



**St James the Less Penicuik  
AGM Reports  
AGM - 2018 - 2 December**

**Our vision is to be:**

**“A people of Christ, loving and serving in God’s strength”**

**God calls us and gives us grace,**

**To use the gifts He has given us,**

**To grow as a loving and Christcentred people,**

**Faithful in worship,**

**Rejoicing in differences,**

**Open to the gifts of the Spirit,**

**Working as His servants in our communities.”**

**Vestry Secretary: [phillg13\[at\]toucansurf.com](mailto:phillg13@toucansurf.com)**

**<https://stjamesthelesspenicuik.org/>**

**Scottish Charity No SC011288**

# MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

## Sunday, 26 November 2017 12.15pm in church

### VESTRY MINUTES:

**Present:** Chair: Revd Lynsay Downs; (attendance listed in the Minute Book)

ITEM	NOTES
1.	Revd Lynsay Downs opened the meeting with reading from Micah 7:14-end and prayer
2.	Attendance as above (sheet attached) Apologies: Jennifer Edge, Anthony Edge, Sue Owen, Robert Clerk, Des Frantom
3.	Minutes of last AGM 4 December 2016: Acceptance proposed by Marion Mather and seconded by Val McGavin
4.	Matters arising: Under AOCB: Revd Lynsay mentioned that concerns had been expressed about <i>Outreach</i> printing costs. As a result, its last paper edition will be next week, then it will move to digital with a few printed copies for those without Internet access. It has also been found that the Newsletters were not working well for rotas, so we are going back to having a limited number of old-style printed rotas being put out in the back of church.
5.	Fabric Report: Ian Fuge summarised key points and updates. The boiler in the Rectory was not replaced but the whole system was completely overhauled, with a new control system, and is now working much better. Tower gutter: work now done at cost approx. £250. Also cleared out gutters and replaced cracked/missing slates. <i>Request:</i> please do not put sticky tape on west door; it has pulled off paint or left irremovable residue. Please use masking tape or Blutac but do not leave it up for a long time.

ITEM	NOTES
	<p>Electricians are coming in on Wednesday 6 Dec 2017 to test system and test portable appliances/sockets (including keyboards – anything that plugs in).</p> <p>Revd Lynsay mentioned that the socket used for the Christmas tree fails intermittently. Ian explained that it is only a 5-amp socket, so should not be used for heavy-duty equipment – it was installed specifically for the Christmas tree lighting.</p> <p>Alan Murray spoke briefly about two problems with the sound system: (a) he mentioned that most problems are caused by people fiddling with the controls – please don't, unless you really know what you are doing! (b) because our way of using the rechargeable batteries (recharging after each use) was not the recommended procedure and was causing problems, he was experimenting with switching to ordinary dry cells.</p> <p>Actions: Marion Mather requested that the electrician look carefully at the socket where the urn is plugged in, as it is jammed with paper! Ian Fuge to check that there is an appropriate notice by dedicated socket for Christmas Tree near altar.</p> <p>Revd Lynsay and the congregation thanked Ian Fuge, Alan Murray, Tom Moffatt, Simon Downs and other casual helpers in the fabric area for their good work throughout the year.</p>
6.	<p>Treasurer's Report:</p> <p>Graham Smith referred to the figures in the published report. He explained that there is a remaining small reconciliation problem in getting the balance correct between what the accounts predict and what is in the bank, amounting to just over £17. Duncan Troup has spent a lot of time trying to resolve this, and Graham is also now working through each month. Consequently we cannot approve accounts at this point, so a special EGM will need to be called to complete the approval procedure. There were no questions.</p>

ITEM	NOTES
	<p>On behalf of the congregation, Revd Lynsay thanked Graham Smith, Catherine Pow, David McGavin and other helpers such as the sidespeople who did the counting.</p>
7.	<p>Rectors Report:  Revd Lynsay summarised the printed report, mentioning the breakdown of the use of her time and also our time and the money. She explained that the money used was deduced from the Budget and allocated to different areas of ministry. She said that a lot has happened this year, with some niggles. We now have a Communications Group, helping, for example, with streamlining the process of compiling and distributing rotas. We also have a Mission Group. We started the year trying different service times. She recognised that while it caused uncertainty for us, a good aspect for her was that she saw us more often. She praised the Lay team (applause all round from the congregation). Revd Lynsay said that she does feel a bit sad now she does not see us as often – she will not be back in until 24 December after this AGM.</p> <p>The Last Supper Club is going well. The Storehouse is having a regular community lunch in our hall. It had really brought us into community contact, with lots of different people: refugees, special needs, home shelters, casual drop-ins as well as helpers. She was delighted to say that the Storehouse wants to offer a Christmas meal on Christmas Day. Volunteers’ offers have been received, and needs are being checked with Storehouse before they are accepted.</p> <p>A new booklet will be released next week, about our journey together through Advent.</p> <p>She mentioned that a lot of people have been ill and she felt that the Wednesday prayer group plays a crucial role in helping to meet their needs, including informing Revd Lynsay herself about who needs prayer. Good news was that although there</p>

ITEM	NOTES
	<p>had been major health concerns about her husband Simon, he had been given positive news about the problem. She thanked people for all the prayers offered.</p>
9.	<p>Elections:  <i>Rector's Warden:</i> David McGavin was re-appointed by Revd Lynsay as the Rector's Warden.  <i>Vestry Members:</i> there had been three nominations for two places – Tricia Tucker (Nominator: Georgina Phillips. Second: Faye Clerk); Sue Crosfield (Nominator: Faye Clerk. Second: Valerie McGavin); Marion Mather (Nominator: Faye Clerk. Second: Gillian Little).  Marion Mather had kindly agreed prior to the meeting to be co-opted if requested, rather than an election being held. Therefore Tricia Tucker and Sue Crosfield were appointed to Vestry.  <i>Lay Representative:</i> Gillian Little (Nominator: Richard Phillips. Second: Georgina Phillips) duly elected.  <i>Alternate Lay Representative:</i> Jill Drought (Nominator: Faye Clerk. Second: Marian Hunter) duly elected.  Thanks to out-going members David Keys and Adrian Marchant.</p>
10	<p>AOCB:  Revd Lynsay mentioned that during recent roof work, workers had found some heroin paraphernalia on the roof (apparently thrown up there). It included a syringe with a needle missing, so Lynsay warned everyone to be careful in the grounds e.g. if clearing leaves, having children playing (may be better if they avoided that for a while). Some local families had been warned. Revd Lynsay informed the congregation about the launching in December 2017 of 'The Astonishing Community'. Her hope is that it becomes a real community. She explained that it has two strands. (1) Pray with us online at <a href="http://Astonishing.Community">Astonishing.Community</a>.</p>

ITEM	NOTES
10 cont.	<p>This concept is to encourage us to remember that however our brains/bodies work we are still part of God's human community. Some people with particular ways of seeing or hearing or sensory processing see a different view of God, and it explores what humanity would miss if it does not learn from their view.</p> <p>(2) Revd Lynsay has compiled a Calendar of Saints taken from Catholic, Episcopal and other churches. It includes people with a variety of idiosyncrasies who have been blessings for the church, and the idea is to take points of prayer from this for people of today.</p> <p>On behalf of the congregation, Alan Murray thanked Revd Lynsay for looking after us in a difficult year (<i>congregational applause</i>), particularly with regards service times and the water damage to the organ.</p>
11.	<p>Revd Lynsay concluded the meeting at 12:55pm by leading the congregation in saying the Grace.</p>

## ***Vestry Report For AGM 2018***

In the absence of a Rector's report, your Vestry has tried to present an overall view of the past year at St James the Less church.

The most significant event was the departure of Revd Lynsay Downs at the end of July to take up a new post in Banchory. We were sorry to see her leave, but wished her and her family all the best in their new venture. Revd Lynsay had introduced many new ideas to the congregation and had encouraged greater participation of the laity.

The most immediate effect was on cover for the weekly service, especially as we are a linked charge with St Mungo's, West Linton. Revd Neville Suttle, our Non-Stipendiary Minister, takes one Sunday service per month at St James, and it was hoped that the diocese would be able to provide cover for one more. However, it has not been possible to do this regularly, and the

Lay Worship Leaders take responsibility for Morning Prayer and Reserved Sacrament services.

These constraints have meant suspending the 8am Sunday and Wednesday midday Communion services. For 2018 there will be no midnight service on Christmas Eve.

We have endeavoured to maintain pastoral care for the congregation, with the Pastoral Care team meeting to focus on areas of concern brought to their attention, which might then be passed on to the appropriate person; and with home visits where needed. There is a monthly Healing Service on each first Wednesday evening; it is open to all, but if you wish to have someone prayed for and maybe a candle lit but cannot attend, please speak to Marion Mather.

Our Interim Pastor is Revd Canon Dr Mike Fuller whom we welcome when his other commitments permit. Your Vestry strives to ensure regular updates to the congregation throughout the Interregnum. The Wardens and Vestry Secretaries from both churches meet informally to provide support and updates on the Vacancy process. We have had a visit from +John. The next step is to draw up plans for our Congregational meeting on Saturday 12 January 2019, for which Revd Dean Fostekew will be the external Facilitator.

During the year St James has joined other churches in Penicuik for ecumenical worship, especially at Christmas, Holy Week and Easter. Our congregation also contributes to a Penicuik food bank, and donates to hampers for needy families at Christmas. Members of St James support many voluntary activities within Penicuik: initiatives for the Penicuik for Africa project, Friends of Chitambo, and the Leprosy Mission. We hold Fellowship lunches occasionally after the service on Sunday morning to raise funds for different charities.

Our hall is well used by outside groups, most notably the Community lunch is held there each week and at Christmas.

There was a successful Last Supper Club course in February based on *Why did Jesus have to die?* which involved visitors from other churches. We supported the Diocesan Celebration Day at the Cathedral. Members of St

James participated in the SU Summer Club held in Penicuik during August. In November we were delighted to have visits from Cuiken Primary School Primary 1s and Primary 2s to help prepare them for their school Nativity play. Cornbank Primary School will again visit on the last day of term for their Christmas service.

Music continues to be at the heart of our worship, and the choir regularly welcomes members of other Penicuik churches to join them for the Nine Lessons and Carols service held just before Christmas and for other significant services. We are still without our organ but David McGavin and his team work hard towards its restoration.

The Fabric Committee continues to spend much time and effort on caring for our building. Please take time to read Ian Fuge's report for a fuller account of their work. Thanks also to the 3-Ds – our dedicated gardening team.

The St James's book of reminiscences is hopefully nearing the finishing line for publication. We received a gift from Phyllida Shaw of her book about Alice and Morris Meredith Williams – Alice designed the reredos and other commemorative items in St James.

Our attendances are low, but there is strong mutual support within the congregation. The Young Church leaders particularly would be delighted to welcome some more youngsters.

New legislation on GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) meant that the congregation was asked to complete new registration forms, and a GDPR audit was circulated to show how data is stored and retrieved. The rotas are now circulated to participants and posted on the notice board. During the Interregnum there might well be changes to services; please continue to check regularly and arrange swaps if unavailable. Everyone's help is much appreciated; however, more volunteers for the rotas would ease the load in some areas.

Please read all the group reports to see just how active is the congregation of St James; without our worship family the church would wither.

***St James the Less Vestry***

## **Outreach magazine**

*Outreach* was produced for many years as a small, monthly A5 format booklet containing news of the congregation (past and present), details of upcoming events and articles – particularly the Mad Scientist occasional offerings.

When Revd Lynsay became our Rector, the concept of *Outreach* was thoroughly revised, and the small editing team decided that in order to reflect its title, it should contain material of wider appeal in the local community. A decision was made to hold back on overt preaching, and concentrate more on showing our interest in affairs and activities outside of our church walls, as well as on life within St James the Less that would appeal to people of any degree of faith, or none. It was agreed that rotas in the new-style magazine were not appropriate for the hoped-for wider readership. The format would become more like an A4 magazine, and it would be produced three times a year. It was an ambitious brief, and naturally, articles written by Revd Lynsay and other authors were not shy of mentioning God.

The Congregation was mixed in its views on these changes. Many missed the former in-house style with its handy references to rotas and notices etc. Several different attempts were made to address the need for access to rotas.

Sue Owen, with the help of Ian Fuge and Lynsay Downs, produced a total of nine issues from November 2014 until September 2017. During 2017, production was put on hold for a while until resources were back up to strength.

In 2018, Vestry decided that as a printed *Outreach* was no longer sustainable, *Outreach*-type articles could be posted on the website, with production of a limited number of hard copies when enough articles were available. Sue has since posted three articles, and there are six more almost ready, or in preparation.

There have been comments and concerns from congregation members that only a minority can regularly access the Internet, and that a printed magazine is preferred.

Perhaps the need and desire for a church magazine, and its format and content, is a subject for discussion when there is more time available. Meanwhile, Sue Owen (with the help of Ian Fuge and others) will continue to post articles of Christian and wider interest on the St James the Less website, and will hope to produce a limited number of hard copies in the near future.

***Sue Owen***

## ***St James the Less Book Group***

Following on an original idea from Revd Lindsay, we continue to meet monthly, usually at Jean's house. We are a small group, about six members, so always room for a few more. Another year of assorted writers – some loved and some loathed. A few were called 'rubbish' and not finished, while others read to the end hoping for a redeeming feature before we decided not to look for that author again!

Our choice was limited by what would be available for the next month and this provided us with some real gems. We all enjoyed *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett and *Man and Boy* by Tony Parsons.

Sometimes the year in which the story was set provided much discussion. As long as the people written about and the times rang true, we found much to discuss.

### **Books read**

Kathryn Stockett: *The Help*

Santa Montefiore: *The French Gardener*

Dawn French: *A Tiny Bit Marvellous*

Tony Parson: *Man and Boy*

Pamela Evans: *Whispers in the Town*

Peter May: *Runaway*

Maggie O'Farrell: *This Must be the Place*

Rosie Godwin: *The Empty Cradle*

Anne Cleeves: *White Night*

Maeve Binchy: *Full House*

Mary Bale: *Threads of Treason* – to come for November  
Heather Morris: *The Tattooist from Auschwitz* – to come for December.  
**Angela Sibley**

## **Stewardship Secretary's Report**

— for boxes issued in October 2018

I ordered 40 boxes of stewardship envelopes, overprinted with the names of both churches. No Gift Aid envelopes ordered since there were still enough in stock. 10 boxes are allocated to St Mungo's, West Linton. To preserve confidentiality, I hold the names, addresses and numbers, the Treasurer has only the numbers and actual money contributed, but does not know who contributes to which envelope. That is known only to the person who makes the income tax refund claims, which are so valuable to the church. Tax can be reclaimed on all gifts, either by using envelopes regularly, or the giftaid envelopes for occasional gifts of more than £20.

The number of users of envelopes continues to decline. There has not been a corresponding increase in the number of standing orders, so this decline is worrying. If you decide to change from contributing via the boxes to direct giving, please let me know too, so that I can assess the number of boxes to order for next year. New members of the congregation or those who do not contribute regularly might like to join the envelope scheme. If so, please contact me or the Treasurer. The use of envelopes or direct giving means that you can plan your contribution every week even if you are not always present in church. Remember the church has running expenses even if you are not there. This continues to be important even in an interregnum.

If you prefer, you may instead make standing order payments – please see the Treasurer about this.

**Richard Phillips** *Stewardship Secretary*

## **Hall booking**

The hall is being well used this year.

We have Brownies and Guides in regularly every week. Their leaders also have meetings with us. Mothers Union, Probus club and U3A meet regularly.

Penicuik Women's Ministry meets here for "Space", a time of refreshment away from the busy world, usually 5 times a year.

We are accommodating the Community meal every Tuesday, run by Penicuik Storehouse, while their building is being renovated. This allows local people to come and enjoy a three course meal but also to help with the cooking, if they wish. This is well supported.

Throughout Lent we held the Last Supper Club, an evening of some study and discussion, led by Revd Lynsay, with some fellowship around the supper table beforehand. And at present a Penicuik Alpha course is being held on a Thursday night, led by Bill Webster and others from Penicuik churches.

If you would like to hire the hall please see me first as I have a booking diary at home; there is also a year planner on the wall in the hall.

***Val McGavin***

## ***The Gardening Team***

The Gardening team (David McGavin, David Owen, David Keys) meets weekly on Thursday mornings to work in the church grounds.

During the summer, the main work is mowing the lawns, and apart from that, the work is really trying to keep the garden under control. In the autumn of course, the bulk of the work is raking up leaves and the large number of twigs and branches which come down in windy weather. Some of the falling branches have been huge! The size of the trees has been a problem for a while and possible action needs to be discussed by Vestry. There have been no work parties this year, and there are heaps of branches etc. that need to be removed.

Over winter, the team hopes to make proper compost-making facilities so that the pile of compost at the bottom of the grounds isn't so untidy.

Another challenge is to work on the weedy gravel path on the north side of the church. This fills with weeds very quickly due to infrequent footfall, and the difficulty in keeping up with the weed growth rate. On the creative side, the team is also trying to develop the borders, often with kindly donated plants, and these are coming along quite well.

The Davids are doing their best, and continue to enjoy their weekly work and cup of coffee, and would very much welcome anyone else to come along to help, even if their name isn't David!

*David Owen*

## ***Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Report – 2017/18***

The Vestry appointed Nigel Johnston as Child Protection Co-ordinator in November 2003 and obtained a character reference which has been seen by the Bishop, who has confirmed the appointment. The Provincial Child Protection Officer, Mr Donald Urquhart, and the Assistant Officer, Daphne Audsley, have been informed.

The Vestry has formally adopted the SEC Code of Good Practice and the SEC Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders.

The SEC Code of Good Practice, name and phone number of the co-ordinator and the Provincial Child Protection Officer and a Childline poster are displayed in the church. The summary cards have been distributed to all those who are in a position of trust with children and young people, including welcomers, choirs etc. and all those in authorised Ministry. Cards are also displayed in the church. The contact details of the Independent Person, Glynis Murray, and Provincial Child Protection Officer are also on view.

The Vestry supports the co-ordinator in keeping records of all those who are in a position of trust with children and young people. All current and new workers/volunteers have completed the Job Description form in the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Handbook held by the co-ordinator.

I have completed the Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS) form 2, and obtained a signatory code so that identity can be checked when Disclosures are required. I also have a copy of the Safeguarding the Vulnerable Handbook (2013)

People who started working with or being in a position of trust with children or Vulnerable Groups after 1st January 2003 have completed a Disclosure Scotland form. All new workers, none in the current year, have completed the Caring for Children Declaration which has been sent to the Provincial Child Protection Officer with the Disclosure Application. Letters from the Provincial Officer informing the co-ordinator of the result of the Disclosures, currently thirteen, are kept on file in perpetuity. All 13 in the current year have completed a form to become members of the new PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups).

The co-ordinator knows the telephone numbers of the local Social Work and Police departments which deal with Child Protection issues, and will inform the Provincial Officer of any concerns about the safety of a child or young person under 18.

The Vestry includes Child Protection on its agendas and the co-ordinator will report in person to the Vestry at least 3 times a year and any specific Child Protection issues will be included. A Diocesan Training Day was attended by the co-ordinator on 2 February 2018.

Child Protection is 'owned' by the whole Church Community. The Vestry has watched the SEC Training Video as have those in a position of trust with children and young people including those in Authorised Ministry. The co-ordinator appreciates the support of the Vestry and thanks all those who work with children and vulnerable groups.

**Nigel Johnston** Child and Vulnerable Adults Coordinator.

More information can be had at: [www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/organisation/safeguarding](http://www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/organisation/safeguarding)

## ***Mothers' Union***

Mothers' Union at St James has had an interesting year, filled with many enjoyable and spiritually rewarding gatherings. We have also had some sad events. In June, Jean Lindsay, a former member of St James and widow of Frank, died in her home country of Wales. When they left Penicuik in 2000, they were sorely missed — Frank did so many jobs for the church, including

bell-ringing, and Jean was in the choir, MU, did flower arranging, and represented St James for Penicuik Churches Together. May they rest in peace.

This October, Irene Hair died aged 96yrs. A lifelong member of MU, it is a testament to the high regard in which she was held that over a hundred people attended her funeral here. Irene was a quiet lady getting on with the work in the background and a staunch supporter of Broomhill Day Centre.

Our happiest meeting was to celebrate the 90th birthday of Agnes, baker and confectioner par excellence, with an excellent lunch in the Navaar Hotel. Several meetings were at Jean's: a DVD of Victoria and Abdul led to a discussion; and the world-wide Wave of Prayer. The World Day of Prayer planned for North Kirk in March had to be cancelled because of snow.

Several meetings took place outside Penicuik: Diocesan Council in November 2017 at St Ninian's Comely Bank and in October 2018 at the church of the Good Shepherd, Murrayfield; coffee mornings in Christchurch in February 2018; and Mary Sumner Day (MU founder) at the church of the Good Shepherd.

Margaret Coull has represented our branch at the Diocesan Office. Several of us go monthly to meet informally for coffee with members of other branches at Waterstone's.

For the *Diocesan Big Day* in the cathedral in April, attended by over five hundred, we and several other groups had a stand in the Walpole Hall; in the cathedral many churches had stands displaying what they do and provide.

We have had some very interesting speakers: Georgina on the history of the early ministers of St James; Revd Christine Barclay of St Peters Linlithgow, MU chaplain; and Major Danièle Norton of the Salvation Army. We also had a 'quiet day' with Christine Barclay in their newly-extended church. There was a meeting to commemorate Remembrance Sunday and 100 years since the Great War Armistice with readings and songs of the period.

On 12 December we shall have our Advent Carol/Readings service with Joy Middleton. The annual Christmas hamper will be organised.

I would like to thank all members and visitors for their support.

**Gillian R Little.**

## **Diocesan Synod**

Diocesan Synod met at St Pauls and St George's 25 October 2018, attended by Gillian Little (Lay Rep.) and Jill Drought (Alt. Lay Rep.)

Opened by Eucharist at 5.30pm, followed by tea/coffee and then the meeting. Four rectors and one vestry secretary have died during the year. The Bishop spoke briefly about changes to our world — climate change, mass population movement, and the implications of Brexit. Reductions of State benefits and delays in receiving them seem to evoke little empathy. As Christians we are called to live the Good News of Christ. Now, many shelters, foodbanks, and advice to the poor and homeless are essential.

The Big Day in the cathedral had 500+attending and 44 churches represented. Calls for 'more of this please'. There were stalls in Walpole Hall and a labyrinth in the grounds. We must engage with all ages, looking outwards to serve the needs of others.

St Thomas Corstorphine has decided to leave the Scottish Episcopal Church as the congregation does not agree with some of Synod's decisions about the role of the Church. This will affect all diocesan quotas and will result in a 5% increase to the diocese, affecting the budget of St James. This motion of increase was agreed by Synod.

☞ The Borders Centre of Mission — Selkirk, Hawick, and Galashiels — will have a Priest-in-charge.

☞ Advance notice was given of '*The Big Sing*' on 1 June 2019 in the cathedral at 11am. An opportunity to sing and learn new evensong music, for singers and others.

☞ Claire Benton-Evans spoke about Glenalmond, with increased numbers: '*Faith, fun and fellowship*', a place where they can be themselves.

☞ The ‘*Sleepover by the sea*’ would be held by St Mark’s Portobello in October, for 8-17yr olds, with young people involved in planning.

☞ Revd Ruth Green (a former member of St James’ congregation) will be moving to St James Aberdeen in January, on a 3-year contract.

Next Synod meeting would be Saturday 9 March 2019.

**Gillian R Little**

## ***Fabric Report – 2017-18***

There are two main items for this year’s report – the future of the Rectory and ongoing work following the ingress of water last year that damaged the organ.

### WATER INGRESS

- Further investigations were carried out to try and determine where and how exactly the water came in. Although not 100% conclusive, no fault was found with the work that had been carried out a few years earlier to renovate the gutter in the tower.
- Alterations were made to the outlet and since that time, there has been no evidence of any blockage of the outlet, water build-up in the gutter nor any sign of further ingress.
- Three additional precautions are being considered and are under investigation
  - Form an overflow in the parapet wall. If the outlet becomes blocked, water can escape through the overflow before the level builds up to the point it can enter the tower.
  - Install a CCTV camera focused on the outlet. This would be connected to monitor used by the organ CCTV and will enable regular checks to be made that the outlet is not blocked without having to climb up the tower. If we proceed with this, another camera will be installed focused on the hidden valley gutter between the tower and the chancel roof.
  - Install a waterproof cover over the top of the existing canopy over the organ. If the worst were to happen, any water coming through from above would be stopped by the canopy

and channelled away, probably into a water butt that could be emptied.

- An item outstanding from our Architect's last quinquennial report is to clear accumulated rubbish from the floor in the tower above the organ. As soon as the organ has been removed for repair, a work party will be required to do this. ALL VOLUNTEERS WELCOMED WITH OPEN ARMS – please tell me if you can help.
- The insurers have paid for redecoration of the organ chamber. This will be done while the organ is away.

## RECTORY

- As soon as it was known that the Downs would be vacating the Rectory, all plans for maintenance were put in abeyance while the future of the building is considered.
- Both Vestries decided that all options should be considered and after a detailed tri-partite discussion (St James, St Mungo's and the Diocesan Buildings Committee convenor), a report was produced and has been approved by all three parties.
- The report recommends that the options for redeveloping the site are investigated on a step-by-step basis, alongside the option of refurbishing the existing building. The first step is to determine if redevelopment is a practical proposition. If it is, then the next step will be to determine the most cost-effective option for the future of the site and the existing building.
- Vestry has given approval for the appointment of an architect to carry out the first step. The architect whom we employ for the Church has said that she does not wish to do this as she has little experience of this type of development. We have therefore now just put in hand finding an architect with relevant experience.

## PROJECTS

- Masonry – Rather than proceed piecemeal with re-pointing and other masonry work, it was decided to try to pull it all together as

one project and to seek grant aid. Our architect is working on this so that quotations can be obtained – a prerequisite to applying for grants.

- Security Lighting – Following a police recommendation, the installation of security lighting around the building is being investigated. Again, our architect is working on this with a view to getting quotations and applying for grants.

As I have said before, tending to the fabric is not a one person job and as ever I am extremely grateful for the support given both by individuals and by Vestry. Being able to bounce ideas off people is of immense help, as is, of course, practical assistance. We now have another contributor to keeping the fabric work going. Charlotte Kemp has agreed to do the groundwork in seeking grants to help fund projects. This will be very useful, if not essential, once we are a bit further with the Masonry and Security Lighting. To everyone who helps in whatever way – a great big ‘Thank You’

“This is none other than the House of the Lord”. Let us look after it for Him.

**Ian Fuge** Fabric Team Leader

## ***Choir Report***



Is it just me, or does it seem that as we get older annual reports for our AGM come around much more quickly than before? Mm ... I wonder.

At present we have 20 members in the choir. We continue to meet every Thursday during ‘term time’ preparing music for each Sunday, hopefully bringing some of fellowship into the worship at St James.

During the past year rather than the pipe organ, [more below] we’ve depended on piano to provide and support our music. As always, we all seem to enjoy the occasions when our music and singing is enhanced by use of guitar and rhythm sections. So throughout the year out of necessity we’ve adapted our music to the resources available. I feel this has helped us to keep our music and worship fresh. Perhaps my thoughts are biased but I do feel we must never take for granted the musical resources and team effort

with which we have been blessed at St James. Special thanks are due to our organists Jean and Jennifer, musicians in the 'band' and to Alison and Alan for all that they contribute to music at St James. To every choir member for their continued enthusiasm and commitment, thank you!

In previous reports I've tried to describe how musicians and choir members might never know what seeds we plant with our music in worship. However, during the summer we were really chuffed when two 'old' members of the choir sang in separate choral performances, broadcast as part of the BBC Proms season in the Albert Hall. Almost within a week of each other firstly Rachel Topham, with Verdi's *Requiem* and then Katherine Oyler, in an enormous performance of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* had the joy of singing with their respective 'other' choirs. We hope to welcome them both back to St James over Christmas!

Last year I included details of the damage caused to our pipe organ following the ingress of rain water. Since then we have been working with organ builders aiming to achieve effective and affordable repairs to the instrument. We have reached agreement with our Insurer who will meet a substantial amount of the costs of repairs and we are drawing up proposals to Vestry for funding and to agree a contract with one of the organ builders. Throughout the year we have been very fortunate to have the support of a member of the Scottish Federation of Organist's Advice Committee. We are indebted to Henry Wallace, Choirmaster and Organist of Grey Friars Kirk Edinburgh who has provided valuable advice with an understanding of how our organ has been developed over the last 135 years or so. Henry from the outset assured us that in his role of advisor he would be with St James 'every step of the way'. We must also give thanks to Ian Fuge and Graham Smith in their fabric and treasurer roles.

There are times during the year where it can be a little worrying when two or three of us are gathered together, and five or six or more are away supporting other organisations or simply spending time with their families, that it might seem musically our worship is a little unsupported. However, there is an underlying strong mutual support for music in our worship.

Looking back to where I started this AGM report, we are all growing older, but that's life in St James in 2018.

Please remember that there is always an open invitation to come and sing with us. There are no auditions. Come and join us?

**David McGavin** Organist & Choirmaster

## ***Penicuik Churches Working Together (PCWT)***

For various reasons, but largely due to the fact that several local churches are currently without a minister/rector, PCWT has not been active in terms of meetings for well over a year.

However, the new minister for St Mungo's, Penicuik (John Urquhart), has recently sent an email round asking if people would like to have a meeting in January 2019 and I have responded positively to this. We could at least identify events in which churches might like to share over the coming year and re-establish best contact details. Meanwhile, we are also working on a joint Christmas events list for inclusion in the December version of the Town Crier. Let us hope that this will all work out positively.

**Andy Longmore**

## ***St James' Young Church***

St James' Young Church group meets on the first, third, fourth and fifth Sundays of the month during school term-time. There are currently five leaders serving on a flexible rota system.

This year we have continued to follow a simple format which mirrors key elements of the service focusing on stories and themes from the Bible and the church's year. This provides a meaningful balance of worship, story and activities, including crafts when appropriate.

We continue to be challenged by the very low numbers of children attending on a regular basis. On several Sundays, including Family Services, there have been no children attending.

The Young Church has continued to take on roles at the Family Service through readings and prayers. This year, these roles have mainly been carried out by the adult leaders. We have endeavoured to keep our contributions to Family Services simple and child-friendly. Highlights from the past year included our annual Young Church breakfast at Christmas, leading the Nativity presentation, helping make the Easter Garden, helping to make peace cranes for the One World Week service and making a simple cross for Remembrance Sunday. We hope the coming year will provide similar highlights.

The Young Church leaders understand the many commitments faced by families today. We know that the age profile of our congregation has been changing over the last few years. We remain committed to providing meaningful and worshipful experiences for any children who join us for worship on Sunday and appreciate the support we receive from the clergy, vestry and congregation.

*Alison Cole*

## ***Penicuik & District YMCA-YWCA (the Y). Report***

Over the past 12 months the Y has continued to deliver successfully a wide range of community-based programmes, usually but not exclusively focused on young people. The largest activity is delivering affordable After School Care, in the form of Breakfast, After School and Holidays Clubs. Reaching over 200 families, there are days where we are at maximum capacity and with waiting lists. The building hosted well-being and sports groups such as Health in Mind, Drama Club, Boys Club, YGirls project, an LGBT programme, Brownies and Guides groups, table tennis, Ty Kwan Do and Share Lives. Many of these include or are specifically directed towards supporting disadvantaged people.

Disappointingly, by November 2017 we could no longer continue to fund our highly successful Plusone mentoring programme (managed by Susan Kerr) or our Youth Development Worker Alba Gonzales and the programme she was running. An excellent summary of the outcomes of the 3-year Plusone project showed it had reached fifty 8-14 yr-olds at risk of social danger. Exit

interviews with the young people and sometimes family showed many very positive, even life-changing outcomes. We are currently awaiting the result of another grant submitted to re-start the programme.

Overall, sadly the Y continues to be in a financially precarious position. We have recently been using business consultants to examine our operational model to try and become more self-sustaining: the recommendations from these are just becoming available at the time of writing. Our CEO Claire MacDonald worked closely with them and is leading in the development of a new business plan intended to help us become much more self-sustainable. It is likely that a range of short and long term actions will arise from this and meanwhile we will continue to apply for a wide range of grants to continue, promote and develop our youth-oriented programmes and fund our core costs.

Looking to the future in hope, a major strategy over the next several months is to try to re-involve the Penicuik community in our operations: parents of Out of School Care, other community users from the groups mentioned, local churches, etc. We would welcome offers of help in a range of areas, on a one-off (e.g. a fund-raising activity), short- or longer-term basis. Please contact Andy Longmore if you think you may be able to help.

**Andy Longmore**

## ***Treasurer's Report***

FOR YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 2018

***This report should be read in conjunction with the statement of accounts and balance sheet for the year ending 30 September 2018.***

**General:** This turned out to be quite a mixed year with an overall deficit of £1,549.17, which encouragingly is only about half the previous year's deficit. This was partly due to not having to pay a Rector's salary and tax for August and September.

**Receipt:** Relative to the previous year, income from collections dropped by £2,910, of which £2,821 was down to a decrease in reclaimed Gift Aid, resulting from only one claim being made, for logistical reasons. In the Other

Receipts category, income from West Linton, to fund one third of Rector's salary and expenses, dropped from £16,088 in 2017 to £11,858, and income from Hall usage dropped by £235. The result was a fall in income from other sources of £1,116, contributing to an overall decrease in receipts relative to the previous year of £14,026.

**Payments:** The accumulated spend dropped by just over £15.5 thousand relative to 2016-17. This reduction was made up of £6,827 on rectorial costs, £3,905 from buildings maintenance (although it should be noted that last year's total included £4,104 for a replacement boiler) and £2,780 for other payments. The latter included rises of £1,307 for Quota, £147 for worship expenses, the result of Outreach printing costs, and £131 for miscellaneous expenses. The £295 under Administration was the cost of room hire at the Secret Herb Garden for the Vestry 'away day'.

**2018-19 Budget:** The budget for the coming year is more difficult than usual to compile since we don't know exactly when we will be blessed with a new rector. As we have yet to advertise the post it seems unlikely that this will happen in the 2018-19 financial year. The main item of expenditure in the coming year will be repairs to the organ totaling £42,000+VAT = £50,400. Since our insurers have already provided £24,380, the Organ Fund currently stands at £9,265 and as a listed building we can reclaim the £8,400 VAT, leaving £7,620 to be found through grants and/or fund raising. Our insurers have also contributed £2,980 for the redecoration of the organ chamber. The other main item of expenditure on fabric will be the provision of, as yet uncosted, a second overflow channel and CCTV cameras to monitor water levels on the roof of the tower.

My **thanks** are due to my Deputy Treasurer Catherine Pow for her support, particularly banking collections in my absence; to Adrian Marchant for handling the FWO envelopes and Gift Aid; and to our independent examiner Duncan Troup for understanding and approving my accounting foibles.

**Graham Smith**, Hon Treasurer