

St James the Less Church  
Penicuik  
AGM Reports  
AGM - 2009 – 6<sup>th</sup> 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.**

**Directory of Reports**

Draft Minutes . . . . .	p.2, 3, 4
Accounts & Treas. Proposed Budget: . . . . .	insert
Bible Study Tuesday am . . . . .	p. Carevan . . . . . p.5
Child Protection . . . . .	p.7
Choir Report . . . . .	p.8
Church Wardens Report. . . . .	p.
CWF Church Women’s Fell. . . . .	p.9
Fabric Report . . . . .	p.10
J -Tots . . . . .	p.11
Lay Rep. Report . . . . .	p.
Mauricewood Housegroup . . . . .	p.12
Mothers’ Union . . . . .	p.12
Outreach . . . . .	p.13
Pastoral care & Rotas . . . . .	p.16
Penicuik for Africa (PfA) . . . . .	p.14
Pooling Fund . . . . .	p.
Prayer . . . . .	p.
Rector’s Report . . . . .	p.
Silverburn Study Group . . . . .	p.16
Stewardship Sec. . . . .	p.17
Treasurer’s Report . . . . .	p.17 World Day of Prayer . . . . . p.
Young Church . . . . .	p.19
Youth Group . . . . .	p.

**Scottish Charity No SC011288**

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 7<sup>th</sup> Dec 2008**

**Present: Father Robert Warren (Chairman), 39 members of the congregation**

1. The meeting opened with prayer

2. Apologies: Jean and Ralph Hindle, Rose McKenzie, Barney Hunter, Glynis and Alan Murray, Alison and Murray Cole
3. Minutes of last AGM 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2007: proposed Andy Longmore; seconded David McGavin; accepted unanimously

#### **4. Matters arising from the previous AGM (2<sup>nd</sup> December 2007):**

- Hall spring clean
- status of Book of Remembrance

#### **5. Rector's report: written report unavailable**

- In 2008 there were 0 baptisms (cf 7 in 2007), 7 weddings (c.f. 3 in 2007) and 2 funerals
- Attendance was down by about 10-12 per Sunday, which is a cause for concern, also irregularity of attendance
- The Rector felt that when he took up post there were more structures in place and more team spirit cf current feeling of withdrawal; we need more socializing
- Need to encourage new and younger members of the congregation
- Budget shortfall is not as critical as some churches
- Our church faces challenges this coming year
- St James is active in the Diocese: MU, Cursillo etc
- Mission, evangelism, study and worship all need to be strengthened

Points raised from the floor:

- Action needs to be taken, but we are not always clear as a congregation who is responsible for specific actions
- Need strategy within congregation to address this and proceed
- There is assumption that organizers who have been in post for many years are content to continue; perhaps they should be asked if they are so inclined
- Anglicans have a tendency not to step forward

#### **6. Treasurer's report: see booklet**

Points raised:

- Inland Revenue claim in
- As a result of talk to Vestry by Stephen Parsons, Graham and Ian MacLennan had embarked on a summary of giving over the past 3 years
- Gas use has dropped, electricity up
- Independent Examiner to be appointed by Vestry
- Surplus looks good but still work to be carried out for Quinquennial review and we could not cope with catastrophic repair bill
- Treasurer will be writing to congregation re giving
- Discrepancy in Inland Revenue figures accounted for by late receipt of repayment claim, only 3 have been entered instead of 4

- Budget for Fundraising unrealistic; agreed to adjust to £2,500

Graham Smith moved acceptance of Report; seconded Andy Longmore; passed unanimously

## 7. **Other reports:** see booklet

Points raised:

- p.6 Nigel stressed the importance of the last paragraph of his report as Child Protection Co-ordinator
- p.8 Mike pointed out that he had been Choirmaster for a long time and new blood might be welcome!
- p.13 new volunteers needed, especially on the cleaning Rota; question raised re process of including people on rotas
- p.15 Care van needs new helpers; spiritual, as well as material, support is given to clients
- p.16 disappointingly there were insufficient people for an AGM of PFA
- p.18 Paul Murray no longer runs Youth Group and thanks were expressed for all his work with them

Acceptance of reports proposed by Marion Mather; seconded Robert Clerk

## 8. **Elections:** see attached sheet

- Thanks were recorded to Ruth Green who has finished her term on Vestry
- Andy Longmore to be co-opted at a later date
- Vestry will appoint Secretary and Treasurer at 1<sup>st</sup> meeting
- All appointments passed unanimously

## 9. **AOCB:**

- Marion Mather stressed that fundraising needed support and that help with publicity would be greatly appreciated
- Need for a Special Congregational meeting in approx. 3 months to reassess our progress; proposed Mike Hay; seconded Geoff Mather - congregation in favour
- Robert Clerk, on behalf of the congregation, thanked Rob for his work during the year
- St James is saddened by the death of Frances McLean; her executors have written to the Treasurer re bequest of £1,000; consideration will need to be given to the appropriate use of this
- Need to improve the lighting in the chancel; Vestry to pursue this matter

The meeting ended with a Blessing

## **Care Van – Operated by Bethany Christian Trust and Edinburgh City Mission**

### **St James' Team**

There are thirteen members to draw from and most of the team go out at least once during the year, but a number of the team often volunteer for the majority of the evenings. In addition to the 'Van Team,' there is the informal back-up team who provide clothing and blankets but also those who volunteer to make the soup, (16 pints!) are considered as team members.

Typical of the other operational areas of the church, most of the team have other commitments, both within and beyond the church environment.

The church is fortunate in having within the team a number of very long term members who have given years of service to this outreach initiative.

### **St Mungo's Team -West Linton**

The team members at West Linton St Mungo's are now nine in number and can therefore operate a complete team for a number of the evenings, Edward Trevillion acting as the local coordinator.

### **St Andrew's - West Linton**

Robert and Sheila Higgins continue to support the St James team, Robert is one of only three 'drivers'.

### **Team Organisation**

For those members of the congregation who are not familiar with the operation, the teams go out on the third Sunday of each month.

It is a requirement that there are three male members and two female members on each Care Van Team.

The maximum number, of five team members is now prescribed, in that there is a new Care Van which has only five seats. This is slightly constraining in the training context as, previously, we would take a trainee along as an 'extra' person.

Due to the current trend to consider safety, risk assessment and litigation; all volunteers are required to attend an induction session at an early stage.

In the past year, the gift of people's time and donations of clothing from the three supporting congregations has continued to be very generous and consistent.

### **Clientele**

At present, there tends to be forty to fifty people who are helped every night of the year.

It had seemed that there were signs that the numbers were going down but in recent months this has not been the case. The teams have been taking out more soup and rolls on successive occasions and even then finding the supplies depleted and having to buy more at late night shops.

In the winter months there are night shelters, which open from November to March, inclusive. And last winter 4273 bed spaces were used and 5457 hot meals were served.

The current clientele tends to be in the age range 18-45, but there are a few beyond this age group.

### **Physical Support**

We have been taking out 6 dozen buttered rolls, and five flasks of hot water. Plus 5 Giant flasks of home made soup, (about 16 pints), provided by 'soup maker' volunteers mentioned above. There is a column on the Care Van schedule, (on the notice board in the church entrance), for soup making team members to 'sign up'. In 2008-9, 12342 people received soup, rolls and support at the Care Van.

### **Clothing and Blankets**

The needs have not changed over the years and are for blankets, trainers/boots (in that order, sizes 8 to 11), warm socks, gloves, and 'hiking' type hats, underwear (for the men, there is a preference for 'boxer shorts'), sweatshirts, coats. 'Fleeces' are one of the most desirable types of clothing, as are jeans, (sizes around 32" waist & leg). Basic toiletries are also welcome.

'Downies' are not practical for street use and now the charity shops will not accept them.

### **Beyond the Care Van**

Bethany provides various levels of help, which are structured to try to break the cycle of people sleeping rough or living in temporary hostels. They also have an Addiction Team for those struggling with alcohol, drug and substance addiction. Around 40% of those using the Care Shelter have said that the abuse of these substances was the principle reason for their becoming homeless.

In the shelters, operated by Bethany Christian Trust and Edinburgh City Mission, with the help of 74 churches and many volunteers, the clients receive an evening meal, bed and breakfast.

Again, I would like to thank everyone for their continued support, both materially, and also in prayer.

*Bernard Hunter, Coordinator. 30<sup>th</sup> October 2009.*

### **Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Report**

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, Dr Daphne Audsley, and the Diocesan Child Protection Officer Morag Buxel, have been informed.

The Vestry has formally adopted the SEC Code of Good Practice and the SEC Policy on 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 support 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 Child Protection Handbook held by the Co-ordinator.

The Co-ordinator has 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 Child Protection Handbook (2004)

People who started working with or being in a position of trust with children or young people after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2003 have applied for a Disclosure. 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 ten, are kept on file in perpetuity.

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 Training Day was attended by the Co-ordinator on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2009. 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 young people.

*Nigel Johnston*

## **Choir**

I must start our AGM Report 2009 by thanking Mike & Ros on behalf all choir members past and present for "nearly 30 years" of devoted service to St James. Mike was only our third choirmaster in almost a century and I hope that as future members of St James take a peek back through our history they will clearly recognise the enormous contribution that he made to the music and choir of St James. Happily both Mike & Ros are still very much involved with music and other activities within the church. – there is no escape!

Looking back over the year we had happy weddings of people who have sung in the choir and the baptism of Melissa whose mother was a long time member. However Sunday by Sunday there are people who turn out to sing and make music both here and to support our friends at St Mungo's West Linton. Often when on holiday we visit churches where there is little scope to make music and it always makes us appreciative of the breadth of resource that is available at St James.

In the life of St James the choir is one of the largest groups of people that gather regularly each week. It would not be too difficult for us to become a closed group of people enjoying music and sharing fellowship. However there are so many choir members who have other roles within our church that we truly are rooted in the day to day life of St James. As part of that life, wherever you see mention of St James in the local press or Church website the choir always has an open invitation and welcome to anyone, including children, who want to come and sing with us, there are no auditions. There has been a thought that we could have "open choir evenings" when you could come along to sing or simply listen. Would you be interested?

It's now about six months since I took over the role of Choirmaster and I want to thank Mike and Ros for their ongoing support, Alison and Alan for their huge input, the organist team and other younger musicians who regularly turn out and add music to our worship.

Each week as hymns are selected I send out an e-mail to around 35 addresses before the Thursday practice. I often muse about how wonderful it would be if these folks could all be together, in the same place, at the same time, on a regular basis - but hey, that's life, - that's St James in 2009.

*David McGavin*

*Choirmaster*

Visit the choir Web page by selecting the link at  
<http://www.stjamespenicuik.co.uk/>

## **Church Womens Fellowship (CWF)**

The Church Womens' Fellowship still meets monthly to keep in contact with one another and discuss current affairs, and anything else of interest to us. We go out occasionally for a meal and to enjoy social occasions, e.g. church functions and charity evenings. We still sponsor the education of a little girl in India, under the auspices of the Delhi Brotherhood Society.

Our new child is is 7yr old Jyoti. Our previous girl Pooja whom we sponsored for 12

years has now moved on to vocational training at a government-funded college. We are a happy little band, who would welcome newcomers into our midst. Details can be found in *Outreach*.

*Joyce Jones*

## **Fabric**

There's a lot happening on the fabric front at St James!

St Margaret's window, damaged by vandals in August 2008, is at last in the process of being repaired by local stained glass specialist Amanda Bennett. Amanda lives in Penicuik and has recently completed glass restoration work at St Mary's Cathedral. Work on the window will be covered by our insurance. We have a number of other smaller damaged windows throughout the church and these will all be repaired as part of the work. At the same time, some of the protective grilles on the windows will also be replaced. We hope to have all the glass restoration work completed before Christmas.

I am delighted to report that work has also started on updating the Quinquennial Review. Conservation Architects Purcell Miller Tritton, an Edinburgh-based practice, have been appointed to update the review undertaken in 2003. They have already spent some time inspecting the outside of the church. There will be further inspections of the church as well as the hall and Rectory. There are plans to hire a hoist to take a closer look at the roof and the upper part of the church structure. The architects will identify any problems with the buildings and provide us with a prioritised list of work to be done. We hope to begin work on the more urgent items of repair in the spring/early summer of 2010. One of my jobs over the next few months will be to try to find grant aid to help meet the cost of some of the works.

We are looking to install two new handrails at the chancel steps. After much discussion, Vestry agreed to put the legacy from Rev. Frances McLean towards the cost of the hand rails. Vestry has also agreed to appoint Taylor Woodwork of Dalkeith to design the new handrails. I have had several meetings with Charles Taylor and drawings have been on display in the hallway for several weeks now. I have had some very helpful comments and suggestions and there will be a full discussion about the proposals at the AGM.

As always, my thanks go to my colleagues on the Fabric Team and all of the other willing helpers. Particular thanks go to Des Frantom who continues to do an excellent job looking after our grounds and to my ever willing helper Barney Hunter who quietly and efficiently goes about doing necessary jobs behind the scenes. My thanks too to Robert Clerk for the use of his tractor, trailer and all the other kit he brings along to our work parties. As Fabric Team leader I am very lucky to have the support of such a reliable team of skilled helpers who are willing to get stuck in and help out. Thanks too to all our loyal work party members, to our bakers, our cleaners and those who work away behind the scenes to ensure we always have loo rolls, soap and clean towels.

Thank you and God bless you all.

*Geoff Mather*  
*Fabric Team Leader*

## **J-Tots**

In 2009 the J-Tots group celebrated our ninth birthday. This year we welcomed between 10 and 15 children and their parents, grandparents or carers to our special programme of worship, craft and play.

In addition to our regular Tuesday mornings, we held Tots' Praise events at Christmas, Easter Summer and Harvest. We have continued to make use of the church, hall and Chapel of Peace throughout the year. Thanks go to Rob and Caireen for allowing us to use the rectory garden for the Teddy Bears' picnic.

Members pay a weekly subscription of £1 per family. These funds are used to provide snacks, craft materials and replacement toys when necessary.

I am enormously grateful to Tricia Tucker for help not only with the craft activities and in her role as treasurer, but also for her advice, friendship and encouragement throughout the year.

New members are always welcome to join us, irrespective of church attendance.

We ask for your on-going prayers and support in the future. Planning is underway for our tenth birthday celebrations in May 2010.

*Alison Cole November 2009*

## **Mauricewood Housegroup**

Our Housegroup meets each Tuesday at 6 Arras Grove and has now been running for over nine years having started as part of the Housegroup 2000 initiative of having congregational housegroups around Penicuik.

During the last year we have been looking at the life of the young Christian Church in the first three or four centuries, as well as looking at the historical development of the New Testament. More recently we've been looking at some worthy prophets from the Old Testament. Most weeks we aim to spend some time in study, prayer and discussion. Our main action continues to be the organisation of an annual Tearcraft Sale and coffee morning. Each year we seem to raise more money than the previous year and we thank you and our friends from other churches in efforts to support this project.

As ever we invite any member of the congregation in our area or beyond to join with us each Tuesday at 7.30pm. See '*Outreach*' for information or speak with other members of the Group. If you can't make Tuesdays, please remember that there are other Groups that meet during the week.

*David & Val McGavin Tel. 675614*

## **Mothers' Union Report**

It has been another busy and interesting year. The Branch has had varied and interesting meetings. Rob and Philip spoke to us at the beginning of 2009. We also had some Bible studies and a visit to the central Mosque in Edinburgh. We have to thank Ruth Green for her help in organising this. We were joined by Tilly, Neville and Philip. The talk was interesting and we were actually present when the call to prayer was done. We were invited to stay for prayers if we wished. The group then went for lunch to the 'Countryside'.

The Branch has taken part in Diocesan events such as Council, the Lady Day Service in the Cathedral and also the Wave of Prayer, we thank Rose for having this at her house. We went to the Advent Carol Service at St. Leonard's, Lasswade but sadly this was to be the last one. The Branch took part in the World Day of Prayer at the Sacred Heart Church. Joyce Black and Angela Sibley attended the Provincial Retreat in March and Joyce later represented the Branch at the AGM in Croydon.

In September the Diocese had a visit from Chrisanthie, Diocesan President of the MU in our link Diocese in Sri Lanka. She explained the work being done by the MU in the aftermath of the civil war especially keeping up a daily supply of fresh water to one of the camps which is a costly business. A collection was taken at the meeting in Christ Church and our Branch is proposing to have a fellowship lunch early in the New Year to raise some more money.

The Branch carries on with its usual projects such as the Christmas Hampers, knitting for the premature babies unit, parcels for the troops (with the help of the Congregation and friends) which were greatly appreciated by the 3SCOTS(The Black Watch). The next batch will be going to 3RIFLES(Redford Barracks) and some 1SCOTS who are with them. At each meeting we contribute to various MU projects in the Diocese and nationally such as Overseas fund, Relief fund, Away from it all holidays. Remember all the money given to MU projects goes directly to those in need.

We have also worked hard at promoting the Mothers' Union and at no better place than the Penicuik for Africa Fair. A great deal of interest was shown and I thank Angela Sibley for setting up the stall and attending along with Catherine Pow and myself, Margaret Coull. The stall shared the prize for best stall with the 1SCOTS in Kenya stall. The MU share has been sent to the MU Overseas fund.

We have 21 members with Gillian Little a prospective new member and we hope to welcome Charlotte McCauley, wife of the Padre at Glencorse and our new team member Steve McCauley. Margaret MacLennan is retiring as Treasurer and we thank her for her service to the Branch.

*Margaret J. Coull*  
*Branch Leader*

## **“OUTREACH” Report**

*Outreach* does not produce itself! We are a team, each responsible for a particular aspect of production:

GEORGINA PHILLIPS: Editor, commissions articles, proofreads

MIKE HAY: Compiler, uses his considerable computer skills to format and assemble, prints colour section

DYANE GOODCHILD: arranges printing, collation and stapling

JEAN HINDLE: distribution

We average 24 pages per issue: the number of pages depends simply on the amount of material submitted - we don't hunt around for additional material from other sources. Usually, there is a double issue December/January, June/July, August/September, otherwise monthly. The current suggested annual subscription is £10, to cover production and distribution costs. Colour printing, in particular, is costly, but enhances the appearance of the magazine. Some complimentary copies are provided, and the Local Studies Library receives a copy for posterity. Outreach travels as far as Australia.

The deadline is not merely an arbitrary date; it is necessary, to enable the team to produce each issue on time, within a short time span. We do appreciate your co-operation in this. All material should be sent to Georgina; if by email, please copy to Mike. Do not be put off if you have no access to a computer; I am happy to type up any material you would like to contribute.

We hope you enjoy the articles in each issue. We have regular reports e.g.: the Rector's letter, Choir News, upcoming events. We have our occasional contributors, eg: our Mad Scientists. Articles for publication are always welcome, and the more we have, on as

wide a range of topics from as large a number of contributors as possible, the better and more interesting the magazine will be. This is *your* church magazine. Thank you for your continued support.

*Georgina Phillips, Outreach Editor*

## **Penicuik for Africa**

Now that the Chitambo ambulance has been equipped and supplied, attention has turned to our next effort – re-opening the Chitambo midwifery school.

The ‘Children of Africa’ account sent £1000 to the Itipini Dump Project in Eastern Cape Province in memory of Frances McLean. The Africa Fair in the Town Hall almost covered its cost from stallholder fees. Main source of income was discount from the sales of Traidcraft goods, which had totalled £1100, slightly down again on the previous year. The Chitambo Midwifery School Appeal already stood at £1530.87.

**Chitambo Midwifery School Project** Dr Jo Vallis gave an illustrated presentation at the AGM, outlining the case for re-opening the midwifery school: there was a serious shortage of health professionals in Zambia, particularly midwives, which had to be reduced if high maternal and infant death rates were to be reduced. When representatives of PfA visited Chitambo Hospital to present the PfA Ambulance in August 2008, they saw buildings once used as a Midwifery School. Dr. Vallis’ provisional estimate of the total cost of re-opening a school sufficient in scale and resources to retain teaching staff in a rural location was put at c. £300k, including new build (classroom tutor accommodation), refurbishment (student hostel) and salaries for a tutor and clinical teacher. Such costs were clearly beyond the reach of PfA alone and would require a search for funding partners. That search would be facilitated by a feasibility study and a grant application for c. £30,000 for such a study from a new International Health Links Fund was being prepared, with NES (NHS Scotland), PfA and Serenje District Health Management Team as partners.

Our proposal is to create an IT platform linking sources of midwifery, health education and HIV expertise in Scotland with counterparts in Zambia and fund meetings in Zambia to discuss suitability of Chitambo as a site, building and equipment costs and curricular development. There are already several potential partners. The first fund-raising activity was already in hand – 1000 Christmas Cards had been donated by The Touch Agency run by Martin Naylor, to whom we were greatly indebted. These would be sold for a minimum donation of £1 each and included a covert way for recipients also to support the Appeal. It was hoped that the card would become a ‘Community Card’ and a variety of outlets in churches, shops, market stalls would be sought. Another Sponsored Slim would be organised in the spring of 2010 and would investigate the possibilities of laying on Celebratory Parties and a ‘Shop Squat’.

PfA has decided to seek charitable status, so becoming legally independent of St James, although St James congregation continues to be most supportive.

*Neville Suttle*

## **Pastoral Care**

Visitors continue to visit, but we need to know if someone would like a visit. We try to keep up with special birthdays and events.

*Angela Sibley*

## **Rector's Report**

I have now been in post as Rector of St James and Priest-in-charge of St Mungo's for six years.

At the end of this year, as always, I feel very grateful for the help and support of the vestries of each congregation, our church musicians and of our Ministry Team. Priests may come and go but the ongoing support and labour of those who make up the church's membership is the one 'vital constant' without which the witness of the local congregation dwindles and fades into memory. There are too many people involved in ministries at St James to comfortably take the risk listing them all (and of leaving somebody off the list).

This time last year we were still mourning the loss of Frances McLean who'd died a month or so before. We have recently learned of the death of the Rev'd John Farrant in London. We know that God is faithful to his promises and we look forward to the day when he will restore all that is broken through illness and death.

As most of you know I began a part time MTh at New College this year. At the end of the first term I realize that I have bitten off more than I can comfortably chew but am convinced that this first term will be the heaviest of the four terms and that the process will become less burdensome. It's been a long time since I've hit the books and I am suffering some adjustment problems.

Caireen and Stewart and now comfortably established in the Rectory and are thriving at work and school. Hannah is doing remarkably well in Montreal and seems to have grown up immensely in the last year or so.

There continue to be some slippages in attendance at St James and this continues to be a worry. Vestry this year will need to discuss both general congregational outreach and Young Church recruitment.

As of the 29th of November, we have seen 6 baptisms, 3 weddings and 4 funerals at St James Church in Penicuik.

Respectfully submitted

*Fr Robert J. Warren*

## **Rotas**

We are all most grateful for the continuing support of all the volunteers who regularly ensure that the services run smoothly in a clean and tidy church.

After the summer meeting several long-serving volunteers retired, and a few new ones have joined the rotas. Unfortunately, the cleaning and coffee rotas have very few volunteers and to avoid over-working them, there will be gaps in these rotas.

*Angela Sibley*

## **Silverburn Housegroup**

Over the last eight years, we have studied in the New Testament: Resurrection, Revelation, Hebrews, Romans, Gospels, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians. In the Old Testament: Psalms, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Why bother with the Old Testament?

I have learnt from you who have been with me, as much as you have learnt from me. However, I do now have to say, "These proceedings are at an end."

*Philip Crosfield*

## **Stewardship Secretary's Report - For Boxes issued in Nov 2009**

I ordered 60 boxes of Stewardship, overprinted with the names of both churches. No Gift Aid envelopes ordered since there were enough in stock. The boxes numbered 51 - 60 (10) are allocated to St Mungo's, West Linton. The total cost was £95.08. (*\*When paid by 28 July, we save £9.56*). 35 of the 50 St James boxes are currently being used.

For confidentiality, I hold the names, addresses and envelope numbers of those issued, but I have no knowledge of the amounts contributed.

The Treasurer has only the numbers and actual money contributed, but does not know who contributes to which envelope (unless giftaid tax relief can be claimed). If you decide to change from contributing via the boxes to direct giving, please let me know too, a.s.a.p. 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. However, for those with bank accounts, a standing order is even easier and cheaper for the church! In either case, please contact the Treasurer.

The use of envelopes or direct giving means that you can contribute every week, even if you are not always in church. Remember the church has running expenses even if you are not there.

*Richard Phillips, Stewardship Secretary*

## **Treasurer's Report 2009**

Having achieved a surplus of £7,292 and with funds and reserves at record levels, 2008-09 would seem to have been a highly successful year financially. However, before patting ourselves on the back we need to recognise that these results are largely due to a combination of exceptional (i.e. one-off) circumstances, namely a fifth gift-aid payment from HMRC amounting to £1,961, a legacy of £977, donations of £1,449 and fund-raising income of £2,546. Somewhat disappointingly income from collections fell short of the budgeted 7.8% rise, the increase bring only 2.9% (=£914), and this was largely due to a £1,937 increase from direct giving, all other forms of collection having decreased relative to the previous year. The main changes in Other Income were the decrease in bank interest, a victim of decreasing bank rates, despite having added £9,000 to our HBOS deposit account, the phasing out of the £150 travel grant from the diocese and a £213 increase in *Outreach* subscriptions. Overall expenditure rose by £3,155 – the main movers were Rector's salary (up £675), Rector's expenses (up £648), heating and lighting (up £1,238), quota (up £608), buildings maintenance (up £266), piano and organ (up £368), worship expenses (up £121) and charitable giving (up £143).

Because of the unusual circumstances described above it seems unlikely that we will achieve such profitability next year, particularly as we will be faced with a 38% (=£2,177) rise in pension contributions, a 1% increase in Rector's salary and an as yet unknown reduction in bank interest – I am in discussion with HBOS regarding maximising interest income. We are also faced with a possible 39.5% (=£1,516) increase in energy costs; this could be significantly reduced, although Argyle Energy (our advisors, as recommended by the Diocese) are dragging their feet over identifying a cheaper provider and it may be necessary to contact an alternative advisor. Our quota is scheduled to rise by £578 largely because of a £767 shortfall in payments in 2008. Also it is highly probable that we will need to fund work identified during the current quinquennial review. The net result is a predicted 17.5% (=£9,663) increase in expenditure which will necessitate a 12.2% increase in income from collections.

My thanks again to Vestry for their continuing support, to my extremely able Assistant Treasurer David McGavin, to Margaret and Ian MacLennan for relieving me of the burden of calculating and claiming Gift Aid, and Richard Phillips for kindly reproducing this report and the accompanying accounts. Particular thanks are due to Marion Mather and her fund-raising team and congratulations for exceeding their target.

*Graham Smith, Hon Treasurer*

*November 2009*

## **Young Church Report 2009**

We have had another busy year in the Young Church. We are organized into two groups, the under tens and over tens, run by six leaders operating on a flexible rota system. We continue to use the “Living Stones” and “Liturgy of the Word with Children” programmes, supplemented with an online resource from the Episcopal Church of the United States of America called “Lesson Plans for Small Congregations”. These resources enable us to follow the same Gospel reading as is being heard in church.

However, we have seen a further significant drop in numbers attending regularly. This has been due in part to the age profile of the Young Church. We have a shortage of school-age children at St James’. The regularity of attendance is more of an issue than the total number.

The question of children’s attendance was raised at the Congregational Meeting earlier in the year and a group formed to consider ways forward. In November 2009 Gill Amos and I will be attending the “Children in the Church Community” Conference in Glasgow organized by Action of Churches Together in Scotland. We will continue to promote, invite and encourage children to attend our services and strive to make their experience of church life as rich and meaningful as possible. Attendance of children and families is a major on-going issue for our church.

In spite of the low numbers we have continued to be involved in leading Family Services throughout the year. Many of the Young Church also serve St James’ as musicians, choristers, readers, servers, sidesmen, flower arrangers and helpers. We have had special breakfast meetings prior to key services which have proved to be very popular. Our all-age Nativity Tableau Service and Harvest Festival were particular highlights of the year. Special thanks go to Ros, Mike, David and Alan for all their help and encouragement with the music. We contributed a carol to the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, had fun together at the Epiphany Party and made a special wreath for Remembrance Sunday.

I am grateful as always for the dedication of all involved in the Young Church; for the leaders Gill, Kathryn, Dyane, Nikkie and Irene, for their good humour and flexibility, and for the youngsters for being such a great bunch.

*Alison Cole: November 2009*