

*St Mary's Cathedral,
Glasgow*

*Annual Report
2019 / 20*

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Agenda – Annual General Meeting, 1pm, Sunday 22 November 2020 (by Zoom)

1. Opening prayers and memorial for the departed
2. Apologies for absence
3. Acceptance of AGM minutes of 24 November 2019
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 Property group report*
 - 4.7 Compliance group report*
 - 4.8 Music Director's report*
5. Elections to Vestry

Nominations:

 - 5.1 Lay representative
Beth Routledge (proposer Franny Mawditt, seconder Stewart Macfarlane).
 - 5.2 People's warden
Franny Mawditt (proposer Brian Toal, seconder Neil Parker)
 - 5.3 Alternate lay representative / Diocesan N E Regional Council representative
Taylor Driggers (proposer Caitlin Wakefield, seconder Jo Russell)
 - 5.4 Vestry members (five vacancies)
 - Alan McCulloch (proposer Alan Grant, seconder Billy Scorgie)
 - Becki Cox (proposer Robert MacDonald, seconder Liffy Grant)
 - Bob Leslie (proposer: Anne Jones, seconder David Kenvyn)
 - Olanna Horhut (proposer Elizabeth Moles, seconder Peggy Brown)
 - Ruth Marshall (proposer Iain Milne, seconder Beth Routledge)
 - Shona MacIver (proposer Pam Richmond, seconder Alan Richmond)
6. Group and network reports*
7. Questions arising from reports
8. Provost's remarks
9. Closing prayers

*Reports all taken as having been read

ST MARY'S EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL, GLASGOW

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON SUNDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2019

Chair: The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth (Provost)

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

Present:

Rev Canon Oliver Brewer-Lennon, Irene Ballantine, Gareth Allen, Anne Robertson, John Gerrard, Margaret Gerrard, Matt Cavanagh, Frank Ewing, Karen Ewing, Liffy Grant, Peggy Brown, Michael Gammie, Harriette Campbell, Franny Mawditt, Robert Mawditt, Kieran Hunter, Sandra Fraser, David Burness, Catherine Mackenzie, Susan Anthony, Greta Mary Hair, Tony Hughes, Christina Hughes, Sue Champion, Caroline McKillop, Kit Lindsay, Anne Jones, Gordon Mathieson, Robyn Airlie, Ian Halliburton, Michael Shanks, Jean Inch, Claire Howell, Kathryn Macfarlane, Stewart Macfarlane, Anne Halliburton, Alan Grant, Joe Brewer-Lennon, Gill Young, Rosalind Searle, Pam Richmond, Bob Leslie, Helen Leslie, Beth Routledge, Joanna Russell, Sr Helena Barrett, Sr Alison Joy Whybrow, Wolfgang Schlegel, Becki Cox, David Kenvyn, Iain Milne, Caitlin Wakefield, Monica Long, Steven McIntyre, Frikki Walker, Christine Walker, Graham Hair, Jinty Stewart, Lynda McCulloch, Alan McCulloch, Michael Hitchman, Migeun Park, Diane Elliot, Lisa Curtice, Neil Aitken, Heather O'Connor, David Hanson, Jessica F Cooper, Vivienne Smith, Emily Wheeler, Robert McDonald, Lisella Hutton.

1. Opening prayers and memorial for the departed

The Provost opened the meeting by giving thanks for the life of those whose funerals were held in the Cathedral in the last year: George Horn, Jason Reese, Philip Hunkin and Doreen Dawson. He also gave thanks for all the departed of previous years who had contributed to the Cathedral.

2. Apologies for absence

Bruce & Eleanor Montgomery-Smith, Gordon & Christine Lowther, Ken & Margaret Taylor, Graham Skellern, Roger Edwards, Pat Bennett, Debbie Lewer, Gail & Gordon Smith, Muriel & Ivan Draper Alan Richmond, Roger Edwards, Robert Elliot, Lucy PMC Hellawell, John Curtice, Ella Aitken, BrianJohn Aitken.

3. Acceptance of AGM minutes of 25 November 2018

The minutes were accepted without amendment and signed by the Provost.

4. Governance: Achievements and performance (Trustees' report); Treasurer's report; Appointment of the independent examiner; Vestry Secretary's report; Leadership Group report; Core Group report; Property Group report; Compliance Group report; Fundraising Group report

The Provost noted that the reports had been circulated with the AGM papers via the

website in advance of the meeting. The reports with an asterisk would be taken as read though questions could be raised regarding any of them. He thanked the Cathedral Administrator, Iain Milne, for his hard work in bringing the AGM papers together and also all those who had prepared the reports.

Treasurer's report

There were no questions to the Treasurer about his report.

Appointment of the independent examiner

The Treasurer proposed that we reappoint Jenny Irvine of Bell Barr who had been the independent auditor last year. This was seconded by Margaret Gerard and the meeting agreed nem con.

Music Director's report and Fundraising report

Pam Richmond expressed disappointment that so little progress on fund raising for the organ and encouraged further activity. Steven McIntyre emphasised the difficulty in keeping the organ going. He was concerned that there was no longer a target date for the organ rebuild and commented that the quotation from Harrison & Harrison was likely to be out of date. He also asked what should be done about continuing to fund raise at present and with donations already received? Frikki Walker asked if a professional fundraiser had been considered?

The Provost replied that in the last year more information had been gathered on our space needs, but no obvious solution had emerged, and it was unlikely that this would be taken forward in the coming year. He asked Michael Shanks to comment on the review of fundraising which he is chairing.

Michael indicated that Vestry had not felt able to sign the contract for the organ rebuild with Harrison & Harrison last December as only a small proportion of the £1.5m quotation had been raised. Fundraising continued in the early part of 2019 but by mid year only £65k had been raised and Vestry decided to take a strategic look at its fundraising and income generation. That report is being finalised and should be ready for the December Vestry meeting. A professional fundraiser will be considered but caution is necessary as such individuals do not always manage to raise more than their own salary.

Stewart Macfarlane asked that the congregation be kept informed of the outcome of the Vestry discussions, possibly at an EGM.

There were no questions about the remaining governance reports.

5. Elections

The following nominations for Vestry had been received:

Lay Representative: Beth Routledge (proposer Franny Mawditt, seconder Stewart Macfarlane).

People's Warden: Franny Mawditt (proposer Brian Toal, seconder Neil Parker).

Vestry Members (2 vacancies): Gordon Matheson (proposer Michael Shanks, seconder Jim McKillop) & Pat Bennett (proposer Alan McCulloch, seconder Franny Mawditt).

As the number of nominations matched the vacancies the above named were declared elected.

No nominations had been received for Alternative Lay Representative. Leadership Group would consider this.

The Provost thanked those who were newly elected for their willingness to stand and existing Vestry members for all of their work on behalf of the Cathedral.

6. Group and network reports

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

7. Questions arising from the reports

No questions were raised about the reports.

8. Provost's remarks

The Provost commented that the last year had been challenging with no Vice Provost in post and his increased Diocesan load due to there being no Bishop. He was delighted that Oliver Brewer-Lennon was now in post as Vice Provost.

The Provost thanked Jo Russell, who had resigned as Office Manager during the year, for all she had done for the Cathedral during her eight years in post. He welcomed Iain Milne, Cathedral Administrator, who had taken over from her.

He thanked the many volunteers without whom the Cathedral could not run. He specifically thanked

- Wolfgang Schlegel for all of the work he had done during his six years as a Vestry member, particularly on space needs and possible solutions.
- BrianJohn Aitken who had resigned from Vestry.
- Sue Champion and Caroline McKillop for their work as coordinators of the School of Spirituality which was ceasing.
- Graham Skellern for many years as Fairtrade organiser.
- Anne Jones for many years dedicated service as the Cathedral PVG Coordinator. Matt Cavanagh will take over this role. Anne will continue with her diocesan PVG work.
- Iain Milne for his work as Events Coordinator.
- Anne Chowaniec for her work as Open Church Coordinator.

He congratulated Steven McIntyre on his recent award of the Silver Medal of the Worshipful Company of Musicians.

Franny Mawditt, on behalf of the congregation, recognised that the last year had been very challenging. She thanked all of the clergy for shouldering the increased workload that there had been in the last year and welcomed Oliver and his husband Joe. She also thanked Jim McKillop for his ongoing and considerable work in keeping things going, recognising that he too had had an increased load in the last year.

She commented that we are blessed to have Kelvin as our Provost. He has clear vision of what we should be trying to achieve and gives us strong and caring leadership.

9. Closing prayers

The Provost closed the meeting with a blessing.

Achievements and performance (Trustees' report)

St Mary's Cathedral is a congregation of the Scottish Episcopal Church that aspires to be Open, Inclusive and Welcoming. It is a place of liturgical excellence which nourishes the faith of people drawn from across the West of Scotland and increasingly from further afield.

This year, St Mary's faced some of the biggest challenges that it has faced in modern times with the outbreak of the Covid 19 Pandemic.

Prior to the outbreak of the Pandemic, St Mary's was a busy building with many groups and activities serving the local community. These included activities such as hosting 12 Step groups aiming to help people break a dependency on alcohol as well as hosting concerts and events for external groups.

Following the outbreak of the Pandemic almost all activity in the physical building came to an abrupt halt. A national lockdown came into place in the middle of March which led to the building being closed for worship and for all events. The Cathedral Office was also closed.

Within days of the announcement of the lockdown St Mary's transitioned to being a completely online organisation. Weekly online Eucharistic services have been offered each week since that time. This involves significant demands on clergy time in recording and editing the videos that are produced with music provided by a number of the cathedral's musicians.

Following an easing of the Covid lockdown regulations, in-person worship began again in the cathedral building on the Sunday following the Feast of the Assumption – 16 August 2020.

There have been no changes in the paid staff of the cathedral this year though two members of staff have been on furlough for large parts of the year – their posts supported by the government. The Vestry have ensured throughout that both members of staff on furlough or part time furlough continued to receive the equivalent of their full pay.

The Rev Matthew Little left his post as an Associate Priest in June to become Rector of St Mary's, Hamilton and St Andrew's, Uddingston.

Before the lockdown in March, members of the Vestry held an Away Day to consider in particular matters relating to the cathedral's finances. Within weeks it was necessary to put some of the plans made at this Away Day into practice. With no physical congregation, meeting the opportunities for people to donate to St Mary's in cash at services disappeared and income from hosting events ceased abruptly. However, a significant number of people have increased their giving to the congregation or taken out new pledges. The work of the Gift Aid Recorder Alan McCulloch has been significant in helping members of the congregation to give money to the congregation.

This year a new Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway was appointed, the Rt Rev Kevin Pearson who translated from the Diocese of Argyll and The Isles on 1 July 2020. Prior to this date

the Provost continued to be called upon for additional Diocesan duties. It would normally be expected that the cathedral would have been the gathering place for services to welcome and install a new bishop. In the event this wasn't possible, and Bishop Kevin was welcomed at virtual events involving online video.

In many ways the year that has passed has been enormously difficult and has been filled with great sadnesses. Since March 2020 it has not been possible for members of the choir to sing together. A single cantor has been allowed at worship and this led to an exploration of the plainsong repertoire that no one would otherwise have envisioned. Several funerals have taken place at which far fewer people were allowed to attend than would have wanted to attend.

Many of the cathedral's groups have found it difficult to meet in the second half of the year. However, new online patterns are continuing to emerge.

A planned series of talks relating to Climate Change leading up to the Conference of the Parties (COP) Climate Talks which were due to be held in Glasgow in November 2020 (now postponed until 2021) became a series of podcasts.

Dr Debbie Lewer recorded a number of podcasts on individual works of art. The number of views of these podcasts reaches into the tens of thousands.

Significant change has come to the pastoral life of the congregation with many members of the congregation keeping in touch with one another by phone. A new development has been the establishment of an Online Coffee Hour on a Sunday lunchtime which draws together those who have been in church and those who have worshipped online. This has developed from a simple discussion time to a weekly event with a range of discussion themes that include informal teaching and interviews. Details of this, the worship and other activities are advertised through a weekly email which is sent to anyone who signs up to receive them on the cathedral website.

The pattern of worship has changed significantly and now consists of two services on a Sunday – a Plainsong Service at 9 am and a Sung Eucharist at 11 am using some of the music that had previously been used at the 10.30 am services. Both of these services are currently limited to 50 people in attendance. More people now engage with worship from St Mary's online than do so in person. Thus the reach of the cathedral has been extended and there are regular worshippers from across the world.

New worshippers have continued to be welcomed to the in-person services.

This year has been enormously difficult for individuals and organisations alike. St Mary's has responded to the situation by trying to be true to its principles of being Open, Inclusive and Welcoming and by having high quality worship at the heart of its life.

Leadership Group

Provost – the Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth

Vice Provost – the Rev Canon Oliver Brewer-Lennon

People's Warden – Franny Mawditt

Provost's Warden – Jim McKillop

Treasurer's report

Both the financial years 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 should be regarded as exceptional.

The former was a year in which we expanded our property portfolio having recruited a new Vice-Provost after almost a year without one. Purchase of a property to house our new employee required realisation of investment assets fortunately still available to us that derived from property sales over thirteen years ago. These investments have gained considerably over the succeeding ~15 years. The cash balances at the end of that fiscal year were significantly affected by a residue not deployed in house purchase showing an increase of around £70,500.

The latter year of course brought the Covid19 pandemic at almost the midpoint of our financial year. Easter was 'cancelled' but was followed by a rather limited relaxation of total shutdown whilst representing a significant reduction of our normal activities. This continues at the time of writing this report and further restrictions are looking more and more likely as we approach Christmas. Might Christmas too be 'cancelled'?

I believe that the major interest in this year's accounts will be the financial effects of the pandemic. In exploring this I will occasionally compare the two halves of 2019/2020, before and after Easter, and also frequently relate back to the same categories of income and expenditure in the same periods in 2018/2019.

Over a full year general income was nearly £22,000 higher in 2018/2019 mainly due to £18,500 of carried over legacy funds. Organ Restoration funds were nearly £34,000 ahead due to 2018/2019 being the launch year for the appeal. If we take these exceptional factors out, general income was ahead in the earlier year by around £3000 and I assign this reduction in the main to almost total loss of service collection income and related tax reclaims. The singular impact of 'missing Easter' is particularly noticeable. The congregation have made some significant one-off donations, some recognising plate collection was in abeyance, which reduced what the loss might have been. New regular giving as replacement for giving at services attended has replaced some of this loss.

A specific factor leading to an increase in 'pledged giving via bank' in 2019/2020 is the congregational response to a campaign conducted by the Gift Aid Recorder, Alan McCulloch, to increase pledged giving. Income from pledging donors tends to be higher in the first half of the year probably because this half covers Christmas and sometimes Easter (though not in 2019). The half yearly figures are roughly £55,000/£53,000 (2019) and £51,000/£59,000 (2020).

Traidcraft income was down £1125, due to no Traidcraft stall activity in the second half of the year. Investment income was down £12986. This was due in part to no income deriving from the untenanted Napiershall St flat. This became vacant in October 2019 and the decision was made to refurbish the flat before marketing it with a new agent. This was not the best of timing and was complicated by the legal situation around the trusteeship of the flat which was, until beyond the end of the financial year under review, still in the name of the Diocese. SEC UTP dividends are reduced year on year due to £200,000 realisation of investments for purchase of the Vice-Provost's flat. Trading income, though dominated by phone mast rental payments, is down a little by £2730 due to loss of Synod Hall and Cathedral letting.

Quota costs, in which there is no Covid19 effect, reflect in part the change in Diocesan support for clergy salaries. These costs were reduced by £6110 in 2019/2020 from the previous year. The full comparison of support for the Cathedral from the Diocese between the two years would need to factor in the loss of property provision for the Vice-Provost's accommodation and consequent effects of the Cathedral taking on this provision. £5985 income from HMRC furlough support claims was received as Steven McIntyre and Iain Milne were placed on full time, subsequently part time, furlough. There was no furlough effect on any staff salaries as we continued to pay salaries in full. Total salary costs increased by £24362 which mainly reflects the employment of the Vice-Provost plus some inflationary increases for all staff.

Fabric costs were reduced by £18870 due in the main to a significant decrease in equipment purchase and a total stop on maintenance for nearly 3 months. It seems maintenance has caught up after the end of the financial year. A small saving in support for liturgical activities of £1520 was noted. £2800 was saved on office activities, though reduced printing and utility costs were offset by an increase in IT support costs due mainly to an online liturgical presence. The main saving was again almost no purchase of equipment. Lack of equipment purchase may well be a pandemic effect, but it is not directly related.

Overall, in the year 2019/2020 we ran at a deficit of £31000. In the previous year we ran at a profit of £6340. In reaching these numbers I have removed exceptional factors such as investment realisation and property purchase; also hypothecated income such as the organ restoration fund and income to the Music Endowment Fund. In practice the 2018/2019 funds are still inflated, as stated above, by some £18500 of residual legacy income from the previous year.

In conclusion, there is no such thing as a normal year. There is a pepper of Covid19 effects in 2019/2020 and of course this will continue into 2020/2021 – another abnormal year.

Roger Mackenzie

Vestry secretary's report

Vestry met 6 times in the last year. All but the first meeting were by Zoom. They also held an Away Day in February.

Inevitably Vestry discussions were dominated by our response to the problems and restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The issues considered included

- the immediate response to lockdown.
- the delivery of online worship.
- re-opening safely for public worship in August.
- rules for access to the building by staff, volunteers and external users.
- furloughing of staff and working from home by staff.
- the impact on our income and measures to address that.
- the impact on clergy and other staff.
- arrangements for pastoral care of the congregation.

Vestry was helped greatly in its Covid-19 related discussions by the careful and detailed work of the Compliance Group (Michael Shanks, Beth Routledge and Caitlin Wakefield) and by the input of a Covid-19 Medical Advisory Group (Justine Inns, Jim McKillop, Roddy Neilson, Uche Nwachukwu, Abha Paulina, Beth Routledge, and Andy Winter).

Other topics considered by Vestry in the year included

- the approval of the annual report to OSCR, including the accounts approved by the independent examiner.
- PVG procedures at the Cathedral.
- The renovation and re-letting of the Napierhall Street flat and the transfer of ownership of the flat from the Diocese to the Cathedral.
- fundraising activities and possibilities for rebuilding or replacing the organ.
- action to support asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland in response to concerns raised by members of the congregation.
- a farewell to Matthew Little on his appointment as Rector of St Mary's, Hamilton and St Andrew's, Uddingston.
- the appointment of Liffy Grant as Vestry Secretary. Liffy will take up post after the AGM.

This is my last Vestry Secretary's report to the AGM. I have enjoyed being in this post immensely but am grateful to Liffy for her willingness to succeed me. I wish her well in the role.

Jim McKillop
Vestry Secretary

Leadership group

The Leadership Group (the Provost, the Vice Provost, Franny Mawditt & Jim McKillop) had 16 meetings in the last year (14 by Zoom). They also were in frequent contact by email and phone between meetings.

The principal business of the Group was the effects of and our response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The issues outlined in the Vestry Secretary's report were discussed in advance of and between Vestry meetings by the Leadership Group. This included discussions of

- arrangements for online and in church services.
- the continuation of online services after in-church services became possible again in August.
- how to conduct in-church services safely.
- why we should continue with pre-recorded services online after re-opening in August rather than streaming in-church services.
- how to maintain our community. Franny set up a network of contacters for this purpose.
- the demands on the clergy and other staff. Clergy were encouraged to ensure they had their days off and took annual leave.
- responses to requests for access to the Cathedral and the office.
- obtaining a licence for the use of music in online services.

- AV requirements for online services.
- possible arrangements if Glasgow moves to Covid Level 4.

Other matters considered by the Leadership Group included

- arrangements for Young Church both before and after lockdown.
- preparations for the now postponed climate change conference in Glasgow. The Vice Provost arranged a series of lectures which were delivered online.
- Cathedral finances.
- Cathedral courses – now suspended.
- the appointment of Pam and Alan Richmond as Senior Stewards in succession to Tony Hughes. Tony was thanked for his efficient and dedicated service in this role.
- the Student Group.
- the concerns raised by members of the congregation about the treatment of asylum seekers and refugees. The Provost and Vice Provost met some of those who raised the issue. Following interaction with the Justice and Aid Network, the Leadership Group wrote to the Provincial Mission Board highlighting the concerns raised and indicating the need for greater action at Provincial level in this area.
- the imminent need to replace the office photocopier. This has been postponed for the present.
- the Napiershall Street flat.
- the purchase of new vestments. This has been paused since lockdown.

Jim McKillop
Provost's Warden

Property group

Although the pandemic has affected the normal functioning of most aspects of church life here at St. Mary's, the Property Group continues to oversee projects related to maintenance and upkeep. Some of the projects for the past year which have either been completed or are in process include:

- Removing ivy which had protruded into the Synod Hall roof;
- Box shaping the trees between the Church and the Office to make for easier passage and better aesthetics;
- Re-lamping of the LED lighting in the church;
- Installation of Carbon monoxide detectors in the church office;
- Replacement of ignition assembly to the main boiler; inspection of any concealed flue joints in church office boiler;
- Inspection and certification of lighting protector in church tower;
- Essential repairs and maintenance work done to Napiershall St flat, in advance of it being let out to a new tenant.

Once the church is able to be used fully again, there will be other projects which will need to be undertaken over the medium to long-term, such as:

- Repair and maintenance works in the mid-level Bell Room (Bell Chamber);
- Repair and maintenance works to the Spire and Spire Louvres;
- Addressing the damp/damage in St Anne's Chapel;
- Review of any outstanding items remaining from the last Quinquennial review.

Steve Innes,
Property Group Convenor

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 last year has been an interesting one to say the least! As I'm sure will feature in many of the reports this year, the major focus of the Compliance Group was on preparing St Mary's to reopen for communal worship in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Within a very short time the Group had prepared a recovery plan and a risk assessment that received approval from Bishop Kevin. We also put in place the practical steps to get our new version of communal worship up and running – including a rather tiring (and dusty) day clearing hassocks from every pew and a memorable moment where the three of us attempted to glue sanitiser dispensers to metal poles! In the end all the preparations – from many more people than our group – were a success.

Our aim at the outset was to create a safe environment where people felt comfortable to come to church but that didn't feel overly 'locked down'. With the very hard work of the clergy, stewards and servers we hope we have achieved that.

Prior to the pandemic consuming all our time, our focus was on more day-to-day compliance issues including safeguarding, continuing to monitor GDPR, and responding to matters in our risk management framework. Our rolling actions log continues to track progress on a number of key issues, many of which are on hold until normal service resumes – whenever that might be!

This will be my last report as Convenor of the Compliance Group and as a member of Vestry. My thanks to Beth and Caitlin – the faithful and hard-working Compliance Group members for all they have done this year. They have made a difficult job much, much easier, and dare I say a good laugh at times too. Given the year we've had, that's no small feat.

Michael Shanks
Convenor

Music Report

Cathedral Choir

The past seven months have been extremely difficult for the Cathedral Choir.

They have been meeting through “Zoom” a platform that allows many people to speak to each other: many of you will be only too familiar with it I’m sure, from business meetings of one sort or another. Unfortunately, the technology does not exist to allow us to sing together through electronic platforms, as there is a time delay, and that delay differs from device to device and network to network, so there is no way of synchronising a group of singers together. So, the only way to run anything is for me to talk and play and sing at the choir, whilst they are all muted. They can hear me, but I can’t hear them, and they can’t hear each other.

Having missed the liturgical splendour of Passiontide and Easter, there were so many plans for the Summer Term that were also cancelled, that it has been a struggle to keep the adult choir going. The social aspect of the choir is very important, and they miss seeing each other face to face. Apart from also missing the weekly challenge and discipline of the services, we had a big concert planned with a visiting choir from Canada, we were to record another CD and we should have been singing in Gloucester Cathedral in July – all of it of course cancelled. Then with the passing of Gordon Smith and Bernard Porter, and not being able to give them the send-off we would have wanted to, morale has taken quite a beating.

We have been keeping together through a variety of Quiz nights, warm-up videos and Zoom singing sessions.

Each week I send out music (electronically) that they know and are familiar with and enjoy singing, and we have sung through lots and lots of lovely music just to keep the repertoire going and to keep their voices exercised. Not every choir member makes it every week, but those who do come along seem to have enjoyed the rehearsals and found them helpful.

In the next few weeks we are going to welcome special guests to our rehearsals to talk to the choir about their music and their lives. Our first guest will be the composer Cecilia McDowall, and future guests include Malcolm Archer and the legendary John Rutter.

So, between the Zoom Rehearsals and the Quiz nights, the choir are still hanging together, but are desperate to sing together again. We have no idea how long it will be before we can resume any sort of singing in church again, but until we do, I will continue to do my very best to keep the choir together and in as decent musical shape as I can from a distance!

The Choristers

Once we realised that the lockdown was going to last quite a while, we first introduced Zoom Rehearsals for the choristers in April. Prior to those starting I recorded some teaching videos for them, including vocal exercises, and teaching videos to teach them some new songs, and then recordings of the accompaniments to their songs to practice

with at home. Shae Weir, who helps me with the choristers, also recorded some warm-ups and some singing games for them.

At the start of the lockdown, we had only 12 choristers in the children's section of the choir. I was on the verge of a recruitment drive set to launch in the Summer, which of course hasn't happened, but to start with we had pretty much a 100% turnout for the Zoom Rehearsals. The repertoire we have covered includes warm-ups and singing games, Spirituals, Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo, and a new Haydn Mass, and anthems by Marty Haugen, Simon Lindley, and even two new pieces for Christmas, in the hope that we might have been able to perform together by then! We have had the sessions at 5.30pm on a Thursday, and they can log in from 5.15pm to chat, which they all do, and after the rehearsal, we let them stay on and chat to us and to each other for as long as they like, pretty much, afterwards, which is variously chaotic and hilarious!

However, long-term on Zoom has been extremely challenging, and unfortunately, we have lost some choristers on the way, and then we are losing a couple of boys as their voices change. Normally I would phase the changed voices into the adult choir, but without the support of singing next to the adults, that is simply not a realistic option.

It's a great pity that the choristers and the adults have not had any time together as they normally would in church.

Royal School of Music Voice for Life Bronze and Silver Awards

Six of our choristers were due to take these exams in March in the hope of being able to be presented with their awards on Easter Day. They were so disappointed not to be able to take the tests as they were pretty much ready for them when Lockdown started.

Again, I have recorded their accompaniments and sent them out to the choristers to practise and sing along with. I have also been giving them individual singing and musicianship lessons on Zoom to keep their repertoire up to the mark and to give them practice at their tests. However, to date it has not been possible for them to take their exams, although the RSCM are now working on a format to make the taking of exams possible electronically.

I am not sure how much longer I can realistically keep everyone in the choir engaged and stimulated and I fear for the future of this wonderful choir. When we do finally meet again, it will take some time to rebuild the choir after such a long break. I do sincerely hope that governments and church authorities will be able to accept the many studies that have been going on about singing and the spread of the virus, and be able to see past the demonising of singing and allow us to sing again, as they have been allowed to safely do in England, for example.

Cantors

All through the Spring and Summer, we have had various singers recording music for us for our online worship. This was done largely at home, either with people in my household, or, with people to whom I sent a recorded accompaniment, who then recorded themselves over my track. Then this has transformed into leading the music live in our worship, alone as single solo singer, and continuing to record material for our

online worship. These are extremely demanding things to do, and we are immensely grateful to all the singers who have contributed, and will continue to contribute, so ably and so willingly to enhance our worship with their lovely singing. Thank you all so much!

Former Chorister and Choir member achievements

Being a chorister is a great training ground and we have had news of several successes of achievements by former choristers.

Shae Wier (now in the adult choir and regularly helps train our choristers) obtained a B.Ed degree from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Magnus Walker a B.Mus from the Royal Academy of Music in London, and Archie Inns has gone to Cambridge to work at the chorister school at St John's College, and to sing in their world-famous choir for a year. Tenor Robert Guthrie after obtaining his degree from Glasgow University has gone to be a Choral Scholar at Hereford Cathedral for a year.

Also, former chorister Blair Ferguson, who is a composer and producer (under the name BLK beats) has secured a writing and production credit on a Billboard top 10 album in the USA at the age of just 17!
We are very proud of them all!

New Digital piano

The old digital piano in the Synod Hall has finally expired, and we have been able to purchase a splendid new one by Kawai. This has been funded by the choir fund, with a combination of donations to the choir, and with money raised by the choir through their broadcast and recording fees.

The Organ

The organ appeal has of course faltered somewhat under the present circumstances, but plans are afoot to re-launch things when the time is right.

Chamber Organ

We are immensely grateful to Margaret Dawson, through whose generosity, we have been able to purchase a chamber organ for the cathedral. It is a three-stop continuo organ built by Robin Jennings of Devon in 2009. This stunning little organ will enhance our worship in many ways: as a solo instrument in its own right, as an accompanying instrument to the choir, especially in early music, and it will be a fabulous continuo instrument within a small orchestra, once such things are allowed again. Indeed, those of you who have been able to attend services of late will have heard it on occasion already. There is a video introduction to the organ on my Facebook page, and, if anyone would like to see it, here is the link: https://youtu.be/a77Rm0nP_m8.

Thank you, Margaret, for this amazing gift.

Finally, thank you to everyone for their support, and thank you to the choir for being patient and for hanging on in there under these very trying circumstances. I pray that it will not be too long before we can all raise our voices in song once again.

Frikki Walker
Director of Music

Bellringers

This year started well. We have a strong band of experienced ringers and several learners who were making excellent progress. We rang for both morning and evening services on most Sundays and for the Christmas Day and Epiphany services.

We attempted a quarter peal of Sgurr A'Chaorachain (yes, that really is a ringing method as well as a mountain) for the Tower Captain's birthday but that was unfortunately unsuccessful.

We had an enjoyable Christmas party in December hosted by Ed Gosden and in February we had an outing to Edinburgh when we were able to ring on all four rings of bells in the city and had a delicious lunch together. This was a very enjoyable day in spite of heavy rain and consequent disruption to the train services back to Glasgow.

We held our AGM and annual tower spring clean on 15th March. Unfortunately a couple of days after that all ringing stopped as the country went into lockdown. Ringing for Sunday services resumed for 3 weeks in August. We were not able to ring all the bells on these occasions because of restrictions on the number of households meeting indoors and social distancing. Even this had to stop again when Glasgow was put under more severe restrictions in September and there has been no ringing since then.

A peal was rung by a visiting band in December 2019, but all peals booked for this year have had to be cancelled.

We have been holding weekly Zoom meetings on our normal practice night. Most of these have included some chat and some ringing on 'Ringing Room', a virtual ringing site. This has required different skills from physical bellringing and has proved challenging even to some of the more experienced ringers. It has meant, however, that we have all kept in touch with each other and hopefully it won't be too long before we are able to resume ringing on the 'real' bells.

Margaret Williams

Book group

The Book Group met on 3 September 2019 with 14 titles to consider. This was whittled down to the required eight needed for meeting from October to June, (Jan. being the only month we don't meet).

There were fewer non-fiction titles chosen and since Cedric's departure we have not had a text at Lent. Hopefully this may change with new clergy joining the Cathedral.

March saw Covid and a huge upheaval for us all. The group managed to continue as a Zoom meeting, with the assistance of Kelvin and Franny Mawditt. I was unable to take part, marooned in Renfrewshire and no laptop. The group lost a few members in a similar situation.

Fortunately, when we reconvened in September 2020, I was able to join the Zoom meeting from Edinburgh. Our first meet was successful, and it was good to 'see' people again. Zoom is a good alternative, but not as good as meeting in person. We sometimes have difficulty logging on and there are the usual glitches with technology. We hope that

during this difficult time we can continue to provide a human face and help alleviate the isolation that many of us are feeling. Hopefully better days are ahead.

Gordon McCulloch

Communications

St Mary's Cathedral continues to have a very strong online presence. The cathedral's previous strength in this area proved invaluable in the course of the year, particularly when lockdown was imposed on the country in March 2020.

The cathedral social media accounts have the following number of followers:

Twitter: 1109

Facebook: 3163

Instagram: 341

Email list: 503

Vastly more online content has been created from St Mary's this year than in previous years. A weekly service is pre-recorded and released in three videos - Gathering, Word and Communion. A weekly email is sent to all on the email list.

Of particular note this year has been the production of a number of video podcasts which have been released on the cathedral website and social media. Notable amongst these have been a series of podcasts on individual works of art which have been recorded by Dr Debbie Lewer. A further series of podcasts called CLIMATETALK were published to prepare people for the Conference of the Parties COP Climate Talks which were due to be held in Glasgow in November 2020, but which have now been postponed until 2021.

Kelvin Holdsworth

Compline

Before lockdown, the Cathedral hosted services of Compline on selected weeknights throughout the year. Compline—a liturgy of nighttime songs and prayers—comes from the monastic tradition that divides the day into times of communal worship. Compline is the last of these monastic hours, focusing on themes of reflection, rest and protection. Its texts and accompanying plainsong melodies are some of the most profound and universal of the Christian rite.

For several years, Gail Smith organised these services at the Cathedral. Various cantors took responsibility for leading a half-hour of Gregorian Chant in the candlelit Choir. In February of this year, Gail sought someone to take over the reins of leadership. With thanks to Gail, I was about to launch into this new role. However, lockdown started in Glasgow, preventing the continuation of these in-person services. Not forever, though! The Compline tradition at the Cathedral demonstrates the value of this kind of prayer. When it is safe and appropriate, this service will resume.

Oliver Brewer-Lennon

Contact group

The Contact Group had meetings on 8th December 2019 and on 9th February 2020 before Lockdown measures came into force. No further meetings were possible face to face after that date. Up until March 2020, members continued to visit the elderly in care homes and those suffering chronic illnesses preventing attendance at church services. Telephone contact was also maintained for those requesting additional support and occasional lifts to and from services was offered. The group also provided a point of contact for new congregation members finding their way into the church community. Members also offered informal meetings for coffee and chat on a short-term basis. Where there had been bereavements, members kept contact with families of the deceased.

At the December meeting, Anne Jones stepped down as PVG coordinator and was thanked for her invaluable work over the years in this role. This role has now been taken over by Matt Cavanagh.

Since lockdown, no face-to-face contact has been possible, but telephone and online contact has been coordinated by the Leadership Group, led by Franny Mawditt. With the current cessation of meetings, Anne Robertson has now stepped down as convenor of the Contact Group after almost 4 years in this role. Arrangements for the group going forward are temporarily being organised by Franny, until such time as in-person meetings can resume.

Anne Robertson

A huge thanks to Anne for convening this Group with such care and commitment. The telephone contact offered by Members of the Group since the start of the pandemic will continue in the coming months - and my thanks to them too. I am very pleased that Anne Jones will be the new convener of the Contact Group.

Franny Mawditt

Events

The events programme this year was to be a busy one with eighteen concerts and exhibitions on the calendar for 2020, plus four concerts that had been held in December 2019. This was to have given us one of the most successful event seasons in a long time.

We started off with a wonderful concert by Amicus Chamber Orchestra in February of this year and before we could get into our stride, Covid came along and washed out our programme entirely. It is only to be hoped that those choirs, orchestra and exhibitors who had their plans dashed, will come back to us. Indeed, many of them are planning to and are just waiting for a long-awaited opportunity to return to rehearsals and performances.

Our Events Team have been inactive, and I and I look forward to being able to bring everyone back together once we are able to get back to some sense of a new normality.

Iain Milne

Fair Trade Stall

This year has been difficult for everybody because of the coronavirus pandemic and the Fairtrade stall had to cease trading in March when the lockdown began. Although some services have now resumed, the ongoing social distancing requirements have made it impossible to reopen the stall, and it seems likely that this will be the position for some time to come. We have cleared as much produce from the store cupboard in the synod hall as possible, and donated anything still in date to our local foodbank. Sadly, some food was already past its best before date and could not be donated. We will do a similar check in February, for remaining food with a longer expiry, if there is no further word on when we might be able to start running the stall again. As in previous years, we have continued to use Traidcraft as our main supplier with Just Trading Scotland (JTS) as our supplier for rice and some preserves.

For the year up to the start of lockdown, our expenditure was £873.80, and our income (from purchases and donations for fresh produce) was £1082.55. Our income is reduced from last year's total of £1938.90, which is unsurprising given that we operated for only four months following the last AGM.

We are very grateful to all those from the congregation who have supported the work of Traidcraft by making purchases from the stall and donating fresh produce, and to all the volunteers who give their time so generously to help us run the stall.

Margaret & Ken Taylor

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.

Sadly, this year we haven't been able to meet up to arrange flowers in the church, but we hope soon we can start again normal activities.

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

Gardening

In normal times, the group is convened around once a month for a couple of hours as necessary, to keep the grounds tidy and free of weeds. We are a small group, and a few more volunteers would be very welcome. Green fingers are definitely not required, for much of our time is spent weeding, maintaining the wildflower area or rose garden, clearing moss and leaves, raking the gravel and sweeping the paved areas. Especial attention is given ahead of the festivals of Christmas and Easter, and in making sure the grounds are tidy before weddings and other events that might take place. In the spring of this year, we had indeed been getting ready for Easter when lockdown curtailed our activity. The easing of restrictions enabled us to tackle a jungle of weeds before the church re-opened for worship in August. Within the current COVID-19 guidelines, without mixing households and using our own tools, the work has continued thanks to the initiative and dedication of the team. My sincere thanks to all concerned.

Frank Ewing

Lay representative

My principal role as Lay Representative of this congregation is to represent the cathedral at Diocesan Synod.

The Diocesan Synod of the United Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway took place this year on February 29th, held at Holy Trinity Church in Ayr. This was only two weeks before mass gatherings were banned and public worship was suspended, and as such I have the sense that it was much longer ago than just nine months.

The business of the Synod included:

- The homologation of Kelvin Holdsworth as clergy representative to General Synod from the North East Regional Council, the election of Oliver Brewer-Lennon to a one-year term as alternative clergy representative to General Synod, and the election of Anne Jones to a full term as lay representative to General Synod.
- An update on work for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups in churches throughout the Diocese.
- An update on the works being done to the new Diocesan Centre in the Merchant City to make it suitable for use.
- Discussion of the Church's role in the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) which was due to be held in Glasgow in October of this year. Due to pandemic restrictions, the event was postponed and at the time of writing is planned to take place in Glasgow in November 2021.
- Announcement of the Bishop's Lent Appeal, which this year was in aid of Glasgow City Mission. Glasgow City Mission was the world's first City Mission when it began in 1826, and it works with adults and children who are vulnerable and disadvantaged in Glasgow. It has a base in Glasgow City Centre and a Child and Family Centre in the south of the city in Govan, and it is responsible for the

Glasgow Winter Night Shelter. It has continued to work, with adjustments, throughout COVID-19.

Shortly after the last AGM, Kevin Pearson was elected Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway by a vote of the College of Bishops. Bishop Kevin comes to us from his previous episcopacy in Argyll and the Isles. He formally became Bishop of this diocese on July 1st, and has already been able to join the Cathedral for worship in the virtual world. This marked the end of sixteen months of this Diocese being without its own bishop, and of Bishop Mark's service to us as Acting Bishop. One of the great sadnesses among many of this year is that we have not been able to formally welcome Bishop Kevin to the diocese with the razzmatazz and fizz which we would have liked, and that we have not been able to give Bishop Mark a proper goodbye. It is our hope that a delayed celebration will be possible in the future.

Beth Routledge
Lay Representative

LGBT network

The events of the LGBT Network have largely been curtailed this year by lockdown restrictions. The various Pride events in the city to which we would normally expect to take a large group of our LGBT brethren and allies were also cancelled.

In January, we held a very successful event on the history and interpretation of art. This event was run by Dr Debbie Lewer, and was a thoroughly and enjoyable and informative evening at which we were also able to welcome a number of new members.

As restrictions are set to continue into the New Year, it seems that this is the right time to explore what could be done with the LGBT Network in a virtual capacity, likely through Zoom. More information on this will come to members of the mailing list in the coming months. It is also our hope that we will be able to do something to support LGBT History Month in February, which this year in Scotland is focusing on the theme of intersectionality. It seems very likely that this will also be based online.

Beth Routledge
Convenor, LGBT Network

Litter picking

During the past year, the litter picking team has remained eight strong, Alan Grant joining as

Christina Hughes stepped down. When Covid-19 struck and the cathedral shut, it was decided that we should endeavour to continue picking litter throughout lockdown if at all possible - those members of the team living within walking distance of the Cathedral and not shielding or self-isolating encouraged to litter pick during their daily spell of outdoor exercise. Inevitably, this necessitated an increased duty frequency for those able to participate and this continues as I write, albeit to a lesser extent.

It has been interesting to note fluctuations in the amount of litter accumulating during the various phases of the pandemic restrictions. Initially, we saw a dramatic reduction in

littering as everyone was asked to stay at home; then, when catering outlets reopened only for carry-outs, there was even more litter than usual. During August and September normality briefly returned until current restrictions reduced littering once again. Fortuitously, the periods of reduced littering have coincided with those when fewer pickers have been available.

I am extremely grateful for team members' willingness to swap duties and take additional turns on the rota to cover for those unable to access the Cathedral due to Covid restrictions. I am also delighted to report success in our endeavours to keep the grounds tidy week by week and thank all who have contributed to this achievement and continue to do so.

Tony Hughes

Needle arts group

Due to the ongoing virus we have only managed two meetings in 2020, but we haven't stopped knitting. Approximately 150 squares have been completed by one of the groups and are ready to be joined to make prayer blankets. Two have already been donated to a local care home.

In normal times we meet to knit, sew and chat from 7.30-9.00pm on the second Monday of each month. (2021 venue still to be confirmed). Anyone is welcome to join us for coffee and a blether - knitting not compulsory.

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, woolly hats for the Seafarers' Mission and 5" squares to make Prayer Blankets for members of the congregation. In addition our members continue to work on their own projects.

Sandy Fraser & Lisella Hutton

Protection of vulnerable groups

Getting to know the Young Church and the Contact group

During Christmas and in the new year Matt Cavanagh met and got to know some of the Young Church members and their parents. A meeting with the Contact Group scheduled for April 2020 was cancelled due to the Coronavirus restrictions.

Coronavirus and safeguarding

The situation around the Coronavirus has made safeguarding through the church more difficult given that there have been significantly fewer opportunities to see how people are getting on in the difficult circumstances we are all faced with. Matt Cavanagh has been in contact with Vestry members through email and phone conversations. On 10th March, the General Synod Office produced the document 'Coronavirus and Children', interim guidelines for working with children in the SEC but the lockdown took place the following week. Safeguarding Considerations were published by the SEC on its website on 18th March.

PVG Record Keeping

No actions were taken based on any safeguarding concerns in the past year. The December 2019 Vestry meeting raised questions about the adequate safeguarding of members of the Young Church. No actions were taken but this is something that may be considered by parents and carers when Young Church meetings begin again. PVG records are held securely by Matt Cavanagh on his computer.

New digital PVG application form

The new digital PVG form allows processing Disclosure Scotland applications which have been paused since March 2020. No appointments that require PVG applications were made this year, but this will be how the process works from now on.

Matt Cavanagh

St Mary's @ The Movies

The St. Mary's @ the Movies was able to enjoy the majority of the planned season for 2019-2020 before the pandemic struck. We watched a diverse range of films including the Oscar-winning *Gladiator*, French comedy *Les Intouchables*, the modern British classic *Kinky Boots*, 2019 Oscar winner *Green Book*, and the brilliant Mexican family drama *Roma*.

In normal times, the group meets in the church office on the last two Tuesdays of each month from September to June (apart from December and April): the first week is the screening of the film, and the second week is the discussion led by the person who screened the film for the group.

Like most other aspects of our community at St. Mary's, we stopped our meetings in March, and, after some deliberation, the majority of the group decided in favour of not meeting until we can meet in person again.

Whenever that day comes, new attendees are always welcome to join our screenings and discussions, whether it is for one film or, perhaps for those aspiring film lovers, to join us for the entire season!

For more information, contact the convenor, Steve Innes, on movies@thecathedral.org.uk

Steve Innes
Convenor

Sacristans

The work of the Sacristans has continued throughout the year, lockdown excepted. Christmas 2019 saw the use of a crib set that hadn't been used for some time, which required work to mend and generally titivate some of the characters - many thanks to Sr Helena for her work with these.

Lockdown commenced mid-way through Lent, so the usual frenetic activity during the lead up to and during Holy Week was absent, though we were able to light a Paschal Candle which was delivered just before lockdown. Services re-started in the building in

August, and the sacristans have again been at work behind the scenes, working mid-week in order to ensure time is left between us setting up & the services on Sunday.

As ever, thanks to David Kenvyn and Kathryn McFarlane for their support & help and to Kate Mackenzie for laundering the small linen.
Sue Champion & Sr AJ

Servers

The serving team at the Cathedral contributes to the planning and delivery of services, hopefully 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 clergy at the required point in the service.

We were delighted to serve at the service for the Installation of Oliver Brewer-Lennon as Vice Provost on Sunday 27th October. Another highlight was serving at the Eucharist for the Episcopal Synod on Saturday 18th January.

As usual, we were involved in all the Christmas services as well as some baptisms, weddings and funerals in the last year. Of course, we also assisted Sunday by Sunday until the Cathedral closed temporarily in March as a result of lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the restrictions were eased, the Cathedral re-opened for Sunday services on 16th August. Currently there is one server for each of the Sunday morning services. I am grateful to Daniel Williams, David McFadyen, David Kenvyn and Franny Mawditt for their assistance and support with this.

I am also grateful to Sister AJ, Beth, Bruce, Caitlin, Chioma, Daniel Kianpisheh, David Hanson, Lucas, Oluchi, Roger and Sue for the serving duties they undertook prior to lockdown in March.

We have been fortunate to welcome some new recruits in the past few years and I hope they are finding serving fulfilling. If anyone thinks they might be interested in becoming a server please speak to Kelvin, Oliver 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 Sister AJ) 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
Head Server

Stewards

We took over the Stewarding remit in April 2020.

It has certainly been an eventful time. Almost immediately we entered into lockdown with no services taking place in the cathedral and the stewards' rota in abeyance. Since the middle of August, services in the cathedral have resumed and stewarding has been a very different experience – with social distancing, masks, hand sanitisers and registrations.

We would like to thank everyone who has stewarded this year – both experienced and new. The stewards have all shown great adaptability and enthusiasm and have quickly become used to their different roles in stewarding the cathedral's services. We would also like to thank Tony Hughes for his time in charge and especially in ensuring the handover was smooth and efficient.

Alan & Pam Richmond

Students at St Mary's

Students play an essential part in the life and witness of St Mary's Cathedral. Many undertake roles of responsibility and share an active part in leading worship. Students bring valuable insight and experience to various committees and groups and contribute notably to the spiritual wealth of the community.

Before lockdown, students would often gather for lunch at a nearby pub after the Sunday morning service. Not only was this an opportunity for camaraderie, but it was also a place to share concerns and discuss matters of Church and faith. The pandemic has thrown a wrench into how students operate day-to-day. Not only have most lectures moved online, but many typical uni connections have been shaken up, too. Adjusting hasn't been easy, and it's not been an easy adjustment for how we do things at the Cathedral either. However, in the new year, new ventures are on the horizon for connecting. Many thanks to Elinor Bracken who recently stepped down as Student Welcomer.

Oliver Brewer-Lennon

Tea and Coffee Team

The Tea and Coffee Team are normally an integral part of St. Mary's welcoming team however they have not been able to operate since March on account of the Corona virus restrictions. After the last AGM we conducted a vigorous campaign to recruit more volunteers – and were very successful bringing in a number of new recruits, many of whom, to our delight, were younger people. Once we get the go ahead that the service may resume there will have to be an even more energetic campaign to rebuild the Team. A minimum of thirty volunteers will be needed, with a number of reserves on standby to fill in for last minute emergencies. When we are up to our normal level once again, we hope to have four people on duty each Sunday morning, all arriving three quarters of an hour before the service to set up the Tables and clearing away afterwards.

The aim will be once again be for each volunteer to be “on” every six weeks or so. It is a great way of getting to know the congregation and clergy! Once restrictions start being

lifted watch out for a request for volunteers which will appear in the pew notes and contact Franny or Lisella if you are interested or want to know more!

Lisella Hutton

Tea-run

Due to COVID restrictions, Cadogan Street Soup Kitchen and the Tea-Run are, for the moment, suspended. Glasgow City Council have no immediate plans as to how to reopen the service. The homeless, however, are still on the streets. Some Tea-Run Teams, such as the Humanists, are out at night in the City Centre Wednesdays and Thursdays, distributing food and essential clothing. They seek out rough sleepers on foot. Kagyu Samye Dzong Buddhist Centre has recommenced services providing meals/packs to charitable organisations in Glasgow providing food to people suffering food insecurity. At St Mary's some are volunteering, for instance, shopping for people who cannot leave their homes during lockdown.

When we convene again, I hope to make changes, and develop the scope of the Soup Kitchen. The Homeless Network Scotland is recently formed to help end rough sleeping. It's a complex proposal. Supplying food to those on low incomes has not, in itself, served to tackle food poverty and food insecurity. Demand is increasing.

We need more interconnection at grass roots level with other groups fighting for social justice, such as in housing and migrant rights. Food poverty in Glasgow will not achieve a solution without a broader network of support and input. I called a meeting of the Soup Kitchen in the Synod Hall before COVID. Lockdown put it on hold. I have spoken with a Glasgow City Council Councillor about funding to run the Kitchen, but from a new perspective. The Project lost its funding over 15 years ago. We should aim to move into a transition phase to assist the Council in its aim to house/accommodate as many homeless/rough sleepers as is possible, and to offer them dignity and justice in their access to nourishing food.

I have spoken with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Michael Fahkri, and Labour MSP Elaine Smith. She introduced a Bill into Holyrood to enshrine the right to food in Scots Law. The Consultation closed 15/9/2020. I have started lobbying MPs, MSPs and Councillors. I also keep links with fellow organisations through the Interfaith Food Justice Network.

It is universally agreed, access to food is a human right. To date, the Scottish Government has delegated the responsibility for the right to food to the Charity model - such as Food Banks and Soup Kitchens. The Charity model lacks dignity. Access to food is not about Charity, but about Human Rights. Charities, however benevolent, are not accountable to the people they feed. The Scottish Government and Westminster, on the other hand, are.

Radical? No! We want to create a UK without the need for Food Banks, states the Trussell Trust. The Tea-Run must undertake a more holistic approach in its fight for Human Rights in Glasgow. Just transition will take place.

Olanna Horhut

Traidcraft stall

This year has been difficult for everybody because of the coronavirus pandemic and the Fairtrade stall had to cease trading in March when the lockdown began. Although some services have now resumed, the ongoing social distancing requirements have made it impossible to reopen the stall, and it seems likely that this will be the position for some time to come. We have cleared as much produce from the store cupboard in the synod hall as possible, and donated anything still in date to our local foodbank. Sadly, some food was already past its best before date and could not be donated. We will do a similar check in February, for remaining food with a longer expiry, if there is no further word on when we might be able to start running the stall again. As in previous years, we have continued to use Traidcraft as our main supplier with Just Trading Scotland (JTS) as our supplier for rice and some preserves.

For the year up to the start of lockdown, our expenditure was £873.80, and our income (from purchases and donations for fresh produce) was £1082.55. Our income is reduced from last year's total of £1938.90, which is unsurprising given that we operated for only four months following the last AGM.

We are very grateful to all those from the congregation who have supported the work of Traidcraft by making purchases from the stall and donating fresh produce, and to all the volunteers who give their time so generously to help us run the stall.

Margaret & Ken Taylor

Verger

This year has been a very strange one for the Cathedral as everyone is aware. We were hit by the pandemic at the beginning of the year, and we went into lockdown in March. We did not emerge from the lockdown until very recently, and we have had to adapt our practices to make sure that we keep our congregation safe.

This does not mean that I, as Verger, had nothing to do. It was necessary to maintain the weekly inspections to ensure that the alarm system and the emergency lights are working. This proved to be important because the emergency lights in the south aisle failed and it was necessary to organise electrical repairs, using scaffolding and safety ladders to reach the affected lights. This is because the emergency lights concerned are high in the ceiling and directly above the pews, so they could not be reached in any other way.

Work identified as necessary in the Quinquennial Review for the most part ceased in March as we could not give contractors access to the building. There are also outstanding issues with the lighting and the boilers, that we discovered when we returned after the lockdown, that still have to be dealt with. There have been no diocesan services. Our new Bishop has been authorised but has not yet been enthroned.

I think, however, that the point that I wish to emphasise is that, despite all the difficulties, we have continued to operate effectively as a congregation, and that this is due to the hard work of everyone, to numerous to mention, involved.

David Kenvyn

Volunteers

This time of pandemic has seen a huge change in how we are as a community - however many people continue to work behind the scenes to make church happen 'differently'. A huge thank you for all you have done as a volunteer over the last year, both in normal times (November - March) and presently. Please contact me if you want to find ways of being actively involved. St Mary's Cathedral rolls on!

Franny Mawditt

West End ACTS

Our group represents the congregations of more than ten churches based in the west end of the city and also that of St. Aloysius in Garnethill. We normally organise three meetings annually but, like so many other activities affected by the coronavirus restrictions, we were able to hold only two of them, the first in January as usual and the second in October by virtual means.

Also affected by the virus has been the plan to arrange another of our now traditional series of Interfaith Burns Suppers, normally held in every other year, at which members of our congregations are hosted by that of a particular faith community and in this case that of Garnethill Synagogue. The event planned for the coming January has therefore been postponed until 2022. However a virtual lecture has been arranged to take its place, probably on February 2nd when Steve Innes will introduce a discussion on *The Jewishness of Jesus*. This will be confirmed in due course in our online newsletter.

The next meeting of the group will take place late in January when we plan to discuss how we can best focus next year's activities on the issues that will dominate the agenda of the postponed COP 22 Glasgow Climate Change Conference.

John Gerrard

Young Church

Thanks to the heroic efforts of leaders of the Young Church (Rosemary Hannah, Sophie Agrell, Christine Walker and Vivienne Smith), week-to-week offerings for young people at the Cathedral have continued, despite various degrees of lockdown. From the impressive stop-motion animations devised by Rosemary Hannah to puppet shows, to outdoor adventures with Sophie Agrell, to learning new songs with Christine Walker and Shae Weir, to Vivienne's coordinating of Pentecost flames from young people across Glasgow, Young Church organisers have trailblazed new ways of engagement. If you've not yet seen some of this fantastic work, be sure to check it out on the Cathedral's Worship webpage (www.thecathedral.org.uk/worship).

Young people teach and inspire, share and encourage, and make the Church an even more joyful place to be. When they're not there on a Sunday morning, it is palpable; they're missed. Rosemary and Sophie write, 'We have missed the children very much during these months ... and look forward very much to seeing [them] again.' If you're the parent or guardian of a young person and want to connect with organisers of Young Church, they would love to hear from you. Send artwork, questions and ideas to youngchurch@thecathedral.org.uk. Young people are welcome in the Cathedral—always and everywhere.

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