

**ST PETER'S RC CHURCH  
EDINBURGH  
ANNUAL REPORT ON PARISH ACTIVITIES 2018-19**

**FOREWORD**

I am very grateful to the team responsible for compiling the following account of the various achievements of so many of our parishioners over the past year, and indeed to all who have contributed to this compendium of the work done in the Parish of St Peter's. It is an invaluable resource for anyone, especially those who are new to the Parish wishing to know about the huge amount of work carried out by and on behalf of the parishioners of St Peter's.

I hope it will inspire and enable many others to take an active part in Parish life.

*Fr Kevin Douglas, Parish Priest*

**INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to readers of this, the Annual Report of St Peter's RC Parish Edinburgh, for the year to June 2019.

Whether you are new to the Parish looking to find out about the liturgical and other activities that go on here, or a regular parishioner looking for more information about a particular aspect of the Parish, we hope this booklet will provide some answers for you. Taken as a whole it provides a picture of the very wide range of activities undertaken by parishioners as we seek to build a community of faith in and around our Parish area. Remember also that there is much information on the Parish website, [www.stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk](http://www.stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk)

The activities described always need support and new volunteers. We hope that you will reflect on this and perhaps feel a call to offer your services in whatever way best suits you. If the report prompts you to become involved in new aspects of our Parish life, it will have been well worth preparing.

*Josephine Beech-Brandt, St Peter's Parish Pastoral Council*

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**PART 1: THE LITURGY**

THE SACRISTY

**Sacristans** *Patricia Cairns*

The Sacristans open and close the church whenever required and prepare the altar and sanctuary for services. Each weekday, a team of two people, drawn from a pool of eight, undertake the main Sacristan duties for the Mass, or Eucharistic Service if held in place of the Mass. A separate rota is organised for Reader and Eucharistic Minister duties.

**Altar Linen** *Rosemary Rogerson*

We have a very dedicated group of seven ladies, but we always welcome any new faces to share the load.

**Church Flowers** *Patricia Cairns*

The main and side altars and the niche at the front door are regularly provided with flowers appropriate to the liturgical season, feast day or other celebration. Anyone with skills in this area would be very welcome to join the team. Contributions towards the cost of flowers can be placed in the box at the back of the church.

WELCOMING AND PASSKEEPING *John Wastle*

[welcome@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk](mailto:welcome@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk)

At St Peter's, we aim to provide a welcoming, friendly and safe environment; to ensure that all the necessary arrangements for Mass are in place; and to give help and advice whenever it is needed.

On Sundays and other Feast days, our much-praised welcomers give everyone who arrives a newsletter, hymn book, Mass book and a warm welcome, while our passkeepers assist with any special needs. Team members attend on other significant occasions, such as funeral services.

Our long-established team of four are grateful for additional support provided as required by willing members of the congregation, including some enthusiastic young people who give out hymn books and Mass books and collect them afterwards.

ALTAR SERVER MINISTRY *Ivor Clarke*

In spring of 2019, four boys and three girls trained to serve. We currently have 33 altar servers: 11 girls and 22 boys. Generally, eight servers are rostered each Sunday so that all have the opportunity to serve at least once a month. New servers are encouraged to gain experience by volunteering for Saturdays and on weekdays during school holidays, perhaps mentored by experienced servers.

Christmas midnight and morning Masses and all Holy Week and Easter services in 2018-19 were, again, fully supported.

In August 2018 the youngsters were treated to an activity session at Foxlake, Dunbar. It was a great success and a repeat is planned this year.

The next training, generally four or five Friday afternoons, is likely to begin in February 2020. Children who have received their First Holy Communion are eligible. Training takes place in accordance with Archdiocesan safeguarding guidelines, parents taking turns to be present. It links closely with P4-P7 themes of *This is our Faith*.

MUSIC MINISTRY *Sophie Bennett*

St Peter's Music Group continues to work very hard to enhance the liturgy each week. We continue to have a wonderful group of instrumentalists comprising flute, two violins, guitar, bass guitar, keyboard, harmonica, cello and trombone. We have a core of six singers and have been delighted to welcome Anne, a committed and enthusiastic new choir member. We rehearse every Sunday at 11am, with special rehearsals for Christmas and Holy Week.

This year we have been experimenting with some unaccompanied singing during the verses for the Gloria, and also at the Good Friday service which was particularly well received. We rotate the Mass

settings every six months and recently added a supplement to the hymn books, containing more of our favourite hymns. Feedback in the notebook I left at the back of the church requested more traditional hymns, so I am incorporating these depending on the occasion.

The group has supported the candlelit reconciliation services and the school Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. I had a productive meeting with Miss Kennedy at the school regarding music for the sacramental preparation.

As always, we welcome new members – no auditions required!

#### READER MINISTRY *Peter Nicholson*

“In proclaiming the word of God, readers exercise their responsibility in mediating the presence of Christ... The reader has responsibility for not simply reading the word but assisting the assembly to hear the word.” So state Bishops’ Conference guidelines for England & Wales, to which regard is also had in Scotland.

Reading duties at Sunday Mass are shared between two readers each week, one delivering the First Reading and Responsorial Psalm, and the other the Second Reading, Gospel Acclamation and the Bidding Prayers. (For duties at weekday Masses and services, see the Sacristans’ entry.)

A number of readers joined the team last year, which has made it easier to fill places as each rota is opened for readers to offer their services. It is also pleasing that the team reflects the cosmopolitan nature of the Parish. However, anyone else interested is still encouraged to come forward. New readers are given a chance to practise, and practical support until they feel comfortable in the role.

#### OFFERTORY PROCESSION *John Wastle (or speak to a passkeeper)*

On most Sundays the passkeepers invite a family to carry up the Offertory gifts – the collection, the ciborium and the wine decanter – in a procession led by the Altar Servers. However, current arrangements also allow for the gifts to be carried by children selected by the Children’s Liturgy team or participating in our Family Masses; people whose intentions are being remembered that day; and representatives of parish organisations on occasions such as Fair Trade Sunday.

The passkeepers would also like to hear from individuals interested in taking part.

#### EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS *John Wastle for rota; Caroline Moffat for training*

Our team of Eucharistic Ministers – properly, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist – assist in the distribution of Holy Communion at weekday services and Sunday Mass, and take the Eucharist to those in hospital or housebound.

In October 2018, we introduced new arrangements for the distribution of Holy Communion at Sunday Mass and other major occasions. Additional Eucharistic Ministers now come to the middle of church to give Holy Communion to those seated in the rear half. For these Masses we need six Eucharistic Ministers, in addition to Fr Kevin and Deacon John. With six new Ministers we now have a pool of around 26 who sign up in advance for a three-month duty roster.

Those approved as Eucharistic Ministers by the Parish Priest are given preparation and practical training sessions. Candidates are formally commissioned at Mass and then take up their duties.

#### LITURGY LINKS GROUP *Reporter – Ian Stewart*

The liturgy plays a vital role in the life and worship of the Church and in our own personal Christian lives. Set up by the Parish Pastoral Council, the Liturgy Links Group is seen as a useful vehicle for collecting, considering and channelling suggestions, questions and answers on liturgical matters, feeding parishioners’ ideas and views to the Parish Priest and the Council, and vice versa.

Members are nominated and chosen to reflect the wide age range and the various relevant ministries within the Parish. The parishioners currently serving are Patricia Cairns, Jo Mulvagh, Hannah Knowles, Aoife Palmer, Ana de Bonrostro Palacios, Allan Whyte, John Wastle and Ian Stewart.

The group continues to encourage and support the various ministries and others involved with the Parish liturgy, such as the Music Group, Children’s Liturgy and Family Masses, the altar servers, passkeepers and welcomers, readers, sacristans, etc.

A number of liturgical changes have been introduced since Fr Kevin’s arrival and the group is very pleased that Father attends our meetings and contributes to our discussions.

The one group recommendation supported by many parishioners, which had not been adopted in the past, related to the frequency and timing of our Parish Sunday Mass. After Fr Kevin looked into all the relevant factors, the group was authorised by the Council to survey parishioners for their views.

The result was overwhelming approval for a trial Saturday Vigil Mass. Unfortunately, Fr Kevin's increased workload has so far precluded this being introduced.

Another present concern is collaboration with St Columba's Parish over arrangements for next year's Easter Triduum, when the two Parishes will have to "share out" Fr Kevin's time and the various services.

Parishioners are invited to submit any relevant liturgical thoughts or ideas to the group, either directly or through the Parish Pastoral Council, or to the Parish Priest.

## **PART 2: REACHING OUT**

ST VINCENT DE PAUL (SVDP) *Grace Jeffrey*

Over the last few months St Peter's SVDP Conference has seen some changes. Two members have decided to step down after many years of active service. Bill Douglas has taken a sabbatical, though he remains as treasurer. Fran Good, the former President, has moved to Musselburgh and Grace Jeffrey is now President. This left our numbers very depleted, so Fr Kevin made a pulpit appeal through which we have four new members who have all obtained or are obtaining PVG and Diocesan clearance.

We continue to visit residential homes, hospitals and housebound parishioners. We give financial assistance to our twin Parish of St John Vianney as well as support to our Twin Conferences in India and South Africa. Funds have also been sent when requested, through our Paris Disaster Committee, for major international disasters. We have supplied a young family with beds and bedding through our Furniture Project. We continue to give out alms and food parcels when requested.

SVDP could not do this work without the amazing financial support of parishioners and we thank them most sincerely for this.

From St Matthew's Gospel: "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these sisters and brothers of mine you did it to me."

ECO-CONGREGATION ([ecocongregation@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk](mailto:ecocongregation@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk))

Swift boxes were installed on the north wall of the church in time for the breeding season. Remedial work destroyed previous planting around the church. We must work to replace it around the new restrictions. Whole parish initiatives continue and our eco outreach efforts involve talks, interaction with schools, outside agencies and business, and supporting community initiatives, e.g. future conservation of Astley Ainslie grounds.

EDINBURGH DOORS OPEN *Mark Dorrian/Bruce Royan*

St Peter's has taken part in the citywide Doors Open initiative each September since 2015. Such is the architectural importance of the church building and its history, we have welcomed over 850 visitors to St Peter's. If you want to get involved, look for the appeals in the newsletter.

THE OPEN DOOR *Archie Cairns*

The Open Door, based at 420 Morningside Road, Edinburgh, is a Christian Community Initiative set up by local churches including St Peter's. It is a registered Scottish charity as well as being subject to inspection by the Care Inspectorate relative to some of the services provided. It has been serving the local community for more than 36 years.

### ***Services provided***

**THURSDAY CLUB** (10.30am-2.30pm) – a registered day care service for older people who need support to get out and about to meet others. They take part in activities tailored to their individual interests, abilities and strengths. Music and singing are always popular.

**SATURDAY BREAK** (10am-3pm) – a registered day care service for people diagnosed with dementia. Members take part in multiple-sensory activity and interact with others. There is always lots of laughter. Families benefit from a break from looking after their loved ones.

The Care Inspectorate have highly commended both these services following previous inspections.

**GOOD NEIGHBOURS CLUB** (Tuesdays, 10.30am-3pm) – older ladies enjoy activities from seated swing dancing and mind stretching quizzes to musical performances and arts and crafts. There is always plenty of time for tea and chat.

**SENIOR MEN'S GROUP** (Fridays, 1pm-4pm)

Members gather to share common interests, tell stories, listen to talks, go on outings, have lunch and simply enjoy the company of other men.

**Community Cafe** – a friendly spot to enjoy a tea/coffee/snack in a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Help support the work of the Open Door by dropping in now and again for tea/coffee.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers help in two principal ways: by serving in the Community Cafe on a rota basis, or by providing support at one of the clubs detailed above.

If you know someone who would benefit from the support of the Open Door or you would like to volunteer for any of the services, please call 447 9757. For more information visit [www.theopendoor-morningside.org.uk](http://www.theopendoor-morningside.org.uk)

**HOSPITAL VISITORS** Fr Kevin (447 2502; [77falconave@gmail.com](mailto:77falconave@gmail.com))

On request, visits have been made to patients in the Astley Ainslie Hospital and Royal Edinburgh Hospital who wish to receive Communion.

**OUTREACH JUSTICE AND PEACE GROUP** Norma Daniels-Emm

Our group works to promote the church's social teaching, especially the work of SCIAF, FreshStart and Fairtrade. We also support Christian Aid. Last autumn we asked parishioners to take part in SCIAF's campaign of writing to MSPs, asking them to support the Government committing to radical cuts in Scotland's greenhouse gases by 2045. The response from parishioners was excellent. Migrant Sunday (29 September) and Homeless Sunday (13 October) will be marked in the liturgy.

**ST PETER'S SCIAF SUPPORT GROUP** Anne Marie Douglas

Uganda was the focus of the SCIAF Lent appeal this year, in particular Lydia. Orphaned at 13, abandoned by her husband at 24, she was raising her three children and two nephews on her own. She could not afford to feed them or send them to school. With the aid of SCIAF's local partner Caritas Lugazi, however, she has turned her life around and is now helping others in her village to do the same. We raised £2,500 (of which £885.50 was gift-aided) during Lent. More information on this appeal is available on the SCIAF website

£500 was donated to the Indonesian Disaster Appeal in October 2018 and £2,000 to the appeal for the Rohingya people in November. A cheque for at least £2,500 will be given at the end of June 2019 for our parish project Agakura in Burundi.

We hope to continue to aid the work of SCIAF financially and by promoting their message on climate change. There are many demands on parishioners financially and SCIAF is especially grateful for all the support given by St Peter's.

**FRESHSTART** Pat Cairns ([freshstart@stpetersrcchurch.org.uk](mailto:freshstart@stpetersrcchurch.org.uk))

FreshStart's mission is "helping people make a home for themselves". FreshStart was founded in 1999 to tackle the evil of homelessness; St Peter's has been involved continuously. Sadly, the needs are as great as ever, but with the addition of some corporate support, more diverse assistance is available, e.g. painting rooms and providing carpeting.

St Peter's is one of over 100 Edinburgh churches which collects, monthly, items essential for setting up home which are provided as "starter packs". Our congregation has responded magnificently to appeals in the Parish newsletter, and there is usually a good carload of items such as bedding, towels, pots and pans, cutlery, crockery and cleaning materials to be transported to the warehouse in Pilton.

The charity now also offers:

- hit squads of volunteers who decorate up to two rooms;
- staff development opportunities for businesses by volunteering;
- cooking and budgeting classes for formerly homeless people;
- growing fruit and vegetables in the Harrison Place allotment;
- training initiatives, PAT testing skills and qualifications;
- food starter packs.

Parish efforts contribute to our Eco-Congregation status as we are saving tonnes of goods from going to landfill.

**FAIRTRADE** *Norma Daniels-Emm* ([fairtrade@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk](mailto:fairtrade@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk))

St Peter's is a Fairtrade Parish. Whenever possible Fairtrade goods are used at parish events. This would not be possible without the support of Ann Royan and the Hospitality team. We held a Fairtrade afternoon tea in October and during Fairtrade Fortnight we raffled a hamper containing a wide variety of goods made from Fairtrade cocoa beans. We also promoted Fairtrade through the newsletter.

**CHRISTIAN AID** *Liz Brown* ([christianaid@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk](mailto:christianaid@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk))

St Peter's is represented on the Morningside and Fairmilehead Christian Aid Committee, which arranges several fundraising events throughout the year, as well as the house-to-house collection during Christian Aid Week in May. We are lucky to have four parishioners who assist with this. We also take part in the Christian Aid Book Sale at Holy Corner. In May 2019, this raised over £17,500.

**CARDINAL WINNING PRO-LIFE GROUP** *Agnes Martony*

In June 2018 the Office of Pro-life was established in the Archdiocese. This regularly issues newsletters and information leaflets to parishes. Its prime aim is to reduce abortion in Scotland.

This Lent there was a "40 hours prayer" for the unborn in front of the Chalmers Hospital (Health Clinic). Many parishioners took part in the open-air praying. At the end of May 2019 there was a pro-life chain at the foot of Lothian Road.

At parish level the parish website has an independent page for pro-life news and information. Paul Atkin, Director of the Archdiocese Pro-life Office gave a talk on 28 May. There were only a handful people present but we had a very frank conversation about the reality of the pro-life movement at ground level in an ordinary parish.

Unfortunately, some pillar members left for another parish in Edinburgh but we hope to find new members.

### **PART 3: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY** *Aoife Palmer and Ana de Bonrostro*

The Children's Liturgy team has had a successful and busy year, with a healthy number of pre- and early years primary school children joining us each school term Sunday during Mass to share the Gospel in an easily understood and simple format and enjoy related activities.

This year two team members attended a training course organised by the Archdiocese. Following this, new guidelines for Children's Liturgy were developed. The St Peter's team has implemented them this session.

The number of children taking part varies, usually between 25 and 40, with a few parents accompanying the younger ones. We welcome all children, whether they attend every Sunday or less regularly. We expect that most children will be ready (and encouraged by their parents) to stay in church for the full Mass after their First Holy Communion.

Following the new guidelines we now ask primary school children only to join the Children's Liturgy, in order to deliver a good and enjoyable experience; however younger children have joined in occasionally if ready to do so.

Currently the team has seven members. New volunteers would benefit the team. All are required to join the PVG scheme, complete the Archdiocesan recruitment forms and undergo awareness and safety training before they begin.

In August 2018 we held the annual Summer Parish Picnic, after Mass in the playing field. We were very lucky to have sunshine and there were games and challenges for all age groups. It was a great opportunity for the team and the children's parents to get to know each other.

During Christmas Day Mass the children sang and contributed to the nativity that Fr Kevin prepared.

**FAMILY MASSES** *Allan Whyte* (look out for appeals for volunteers)

The children of the Parish took the lead in the liturgy for Good Shepherd Sunday and also the Sunday parish celebration that traditionally follows First Holy Communion Saturday.

Younger members of the congregation have the opportunity to lead the opening message, procession, readings, bidding prayers, collection and offertory. Appeals for children to volunteer are made through the newsletter and other public channels.

It was welcomed by the children and parents when Fr Kevin sat at the front of the altar with them for the homily. We are also grateful to the Music Group, Children's Liturgy team, passkeepers and Hospitality team for their wholehearted support of these special services.

**JUNIOR YOUTH CLUB** *Fr Kevin (447 2502; [77falconave@gmail.com](mailto:77falconave@gmail.com))*

St Peter's and St Columba's parishes started a Junior Youth Club in May 2018. It is open to all young parishioners from P4 to P7 and has proved very popular.

The club offers children the chance to do sports, arts and crafts, and to socialise in a safe and friendly environment. This year there was a Halloween Party and an end of year BBQ.

The club runs on Fridays from 4.30-6.30pm at St Columba's church hall. Entry is £2 per child; tuck is included. Dates for the next block are to be announced.

#### **PART 4: FAITH FORMATION AND PRAYER**

**BAPTISM PREPARATION** *Josephine Beech-Brandt (contact Fr Kevin 447 2502; [77falconave@gmail.com](mailto:77falconave@gmail.com))*

The Baptism Preparation team assists Fr Kevin and Deacon John with preparing parents who wish to have children baptised at either St Peter's or St Columba's. Classes are held three times a year; the format is one Sunday afternoon session from 2-4pm. The course provides an opportunity to learn about Baptism and reflect on the child's spiritual journey, and to meet other parents in the Parish.

The team comprises parents drawn from both Parishes; we are happy to welcome new members. Most members assist with two courses a year. Over the past year, around 20 couples have attended.

**CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF CHILDREN** *Fr Kevin (447 2502; [77falconave@gmail.com](mailto:77falconave@gmail.com))*

Every academic year, there is a series of events at Sunday Mass, known as the Christian Initiation of Children (CIC), relating to the preparation of children in P3 and P4 for their first celebration of the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion.

The Archdiocese has made clear that rather than leaving all the preparations to the schools, "parents are their children's primary educators into the lifelong journey of faith", and "it is important that parents and their children are committed to gathering for the celebration of the Sunday Eucharist". Schools and parish communities are there to support parents in this. In St Peter's, these events are accompanied by a series of preparatory meetings with parents throughout Primary 3 and 4, along with associated celebrations in church.

Before the celebration of First Reconciliation, P3 children celebrate two rites at Sunday Eucharist:

- *Signing with the Cross* recalls that the children's Baptism and reaffirms parents' role as first teachers in faith;
- *Rite of Illumination* – we pray that the children continue to walk in the light of Christ.

Then before First Holy Communion, P4 children celebrate another four rites:

- *Rite of Enrolment* – when the children are called by name to take part in the preparations;
- *Presentation of the Gospels* – children receive a copy of the Gospel of the current liturgical year;
- *Presentation of the Creed* – an opportunity to confirm all that we believe;
- *Presentation of the Lord's Prayer* – the model of all Christian prayer.

This year, our P3 children celebrated First Reconciliation on Thursday 14 March, and P4 pupils received their First Holy Communion on Saturday 1 June. It has become a tradition that the children lead at Sunday Mass on the following day, to continue their celebrations with the Parish community. Parents of children attending non-Catholic schools can ask Fr Kevin for advice about sacramental preparation.

**RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)** *Andrew Thackrey*

RCIA group meets regularly for about an hour on a Monday evening. The course is for those wishing to know more about the Catholic faith with a view to Baptism or Confirmation at the next Easter Vigil.



Parishioners and anyone who wishes to share views are most welcome. We usually have at least one candidate for Baptism or Confirmation. As well as talking about the Creed, we usually read and discuss the Gospel passage for the following Sunday.

**MARRIAGE PREPARATION** *Louise Smith (contact Fr Kevin 447 2502; [77falconave@gmail.com](mailto:77falconave@gmail.com): Deacon John Smith [johnsmith@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:johnsmith@blueyonder.co.uk))*

Three marriage catechists conduct marriage preparation in St Peter's. There are on average two sessions a year.

The day takes about four and a half hours, with a lunch break allowing the couples to socialise. They receive information on marriage as a sacrament, the Church's teaching on marriage and family life, helpful tips on communication within marriage and information on the wedding ceremony. There are many breakout groups, in which couples can discuss their personal views and feed this back if they wish.

We receive very positive feedback from the couples, most of whom consist of one Catholic and one of another or no religion. The non-Catholics appreciate the opportunity to learn about our faith and are reassured by the preparation.

**BEREAVEMENT BEFRIENDING** *Rosemary Rogerson*

Our parishioner is available to lend a listening ear to any parishioner who wishes to talk. If there are any others in the Parish interested in this ministry, contact Fr Kevin or me.

The Parish annual Bereavement Mass takes place in November on a Saturday at 12 noon.

**EVENING RETREATS** *Juliet MacKellaig*

The following evening retreats ran at St Peter's:

- Advent retreat evening: contemplating Mary and Joseph's road to Bethlehem, using art and imaginative prayer;
- Lent retreat (Prayer Group) run by the Ignatian Spirituality Centre in Glasgow and followed, online or in booklet form, by 3,000 others across Scotland;
- P3 and P4 parents were offered a retreat evening before First Holy Communion, praying with art and scripture.

**PRAYER GROUP** *Douglas Hunter*

The Prayer Group meets on Thursdays at 7.45pm, after Adoration in the church from 7pm. Our main purpose is to pray for the needs of the parish and to offer fellowship to anyone who wishes a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith.

The group regularly attracts about 10-15 people. We never know who will join us. People come from anywhere, some just out of curiosity.

We joined with Juliet MacKellaig to organise a service on Divine Mercy Sunday.

## **PART 5: ADMINISTRATION**

**PARISH SECRETARY** *Mary Wastle (447 3442; [communications@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk](mailto:communications@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk))*

The Parish Secretary carries out general secretarial and administrative duties as required, prepares the weekly Parish newsletter (see Communications section, below), and maintains the Parish records. She also keeps a central diary of forthcoming liturgical and social events and should be consulted when such activities are planned. The diary is updated regularly and posted to the Parish website.

In Fr Kevin's absence the Parish Secretary can undertake tasks such as providing copies of Baptism certificates and letters of freedom to marry.

**GIFT AID SCHEME** *Andrew Thackrey*

About 140 parishioners participate in the scheme, which brings extra finance to the Parish. Contributions can be made by cheque, standing order or the weekly envelopes. A small team of parishioners, who count the weekly collections, record the envelope contributions; these are identified by number only, ensuring privacy.

We are most grateful to the taxpayers among the parishioners, as this money from Inland Revenue helps sustain ongoing Parish work.

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS/PARISH SAFEGUARDING *Coordinator: Joyce Cullen*  
(447 4316 / 07977 82112; [pvg@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk](mailto:pvg@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk))

The Parish annual return, confirming the details of all Parish volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults, was submitted to the Archdiocese in March 2019. It showed an encouraging number of new volunteers to replace those who had retired, leaving us with an overall uplift.

Working alongside the Parish Priest, the Coordinator ensures that the Church's Safeguarding Guidelines are followed on recruitment, training and safeguarding. There is a rolling programme for volunteers to update their PVG memberships every five years and each year the Coordinator contacts those who need to complete update forms.

All parishioners are encouraged to look at the updated Bishops Conference guidance at [www.bcos.org.uk](http://www.bcos.org.uk)

Training for new volunteers, and update training for existing volunteers (every two years), is provided by the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Team.

We are currently preparing our Parish Safeguarding Action Plan, which is based on risk assessment checklists completed by leaders of the various groups, to ensure that we identify any areas for development in our processes and make the necessary changes.

We are very grateful to all who volunteer and go through these processes, in the best interests of our children and vulnerable adults.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL *Josephine Beech-Brandt (chair from June 2017-present)*  
([pastoralcouncil@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk](mailto:pastoralcouncil@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk))

The Parish Pastoral Council comprises up to 12 members, elected by parishioners or co-opted. Fr Kevin, as Parish Priest, is *ex officio* President. It meets up to six times a year, with an AGM in June. It deals with a wide range of business relating to the life of the parish.

The Council supports events such as Volunteering Sunday to encourage support for the many Parish groups and activities, training in connection with Protection of Vulnerable Groups and also a successful Parish ceilidh. Its meetings also monitor and discuss liturgy issues, maintenance of the church and premises, and other aspects of Parish life. This year it was necessary to review our response to, and compliance with the GDPR data protection legislation. Trish Dolan volunteered to be our Data Protection Representative.

Next year we will assist the Property Committee planning for the heating replacement, working with all teams to ensure the work goes as smoothly as possible.

All parishioners are welcome to attend Council meetings and to raise agenda items via the secretary. Minutes are posted on the Parish website along with other papers of interest, and on the noticeboard in the Parish room. Copies are available from the secretary on request.

## **PART 6: COMMUNICATIONS**

PARISH NEWSLETTER *Mary Wastle (447 3442;*  
[communications@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk](mailto:communications@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk))

The Parish Secretary edits the weekly newsletter as part of her administrative duties. Priority is given to providing information on all aspects of Parish life in St Peter's but news is also given of events in our local community and beyond.

Each week's newsletter is available to parishioners from Saturday Mass at 12 noon, and is posted on the Parish website. Contributions are needed by the previous Wednesday. The newsletter is clearly popular but, in some cases, only for the duration of Mass! Please take your copy with you and recycle it in due course.

The editor is grateful to Trish Dolan for stepping in when she is on holiday.

PARISH MAGAZINE *Caroline Moffat (Ian Stewart)*

Issue 8 of the Parish magazine was produced in 2018 containing articles ranging from parishioners' travel experiences to memories of Pope John Paul II's visit, spiritual exercises, poetry, baking, jokes and quizzes as well as reports on Parish activities. Requests for articles appear in the weekly newsletter ahead of each issue, but the editor welcomes articles from any parishioner at any time.

PARISH WEBSITE [www.stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk](http://www.stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk)  
([jmackellaig@yahoo.com](mailto:jmackellaig@yahoo.com))

*Juliet MacKellaig*

Approximately 13,708 *different* people used the website over the last year, up almost 3,000 on the previous year, 900-2,300 each month (Easter and Christmas peaks). Fr Kevin's and Deacon John's homilies are posted weekly. All the Parish ministries have web pages; leaders are asked to keep their pages up to date and fresh. Pro-life updates from the Archdiocesan office are posted regularly.

People can subscribe to the Parish newsletter through the website and the Parish privacy and cookie policies are posted to comply with GDPR regulations.

There is an extensive section on prayer and spiritual development, along with daily and weekly meditations on the gospel.

Of the 97 pages, the 10 most popular pages (similar to last year), in order, are: (1) Home page; (2) Mass times; (3) Newsletters, diary and events; (4) This week's Gospel; (5) Venerable Margaret Sinclair; (6) Fr Douglas' Homilies; (7) Last Supper meditation; (8) Stations of the Cross; (9) Contact us; (10) St Peter's RC Primary School.

Any request for website pages and updates is most welcome - it is our window to the world!

PARISH ON FACEBOOK *Trish Dolan* ([www.facebook.com/Spetersrcesinburgh/](http://www.facebook.com/Spetersrcesinburgh/)).

Parish Facebook page followers have increased again. As of 30 April there were 163 Likes and 178 Follows. This is fewer than some neighbouring parishes, including our sister Parish St Columba's. Hopefully, with further content and wider sharing, we can grow some more. Engagement with the page has also increased, with people responding especially to topical postings such as around Remembrance Sunday and Mothering Sunday. There are understandable reservations about the pervasiveness of social media. However, following our Parish page, with its strong links to the Parish website, and liking and sharing the content that seems useful or strikes a chord, is an effective way to spread God's word into the online community in which so many people spend their time.

## **PART 7: CHURCH PROPERTY**

CHURCH CLEANING *Tina O'Donoghue*

The main body of the church is professionally cleaned, so the work carried out by the "Holy Dusters" consists of keeping the Parish room, kitchen and toilets spick and span for the use of our parishioners and visitors. New volunteers who wish to join the rota are always welcome.

PARISH PROPERTY COMMITTEE *John Wastle*

The committee is responsible for the care and maintenance of the church buildings and other property; and for the care and safety of our parishioners and visitors. The committee and its responsibilities are listed under Property and Finance in the Parish Life section of the Parish website.

### ***Safety measures***

Throughout the year, we carry out statutory testing, inspection and servicing of the various mechanical, electrical, fire alarm and emergency lighting systems within the church.

Our annual practice evacuation of the church was carried out during Mass on Sunday 8 July 2018. The alarm bell was activated during the opening hymn and procession, and everyone evacuated quickly, timed at 2 minutes 5 seconds – our fastest ever – but a small number of improvements were noted and have been incorporated in the evacuation procedures, which are posted at the back of the church.

### ***Works and maintenance***

A wide variety of works have been carried out over the past year. These can be found on the Property and Finance page of the Parish website. Two items may be of particular interest.

The St Andrew Chapel, the area formerly used for the parish library and for storage, has been cleared and completely refurbished. The internal curtain and partition have been removed to aid air circulation, the walls repaired and repainted, the brickwork cleaned, and the parquet floor cleaned, sanded and sealed. The Chapel is now ready to be returned to its original purpose.

We were unable to find a buyer for the large mural *Mythological Scenes* by John Duncan, formerly on display in St Peter's School and Gillis Centre. The work has now been deposited in the Scottish Catholic Archive at St Thomas, Addiewell, for safekeeping.

### ***For the future***

We currently have two priority concerns to handle.

A specialist report on the extensive internal and external dampness in the walls recommends a remedial programme of works over a period of years, and we have already addressed the priorities for action: external repairs to the roofs and walls, improvement of the damp proof course and drainage, and improved air circulation. Further works are planned for the coming years.

The church heating system needs repaired too frequently. Blackwood Partnership Ltd, a local firm of consulting engineers, provided a preliminary report which outlined options for upgrading or replacing the system, and after consideration we appointed them as lead consultant and principal designer. On 4 February 2019, we gave a presentation on the project to the Parish Pastoral Council, and on 26 March, after receiving the first design drawings from Blackwoods, to an open meeting of parishioners. Preparations continue with a view to having a new system installed before the onset of winter. The committee will arrange further open meetings at key stages.

## **PART 8: SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

ST PETER'S HOSPITALITY TEAM      *Ann Royan* [hospitality@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk](mailto:hospitality@stpetersrcchurchedinburgh.org.uk)

The Hospitality Team exists to serve teas and coffees after 11.30 Mass, and other refreshments at occasions throughout the year. The co-ordinator maintains a rota of some 20 volunteer helpers, as well as a larger network of people who can be pressed into service as the need arises.

### ***Refreshments after Mass***

On 42 Sundays over the past year, refreshments were served both in the Parish room and in the courtyard, catering for some 90 parishioners and visitors each week. There is no charge, but donations are used to cover expenses including occasional treats, for example wine and nibbles on days of celebration. Sometimes a parishioner will contribute to enable the whole congregation to celebrate a special occasion (e.g. an anniversary, christening, or special birthday): the co-ordinator is always happy to discuss the possibilities.

### ***Particular social events***

Parish events where hospitality has been provided, (in whole or in part) by the team have included:

- *19 Aug* Welcome back... and home baking sale (proceeds to SCIAF)
- *26 Aug* Fr Brown's birthday
- *2 Sep* Parish picnic
- *9 Sep* Volunteer Sunday
- *29 Sep* Doors Open Day
- *30 Sep* Harvest Festival (proceeds to SCIAF)
- *28 Oct* Signing with the cross for P3s... and Halloween
- *4 Nov* Sale of preserves and home baking (proceeds to SCIAF)
- *11 Nov* Junior Bake-off
- *18 November* Presentation of the Gospels for P4s... and Christmas cake sale (proceeds to SCIAF)
- *25 Nov* Christmas fayre (proceeds to SCIAF)
- *9 Dec* Seasonal refreshments
- *16 Dec* Family Carol Party – mulled wine and mince pies
- *6 Jan* Welcome back
- *27 Jan* Rite of Illumination for P3s
- *3 Feb* Presentation of the Creed for P4s
- *5 Feb* Malt whisky tasting (proceeds to SCIAF)
- *10 Feb* Valentine's Day
- *3 March* Presentation of Lord's Prayer
- *17 March* St Patrick's Day
- *31 March* Mothers' Day... and sale of simnel cakes and marmalade (proceeds to SCIAF)
- *21 April* Easter Sunday
- *12 May* Family Mass
- *2 June* First Communicants' Family Mass
- *16 June* Fathers' Day
- *18 June* Youth Club barbecue

- *23 June* Confirmation... and Patronal Feast

PARISH CEILIDH *Josephine Beech-Brandt*

Repeated for a second year, this event was a great success and will be an annual fixture in the Parish calendar. It was very well supported, with dancing to music by the Columcille Ceilidh Band, featuring our very own James Brown from the Music Group.