



Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105

Annual Report

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF NEWHAVEN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

2017

POINTS OF INTEREST

- ♦ Minister's Report
- ♦ Session Report
- ♦ Working Group Reports
- ♦ Growth Groups
- ♦ Sunday School
- ♦ Toddlers
- ♦ Café
- ♦ Schools Ministry
- ♦ Chatterboxes
- ♦ The Haven
- ♦ Timothy
- ♦ Presbytery
- ♦ Boys' Brigade
- ♦ Notice of A.S.M.



A Word from the Minister

Dear Friends

As I've reflected on the life of our congregation in the last year three passages of scripture have come to mind, all written by the apostle Paul.

"For as in one body we have many members, and not all members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one Body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ, according to the grace given us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhorting; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour."

Romans 12: 4-10.

"But God has arranged the body, giving greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body; but the members have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it."

1 Corinthians 12: 24b- 26.

"Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:35, 37-39.



I found 2017 tough. As a congregation we said farewell to a number of very dear brothers and sisters. In a small and close congregation, which I believe we are, that is never easy. Personally, it was a great privilege to minister to them, to be able to be just a small part of their lives and, indeed, their families' lives. I witnessed great love and I witnessed tremendous faith and these things moved me greatly. I know I am a better person for having known our dear friends. And the support they received from our congregation in terms of prayers and simple concern was wonderful to see. I was reminded again and again what truly matters in this life; that so often we carry so much baggage that means very little when all that truly matters is what we witness in Jesus, namely love.

We are a small congregation but we do a lot and I want to say thank you to the many who give of their time and their talents to ensure that we, as part of the body of Christ, thrive as best we can. Thank you to the Session for their guidance and wisdom and enthusiasm in leading God's people at Newhaven. We have been operating a little differently in the last while, with John Hodge as our Session Clerk and Lesley-

Anne Weir as our Church Secretary, and this has worked well. They have both put much time and effort into their work and it is greatly appreciated. Our revamped website, for example, has seen us reach 400 followers, two of whom are members of my family. Thank you to those who give of themselves so tirelessly in our café. Yvonne and her team do wonderful work. Thank you to all those on committees who make sure we are heading in the right direction. Your time and effort brings glory to God. Thank you to our caretaker and our cleaner who do such sterling work. Jeanette Meek is stepping away from the role of cleaner and has simply been a star.

I have also been involved in youth work at the local high school on Wednesdays and it has been a great privilege to be a part of it. Thank you to Cassie, our youth and children's worker, for all you do, especially for our young people.

I could go on thanking people by name until I'm blue in the face because so many people are involved in so many things. Perhaps it is best to simply say, THANK YOU TO ALL - for your devotion to God and your devotion to your brothers and sisters at Newhaven Church and the wider community. It means so much to so many people and I would encourage you to continue, to keep up the good work, because it makes a difference in people's lives.

May God bless us as we seek to love each other with the love of Christ, as we endeavour to bear the fruits of God's Spirit in a world that can do with more kindness and gentleness and love.

I feel privileged to be your minister.

Much love
Peter

Report from the Kirk Session

This is my first report as the new Session Clerk. It has been a great learning experience and I am very grateful to Colin MacNeill for his encouragement and support. It is very difficult to follow him and in reading his previous reports I am struck by the depth and breadth of his vision for our congregation. It will be very difficult to fill his shoes.

The fragrance of Christ

My appointment co-incided with my retirement from the practice of the law. That in some ways was useful because it meant that I had more time to see and experience some of the activities of our congregation which I had not previously been able to because of work commitments. In particular I have had first hand experience of the workings of the café and also seen for myself something of the work of the Toddlers, the Haven, and the various other groups which meet during the week. Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians describes the church as being the fragrance of Christ in the community. In many ways I do see these groups as being the fragrance of Christ in the community. They are showing how Christ makes a difference in our lives by imparting His love and speaking to those we come in contact with. This of course is not limited to our church activities and it is all our callings to have this effect on all the situations we find ourselves, whether at work in the office, in the shops or even driving along East Trinity Road.

Challenges

This has been a hard year for us in that we have lost some treasured friends and members during the year. While we know that death is not the end, we still feel the loss of folk who have helped us, encouraged us and played a major part in the life of the congregation. We

are also conscious that there are less people around to do all the jobs which need attended to. We are grateful to those who have stepped up and taken on new roles in congregation. We have welcomed Liz Thomson onto the Session. Robert Weir has stepped up to convene the fabric group. Heather Robertson has agreed to be our Presbytery Elder.

Jeanette Meek has decided to hang up her mop as our cleaner. We owe a tremendous debt to her for the immaculate way in which she has cleaned and maintained the premises. We regularly hear how people say that the premises are always so clean. Jeanette has also agreed to take on the role of PVG co-ordinator, a very important role in ensuring that all vulnerable people with whom we have contact are properly treated by folk who have had the requisite training. We are grateful to Gillian Charles for all her work previously in that capacity.

Prayer

Somehow prayer and social media do not seem to go together. However recently we have seen just how much they do interrelate. A schoolboy was very seriously injured in a rugby match and the news of it spread by Whats App and other forms of social media. We and other churches were very much involved in praying for him. He has made a remarkable recovery although there is still a long way to go. This showed how we can support folk through prayer. Susan Edwards has now set up a dedicated Whats App group to enable prayer support to be given by the congregation. Speak to her if you would like to be part of it.



Publicity and signage

We have looked at ways in which the church's presence in the community might be better known. Some still think that the church closed when the flats were built above us. Various signage options were looked at but are not really possible. However thanks to Lesley-Anne Weir's work the modern signpost, the website, has been brought up to date and now those visiting it experience a vibrant and active congregation. Ultimately are not we all in our everyday lives called to be the effective signposts for the congregation?

Youth Worker

Because of financial constraints, Scripture Union are unable to continue the existing partnership arrangement with us beyond April 2018. The Session therefore looked at possible options to take the work forward. Because of visa issues it is particularly complex and at the moment it is intended that the work currently carried out by Cassie under the SU auspices will be transferred to Newhaven to continue. This obviously involves a greater financial commitment on our part and so we applied to the Church of Scotland Go for It Fund and obtained a grant which

should enable us to go forward. There is a lot still to be done and worked out but we are optimistic that we will be able to continue and build on the valuable work which Cassie has started.

Wider work

As always the congregation looks beyond our parish and is helping in all sorts of wider work.

- ♦ The Ceilidh raised valuable support (well over £1000) for the Kampi Child Care Centre.
- ♦ We filled about 90 boxes for Blythwood Care which were sent to needy folk in Eastern Europe or Asia.
- ♦ We heard about SU work in Belarus and raised money for a dishwasher for their campsite.
- ♦ Jackie Souness reports separately on the support for Timothy.
- ♦ There were also the retiring offerings for Erskine Hospital and Bethany Christian Trust.
- ♦ Alister Greig represents us on the local Community Council.

John Hodge
Session Clerk



Roll Keeper's Report

A Statistical Return is required to be sent to the Church of Scotland at the end of each calendar year. It is a sort of annual census and it helps to provide a national overview of the make-up of the Church of Scotland.

"Joining the Church" has become a more flexible term in recent years and many people no longer see the need to make such a public commitment. However, it is not so much a commitment to the Church as making a commitment to Christ - professing faith in Christ and being part of the life and work of His Church at Newhaven.

If you would like more information on what 'membership' means and involves, please speak to the Minister.

Statistical Return as at 31st December 2017

Opening Roll:	153	
Added by Profession: 2	Removed by Death: 8	
Added by Resolution: 0	Removed by Certificate: 0	
Added by Certificate: 0	Removed by Resolution: 0	
Closing Roll:	147	

Elaine Greig

Finance and Stewardship

With prices continuing to rise and with the uncertainty in our economy generally, we have not been short of challenges in 2017, and I suspect it won't likely get easier in 2018 either!! All that said I never fail to be amazed by the generosity of folk round me – not just in the giving of their time and talent but in the giving of their offerings as well. Our income has kept pace with what we are spending so many thanks to everyone. It has allowed us to look positively ahead and focus on bringing God's message of love to all.

As is usual, the church finances are explained in fuller detail within the annual accounts - produced as a separate report - so I won't go into too much more detail on the figures themselves but merely highlight key facts, providing an overview of what happened during 2017, from a financial perspective.

During 2015 we had taken the decision, with Session approval, that we would start looking at moving our accounts from the Royal Bank of Scotland to the Bank of Scotland. This continued during 2016 and 2017 with more and more of our income going directly to the BofS. This allowed Shona to pay bills in a better and more secure way. If you pay by direct debit to the RBS account – don't worry, we still have access to that account and can transfer funds as needed. It's our aim to contact folk and provide them with details of moving to the Bank of Scotland, in due course.

For 2017 our income exceeded our expenditure but the figures need some careful explanation. Although we show a surplus this is based on our accrual method of accounting. We also took in donations towards the funding needed for our youth worker. We also have various incoming monies which we have allowed for in last year's accounts which are still to be received. However what is definitely true is that our income from offerings alone has risen by almost £4,000 so we do have a surplus for the year which, as I said before, is something special in today's times.

With offerings rising I would expect our Gift Aid figure to be slightly higher - especially now that we can claim for cash giving as well. The Government changed the maximum that could be claimed from £1,250 to £2,000 so our income from tax recoveries will certainly be better. During 2018 we will continue to look at ways in which we can reduce expenditure further. We will be looking at our current energy supplier and seeing whether we should remain or move to another supplier. This is something we all do at home – in the Church we need to do that too.

Gift Aid

We have submitted, and will be receiving soon, gift aid claims for 2017. These are shown in the accounts as estimates of what we should receive. By the time of our annual meeting we should have confirmed these figures. The Finance Group would certainly like to thank all the members of the Congregation who were able to sign these mandates. This has allowed us to claim (on offerings) around £14,000 for 2017.

If you haven't signed a mandate form and think you might be eligible as a UK taxpayer please see Alister Greig for further details on how you can help the Church.



One outstanding piece of work is for us to check with existing gift aid donors, that they do still pay tax. If you signed one of my mandates, and your tax situation has changed, please let me know. Don't worry if you are not sure,

I'll be checking with everyone individually during 2018 in any case. This was something I wanted to do last year so it's overdue. As mentioned, the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme allowed us to claim a further £1,250 in 2016 and £2,000 in 2017 based on the cash amounts that come in each Sunday morning in the offering.

My thanks ...

None of this happens, however, without the help and dedication of the folk who assist every Sunday. To the ones who welcome you at the door, to the ones who take in the offering, to the ones who count it, and not forgetting to the ones who give – you – can we thank you all. This really does continue to make our lives a lot easier.

To all the members of the Finance Group, especially Shona, our Treasurer, for all your hard work in preparing these accounts, making sure the bills are paid and our income secure, my sincere thanks.

Looking ahead to 2018 we will continue work at moving anything that remains from the RBS to the BofS. As mentioned already, however, we will continue to have an account with the RBS so if you pay directly into that account, your donation will still get to us!!

If you have any queries about either Newhaven's finances or the work of the Finance Group generally please feel free to contact any member of the Group:

Alister Greig (Convenor), Shona Adam (Treasurer), Catherine Lighterness, Janis Merry, Hugh McDiarmid or Emma Masson.

Alister Greig
Finance Convenor

Email: bowtow@btinternet.com

Fabric Report

In submitting this short report the Committee remembers, with love and appreciation, Bill Oliver. Bill was a kind and generous friend to the congregation. Over many years, he also oversaw the maintenance of the church's fabric with a quiet efficiency which we are doing our best to emulate. What Bill knew was that, while there is a saying "use makes master" (and after ten years in the "new building" the congregation pretty much knows its way around the church), "use" necessarily makes mischief with the church fabric. With God's help, the Committee will endeavour to keep on top of the mischief.

In the last year, the Committee has conducted annual inspections of both the manse and the church. The manse now has the benefit of a new boiler, and other fabric issues have been identified for attention. Preferable as it would be to have little to report, there are a number of headline items in the church to report from the last year. Members will be aware that the water heater in the kitchen recently expired after many years' service. By the time this report is published we expect its replacement to have been installed. We also hope that, by that time, the outside notice board door will have been replaced. It disintegrated in dramatic fashion shortly before Christmas. The joiners are attempting to construct a replacement in a stronger wood to ensure greater endurance to the elements. The nativity scene has necessarily enjoyed an improbably lengthy festive season.

There is evidence of water ingress into the boiler house. That is now the subject of investigation and, depending on what is found, remedial work will be instructed.

Routine inspections of the fire safety equipment, and the gas and electrical installations, have been conducted through the year. The fire extinguishers have required replacement to meet current fire safety standards. Lighting has been replaced as appropriate, and the Little Lights Room has been redecorated. The church has been subject to regular inspection for pest control. Accordingly, mice have not had a successful year. Yves Demaude deserves particular thanks and praise for bravely applying a deep clean to the areas behind the cooker in the kitchen.

Finally, the Committee continues to give thought to the use of the garden. Until the wooden decking has been coated with a non-slip surface, its use is being discouraged. We do, however, encourage any suggestions for improvement to an area which has perhaps not yet found its niche. So, please be forthcoming about your ideas as to how it might be used to better advantage.

Robert Weir (Convenor)

Jeanette Meek
Retta Lindsay

Worship Group

The members of the Worship Group are Peter Bluett, Cassie Abousamak, Christine Hodge and Jen Robertson, and although this is the core group of members various members of the congregation have contributed their time and energy to ensuring that our services are worshipful and enjoyable. We thank Colin MacNeill for his participation and guidance in being a part of this group. Colin has taken some time off from the group to take a breath. Charles Livingstone has also been a member of this group but the arrival of a new baby now occupies his time. As in the past the services have simply followed the pattern that has been established over time and the usual special services, for example, the service of Remembrance, have been held, drawing on people's talents and gifts when needed. Our all age services have taken place each month with Peter and Cassie normally leading these and also working out and agreeing on themes.

In November 2017 a meeting was held which included John Hodge and Lesley-Anne Weir to consider all age service themes for 2018.

We would like to thank each and every member of our congregation and each person that partakes in our services and also those who give of their time and energy to ensure that services take place each Sunday and run smoothly. We especially thank Jen Robertson for her piano playing on Sundays and the Praise Band for their musicianship and singing. We are truly blessed to have such talented people to lead us in worship. We would also like to thank Cassie and all those who teach and lead our children and young people within the context of our church services and throughout the week in our schools. Finally, we would like to thank those who feed us after our all age services, to Colin Robertson for organising the teas and coffees after the service, and those who wash up. All these things are part of our worship of God and make our worship more enjoyable.

May God bless us and guide us as we seek to glorify God's name and follow the Way of Christ.

Peter Bluett

Communications Group

The Communications Group has two members, Elaine Greig and Lesley-Anne Weir (Convenor). We liaise with John Hodge, who represents the Mission and Outreach Group and is also interim Prayer Calendar Editor.

We have endeavoured to support the activities of the Church using various means of communication over the course of the last year. Primarily these have been our quarterly newsletter "Harbour Lights," our website www.n-c.org.uk, weekly intimation sheets, and posters and flyers for individual events.

We have also had a presence on social media, with every new post on the website automatically appearing on the Church's Facebook page and Twitter account.

Harbour Lights has continued in its high standards of content and design thanks to the skill and hard work of Elaine, our Harbour Lights Editor. Elaine also produces the weekly Intimation Sheets for our church services. Her contribution to the work of the Church is much appreciated.

John Hodge has been standing in as Prayer Calendar Editor since the departure of Dermot Ferry for the USA last year. We are still looking for a permanent Editor for the Prayer Calendar and would be grateful for a volunteer to take over this important ministry.

The website received an overhaul early in the year and now has a fresh design, regularly updated calendar and easily accessible menus. New editions of Harbour Lights

and the Prayer Calendar can be viewed on the website for those who prefer their information in digital format. Recordings of sermons can be listened to by audio player, allowing people unable to attend church to hear the teachings and be fed and nurtured in their faith. There are now around four hundred people who follow the website and they receive e-mails every time news and sermons are posted.

The Communications Group is one of the Church groups which, if it's working well, you shouldn't even notice exists! If you feel that you have never had to wonder what's going on at Newhaven Church then we may have fulfilled our goals. However I'm sure that there will have been occasions when people have been unaware of things they would have preferred to have known about. If you are one of those who feels they missed out on some important news, please do let Lesley-Anne or Elaine know and we can see how we might avoid such omissions in the future.

Of course not all the work of communications in the Church has been done by the Communications Group alone. Many people have assisted in various ways over the course of year and the Group would like to thank them for their help. We rely on people remembering to let us know about news and events and without their cooperation we would be unable to function. Your assistance has been much appreciated.

Lesley-Anne Weir (Convenor)





Mission and Outreach Group

To enable the people of God to be the people of God.

New Members breakfast

This was held in October and 5 or 6 new people attended the breakfast along with a similar number from the congregation. Numbers were not as high as had been hoped but it was a valuable time to get to know those who had started attending our fellowship.

Alpha

We had hoped to run another Alpha course during 2017. However other priorities took precedence. We still intend to run one in the near future. The course has been considerably reworked and improved. It is essential to run it at a time which suits those who want to attend. We find that some on fringes of the church are beginning to show interest.

Events

What are now becoming the usual events all took place. There was the Inflatables day in March when a large number of children took part. We had the Christmas Extravaganza where again about 65 children heard the Christmas story in an actioned packed morning. In addition this year we held a Family Fun day which was a single morning holiday club type event on Easter Monday. This was intended to follow up the children who attended the Leith Churches holiday club in the summer. The Leith Churches holiday club took place again in July although

this time it was run under the auspices of Scripture Union to improve safeguarding protection. Peter and various members of the congregation took part in the team which was co-led by Cassie.

We also ran Prayer Stations on Good Friday. Very few participated but once again those who did seemed to appreciate it and find it useful.

Christmas Leaflet distribution

Once again we distributed flyers around the parish. 2000 were given out. While we did not have as many visitors this year at the services as we have had in the past, it is still a valuable way of letting the parish know of the church's existence. We also managed to get a larger proportion of the flats in Western Harbour covered partly due to the co-operation of people who lived there and partly by doing it in the morning when access can sometimes be obtained. We would like to cover more of Western Harbour next year and help with that would be appreciated.

Outdoor Events

The group have been considering the possibility of holding some outdoor events in the parish. This includes the possibility of an open air dawn service on Easter Day and an outdoor service at some stage.

John Hodge

Pastoral Care Group

2017 was a rather difficult year in which we lost several dear familiar faces from our fellowship. There also seemed to be more illness and accidents than in recent years. This all impacted us as a working group and Peter particularly. In years such as these we are aware of the real privilege we have to be part of such a warm and caring church community, making our task of facilitating and overseeing the work of pastoral care very rewarding.

We were very thankful to those who donated flowers throughout the year. Despite our numbers not being what they once were the flower calendar was well filled. A special thank you to those who responded to the plea in June to fill the vacant slots in the second half of the year. The old Interflora slogan, "Say it with flowers", still rings true as we know how much receiving the church flowers means to those laid low for one reason or another. Equally the flowers can convey our congratulations to those who have celebrated a special anniversary or milestone birthday. We are blessed with a remarkable number of nonagenarians in our midst! The team of flower distributors faithfully carried out their task of getting the flowers to the recipients and we are very indebted to them all. The new arrangement of Lesley-Anne, Linda and Heather sharing the flower convenorship on a monthly rotating basis worked well and will continue next year.

Christmas gifts were distributed to those in residential care and to those who had hard circumstances to cope with in 2017. Grateful thanks are due to the elders for their willing assistance in delivering these.

As a group we met four times last year. The pastoral visitors joined us at alternate meetings. Our new elder, Liz Thomson, came on board as a member of the group at the end of the year and we welcomed her warmly. Ray Bain joined us too as a pastoral visitor. It is so good to have the benefit of his wealth of pastoral experience.

The Pastoral Care Group always seeks to respond with care, compassion and practical help, where possible, where we perceive a need. We are very thankful to those who let us know of such situations, and are mindful of the confidentiality that is required regarding any information we receive. Peter would be the normal first point of contact but the rest of us are very happy to be approached too. Our contact details are: Peter Bluett (476 5212), Linda Brunton Bruce (467 2199), Heather Robertson (552 2047), Liz Thomson (554 9176), Lesley-Anne Weir (07486 440234).

Peter, Linda, Heather, Liz and Lesley-Anne



Growth Groups

There are currently two growth groups. The groups each meet fortnightly, one on a Tuesday morning and the other a Tuesday evening. Groups are small in number making them ideal places to get to know others while also exploring God's word.

They offer the opportunity to take time out in the week and spend it with God. There is time for prayer and usually a cup of tea and a biscuit.

Those who go along often mention the positive experience, support and blessing that they feel as a result.

Groups have chosen their own material and this year included studies on The Beatitudes, Proverbs, Acts and Women of the Old Testament.



At the time of reporting, the other groups which had previously met have not been restarted for various reasons. Sadly as a congregation we have lost many members through illness and death and this has taken its toll on the groups. We give thanks for the lives and examples of our brothers and sisters who are no longer with us. As we read in Ecclesiastes 3 there is a time for everything and we look forward to seeing these groups re-establish some time in the future.

In the meantime if you had been part of a group and are missing it or are considering joining one for the first time, please speak to Peter Bluett or Lynn MacNeill and we can help you find one to join.

Lynn MacNeill

Sunday School Reports

Little Lights

I apologise if this year's report seems repetitive however not much has changed in the past year. The children continue to thrive and keep us on our toes.

We have a team of committed, faithful and loving people who care for the children each week, Janis Merry, Jacqui Bain, Gillian Charles, Linda Brunton-Bruce, Irene Sutherland, Kirsty Milligan and yours truly.

At the beginning of 2017 we had 8 children on our register however after the summer break Sophia Comely and Ella Barnes graduated to Lighthouse, Islay and Ada Ferry moved to Ohio and Kirsten Myers moved out of the Parish.

As usual we try to make the programme as varied as possible in order that the children are kept interested and have fun; however as the majority of children are less than 3 years old our lessons and crafts have had to be simplified for such a young group.

Depending on the age of children in attendance our mornings programme includes a short time of welcome, story/lesson time, craft, snack and time permitting songs and games.

This year our lessons have included **Dads Are a Special Gift from God, God's Creation, Jesus Loves You, God's Messenger** and much more.

Our activities/crafts usually reflect the lesson/story which at times can be challenging but fun. The children have made amongst other things **Pictures to portray God's Creation, Valentine cards and Angels**. If you visit the Little Lights room you will see some of the children's handy work on the bulletin boards.

The children's favourite activities are using stickers, glue sticks, glitter and playing with the play doh, the messier the better and of course snack time is always welcomed.

At the end of the Sunday school year the children were presented with their books and the Sunday before Christmas the children received their Christmas gifts.

I would like to take this opportunity to give a big thank you to all who help with the children. Without this committed, faithful and loving team of people it would be impossible to provide the support needed in caring for the children and teaching them God's word.

I would also like to thank the congregation for their continued encouragement, support and prayers.

Please do feel free to come and visit us any Sunday to see what goes on in Little Lights or you may like to join our



team I am sure you would find it very rewarding and we are always looking for helpers. Please see myself, Jacqui Bain, or Janis Merry who will only be too glad to tell you what is involved.

Jeanette Meek

Lighthouse

At the beginning of this year we had 6 children from Primary 1-4 registered for Lighthouse. We decided mid-way through the term to invite the 2 pre-schoolers to move up to join the group in order to give a more stable core of children attending. Boosting the numbers has been good, both for the children as it means that they are

more likely to have someone else to be part of a group with, and also from a teaching point of view as we still have an emphasis on games to introduce the Bible theme each week and a few extra children allow this.

Occasionally we have visiting children and we are always delighted to be joined by them and they are made welcome by the other children. If anyone has family or friends visiting please encourage them to come along and invite the children to join one of the children's groups.

Lighthouse is currently for children from aged 4 to Primary 3.

Our regular teachers are Lynn, Kate and Ann with help from Liz and Catherine. In addition we have cover from Christine, John and Cassie who are able to step in and take the group if needed.

We started the year looking at some traditional Bible stories and how they fitted together giving us a picture of God and Jesus and their love for us. More recently we have been using a series from 'Urban Saints' called The Nature of God where we find out a bit each week about what God is like. It has been great fun and there's always plenty of action to keep the kids occupied as they learn through games, stories and crafts. We will continue with this material right up until Easter.

As usual during the summer months the Lighthouse and N-Lighten groups combined and this year the group followed fantastic Scripture Union material called Luke Street. There was plenty of impressive crafting going on and they watched a DVD which unpacked Luke's Gospel and the encounters that Jesus had with different people.

Thanks to Cassie, Ann and Kate for organising this along with the support from numerous volunteer helpers in our congregation.

Sunday School Reports continued...

Over and over as we plan for each new term in our children's and young people's groups we are conscious of a lack of leaders. Not surprisingly though God provides for our needs and deals with this burden. We give thanks to God for his faithfulness and blessing on his work here in Newhaven Church. We ask you to keep us in your prayers - we really appreciate them.

Lynn MacNeill

N-lighten

From August we have had 8 children from P 5-7 (4 boys and 4 girls) on the register, and on most Sundays we have about 4 or 5 children. We have a good time together starting with an introductory game and moving onto the teaching, questions and discussions. Last year we started going through the main stories of the bible and seeing how the stories join up into one big story. We also ate our way through the bible, each week finishing by icing a biscuit on the subject of the story that day. Since August we have been looking at the "Nature of God" and tried different crafts which has been fun.

The Edinburgh SU weekend at the end of February has now become a tradition in the church. It is a good weekend to have fun together, learn more about the bible and our relationship with God, and meet many other children from different churches and SU groups. There are all sorts of outdoor activities and crafts to enjoy too.

The children have also attended Extravaganza, acted in the Christmas service and other All Age services, many have come to Extravaganza, Inflatables day and some also to holiday club.

We have a very small team of helpers – namely Kate, John and Christine so on some occasions we have joined with the younger group. Helpers are always welcome so please see Cassie if you are interested in getting involved with this great group of children.

Christine Hodge

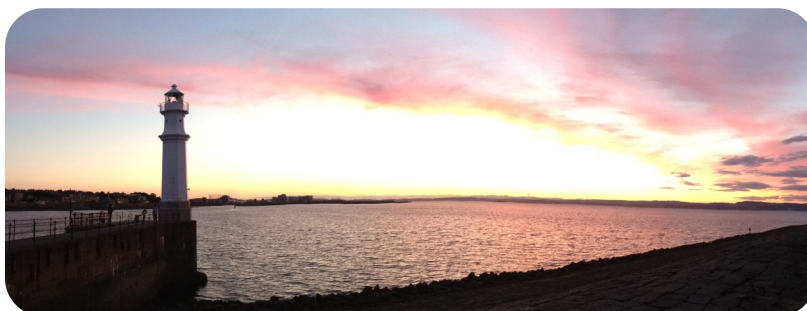
Lighten Up

We have had six young people engaging regularly with our Sunday group and the consistency in attendance seems to have increased over the previous year which I believe has had a positive impact on the group. This year in youth we have tried out a few new things. In February a few of the young people attended the Edinburgh Secondary Weekend with SU Scotland, which will be repeated in 2018. In the first half of the year we continued with the Pizza and Pudding socials to build community; however, in the current school year it was felt that demands on family's time and resource made this a less ideal. We have instead made space for a monthly breakfast club before the service on the last Sunday of the month.

We began 2017 with a weekly breakfast club and utilized the extended time together to go through the youth alpha series, offering the opportunity for the young people to chose to be confirmed in the faith in which they have been raised at the end of this period. Two young people took up this opportunity. We then explored what it means to be the church before taking a break for the summer holidays. Upon returning we delved into answering big questions about the Christian faith as well as exploring some elements of the Christmas story that often are left out in the excitement, such as Jesus's presentation at the temple.

The young people have continued to be involved in the life of the church through the organisation of the Newhaven Big Bake for Tearfund, as well as playing a vital role in the team of Leith Churches Holiday Club, Extravaganza, and activity days, where they have led the dramas, help in small groups, planned and delivered the silly challenges and memory verse activities. There has been one young person who has been able to serve the church as part of his Duke of Edinburgh and there have been queries outside the church for both Duke of Edinburgh Service and JASS award service. As we head into 2018 I believe that we are in a fantastic position to see our young people continue to grow in faith and in their ability to express their faith through the life of the church.

Cassie Abousamak



Toddlers Group

This group meets every Tuesday during the school terms from 10am -12noon. We have a lovely group of about 45 mums, dads, grandparents and carers, who are very friendly and supportive to each other, and approx. 53 babies and toddlers ranging from new-born to 4 years old, although most of them go to nursery around 3 years old. Most weeks there are between 27 and 30 families.

The group is run on a rota of 3 teams:- Audrey Gardiner and Lynn MacNeill; Jacqui Bain, Retta Lindsay and Karen Mackenzie; and Christine Hodge and Susan Walker. We were shocked when Susan Walker died very suddenly in October and she has left a big "hole" in the group. We miss her cheery smile and her friendly chat and many mothers wrote of their sadness and appreciation of her. We welcome Hope Taylor (actually a friend of Susan's) to our team – she and her husband Graeme have started coming along to church, and we look forward to getting to know them better.

We have free play with lots of big toys, playdoh, the doll's house, the kitchen, dolls, trains and cars and sometimes a craft or painting. We have a break for a snack and after more play, the mums help us tidy up at 11:30 before songs in the back hall. We are very grateful to Lesley-Anne who with Retta and Christine take the song time.

We once again had our very popular "Christmas party of sorts" with the children decorating a gold cardboard crown, some play and lots of party food ending with songs, the Christmas story and a parachute game. The children were all given books with the Christmas Story

which are very popular and many mothers tell of the children asking to be read them over and over again. This is a real witness to the families.

Toddlers are a life line for many mums as this is a time in their lives with big changes. It can be very lonely and exhausting through lack of sleep, but it's also a time to make new friends and many friendships have been forged through Toddlers. Some of the families also stay on for lunch in the café, and it's good to see friendships develop through that time too. Toddlers and their families have also joined in with the Inflatables day and previous Toddlers who are now at school have come along to Extravaganza and holiday club. It is always hard to say good-bye after some of them have been with us for over 2 years but we hope to keep in touch with other outreach events as they start school.

Without our volunteers this group couldn't run. Many mums comment that they love the group for the bright and clean halls as well as all the great toys and the friendliness of everyone. A special thank you to Jeanette for the clean halls; also to Jason who puts out and puts away the toys each week; not forgetting the cafe staff who make up the whole toddler experience. Toddlers is very much a team event.

If anyone would like to volunteer to help with the Toddlers, Christine would love to hear from you. Please feel free to visit before deciding.

Christine Hodge



Newhaven Connections Café

It's been another wonderful, yet challenging, year in the café. It is thanks to our dedicated team of volunteers - they keep the teas pouring, the cakes baking, and the dishes washing!!

Birthday

In February 2017 the café celebrated 10 years of work within our community. We had a photographic display of past and present volunteers.

Fiona Thornton (the first café manager) was invited to come along and cut a birthday cake. Kate Aitchison and Alistair Sutherland played a musical compilation on accordion and guitar.



Personnel Changes

There have been quite a few changes this year. In February our café assistant, Katie Miller, left due to ill health; Cassandra Colonneaux wonderfully stepped in until the end of June. Rachel Hattersly Smith our new café assistant manager arrived in July, a marvellous addition to our café family.

Retirement

I'm always amazed by the dedication of our café volunteers. In August Pauline retired after working in the café since it opened 10 years ago. I am also aware that there will be more volunteers leaving in the coming months.

Susan Walker

Sadly one of our lovely volunteers passed away in October - it was a particularly hard for all of our café family. One of our volunteers wrote a note and put it in the kitchen cupboard, it simply said "she was such a good friend, I will miss her"

Closing

There have been times this year when there have not been enough people for the café to open - we closed for a week in July for this reason.

On Wednesday afternoons we often have to close, after the last person has left from lunch, which is about 3.30ish. as we have no one to cover this last hour.

Prayers

Thank you so much for your prayers over this last year, this is the most important thing we can do regarding the work of the café.

Yvonne Demaude

Schools Ministry

Schools

2017 has been a fantastic year fostering connections with Victoria Primary, our parish school. I have had the opportunity to speak at five assemblies: Easter, Pentecost, Harvest, and the Christmas address to the families at the carol concert. We offered a church visit in May to learn about the church and our values through the Parable of the Good Samaritan. We were able to accommodate all but two classes. The P6 class came back for a second visit to learn about poverty and social justice and the Christian response to these situations. We have also been able to, through a team from Newhaven Church and helpers from North Leith Parish Church, put on Bible Alive - going through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation - for the P5 and P5/6 classes. Members of our church community are also regularly involved in the life of the school and the school enjoys the invitation and benefits from our offering of Inflatables and Christmas Extravaganza.

In 2017 we also offered a quiet study space for pupils at Trinity Academy to study for exams, and although it was not hugely popular, the school expressed gratitude and believe it to be a worthwhile partnership. Peter and I

have also taken on the responsibility for Trinity Academy SU Group by helping to foster pupil leadership and providing over all supervision of the group. The group has moved from 1-2 irregular attendees to 5 consistent attendees. Through the relationship built through this, I will have the opportunity to engage with RMPS lessons in 2018.

Lighthouse Learners SU Group and Chatterboxes SU Group are both running well and will be discussed separately.

Lighthouse Learners

Lighthouse Learners is the Scripture Union Group for P4-P7 pupils at Victoria PS which meets on a Wednesday lunchtime and is run by myself and Catherine Lighterness. There are 20 children on the register for the club whose parents are happy for them to attend, although the core group who attend is 12. The group meets at a Wednesday lunchtime and has been working through the Jaffa 2 lessons resource. Some of the children in the group are keen to and are offered the opportunity to help deliver assembly content alongside myself when possible.

Cassie Abousamak

Chatterboxes

Chatterboxes (the Scripture Union group at Trinity Primary) meets on a Friday after school. After the summer we only had 4 children left in P7 after all our boys and 1 girl went up to the High School. We were delighted after going round the class rooms to tell them about Chatterboxes, some siblings from previous children and their friends joined us. Numbers have settled, and we now have a lively group of 16 from P5-7. We continue to have children from non-church families and it has been great to see their enthusiasm for finding out about "Who Jesus is" which we investigated using the "Miracle Maker" DVD and making something each week to remind the children of the story to put in their Treasure Boxes. The group continues to be led by Lynn MacNeill and Christine Hodge with assistance from Ben, a 3rd year pupil from Trinity Academy (also ex- Chatterboxes). John Hodge and Shona Adam kindly volunteered (or were volunteered!) to help when we were short. Cassie also comes along sometimes when she is free and we are always pleased to see her.

We start each week with lively games in the school hall for 15 minutes before going to a smaller room for snack, bible teaching and discussion and sometimes a craft. A lot is squeezed into the 50 minutes. We will be looking at the Easter story in more depth this term. During 2017 because most of the children had been with us for 2 years we were able to look into a variety of bible stories in more depth and also into the role of the Holy Spirit. Since August most of our children are new and younger although it is great to have 5 children in P7, all of whom have a faith.

Like last year we have children going to the SU weekend at Lendrick Muir - this year 10 are coming - with only 1 child having been before - so please pray for that (23-25th February) Both Lynn and Christine will be leaders there, so we are looking forward to getting to know the children in a different setting and for them to experience living in a Christian environment.

Last year most of our children came to Lendrick Muir and many joined us at Christmas for the Extravaganza too. We feel at Chatterboxes we have opportunities to invite them along to any outreach activities the church is doing and it was great to have 2 of our previous boys now in High school helping at the Extravaganza, and a different 2 in the drama on Easter Sunday last year.

We would like to thank Trinity Primary for their help and support, the parents for their support and encouragement and also the Growth Group who regularly pray for us, as well as the church prayer meeting.

We know this is God's work and we are privileged to have the opportunity to be involved in it, and very much value our prayer support.



The children covered the treasure chest and made something each week from the stories in "The Miracle Maker" film which we used to investigate "Who is Jesus?"



The Haven

Since my report last year, the Haven has lost approximately 10 regular members. In saying that, I believe we still offer a most valuable service for the 25 – 35 members who attend on a regular basis.

During the course of the year, we celebrate Burns, St Andrews, special birthdays and Christmas with the children from Victoria Primary School singing carols to the members every year.

All of the members seem to desire the company and friendship that the Haven offers and would rather listen to each other and drink tea or coffee than listen to speakers. Some women also participate in an art group while the men mainly play dominoes.

Like any other club or group, new members would enhance the prospects of the organisation.

Elizabeth, Laura and Reta

Pennies for Timothy



Timothy is now in Class 2, and learning to read and write. English is not his first language but he is doing well. He likes reading story books.

He recently wrote a nice neat letter to thank us for supporting him.

Please continue to save your pennies and small change to help with Timothy's education.

Thank you!

Jackie Souness

Presbytery Report

So far I have attended 3 meetings of Presbytery in my new role as Presbytery elder, not a role that I aspired to fill but one that needed filling!

As I am still getting to grips with the workings of Presbytery I will limit myself to giving initial impressions and also mention two issues affecting a lot of congregations. One thing I quickly realised is that it is essential to read the papers circulated before the meeting to have some idea of what is happening!

Initial impressions are:

- a) the excellence of the worship which opens the meeting. This is led by the Moderator, Colin Sinclair, minister of Palmerston Place Church. His short sermon/talk is very meaningful and thought provoking.
- b) the grace and humour with which the business is conducted and the sense of fellowship enjoyed by those attending. The meetings are not dry and dusty as some might imagine.
- c) the huge amount of work that goes on behind the scenes to ensure that the meetings run smoothly.

One issue causing much concern not only in Edinburgh Presbytery but countrywide, is the shortage of ministers. At a recent meeting there was a presentation outlining some ways to help congregations without a minister. These involved tapping into the talents of the church



members, more use of students training for the ministry and a proposal for specially trained lay people to be able to take Communion services. We should spare a thought, and a prayer, for those congregations enduring long vacancies. Many of us will remember the period of almost two years when we had no minister.

At the meeting in December an issue to which considerable time was devoted was the all too common problem of ageing church buildings, usually listed, requiring considerable and very costly repairs and renovation to make them fit for purpose. I thought back to our own building dilemma, 15 or so years ago, when we were in precisely this situation. God graciously guided and provided so that now we have modern premises designed for our needs with running costs within our means. I came away realising, not for the first time, how blessed we are at Newhaven.

In my next report I will outline the results of a survey which the presbytery has been conducting, asking all its members questions about the corporate worship at meetings, the suitability of the venue, the process of decision making etc. etc. These results are due to be presented at the meeting in February and could herald some revamping of the nature and processes of presbytery meetings.

Heather Robertson

The Boys' Brigade

The 20th Leith is in difficulty at the moment. While numbers are slightly growing in the Anchorboy and Junior sections, and we continue to have a healthy financial position, since the end of the 2016/17 session we have lost almost half the Company section boys (aged between P7 and S4), mostly but not exclusively to competing groups and activities. We now have around 10 to 12 Company section boys each Friday, down from around 20 at the end of last year.

The key issue facing the company, at all levels, is a lack of staff. We have lost key staff members in each of the last few years and are now running on a skeleton crew at all levels. They do a fantastic job but there is only so much we can cope with between us. We had to cancel three consecutive Company sessions and one Junior session towards the end of 2017 due to lack of staff to lead them. This will be a contributing factor to the loss of boys – they won't choose BBs over other events if they can't be confident that BBs will actually take place. The lack of staff also affects the quality of the Friday night offering, as there is a limit to what can be prepared and delivered by the same small number of people.

There is a vicious circle effect for both staff and boys. The fewer staff we have the more demanding it becomes of each individual, and the more likely they are to stand down. Similarly, the more boys leave the less fun the Friday nights are, and the less able we are to take part in team events such as 5-a-side competitions. If the staffing position does not improve by the end of the 2017/18 session, a decision will have to be made on whether the company can continue.



Otherwise, when we are able to run we continue to provide a mix of classes, games, trips and Christian teaching to all sections of the company. Peter attends the company section most weeks and the boys are always happy to engage with him on complex issues.

Andrew Gillies and Robert Weir take the Anchorboys and Juniors, often on a combined basis, with part-time assistance from Kieran Hudson and the help of our three remaining seniors (Jack Liddall, Ewan Greig and Oliver Gillies) who volunteer as part of their Queen's Badge work. Neil Bain and Keith Robertson assist me in the Company section. I'm very grateful to each and every one of them for contributing so much time and effort. I'm also grateful to those parents and other members of the church who have helped out by coming down to deliver classes on things like music, first aid, cooking and business.

If you think you might be able to make some time available on Friday evenings to help out, please speak to me or to Lesley-Anne Weir.

Charles Livingstone
Captain



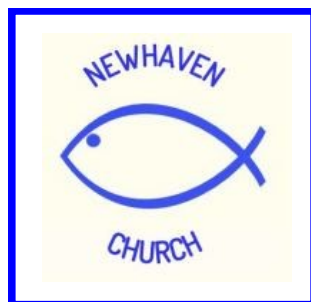
NOTICE OF ANNUAL STATED MEETING

**The Annual Stated Meeting of Newhaven Church
will take place
after the service on
Sunday 25th March.**

Please come to hear about,
and celebrate,
the work of Newhaven Church over the last year.

The ASM is also your chance to ask questions
and make suggestions about the direction
we, as a church,
should take in the future.

*Serving Christ, each other,
and the community.*



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