



**Blackhall St Columba's
Church of Scotland
Edinburgh**

**STATED ANNUAL MEETING
Sunday 23 March 2025
1130am – Sanctuary**



Dear Member,

Dear Member,

And they came, everyone whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, and brought the Lord's offering (Exodus 35:21).

The Kirk Session has asked me to write to ask you to review your offerings to our Church. This is something I do each year at the time of our Stated Annual Meeting and it is hoped that our members will use that date as a time to consider their giving to the Lord for the coming year. If you have increased your offering recently, I would simply like to say thank you.

Although our accounts for 2024 show a surplus, it remains important that giving to the work of the church rises year by year to allow for inflation and to allow for the ongoing expansion in the mission of our church to our community. The healthy financial position of the church in the last couple of years has already allowed a number of new initiatives such as Soup-n-Chat, the very successful Nativity Trail and the events organised by the Outreach Team.

Our Budget for 2025 is included in the SAM papers. The Finance Team have tried to be as realistic as possible in the budget but in order to budget for a small surplus, we have assumed that giving will rise in 2025.

It is very easy to leave standing orders or regular giving unaltered for many years. I would ask you to consider prayerfully whether you are in a position to increase your giving to the work of our Lord and his Church.

If you contribute to the Church through a standing order and wish to increase your payment, the easiest way is to go online, if you can, and increase the standing order. If you don't have online access to your bank account, the next easiest route is to telephone your bank and ask them to make the change. If all else fails, please speak to me or the church office and we can give you a new standing order form that will set up the new amount and cancel the old order.

For St Columba's Church to be an effective witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Blackhall community and for it to carry out its mission in the parish, we rely on your support and commitment as a member of our church. The vast majority of St Columba's income comes from the giving of our members. With this in mind, I would ask you to respond to this reminder.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Johnston
Treasurer

STATED ANNUAL MEETING
SUNDAY 23 MARCH 2025

This year's Stated Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place after the 10.30am morning Worship Service on Sunday 23 March 2025 at 11.30am in the Sanctuary. This meeting will not be livestreamed. Participation in the meeting will require members to be present in the Sanctuary.

1.SAM Agenda

1.Reports on the Agenda.

2.Accounts for Yr. End 31 December 2024

3.Budget 2025

4.Reports including financial statements can all be found on our website under Stated Annual Meeting section within Resources folder (Main Menu)

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. SAM 24 March 2024 Minute
3. Moderator's Report
4. Session Clerk's Report
5. Congregational Treasurer's Report and Annual Accounts
6. Gift Aid Convener's Report
7. Fabric Convener's Report
8. Staff Team Leader's Report
9. Any Other Competent Business
10. Closing remarks
11. Benediction

BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH
MINUTE OF THE STATED ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION
HELD ON SUNDAY 24 MARCH 2024 AT 11.30 IN THE SANCTUARY

The Reverend Fergus Cook constituted the Stated Annual Meeting by welcoming those attending. Papers for the Stated Annual Meeting and the Financial Report for year ending 31 December 2023 had been made available online on the Church website. Reports referred to below are in the appendix to this Minute. The Minister explained to the Congregation there have been changes to rules on Charities and now only Trustees (Elders) may vote on Financial Accounts but that this meeting was an opportunity to hear and comment on the accounts.

Sederunt: The Reverend Fergus Cook and 69 members of the Congregation were present. There were 4 apologies for absence.

Minutes: The SAM 2023 minutes which had been published online were unanimously accepted.

Moderator's Report: The Minister explained that his report did not include all that had been happening as 2023 had been a very busy year. He had tried to keep it brief. Extending the reach of worship in the community, working towards the Union with Drylaw Parish Church, joint services, planning for the future and numerous social events had all taken place. He thanked those who had helped to make these things happen by offering their services, often unseen. There were no questions.

Session Clerk's Report: The report by Eddie Thorn had been available online. There were no questions.

Congregational Treasurer's Report and Annual Accounts: The Accounts had been prepared for the Congregation and provided before the meeting by Adrian Johnston the Congregational Treasurer. In the absence of Adrian, his deputy Sheila Mackintosh spoke. Total Income for the year was £287,172. Legacies totalling £67,550 have helped greatly. The trend over the last 4 years is that Offerings are reducing steadily while other income including from Hall-use has increased.

Total Expenditure during the year at £217,095 was more than the previous year. The trend is that this has been increasing over the last 4 years. The surplus of £70,076 is almost entirely due to the legacies received. Without them our surplus would have only been £2,527.

The Total Funds Balance stands at £235,629 but this too has increased because of legacies received.

Budget for 2024 Expenditure is expected to rise to £245,513 with Fabric expenditure returning to normal and as a result a deficit of £28,963 was anticipated. Additional income of around £10,000, due from Hall users not originally included, could reduce this deficit to under £20,000. Our contribution to Giving to Grow, formerly Ministries and Mission, will increase. With membership declining we need members to contribute more where they can and review their level of giving regularly.

With this projected deficit it may be necessary to dip into reserves to balance the books. However, the Fabric fund has been increased to bring it up to £56,000.

Building for the Future All pledges have now been received and there has been no expenditure. The balance of £81,812 has been invested as a Restricted Reserve for Fabric work in Church of Scotland Investors Trust Deposit Fund.

There were no questions from members.

The Moderator thanked Adrian for his work as Treasurer and reiterated the fact that with falling membership numbers we are managing to maintain the Church by legacies gifted for which we are very grateful.

Gift Aid:

Sandy Weir's report had been published online There were no questions.

Fabric:

Mike Whiteside's report had been posted online. There were no questions.

Premises and Staff:

The report has been made available on the website. There were no questions. Convenor Frances Douglas was thanked for her 18 years in this role as she is now stepping down.

AOCB:

No issues were raised.

Closing Remarks:

The Moderator thanked the Kirk Session and the Congregation for the help and support given to himself and his family enabling him to carry out his duties in fellowship and worship at St Columba's. Often these people are working in the background operating the AV system, organising catering, decorating the church with flowers and their distribution or helping as drivers but are all indispensable in the running of the church.

The Session Clerk, Eddie Thorn, advised us of the challenges to be faced going forward. We have a short-term buffer of reserves but we should not be complacent. The process of reaching a union with Drylaw Parish Church is slower than had been hoped, the Basis of Union is still to be agreed and voted on by members of both churches but it is envisaged that it could be completed by the end of 2024. Eddie thanked Fergus for leading us together.

The Minister thanked Eddie and closed the meeting with the Benediction.

REPORT FROM THE MODERATOR –REV FERGUS COOK

STATED ANNUAL MEETING REPORT FROM THE MODERATOR – REV FERGUS COOK

As you will be aware each year, the Office Bearers of the church prepare reports regarding the ongoing work of Blackhall St Columba's. I have great pleasure in adding my own report which, in addition to providing an overview, focuses on just some of the highlights and achievements of the year.

As with last year I have broken the report into sections.

Worship

The bedrock of our Church life is our Sunday Worship which continues at 10:30am each Sunday.

We are blessed with a great A.V. team and our livestreaming of services allows a great number of people access to worship at times that are convenient to them. It allows people from as near as the parish but as far away as South Africa and Australia to join us for worship.

We presently offer Communion on three main Sundays in the year, in February, June and October. This service is augmented by a now regular 3pm service which, whilst aimed at those who can't manage the 10:30am service is open to all. Additional communion services are held at Mid-week PEACE services, Maundy Thursday service and periodically at Care Home services and other special events.

Having mentioned care homes we continue to offer a monthly service to Strachan House residents and other services to residents of both Queen's Court and Lyle Court. All these places are continuing to explore how they join with us online on a Sunday. At Christmas, the Junior Singers again attended at Strachan House and sang carols which was greatly appreciated by staff and residents alike.

Our now annual Monte Cassino Remembrance Service on behalf of the Monte Cassino Society. Will take place on the 3 May when we will remember the 80th anniversary of the end of the war in Italy. This service continues to attract a number of dignitaries and Regimental representatives who were associated with the Italian Campaign.

The Annual Youth Service this year will be on the 23rd February, when we mark 'Thinking Day' and 'Founders Day' for the Guides and the Scouts. The 'Junior Singers' will also be present.

We maintain our connections with Blackhall Primary School and in addition to the whole school assemblies at Christmas and Easter held within the sanctuary, I continue to be invited to participate in School Assemblies at other times such as Remembrance. We are now in a position to invite the parents and carers of Primary 6 children to the Christmas Assembly and the same for Primary 7 at the Easter Assembly. This has been made possible by the inclusion of screens and a speaker system that serves the balcony area of the sanctuary.

Our Praise Band and Praise Choir are now a regular feature of Youth and Family Services and we are grateful for their time and efforts. Mother's Day, Father's Day and Harvest Sunday are all part of the routine of Family Services.

The Choir, under the direction of Donald Cameron, our Musical Director, continues to play a big role in our worship varying whether we hear an Introit, and Anthem or a Benediction at morning worship. In addition we have had different services that have been led by the choir in a 'nine lessons and carols' format.

The 'Blue Christmas Service' has become firmly established on the third Sunday in Advent. The Pastoral Team do a wonderful job of assisting at this, and many other services, and it continues to be greatly appreciated by regulars and those attending for the first time.

Our 'Family Christingle Service' continues to grow in popularity and this year we had over 300 people in the sanctuary plus those joining us online. This coupled with nearly 100 at the Watchnight Service and around 60 at the Christmas Day service made this our busiest Christmas worship services in my time here.

Mission

Mary's Journey was a highly successful Nativity Trail which included Escape Rooms, crafts and other activities whilst teaching those who attended the story of the birth of Jesus. This year we were joined by the Primary 7 classes of both Blackhall Primary School and Ferryhill Primary School. This was only possible by holding the event over two days and the congregation owes a massive thanks to all who participated. Outwith the school visits, the trail was again open to the public.

Monthly 'storytime' continues for Blackhall Nursery, the Playgroup and the Parent and Toddlers group. It is well received and has allowed us to reach a whole new group of younger people. It is through these contacts that we are able to advertise the Youth and Christingle Services already mentioned.

Connect is our latest regular meeting of people on a Sunday evening who wish to discuss faith related matters and another relaxed, informal way to meet others and explore faith in a non judgemental way. All are welcome to this.

We continue to reach out to the parish and community in too many ways to mention but our magazines; the Blackhall Bulletin and the Kirk News are vital to this contact. We participate in the Blackhall Community Sports Day and have a representative on the local Community Council. We engage with social media and are always open to finding new ways to involve ourselves in the community.

Social

Socially, we continue to offer a wide variety of events to cater for all members of the community.

We now have an ongoing programme of music events under the banner of [Music@St Columba's](#) and film events under the banner [Movies@St Columba's](#).

The Outreach Team continues to offer a variety of events and publish a diary to allow for forward planning. The Burns Supper was a sell out and has become a regular and appreciated event in our social calendar. Other clubs that meet outwith the Church buildings include; The Blackhall Drambusters, The Curry Club and the Buon Appetito Club. We have book clubs, a Knit & Knatter and many other groups who meet under the auspices of the Church. Our social activities continue to be an important part of who we are and how we form a welcoming community.

Externally there continues to be too many clubs, activities and organisations which regularly use our buildings to mention here but they are all important to keeping our buildings and 'the Church' at the centre of the community.

Presbytery Plan

By now few, if any, of the congregation will be unaware of the fact that the proposed union with Drylaw Parish Church is not now going ahead. The planning and exploration of this union dominated a large part of the year with many members of the congregation being involved. Regardless of the outcome of this exploration we remain neighbour's with Drylaw Parish Church and will continue to explore ways in which we can work together for the

benefit of the mission of God in our respective areas. Many friendships and connections were made over the time and it is hoped that these can continue and even grow.

At the moment this leaves Blackhall St Columba without a partnership to explore. This does not mean we are standing still. Whilst we await further guidance from the Deployment Group, who are responsible for the Presbytery Plan implementation we continue to develop relationships with the neighbouring churches in our 'cluster'. These collaborations include plans to hold a joint Easter Breakfast Service, a joint Pentecost Service and to support one another in different venture such as the World Day of Prayer.

Royal Naval Reserve

Last year I spoke of the support I received from the Kirk Session and from members of the congregation as I sought to become a Chaplain in the Royal Naval Reserve. The commitment was as big as I thought but has been successful and I am now the Chaplain for HMS Scotia and soon to be the Chaplain for HMS Caledonia as well. Of course, as you have heard me say, as a Christian the reward for good work is more work! My roles and responsibilities are still being confirmed but there is an increasing requirement for this form of chaplaincy at the moment. I thank all for their understanding when these commitments occasionally take me away from the parish.

As a congregation we are indebted to all who contribute to the worship and life of the congregation. So many people offer their services, many go unseen and unnoticed by the majority. On behalf of the congregation, the Kirk Session and myself, I thank you. I also send my thanks to all those elders who work so hard at keeping contact with their districts.

I commented last year that the BStC's mission statement is; 'to glorify God, proclaim Christ and serve others'. As with last year I am happy to report that we have done all three and our future plans look to continue this for many years ahead.

Rev Fergus Cook

Moderator

SESSION CLERK'S REPORT

SESSION CLERK'S REPORT

Membership

The annual statistical return as at 31 December 2024 to The Presbytery of Edinburgh & West Lothian shows a fall in the Communion Roll – from 537 to 529. During 2024 we welcomed 14 new members, compared to 8 the year before. Sadly 17 members died during the year and 5 members left us as a consequence of moving to another part of the country or for other reasons.

A census was regularly carried out during the year to measure actual Sunday morning attendance. The average attendance was 127, basically at the same level as the past two years. Blackhall St Columba's still remains one of the best attended congregations across the Presbytery. Members continue to have the option of watching the Service being live streamed or catch up via You Tube at some later time. Our Christmas Eve Services were again very well attended especially the Christingle.

We are not alone in having an ageing congregation and our dual focus remains looking after our existing membership while working at attracting young people into the fold, the latter is very much the challenge of all churches.

Kirk Session

During 2024 there were no Elders ordained or inducted. Sadly Jim Laing, a long standing and much respected Elder, passed away in August.

The smooth and efficient running of Church life and the many activities carried on for members and the Parish community depends on the leadership of the Working Team Leaders and Conveners, who all continue to do good work with great dedication. In my capacity as Session Clerk I am dependant on the support and assistance of many Elders and members, in particular Sheila Mackintosh (Roll Keeper), Jackie Lowe (Safeguarding Officer), James Burr (Communion Convener), Jim Logan and Frank Morrice (Minute Secretaries for Session meetings), and Lindsay Duguid (Health & Safety Administrator). I remain appreciative for all their support and am particularly grateful to Jim Logan, who readily stands in for me when I am unavailable.

Mid way through the year Joy McGonigal-Paget resigned as Office Secretary. Thereafter Ruth Laidlaw took the lead of looking after the office.

Elsbeth Williamson stood down after a number of years of dedicated service as the Catering Convener. It was greatly appreciated that Lynn Bunney volunteered to take on this role.

During the year Frances Douglas retired as Premises and Staff Convener. Frances had carried out that role for longer than the 14 years I have been Session Clerk and throughout that long period she carried out her duties, including looking after the church garden, with great commitment and dedication. Mike Whiteside, Fabric Convener, picked up the Premises responsibility while Dianne Fulton looks after all staff matters.

The Congregation's finances are covered elsewhere in this pack of reports. However grateful thanks must be extended to Adrian Johnston, Congregational Treasurer, and the Finance Working Team for their diligent stewardship of our finances.

During the year we were immensely grateful to receive the following legacies from the Estates of former members:-

Mrs Christine Morrison	£10,000
Mr Alistair Gunn	£15,000

Presbytery Plan

During the year the Kirk Session and Congregation worked diligently with the Kirk Session and Congregation of Drylaw Parish Church towards a Union of both Congregations. The Union was agreed by both Kirk Sessions and on Sunday 13 October both Congregations voted and agreed to accept the Union. As Drylaw was in vacancy (without a Minister) the Congregation required to vote on accepting Rev Fergus Cook as Minister. Unfortunately the vote did not support the appointment of Mr Cook and therefore the Union did not proceed.

At the time of writing this report, we await hearing from the Presbytery regarding the way forward in terms of a) do we sit on our own, b) do we look at going into another Union, or c) some other arrangement such as a parish grouping.

Achievements and Performance

- A successful Burns Supper was again held in January.
- We continued Soup 'n' Chat with a lunch being offered to the community every second Friday – on the Fridays that our CAMEO club does not meet.
- We continued to live stream the Sunday morning Services.

- In May the annual Service of Remembrance was held for the Monte Cassino Society.
- We again supported the Operation Christmas Child shoebox appeal and were pleased to send 137 (136 last year) boxes from the Congregation.
- Considerable work was done by Lindsay Duguid in updating our Evacuation Plan and setting up the Asbestos Register.
- Throughout the year mission work continued in terms of Services at local care homes and work with schools.
- We continued to support Ferryhill Primary School
- Work to provide Wi Fi across all the church halls was completed.
- Work was carried out in the Upper Gallery to provide screen and sound facilities.
- A number of Saturday musical evenings and Film Nights were held in the Sanctuary throughout the year.
- In December 2024, we held our second Nativity Trail called "Follow the Star- Mary's Journey". This ran over two days in conjunction with the Christmas Tree Festival. We welcomed well over four hundred visitors including primary seven from both Ferryhill and Blackhall. This was a real team effort with approximately 90 members of the church involved in all aspects of the preparation and execution of the event. The expenses of the trail were much reduced from the previous year. After all the expenses of the tree festival were paid, a modest sum of £50, which was raised during the event, went to church funds to offset the costs of the trail.
- Throughout the year occasional joint Services were held along with Drylaw.
- In October Kirk Session agreed to rename the North Sanctuary as 'St Columba's Chapel
- During the year, from Retiring Offerings, we supported the following charities.

February Communion	RNLI South Queensferry
Easter Services	Rock Trust
June Communion	Mary's Meals
October Communion	YMCA
Christmas Services	Scottish Bible Society and Fresh Start

The WATCH Committee continued the proud record of supporting deserving causes out with our own walls by during the second half of the year raising £10,000 from various activities for Blood Cancer UK.

We continue to publish and distribute two fine magazines, namely Kirk News and Blackhall Bulletin which allow us to reach out and communicate across the Parish and to our members. Judith Mair and Barbara Wilson, respective Editors, both do an excellent job in producing these publications.

Finally, on behalf of the Kirk Session, I should like to thank Fergus, our Minister, for his ministry and leadership over the past year.

As we await hearing what the Presbytery Deployment Committee propose under the Presbytery Plan we will continue to deliver the Good News across the parish and beyond.

Eddie Thorn
Session Clerk

Congregational Treasurer's Report

FINANCE REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

This is the Treasurer's report into the financial position of the Church. For the fourth year running, we finished the year with a surplus having budgeted in each of those years for a sizeable deficit. This is particularly marked for 2024. When we prepared the Budget at the start of the year, despite the Finance Team giving it detailed consideration, we could find no way of realistically projecting anything other than a deficit yet by God's providence, here we are again with a surplus.

In 2024, we budgeted for a deficit of £28,963 but ended the year with an operating (excluding legacies) surplus of £19,676. When legacies are added in, the surplus is increased to £30,726.

This surplus will enable the church to continue to rebuild its reserves, particularly the Fabric Reserve, after the expenditure on Building for the Future.

Overview

Our Freewill Offerings in 2024, made through envelopes, cheques and standing orders, were 4.8% higher than in 2023. Ordinary Offerings are 26.2% higher. Ordinary Offerings are the plate offerings. Other offerings are well down but that is due to two one off donations that were received in 2023 and reflects considerable year on year variability in this category. When all offerings including the gift aid recovery are included, our total income from offerings rose by 3.8%. This was ahead of budget and is explained by offerings rising by more than we expected.

I have mentioned in past years' reports that falling Freewill Offerings appeared to be an ongoing trend that was troubling the Finance Team. It is therefore with gratitude that we saw a rise in this last twelve months.

Our Other Ordinary Income, was both higher than last year and £25,459 ahead of budget. The main areas where we beat expectations were in Deposit Interest (+£7,984) and Use of Premises by External Bodies (+£13,962). Deposit interest rates rose higher than expected when we were budgeting in December 2023 and we had more money on deposit due to the merging of the main church account with the Building for the Future account. Rents for the use of the halls included a certain amount of catch up from 2023 and there was also a small amount of under estimating in this category when the budget was drawn up.

Yet again legacies played an important part in the Church's finances. The James & Jessie Shaw Charitable Trust made a further donation of £10,000 and the receipt of another legacy took the total to £11,050.

Expenditure in 2024 was higher than in 2023 and £15,856 over budget.

The net effect, as noted above, is that we ended the year with an operating surplus of £19,676 and when legacies are added in, a surplus of £30,726.

Income

Income from Congregational Giving (including Gift Aid Tax Recovery) was £185,023, an increase of £6,782 (+3.8%) against 2023.

Other Ordinary Income, which includes use of premises by outside Organisations, Congregational Organisations, Weddings, Funerals, Interest and Dividends amounted to £64,309 a rise of £22,928 (+55%) on the previous year.

Our Total General Income for 2024 which includes legacies was £260,382. This is less than in 2023 but that is due to the high level of legacies received in that year. Taking legacies out of both years' income, our Total Income in 2024 rose by £29,710.

Expenditure

Our overall General Expenditure in 2024 was £229,657 which is £12,561 more than in 2023 (+6%). This is £15,856 under budget. Within the totals there are considerable variances. Staffing costs were £13,456 below budget due to the resignation of our secretary and the decision not to employ a replacement until the expected union with Drylaw was completed.

Fabric expenditure was well below budget but this was offset to some extent by much higher Heating & Lighting expenditure. As regards that, we were overcharged for electricity due to a fixed direct debit mandate and when our secretary left us there were no electricity meter readings being submitted. A reading was subsequently submitted and the over charge is being worked off.

Congregational Organisations was quite a big overspend (+£6,398) but that reflects the vibrancy of church life and all the events going on. Water services show an underspend of £2,939 against budget and a good part of that is under collection by the water company which will be collected in 2025.

Surplus

We can once again give thanks to God that we finished the year in a strong position with a surplus of £30,726. The budget had predicted a deficit of £28,963. However, due to the fairly complex mix of reasons explained above, including the welcome receipt of legacies, we finished the year as we did in a healthy position.

General & Restricted Funds

At the start of 2024, the balance of money in the Building for the Future Fund, an amount of £81,812 was added to the main church funds and placed in a restricted reserve. As a result of that and our surplus in 2024, our total funds including General and Restricted Funds at 31st December 2024 amount to £348,167. That is an increase of £112,538. During the year, we added £24,000 of the 2023 surplus to the Fabric Reserve, taking it up to £80,000. The Finance Team think this has to be increased each year we have a surplus as any future expenditure on our roof or stonework could easily run into some hundreds of thousands.

Budget 2025

Our Giving to Grow contribution for 2025 will be £109,305. The Fabric Team Leader has advised that a realistic estimate for Fabric expenditure would be £6,605 on the Church, £9,900 on the Halls and £4,150 on the Manse.

I have assumed that our freewill offerings will increase slightly to allow for inflation. As there is a gradual reduction in the number of people making freewill offerings, this really means that we are asking our members to raise their giving to make that possible.

In preparing a budget, we cannot assume we will receive legacies and I would ask you sincerely to respond to my letter on reviewing giving and make that a reality.

I have tried where possible to calculate what our actual income and expenditure would be but for those categories of income and expenditure where that is not easily done, I have budgeted close to the actual experience of 2024 with inflation adjustments where I thought appropriate.

The Kirk Session have decided not to appoint a new secretary or administrator and we are fortunate to have volunteers providing the necessary cover. Taking that cost out of our budget makes a substantial difference. As a result, I am pleased to report that we have been able to budget for a small surplus of £1,853 in 2025.

Conclusion

On behalf of the Kirk Session, I would like to thank members for their continued support through your giving. The Kirk Session greatly appreciates the many people who give by standing order and who use gift aid which forms such an important part of our income. I would ask all members not yet using standing orders and / or gift aid to consider doing so if they can.

Our accounts will be presented under the rules of the charity regulations. The accounts are examined by an independent examiner who will examine the accounts in accordance with the regulations set by the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator, (OSCR). A meeting of the Kirk Session will approve the annual accounts.

Adrian Johnston
Congregational Treasurer

Gift Aid Convenor's Report

GIFT AID

For the year ended 5th April 2024 we claimed Gift Aid on:-

General Giving	£120,961
*Small Donations Scheme	<u>£ 8,000</u>
General Fund Total	<u>£128,961</u> (previous year £126,704)

Building for the Future (final instalments)	<u>£ 780</u>
Total claimed for Gift Aid	<u>£129,741</u>
Including £45.38 of taxman's interest this raised	<u>£32,480.63</u>

*The Small Donations scheme is a Government concession for small undocumented donations up to a maximum of £8000 for which we qualify.

Clearly Gift Aid is an essential component of the congregation's income. The vast majority of taxpaying members and supporters have done so, but if you have not, you should simply register your present and future donations with me by signing a simple form. This will add 25% to the value of your gifts with no further involvement by you.

What cannot be Gift Aided but can carry other tax advantages to the donor's estate and provide essential income to the Church is a future **Gift in your Will**. I will be pleased to give general, confidential, unbiased information in this respect if you would like it. Otherwise please arrange now to make a gift in future when you cannot make it yourself by, literally and figuratively, continuing your support of the Church through your Will with a gift for General use or purposes you specifically wish.

All matters concerning individual giving, including legacies, are always considered personal, private, confidential and strictly honoured as such. If you ever have any queries or comments please contact me.

Sandy Weir
Gift Aid Convener

Fabric Convener's Report

During 2024 the required annual servicing of the Fabric and Appliances for the Manse, Church and Halls was carried out.

This included Boiler Services and Gas Safety Checks, Security Alarm System, Kitchen Equipment, Fire Extinguishers and our Extensive Fire Alarm System.

Throughout the year, as required, there were repairs undertaken on Roof Areas, Electrical Items, Plumbing and Fire Alarm Equipment.

Other works carried out in 2024 were –
Extensive Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) were carried out as 5 year cycle
Old mastic at Manse Windows Replaced.
Replacement Fluorescent Tubes sourced and fitted in Large Hall

Mike Whiteside
Fabric Convener

Staff Team Leader's Report

Church Office:

The Church Secretary left in June 2024. Cover has been provided since by Sheila MacIntosh who has been looking after all Hall related matters in terms of bookings. Eddie Thorn, Ruth Laidlaw and recently Susan Srimegeour have been providing Office cover and we thank them for their contributions. The Kirk Session in January 2025 agreed for these arrangements to continue and not to fill the post of Church Secretary at this time.

Church Organist/Director of Music:

Donald Cameron has kept us going during the past year providing much needed music and we thank him, Elizabeth Smith and the choir for their contribution to this ministry.

Church Halls/Sanctuary:

The Halls and Sanctuary have been well maintained by Dorothea and Kevin over the past year and we thank them for their hard work and covering for each other during holiday and illness periods.

Dianne Fulton
Staff Team Leader