmission system installed in 1990 is now obsolete, so as parts now fail, it is impossible to replace them. Patching up can (and does) happen, but it is extremely costly, and not durable.

There are also issues with the winding of the instrument. The blower is good, but the trunking system that carries the air from the blower to the pipes is deficient and results in the organ being under-winded.

### **Our needs, and the solution:**

H&H have now devised a variety of schemes for us, and have visited the cathedral on many separate occasions. Their recommendation is for a total rebuild of the organ, using the old pipes that are re-usable, and replacing a proportion of the pipework with new pipework, as well as entirely replacing the console and transmission system.

Restoring, rebuilding and renewing the organ would involve:

- Removal of the substandard pipework from 1967
- Addition of new pipework to match the quality of the good pipework
- Replace the console and all the mechanics of the organ
- All soundboards and wind trunking would be made from inert modern materials that would not be affected by modern heating systems and the Scottish climate

The organ would be turned around so the Great, the loudest section of the organ, would face west, not North across the chancel as it currently does. A new case, which would also be a fabulous visual addition to the cathedral, may be built for the Nave-facing arch. In fact, H&H have drawings and a design for an organ case by J. Oldrid Scott, who built our tower and spire, for a case intended to be fit on the organ in 1909 when H&H enlarged the organ for the new Cathedral.

As the congregation and the choir grows, we need a first-class instrument that can convincingly accompany, support, lead and inspire the colourful and emotional liturgy of our wonderful Cathedral services; an instrument that can take its place in the city and the Diocese as a standard setter, and an instrument that is equally versatile in the solo organ repertoire of all styles and periods. If the organ were to be rebuilt, the dynamic range of the instrument would be hugely improved, from the subtlest quiet sounds to the most magnificent full organ that will properly project into the church and thrillingly lead a 400-strong congregation, as well as produce a beautiful array of tonal colours for the accompaniment of our choir and our dramatic liturgy.

A first-class organ would, furthermore:

- ensure organists of the highest calibre be attracted to work here
- ensure organ students of the highest calibre be attracted to study here
- attract top rate organ recitalists to perform here
- make the Cathedral an attractive venue for concerts for choirs and musical groups in the area
- open the possibility of the organ being included in the Glasgow Organ Festival



- be used as a tool for education and outreach, consolidating links with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow University, Strathclyde University as well as local schools

If we want the organ completed by 2021 for the 150th Anniversary, we would need to pay a deposit (5% of the final price) by the end of December, to secure a place in their work diary in 2020.

This is a prime opportunity to secure the ongoing development of the music and liturgy at St Mary's for the next 50 – 100 years.

The time to act is now, and the responsible thing to do is to think in terms of quality, and longevity.

### **Thank you**

Thank you to everyone who helps to make our music department such a successful and happy part of the life and ministry of our cathedral. The list is endless; our very supportive and appreciative clergy team, all the singers, the players, chorister parents, chorister families, library helpers, wardrobe helpers, chauffeurs, photographers, feeders, washer-uppers, and not least, you, the congregation!

Gratitude and best wishes to all,  
Frikki Walker  
Director of Music

### **Bellringers**

This year we have continued ringing for services on Sunday evenings, for some Sunday morning services, for the morning service on Christmas Day, Easter Day and Pentecost and also for the services for Epiphany, Candlemas, Maundy Thursday, Ascension Day and Corpus Christi.

We have rung eight quarter peals including one to celebrate the first same sex marriage in the Cathedral. There have also been two peals during the year.

We have been liaising with the Cathedral property committee to plan work that is required to the bells, bell-frame and louvres. We are hoping this work will be carried out during the forthcoming year.

We support meetings of the Scottish Association of Change Ringers. In the striking competition at the AGM in May our team won the competition for less experienced ringers and our more advanced ringers came second in their section. We have hosted some of the Association advanced practices.

The Central Council of Church Bellringers held its annual international ringers' conference in Edinburgh this year and several of our ringers were involved in the organisation of this. It was due to the hard work of Ruth Marshall (one of the Scottish representatives on the Council), Terry Williams, Tina Stoecklin and ringers from other parts of Scotland that this event was such a great success.

In September we had a very enjoyable weekend outing, first ringing at the ruined Cathedral in Dunkeld and then travelling to Tulloch and the excellent training facility there. Everyone was able to improve their ringing skills during a full day of practise. It

was also a social occasion. We shared self-catered meals, including a hot dinner on the Saturday evening, culminating with cakes in honour of the upcoming birthdays of three of our members.

Margaret Williams

### **Bible discussion group**

Between eight and ten people meet monthly at these open discussions. Recently for various reasons, we have said goodbye to several of our regulars, three of whom have moved on to pastures new in other cities, as is the way within the St Mary's family.

Several liturgical, cultural, ethical and historical aspects of scripture have been presented and discussed, through video, debate and teaching by members of the congregation and clergy. We have not had the Bible Challenge pit stops this year, though some are still involved with it.

We recognise that, as within the main congregation, we have a foundation of regular attenders as well as several who come occasionally or at a particular time in their faith journey; and occasional attenders are always encouraged to come along.

On November 27<sup>th</sup> as we enter Advent, we welcome Debbie Lewer to lead us in "Seeing the Prodigal Son in Art". Many will remember her thought provoking presentation on Judas last year.

All are welcome to join these study and discussion evenings as in our January meeting we plan our future.

Gill Young

### **Book group**

The Group met for the first time this session on Tue 6<sup>th</sup> September. There were ten people attending, including three new members, so quite a good start.

There were 20 suggested book titles and these voted on produced six Fiction and two Non-Fiction titles. These will be alternated from October to June, with no meeting at Christmas.

We decided that the book's proposer should chair that discussion. We also voted to keep the same times and venues. Anne Jones and Jackie Heatlie kindly agreed to continue as key holder and tea provider.

We look forward to a good year of book discussions with the increased numbers boost.

Gordon McCulloch



## Communications

The website continues to be a significant factor in people discovering St Mary's. In 2016 it received 63617 hits. In January 2017 alone the site received over 12000 hits as news about the cathedral's Epiphany service received global recognition. It is pleasing to note that the sudden influx of visitors did not cause the site to fail.

The cathedral's online mailing list has over 500 people. Preparations are moving forward to move to a new mailing list using the mailchimp server.

A significant challenge this year has come from attempted cyber-attacks - these then have the knock on effect of requiring more time to administer the site.

Kelvin Holdsworth

## Compline

Gathering to sing the plainchant Monastic late evening Office of Compline in the Cathedral has continued throughout this past year on the first Tuesday of each month at 7.15pm, and each week through Lent.

St Mary's started this regular service when Drew Sheridan was curate with our clergy team. Times and days have varied a little through the years, details being published in the Sunday Services' pew notes and an informal email reminder circulated to everyone who has requested this – send me an email at [gail@ggsmith.co.uk](mailto:gail@ggsmith.co.uk) to join the list. Everyone welcome.

The service lasts about half an hour with folk frequently enjoying informal refreshment thereafter in the local vicinity.

Gail Smith

## Contact group

I took over the role of Convener of the St Mary's Contact Group from Robert Mawditt in November 2016. Since then, we have had 6 requests for contact from congregation members. The group has four members, currently all female and it was noted that there may be a case for finding at least one male member for the group, in case anyone would prefer to speak to a male.

The group is supported by Anne Jones with information and guidance on PVG issues and legislation and we met with the FIOP group for a PVG training with Anne on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2017, followed by lunch together.

The aim of the Contact Group is to provide pastoral support to back up that offered by the clergy. We offer regular meet-ups for coffee and chat with anyone feeling a need for extra support outwith the church services. It may be due to being new to the area and needing to find a way into the congregation, or a specific personal issue or crisis, where an impartial listening ear might be welcomed, such as bereavement, relationship issues, isolation or illness, or just a problem that might be helped by talking it through with someone outside the situation.

Referrals can be made either through the clergy or individually, by the person requiring support or on someone else's behalf. The group cannot provide formal counselling,

however there are trained counsellors among us. The help is more geared towards offering friendship and connection at a time of need.

Meetings are scheduled approximately once every 2 months to review and assess contacts made. Any referrals or input can be forwarded to me on the email: [contact@thecathedral.org.uk](mailto:contact@thecathedral.org.uk)

Anne Robertson

## **Events**

As your new Events Co-ordinator, I am pleased to present this report of the events that have taken place at St Mary's Cathedral since November last. We continue to be a popular choice as a performance and exhibition space by both professional and amateur orchestras and choirs, as well as an exhibition space. Well known for its superb acoustic properties, we have garnered a reputation for our warmth of hospitality, and our ability to offer an enthusiastic support team who have worked hard to make all who come to St Mary's feel that they are truly welcome.

Over this past year, we have had an encouraging number of returning choirs and orchestras, peppered with a few new events. This is very encouraging, and gives us confidence in our ability to attract events to come to St Mary's. In summary, here is a breakdown of the number and kind of events we have held this year: Orchestral concerts = 8; Choral concerts = 12; Art exhibitions = 1; Dedication Services = 2; Workshops & Meetings = 2. The total number of event from December 2016 - November 2017 is 25.

### **Doors Open Day**

Unfortunately St Mary's was not selected by the organisers, as one of the venues for 2017. This decision, although disappointing, is the result of the necessary ongoing inclusion of new venues, or places that have not been included for some time. We will have an opportunity in the future to be included in the program. Special thanks are; however, due to St Mary's Open Doors team, who arranged to have the Cathedral open and staffed throughout the Saturday of the City wide event.

### **West End Festival**

This year's festival was a very busy time for the Cathedral, as we were busier than ever, hosting a very full program of events that included everything from art to jazz, professional and amateur orchestras to barber shop music that included a chorus all the way from the USA and Canada. Youth and adult choirs, as well as our own choristers and musicians performed works all the way from Duke Ellington to Telemann. Over the month we hosted five events as part of the festival.

### **The Events Team**

As you will have gathered from the above report, there has been a great deal of work and time invested in hosting so many events over the past year. This would not have been possible without the dedication of a small team of events volunteers, Kathryn MacFarlane, Bob Leslie and Robert MacDonald. I would like to thank them along with David Kenvyn and Tony Hughes, all of whom have given of their time and energies to make everything come together. The work of this team has not gone unnoticed by all who perform within St Mary's, and in the most practical way, extend that warm and welcome that the Cathedral has become well known for.

### **A word of thanks**

It is possible to finish this report without mentioning Honor Brogan, my predecessor. The transition period between us, was managed over June during the West End Festival, one of the busiest time of the year for events. There was much for me to learn, both administratively and practically and I am most grateful to Honor for her diligence and helpful support in making the handover work seamlessly. Honor has brought the events organisation, over the last five years, to where it is now, and I have a hard act to follow. With the promise of having Honor in the background should I need her expertise, I will do my very best to dedicate myself to continue where she has left off. Thank you Honor.

Iain Milne

### **Faith in older people**

The Faith in Older People project has inspired a group of trained visitors at St Mary's who keep in regular contact with some of our older members. Our aim is to visit parishioners in their homes or places of residence on an ongoing basis to provide a connection with St Mary's for those who may be unable to attend church. This year the group have made over 150 visits and have arranged for Communion to be taken to our visitees as requested. Visits may be arranged through the Cathedral office.

Diane Elliott

### **Flower Team**

The St Mary's Flower Team is a friendly group of volunteers, who, with their love for flowers, try to bring the beauty of nature into worship. We make a team effort to arrange fresh flowers for Easter, Pentecost, the Open Day, All Souls' Day and Christmas, and arrange silk flowers from time to time.

As well as this we arrange flowers for weddings, civil ceremonies, baptisms and funerals, working to a budget with families in their choice of colour and design for their floral displays.

We welcome anyone to join us and share our delight in adding to the beauty and welcoming feeling of our Church. Some experience would be helpful, but not essential; flower arranging is very enjoyable and easy to learn.

Migeun Park

### **Friends of St Mary's**

The Friends of St Mary's consists of those who wish to make a commitment to the congregation but who live at a distance from Glasgow. Most of these are former members of the congregation though some are people who wish to align themselves with the open, inclusive and welcoming values of St Mary's which they find difficult to find in a church congregation local to themselves. Some of these people sign up through the website and their financial contributions go into the paypal account. Others are those who move away who maintain their pledge and still regard themselves as part of the congregation even though they don't attend regularly.

Kelvin Holdsworth

## Gardening

We have continued to do battle with the weeds around the paving and graveled areas at St Mary's. A fellow at Morning Prayer, reflecting on his experience of the process, suggested that gardening is mostly about killing things. There is a little space for nurturing: the area of garden at the back door, which is mostly left to shape itself, houses five surviving rose bushes (out of six) and a community of hardy annuals. The bulbs that come up each spring are probably getting little nourishment from the stony soil, but it is a patch of growth, with some occasional rough weeding out of nettles, dock, buttercup and dandelion. My thanks to BJ, Daniel, Frank and Iain, who have helped at different times in the year to keep the grounds looking cared for.

Robert Mawditt

## Justice and aid network

A group of us have been meeting refugees and others from the Glasgow Night Shelter on Sunday afternoons on a rota basis, taking them to lunch and sometimes visiting local places outside the city that they may not have had the opportunity to see. They certainly enjoy this, and it gives us an opportunity to meet and talk to people whom we might not otherwise encounter, learning about their life and experiences, and hopefully letting them know that there are folk in Glasgow who care about them.

We also took part in the Interfaith "One Big Picnic" in George Square at the beginning of September, where we provided free food and drink to anyone, again trying to show that we are a caring city and concerned about food justice.

The committee is also in touch via email with members of the congregation who would like to alleviate the impact of poverty and crises in people's lives: for example we have been able to find a temporary home for a pregnant refugee, and sometimes one of us is able to step in and help other destitute people.

We are currently planning our biennial "World Christmas Fair" at the end of November, to raise the profile of food justice and help fund various small international charities.

Robin Webster

## LGBT network

The LGBT Network at St Mary's Cathedral represents some of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals within the community. It has a mailing list and meets on an irregular basis. Through the Cathedral website, it has also functioned as a first point of contact for a number of people who are seeking an inclusive and welcoming church.

The passage of Canon 31 at General Synod has been noted by the LGBT Network with joy and pride. The first marriage in St Mary's between a couple of the same sex took place in September. Members of the LGBT Network were involved with the passage of civil legislation for marriage equality, and have also been involved for a number of years for the campaign for marriage equality within the Scottish Episcopal Church. This goal has now been achieved and we give thanks for the work that was done.

The LGBT Network has met on a number of occasions during the year, including a film discussion evening, a meeting with representatives from the Time for Inclusive

Education campaign, and preparation for Glasgow Pride. A large group of members from the LGBT Network and their allies attended Glasgow Pride in August as part of the “Scottish Episcopalians at Pride” delegation. We were joined by friends from across the Province. Members of the Network also helped to staff the stall on Glasgow Green throughout Pride weekend, where we engaged in missional outreach to members of the wider Glasgow and LGBT communities. Our presence at Pride was partly funded this year by a grant from Bishop Gregor.

Beth Routledge

## Lay representative

My main responsibility as Lay Representative is to represent the Cathedral at Diocesan Synod, which this year took place at the Barony College in Dumfries in March 2017.

The Synod received reports from:

- The Reverend Canon Audrey O'Brien Stewart on her work as Canon Missioner during her first year in post.
- The Worship and Liturgy Development Team on new resources for ministry to the sick and housebound.
- The Provincial Youth Network on their plans for their 20th Anniversary celebrations which fell this year.
- Miriam Weibye, the Church Relations Officer, on preparations for the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches. This takes place in 2021 in Glasgow.

The accounts and budget for the year were presented by the Diocesan Treasurer, and it was concluded that Diocesan finances are in good health.

A review of the Diocesan Constitution is ongoing. This is likely to represent a significant part of the work to be done in the Diocese in the coming year.

A number of proposed changes to Canon Law were considered by Diocesan Synod:

### **Canon 21 - Of Divine Worship and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies**

The proposed alteration was that changes to liturgy should in the future be subject to a similar approval process as changes to Canon Law. This would require debate and vote at two separate General Synods, with an advisory vote from Diocesan Synods taking place in the middle. This motion was passed.

### **Canon 63 - The Office of the Lay Representative**

The proposed alteration was to require that the Alternate Lay Representative from each congregation would automatically become a member of Vestry. This motion was passed. I note that this is already the case in the Cathedral constitution, and so makes no change to the processes within our own congregation.

### **Canon 31 - The Solemnisation of Holy Matrimony**

The proposed alteration was that the doctrinal statement on marriage be removed from Canon Law, and that a conscience clause be inserted which would make it clear that no cleric will be obliged to conduct any marriage against their conscience. The pragmatic effect of this change to Canon Law would be to allow for the possibility of marriage between individuals of the same sex within the Church. There was a robust debate with a variety of viewpoints heard, and the motion was passed with an overall majority of 64%.

The votes by Diocesan Synods on changes to Canon Law are advisory to General Synod. All three motions were subsequently passed at second reading by General Synod in June 2017, and are now formalised in the Code of Canons.

In the elections to General Synod, I was elected as a Lay Representative and Cedric Blakey was elected as Clergy Representative. These appointments were both for a four years. We joined Kelvin Holdsworth and Anne Jones at General Synod in Edinburgh.

The Bishop's Lent Appeal this year was for the Scottish Refugee Council.

On behalf of the congregation, I would also like to note and give thanks for the work that was done by the Dean, members of Bishop's Staff Group, and the Diocesan Office to keep the Diocese running smoothly in Bishop Gregor's absence during the earlier part of the year. We have been delighted to have Bishop Gregor back among us for various services and Diocesan celebrations since his return to work.

Beth Routledge

### **Litter picking**

Once again throughout the past year, your seven litter pickers have kept the Cathedral grounds generally tidy and litter-free. Taking charge for a week at a time, one of us visits St Mary's as often as necessary to clear any litter either thrown or blown into the grounds. We trust that our efforts are appreciated.

Tony Hughes

### **Needle arts group**

NAG has continued to prosper; we meet to knit, sew and chat from 7.30-9.30pm on the second Monday of each month. As well as those who come to the meetings we are grateful for the generous support of many members of the congregation in our project work.

We have several on-going projects – we knit for the Special Care Baby Unit at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Over the year several enormous bags of blankets, bonnets, cardigans, bootees etc. have been dispatched to the Hospital.

We also knit for the Seafarers' Mission (woollen hats, mufflers, balaclavas etc.); and we knit five inch squares to make Prayer Blankets for members of the congregation.

In addition our members continue to work on their own projects.

We hope to continue to thrive by enlisting more members – and are always open to new suggestions for projects which involve even more folk from the congregation!

Our next meeting is on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December – why not give it a try?

Sandy Fraser/Pam Barrowman



## Open church

The Open Church volunteers offer hospitality to visitors to the Cathedral when the doors are kept open between 10am and 12.30pm every day from early May to the end of September. Working in pairs, they provide welcome, information and support to a wide range of people.

In 2017, they received visitors from across the world, including intrigued local passers-by, tourists, pilgrims returning to their church of origin, church ‘collectors’ and those in need of spiritual or occasionally practical support.

The total number of visitors was 590 in 2017, an increase of 38 over 2016. The Cathedral was open on 125 mornings between early May and the end of September. We did not participate in the official Doors Open weekend programme in 2017.

Feedback from visitors highlights and commends the warmth of the welcome given and the high quality of the knowledge and information shared about every aspect of Cathedral life.

As a new venture, the Open Church volunteers are facilitating having the Cathedral open on every available Saturday morning until 16 December. This will be reviewed shortly to consider the feasibility of continuing to do this from January 2018.

Anne Chowaniec

## Poetry group

As usual we have been meeting monthly on third Thursdays, in the small meeting room, with a set poet or theme for the hour we spend together. Membership has been faithful but not large. Poets we read this year included Owen Sheers, Bob Dylan and local poet Jim Carruth. We spent a session looking through an edition of the literary magazine Northwords Now and, as usual, discussed the contenders for the T.S.Eliot prize won by Jacob Polley.

The present session (2017-18) will be my last as convener of the poetry group. I would like to thank all those who’ve supported the group over the last few years, each bringing their own interests and concerns to the mix. I appreciate the broadening of experience that has given me. I know all of us feel likewise.

Chris Athorne

## Protection of vulnerable groups

The PVG coordinator is appointed to take responsibility on behalf of the Vestry for ensuring that the work of the Church is carried out in accordance with the Law and the Church’s policies on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults. These policies focus on prevention and safeguarding by ensuring that anybody appointed or volunteering to do “regulated work” with children or vulnerable adults have their details submitted to Disclosure Scotland who check for any relevant criminal convictions. Vulnerable adults include those people who, because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness, infirmity or ageing, are unable to protect themselves from abuse, or are more vulnerable to being abused than persons who are not so affected. Regulated work could include teaching or supervising Young Church or providing some

kind of regular welfare service to people with particular needs as members of FIOP Group or the Contact Group. All clergy doing regulated work have gone through the PVG process before taking on their duties.

At the beginning of each year I submit a Protection Checklist to the Diocese to confirm that we are implementing the PVG process correctly including ensuring anyone involved in regulated work has the correct level of PVG clearance. In the last year I have processed the forms of 4 people and have carried out training with those working with Vulnerable Adults.

This year I provided the Vestry Secretary and Treasurer with a statement describing the PVG process at St Mary's to include in the Vestry's paperwork for the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR). OSCR now expects charity trustees (i.e. Vestry) to notify them of any events that may have a significant impact on the charity or its assets. In particular any incidents of abuse or mistreatment of vulnerable beneficiaries must be reported to OSCR as well as notifying the statutory authorities (Police, Social Services etc.) and the Provincial Officer for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults. However as the SEC website reminds us "*it is important to remember that it is **everyone's responsibility** to protect the vulnerable and everyone working in and attending services in the SEC has an important part to play in developing a safe and supportive culture within the Church that protects everyone, regardless of the nature of their vulnerability*". If any member of the congregation has concerns about possible incidents involving children or vulnerable adults they need to notify the PVG Coordinator. If neither is available and there is somebody at immediate risk, the police or local social work department should be contacted.

Further guidance about SEC policies and procedures can be found at [www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/organisation/safeguarding/](http://www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/organisation/safeguarding/)

Anne Jones

## St Mary's @ The Movies

The film group meets on the last two Tuesdays of most months to watch and discuss films selected by democratic vote from a list of suggestions compiled by the membership. As such the schedule is eclectic. Discussion is often vigorous, always open and mostly spiced with humour. This year we have ranged from subjects of a broadly political nature (Cry Freedom, Overnighters, Spotlight, Of Gods and Men) through to more individual narratives (I've loved you so long; Paris, Je t'aime), classic science-fiction (Forbidden Planet) and art (Rivers and Tides).

The present session (2017-18) will be my last as convener of the Film Group and I wish to thank all the members for their regular commitment, for engaging in the film selection process and for meeting the challenge of what can often be difficult subject matter over the last three or four years. It has been very valuable to me and I'm sure that's a sentiment echoed by all.

Chris Athorne



## Sacristans

The work of the Sacristans has continued at a steady pace throughout the year. We were delighted to be supplied with Palms again this year for Palm Sunday, kindly supplied by the Botanical Gardens Glasgow and I hope they will continue to supply us for future services. Nelson Connelly-Smith has hung up his keys and I am delighted that Sr AJ will be assisting me in the sacristy.

I would like to extend grateful thanks to David Kenvyn and Kathryn McFarlane who heads up the team of Servers for their support and help, and also to Kate Mackenzie for laundering the small linen.

Sue Champion

## School of spirituality

The co-ordinators are Cedric Blakey, Caroline McKillop, Sue Champion, Sheena Forsyth, Debbie Lewer and Margaret Kerr.

**The Open Silence**, an hour of shared silence in St Mary's has been maintained twice each month on the third Sunday at 20.00 and the following Thursday at 12.30 for most of the year. During the autumn, it has had to be cancelled due to staffing shortage, but it is hoped to restart in 2018. It is still felt to be worthwhile to host these sessions as a place where individuals can join with others in church to be still and to develop their prayer practice.

**The Advent Quiet Day** was held on Wednesday 14 December and was led by Audrey O'Brien Stewart. The next one will be Sat 9th December 2017 at St Mary's and will be led by Debbie Lewer.

**Lent 2016.** Compline took place on Tuesdays. Debbie Lewer presented an evening on Judas in art during Holy Week, and the labyrinth was available to walk, also during Holy Week.

**Retreats & Pilgrimages.** There was a Millport retreat in during March/April 2017 led by Pat Bennett. There is a further retreat at Millport planned for 20-22 April, which will be led by the Rt Rev Gordon Mursell.

**Holy land 2018.** The Vice Provost is planning a pilgrimage for the congregation and diocese, probably May 2018.

**Wednesday learning sessions.** There have been two sessions on Art and Prayer, a sessions with Srs AJ and Helena about the religious life, and three exploring prayer sessions.

**Lent 2017.** There will be a Quiet Day on Saturday 10th March, which will be held near Lenzie. Further details to follow in the New Year.

Sue Champion

## **Servers**

The serving team at the Cathedral contributes to the planning and delivery of services, ensuring that they are conducted with the grace and dignity that allows for prayerfulness. This, of course, is the purpose of serving – to ensure that everything required is in place and available for the celebrant at the required point in the service.

As usual, we have been involved in all the Christmas, Holy Week and Easter services as well as assisting Sunday by Sunday. We have also served for several baptisms, weddings and funerals in the last year as well as an Ordination.

The Cathedral currently has 16 established servers - I am extremely grateful to Awele, Beth, Bruce, Caitlin, Chioma, Daniel Kianpisheh, Daniel Williams, David Kenvyn, David McFadyen, Franny, Matthew Little, Matthew Wyllie, Roger, Ruth and Sue. Hopefully a few more new servers will be joining the team in the next few weeks.

If anyone thinks they might be interested in becoming a server please speak to Kelvin, Cedric or myself for more information. No previous experience is necessary as full training will be given.

I would like to express my thanks to the clergy and the other Cathedral staff for all their help and support. I am particularly indebted to the Verger (David Kenvyn) and the Sacristans (Sue Champion and Nelson Connelly-Smith) for all their hard work in organising the Sacristy, keeping everything clean and tidy, and preparing for services.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all the servers for their dedication and enthusiasm.

Kathryn Macfarlane

## **Stewards**

The stewarding team at St Mary's supports the clergy and sacristy team in ensuring the smooth running of services and the safety and security of the congregation. Down from a peak of 31 stewards last spring, the team currently numbers 26. For a variety of reasons, Muriel Draper, Lynne Ellis, Hilary Hamnett, Eddie Iiechukwu, Gordon Lowther, Shona Maciver, Stephen Murray and Debbie White have left the team during the past 12 months, while we have welcomed back Hazel and seen Chinedu and Madad join us. An attempt, in September, to address reduced numbers of both stewards and welcomers by integrating the two teams, was not entirely successful but has hopefully paved the way for development during the coming year.

Tony Hughes

## **Students at St Mary's**

In the past year students at St Mary's have continued to meet for lunch after the 10:30 service on Sundays and socialising throughout the year. In the past year we have had a wine and cheese night, a Christmas lunch and secret santa, a Shrove Tuesday celebration with liturgy and an Easter celebration.

We have partnered with Student Christian Movement Glasgow Network and the Student Hub at Wellington Church of Scotland. In this capacity we've been involved in events run

by those organisations such as a fortnightly Bible study and freshers event, as well as events for LGBT History Month.

We are in the process of writing a rule of life to follow together over Advent. This was suggested by Sister AJ who has been advising us and providing pastoral support.

The past year has seen our numbers grow and we now have a group of about 15 people who attend St Mary's and several affiliated students. Numbers who attend week by week fluctuate but we regularly have between 8 and 10 people at lunch on any given Sunday.

As to participation within the wider Church students and young people at St Mary's are involved in serving, the readers rota, the intercession rota, the fair-trade stall, young church, stewards, and interfaith work.

Caitlin Wakefield

## Tea-run

The Tea-run continues as a necessary service in the weekly life of the homeless in Glasgow.

As winter and the cold weather approach, the need for hot drinks and food become more comforting, as do directions to the seasonal night shelters set up by charitable groups and Glasgow city council.

More and more homeless are coming from refugee and non-British environments and are transitory users of our services. Local people tend to come out of loneliness, financial deprivation and tend to be the most marginalised in their local communities. The majority are men - but there are marginalised women, also out of prisons, hospitals, with addictions.

The Tea-run is wider than St Mary's presence and I also coordinate teams of Humanists and Quakers at Cadogan Street. We also work with a Buddhist presence representing a range of people with different backgrounds offering hot soup, pasta and sandwiches under strict professional guidelines. There is also a multid denominational pastoral street presence on the alert for the most vulnerable.

The Tea-run is part of a wider service to the homeless and the marginalised. It comes under the umbrella of the Cadogan Street Soup Kitchen and as such we are proud and committed to working with groups of Sikhs, Muslims, and many other faiths and belief groups.

St Mary's has established further useful dialogue with Inter-faith Glasgow which has a commitment to food justice and we are looking to influence future involvement through our work.

The voluntary work undertaken by the Tea-run is supported by the Cathedral and we rely on the on-going and enthusiastic support of the congregation in our compassionate but sometimes stressed-out service to one of the most deprived inner-cities in the country.

Look out for a request for new unopened toiletries - deodorants, shower gels, shampoos, shaving foam - in the future.

Olanna Horhut

## Traidcraft stall

One way the congregation supports the work of the Fairtrade movement is by purchasing goods from the Traidcraft stall. For 2016-2017 purchases have been down compared with previous years totalling £1672.23. Apart from selling Traidcraft goods to the value of £1434.63, the stall sold Just Trading Scotland (JTS) products including rice and preserves totalling £237.60.

I would like to thank the team of dedicated people who ensure that there is a stall nearly every Sunday and for the donations of seasonal produce.

Graham Skellern

## Verger

As usual, this has been a particularly busy year at the Cathedral. A particular joy was the ordination of Jonathan Livingstone to the Diaconate. There were so many clergy present that it was quite challenging to arrange seating for all of them, but we did this. The service was conducted by the Bishop, and went without a hitch. Anyone who saw it will not be able to forget the huge angel in the Sanctuary, made from dried teabags.

It was also a pleasure to welcome the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem to their annual service, which was held this year at St. Mary's.

There are far too many people to thank by name. They know who they are. They are the people who count the money, who organise the coffee for the 11am service on Thursdays and for the Sunday morning service, the home visiting team, those who help with Open Church and other events, the stewards and the welcomers, the servers and the choir and everyone who helps in whatever way with what happens at the Cathedral.

There is one person, however, who must be mentioned and that is George Eastcroft. Without him, many of the small repairs around the Cathedral would not get done or we would have to spend money on them. That is a significant contribution.

Finally, as always, my thanks go to Joanna Russell, Iain Milne, the Events' Organiser, and Sandy Fraser who have not only put up with me this year, but have given me a constant supply of coffee and biscuits. And, of course, I would like to thank Kelvin and Cedric for all the support they have given me this year.

David Kenvyn

## Volunteers

We are an ever changing congregation - people join us for a while and then have to move on but that also adds to the richness of who we are. St Mary's is also a very busy place, needing support from members. Please consider whether you can help out - it's a great way of getting to know people and taking up a role is not for life! The 'Who's Who' leaflet is a help to those wondering about activities and who runs them. Please ask me if you need to know anything more and as I say every year: thank you so much for all you do at St Mary's - we are a blessed community of generous people.

Franny Mawditt

## West End ACTS

The Committee, representing more than ten church congregations in the west of the city, met on three occasions. It was represented by myself and other members of the group at several ecumenical services and meetings arranged by the city-wide Glasgow Churches Together and at others forming part of the annual St. Mungo Festival. It was itself responsible for organising two main events. On January 26<sup>th</sup> a highly successful and enjoyable Burns Supper was held in the new Gurdwara in Berkeley Street, jointly organised by WEACTS and its Sikh congregation. Attended by around 150 guests the highlight was probably the recitation of the Ode to a Louse, recited by heart in impeccable Glaswegian Scots by a 12 year-old member of the community.

With more serious intent, WEACTS again approached Professor John Curtice to chair a hustings between the local candidates for election to the Westminster Parliament. As before, the group is grateful to St. Mary's for agreeing to be the venue for another successful event.

Looking ahead, the group has shown interest in helping to ease the problems of isolation and hardship of the city's numerous refugees and asylum seekers. This may hopefully be taken further by the time of its next meeting in January.

John Gerrard

## Young Church

Young Church has had a demanding but fulfilling year. Due to circumstances utterly beyond her control we lost our excellent Children and Families organizer Lorraine Darlow, and what had been a reasonably viable team of Christine Walker, providing music, and Lorraine and ourselves providing cover for the other kinds of learning was reduced to us, Rosemary and Sophie, providing cover with valued help from Vicki Henderson. Vicki has many outside commitments and while we are deeply grateful to her for the help she gives, and to Ethel Parker who helps Christine, we are very undermanned.

Christine provides incredible musical experiences about half the Sundays in term time, and Rosemary and Sophie cover the other days, and also the holidays. Young Church runs every Sunday of the year, and also for some major festivals.

Young Church is not much like the Sunday School that used to be. It is informal, much less structured, and generally for much younger children.

A few figures. Until some key families moved for the new academic year, we had a core group of seventeen children and an average attendance of about nine. This sounds very few, but in early 2016 there was a core group of about seven with an average attendance of about six. We now have a core group of approximately 13. St Mary's is an ever shifting congregation.

The age range of YC is enormous. We regularly have children of two, and also of ten. The wide range of ages makes it very hard to do anything like latching on to agreed educational levels. Most of our children are either pre literate, or in the first two years of Primary. The fact that the core group very rarely all attend at once, means that we cannot rely on any child having met any lesson for us to build on it. An example. During our series on the Lord's Prayer we talked about 'hallowed' and halos and how we are all becoming saints, holy, the people of God. It would have been wonderful if we could have

built on that for our lesson on All Saints. It turned out that only one of ten children had been at the first lesson. But of course, another week, it might have been all of them. We have to provide for each eventuality.

Space is at a premium at St M's and we cannot usually set up before the service, though paintings can usually be left to dry until the end of the service. We are very fortunate that the clergy already have an ethos of being inclusive which extends to our children.

### **Diversity**

St Mary's has the usual mix of city children, ethnically and socially. We always talk about 'your grown-ups'. This is because we have many different configurations of families, also some are brought to church by their grandparents but every child has a grown-up. We encourage the grown-ups with the smaller children to stay and help. It makes things much easier and more relaxed. Larger families often depute this to a big sister, and this works fine.

Where we are drawing faces, we make sure we have paints and chinks to cover a variety of skin tones. It is very trying that the chinks are so much more expensive but it is the only way you can be sure of including children from BAME backgrounds, or, if you are drawing Biblical characters, of getting near their real flesh tones. Jesus did not come from a blond, blue-eyed people.

Of all the things we bought, the ones we have found most useful (after paper, paints and chinks and felt tip pens) are our double set of puppets. We bought one African and one Asian set, and we use them freely to story-tell. It is much easier for young children to focus with their visual stimulation. Also the older children can help by using a puppet to tell part of the story.

They also get away from a white Jesus/Abraham and all the others, and the endless tea towel headdresses. We made a baby, which it is very simple to do, and very frequently needed.

### **How we get our materials**

An early question was 'Could we beg, borrow or buy (or even steal) a set of lessons from other providers?' The answer proved to be that we could borrow some ideas, but no series really covered our needs. For one thing, we lock into the life of the congregation. We have tied two of our sessions on prayer and spirituality into the last two sets of baptisms. For one we made little floating flowers which carried prayers which opened in water and put them in the font after the baptism. For the other, the children came up with a series of prayers of thanksgiving for water. When it came to water to play with and also to flush the loo, the Provost was heard to murmur "That's a good one."

Quite a lot of the possible material is for much older children and assumes writing skills ours do not yet have. Quite a lot is terribly shallow. For instance, there is a lot to be said for exploring the idea of the Holy Spirit as wind, and part of that might be as bubbles floating in air. But pretty as that is, the church thinks of the Spirit as a mighty rushing wind, every bit as much as a pretty vehicle for soap bubbles. And quite a lot of the material on offer supposes a theology that is not the theology of the grown-ups at St Mary's. We know the children will have a lot more to learn as they grow in faith, but we want a sound basis, not things they will have to unlearn.

So, generally, Rosemary and Sophie have created the material with the help of a little borrowing, and overall the year has been fabulous.



The highlight of our year was a grand combined session for Easter Parish Mass, where the group of 28 children were split into two, with one group learning an Alleluia song with the wonderful Christine, whose work so marvellously balances ours, and the other group colouring banners of the Alleluias we had locked up for Lent, and decorating the Easter Garden we had made on Good Friday. We then ‘swapped sides’ so the other group learned the song, and at the end, all the children and some parents processed up the aisle, singing and waving banners.

**A snapshot of some things we did:**

- Thought about the Lord’s Prayer, clause by clause.
- Had a rolling series of activities for Good Friday’s three hour service
- We celebrated Easter
- Whitsun, during the latter parents and helpers recited verses from the Lord’s Prayer in Ibo, German, French and Latin and Greek.
- We ran a series on prayer and thought about different ways of sharing things with God.
- We all made drawings which were blessed and put on the altar. We prayed using our imaginations.
- We used the story of Jacob and the angels for this, once again using the puppets to help. Our prayer stations included walking up and down steps pretending we were angels, using play dough to make a meal for Esau and painting an angel.
- Cedric came and told us about the Jesus prayer and we all made a rope of prayer beads using large wooden beads – for the tinies, these were huge wooden beads.
- We drew our own huge labyrinth and walked it praying. Then we drew smaller ones to take home
- Made a big heart and hung from it little hearts with drawings or words to pray for people we loved
- It was very interesting to see how different children responded positively to very different ‘spiritual exercises’. What meant a great deal to one child, might mean little to another, and what left one unmoved could be the start of a continued spiritual practice for another.
- We told some of the stories of Moses.
- We made a figure for All Saints to represent the church and filled it with small cut out saints, coloured and drawn by the children, because the church is her people.

It has been varied, fun and fulfilling. We are looking forward to John Riches coming to inspire us to justice, and Kelvin taking us on a Sacristy Safari. We want more collaborative art works, and we are making a star for the Christmas Eve crib service. We remain desperately short handed, and full of ideas for the future.

Rosemary Hannah and Sophie Agrell

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