



Bruntsfield Evangelical Church

Annual General Meeting
2016

Sunday, December 4th, 2016

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Church Leadership Reports

Elders' Report

Jon Gemmell, Graeme Shanks, Peter Ervine, David Aird, Paul Johnston, Fraser McLaren & Ian Naismith

Bruntsfield Evangelical Church exists to glorify God through lives being transformed by the grace of Jesus Christ.

We praise God for His grace to us over the last year. We have seen numerical and spiritual growth, notably through the increasing number of families and young people who have chosen Bruntsfield as their spiritual home. It is a great thrill to see so many of all ages worshipping, learning and enjoying fellowship together each Sunday morning, with many also involved in home groups and other areas of church life. God is at work transforming lives, and our desire is that all the glory should go to Him.

Worshipping together

Our Sunday services represent well the diversity in our congregation, and the different approaches that help us in our worship of the Lord. Worship at the Communion Service is more reflective, while at the All Age Service it is vibrant and at the evening Bible Teaching Service, it is more relaxed. All can help us express our appreciation of the Lord and His grace to us. We are grateful to all those who lead us in worship.

Learning together

We have been privileged to benefit from the teaching of Jon, Graeme, other church members and some visiting speakers at our Sunday services. We have also continued some of the studies in our home group discussions. Over the year we have studied New Testament (Luke, Romans, Hebrews, 1 Peter, Revelation 2-3), Old Testament (Solomon, Daniel) and topical themes (relationships, why church?). Sermons have also been made available online. We gain maximum benefit by coming to both teaching services on a Sunday looking for God to speak to us in life-changing ways.

Praying together

Prayer is our key resource as we seek to glorify God in all that we do. We have a church prayer meeting early in the month, a range of prayer meetings at different times of the day in the middle of the month and prayer in all our home groups. We also had a week of prayer in September with many opportunities to focus on different needs in our church and further afield, and many also pray in one-to-one sessions and other small groups. We encourage everyone to take advantage of the many opportunities to unite in prayer.

Serving together

We have benefited greatly from the faithful service of Jon, Graeme and Peter, who have been joined in recent months by our three interns. A good number of members are also very actively serving in the church, as will be evident when you read through the reports, but many have limited involvement beyond attendance at one or two Sunday services. We urge everyone to consider how you could use the gifts God has given you in the work of the church, particularly in the early months of 2017.

Witnessing together

One of your greatest privileges as Christians is sharing the good news of salvation through Jesus with others. That is our responsibility as individuals, and as a church. We can all play a part in that, whether it is in making visitors at the All Age Service feel welcome and talking to them about Jesus or becoming involved in activities such as Basics Bank where there are opportunities to share our faith with others.

Sharing together

The fellowship we enjoy together cements our unity in Christ and enables us to build one another up in our faith. We can enjoy fellowship at our services, at many of our activities during the week, by meeting for coffee and by offering and receiving hospitality in our homes. This year we have rejoiced together at births, weddings and special birthdays. We have also stood beside those who have suffered, and in recent weeks have celebrated the lives of two dear sisters who have gone to be with the Lord – Mrs Margo McDowell and Miss Anne Darnley.

Moving forward together

Our church is going through times of change. We have many new members and have been delighted to welcome Hazel, Simona and Tim as interns, serving in the church as well as studying at Cornhill or ETS. We are already benefiting greatly from their work. We are also, of course, going to experience big change next year as Jon moves on and we seek God's will for us. Jon has pastored the church for over seven years with vision, passion and enormous commitment and he will be hugely missed, but we are confident that the Lord will continue to bless us. We have been struck by an evident unity in recent weeks as we have consulted with the church about the future. We value your prayers for wisdom as we move forward, and also for Jon and Aileen as they move on to new areas of service.

Finally, we are grateful to all the leaders of activities for their faithful service throughout the year and for preparing their reports, and to our church administrator Adam Campbell for pulling them all together.

Pastor's Report

Jon Gemmell

When I think about the job I do at Bruntsfield now, compared to the job I came to do in 2009, it reminds me just how much has changed over that period.

Instead of rattling around in the church, largely alone as in the early days, there is now a great hub of diverse activity and people using the building most hours of the day. Instead of populating my own diary and worrying about doing my own job, I now find myself managing a team and overseeing a wonderful band of people all labouring to make much of Jesus in our church family. Instead of relying on word of mouth and infrequent email updates, there is now an incredible back room operation to keep everyone up to speed and informed about events and developments in the life of the church. Instead of being a medium sized, faithful and largely stable congregation, there is now a large number of very different people to lead, look after and seek to serve.

Looking back over just 7 years I am so thankful to God for all that He has done at Bruntsfield. We have seen so much change and yet so much stay the same. We have seen radical changes in service structure, church programme, expansion of ministries, changes in staffing levels as well as lots and lots of new people, so much has changed.

Yet so much has stayed the same, Bruntsfield continues to be a growing church, with a real family feel and a tangible excitement about all that God has been doing amongst us. Bruntsfield continues to be a church that loves the Word, loves the lost and strives to be faithful and obedient in its life together.

It has been a great joy to be the first pastor of this church and I leave soon with real thankfulness just to have been involved, and a real excitement about all that God has in store for you in the future.

Assistant Pastor's Report

Graeme Shanks

'Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His love endures forever.'
(Psalm 135:1)

I love this consistent chorus of praise in the Psalms. What an blessed truth it is that there is no shadow of change with our God. He truly is the same yesterday today and forever showing goodness and steadfast love to generation after generation. As his people, called out of darkness and into his glorious light, let us never tire of praising His wondrous name!

Looking back on the year gone I am so grateful to the Lord for his goodness to my family and I. This year in particular, both Alex and I have been so aware of God's unceasing kindness to us. We were ever so thrilled to welcome Grace Mollie Shanks into our lives in August of this year. She is now just over 3 months old but already she has been a source of so much laughter and joy. She truly is an undeserved gift. It continues to be a stretching yet tremendously delightful privilege to see Chloe (19 months) continue to grow. Alex and I are ever so thankful to be part of a church family who are supporting us in the endeavour of rising the girls up to know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

It has been such an encouragement this year to see so many new people, at many different stages of life, join our church family. Even more encouraging are the signs of spiritual growth I see amongst our people. It has been wonderful to hear reports of Small Groups starting and growing. It has been so edifying to hear of students taking their stand for Jesus Christ on campus. I have found a great amount of delight in hearing of people who are sharing their faith with their non-Christian friends. It has been heartening to see people using their God given gifts to serve our church family. It has been so inspiring to see our dear sisters Margo McDowell and Anne Darnley finish the Christian race so strongly. In particular it has been a joy to witness the start of the Bruntsfield Internship Programme in September of this year and to welcome Simona, Tim & Hazel to the staff team. It has been ever so refreshing to witness three young and hungry people following what they sense is God's call on their lives and taking this step of devoting themselves to full-time gospel ministry. Not only is this so exciting for Bruntsfield but it is also greatly encouraging when one considers the work of the gospel in Scotland and beyond.

I continue to enjoy my time spent studying the Word of God at Edinburgh Theological Seminary (ETS). This year I have been taking courses on Systematic Theology, Church History, Greek and New Testament. I have found my studies to be so helpful and useful, not only for developing my own understanding, but also in aiding my day-to-day ministry at Bruntsfield.

Looking forward I am so excited for all the Lord has in store for us in 2017. It is with great sadness that Jon will be moving on from our family at the end of 2016. It has been such a privilege to sit under Jon for the past 4-5 years and to learn the nuts and bolts of gospel ministry from him. I am so grateful to all that Jon has invested in me over these years. So it is with sadness that we leave 2016, but, it is also with great boldness that we look to the Lord's leading for everything that the year ahead of will hold. Please join with me in praying for the Elders of our church that we would sense God's leading and presence at this time, and together, let us all continue to pursue Christ seeking first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness doing everything with our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ and for His glory.

So whatever comes our way in 2017, may it truly be our souls delight to join in with the consistent chorus of the Psalmist;

'Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His love endures forever.'
(Psalm 135:1)

Yours warmly In Christ,

Graeme

Interns Report

Simona Basilotta, Tim & Hazel Foster

We started our internship in September and since then we have been involved with the Student Ministry, One-to-One discipleship (particularly among the students), Basics Bank and generally being involved in the life of the church. Outside of Bruntsfield we have been networking with other Christians in ministry and beginning our respective studies.

We are very thankful for the support of the church both spiritually and financially. The student ministry has been incredibly encouraging - particularly the Getaway and the One-to-ones. As the relationships have developed we are thankful to God for the evident work that He is doing in the lives of these students.

Looking forward, we long to see the one-to-one discipleship bearing fruit and this model of discipleship permeating the church body more widely. Our studies are ongoing, and we are all excited to see what God will teach us throughout this next year – in the classroom, through our experiences in the internship, and especially in our own devotional lives. In the new year, we hope to see the development of the women's ministry, and to see Grove92 become more established.

Please keep praying for us:

Pray that we would be growing spiritually, and not just busy.

Pray that we would develop our gifts in order to serve God and His people better.

Pray for our marriages and home lives, that we would balance church ministry, studies and family well, and that we would not neglect any part of what we are called to do.

Please be involved in our lives! We are continually encouraged by your support and we love to get advice from you. Please continue to think how we can minister more effectively and feedback to us and to the elders as you see opportunities arise.

Trustees' Report

David Aird, Paul Johnston, Fraser McLaren & Ian Naismith

This report has been prepared by the non-staff church elders who, along with our Treasurer Ian Wilson, undertake most trustee activities. The legal trustees include some former elders and not all the current ones. As explained below, we plan a clearer distinction between elders and trustees in future.

Church staff

The church trustees are ultimately responsible for employment of staff. We are enormously privileged to have Jon Gemmell, Graeme Shanks and Peter Ervine serving among us, and church growth in recent years, including among families and students, is evidence of God working through them. We also acknowledge the faithful service of Adam Campbell as church administrator and Irene Rae as cleaner. This year we have also welcomed three interns to the church – Tim, Hazel and Simona. They are not employed by the church, but we have been delighted by the generosity of members in providing financial support for them.

With Jon moving on, the trustees will formally make decisions about the new staff structure and personnel, though guided by the elders and the views of church members. We would like to acknowledge our great gratitude to Jon for all his sacrificial service over the last seven years and for bearing with us in that period as we have put in place for the first time the procedures needed to support our staff.

Finance

Ian Wilson will distribute the accounts for the year separately. We are greatly indebted to Ian for many years of devoted service as our treasurer. Over the next year we hope to put in place greater support for Ian, with a view towards him ultimately being able to hand responsibility over to others.

Building

Our building is a tremendous asset to us as a church, but also one which requires considerable maintenance. We are really grateful to David Wright and his team for the many hours, generally unseen, which they devote to the building. David's report will cover all that has been done over the past year, and we look forward to the installation of our lift in the early part of 2017.

Risk management

We continue to monitor the risks we face as a church and, for example, work done in the old boiler room and the move of our main electrical board to the basement were both the result of safety

inspections. It is particularly important that we are aware of our child protection responsibilities, and all those working with children or vulnerable adults must be registered under the PVG scheme. Anyone preparing food must have a food hygiene certificate.

Trust structure and trustees

Unfortunately we have not been able to make significant progress over the past year with revising our charitable structure and appointing new trustees. This will be a priority in 2017, particularly as our staff structure develops.

Services and Meetings Reports

All-Age Service

Jon Gemmell

What has happened over the last year?

The All-Age service is a busy, vibrant service and one that has seen growth in attendance over the last year.

We have been served well and faithfully by our great pool of talented musicians. We have remained glitch free with our incredible tech team. We have been well led in our corporate times of worship by a variety of chairmen who have thought and prayed about the content of each service and served by our super musicians. We have witnessed and learnt from some very good children's talks. We have had lots of opportunities to gather together around God's Word.

We have spent time in different books of the Bible, including Hebrews, Daniel, Revelation and most recently in the Gospel of Luke. We have been well served by faithful preachers both from within the congregation and also from outsiders.

All in all the All-Age Service has been a thrilling service to attend over the last year and one we hope has made a real impact in people's lives as we seek to glorify God through lives being transformed by the grace of Jesus Christ.

What have been the highlights and reasons to give thanks?

The highlights have been many and multifaceted.

For me the studies in Daniel were a real thrill. To see people wrestling with the last chapters of the book which are among the hardest in the whole Bible was great to see. Hebrews was dense and at times a struggle but one that showed us the surpassing greatness of Jesus Christ who is infinitely better in every conceivable way.

It has also been great to see the progress in many of our in house preachers. Graeme's development has been a joy to behold as well as Jonny, Neil and Tim taking great strides forward in developing their preaching ministries.

The music continues to be delivered to a very high standard and we are so blessed to have such a pool of willing and able volunteers to serve the church in this way.

We have so much to give thanks for and it is important that we continue to strive to keep building on this service.

I am excited to see this service continue to grow and people to be made exceedingly welcome whether this is their first time or thousandth time at the service.

I am excited to see a growing expectation and delight in spending time together in God's Word and putting what we are hearing and learning into practice.

I am hopeful that we might also see an increased prayerfulness in and around the All-Age service where praying for each other just becomes a normal part of our family together in response to and preparation for receiving God's Word.

Mostly I am looking forward to seeing God glorified through this and other times of us coming together.

How can the church family at Bruntsfield pray & be involved?

Making attendance a priority for all of us because when you are missing, we are all missing out. Being in prayer for our services, both as we prepare ourselves to meet with God's people, sing his praises, seek His face and gather around his Word. Using your gifts to build up the church and also taking opportunities to infuse conversations with a spiritual dimension so we don't flitter away our time together in idle small talk.

Evening Service

Graeme Shanks

I always love coming out to the Evening Service. There is a much more relaxed feel to the whole evening and it presents us with yet another wonderful opportunity to gather ourselves around God's Word and focus our minds and lives on Him as we stand on the cusp of another busy week. Over the past year we have enjoyed spending time looking at the books of Amos and 2 Timothy as well as finally finishing our series in the letter to the Romans. In terms of topical series we have been blessed spending some time varying our main expository diet and looking at *REALationships* (relationships), *Solomon's Slide* (the life of Solomon), and *Why Church?* (the purpose of church). We also had a tremendous evangelistic course in Costa called *Storiez* where we looked at encounters that people had with Jesus from Luke's gospel.

Over the past year it has been such an encouragement to see numbers at the Evening Service increase. In particular, it has been a joy to see this increased attendance being made up of people from different ages and stages of life. It continues to be a delight to see people staying on after the service and spending time developing real and meaningful friendships. It has been terrific to see new people contribute to the evening in terms of praying, reading, preaching and leading in worship. We do pray that this would continue to be a real feature of the Evening Service as together we seek to play our part in building up the body.

I am excited to see the Evening Service continue to develop its unique place in the life of our Church. Looking ahead we have some exciting teaching material in the pipeline and many talented and godly preachers coming to speak to us. I do pray that, going forward, the Evening Service continues to be a real hub of intentional discipleship and meaningful service.

If you are not a regular attender at the Evening Service then can I encourage you to come along and join in.

Communion Service

Ian Naismith

We have a communion (Breaking of Bread) service every Sunday at 10am. Following an opening reading and meditation, we have a time of open praise and worship and share communion towards the end of service.

We also have communion at the end of the All Age Service on the first Sunday of each month. Some months we invite Christians to come forward to take communion and on others the bread and grape juice are passed round.

The 10am service is a spiritual highlight of the week for many of our members, as we spend an hour together focusing entirely on the Lord Jesus, and particularly remembering His death for us. Similarly, many appreciate the opportunity for people of all ages to share communion together at the 11:30am service.

Continuing to remember Christ's death for us regularly and to celebrate all He has done for us. If you only attend one of the opportunities for communion, why not come to the other and remember the Lords death in a different way.

Prayer Meetings

Jon Gemmell

Over the last year, we have altered the way that we organise our corporate prayer times. We have had one whole church prayer meeting the first Wednesday of the month and the spread of 3 prayer meetings in the third week at differing times. Prayer needs to be both a priority and also is a great struggle. Jesus tells us the parable of the persistent widow so we will pray and not give up because he needs consistency in this area of life is a constant struggle.

We have enjoyed some good times of prayer together over the last year. I am very grateful to the few who have ventured out early on a Tuesday for the breakfast prayer meeting, though often small these have been some of the most encouraging times. I am also grateful to the band who turn up on a Wednesday lunchtime their commitment and fervency in prayer has been a real encouragement in my own prayer life. The Thursday evening as well has included some helpful gatherings.

The main Wednesday evening prayer meeting has also included some great times of prayer together as well as learning from the Psalms.

I think there is still huge room for improvement in our corporate prayer life together. There is something uniquely special and powerful in joining our hearts together in prayer, it amongst other things has a wonderful ability to galvanise our dependence, unite our desires, strengthen our fellowship and conform our wills.

The highlights have been the earnest prayer times where we have met and prayed fervently for different situations. The scope of the prayer has been encouraging not only praying for ourselves but our governments, our world and other churches in the city of Edinburgh. Coming before God as people made righteous in his Son render our prayers powerful and effective so we in faith trust that they have been instrumental in blessing and transforming lives.

I'm excited about seeing the church family fully on board with the corporate prayer life of the church. It is the meeting that I least look forward to, but is always the one I drive home so thankful that I have attended. It is a sacrifice to attend, but it is a very worthwhile sacrifice and one that declares our dependence on God. Prayer will never be convenient, or easy or instantaneously rewarding, it will always be a struggle and we will always be tempted to give up. However, it is always worthwhile, not because of the eloquence of our prayers nor the size of our gathering but because it is a time we set apart together to come before our heavenly Father who loves to hear the prayers of his people.

Small Groups

Graeme Shanks

We want to see every member of the Bruntsfield church family be part of a Small Group. We envisage these Small Groups being places where, together, we devote ourselves to the Word, prayer and fellowship and grow in our knowledge and love of the Lord Jesus Christ as we are transformed more into His image. We currently have 8 fully functioning and flourishing Small Groups at BEC. It is encouraging to see these groups take shape and be filled with many different types of people. In September of this year we started a new Small Group in the south of the Edinburgh which takes in those members who living in the Gilmerton/Dalkeith areas of the City and it is a great delight to see this develop.

We do continue to give thanks for the tangible evidences of God's grace that we see in these groups. To see deep friendships forged and real discipleship happen is so encouraging. It has also been a real cause for thanksgiving that new Small Group leaders have been identified, trained and deployed to serve the church in this ministry.

I am excited about seeing these groups continuing to grow and develop into the vibrant hubs of discipleship and growth that we pray that they will be.

The recent surge in the number of people attending Bruntsfield is so incredibly exciting. However, we are aware that demand is currently well outstripping supply. Therefore, please do continue to pray that new groups would be started and that God would raise up new leaders from amongst us equipped and enthused to take these on.

Mum's Bible Study

Kate Pass

There has been a big change over the last 12 months in the make-up of this group. There are now usually 4-5 women meeting once a fortnight. We have read through "Gospel-Centred Family" by Ed

Moll and Tim Chester and are part way through "Walking with God in the Season of Motherhood" by Melissa Kruger. Both of these are studies of different bible passages each week.

We are very thankful to both Margo McDowell and Peter Ervine for their generous service to us in caring for the children while we meet. We are thankful for this time each fortnight where we can share our lives with each other, pray for each other and encourage each other in the scriptures.

We are looking forward to seeing God at work in us and in our children - we pray for them each week and for ourselves as we seek to guide them and bring them to a saving faith in Christ.

Pray for us as mums - that we would be Godly wives and mothers, that we would seek to bring glory to God in the way that we parent our children and run our households. Pray too that there might be an extra volunteer or two who might help with the child-minding. Pray that in our busy lives we would make time for the most important things - to sit at Jesus' feet.

Outreach Reports

Mission Support

Ian Naismith

Bruntsfield has continued to support mission locally and worldwide. Financial support has been given to Ferrywell Youth Project and UCCF in Edinburgh, Richard & Elaine Leakey doing discipleship training with YWAM in Switzerland, Derek & Heidi Malcolm supporting the Turkish church, Andrea Smith in Lebanon, Jim & Irene Legge in Botswana, MG in China, plus Jim & Betty Burnett and Heber & Fiona Gallitto in Parana, Argentina. In addition, part of a legacy to the church was used to support the church in Romania, following the visit of Ruth Aird and Fiona Watson.

Betty Burnett passed to be with the Lord in August following a period of illness. Jim and Betty have served in Argentina for many years, and have been closely associated with Bruntsfield since they were with us during the Falklands war in 1982. We continue to pray for Jim and all the family.

The launch evening for the Ferrywell Youth Project, which took place in the church shortly after John Gillan started full-time work in April, marked a new phase in work in Muirhouse and Pilton, which church members have been involved in for many years.

We were delighted to welcome Andrea Smith and students from Lebanon for an evening at the church in June. We are thrilled that Jonny and Rachel Towler plan to work in Chitokoloki Mission Hospital, Zambia, for much of next year, and as church we want to support them fully, including in prayer, as they head out in February.

Read the updated provided in the monthly newsletter by Sheila MacLeod and support our missionaries in prayer. Contribute to the monthly offerings, either at the 10am service or by putting your gifts in the box in the vestibule. Support Jonny and Rachel as they head out to Zambia. Become involved, perhaps in local mission such as Ferrywell.

Basics Bank

Jon Gemmell

Basics Bank continues to be a valuable outreach ministry at Bruntsfield. Over the last year we have sought to love, care for and share with the many clients who have come along. There has also formed a 'community of regulars', who come pretty much every week just for coffee, chatting and chess. God has always provided all the food we have needed, primarily through the generosity of his people both here at Bruntsfield and from other churches. The challenge continues to be making decisions on how best to support the people who come along, forging meaningful relationships with them as well as moving the conversations in a spiritual direction.

I think there has definitely been a shift in the people we are seeking to serve. When we started 5 years ago the people primarily came because of addictions, relationship breakdown and recent release from

prison. These people were really seeking positive change in their lives, so talking about hope and new life as well as a God willing and able to help them was easy and positively received.

Now our referrals are almost exclusively due to benefit issues like sanctions. Whilst serving these people is still a joy and one we hope that God will use for his glory there is not the same motivation and desire for change, more a need for a bridge to get them through this period of hardship. This has made conversations about the gospel more difficult but we continue to pray and try to take the opportunities that present themselves.

The highlights continue to be our friends who return after being helped by us and report how life is improving.

One guy E, whom we had the privilege of helping for a prolonged period while he addressed his long-term heroine addiction. He popped back about a month ago looking healthy, having been clean for 6 months, he has a new flat and job interviews lined up and was working to be reconnected with his two sons. E would say that a defining feature in his recovery was the help and support offered by the people at Basics Bank.

Another woman J who came to us in real need, problems with immigration, housing and health. We had the privilege of helping her, supporting her and encouraging her. J is now in better health, has a great flat and is looking forward to being reunited with her husband in the coming months. It has been a great joy to pray with her and see the Lord at work in her life.

The team at Basics Bank are also great highlight. People who give of their time and energy to help and serve these people. To see them build relationships, chat and care for those that come in who are not always easy, is wonderful to behold and gives me great hope about the future and fruitfulness of this ministry. The addition of Alan from Citizen's Advice has also been a great blessing, he is by far the most popular person on a Friday morning these days often working with long and complex situations.

I am excited about the future of Basics Bank. It is long, hard work but God willing a ministry that will produce fruit that will last. It needs a bit of refocussing and freshening but there is a great work to do here and it definitely brings us into contact with people that we wouldn't otherwise meet. The 'community of regulars', is an exciting group to work more with. People very comfortable in and around Bruntsfield and a great opportunity to further invest in their lives by including them in more activities of the church.

Of all the things I have been involved in at Bruntsfield, Basics Bank has definitely been the hardest, at times funniest but also the most rewarding when it has gone well. It is a ministry I am excited to see where the Lord takes it going forward.

Basics Bank is a ministry that needs your regular and concerted prayers. It is God who will open hearts to the truth about Jesus and it is God who will draw people to his Son. As with anything, regularity breeds complacency and yet your prayers are greatly needed if this ministry is to bear fruit to God's glory.

There are also ways to be involved practically, both in helping out or giving either supplies or funds to supply the food. People often remark that of all the Food Banks there are in Edinburgh, Bruntsfield gives

away the nicest food and treats people like they are human beings. If you would like to be more involved, then Ian Naismith would be a great person to talk to.

A further way to help out is that on occasion our Basics Bank friends pop into church on a Sunday morning. Looking out for them, making friends with them and including them is a great way to make a difference and grow the work of Basics Bank.

Care Van

Alastair Mackintosh

The church has a team of volunteers working on a rota basis one Wednesday evening each month and this has continued to be the case throughout 2016. The care van service continues to provide at evenings and lunch time services, not only that basic need of food and clothing but also provides an access point to the different services offered by different organisations to individuals in need.

Highlights have been the inclusion of new members coming onto the team as others have stepped away for differing reasons. We have seen people relatively new to Bruntsfield willing to commit themselves to this service and it is a real reason to be thankful that with all the other aspects of service to be involved in at church, the care van ministry has continued without any obvious gaps.

That the new members of the team will continue to find their feet and we get to know one and other a bit better, and that throughout 2017 there will be the continued opportunities available for others to step forward and help with this ministry.

Continue to pray for the service users that rely on the provision of the care van that their physical needs in terms of food, clothing and shelter will be provided through the ongoing work of ECM.

Pray that the work of the care van continues through 2017 across all the volunteer churches and that there is no shortage of individual volunteers. Pray that over the coming year the care van ministry will challenge others within the church to step forward and serve those in need. Donations of clothes and blankets are always welcome and can be distributed by the team from the van on the night we are serving.

Ministry Reports

Music Ministry

Jamie Wilson & Fiona Watson

Over the course of the last year, the music ministry team has sought to serve the church at Bruntsfield mainly at our Sunday services, but also at some other special events when invited. The makeup of the team has shifted quite substantially during the year, with some new team members joining, as well as others leaving or taking a break to care for children. We have learned many new songs throughout the year, both performance and congregational, and truly hope that this has been a blessing to the church family, as we earnestly seek new ways to articulate our love for and devotion to our God.

We are so grateful to God for all those who are, or have been, involved in helping us worship together as a family. We are particularly thankful for those who have joined the team in the last year, adding real strength and further depth to the talent pool.

Worshiping God with friends and family is a huge privilege, and one that we are sometimes guilty of taking for granted. We are excited to continue walking in faith with you as a church family, and worshiping our God as we do so.

Please pray

- that all that we do as a team will be for God's praise and glory.
- for wisdom, that as the team grows, we would know how to make best use of everyone.

If you are musically gifted and would like to help us out, please speak to Fiona Watson or Jamie Wilson for more information.

Food and Fellowship

Gill Mackintosh

We have held a number of church lunches, including a Scottish night in January. We also help support the student lunch ministry. It has been encouraging to see the numbers attending the lunches increasing over these last few months and to see new people coming along. Looking to the year ahead, thinking about other events as well as the church lunches that we could organise as a way of developing and deepening fellowship for the whole church.

We are always looking for volunteers to be involved in the practical side of the church lunches due to the increasing numbers attending. It would be good to develop a rota of regular volunteers to help with this.

Building Maintenance & Tech

David Wright

Looking back over 2015-16 it is surprising how much has happened. The church calendar identifies only 10 days each year when the building was not being used for one activity or another.

The maintenance work is mainly concerned with keeping things running. This takes up a tremendous amount of time and effort, lots unseen, by many people to keep on top of cleaning, replenishing consumables, servicing equipment, and minor repairs. We have also undertaken work to clear roof gutters and repair some small sections of the roof.

I'd like to pay special tribute to Peter Ervine whose work in this area is largely unseen but is vital to the smooth operation of the building.

On the tech side, we have replaced some of our radio mics this year (the old ones were 15+ years old), and plans are well advanced to replace our 13yr old data projectors in the main church and upstairs hall.

External use of the building continues to be high. In addition to community use, we have been delighted to provide the building free for use by Holyrood Evangelical Church, Edinburgh North Church, Lothian Healthcare Carol Service, Ferrywell Youth Project and Boroughmuir High School. In total, these are equivalent to over £1500 of giving 'in kind'.

We plan to undertake some more roof work to restore some damaged areas of tiles, flashing, gutters etc. We also plan minor works to improve the AV in the main church. As the congregation grows, we now have people regularly sitting in areas with suboptimal sightlines and audio coverage.

All church members can contribute by keeping the place tidy, emptying full bins, making us aware of maintenance tasks and broken facilities. Although often expensive, maintaining the building in good condition is essential to the church's functioning and ministry.

Our applications for grant funding for some major roof renewals were unsuccessful. Please pray for guidance as we explore options, none of which will be cheap, but are nonetheless likely to be necessary in the coming years.

Pray for the team as the work can seem never-ending and the to-do list is never below a page long!

Building Improvements

David Wright

In the past year we have improved the rear corridor with a new ceiling, lighting and fresh paint throughout to freshen up this area. Room 1 is currently being refurbished with new furniture, decoration and facilities to make it suitable as a base for our interns, expanding kids' church, and a formal meeting room. Largely unseen, we have had the work to upgrade the electrical system to current standards, and we have made some improvements in our telecom network to support the greater number of internet users. We have sought, where possible, to install motion sensors to reduce unnecessary energy expenditure.

The lift project has dominated our workstream this year. Many thanks to Fraser, Margo, Ian Wilson, Ian Naismith, Adam, Neil, Michael and others who have worked hard to help take the initial idea through various stages of design, planning, grant applications, costings and revisions. This work will be starting in early 2017, and will be a tremendous addition to our building, allowing all members to access the upstairs hall for lunches, prayer meetings, vision evenings etc. This work also includes a remodelling of the rear entrance to accommodate the lift, and this presents an exciting opportunity to enhance the appearance of the area for a significant number of building users - the plan is to make it an open, welcoming space, with more visible information about BEC services, activities and groups.

Clearly, the opportunity to improve the building is a great blessing and we are most grateful for provision of financial resources from Church members and trusts. It has also been a blessing to see so many Church members offering their time and professional skills to assist us with the various phases of work.

The lift will continue to be a large feature in our work in 2017. This will inevitably be a period of dust, mess, noise and disruption, and we ask for your forbearance with us as access routes may vary! Following this, we will have improved the upstairs hall, and the back area of the church considerably over the last 5 years or so. Attention will then switch to the main church, with various options to enhance the space where appropriate.

Please pray for the lift work that it runs smoothly, and that it becomes integral to our activities, allowing less mobile members of the church to access activities and meetings upstairs. Please pray as we explore options for the main church over the next few years.

Pastoral Care Team

Ruth Aird

Over the past year the team has grown and we now number ten:

Ruth and David Aird; Ian and Nan Wilson; Bridget Naismith; Alice Pirie; Molly McArthur; John and Rosemary Campbell; Karen Hayes. Two other members who are our consultants are John Gillan and Anne Cockburn. We have met on a regular basis each month to pray and to discuss the visiting required for the coming month and particular needs experienced by some of the church members.

It has been a real privilege to serve our church members in this way and although we perhaps do not manage to do all the visiting we would love to, we have been able to meet up with many of you at various times in the year. We would like to thank all those in the church who visit without being asked to and who work in the background taking people out to coffee, for lunch, offering hospitality and generally living their lives with others as we are told to do by our Lord.

We are really excited about the new lift and looking forward to the day when everyone will be able to access the upper hall for all the dinners and lunches that the hospitality team put together.

Please pray for each other. Look around you on a Sunday and see who is sitting near you that you don't know or haven't spoken to before and say hello. Ask someone out for a coffee this week and enjoy the pleasure of being in a church family.

'For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.' Ephesians 1:15, 16

Welcome & Integration

Jonny & Rachel Towler

It's been such a pleasure to see dozens of new faces dotted amongst the pews over recent months! We really hope that each and every new person has felt welcomed to our church family not only at the door or from the platform, but also by those sharing a pew, in the coffee queue and in our fellowship times after the services.

Small groups are a great way of becoming embedded in the church family as they provide the opportunity to cultivate deeper and more meaningful relationships with one another. We've enjoyed seeing the small groups growing recently and if anybody is yet to get involved, please speak to Graeme, Jonny or Rachel about how you can be plugged in.

Our latest initiative 'Meet Up & Eat Up' was launched last month, and aims to bridge the gap between members of our congregation at different ages and stages by encouraging them to meet up for a meal, a coffee or whatever takes their fancy! We look forward to hearing how everyone has got on, and would value feedback about whether it was enjoyable and helpful.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank those who help faithfully on the weekly Sunday welcome team. All you need is a lanyard, a smile, and a genuine interest in the people coming through our doors! If this could be you, please let us know - we need more people going into next year. For those who don't formally serve on the team, we would be grateful if you could always keep a look out for anyone who is sat on their own. A short conversation could have a huge impact!

Student, Youth, and Children's Ministries Reports

Student Ministry

Graeme Shanks

It has been so thrilling to see an increase in the numbers of students who have come to call Bruntsfield their church family. This September saw perhaps the biggest intake that we have had in recent years. We desire that every Christian student that comes to Edinburgh to study would be both plugged into and growing in a gospel loving and preaching church. My challenge to the students who come to Bruntsfield is not to settle for remaining on the fringes of church life, but, rather, to get fully stuck in and embrace what it means to be part of a church family. We are firmly convinced that the local church is the God given context for discipleship and growth.

In terms of activities we have continued to see the growth of **student lunch** after the All Age Service. We have also started a monthly student night called *Dug Down Deep* where we have been going through Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians. The ethos behind this evening is that we want to see friendships deepened and convictions strengthened. The first few meetings have, by God's grace, proved very fruitful and we pray that this would be the case as we continue on. Finally, we had our annual **Student & Young Adult Day Away** (*The Getaway*) at the beginning of November when 32 of us travelled to Canty Bay just outside North Berwick for the day. This was a fantastic day full of fun and fellowship and with God's Word right at the centre as we took time to look at Psalms 1&2. Given the success of the day, plans are already in motion for next year's day away.

The current buzz around Student Ministry is a real cause for thanksgiving. To see numbers increase is fantastic. With Simona, Tim & Hazel starting with us this has opened up many new opportunities to increase the pastoral work amongst students. It has been a real joy to see many 1-to-1's happen across the board as people meet up to read the Bible together. We do pray that this would become such a natural and integral part of church life as we allow God's Word every opportunity to do its transforming work in our lives. Perhaps the biggest delight is to see our students growing in both their love for Jesus and their understanding and appreciation of God's Word. I am so encouraged to see many of them developing a real hunger for spiritual things and to see many putting down roots and committing to our church family. To hear their stories of how they are sharing the gospel with their non-Christian friends is quite inspiring. This truly is a incredible delight to witness.

I look forward to seeing more evidences of God's grace at work in the lives of these students.

Please do continue to pray for the students who are part of our church family. Each year I come to appreciate more just how tough it is to stand for Jesus in a University setting. The temptations are both strong and real and Christian orthodoxy seems to be coming ever increasingly under attack. Let's do everything we can to continue to support our students as they hold out the gospel to their non-Christian friends and shine like stars on campus. Do take time to speak to them on a Sunday morning and even take them out for coffee/dinner. If you are looking for something really practical then we are always on the lookout for more people to be involved in Student Lunch.

Ferrywell Youth Project

John Gillan

In short lots! Here's a few things....

I started to work full time for Ferrywell in April 2016. We now are working in 3 local schools, offering group work and individual support as well as running 2 SU groups. We are seeing young people at SU groups and DIME engaging with the bible, asking searching questions, seeking God and learning to pray

We continue to have young people interested in and attending church on Sundays. Sunday mornings have been less busy recently but Sunday nights have been very busy. Seeing some of our older young people really wanting to read their bible and asking searching questions about faith. Meeting every month and praying together with local churches interceding for the area and for God's kingdom to come. Seeing young people enthusiastic to come along and take part. A great weekend away to Alltnacriche in November 2016 with 29 young people, studying the life of Moses

Opportunities continuing to develop with local schools, agencies and churches. Building on existing good relationships with young people and their families. Introducing children and young people to who Jesus is and what difference following Him can make in your life.

Sign up to receive our newsletter which will keep you completely up to date – you can email john.gillan@ferrywell.org.uk to do so.

You could volunteer! We have opportunities on various days and times with both primary and secondary age groups. We will also be developing our 1:1 mentoring support so if you would like to know more please come and talk to me.

Thank you to all at BEC who support, pray and help make this work happen. We are so grateful for all those who help in any way.

The Embassy (Sunday Morning Sunday School for Teenagers)

Mike Fernandez

Over this year, we have been able to cover parts of the book of Matthew and the book of Luke thru the Carry your cross series.

It has been so encouraging to see the growth in our kids and also the transition from one generation group to the next one in the summer, our students have got younger, eager to learn and to be challenge by the teaching.

Give thanks for the older kids who left the embassy and give thanks for the new ones that have joined

The desire and eagerness to learn from our new students, they are always on it, giving you a good answer or asking the right question. They do want to know more

Pray for each one leading the embassy, to have a clear vision and unity about what we are teaching, to find the right time for preps and to have a good relationship with Christ that can be contagious

Pray for our new kids to transform their eagerness and curiosity to learn into strong biblical foundation that could be with them for ever

Pray for them to see Christ glorified in their lives, so they can develop a personal relationship with Jesus.

The 11nine9 (Sunday Evening Study for Teenagers)

Peter Ervine

Over the course of the year the group has reduced from 4 to 3 as Alexander is now at Edinburgh University, it has been increasingly difficult to find Sunday evenings to meet, Struan has started helping as a leader and we have been continuing to use Delve as our study material.

It has been great to see some of the boys joining in with the student day away and to see the relationship between Struan and the boys develop.

I'm excited to see how the boys move on to the next stage of their education and seeing how we can best serve them in that new phase.

Please pray for Alexander as he studies at University and pray that he will stay involved with BEC through the student ministry. Pray for Ross and Daniel as they consider the next stage in their lives as they are both in S6 and so will leave school next year. Keep praying that all the guys will come to fully accept God's grace and salvation and will let that impact their lives. Pray that Ben will not become isolated at church next year when the others guys leave school. Please also take the time to engage with these young men if you have the opportunity and make sure they know they are an important and valued part of the church family.

The Field

Bridget Naismith

We have had a great year in the Field. The children have grown and developed and with this there has been increasing engagement with the Bible stories and understanding of God and Jesus. The children will now say thank you and help prayers, enthusiastically do the crafts and games, and listen and grasp simple Truths about Jesus. Please pray that this will continue, that we will build good relationships with them and nurture them so they come to a personal faith in the Lord.

The Harbour and The Track

Peter Ervine

New children have joined, we've moved some children up from The Harbour to The Track and moved some on from the Track to The Embassy. We are continuing in our 4 year curriculum and we started

the year with part 2 of Mark's Gospel. After Easter we moved back to Jacob, Joseph and the Exodus taking a break for the summer to learn about Jesus on Mission. After the summer we finished Exodus and we have just finished the Journey to the Promised Land.

It's great to have new families join with us and to see parents get involved in teaching in Kids' Church. I've loved seeing that many of the children are developing a very joined up knowledge of the Bible. Knowing how much of God's story fits together and not just knowing about Bible characters in isolation.

I'm excited to see how the next transition will go will potentially quite a few children moving up to the Embassy after next Summer. I'm also excited to see how this year's nativity will turn out.

Keep praying for the children to come to fully accept God's grace and salvation. Pray for the leaders as they prepare and teach. Pray that the new children will settle in well and that the group will be welcoming and the children will get along well.

Crèche

Alex Shanks

The crèche has really grown over the last year with many more babies added to the numbers. We have recently extended crèche to have another group called 'The Roots'. This is for slightly older babies (about 18 months and over) and involves more intentional Christian songs, craft and a Bible truth. Simona has also just taken over the running of crèche and The Roots, although I will support her in this.

Thanks that we have had more people sign up to the crèche rota.
Thanks for the increased number of children and families.

Further growth and more structure and support for the children and their parents. This will allow parents to have a break and be able to go into services regularly.

Sign up to help in crèche. Pray for the helpers, children and their parents and for Simona and myself as we try to organise it! If anyone has a particular passion for this area of ministry your input would be greatly appreciated.

The Roots

Simona Basilotta

The Roots is a new group for children aged between 18 months and 3 years that was started in September 2016. Before then, these children were looked after in Crèche, but it was then decided to split the group in two (Crèche and Roots) because we now had around 12 children in Crèche and it was starting to be difficult to be all in one room with volunteers and mums who are feeding. Babies often need to be somewhere quiet, whereas toddlers need to walk around and play more, so we thought that setting up a new group would be the best solution. The Roots is a prototype of the Sunday school and it's more structured and varied than Crèche. The children listen to a small Bible truth, always accompanied by a craft and then spend the rest of the time singing, colouring in and playing.

The Roots is working well and it is a great starting point for children who are learning to spend time together and learning about God. I think it is also a good way for volunteers to know the children of our church a bit better and be present in their lives. I am very thankful because we have another room in the building that we can use for The Roots, for all the volunteers that are willing to help and for the children who seem to enjoy this time on Sunday morning.

Please pray for the children, that they might feel God's love for them and that they might grow together learning from one another; pray for the volunteers who are already helping and for more to come. Pray for me as I help organise the group, that this will not just be a task to do but that I can be passionate about it.

Holiday Club

Terri Unwin

For the first time in recent years, this year's Holiday Club was for a full week of mornings, rather than for two or three days. This worked really well, and we had a good number of children each day, most of whom were with us for the whole week. We followed the Epic Explorers programme, which is Christianity Explored for children. This meant that we had specific themes and helpful ideas for each aspect of the timetable – games, craft, Bible times, etc. Each session ended with a hugely entertaining drama!

We thank God for the team of leaders and helpers who were amazing. As the week progressed many individual problems arose (the devil trying to interfere) but each time someone stepped up to fill the gap so that everything ran smoothly. We're thankful for everyone who gave up a week of their time to serve in this way.

The youngsters too were well behaved, listened well and participated enthusiastically in the various activities. A highlight was seeing a couple of the children witnessing to their friends. We pray that what they learned during the week is planted in their hearts. Two of the girls who came to Holiday Club are now coming to Friday Funzone, and have also brought other friends along, praise the Lord!

Holiday Club needs a lot of work, in preparation and during the week. A good number of people are involved, so please give thanks for everyone who gave of their time so generously for Epic Explorers, and also please pray for wisdom for Peter Ervine in deciding what we should do for Holiday Club next year. Please continue to pray for all the youngsters that came, that the Lord would be pleased to save each one, for his glory.

Baby and Toddler Group

Terri Unwin

This is one area of outreach where the young participants are constantly changing – both in appearance and attendance. We see babies growing into toddlers, then they leave us when nursery beckons! We have been blessed with many new parents coming along with their little ones, as well as regular

attendees whose families are growing numerically, along with a number of carers who seem at home in our midst with each change of young child in their care.

We have made a few changes during the year, with a baby corner, regular craft activities and the addition of fresh fruit at snack time. These have gone down well with adults and children alike.

We're thankful for the conversations we have with the parents/carers, and for relationships being built up. We give thanks too for Nan, Doreen and Sylvia who have been running this group so faithfully for many years.

Friday Fun Zone

Peter MacGregor

Over the last year, Friday Fun Zone has seen fantastic growth with an increase in the number of kids coming from outside of the church. The children have heard about the parables Jesus told, as well as the stories of Esther and Samuel.

Give thanks that the children enjoy the club and see it as something they can invite friends along to. Give thanks that they enjoy hearing the stories from the Bible and actively engage with them, asking good questions.

It will be exciting to see how the Friday Fun Zone adapts to increased numbers. Having more children gives us the opportunity to restructure the club a little to give the children a better experience. For example, we can split into multiple groups with narrower age ranges for activities.

It is also exciting to see some of the children without a church connection engaging with the bible teaching more as their understanding increases.

Please pray for the practicalities of managing a growing club. Please also pray for the volunteers that they would remain motivated and clearly present the gospel through the Bible teaching.

Friday Fun Zone would also really benefit from any additional volunteers. Please talk to Peter Ervine if you would like to be involved.

Boroughmuir SU

Peter Ervine

Over the last year, we have been running pizza lunches every 4 to 6 weeks to give pupils a good excuse to invite their friends along and hopefully engage with some faith based discussions and hear the gospel for themselves. We have covered a wide range of topics over the year ranging from lent to the great commission to the Trinity. We also ran the Changing Lanes course again which uses video clips and discussion to cover the basics of Christianity.

It's been great to see some of the older pupils get involved with leading some of the table groups and for a couple of them to even give a talk at the SU group. It's been great to see Lulu join the group and I'm very thankful to the BEC toddler group team who often make the sandwiches of the group.

I'm excited about the possibilities of giving the pupils more opportunities to lead and be actively partner with us to reach Boroughmuir with the Gospel. SU Scotland have produced a training programme called Equip specifically designed to train senior pupils to lead SU groups and it would be great if we could use it to help develop leaders at Boroughmuir. It will also be exciting to move to the new building and see how God will use that move.

Please pray that we would be able to make the most of the senior pupils in the SU group. That they would be willing to let God use them to tell their fellow pupils the good news of Jesus. Please also pray that a good crop of new S1s will join us in August and that the move to the new building will go well. If you know pupils or parents at Boroughmuir then do make sure they know about the group.

Bruntsfield SU

Peter Ervine

Over the last year we have moved from running on a Monday lunch time to running on both a Monday and Tuesday lunch time. This is to give those in the running club and those with playground duties etc. the opportunity to make it along. We have been continuing to use the 'JAFFA' (Jesus a friend for all) material at the group. Peter Smith has been helping lead the group and Tim Foster is in the process of becoming an SU volunteer.

It's fantastic that we have the opportunity to run the group at Bruntsfield Primary and it's great to have Peter Smith and now Tim Foster involved. It been great to see the group feed into Friday Fun Zone and vice versa.

I'm excited to see how we can develop the group now that we are running on both a Monday and Tuesday and have lots of crossover between SU, church and Friday Fun Zone. I'm also excited to see how Peter Smith and Tim will develop in their roles.

Please pray that good relationships with the school would continue and that the group will have a positive impact on the school and that we would have opportunities to reach more of the school population. Pray that church kids would be willing to be part of the SU group and that it would help them to be salt and light in the school. If you know pupils or parents at Bruntsfield then do make sure they know about the group.