

Annual General Meeting

31 January 2021

4pm to 5.30pm - Zoom virtual meeting

Committee reports

Altar Guild report
Book Group report
Churchyard and Garden report
Cleaning report
Communications sub-committee report
Congregational Safeguarding checklist
Craft Class report
Eco-congregation report
Fabric and Finance committee
Flower Guild report
Foodbank report
GDPR – general data protection regulations
Intercessor's report
Monday Club report
People's Warden report
Prayer Circle report
Readers' report
Social and Catering Committee report
Sunday School report
Trinity Centre Management committee report
Women's Fellowship report

Altar Guild report

Given the situation for most of the year, the Altar Guild has little to report. Jill Gilbert, Head of the Altar Guild reports: "As of July I have stepped down from the Altar Guild. Penny Blackburn has also stepped down. I would like to thank the ladies of the Guild who have supported me and the running of the Guild. I would like to thank them for all their work and time given, which goes on behind the scenes unnoticed."

Book Group report

Alasdair Johnston reports: "The Book Group met six times this year, until March in various members' houses (and thank you to those who entertained us), since 23 March by Zoom. We discussed six books, including two recent novels (one being the winner of the Walter Scott Prize), two works of fiction from the early 20th Century, and two recent non-fiction works:

- *The Crossing* by Andrew Miller
- *Blood River* by Tim Butcher
- *A Burnt Out Case* by Graham Greene
- *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* by Katherine Anne Porter
- *Wilding* by Isabella Tree
- *The Narrow Land* by Christine Dwyer Hickey

Our next discussion, later in November, will be on *An Equal Music* by Vikram Seth."

Churchyard and Garden report

John Barley reports: "We had 14 people who volunteered to be on a rota system at the start of the year. Some of the volunteers have been doing this for a number of years but there were new volunteers this year as there are every year. Thank you to those who have now retired from this service to the church. The main tasks are to cut the grass around the flatter lawns round the church, the slopes and grave areas and strimming around the graves and edges. This year as last it was decided to divide the work up into the three areas mentioned above. Normally each person is allocated to an area and a period of two or three weeks in turn to cut the grass. This is in the hope that the grass being slow growing through most of the year would only need one cut in that period. However, this year due to lockdown happening before the grass really got growing the work has been done by agreement on a fortnightly basis with members of the team contacting one another to see when they were available. There was no pressure on people to help out and no rota was drawn up. Those who felt it was safe to meet socially distanced volunteered to help during the grass growing season. Between us we managed to keep the churchyard looking reasonable. We have now reached the autumn leaf clearing and this will be ongoing by members of the gardening team and other members of the congregation. The final leaf clearing days dates still to be decided will be happening in November onwards as required. We usually wait until the majority of the leaves have fallen before we have the main leaf clearing work parties. This will, of course, be done this year socially distanced.

In addition to the grassed areas many other people look after other areas around the church and the Trinity Centre. The gardens are the first thing people see as they approach the church and visitors frequently remark on how well maintained they are. Our dedicated teams have done a fantastic job again this year.

More volunteers are always welcome and a new co-ordinator is being sought for next year. The co-ordinator does not have to be able to do the work to co-ordinate the rotas and make sure things are kept neat and tidy. If you feel you could take this on please let me know and I can explain what is involved. If any of the existing team feel unable to continue please let me know. Enjoy a well-earned rest over the winter months until next spring once the leaf clearing is completed. Many thanks to you all."

Cleaning report

Agnes Stott reports: "The regular teams continued the maintenance of the church to the usual high standard until we had to close. An annual clean when we look for additional volunteers to tackle the one-off tasks, removing cobwebs from high places etc. was planned for Spring 2020 which of course will be rescheduled when appropriate.

When normal service resumes, I will contact rota members to discuss their availability to restart. I will also continue to lookout for any new volunteers to maintain adequate support for all the regular teams."

Communications Committee report

Jane Barley, Pat Blackledge and Liz Lowrie report: "Up until lockdown at the end of March the communications committee produced the pew sheet and weekly notices and kept the website page and Facebook page updated. They also published a monthly calendar that was circulated to every member of the congregation and anyone else who requested one. Copies of this and the pew sheet were placed on the notice board in the porch and spare copies were available in the church. Since lockdown the weekly notices continue to be circulated via e-mail and a paper copy is produced and delivered to everyone not on e-mail along with a CD or DVD and a copy of the weekly service for those who have requested them. Pat Blackledge produces the weekly notices and she is always pleased to receive items for the notices including suggestions for music and poetry, photographs and anything else that you wish to be included.

Liz Lowrie is gradually taking over the production and delivery of the paper copies of the weekly notices, the order of service, CDs and DVDs. She will update the website and Facebook page. When things get back to 'normal' Liz will also produce the monthly calendar and keep the notice boards up to date.

Extracts from the notices and the order of service are posted on the website weekly. The video of the Sunday service is uploaded to the Holy Trinity YouTube channel and the Facebook page and premiered at 11am on Sunday mornings. Notices are also posted daily on the Holy Trinity Facebook page.

Again, up until lockdown, posters publicising services and events were displayed in the Trinity Centre, on the church notice boards and outside on the notice board at the church gate. Banners were also hung on the end of the Rectory wall at the junction of High Cross Avenue and Waverley Road. This will resume once services and events are resumed. In the meantime, Pip puts appropriate posters on the outside notice board advertising help that is available for people and other important information.

We produced a joint Christmas card and a joint Easter card with the other two Melrose churches to be delivered to all the households in the Bowden and Melrose Parish area. The Christmas ones were delivered. The Easter ones were produced but lockdown happened just as we were about to do the delivery and all church services were cancelled by the restrictions put in place by the Scottish Government.

If you have an event you want publicised once services and events are allowed to resume please let us know as soon as possible. We can make posters for you if you let us have the details of your event. If you are producing posters or anything else that is released into the public domain please remember to put the church charity number which is SC 000966 on them. Thank you."

Congregational safeguarding checklist



SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL SAFEGUARDING CHECKLIST



| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Congregation:</i> | Holy Trinity, Melrose |
|----------------------|-----------------------|

For details of publications/procedures mentioned here, go to
<http://www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/organisation/safeguarding/>

SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

| | YES | NO | Details |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|--------------------------------------|
| Are the SEC Policies for Children and Vulnerable Adults displayed prominently in the Church? | | | |
| Is the 'Childline' Poster displayed in the Church? | | | |
| Does the Church have a PVG Co-ordinator for Children? | | | Marjorie Keys |
| Does the Church have a PVG Co-ordinator for Vulnerable Adults? | | | Marjorie Keys |
| Are their names and contact details displayed within the Church and the Church buildings? | | | At back of church and in church hall |
| Do they have a copy of the Child Protection Training Booklet? | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|------------------------------------|
| Do they have a copy of the Protecting Vulnerable Adults Booklet? | | | |
| Are the contact details of the Diocesan Protection Officer and the Provincial Officer for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults displayed within the Church? | | | Details of Provincial Officer only |
| Does the Vestry have safeguarding on its agenda at each meeting? | | | Yes |
| Is an Annual Safeguarding Report presented at the Church AGM? | | | Yes |
| Has the Vestry identified a 'Regulated Work Employer'? <i>(If so, please state who that is)</i> | | | Philip Blackledge, Rector |
| Has the Vestry compiled a register of 'Regulated Work Positions and 'Positions of Trust' within the Church? | | | Sunday School Pastoral group |

SAFE RECRUITMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS/STAFF

| | YES | NO | Details |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Who undertakes the recruiting process for regulated work positions and positions of trust within the Church on behalf of the Vestry? | | | Philip Blackledge, Rector |
| Are regulated work positions and positions of trust within the Church advertised? | | | Only paid posts are advertised |
| Are job descriptions available for all volunteer and paid staff posts? | | | Available for pastoral care group and Sunday school helpers |
| Are people interviewed for these roles and who undertakes this function? | | | Volunteers are not interviewed but are informally assessed |
| Are references taken up for volunteer and paid staff posts? | | | Paid positions only |
| Are PVG applications submitted and the approval of the Provincial Officer received BEFORE the person commences regulated work? | | | This is the case wherever possible, but individuals awaiting PVG membership might occasionally work under supervision |
| Do all volunteers and paid staff have an identified supervisor to whom they report? | | | Pastoral care group would report to Rector. Sunday school helpers would report to the Sunday school leader. |
| Have all volunteers and staff undertaking a regulated work role been issued with a pocket card of good practice for children or vulnerable adults? | | | These cards are also placed on the notice boards in the church and church hall, for all to see. |
| Have the volunteers or staff (including the PVG coordinators) received or attended any training? | | | Yes. A safeguarding training session was held in March 2019 with input from the Rector and the PVG coordinator. This session included discussion of potential safeguarding scenarios. A further session, planned for this winter, will be open to members of other congregations. |
| Are records maintained for safeguarding training? | | | |

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

There have been no safeguarding issues of concern raised during the year since the last report, submitted in October 2019. Between March and May 2020, at the start of the pandemic, an exercise was carried out to ensure that all known members of the congregation had at least one point of contact within the church community. No training has been carried out during the last year although

the PVG coordinator is awaiting information from the Provincial Officer for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults regarding what if any online training is available should it be required.

| | |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Name of Person Completing this return: | Marjorie Keys |
| Position in Church: | PVG Coordinator |
| Date: | November 1 2020 |

Craft Class report

Murielle Johnston reports: "A small group of ladies met on a Wednesday afternoon, up until lockdown, to knit or sew and have a cup of tea and a chat. Items made this year included blanket squares, jumpers for children in Romania and embroidery for cushions."

Eco-congregation report

Ian Skinner reports: "The Holy Trinity Eco-congregation team met once formally in February and subsequently issues have been dealt with ad hoc. The Wildlife Garden continues to develop with some interesting and attractive features becoming established. The wriggly path through the area is maintained and several of the bird and bat nesting boxes have been occupied.

The Central Borders Network meeting planned for 17 March at Hawick had to be cancelled at short notice although a Zoom meeting took place on 23 April attended by seven Borders congregations and representatives from EcoCong Scotland. The EcoCong Scotland April Gathering and AGM at Helensburgh was also cancelled; subsequently a set of 12 monthly resource packs covering a variety of topics has been prepared by EcoCong under the heading "Let's Talk about Climate Emergency". These were designed to be used in discussion groups but with current restrictions the material is being adapted and incorporated in Holy Trinity's Weekly Notices as food for thought.

The Greener Borders series of monthly winter talks at Marmions commenced last October and EcoCong hosted the December meeting with a talk by Home Energy Scotland. Unfortunately the series had to be cut short after the February meeting.

We arranged a small EcoCong display at this year's annual Borders Organic Gardeners' Potato Day on 1 March at the Borders Union Showground Kelso. Sadly next year's event has already been cancelled due to uncertainty."

Fabric and Finance committee

Alasdair Johnston, Chair, Finance and Fabric Committee, reports: "The Finance and Fabric Committee (F&F) is currently chaired by Alasdair Johnston. Other members are the Treasurer and Fabric Convenor (who are also members of Vestry) and Pamela Gordon who acts as minute secretary. Following the last AGM, F&F held meetings in January 2020 and 'virtual' meetings (due to Covid 19 restrictions) in March and September. At its meetings F&F receives reports on financial issues from the Treasurer and considers matters relating to maintenance and repairs of the church fabric. F&F gives preliminary consideration to financial reports, including accounts and budgets, which are then submitted to the Vestry. The minutes of F&F meetings are forwarded to the Vestry with specific recommendations on matters requiring Vestry approval. F&F has authority, under the Procurement Policy, to approve expenditure up to £2,000 on particular items within the purview of the committee.

During 2020 the Vestry agreed revised terms of reference for F&F; a procurement policy drawn up by F&F applicable to all expenditure incurred on behalf of the church; conditions of hire of church premises recommended by F&F; and a number of recommendations on specific items. F&F raised concerns in connection with arrangements after the retirement of the current Treasurer and subsequently welcomed John Wood's agreement to take over the role and to serve on the committee. The minutes of Vestry meetings record consideration of F&F minutes and the committee's recommendations.

The Chair of F&F and the minute secretary will both have completed six years' service on the committee by the time of the AGM and will be no longer eligible to serve a further term. If the committee's work in supporting Vestry is to continue replacements to fill these roles will be needed."

Flower Guild report

Mary Edwards reports: "The flower guild is comprised of six members who arrange and, in most cases, provide the flowers, which beautify the church building Sunday by Sunday. At the major church festivals of Easter, Christmas and harvest these numbers are swelled by members of the congregation who wish to help. Before each major festival an informal meeting takes place to decide of the decoration for the coming festival.

For obvious reasons flower arranging never began again after Lent 2020 but the artificial flowers have been used to provide floral decoration 'lasting' a month to six weeks at a time! We hope to be able to arrange real flowers again in 2021."

Foodbank report

David Blackledge reports: "We would like to link our report with thanking everybody who has supported the Galashiels Foodbank this year. Many people have given of their time and many people have been generous in donating to the Foodbank. It has been a privilege to be involved albeit from a distance.

A special thanks should be given to the volunteers who have worked so hard in filling the gaps created by the older and more vulnerable members going into shielding. Due to the need to social distance and keep people safe it was decided to distribute food on one day a week instead of three days per week. Volunteers have had to devise a totally new way of organizing the provision and distribution of food. Fortunately, we have had people who have a special skill in this respect. They have worked hard to develop a very successful system. Many thanks to all involved.

The process has been divided into buying and collecting food, packing the food into bags and then the distribution of the food.

The week begins with a stocktake to determine what food is needed given the number of people requesting food. Once we know what is needed volunteers then go to the wholesalers and supermarkets to buy provisions which are brought to St Peter's Church. Volunteers also go to Fareshare to get provisions. Fareshare is a charity which collects food from supermarkets. There is a hub in Selkirk where we go to see if they have any of the provisions that we can use. We also have been given donations of food from Café Recharge and Monte Casino who, during lockdown, have given us meals to give out.

All the retail outlets have been helpful, particularly the wholesalers Bookers and Tesco. Our buyers visit them several times a week and they support us in whatever ways they can. We have a policy of providing fresh food which we know is appreciated by the people who come to us. But that means our buyers having to load their trollies with large numbers of items like milk, eggs, bread as well as buying the items listed in the stocktake. This is heavy work and time consuming and a special thanks go out to these volunteers.

All the food is stored at St Peter's Church and we would like to thank the Rector and Vestry for allowing us to use their rooms. We know it causes disruption to the Church especially as we need more space due to the new system we have put into operation.

On Tuesday and Wednesday more volunteers come to fill in the bags with food. We are very thankful to the people who donate their time and energy in this task. Due to social distancing we try to have just two people at a time in the room when filling the bags. On average we need about 70 bags filled with what we call dry food and the same number of bags with fresh food. We

provide bags for Social Services to help cover for any emergencies. There is a lot of other work involved too like sorting eggs or pasta or cereals bought in bulk into smaller packages.

In the early part of the lock down we helped out TD1 who was providing food to children in need of free school meals. We have also sent food to other food charities who were short of provisions.

On Wednesday food is distributed. Some people come to St Peter's and collect it but increasingly food is delivered. A week's worth of food for a family can be too heavy for people to carry home. We have a team of delivery people who pick the bags up and deliver them. This is also an important point of contact and support. They give of their time generously and we thank them.

Due to the virus shopping habits have changed so that, for a while, we have had fewer donations of goods through the supermarkets and Churches. This has meant that we have had to buy in more food from the wholesaler and the supermarkets. However, the generosity of our local people has been awesome. We have had donations through our website. We also have donations from individuals, Churches, businesses and local sports groups. People have organized crowd funding for us. Without such generosity we could not continue and we thank all who have donated. Because of this we are in a sound financial position and feel confident we can manage to keep providing food for the people who need it for the near future.

For the future we have decided to apply to become a registered Scottish Charity. We have been a voluntary charity up to this point. Being a registered charity allows us to receive gift aid but also involves us having to create a constitution. We have suggested that the Foodbank should have an Annual General Meeting to which anyone with an interest can attend. The meeting receives a report from the Trustees and nominations for membership of the Board of Trustees can be submitted and voted on at this meeting. The Foodbank is overseen by a Board of Trustees who are responsible for its good practice, its effective organization and its compliance with the rules and regulations laid down by law.

People come to the Foodbank through a variety of agencies including schools, medical services, social agencies and Churches as well as getting in touch with us directly through our website and Facebook. With these agencies it is our aim to try to ensure that nobody needs to go hungry in our area."

GDPR – general data protection regulations

Jane Barley reports: "By default because I hold (and have done for many years) the church contact lists I was nominated as the general data protection officer for the church. Under the regulations the lists are all password protected and everyone who receives a copy of them is required to have them password protected or to keep them under lock and key. Any breaches in security have to be reported. I haven't received any reports of such breaches.

Anyone sending e-mails if they are sent to multiple recipients should always send them BCC (blind copy). Everyone whose details are held on the church lists fill in a form giving their information and permission for this information to be held. They give their permission for their information to be circulated to others on the list and the lists are only circulated to those whose names are on them. People can nominate to be on undisclosed list that are only held by the data protection officer and the Rector so they receive information that is circulated. As they have nominated to be on the undisclosed list, they do not receive a copy of the circulated list. The churches charity number should be displayed on any information that is released into the public domain. It is SC 000966."

Intercessor's report

John Wood reports: "Although some on the team didn't feel comfortable videoing their prayers there were enough volunteers to provide a rota for the alternative Sundays to take the strain off Katie. Given the restrictions on time prayers have been more rigorously focused on the sermon themes and I know I have benefited from this discipline. Some intercessors have shown real flair

for the new medium judiciously using both indoors and out for their presentations. We are especially pleased to welcome Caroline Daye to our rota.”

Monday Club report

Murielle Johnston reports: “The Monday Club continued to thrive, with much fun and laughter, until the imposition of lockdown in March. There are 20 ladies on the roll, with a regular turnout of between 12 and 16, almost always to play scrabble. Although scrabble is the game of choice at the moment, there are other games on offer such as cards and dominoes.

We had a very successful Christmas party in the Trinity Centre, and a most enjoyable lunch outing to Hergès in September.

At the time of writing we do not know when the Club might be able to restart. But we keep hoping! The success of the Club is dependent on the willing support of our volunteers. I am once again very grateful to all those who give their time in this way.”

People's Warden report

John Wood reports: “A new system whereby vestry members took responsibility for collating and reading out the notices at the 11 o'clock service was devised and introduced before the onset of the epidemic made it somewhat redundant. The online services have been received very positively and I was pleased to relay messages of support from the congregation on to Pip and his musical assistants. Obviously there have been few opportunities to meet people but more frequent vestry 'Zoom' meetings have provided an alternative forum for airing opinions and I would encourage people to get in contact if there are any issues they would like raised.

John Wood (01835 822143)”

Prayer Circle report

Liz Brims reports: “As part of pastoral group, I organise the Prayer Circle which has seven people at present. Once someone requests prayers from us I circulate by secure mail. This is open for anyone to request prayers. Call Liz on 01896755218.”

Readers' report

Liz Williams reports: “As with so much in 2020 the usual rota and means of reading at our Sunday morning service at 11.00am had to be changed. We started the year in our usual manner but once 'lock down' was imposed and the church closed for general use, we had to think and act differently. A number of people, with an excellent tutorial from Pip, were able to record themselves reading at home and then forward that video to Pip for inclusion in the on-line service. For some others this was not practicable; however, once it was possible for limited access to the church we were able to record people reading both the lesson and the Gospel from the lectern in the church. This was well received by the 'congregation', both near and far, as it meant additional familiar faces appearing on their screens.

We do not know at present what the pattern of services with reader involvement will be in the immediate future, but I am certain there will be a will and a way for such participation to continue. On your behalf, and mine, sincere thanks to all who agree with enthusiasm to read and then do so with such skill on a regular basis as well as at carol services and other special occasions.”

Social and Catering Committee report

Murielle Johnston reports: “The committee has had far less to do than in previous years, due to the lockdown from March. We are very sorry to lose Vera from the committee and thank her for all her hard work over many years. We are delighted to welcome Sara Duncan on to the committee.

Filled rolls and cakes were provided for the AGM at the end of November. A week later we organised the Christmas Fayre in the Trinity Centre. There were several stalls and raffles as well as drinks, shortbread and mince pies.

The committee organised and served up the Burns lunch for the Women's Fellowship in January. Martin Baird supplied the haggis, neeps and tatties.

We had an enjoyable pancake supper in March and dozens and dozens of pancakes both savoury and sweet were consumed.

The monthly congregational breakfasts resumed in October and continued until February, with members of the committee taking it in turns to do the catering. Once again this took the form of a continental breakfast."

Sunday School – children and young people report

Jane Barley reports: "Sunday School continued to meet on Sunday mornings during the 11am service until the church was closed due to the Covid 19 pandemic although for a large part of the year there weren't children who regularly attended and some Sundays there were no children at all. We left during the Gloria and return for communion. We used a resource called 'Spill the Beans'. This is a lectionary based resource with a Scottish flavour for Sunday Schools, Junior Churches and Worship Leader.

When Sunday School, or its equivalent, resumes new staff will be required to run it as I will no longer be available.

We were also involved with the running of the Ecumenical Messy Church sessions which took place, usually monthly, during school term times in the Parish Church Hall on Sunday afternoons. They were great fun and much appreciated by those who attended. Again this stopped in March due to the churches being required to close. The themes were Lost Sheep, Harvest and The Rich Farmer, Christmas and The House on the Rock. Hopefully we will be able to resume holding Messy Church sessions at some point in the future."

Trinity Centre Management committee report

Pamela Gordon, Chair, Trinity Centre Management Committee, reports: "The Trinity Centre Committee (TCMC), which includes representatives from the community as well as those nominated by Vestry, met in October 2019, February and September 2020 (the last held by Zoom). A meeting arranged for June 2020 was cancelled due to the Covid 19 lockdown. At their meetings the TCMC dealt with a number of issues relating to necessary maintenance and repairs and considered how to secure more bookings for use of the Trinity Centre by community and other groups. By the time lockdown began they were pleased to note a small increase in bookings. The main item of discussion at their September meeting concerned facilitating use of the centre by youth groups (subject to Covid 19 restrictions).

The manager of the Charity Beyond Earlston attended the September meeting. She informed us of the youth work guidance from Youth Scotland and additional advice from YouthBorders which confirmed that existing guidance for the youth work sector is unaffected by the Scottish Government's new rules about use of premises. The TCMC agreed in principle to seek Bishop John's permission to reopen the centre for use by the youth group subject to certain provisos. The manager of the charity subsequently submitted relevant paperwork the committee had requested, including Beyond Earlston's insurance documents and risk assessment. This documentation met the provisos.

[Following the TCMC meeting Bishop John indicated he was content that all necessary precautions had been taken and, together with Beyond Earlston's codes of conduct, this suggested that it would be safe to reopen if the Vestry were happy. Members of Vestry were then approached. Some questions were raised and answered and BeyondEarlston commenced use of the centre in late October. Discussions are in hand with other youth organisations about use of the centre on the same basis.]

The accounts in respect of the Trinity Centre are included in the Church's accounts to be submitted to the AGM by the Treasurer."

Women's Fellowship report

Murielle Johnston reports: "The Women's Fellowship had a successful six months until lockdown on 23 March, with our members enjoying a variety of events.

We resumed in September with Pam Johnson's enthralling talk 'Say it with Flowers'. She spoke about different flowers and what they meant to her.

Our first outing of the season, in early October was to Hergès. We enjoyed a good chat with tasty eats and plenty of tea and coffee! Our talk later in the month was given by John Williams, who spoke knowledgably and entertainingly on 'The Invisible Profession'. We looked at various packaging and had to spot the correct marking on the labels for EU regulations! In November we enjoyed coffee and delicious eats at Liz Williams' house, followed at the end of the month by a very interesting talk in the Trinity Centre by Dave Frew on his pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, illustrated by a wealth of lovely photographs.

Our only meeting in December was the Christmas party in the Trinity Centre with games and lovely things to eat. A dip into Santa's sack rounded off the afternoon.

January took us to Priorwood Court to have coffee with the residents. There was an even smaller turnout from both residents and Holy Trinity than the previous year and we may decide to move our venue for the next year. At the end of the month a few gentlemen joined us for the Annual Burns Lunch. Once again, we were entertained by Gus Redburn on pipes and Donald Gordon addressing the haggis. Jennifer played the keyboard and we all sang some Scottish songs.

We had coffee at Caroline Green's house in the middle of February, and Caroline provided another lovely spread. At the end of the month we were entertained by Ken and Anna Swinton's beautiful wild life photos.

Our last meeting before lockdown was in mid-March for coffee at Mary Edwards' house, when we had a long and enjoyable chat, as well as lovely cakes and coffee.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to meet since then, and, at the time of writing, we do not know when we might next meet. But we keep optimistic!

We recently said farewell to Vera Peat, who was a stalwart of the Fellowship Committee for almost twenty years. We will miss her hugely and wish her well in her new life in County Durham."