



**Christ Church Celebrating Volunteering at**

*Seven whole days, not one in seven...*

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## Introduction from the Rector

On Trinity Sunday, 31st May, the Bishop will be with us for the 10am Sung Eucharist during which we will celebrate all we give as individuals as we volunteer in different ways in the wider community.

At coffee time in the hall we will be celebrating the many different ways we volunteer within the life of Christ Church, of which you can read more in this booklet.

By offering our gifts, skills and time we are a gift to the community – this community of Christ Church and the wider community we serve, and it brings us as much, if not more than, we can ever give. Volunteering connects us to others, helps us to make new friends and contacts, and as St Francis of Assisi said “it is in giving that we receive.”

Please come along on the day and encourage those who already volunteer and consider how you may offer your gifts, skills and time to the life of Christ Church, for



come in all shapes and sizes, and we all have something to offer – so no excuses! Volunteer also gives an opportunity for us to use and develop our gifts and skills.

Volunteering is a vital part of building community – without it there would be no Christ Church. If you are unable to commit to a regular role or task, perhaps you might be interested in helping out on an occasional or one-off basis. If so you please contact us.

We hope you enjoy reading the contents of this booklet and we look forward to seeing you on 31st May

*Susan Macdonald & Mary Snow  
on behalf of Christ Church Vestry*

## **Area and Pastoral Visitors**

At present we have some 24 Area Visitors, 4 Area Visitor Support Team members, and 12 Pastoral Visitors.

Each Area Visitor will develop their own style of working with their households (ave 7-10), which includes building up social contact through the regular exchange of news and views on church matters and offering or arranging assistance when required.

In consultation with the Rector and Pastoral Co-ordinator Team, Pastoral Visitors provide short or long term pastoral support for Christ Church members who are in regular or occasional need of additional support

All who fulfil these roles find them to be rewarding, both in the contact they are able to make with others, and in the support and care they can offer as and when appropriate, and in the mutuality of the relationships that so often develop between visitors and the individuals and households with which they have contact.

*Elizabeth Pearson*

*(Volunteer member of the Pastoral Co-ordinator Team, along with the Associate Priests)*

## Bethany Night Shelter and Christian Aid

Volunteering is fun. Of course, it's easy for me to say that, being recently retired, I've now got plenty of time to do all the things that I never got around to doing while I was working. I've been involved in a couple of things this year, the first was in January, helping the Homeless alongside Bethany Trust. The Christ Church team, co-ordinated by Nigel Rode, made and served a meal at a temporary night shelter in St. Stephen's in Stockbridge. The Bethany team stayed all night, but we were away before lights out. What struck me as unexpected was the clientele. As a student, I'd done voluntary work with down and outs, as they were collectively known, in the Grassmarket, mostly older Scottish men. That night at St. Peter's, they were mostly young, men, a few women, some foreigners. My job was driving the minibus. They somehow knew we were coming and hung around Waterloo Place, not gathered together, but standing in self isolation.

The Bethany worker recognised them and knew a few by name. In stark contrast to when I drove the school minibus, they were silent and orderly, shuffling up and letting others on first. One sat up front, he'd lost his job as a chef, now homeless, he wanted to work.

Another event was the Christian Aid soup and bread lunch in March. What a success that was! Putting out the tables, we wondered how many we'd need. The list was thin, but maybe people would just turn up. I thought, oops, maybe only a few will come and we'll have gallons of soup left over, but as often as at other such Christ Church events people turned up in large numbers and every last drop was needed! Apart from the soup lunch, people kindly made baking and preserves for the stall.

Such fun and all in a good cause – and now it's time to prepare for the annual Holy Corner Christian Aid Book sale!

*Richard Walker*

## **“Bob the Builder”**

About three years ago some of us thought we could do some simple jobs around the Church and save money for jobs requiring specialist skills. Initially we set aside time on Tuesdays twice a month but soon found that the jobs that needed to be done frequently took longer than a one half day session and like the proverbial bus the jobs came in threes.

So we became “project led”. Early tasks included laying down glass fibre insulation in the Rectory and No 6, lagging the pipes in the Hall, painting the interior of the Church Centre ( a job we repeated – in part – just before Christmas 2014). A substantial amount of painting in No 6 before Nigel and Maggie arrived was achieved although this was not quite as scary as doing Susan’s kitchen in bright colours that had myself and the Factor more than a little worried but which , in the end, turned out well. A major project was the painting of the ambulatory including the digging out of crumbling plaster and reinstatement. We had to repeat some of this work last autumn when it became evident that there was still some moisture coming through in a few areas. We have remedied this. Painting the outside railings last year took many evenings due to the poor weather. Anne keeps us busy with such items as erecting cupboards, shelves, the drop down projection screen, and the odd trip to the recycling centre.

Since we do the painting ourselves we do not skimp on quality which means we do not thin out emulsion paint with water. So with apologies to John the Baptist our motto is; “Repaint and thin not.”

All volunteers are most welcome. Very little previous experience is required but a sense of humour is essential. Details of any forthcoming jobs will appear in the Magazine. Let me know if you want to join in – and “Brendas” are welcome as well as “Bobs”!

*Howard Moody*

# Choir

Christ Church has a very good choir and, unlike the majority of Edinburgh churches with good choirs, it is entirely voluntary.

Apart from our obvious presence on Sunday mornings and other services, we practise every Thursday from 7.30 to 8.30 pm.

I hope you find the two paragraphs below - one from the longest standing choir member, and the other from a much more recent choir member - informative. If you would like to join us, please get in touch with me and I can give you more details.

*Michael Green*

Being introduced to the choir by my brother when I was seven years old, has been a life-time commitment. I have had the pleasure of singing a variety of different music with several choir-masters over the last seven decades and value the friendship and camaraderie. On one occasion, while waiting to process down the aisle to begin evensong, I was asked how long I had been in the choir and whether I ever got bored! As far as I was concerned, boredom was never an issue! To sum up it has been a great pleasure to be part of Christ Church choir, enhancing the worship Sunday by Sunday.

A perfect verse to finish with:

*"My heart will never tire  
Of chanting with the choir!"*

*John Allan*

I've never seen music as an optional extra in life. It's always seemed more essential: a way of being more fully alive; a way of touching something beyond the here and now. For me, music is fundamental to worship, and was indeed one of the main reasons we came to Christ Church (though the friendliness of the welcome was why we stayed). Although I love singing, for many years I had felt I was too busy to commit to being in a choir. However, when new volunteers were sought, Michael was very understanding about "real" lives and the need to be flexible when it came to family commitments. I was welcomed immediately with such warmth and supportive encouragement that I felt at ease from the first practice. I enjoy the focus required to sing because it makes me think more deeply about the words, and the music stays with me throughout the week. I find myself thinking of all the others who, often for hundreds of years, have sung the same timeless words to the same beautiful music, and I am taken away from day-to-day pressures into lasting truths. I see singing in the choir not as a commitment or chore, but as a blessing and privilege.

*Beth McNamee*

## Coffee Teams

Coffee (or tea) is something which almost all of us enjoy, including downstairs in the Hall after our main Sunday worship service, but it doesn't just happen, so a fair amount of work is involved in terms of putting out the tables and chairs, distributing mugs, spoons, sugar and milk, putting out the flowers and the information stands about church news and activities, and then, after the notices and the final hymn, waiting for the punters and having the coffee (and tea) ready. Tea-making is of course an art, but coffee-making perhaps even more so, particularly not having any spillages when pushing the plungers on the cafetières. Sometimes we have success, but on others there is a bit of a mess. These things are sent to try us, however, so we press on, and then it is a matter of collecting the mugs and the unused materials, efficiently but unobtrusively, and certainly without giving anyone the feeling that they are being rushed or hassled, rinsing the mugs and then putting them through the industrial-strength dishwasher, which takes just three minutes. Back into the cupboard with them, and away with the tables and chairs, and the weekly cafe incarnation of the Hall is done and gone. 'Divine service performed here every week', to paraphrase George Herbert, and our team is great (thank-you, Jean and Mary!) – as we are sure are the other three teams, each team on duty once a month, not to mention the fifth Sunday team when the need arises!

*Hugh and Jane Goddard*

## Crèche Helpers

Christ Church hold a crèche to allow parents of young children to attend the Sunday 10am service. The crèche meets in the Church Centre every week of the year, with the exception of the Sunday between Christmas and New Year when we are over the road at Morningside United Church for a joint service.

We look after children whose ages are from newborn up to four years. However children are all different, so if they are not quite ready to move on, we keep them in the crèche for a further short time. At present, we have eighteen children on our register, with attendances between five and thirteen each week. The older children love making up puzzles and drawing. We also have a CD player, and sometime they have a little dance with the helpers. The highlight of the year is when we have our Christmas party together with parents. Santa always makes an appearance and distributes presents to all the children. On their birthday they receive a card containing a small text from the bible.

Thirteen dedicated helpers operate a rota system of four on duty each week. Only in exceptional circumstances, such as a baptism in church when numbers are larger than normal, will parents often volunteer to help out. Children are collected by their parents towards the end of the Sunday service, to be taken into the church to have a blessing . After having been blessed, it is always a great joy to see the toddlers running back up the aisle, often out running their parents!

*Janet Rathband*

## **Flower Arrangers**

Christ Church has a small band of enthusiastic but non-professional flower arrangers who enjoy arranging flowers in a beautiful setting. We have four meetings a year when we plan the main festivals and organise the very flexible rota for the flowers. Some enjoy arranging by themselves, while others prefer to band together to do the church flowers. On special occasions a large group will take on the decorating and enjoy much social chat and coffee while doing this. We are always looking for new members and assure you that anyone is welcome to come and learn even if you have no previous experience. A good introduction would be to join us in preparing the church for Easter, Harvest or Christmas when we are always in need of extra pairs of hands. Coffee and biscuits will be there to encourage you. We look forward to seeing you then if not before.

*Anne Mackenzie and Mary Ball*

## Garden Group

We meet on fine Wednesday mornings from about 10am until around noon, including a cuppa and a chat. Here's what four of our team have to say:

"Some people enjoy the front garden whilst just passing or waiting at the bus stop. Others eat their lunch or read behind the centre. Children love to see the flowers, insects and birds and there's space for them to play safely before and after playgroup. To be part of this is important to me."

"The fresh air and exercise is really healthy. Everyone needs to keep fit. Gardening with our group certainly provides this opportunity plus adding the bonus of fellowship with the team. Do consider joining us. It's only a couple of hours a week with a break over the winter months. We would be delighted to welcome new members into our circle of gardeners."

"I've always enjoyed gardening – though I'm no expert at it – but in recent years there always seems to be something shouting louder for my attention than my own garden. Having a commitment to the Garden Group means that I garden for an hour or two at least once a week and in very good company too."

"Having downsized from a large country garden to a much smaller town one, I was accustomed to spending more time gardening than I need to now. It's nice to be able to garden in company rather than on my own."

*Kate Houston*

## Holy Dusting

Having been a member of several churches over the years, I had always avoided becoming a holy duster as I was in full time work, however, being newly retired when I started at Christ Church, I felt I should 'do my bit' so was persuaded by Jean Barrell to join her team.

This involved up to one hour's house work (or should that be church work?) every 6 weeks. I have picked up a few tips along the way. It halves the time it takes to dust a pew if you have a duster in each hand. Some holy dusters have natty 'dusting gloves'. On a very rare occasion Michael might be practising an organ piece and then we work cheerfully and quickly in time with the music. I wish we could hear him every time it's our turn to clean.

Most times we go for a coffee at the Eric Liddell Centre once we have finished and take turns to treat the others. This has meant that I have made some good friends.

We have recently reduced the amount of work to be done by the HDs and work in groups of 3 rather than four. The theory is that the work can be done by two which means that if someone cannot come the dusting still gets done. This enabled some of our faithful older volunteers to hang up their dusters for good. It would be super if just a few more members could join the team so that more long-term volunteers can retire knowing that the church is not going to disappear under a cloud of dust.

Remember, dusting church is much more fun than dusting at home even though, if you are like me, your home is much dustier!

*Mary Snow*

## Hospitality Group

You may think that the members of the Hospitality Group spend their time baking cakes and making food – and you would be partly right. Throughout the year, we provide the catering and serve at a number of occasions including the Harvest Lunch, the Strawberry tea and a number of Christmas services. This starts with preparing the food, though one of us always takes the lead for each event so everyone knows exactly what they should be making or preparing. We then have lots of fun serving our creations to the congregation as this is a great way to meet people and make new friends. Of course, there is a lot of tidying up to do after each event, but the new dishwasher has helped with this task and there are always lots of people who offer to help.

However, what you may not know about the Hospitality Committee is that the group also laugh, giggle and even sing our way through the preparation and clearing up! If you are in the church hall, you may hear some of this going on behind the serving hatch!

I joined the committee a few years ago and found it a wonderful way to meet other members of the congregation. We have a cross section of ages and experiences and there is a huge willingness to help out and have fun together.

*Lisa Gallagher*

## Intercessors

When I offered at least ten years ago to prepare the intercessions in a rota with others I did so because for a very long time I have been convinced of the power of intercession, both in our private and corporate worship. It is a way in which we can try to align with the mind and purposes of God, and let our prayer help these purposes.

When I prepare the intercessions I remind myself first that the prayers are not my personal ones, but that I am preparing the prayers of the people in the congregation. In order to do this I listen to the worries and anxieties which people express, their own and for others. I also listen to the news, and read the newspapers to pick up anything which is currently of great concern.

I then read the lessons for this Sunday to see if there is a theme which I can use to link to the prayers so that there is cohesion. I take account of the Church's year and saints' days.

When writing the prayers I use a wide variety of books whose authors can often express a theme in very helpful ways. I use many books published by the Wild Goose Publications of the Iona Community, and I often use books published by Christian Aid, especially those edited by Janet Morley.

I try to remember as I prepare that it is an awesome thing to come close to the throne of grace and there to lift up our hearts to our God.

*Jean E S Williams*

## **Open Church**

A number of people volunteer occasionally or regularly to be in the church when it is opened to visitors for 2 hour sessions, normally on Wednesdays and Fridays. This contributes to the mission of the church by offering a space for visitors who come in to pray, chat or just look round.

Volunteers enjoy meeting a wide variety of people, from across the globe to literally just round the corner, and even on the quietest days can feel enriched by being in the quiet space of our beautiful church.

*Elizabeth Chalmers-Watson*

## **Sacristans**

Being a sacristan is a quiet behind the scenes duty which is a very fulfilling extension of worship.

Sacristans' duties come under several divisions.

Some work during the week cleaning brass items. Others prepare the altar and elements for services.

After the 10 am service sacristans wash and store items that have been used during the service.

The side chapel is also supplied with communion needs and fair linen for the following weekday services.

New members would be welcome and written instructions and practical help await you.

*Naomi Clemson*

## Servers

There are three servers covering the month for the 10am Sunday service, and two for the Sunday 8am.

For the 10am the server takes the elements to the back of the church before the service begins, dresses the altar and lights the candles. Wearing an alb is appropriate as the server precedes the clergy down the aisle at the start and end of the service. During the offertory, the server receives the elements and collection. The main duties are to serve the clergy and the chalice bearers at the appropriate places during the communion. On festival days, the server is required to carry the bible up the aisle for the gospel reading. At baptisms, pouring water into the font, handing oil to the priest and lighting candles are additional duties. This is a reverent, worthwhile and satisfactory job!

We are requiring more volunteers to help on Sundays and on other special celebrations throughout the year. I have been serving at 10am services for about seven years. Prior to this I was trained in 1977 to serve at the 8am service by the Revd. Alan Johnson. Training for this is not too onerous and is within the scope of anyone who attends Christ Church regularly.

*Hilda Moran.*

# Sidespersons

## **The welcome**

One of the lasting joys of being a part of the congregation at Christ Church is the shared friendships that arise. The sidespeople teams have a very important role to help foster this spirit of fellowship.

At the start of services a sidesperson extends a warm welcome as people arrive and hands out service sheets and hymn books as appropriate. Over time, sidespeople get to know the members of the congregation and any special requirements they may have, e.g. a music score hymn book. These personal interactions are an important part of encouraging a sense of belonging.

An equally important part of the welcome activity is to try to identify any new people who may be visiting for the first time. When this occurs the sidesperson tries to discreetly ask a member of the congregation to interact with the newcomers on a one to one basis, e.g. at coffee time after the service, to help ensure their presence is valued.

These simple duties provide a wonderful opportunity for the sidespeople to get to know a high proportion of the congregation.

## **Service to the congregation**

In addition to the welcome, the sidespeople have one or two other essential duties, such as organizing the collection offering, and guiding the congregation to come forward for receiving the elements during the communion services. In addition the sides team ensures the south door is open for access for those using wheelchairs and other walking aids who find steps difficult, and if necessary helps to manoeuvre the wheelchairs. For the first ten to fifteen minutes of the service, a sidesperson will be on hand at the back door to welcome anyone arriving after the service has started. In the event of a rapid emergency evacuation of the building during a service, a sidesperson will stand by each exit door to ensure an orderly and rapid evacuation.

At the conclusion of services the sides team will collect and store all hymn books, and tidy away loose papers or lost property. They check the pews are neat and tidy for the next service. If there is a collection, an important task for the sides team is to take charge of the collection, accurately count and document its contents. This record is entered into a banking account form, and this together with the money is deposited into the night safe next door at the Bank of Scotland.

For the larger attended Sunday 10am services there are four teams of sidespeople. The aim is to have five members in each team; each team will be on duty for one of the Sundays in each month. These teams have a lead person who oversees the duties for their team. For other services only one sidesperson is generally necessary. During festival times (e.g. Christmas/ Easter) special rotas of sidespeople are drawn up for the various additional services.

The four current team leaders are: Kenneth Ramage, Jack Rathband, Simon Mackintosh and Colin Henderson.

### **Be enriched by becoming a team member**

The duties of sidespeople are not onerous, but the rewards are very significant in that as a sidesperson you will be provided with a wonderful opportunity to get to know a wide variety of people in the congregation. So if you would like to take up this opportunity, or just to find out further information, do contact me or one of the team leaders.

*Alan Shotter*

## Young Church Team

Volunteering to work alongside the children of Young Church is rewarding and fun! It is also challenging as we try to lead in a way that values each child's individual spirituality and learning style.

Every Sunday of the year (except the Sunday after Christmas when we have a joint service with and at Morningside United Church) we gather in church for the beginning of the 10am service. We leave, often led by the children skipping their way to the front door, during the Gloria or at another appropriate time during Advent and Lent, for our time of learning together in the church centre. We then return to church towards the end of the service to receive a blessing or communion with the rest of the congregation.

At present the materials used most weeks are Bubbles, Splash, Xstream and the GRID (Scripture Union) with a Godly Play Session approximately once a month, and Young Church playing a full part in a 10am Sung Eucharist one Sunday a quarter. The Godly Play team is led by a separate team co-ordinated by Lisa Gallagher, but still requires a member of our team to be on duty.

During the summer school holidays we rely on volunteers to lead Young Church to give us a break, and are very grateful for those who have done so over the past three summers and are hopeful for the same cover for the coming holiday period!

We look forward to you visiting our stall at the Fair, where you will be able to find out more about what is involved in volunteering with Young Church, be that on a regular, occasional or one-off basis.

*The Young Church Team*  
*Kirsten Atkinson*  
*Alex Barrett*  
*Nicola Chittleburgh*  
*Charles Stewart Roper*