

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING REPORTS



14th May 2017

Minister's Report

This past year has seen about a dozen of our members move on to pastures new. With the downturn in the Oil and Gas Sector, scholarships from African nations have virtually dried up which has meant fewer African students amongst us compared to previous years. I often felt at the time we were blessed by the young adults who were with us each of whom left their mark in various ways. I hear regularly from quite a few of them who tell me they miss us very much. (One constant remark: 'I wish there was a CTM in Accra!') We are blessed to have those that remain and grateful for their ongoing employment in the City. This past year, our church has supported in various ways those have been affected by the baby ashes scandal; we have also been involved in the integration of the new Syrian Scots refugees, two of whom, Haval and Peman, we have helped with accommodation. These actions have been widely appreciated and approved by the City Council. In recent months our 'Open Table' project has been launched. This has taken a lot of thought and foresight, and we are grateful to Alix, Carol, and Sarah for the time and effort given to this. We also appreciate this is part of Rev Joe McColligan's legacy for his time spent amongst us along with his wife Ching. My hope is that the Aberdeen Churches Together will integrate our project into an overall strategy which supports the homeless on our streets throughout the week. I continue to support Chaplaincy work at Ferryhill Primary School, Harlaw Academy, Robert Gordon University, and the University of Aberdeen. It is a privilege to support children and young adults in this way. I was only reminded recently of sowing seed without knowing what the results would be like; there is a student who way back attended an event I helped run in Durham Cathedral when she was a child, and lo and behold all these years later started attending our church. I know a number of other young adults in the City who were members of some of my children's/youth clubs in Shetland and I am pleased to be in contact with them particularly via Social Media; my hope is a number of them will start attending our church. The other form of outreach which has got off the ground this past year is the running a lunchtime cafe during the Craft Fair; previously we tried Messy Church. This is a great advert to the life our church. As the scripture reminds us, 'if we eat or drink or whatever we do, we do it all to the glory of God.' That is a trait I recognise at the heart of our life together. Let us continue in that vein.

Rev Dr John McNeill

Pastoral Report

Our Pastoral Visitors continue week by week to keep watch over our flock at Crown Terrace. The year 2016 saw many members of our congregation from overseas leave Aberdeen with mutual sadness, though those who had not been home for years will also have been delighted. As reported this time last year, we lost several regular members of our congregation particularly from Ghana, Nigeria and the USA in the first few months of 2016, including Samuel, Patrick and Nana, and Ross, Rachel and children. Those who have left since May 2016 include Ebenezer, Joe and Ching, Isaac, Ebo, and Elorm; we miss them all and wish them many blessings for the future and hope to see them again at some time. Ross who is completing his Aberdeen PhD in the States visited recently. We hope to see Joe in the near future; with his encouragement and experience, Alix, Carol and Sarah started Street Visiting and Open Table on a Sunday evening to provide food and company for those living on Aberdeen's streets. We give grateful thanks to the above for all they have contributed to the life of CTM.

We celebrated the births of Eleanor Day Lilley to David and Meredith, of Olivia Serafinavicius to Jurgita and Tomas, and of Kofi Aboagye to Patrick and Nana; the dedication of Kirsten Marshall, David and Annuli's daughter and the Christening of Arthur George, the third child of Marie and Gareth Hubbuck.

Pastoral care is a shared commitment for all Church members: please pray for all our visitors who carry out this centrally important part of Church life.

O.A.K.

OAK has seen some changes of personnel in the past few months.

We note with sadness that the Reverend Diane Hobson has been forced by ill-health to resign her charge at St. Mark's. We remember her with affection, fondly recalling the services she led from time to time at CTM, and hope that she enjoys a well-earned retirement with her supportive husband. Our prayers are also extended to the congregation at St. Mark's, trusting that the vacancy will be filled as expeditiously as possible.

Betty and Malcolm Steel, who have played major roles in the work and administration of the Monday to Friday café have demitted their respective offices. Daphne Cowking has also stepped down from her responsibilities as chief cook and bottle washer on Tuesdays, though she is not entirely lost to the staff rota! A suitably affecting dinner and presentation was held in recognition of the stentorian work Betty, Daphne and Malcolm have undertaken for more than a decade. The café, however, continues under revised management, and the first special lunch held recently under the new regime raised £500 for the Fisher- Children's Primary School in Accra, Ghana, for which CTM acts as a conduit for private donations. Several members at CTM work as volunteers in the cafe, usually on a one morning a week basis, but also as persons prepared to fill in now and again when regulars are absent. If you wish to assist in this work please contact me, Michael Dyer, for any details. Many hands make light work!

Michael Dyer

Crèche and Sunday Club

We have seven children on the register for Sunday Club, and the pattern for each Sunday will vary slightly depending on the ages of the children present. This year we have started to learn the order of the Books of the New Testament. We play games to familiarise the names and even our youngest member is full of enthusiasm. We have just started to explore the Communion Service, and here some of the workbooks will be completed at home to aid continuity. Carol and Lorna have introduced some new songs and so singing has once again become a very happy part of our time together. The children have enjoyed taking part in two Services and it is great to have them involved in our worship together as a family.

We have valued the help of the congregation in the crèche, and would be delighted to welcome new leaders to Sunday Club.

Please give thanks for the children in our congregation and remember them in your prayers.

Anne

Prayer Meeting

A midweek prayer meeting takes every two or three weeks on a Wednesday at 7:30pm in Room 4; please check the notice sheet for details. Different members of the group take turns to lead and we usually spend time in open prayer for the needs of the world and of our congregation as well as having a time of more structured worship, including some hymns or worship songs. Our numbers increased during the first half of the year, but sadly decreased again when three of our members moved away from Aberdeen in the autumn. We are a small group and would very much welcome others coming along to join us, even if you are only able to attend occasionally.

In addition, two church members have been meeting for prayer before some Sunday morning services. If you would be interested in joining them, please contact Sarah Sim (Tel. 01224 824758) for more information.

Jackie

Singing Group

The singing group has continued to meet currently on Sunday mornings only due to limited number of people attending on Thursday night, so we decided to pause our Thursday evening meetings for now until our numbers increase again. We are not discouraged by all this but will continue to contribute positively to the Sunday worship in every way possible that we can.

Treasure.

Ghana Bible Study

The Ghana Bible Study continues to meet on a regular basis on Thursday evenings, providing an opportunity to study the bible in an open way. We don't always stick to the point, but the fellowship is lively and sincere. We regret that illness and family duties have resulted in the loss of several regular members; we miss them and remember them in our prayers. If you wish to join us either occasionally or regularly you are more than welcome. The group is so described because it uses bible notes prepared by the Methodist Church, Ghana, and provides us with a spiritual contact with our sister church, St Peter, whose members use them at weekly class meetings.

Michael Dyer

Monday House Group

During Advent our group used 'Living Upside Down – 40 days of the Old Advent' written by Revd Andrew Letby as the basis for discussion. This year we have been studying the book of Romans. We began by looking at significant passages then, during Lent, we looked at Romans as part of the lectionary and now we have started at the beginning with Chapter 1. Romans has the reputation of being the most difficult of Paul's letters but it is fascinating to study. We will work through until we need a break, then focus on a lighter discussion topic, before resuming the study of Romans.

We are, at present, meeting on Monday afternoons.

Carol Reeves

Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship and friends rounded off the 2015/2016 session with a walk and lunch at Castle Fraser. Rev. Lorna Murray re-opened our new session in September and we have continued to meet at 10.30am. on the last Monday of each month. We have taken full advantage of the rich in-house expertise of CTM with a talk from Joan Rae about her work with the diagnosis and treatment of Haemophilia in Malawi and a talk from Ron Hughes on his wide experience with the Police Service. Then, in April, Rev. Aboseh Ngwana spoke about his native Cameroon.

Christmas carols were depicted in sets designed by Anne Hubbuck and used to decorate the windows for Advent. The Mothering Sunday service led by Alix Thom was a supreme team effort with a thought provoking message acted out by the children coached by Anne Kelley, with masks by Joan Ørskov and based on material sourced by Sarah Johnson. Thanks to additional help from friends in the congregation, we have continued the Café at the monthly Craft Fair and raised £400+ for Action for Children. Details of our May meeting and our end of session lunch will be in the Church notices and a warm welcome is extended to anyone who would like to join us.

M.D.C.

Church Flowers

Flowers put in the Church are there to aid our worship and give glory to God

Flowers come in many colours, shapes and sizes. Some last weeks, some only a few days. Lilies are usually closed when purchased and can take a full week to open. I buy them at the same time as the previous week's flowers and take them home so that they have heat and light to encourage them to bloom. Our Church is cool and dark during the week and so is wonderful for keeping flowers fresh once they are open.

Most of the flowers are bought from a supermarket which stocks a range of Fair Trade, as well as British flowers. Foliage often comes from my garden.

Ron Hughes distributes the flowers during the week to members of the Church who are ill, housebound or otherwise in need.

Thank you to all who have contributed flowers, or money, in the past and to all who will contribute this year.

Carol Reeves

Traidcraft – “a Christian response to poverty”

For the benefit of new members, CTM is recognised as a Fairtrade church. As such we are called on to use Fairtrade products wherever possible and promote the purchase of Fairtrade goods.

This has been a disappointing year as far as sales from the Fairtrade stall goes with weekly takings averaging less than £7.00. The small discount we get from bulk buying offsets any losses from out-of-date stock and any surplus contributes to the cost of Sunday morning refreshments – over the last 15 months this has amounted to £50. None of the products we stock can be classed as luxury goods - just everyday housekeeping. What is special about them is that thousands of farmers around the world depend on us paying just a fair price for them so they can have the security we enjoy of being able to feed and educate their families.

Traidcraft goes “the extra mile” in Fairtrade as it supports and trades with small producers who can supply the quality but not the quantities required by supermarkets which is why they need our custom. I hope that in the coming year we shall see more support here for Traidcraft.

JØ

Open Table

Since mid February, Open Table has had a presence on the street every week but one, providing soup and sandwiches to the homeless on Union Street and close by. We go out in pairs and have been supported by members providing the soup and sandwiches. We now know a number of regulars but every week we find someone new too. The food is much appreciated but a bit of company probably even more so. Volunteers (and we need more!) are also equipped with emergency numbers for shelters though sadly a number of people have told us that they would rather sleep on the streets than go into a hostel. The challenges people face are enormous; a number have been in prison, some have mental health issues and of course addiction is a real problem. However, they are often funny, keen for a chat and have formed a real community which it is a privilege to be on the fringes of.

The other aspect of Open Table is our Sunday evening outreach. This runs every other Sunday and offers a hot meal, books and games, a clothes bank and company. Number have been small; two people on the first Sunday, four each on the second and third but they are all different people so word is getting out there. We also did three 'takeaways' for people who couldn't leave their pitch.

Carol Reeves, Sarah Johnson and I are so grateful for those who have volunteered to visit the streets, provide food, set up tables and run the clothes bank (thank you Joan!) but **we fear for the future of Open Table without more volunteers.** I have been able to get some additional help from work colleagues, which has been hugely helpful.

Alix Thom

Table Tennis

It was a successful season for our two CTM table tennis teams this year, with the A team runners up in Division 1 and the B team taking a similar spot in Division 2. In addition the A team reached the semi-final of the KO cup and the B team the semi-final of the League cup. Last year's star player Marcin Ziemkowski returned to Poland during the close season, but the A team saw the welcome return of Martin Richens and the arrival of new player Sebastian Wolejnio. The team was led by Gregor Ksiazek. The B team was bolstered by Dennis Oon dropping down a division, along with Mohammad Namavar, Bartek Ciechowski and Nigel Herbert. We continue to meet on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Separate ladies' nights had low numbers and proved unsustainable, but everyone remains welcome at any of our sessions.

Nigel Herbert

Tables > ADTTA League 2016-17 > ADTTA Division 1								
#	Team	P	W	D	L	SF	SA	Points
1	Abdn Univ Harriers	18	17	0	1	144	36	144
2	Crown Terrace Methodists A	18	15	1	2	124	56	124
3	Hazlehead Hooligans	18	13	1	4	113	67	113
4	Robert Gordon University	18	7	5	6	92	88	92
5	David Lloyd Aberdeen	18	6	5	7	88	92	88
6	Triangle Swetic	18	8	1	9	86	94	86
7	Abdn Univ Eagles	18	6	1	11	77	103	77
8	Shell Gashers	18	3	3	12	66	114	66
9	Aircon Westhill	18	2	3	13	56	124	56
10	Triangle Trio	18	2	2	14	54	126	54

Last Updated: 26 Apr 2017

Match Players		
Name	Played	Win %
Gregor Ksiazek	52	59.62%
Martin Richens	49	77.55%
Sebastian Wolejnio	49	69.39%
Dennis Oon	6	66.67%

Tables > ADTTA League 2016-17 > ADTTA Division 2								
#	Team	P	W	D	L	SF	SA	Points
1	Hazlehead Surfers	16	14	2	0	127	33	127
2	Crown Terrace Methodists B	16	13	2	1	127	33	127
3	Nordan Uk	16	11	0	5	98	62	98
4	Triangle Eagles	16	10	1	5	91	69	91
5	Hazlehead Hawks	16	6	3	7	68	92	68
6	Westhill Demons	16	3	2	11	61	99	61
7	Triangle Quattro	16	3	2	11	60	100	60
8	Westhill Bees	16	4	3	9	56	104	56
9	Aberdeen University Falcons	16	0	1	15	32	128	32

Last Updated: 26 Apr 2017

Match Players		
Name	Played	Win %
Dennis Oon	48	97.92%
Nigel Herbert	45	80.00%
Mohammad Namavar	42	57.14%
Bartek Ciechowski	9	66.67%

Financial Report

The downturn in the economy of the NE of Scotland, and of Aberdeen City in particular, has had a negative impact on Church income. The position is difficult and needs to be watched in case it deteriorates further.

In the main (unrestricted) Church account, the income from 1/9/16 to 30/4/2017 (the first 8 months of the Methodist financial year) was £33,997, the expenditure was £33,909, resulting in the small surplus of £88. The corresponding numbers for last year were, £34,477, £30,027, giving a surplus of £4,458. By the end of August, this surplus had fallen to £388. Payments expected by the Circuit from Aberdeen are £9,378 by 20th May and £9,131 by 20th August. We can expect a tax refund of about £9,655 before August. So to break even, we will have to raise about £8,853 before September above normal running costs, and the latter are rising.

In a separate area of Church finance, we have to complete payments for replacing the roof, some redecoration is needed in rear Church rooms and we must pay for necessary repairs to the Church identified in the Quinquennial report. Thanks to a grant from the District of £5,000, a District interest free loan of £5,000 to be repaid over 10 years, and some unspent money donated earlier by the congregation, it is hoped that there is not a significant problem. We wait to hear more on progress with the Quinquennial report on the manse.

Finally we are most grateful for a legacy of £10,000 from the estate of Howard Marshall given by his family. It is hoped that this can be spent on some special project in commemoration of Howard's life in Aberdeen.

Jack Hubbuck (Treasurer)