

The Cathedral Church of St Andrew

Aberdeen

Registered Charity SC001058



Reports for the Annual General Meeting

20 November 2016

DRAFT MINUTES - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 6 DECEMBER 2015

Present: The Provost (Chair), the Trustees, and 42 constituent members of the congregation

Apologies: Ian Flett, Derek Elliott-Jones, Sonia Hudson, John and Audrey Parkes, Moira Paterson and Sylvia Simpson

1. Welcome and opening prayer

The Provost opened the meeting, remembering those who had passed away over the last year, in particular Max Paterson.

He also proposed that a message of thanks should be sent to the Dean for his work over the last year.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2014

These were received as correct without any amendments.

3. Elections

The Provost explained that there were two vacancies, one of these due to Sonia Hudson's decision to step down due to health reasons. The Provost wished to acknowledge the large contribution Sonia Hudson had made to the Cathedral.

There was only one nomination for Trustee, Regina Jäschke, who was elected unopposed. It was decided that a further Trustee would be co-opted at a later date.

There were also single nominations for the positions of Lay Representative and People's Warden and Andrew Morrisson and Mark Edwards respectively were elected to these unopposed.

4. Accounts/Budget

Andrew Morrisson explained that the role of Treasurer had now been vacant for over the year and thanked those who had helped him to keep the Cathedral finances in order. He added that a tender had been put out to allow us to access professional help and that Johnston Carmichael (JC) had been chosen as our accountants. This would allow us to submit our accounts to OSCR adhering to their strict guidelines. In the accounts presented to the AGM, the narrative and accounting policies provided by JC for this purpose had been missed out, however, the full document was available to access by request.

Andrew then provided an overview of the financial activities over the previous year:

- We had seen a cash income of £65,000 plus an additional £25,000 from other income such as the rent from Peacock's and proceeds from investments. This amounted to a total of approximately £95,000. However, the previous year's budget had been based on an income of £120,000 and even though we were still expecting Gift Aid rebates, there had been a considerable shortfall.
- The Development Fund stood at approximately £25,000 last year and, mostly due to the generous contribution from the Dean's Walk alongside some other donations, the total had now risen to £44,000.
- Staff costs had been much lower over the year as we had not been paying a Provost's or Administrator's salary. Payments to St Margaret's for the Dean were included under "Church expenses" as were repairs on the organ.
- Total cash assets amounted to £295,000.

Andrew then invited questions but there were none.

The Provost thanked Andrew and Claire in particular for all the time they have spent on the accounts and the help provided to them by Regina.

The accounts were then received by the AGM with Mark Edwards proposing and Jackie Hughes seconding. There were no objections.

5. Reports

The Provost pointed out that, while the reports provided an overview, much more work was carried out in and around the Cathedral than was listed here. In particular, he thanked those who worked quietly in the background and whose work may not even be recorded in our reports.

The Bishop had also reviewed our reports and has asked for the addition of the reason for the Dean's appointment as Interim Priest-in-Charge, i.e. due to the resignation of the previous Provost. He also wished us to know that he regarded our reports as a model of their kind.

Amber Shadle wished to make it clear that she had met with new Administrator appointed at the beginning of 2015 and had given her her email address to help with any queries.

The reports were then received as read with these amendments.

6. AOCB

There was no other current business from the congregation.

The Provost then introduced a new document on the Cathedral Development project. He encouraged the congregation to consider this as a “working draft”, to pray for and actively participate in determining the direction of the project. He also provided an explanation of the prayer logo to the congregation.

The Provost thanked everyone and concluded the meeting with the Grace.

THE PROVOST’S REPORT

Introduction

It is hard to believe, as I write this report on the day of Commemoration of Samuel Seabury on 14 November 2016, that we have journeyed together as God’s people for one year and one week. As I stop briefly to recall the past year, I am overwhelmed with a sense of joy and gratitude for the way God has led us through this year. There are many people to name in this report, to thank God for you and pray for God’s blessings upon you. And for the fear of omitting someone or other by mistake, I am choosing to keep my thanks unanimous. However, as I reflect on various aspects of our life together here at the Cathedral Church of St Andrew, under the headings of Worship, Communion and Stewardship, I hope you will recognise your unique contribution to our journey together. Much has happened in the past year and God chose to make it all happen in and through you. Blessed be God for ever.

Worship

One thing that I have come to realise and cherish in what we have inherited in the Cathedral worship of the Scottish Episcopal Church is our collective offering which happens throughout the week. On Mondays I see someone picking up rubbish around the Cathedral and tidy up the grounds. Tuesday mornings I come into the Cathedral to say Morning Prayers and find one or two people tidy up the pews, return the Bibles and other cards on the pews to their places. On one of these two days there is always someone in the John Skinner Centre cleaning the kitchen and counting the offertory. Tuesday evenings are a time for prayer, reading, discussion and fellowship. There is always something new to discover about God and God’s wonderful Word in the fellowship of one another. Wednesday morning Communion and the refreshments thereafter are something that give time to stop, pray, chat,

laugh and be refreshed as a worshipping community. I would leave for Robert Gordon University for prayers as their Chaplain. And I know people remain afterwards to tidy up and prepare for Sunday, in the Sacristy, tidy up flowers or vacuum the floors and dust the pews. On Thursdays as on Mondays there is someone in the office to assist the New Scots (Syrian Refugees) as they learn the culture and language. In the evenings, students and Masters meet to sing and learn music in preparation for Sunday. Friday mornings are a time for a cup of coffee through the loving labour of the faithful few. Saturday lunchtime concerts are another time for music, food and fellowship. There are those who set the place for worship on Sunday. We worship throughout the week, one way or the other. The week passes too quickly when we are caught up in that which is our chief duty. Thank you all and God bless you for your love of God and love of our Cathedral Church.

Communion

On Mondays and Thursdays the New Scots from Syria meet for English lessons in the John Skinner Centre. In the week leading up to the AGM, they had a celebration for a new family which arrived in Aberdeen two days earlier. There was a feast for which around 30 adults and 10 children gathered in the JSC and I was invited to join in and say a blessing. I began with the traditional form of prayer in Islam, in the name of God, Most Gracious and Most Merciful and proceeded to thank God for the people who were brought to safety in Aberdeen, and prayed for the safety of those making the journey and protection of those still in Aleppo and for peace in Syria and around the world. The prayer ended with thanksgiving for the food we were sharing. They all joined in saying "Amen". The translator from the Aberdeen City Council translated the entire prayer, and the end of which I saw tears of joy and gratitude in the faces of every woman and man who knew what it means to give and receive hospitality. God in Christ extends hospitality to us, strangers and aliens to the kingdom of heaven. It is a privilege to extend that hospitality to strangers and aliens in our city. The trustees have decided to open our doors to the New Scots, Narcotics Anonymous and Alcohol and Drugs Action. It is humbling to have this privilege which is made possible through you. God bless you as you seek to be faithful to that one true Communion, the bread of heaven given to the world through you.

Stewardship

Developing the properties we have inherited is the key aspect of our stewardship. We have made good progress in the past year as we respond to the call for the Cathedral to be open for prayer throughout the week. To

enable this, we have disposed of the Rectory in Grandholm Village to convert our properties on site to make it a living and lived in place of prayer. The ultimate objective is to form a “new monastic community” which would enable prayers to be offered continually in the Cathedral and in the city centre. The venue for this would be called the Seabury House and would include a four-bedroom apartment for the Provost and family as well as a single bedroom apartment for a member of Cathedral staff. It would also incorporate a new Song School and Morrisson Music Library, celebrating the dedicated service of someone who served this cathedral faithfully for nearly forty years. In addition, the John Skinner Centre facilities will be upgraded and office facilities made more suitable for a Cathedral.

Our primary task of developing and securing the future of the Cathedral through a range of repairs, renewal, reorganisation and upgrade has been progressed by the Trustees. They have been diligent in ensuring good progress in the appointment of Project Director James Lyon, Project Manager Andrew Morrisson, the formation of a Board of Patrons with Lord Glenarthur in the Chair and James Roy, a local architect.

Journey forward

Our next step will be to generate funds to complete the project and make the Cathedral a home of Christian culture and hospitality in the heart of Aberdeen. God has called you to this task. May God bless you to seek to answer that call.

The Provost, 18 Nov 2016

TRUSTEES’ REPORT

Installation of the Very Reverend Dr Isaac Poobalan as Provost and Rector

The year began with preparations for the Installation of Isaac Poobalan as Provost and Rector of the Cathedral. The installation took place on Saturday 7th November 2015 and the Trustees were delighted to welcome their new Provost to the cathedral. The Trustees also recorded their sincere thanks to the Dean for his inspiring leadership during the interregnum and the whole congregation thanked him officially after the Advent Carol Service.

Cathedral Development Project

In December, the Trustees reviewed the 2011-13 plans for the Development Project. The plans were displayed in the Suther Chapel in January and the congregation were invited to review them and give the Trustees feedback during the month of January. The consultation concluded with an EGM after the Sung Eucharist on Sunday, 31 January.

In January we informed the Edinburgh architect (John Sanders) that we propose to appoint a local architect to assist us, to facilitate support on a day-to-day basis. He agreed that this was a sensible idea, therefore we appointed James Roy, who has recently been involved with the St John's and Queen's Cross church developments. Mr Roy will also assist us with the appropriate grant applications for funding various parts of the project.

The Trustees have appointed Mr Jim Lyon, a retired architect and member of the Westhill Episcopal Church congregation, as the Project Manager for the Cathedral Development Project. His remit will include the development of the Cathedral itself, the Merchant's House and all the other buildings owned by the Cathedral. Mr Lyon has previously managed the £2 million Westhill Church project. He has very kindly agreed to act on our behalf without remuneration.

Drawings of the new Provost's house and guest flat in the Merchant's House by the architect, James Roy, have been accepted by the Trustees.

Advisory Boards for the Development Project

The Provost has set up two Advisory Boards, primarily as vehicles for networking, enabling us to tap into funding sources.

The UK body is named the 'Board of Patrons' with the Bishop in the chair. It includes The Lord Provost of Aberdeen, The Lord Simon Glenarthur, Dr Ian Long (Head of Albyn School), Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski (Principal of RGU) and Mr Damian Bates (MD of Aberdeen Journals). The Board met in May and Isaac presented the vision for the Development Project. He received detailed feedback from Lord Glenarthur.

The second Advisory Board is based in the USA. A meeting was held on the 22nd of February 2016 at 120 Broadway, New York. This was chaired by the Rev'd Dr William Lupfer (the Rector of Trinity, Wall Street). Also in attendance were the Rev'd Kristin Miles (also on the Trinity staff), the Rev'd Professor Gordon Graham and the Rev'd Michael Belt of St. James's, New London, CT. This group has not yet been formally constituted as a Board and the Provost is still in discussion with Dr Lupfer. Professor Graham suggests that we register a charity account in the USA, which will then automatically be credited with tax rebates when donations are received from USA tax payers. Dr Lupfer has agreed to host this account at Trinity, Wall Street. Money would be transferred from it to our UK account at our request.

The Rectory and accommodation for the Provost and his family

The decision to sell the Grandholm Rectory was explained in last year's

annual report. The Provost and his family continued to live at 15 Ashley Road (the St John's rectory) until the end of March, by mutual agreement between the Cathedral and St John's Church. They then moved into rented accommodation in the centre of town. The Trustees accepted an offer of £340,000 for the Grandholm Rectory in March. Missives were concluded and the keys were handed over on 29 April. Over £330k was credited to the Cathedral funds after expenses. The Trustees agreed that provision of a new rectory should be our top priority within the development project and that we will explore the creation of a rectory within the existing Cathedral properties. The Trustees and the Provost agreed to convert part of the Merchant's House adjacent to the cathedral into a rectory, which would require Peacock Visual Arts (PVA) to reduce their footprint. The Cathedral solicitor (Philip Anderson) has advised PVA'S solicitor that we will not grant a new lease on the Merchant's House when the existing one expires, but would be prepared to grant a lease on the Old School Building, provided conditions relating to the dilapidations are met.

New Trustees

Four new Trustees were appointed in March and April, to fill vacancies:

Canon John Walker, Rector of St Mary's Church, Inverurie (Diocesan Trustee)

Captain Derek Whatling, who attends St Ternan's Church, Banchory (Diocesan Trustee)

Mr Kelechi Nwajiuba (Cathedral Trustee)

Mr Michael Stone (Cathedral Trustee)

Constitution

Following the 31 January EGM, the Trustees agreed to set up a small working group to review the constitution and propose revisions to bring it in line with the Provincial template. This is chaired by the Provost and co-ordinated by Michael Stone, with input from several others.

Grants from the Dr John Anderson Trust

The Bishop encouraged the Cathedral to apply to this Trust and suggested that a proposal to spend up to £15,000 a year on capital project(s) related to the Cathedral development could be received favourably. The Trust allocates funds in November of each year and the Bishop has undertaken to make a case for funds for us in September/October.

Fabric and Maintenance

The Trustees have negotiated a 3-year contract with Cheyne Roofing to inspect and clean the Cathedral roof at 6-monthly intervals and perform any

other necessary maintenance and remedial work. Cheyne have informed us that the nails securing the roof are made of copper and are not rusting, therefore the total cost of roof repairs is expected to be less than £10,000. The architect (James Roy) has advised us not to seek Heritage Lottery funding for this, because they would stipulate the use of lime mortar, whereas modern mortar will be more durable.

The Trustees were repeatedly disappointed by the poor response of Mutch to our internal maintenance requirements and have terminated our contract with the company. Alternative local tradespeople are being sourced as required.

The repairs to the JSC to make good the damage done during the 2015 burglary are now complete.

Barriers were installed at the entrances to both the Cathedral car parks. The one for the car park off Peacock's Close is very heavy and difficult to operate, therefore they are left open most of the time. The barriers were closed and locked for a week in May, to dissuade unauthorised parking, and this reduced the problem in the short term.

Improved signage for the car parks has been ordered from the local firm 'Sign Designs'.

The 2016 phase of the work on the organ (re-leathering of the Swell and Choir divisions) has been completed. Nicholson (organ builders) have visited to cost the replacement of the organ electrical system and they have also advised us that there is insufficient room in the organ loft to rebuild the swell box.

Activity Portfolios

The Trustees agreed Position Descriptions for the following Portfolios:

- Finance
- Building and maintenance
- Communications (including IT) and publicity
- Operations (events, catering etc)
- Health and Safety
- Peacock Visual Arts liaison

We intend that the Trustee with responsibility for each portfolio should not have to do the bulk of the work himself/herself, but should be the convenor of a small working group of non-Trustees, overseeing their work and liaising between them and the Trustees. Andrew and Claire Morrisson have joint responsibility for the Finance portfolio, with continuing support from

Johnston Carmichael Accountants. Regina Jäschke has responsibility for the Operations portfolio and the COLT (Cathedral Operations Leadership Team) has been formed. Mark Edwards has responsibility for the Health and Safety portfolio. The assignment of other portfolios is in progress.

Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG)

The Trustees agreed two documents: A form to request permission to use images of those aged under 16 on the congregational website, in photo displays and in publications; and a document specifying the procedures for handling the permission forms and material itself. These are now in use and are available on the Cathedral website and from the Cathedral office.

Cathedral Development Fund

Christine Flett agreed to become administrator of the Development Fund, following the sad death of Sonia Hudson. She oversees the day to day financial transactions and maintains a financial balance sheet, under Claire Morrisson's supervision. Treasurer responsibilities remain within the Cathedral Finance portfolio and the formal accounts are prepared by Johnston Carmichael as part of the overall Cathedral OSCR reporting. The Trustees agreed that Isaac Poobalan and Christine Flett be added as authorised signatories in the current mandate for the account. The continuing authorised signatory is Sylvia Simpson.

Claire Morrisson, Provost's Warden, 9 Nov 2016

CATHEDRAL FINANCES

This summary is aimed at giving a very broad outline of the Cathedral's Financial position.

Our income for the year was £114,000 for the general fund and £25,500 for the Cathedral Development Fund making a total of £139,500. The balance in the Development Fund was £64,000. In addition, the proceeds from the sale of the rectory were £335,000. The Cathedral also has investments managed by Brewin Dolphin currently valued at £203,000.

Income to the general fund was made up of £23,700 from regular congregational giving by bank transfer, £32,500 from cash (collections etc.) and £57,800 from other sources (rental income, investment income, gift aid reclamation and grants). It should be noted that this figure includes two years of gift aid rebate (approx. £7000 p.a.). Our expenditure for the year was £160,000 which included two capital expenditure items: urgent renewal of the perished leatherwork in two divisions of the organ and the new car

park barriers (£24,000 in total). The income to the general fund represents an increase of 23% over the previous financial year. Whilst this is a very welcome increase over last year, when the exceptional gift aid rebate and capital items are excluded, it still represents a deficit in operational expenditure (salaries, heating, administration costs, professional fees, repairs and maintenance, Insurance etc.) of approximately £3,500.

Andrew Morrisson, 14 Nov 2016

LAY REPRESENTATIVE

Diocesan Synod

I attended the meeting of the Synod of the United Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney which took place at Westhill Community Church on Saturday, 5 March 2016. Several trebles from the choir attended the Youth Synod which ran in parallel.

The Bishop asked members to remember those clergy and lay readers and Lay Representatives who had died in the last year namely: the Rev'd Canon Archie Allan, the Rev'd Canon Dorrie Firman, Miss Beatrix Neesham and Michael Grant.

Two new PVG Officers were introduced, namely Mrs Val Steele and Mr Tom Ferguson. Both had relevant background to help in carrying out the PVG work for the diocese.

A talk on the work of Grampians Woman's Aid was given by their Manager, Alison Hay. This service has been running for 40 years in the Aberdeen area and has been supported over the years by the Mothers' Union. The Rev'd Vittoria Hancock of Upper Deeside gave a report following the floods at the beginning of the year.

The main agenda item was a Provincial Matter: the subject of Same-Sex Marriage. After presentations by a number of speakers, members of Synod were invited to take a blank card to write their own views on the subject. These cards were placed on the table by the conclusion of the Synod and the thoughts shared with everyone.

The Rev'd Capt Gerry Bowyer spoke in support of the established Doctrine of Marriage. He proposed the following motion which was seconded by the Rev'd Dr David Greenwood: In the light of the recent Anglican Primates' meeting we, the Synod of the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney, wish to:

- a. Support the Primates' reaffirmation of the traditional doctrine of the

church in upholding marriage as between a man and a woman in faithful, lifelong union. This was carried.

- b. and request that the General Synod makes no decisions that could put the SEC's relationship with the Anglican Communion at risk. This was carried.

The Bishop then moved that the motions be put to General Synod. This was carried.

A replacement for Bishop Bob

The Primus and the College of Bishops have confirmed that the preliminary meeting of the Episcopal Synod and the Preparatory Committee will be held on Saturday, 17 December at Westhill Community Church. It is intended to establish a short list of candidates for the Episcopacy by 21 March 2017 at the latest.

Andrew Morrisson, Lay Representative, 14 Nov 2016

SERVERS AND SACRISTY

Serving team: Athol, Emeka, Ian, Mika, Wendy and Margaret

The servers have assisted at all Sunday services throughout the year as well as at the Advent Carol Service, Nine Lessons and Carols, Christmas Midnight Eucharist, Epiphany Carol Service and all Holy Week Services.

On Saturday, 7 November of last year we were pleased to be involved at the Installation of Isaac as our new Provost and the Rev'd Paul Watson as Chapter Canon.

In May we took part in a Gaelic Mass to celebrate the Feast of St. Moluag led by the Dean, entirely in Gaelic.

Also in May, we assisted at the MU Lady Day service presided over by Bishop Bob and attended by the Bishop of Mthatha.

In the earlier part of the year we had the Dorsal Curtain, which was extremely dusty and dirty, professionally cleaned. Unfortunately on hanging the curtain we discovered a small existing hole had become considerably larger and I am very grateful to Audrey Parkes for the expert repair.

You may have missed Ian Brown over the last few months from the serving team. Ian has been having back problems but is hoping to be back serving soon.

Lastly I would like to thank the serving team for their support and commitment throughout the past year.

Margaret Buyers, 10 Nov 2016

CATHEDRAL MUSIC

Organist and Master of the Choristers: Andrew Morrisson

Organ Scholar: Kevin Cameron

Trebles Choir Trainer: Claire Morrisson

Choir Practice: Thursdays 6.30 – 7.45 pm (boys/girls), with optional theory session from 5.45 pm

Sunday Services:

Sung Eucharist: 10.00 for 10.45 am

Choral Evensong: 5.30 for 6.30 pm

Weekday Services:

Friday Sung Compline: 6.00 pm (penitential season)

The groups which contribute to the music are:

The Cathedral Choir (boy and girl choristers and lay clerks): minimum of one service a week (Eucharist or Evensong), augmented for major services by adults.

Choral Scholars and Lay Clerks: minimum of one service a week (Eucharist or Evensong) during University Terms

Cathedral Voices (adult mixed choir): minimum of one Sunday per month.

The remaining Sunday Services are sung by the Cathedral Lay Clerks.

The different choirs combine for special occasions such as Advent Carols, Christmas Midnight Eucharist, Easter Day Evensong and the Diocesan Choral Festival.

We currently have 15 youngsters (boys/girls) in the choir and we are always grateful for contacts to potentially recruit more. This year, under the guidance of Claire Morrisson, two Choristers were successful in gaining St Andrew's Awards of the RSCM: Lewa Olaosebikan (Gold Award) and Nina Morgan (Bronze Award).

In May we said *au revoir* to Nina Morgan who was awarded a place in the

Durham Cathedral Girls Choir. Nina is boarding at the Durham Cathedral School and singing the daily services in the Cathedral.

We were delighted to appoint six choral scholars, generously funded in part by a member of the congregation. One of the scholars, Jenni Halliday has been awarded a scholarship to study for a Masters in singing performance at Westminster Choir College, Princeton, USA. Another scholar, Emily Harrison, has been accepted to sing in Genesis 16, the training choir for the world-renowned choir “The Sixteen”.

On 27 April 2016, our Head Chorister Lewa Olaosebikan was invited to sing in a concert in St Paul’s Cathedral to launch the Friends of Cathedral Music Diamond Fund for Choristers. The Concert, in which choristers from all the Cathedrals in the UK joined with St Paul’s Cathedral Choir, was introduced by Alexander Armstrong and Aled Jones and was conducted by the Cathedral Master of the Choristers, Andrew Carwood. Lewa had the honour of being personally introduced to the Duchess of Gloucester. In January she will return to London to make a recording of music from the concert on the DECCA label.

In February, the Cathedral Lay Clerks had a very successful visit to Blackburn where they sang the weekend services in the Cathedral, where our former Assistant Organist, Ed Jones, is based. The choir had the privilege of singing at a special service for the installation of the new Archdeacon of Blackburn. This weekend was a chance to catch up with many former choir members who joined us for the occasion. Ed has since moved on to a new position at Exeter Cathedral. The Trebles ‘held the fort’ in Aberdeen, singing an Upper Voices setting of the Mass and the Motet.

The choristers participated in the annual ‘choir camp’ in August, spending a week at Coventry Cathedral. The choristers stayed in the Coventry University Halls of Residence and our old friend Janice Smail provided excellent catering. Rehearsals took place every day and they sang choral services in the Cathedral on most days. On the day off, a visit was made to Alton Towers. A photographic record of the trip is displayed in the South Aisle. Particular thanks go to Christina and George Cameron and Mark Edwards and Wendy Webb for all their help on the trip,

This year, as part of reaching out to the community, the Trebles have been singing at Rubislaw Park Care home on a number of Sundays during the year. The residents and staff are very appreciative of the music at their services. On Sunday 6th November, the choristers are singing at a special service of healing and light for the families of the “baby ashes” scandal.

In December, the Trebles and Lay Clerks raised the profile of the choir and did some fund raising by singing carols at the Maritime Museum.

We were delighted that a number of the choristers were baptised and confirmed by the Bishop at a special service in September.

The **Saturday at Midday** Concert Series continues under Kevin Cameron's organisation. The half-hour concerts take place 52 weeks a year and have built an audience of regular listeners. The concerts are followed by an informal lunch and are making a significant contribution to Cathedral Development fund-raising. There are always opportunities for individuals or groups to perform, so if you have contacts who may be interested please get in touch with Kevin. Thank you to all the members of the congregation who provide lunch. Particular thanks to Margaret and Athol who organised the catering rota for a long time and to Amu who has taken over responsibility for catering on a temporary basis. Any offers of help with the catering would be gratefully received.

There were a number of special choral services and events during the year including:

- November – Victoria Requiem for All Souls
- November – Concert and Service for the Installation of Provost Isaac
- November – Fauré Requiem for Remembrance Sunday
- November – Advent Carol Service
- December – Crib Service and Posada Event (Trebles)
- December – Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols
- December – Midnight Eucharist
- January – Epiphany Carol Service
- January – Festival of Lights Evensong before Solidarity March
- January – Choral Evensong and Benediction for Candlemas
- February – Ash Wednesday Service including Allegri's Miserere
- March – Afternoon Concert replacing Evensong on Passion Sunday
- March – Service of Tenebrae on Good Friday
- May – Evensong for the Scottish Federation of Organists Annual Conference
- May - Diocesan Choral Festival
- June – Mattins for Her Majesty the Queen's 90th Birthday
- June – Gaelic Mass
- September – Diocesan Confirmation Service
- October – Farewell Evensong and presentation to Bishop Bob

Forthcoming special services include the Advent Carol Service on Sunday, 27 November and the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols on Sunday, 18 December.

The choir relies on a number of willing volunteers. In particular I would like to thank Bill Henderson who plays the organ most Sunday mornings. A considerable expression of thanks must go to Claire Morrisson for her hard work with helping to train the youngsters and preparing the choristers for awards of the RSCM and her work in looking after the robes.

Finally, I would like to thank the Provost, Trustees and Congregation who give the choir so much support and encouragement.

Andrew Morrisson, 10 Nov 2016

CATERING

Sunday coffee – This continues to be well supported and appreciated. Thanks for all the donations of tea, coffee and biscuits (of which as a congregation we eat a lot of). The duty rota for serving these refreshments after the service runs fairly smoothly and I thank all the teams involved. We could use more helpers so if you can offer your services every two months, please see a member of the catering team. Donations of tea and biscuits would also be gratefully received.

Friday Coffee Shop – Numbers are unpredictable. We have a small core of regulars whom we now know well and appreciate their loyalty. Many visitors to both Cathedral and City drop in and we always try to give them a warm welcome. Several members of the congregation come for their Friday coffee and to have some leisure time catching up with friends or to hold meetings for Cathedral business. We would be so pleased to welcome more members of the congregation. Do give the coffee shop a trial - you will always meet someone to chat with. The sandwiches and home bakes are always popular.

Thanks here to the dedicated team of helpers, organised by Rose Hall, who tirelessly produce home bakes and sandwiches. Particular thanks also to those who step in to cover emergencies. New volunteers would be appreciated, especially when illness occurs.

Saturday lunches – We continue to serve a light lunch following the Cathedral at Noon series of recitals. These together with the recitals themselves are very popular and apart from a slight drop in numbers during the summer months are very well attended which means during the financial

year 2015-16 we have been able to contribute just over £4000 to the Cathedral Development Fund.

Many thanks to those members of the Cathedral who have provided and served the refreshments over the last year.

Volunteers are always welcome and if you would like to help please contact Amu Poobalan who is now at the helm.

Special Events – We have recently catered for refreshments after the confirmation service and Bishop Bob's farewell service. This was challenging but successful especially considering the large number of people and the limited space available.

The financial contributions from the catering is available in the financial report but the fellowship generated is as important as the financial success.

Anyone able and willing to help please come forward and join the caterers. Everyone who does so really enjoys it. It truly is a team effort.

Kathy Priestley, Catering Coordinator, Rose Hall and Margaret Buyers, 14/17 Nov 2016

FLOWERS

The flower team currently has 12 regular arrangers: Jeanette, Victoria, Christine, Rose, Jackie, Marian, Pam, Gwyneth, Moira, Audrey, Kathy, and Jean. These 12 people are on a rota to source, arrange and maintain the flowers all year. There are extra people who regularly assist us all for special occasions including Amber and Simon, who climb up to make wonderful porch windowsill arrangements for Christmas, Easter and Harvest, and Liz Gillies, who has been another very helpful reserve extra arranger this year; she brought marvellous flowers and greenery from the Bishop's garden, especially at Christmas and Harvest this year – she will be very much missed at Cathedral.

The team has ensured that flowers are provided every week, (except Lent and Advent when we observe tradition and have no flowers), both in the porch to welcome people into the Cathedral and at the crossing, reflecting the liturgical colours in the church year or for a special request from a sponsor. There have been special arrangements, which this year included a 'bower' made by the youth ministry team from a decorated gazebo, for the children's portrayal of the story of Ruth, in the Eucharist service at Harvest.

We have also had events outside Cathedral organised by Amudha, who is also a great 'permanent reserve' arranger. We have had a very enjoyable flower-arranging session for the flower team and others who were interested, with a demo from Amu's flower-arranger friend Lorraine; she also a visit to the gardens at the BP house at Greenridge, which looked stunning; and a series of workshops at Cathedral, making door-wreaths and decorations for Advent and Christmas for the Advent Stall on 27 November.

Helena Thomas, 17 Nov 2016

CATHEDRAL CLEANING

We continue to meet on a Wednesday following the 10am Communion Service. We are very few in number and are struggling to keep the Cathedral and vestries clean and tidy.

However, on a more positive note, two of the choir mums have offered their help one evening a week when available and we are also getting some help with the hoovering again depending on availability.

It would be good to have one or two more volunteers on a Wednesday to help lighten the load, so if you have a spare couple of hours, it need not be every week, we would be pleased to see you.

I am however aware that too few people are doing many jobs around the Cathedral and I would like to thank those who come along regularly to help out.

Margaret Buyers, 10 Nov 2016

CATHEDRAL SHOP

The shop has had a steady year and we are happy to report increased takings during the summer. This was partly due to the sale of our new coffee mugs. They are beautiful with scenes of the West Coast in delicate colours and are designed and produced in Scotland.

We are grateful to the stewards who not only look after our visitors but are customers themselves.

Greeting cards continue to sell well and we thank members of the congregation for their support by buying regularly. We have stands in the Cathedral and John Skinner Centre. If we are not available please take your cards and pay us later. Remember our prices are always lower than shops in the city!

We visit at least one Trade Fair every year and are always looking for new ideas. If you have suggestions please let us know.

We hope more people will buy from the shop next year contributing to Cathedral funds.

Kathy Priestley and Jackie Hughes, 17 Nov 2016

MOTHER'S UNION

The AGM in February was well attended. There was uncertainty over the future of MU at Diocesan level due mainly to lack of members either willing or unable to take up office. The present committee are all due to stand down as they have served their maximum 6 year time in office. If no committee can be elected then the diocese will lose their charitable status. In view of this we were unable to go ahead with elections at Branch level. The committee and office holders in the Branch are to remain the same on an "acting" basis. The meeting was followed by an excellent Bring and buy sale.

In March we had a productive meeting assembling toilets bags for the Woman's Refuge. So far this year we have delivered in excess of 50 bags. In addition members have knitted in excess of 30 hats and gloves to be given to Seamans Mission and Cyrenians.

A discussion group in April decided that we would continue to meet as a Branch group of MU regardless of the outcome of the problems at Diocesan level.

The Diocesan problems were discussed before the Lady Service, held in the Cathedral.

Interim appointments were made in the Branch to keep it running until the AGM in 2017.

Appointments

Interim Branch Coordinator, Florence Cal-Anglia, Interim Treasurer, Moira Middleton, Interim Secretary, Kathy Priestley and Interim Committee Member Margaret Buyers.

It was decided that meetings would always be on the first Tuesday of the month at 2pm and individual members could be solely responsible for organising a meeting of their choice.

The autumn programme began with a meeting at which the Reverend Joan Lyon gave as much to think about. The Reverend Carole Phelan prepared a

quiet afternoon for the November meeting. What an oasis of calm as we discussed Saints both living and dead. What a pleasure it was to follow up on a bible references in the search for a definition of a saint and then to discuss everyone's thoughts. The last meeting of the year is the advent service followed by a festive tea. As we did last year we will be inviting friends from the churches in the city and Ellon and of course all of our own congregation are very welcome.

During this year three of our members have passed away:

In early April our loved and respected branch leader, Sonia Hudson, died after a long illness. Sonia was an inspired leader and stood for solid family values. She gave generously of her time and energy to helping others. Not only have we lost an MU leader but also a dear friend to all the members. She is greatly missed.

Valerie Irvine-Fortesque was an indoor member for many years before her death but she always took a keen interest in what was going on at the MU meetings. Her gentle voice of wisdom and calm was always appreciated. Her strong faith was an inspiration to us all.

In October, Lily Cameron passed away after being unwell for some time. Like Valerie, Lily, had been an indoor member for some time. Lily joined us from Edinburgh and was a regular presence at our meetings. She used to arrive at great speed on her motorised scooter! Mothers Union members were privileged to carry out her wishes that we looked after refreshments following her funeral.

The Mothers' Union Cathedral Branch, will continue as part of the Diocesan fellowship of the Mothers' Union and everyone is most welcome to join us.

Kathy Priestly, Acting Secretary, 17 Nov 2016

BIBLE STUDY/FELLOWSHIP GROUP

Venue: John Skinner center (Just behind the main Church building)

Time: 6.00 pm every Tuesday

The Tuesday Bible study group has been in existence since 2008. Through interaction with God's word and one another, it is our hope that the lives of your Bible study members will be profoundly changed. The purpose of a Bible study is not to simply learn information or to be a part of a Bible study club, but allow the Lord to transform our lives.

2016 Summary: We are happy to welcome the new Provost to our study

bearing in mind we ran a good part of the previous study without a Provost. Some of the highlights in 2016 were our visit to Orkney in relation to the Science and Religion project led by the Provost and Prof. Nicolae Bulz.

The journey to Orkney through the ferry was good and interactive, gave us a chance to get to know the team better and an opportunity to discuss various perspective of science and religion. Sites visited included Skara Brae, Europe's best preserved Stone Age village; the Standing Stones of Stenness; Highland Park and St. Magnus Cathedral.

2017 Plan: We would like to encourage more participation from the congregation and hold joint meetings/seminars with other groups within the church. This was not achieved in 2016 so any ideas on how to achieve this is welcome from the congregation.

Our activities include:

Prayer Meeting (We aim to do this once every month): In this session members are encouraged to pray for one another's shared and unshared physical and spiritual needs.

Bible Study (This activity occurs when there are no Holidays or prayer meetings): In this session participants are encouraged to contribute to each other's understanding of the Bible. Specifically, we hope that participants, through Scripture, are drawn more intimately to our Lord through this study. The leader encourages people with various backgrounds and personalities to help them form authentic relationships with one another.

Every member is encouraged to lead a study at some point as we know that the greatest beneficiary most times is the leader who is encouraged to prepare a study and out of his research comes to share with the rest of the group. We also invite guest speakers which can include priests from other churches etc.

Holidays: This normally occurs during the winter break (December to January)

Visits and Consolation: During times of celebration or loss bible study participants are encourage to visit and pray for one another, bringing gifts of appreciation and also by sharing a kind word.

Everyone is invited, irrespective of your background or age. We hope you find our fellowship worthwhile.

Ikenna Asogwa, Coordinator, 17 Nov 2016

CRÈCHE

The crèche has continued this year under the leadership of Christine Flett and a group of faithful helpers. On average the number of children attending weekly is 8 out of 20. The rota is drawn up for six months at a time and we have three people on duty each week with extra mums staying as required. Christine Thomson has retired from crèche duties this time but we welcome Kathleen Kilgour to our team. Thanks to Christine for her help over the last few years.

A number of children have progressed to Godly Play and Junior Church and some are in the transition stage. We were delighted to welcome three new babies this year Alison, Chikanso and Kamsiyo and are happy that Joy and Mimi are back with us again after their maternity leave.

The Umah and Brock families have returned to the Cathedral and we welcomed the Cuthill family from Ellon.

We had a great Christmas Celebration at the end of last year with all the Cathedral children. Santa paid us a visit and we look forward to repeating this again in a few weeks' time. The children took part in the Christmas Eve afternoon crib service and welcomed the Pasada which had travelled all over the Diocese to the Cathedral. There was a Family Fun day in July with a bring and share lunch in the JSC and the highlight being a bouncy castle in the Cathedral. A good time was had by all. We all took part in the Good Friday service led by the Bishop. This was a hands on service following the steps of Jesus and the stations of the cross, enjoyed by both adults and children. This was followed by drinks and hot-cross buns in the JSC. We joined the Pentecost and Harvest festivals in the Cathedral, making crowns of fire, flowers and fruit for the drama presentations in the cathedral.

Thanks to Iain Flett for signalling us when it is time to get the children ready to be picked up for church, Ann Leith for opening the side door to let us in and the Sides-people for putting service books in the front pews and all the parents and helpers for their continued support.

Maira Middleton, Assistant Crèche Leader, 17 Nov 2016

GODLY PLAY

I have only had the privilege of being involved with the youth of St Andrew's Cathedral for about 9 months now following an interim of about two and a half years away. In that time the Godly Play and youth programmes at the

Cathedral have continued to develop and have an established core group of young people regularly attending. In addition, a set structure to the programme and solid group of helpers on the rota has been developed to meet the needs of a growing group.

The Godly Play and youth programme had been under the confident guidance of Liz Gillies for some time, and during that time the pattern of mixed Godly Play and Junior Church sessions was established. This term we had 10 sessions of Godly Play and were going through the supplemental stories. The other four Sundays we used to prepare for the Harvest all-age service and Remembrance Sunday, for example. We also did a dramatic presentation of the book of Ruth for our Harvest service which was quite a memorable experience!

Now that the Bishop has retired and Liz has left to accompany him on their new adventures, we are beginning to think and pray about the forward direction our Junior Church programme needs to take to serve our young people best. We will begin by deciding a course of Godly Play material to pursue and deciding how to augment those sessions on the Junior church Sundays. In addition, we will determine how best to support our helpers and build their confidence for taking on roles such as storyteller and leader.

At the moment we aim to continue having mostly Godly Play sessions on Sundays, supplemented occasionally by Junior Church sessions. We are looking at ways to develop the practice of all-age experience in the Cathedral. And we look to the Spirit to guide us in being faithful pilgrims as we continue to do His work.

If you would like to be involved with the young people of the Cathedral don't hesitate to let Moira or myself know. And do continue to pray for us as we move ahead in this "Post-Liz era" into the shape and people God wants us to be in 2017!

With humble gratefulness to the Trustees, the Youth Team and the Provost.

Stephanie Brock, 18 Nov 2016

CATHEDRAL WEBSITE

I am pleased to report that the www site has been technically "stable" for 18 months or so, since we moved to an alternative provider, as recommended by the Diocesan's IT advisor, Mary McKinnell. I am also pleased to report that the numbers of people visiting the web site continues to increase, and that

we have even had some compliments!

Basically the website has two principal “sections”, namely basic information about the Cathedral which is relatively static: Introduction/Welcome, Buildings & History, Regular Giving & How-to-Contact-us. And further sections which change regularly, namely the side panels which give details of the next week’s services, another which gives info about next week’s Children’s Ministry (“Godly Play” etc), and a pointer to the current month’s *Focus*.

Did you know that the following information is also available from the WWW site:

All the *Focuses* published (monthly) since May 2015.

Service sheets for the last couple of months (Note these contain the weekly prayer list)

A selection of sermons preached in the Cathedral (so far restricted to Bishop Bob)

A list of Saturday Recitals to be given over the next period.

More details of the Cathedral’s Music & Choir, including a list of occasional concerts.

Information about visiting the cathedral ie Summer Visiting Hours. (This TAB contains a useful map.)

Details of the Mothers’ Union planned activities

Information about the Tuesday Fellowship

And much more (to quote from the front page of *Focus*)...

The entry page is used either to display a graphic of the Cathedral’s interior or it contains information about current/ upcoming *major* activities. For instance, in Spring ‘16, this page carried details (& appropriate graphics) of the Lenten series of special weekday services and associated fasts. Currently this page carries details about the Advent Carol Service and the launch of the Cathedral Development Project 2020. (These displays are generally designed and “uploaded” by the Provost; we thank him for his creativity which greatly enhances the appearance and content of our website).

Finally, if you feel that there are activities in the Cathedral which are not yet represented on the website please let the Provost or me know. Also if you are responsible for a particular activity in the Cathedral, please consider when you pass info to Amber (Editor of *Focus*) to pass the web team a copy as well. Our email address is: website@standrewscathedralaberdeen.org.uk or d.sleeman@abdn.ac.uk; alternatively you can pass us a hardcopy or just talk to me/us.

General suggestions of how to improve the layout and content are also welcome.

Happy browsing!

Derek Sleeman, 13 November 2016

FOCUS

This has been another successful year for the Cathedral Focus magazine. We have continued to see updates from the Trustees meetings, which help to keep the congregation informed about important issues and changes. In the past couple of months we have also seen details circulated about the Cathedral Development Project and our fundraising efforts. This is in addition to our regular features, such as the MU updates, Flower Reports, Summer Stewarding, various appeals for volunteers, Wardens' Corner, Choir News, ponderings from the Provost, advertisements for various services and concerts at the Cathedral, occasional updates from our Tewkesbury correspondent, and much, much more. Thank you to all who have contributed to the Focus this past year - without your willingness to send in articles, the Focus would not exist! Thank you to all of our readers and those who have supported the distribution of the magazine, especially Christine Flett, who sends out copies of the magazine to those on the mailing list. I look forward to seeing what the New Year will bring - as always, if you want to submit something to the Focus, please do! In the past we have published articles, Cathedral event advertisements, poetry, photos, etc. Looking forward to hearing from you!

Amber Shadle, 14 Nov 2016

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS (PVG)

There were not many events or activities organised this year. However, the redesign of the Cathedral website brought into focus the need to develop a form to which parents and guardians can consent to having their children or wards' images, pictures, video etc to be posted on the website.

After spending a lot of time on the format and content of the consent form the trustees of the Cathedral gave the go ahead for the consent form to be made available to parents and guardians. On Sunday the 16th of October the first batch of parental consent forms were given out to parents who readily gave their consent for images of their children to be posted on the website.

May I seize this opportunity to remind parents who have not done so to collect consent forms from the Cathedral office or let me know and I will make them available to you.

I will take this opportunity also to once again thank everyone who helped with the design of the consent form.

Thank you.

Victoria Angoe, 14 Nov 2016

GIFT AID

Gift aid rebates have been claimed and received for donations made between 6th April 2012 and 5th April 2014, therefore the backlog of unclaimed donations has been reduced by 1 year over the reporting period. We plan to reclaim the gift aid for 2014-15 and 2015-16 in the current year (2016-17), which will bring us up to date.

We have kept records of the weekly loose plate collections by denomination from October 2015. Our accountants (Johnston Carmichael) have advised us that this should enable us to claim a tax rebate of up to £1,250 pa on the loose plate collections from this date.

Two gift aid rebate claims were submitted to HMRC in March 2016. One covered the period 6 April 2012 to 30 September 2012 (from the start of the HMRC financial year to the end of our own financial year) and one from 1 October 2012 to 5 April 2013 (from the start of our financial year to the end of the HMRC financial year). A further two claims were submitted in September 2016, covering the periods 06/04/13 – 30/09/13 and 01/10/13 – 05/04/14. These claims are summarised in the table below. Both these rebates were received in the 2015/16 financial year.

Period	Total value of qualifying donations	Total rebate	Qualifying donations to Development Fund	Development Fund refund	Rebate as % of gross before tax
HMRC FY 12/13	£27,258.40	£6,917.59	-	-	20.2%
HMRC FY 13/14	£28,713.05	£7,267.45	£910.00	£230.07	20.2%

The gift-aided donations to the development fund are included in the same claim as the general fund, because they both come under the same SCO charity number. The rebates are electronically credited to the general fund account by HMRC, therefore an amount of £230.07p has been transferred from the general fund to the development fund. The refunds are slightly more than 20% of the gross before tax (i.e. qualifying donations + rebate) because HMRC adds a small amount of interest to cover the delay in repayment.

We reviewed the gift-aid declaration forms we have on file at the beginning of the year and found that many families who started to attend the cathedral over the last ten years had not completed a declaration. Consequently, we campaigned to get tax-payers to complete gift-aid declarations before we submitted the claims in March. The percentages of donations we have been able to claim on are summarised in the table below. Not everyone pays tax, therefore the overall total will always be less than 100%. Nevertheless, the table suggests we still have not maximised our potential rebate.

Church FY	FWO envelopes	Standing Orders	White envelopes	Total
2012/13	69%	76%	97%	77%
2013/14	71%	81%	100%	80%

The nominated individuals for the charity have also been updated. Richard Kilgour has been removed from the list. Isaac Poobalan has been added as the ‘Responsible Individual’. Claire Woods and Regina Jäschke have been added as ‘Authorised Individuals’.

Claire Morrisson, Provost’s Warden, 11 Nov 2016

Annual General Meeting

The Cathedral Church of St Andrew Aberdeen

Sunday, 20 November 2016

Agenda

1. Welcome, opening prayer and apologies
2. Minutes of the 2015 AGM
3. Change in Constitution
4. Cathedral Accounts/Budget
5. Reports
6. Elections
7. Cathedral Development Project
8. AOCB
9. The Grace