CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, GENEVA



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL REPORT 2018

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A word from the minister

The amazing thing about coming to be minister here in the Church of Scotland, Geneva, is how quickly it becomes part of who you are, how you think and what is important to you. People you knew nothing about, a matter of months ago, become friends, fellow-pilgrims, precious and loved members of a church family increasingly grafted onto your heart.

How wonderful to connect with a whole new raft of people whose faith, warmth, laughter and love are ingrained into your week, your month, your life!

Lindy and I feel extraordinarily privileged to have made that discovery and to have had our lives enriched by those bonds of friendship, common purpose and worship.

Of course, there are challenges – and there is work to be done in witness and service within this community – but the delight of sharing in that ministry still takes us by surprise.

By the time you read this, we hope that our sister congregation in Lausanne will have a new minister. Working with the people there over the last year and a bit has been a real joy. But it will be good for them to have their own minister in place.

Once again, sincere thanks for friendships shared, laughter enjoyed, kindnesses shown and prayers said!

Laurence Twaddle

Worship

Bible readers

Once again, I express heartfelt thanks to our small but extremely loyal band of regular and occasional readers of the Bible lessons at our Sunday services in the Auditoire. The word of God is to be shared with all and is, as ever, an enriching experience for reader and listeners alike.

Reading in church is not nearly as daunting as it may seem. If you think you might like to get involved, please do speak to me or contact by email to find out more.

Nicola Hollyman (nicolahollyman@hotmail.com)

Flowers

I would like to say a very big thank you to all those who have contributed flowers during the year – a bunch of flowers from the garden or an arrangement from your florist.

I believe that flowers add so much to the atmosphere of our worship each Sunday, so I appeal again to members of the congregation to add their names to the flower rota, which stands beneath the notice board in the Salle, and let me know if you wish a dedication to be made in the order of service

- to remember the passing of a loved one,
- or on the occasion of a celebration,
- or for the sheer joy of seeing fresh flowers brightening the Auditoire on a Sunday morning to glorify God…

Offers of flowers, donations and arrangers are always very welcome - there are a lot of Sundays in the year!!

Janet Askew

Note: Janet died on Saturday, April 13 2019, after a protracted illness. She will be missed more than we can say.

Choral and other music

The year 2018 was one of searching and transition for the church choir.

A high spot was the joint carol service in December with the Swiss German congregation – an opportunity to make new friends and sing different music, and greatly appreciated by the two congregations.

Our warm thanks to all the devoted choir members who man-and-womanfully kept the music alive throughout the year, and to Kirsty Griffiths and Cédric Costantino who brought their skills and inspiration to choir direction at different periods.

In November, the kirk session endorsed a new pattern for music in worship, beginning in 2019. The choir will sing an *introit* every Sunday and, in addition, a communion song on the first Sunday of the month and an anthem on the last Sunday. On the two (or occasionally three) Sundays in between, extra music will be provided by the many instrumentalists and other musicians in the congregation.

If you think you might like to join the choir, please speak to Páraic Réamonn or email him *(paraic.reamonn@gmail.com)*.

We would be lost without our three inspiring volunteer organists (voluntaries are voluntary in this church), Rebecca MacDonald, Peter Billington, and Linda Revkin. That hardly anyone leaves before the end of the Postlude shows the high quality and meaningfulness of their playing. Warm thanks to all of them.

Peter Tulloch, Páraic Réamonn

Sunday School

In 2018 our Sunday School continued to follow the Godly Play programme and support the work with the children at the Lalgadh Leprosy Hospital in Nepal. To wrap up the school year we used the Scripture Union Bible Timeline. This timeline helped us to review the most important stories and people we had heard about through the year, and the children were able to take a pocket-sized version home to share with their parents.

The highlight of the year was the family service. The children helped in preparing the table, arranging the flowers, welcoming the congregation, distributing the hymnals, taking the collection, doing the scripture readings and singing. As the Bible reading was from Luke 15: 1-7, the parable of the good shepherd, the children also helped sticking up 'potentially lost sheep' all over the church reminding us that Jesus puts the children in the centre of our faith.

After 11 years as Sunday School team leader, I had decided to stand down at the end of the 2017/18 school year. Following initial difficulties in finding a replacement, I am happy to say that the new team is now completely operational.

Thanks to Lyndsey Bochaton, I was able to give a training session to provide some direction to these team members who were mostly new to the Godly Play programme. The new team includes Cornis van der Lugt (coordinator), storytellers Starr Benyon, Arthur Askew, Lyndsey Hamilton, Gerald and Marianne Lewis, and Alice Tulloch,and doorkeepers Georgina Cofie, Suzan Meier-Ewert, Chris Sutton and Andrew McCallum.

It has been a great pleasure to work with all the children over the years and I would like to thank the team members, parents, and congregation for their wonderful support and encouragement throughout the time I served as coordinator and leader.

I would like to congratulate the new team and assure them of my continued support and prayers.

Freda Craeye

Crèche

The crèche is greatly appreciated by parents, as it allows them to maintain their church attendance, provides a break from parental duties, and offers an opportunity, at a busy stage of their lives, to chat with other members of the congregation. It is also an opportunity for children to feel comfortable in being part of the church family from a young age.

All children under four are welcome to attend.

In 2018, the Sunday School went through a transition in leadership (see above), and fewer families with young children were in attendance at church. Towards the end of the year, however, we were pleased to welcome new families, the number of children in the crèche increased, and we were able to maintain a rota of adult helpers.

We worked closely with the Sunday School to ease the transition of the children from crèche to Sunday School and to enable the crèche children to be involved in events organized by the Sunday School.

Lyndsey Bochaton

Ushers

Ushers are normally the first people newcomers and visitors meet when entering the church. The warmth of the initial welcome has a big impact on their first impression. Many positive comments have been received regarding the initial feelings generated, and hopefully we are regarded as a welcoming church.

As well as greeting those attending Church each week, ushers carry out a number of other simple tasks to ensure the smooth-running of the service.

We typically have around 30 ushers. With two serving each Sunday, this means that each usher is on duty around once per quarter. The roster for the following six months is published twice a year, in April and October.

If you think you might be interested in joining the usher rota, please speak to me or email me *(griffith@bluewin.ch)*.

Thank you to all involved in serving the church in this way, and for the continuing warm welcome to regulars and visitors attending the Church of Scotland in Geneva.

Arthur Griffith

Congregational life

Kirk session

In 2018, the kirk session held five regular meetings, a session retreat, and a joint meeting with the session of our sister church in Lausanne. Jane McKenzie replaced Mary Couper as

our presbytery elder to attend the twice-yearly meetings of the presbytery of international charges *(www.europepresbytery.net)* and keep the session up to date with developments.

The Church of Scotland as a whole is currently facing a crisis in funding and recruitment, and some radical solutions are being proposed, including cutting the number of ministers in each presbytery. This poses particular problems in the international presbytery, where it is difficult to allocate one minister to more than one church when these churches are mostly in different countries and far apart. One possible solution for us is to be allowed to call ministers who are not currently Church of Scotland ministers, and in May our presbytery will be asking the general assembly for permission to do just this. Our session has already held a joint meeting with Lausanne to talk about the challenges, and our congregation will be given the opportunity to explore the issue and give their views at the annual meeting this year.

The Auditoire is now used by the Swiss-German congregation and the children's programme of the Église protestante de Genève as well as its original users – the Waldensians and ourselves. Over the summer, work was carried out to install a Godly Play area at the back of the church, new storage facilities in the side chapels, and a revamping of the vestry area. The positive aspects include having our hymnbooks more accessible in a moveable storage unit, discreet storage for extra chairs, etc., in curtained-off alcoves and a better sink beside the vestry. On the downside, the vestry itself has become very crowded. This makes Sunday mornings a challenge for those setting up and clearing away before and after the service.

For Christmas, a joint choir of our own congregation and the Swiss Germans provided the music for two carol services, one in German in the Madeleine and one in English in the Auditoire. This was greatly appreciated by both congregations.

Our session currently comprises four ministers – Laurence Twaddle, Jim Sharp, Páraic Réamonn and Matthew Ross – and 12 elders – Alice Tulloch (clerk), Terry Angleys, Lyndsey Bochaton, Christine Buhler, Graeme Clugston, Mary Couper, Laurent Djamen, Nicola Hollyman, Jane Mckenzie, Isabel Phiri, Joan Reilly, and Rosaleen Walker.

Alice Tulloch (alicetulloch@gmail.com)

Congregational committee

The congregational committee met four times in 2018 and covered a wide range of topics related to the temporal affairs of the church. Regular agenda items were finance, fabric, mission and fundraising. Other topics included access for persons with disabilities, acoustics in the Auditoire, review of the church website, arrangements for sharing the church premises with the German-speaking congregation, the church fair, and a new lectern.

The annual congregational meeting took place on Sunday May 22 2018. The evening began with fellowship over a light supper. The first part of the meeting covered the business items:

- approval of the 2017 accounts
- adoption of the 2018 budget
- appointment of auditors for the 2018 accounts
- reception of the 2017 annual congregational report
- election of members to the congregational committee.

This was followed by a lively and thought-provoking discussion on various aspects of church life, including caring for others, opportunities for fellowship, study groups and worship materials.

One significant outcome of the discussions was a series of “big conversations”, in which congregational members and others had an opportunity to learn about and share views on Israel/Palestine, ecumenism, the world church, climate change, and inter-faith dialogue.

All in all, 2018 was a very busy and exciting year for the congregational committee and, I trust, an interesting, fulfilling and enjoyable one for all its members.

Nan Braunschweiger (Nan.Braunschweiger@wcc-coe.org)

Caring for one another

Our congregation's focus on pastoral care is based on “caring for one another”. As a follower of Christ, each one of us is called to care for those around us.

Some may be inclined to think that “pastoral care” is the responsibility of the Minister, and perhaps the elders or a designated care group. And we do have those support structures in place in our congregation. But it is primarily the responsibility of each one of us, as Christians, to care for one another – our families, our friends, our neighbours and all those around us and with whom we come into contact.

The person sitting beside you in the pew on a Sunday morning, whether it's someone you know or a total stranger, is a good example – and your caring for him or her may be reflected in as simple a gesture as a smile, a word of welcome and a willingness to chat. Jesus was a perfect role model for that.

We do have a small caring for one another core group within our congregation, whose role is to support and coordinate our caring efforts and to ensure that those needs of which we are aware are, to the best extent possible, met. We also pray a lot for those who are in need, for prayer can be one of the most effective responses to challenging situations. Please do pass on to the minister or a member of the core group (see below) any specific care concerns of which you may be aware. Confidentiality is always ensured.

Members of the core group are currently Laurence Twaddle, Terry Angleys, Christine Bunn, Eleanor Strittmatter, Rosaleen Walker, and me. We take this opportunity to say a special thank-you to Jean Murray who has stepped down as a member of the group. Jean, of course, continues to care for others in her usual loving way.

One of the initiatives the core group has taken recently is to offer folk in the congregation the possibility to lodge with the Minister, for confidential safekeeping, a note of contact details for their next-of-kin or others, to be used in the event of serious illness or death.

We have designed a simple contact information form, to be completed with the name, address, and telephone number of your next-of-kin. Once completed, this is placed in a sealed envelope bearing your name and will be held in confidential safekeeping by the

minister. It will be opened only in the event of your death or serious incapacitation requiring the intervention of others.

Jim Sharp (jim.sharp@churchofscotland.org.uk)

Eco-congregation

On Sunday, January 21 2018, Laurence Twaddle preached a sermon on the environmental theme. He reminded the congregation of the eco-congregation initiative and activities we are invited to take part in in its support. He reflected on the implications of irresponsible resource use and the consequences of global climate change.

Earlier that week, as your eco-congregation coordinator, I attended a Climate Convention COP23 debriefing at the World Council of Churches in Geneva, which included presentations from the ACT Alliance, Green Faith, and Catholic development agencies (CIDSE).

On Sunday, March 18 2018, a special talk on the environment was held with our congregational youth group. Participants were invited to reflect on our responsibilities as Christians to care for the planet, and what they as young Christians can do in their daily lives. They were also reminded of verses from the Bible that refer to environmental care.

Cornis van der Lugt

Youth group

The youth group, for young people aged 11 to 14, meets every Sunday except during the school holidays and on the first Sunday of the month, when they remain in church and participate in the communion service.

In the summer of 2018, Christine Colliar and Franklin Njatcha stepped down as youth leaders. Franklin moved to Amsterdam for work after signing up with a new company. We thank both for their steadfast devotion and the impact they made in the Christian lives of our young people.

When the group resumed in September 2018, we began with a discussion on the 10 commandments. We followed this with the story of Adam and Eve, the creation of God's world and how evil and sin came into the world. We also studied the story of Cain and Abel and how we can relate this story to the 21st century.

Women are not as present in the Bible as men, but they are often symbols of strength and even leadership. We looked at Esther, Hannah, and the Samaritan woman at the well, talked about their bravery, prayer, perseverance, humility and grace, and discussed how their stories can relate to the world of today. This spring we thought about the meaning of Lent and what it is like to journey with Christ to Calvary. We shall pick this up again in Lent 2020.

Attendance at the youth group has varied from week to week. We do not have an answer to that, but we do believe that where two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus, he is there among us, so we go ahead regardless.

The two of us currently lead the group. Sometimes this causes a problem, as our irregular professional schedules – we are both doctors – may require us to work on a Sunday. We should be delighted to welcome anyone interested in joining us in the leadership team, whether regularly or occasionally. Just get in touch with either of us!

Ailsa Craig (ailsa.crg@gmail.com), Antoinette Djamen (antoinette.djamen@bluewin.ch)

Women's group

The women's group continues to meet for lunch on the first Monday of every month at the Ecumenical Centre (World Council of Churches). The group is open to any woman who would like to join. If you are interested, please speak to me.

I would like to express many thanks to Gillian Friedli for hosting a wonderful annual general meeting in June.

Details of this year's annual general meeting will be announced soon. A new programme of events will be available after the summer.

Christine Bunn

Lenten studies

Intelligent people of faith, talking about deep issues, in congenial surroundings make a heady cocktail, and the Lenten studies in 2018 offered that intoxicating mix once more.

It is possible to arrive at Easter Sunday without any prior preparation and still be caught up in the wonder of that day – but there is something even more meaningful and personally engaging in making the journey towards Good Friday alongside fellow pilgrims, each feeling the sense of quest and the need to question; each sharing with the others the drama of the unfolding narrative -and our part in it, as more than vaguely interested bystanders.

Sharing in our Lenten studies gives that opportunity – and a good sense of shared fellowship on the road brings real blessing. This, as always was the experience of the studies in 2018 – which brought us, vision clarified and spirit sensitive, to the darkness of Calvary – and the blinding sunlight of Easter hope.

So, next time…don't miss out!

Laurence Twaddle

Coffee and tea

A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped prepare and serve coffee and tea each Sunday after church. This is much appreciated by regulars and visitors and gives us all a chance to make new friends and catch up with old ones.

A special thank you is due to Jacky Coo, who has now stepped down as coordinator.

The new coordinators are Rosaleen Walker *(rmwalker@bluewin.ch)* and Hazel Griffith *(griffith@bluewin.ch)*. If you would like to join the team of volunteers who each serve coffee a few times a year, they would be delighted to hear from you.

Alice Tulloch

Bookstall

"Didn't I do you a piece for the annual report only a little while back?"
"Yes, you certainly did, but that was last year".

Which only goes to show how quickly the Sundays come around when you're on the bookstall team – and even more so since we've been able to replenish our dwindled stock of souvenir mugs and tea towels plus other Scottie gift items such as coasters, all of which also sold very well at the 2018 church fair.

As always, your generous book donations have kept Lily busy in sorting and sifting, so please make time to stock up on reading material for your next trip away. And if you're looking for a novel gift idea what about a Church of Scotland Geneva mug wrapped in a Church of Scotland Geneva tea towel accompanied by a tasteful greetings card that won't break the bank? What's more, unlike Migros or the Coop, we also provide a free bag to carry them away!

All our proceeds are used for the maintenance of the Church's outreach in Geneva so your contribution really does go a long and useful way.

Methinks ours is a pretty good deal, so do continue to stop by whenever you can.

On behalf of the bookstall team of Mary Couper (our *cheffe*), Antonia Bruce, Claire De Reynier-Bernard, Lily Geissbühler, and me, renewed thanks for your support, custom and friendship.

Ritchie Panetti

Congregational lunches

Everyone is welcome to attend Sunday lunch in the Salle on the last Sunday of each month. In a gathered congregation like ours, the lunch provides an opportunity to get to know others better while enjoying a meal together.

Each time, we serve anything from 15 to over 30 lunches. Not knowing in advance just how many will attend does make catering a challenge, but somehow we do manage. A two-course lunch (hot food in colder months) with drinks is served – and all for the modest suggested donation of CHF 12.

Most of the cooking and preparation is done by Lindy Twaddle and Alice Tulloch, but we always welcome volunteers to help with providing food or with serving and clearing up on the day. Thank you to all volunteers who help the lunches go well.

Church fair and cèilidh

Our church fair was held on Saturday, November 24 2018. Attendance was good, and the Geneva Pipes and Drums played throughout the morning, greatly adding to the atmosphere. Some new stalls – arts and crafts and accessories – added to the quality and diversity on offer. Every stall matched, if not improved, on the previous year's takings, which meant a net increase in the fair's financial result.

Numbers increased for the evening ceilidh, where fine Scottish dining was on offer. Another successful event, much appreciated by many of the local community.

Yet again, a huge amount of hard work – stallholders sourcing, transporting, storing and making a wealth of goods throughout the year, people taking the reins of managing a stall at the last minute. It all contributes towards an important day in our congregational calendar. Sincere thanks to everyone involved!

This year's fair will be on *Saturday November 16 2019.* Please note the date!

Christine Buhler

Outreach

Ecumenical links

The very composition of our congregation means that the Church of Scotland in Geneva is itself ecumenical in nature. But our ecumenical engagement goes way beyond that.

Throughout 2018 we maintained our links with the Rassemblement des églises et communautés chrétiennes de Genève (RECG: *www.recg.ch*) and Témoigner ensemble à Genève/Witnessing together in Geneva (TEAG: *temoignerensemble.wordpress.com*).

In September 2018, on the occasion of the Jeûne genevois *(www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/jeune-genevois-a-201creligious201d-holiday-linked-to-the-history-of-geneva*), we participated in a day of worship and discussion organized by TEAG on "Moving in the Spirit: called to transforming discipleship". Our minister took a leading role in the concluding service, which was held, as always, in the Temple de Saint-Gervais.

For many decades, we have worked ecumenically with seven other English-speaking congregations in the Geneva English Cursillo community *(genevacursillo.org/wordpress)*. A Cursillo – the word is Spanish – is a "short course" in Christianity stretching over a three-day residential weekend, from Thursday evening to Sunday evening. Lay driven, and designed for young people of any age, it has helped many of us to move to a fuller, more adult understanding of what Christianity really means. Cursillos #69 and #70 were held in May and November 2018; #71 and #72 will be held on the weekends of May 9-12 and November 7-10 2019. All involve a number of our church members, in particular #70 and #71 led by Freda and Alex Craeye respectively.

Arthur Askew

Mission partnerships

We give thanks for all who give generous support to our two main mission partnerships outside Europe: the Youth HIV/AIDS resource centre attached to Ekwendeni Mission Hospital *(en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ekwendeni)* in northern Malawi, and the Lalgadh Leprosy Hospital and Service Centre *(www.nepal-leprosy.com)* in Lalgadh, south-eastern Nepal, near the Indian border. In 2018, we supported these two partnerships to the tune of CHF 20,000 and CHF 18,000 respectively. Members of our congregation added further support to both, through cash contributions and special events like concerts.

Malawi has been one of the most successful African countries in coping with the HIV/AIDS epidemic, but still one million of the country's 19 million population live with the disease and its consequences. The Youth Resource Centre at Ekwendeni has developed from a small base to spread its message of Christian love, disease prevention, health care and local development, through a growing network of village youth clubs. We are the sole supporter of the centre, paying the salaries of the supervisor, Shupo Kumwenda, a caretaker and a night-watchman. In 2018, support from our congregation also helped to pay for a much-needed vehicle by which groups from the centre can reach out to distant villages.

The work of Lalgadh Leprosy Hospital has been largely developed through the Christian commitment of our elder, Dr Graeme Clugston, and his Nepali wife, Meena. You may think that leprosy is a disease from Biblical times. However, in that area, it is very much alive, and as Graeme reports, growing. If diagnosed early, leprosy can be cured; but the stigma attached to it often prevents patients and their families from seeking treatment in time to avoid irreparable damage. Lalgadh is the world's second busiest leprosy hospital, as well as a major general hospital for south-east Nepal and for patients crossing from India. All leprosy patients are treated free of charge.

In his most recent letter to the congregation, Graeme Clugston highlights not only the fact that leprosy – and the general work of the hospital – is increasing, but the difficulties of living as a Christian in Nepal. Malawi is not in the same situation as regards religious pressure. However, your prayers and your messages, as well as your financial support are essential for the well-being of our good friends in Malawi and Nepal.

You may contribute to our mission partnerships via the "blue envelope" scheme of the Freewill offering scheme, through direct transfer to the Church of Scotland, Geneva bank account, or by making a donation directly on a Sunday morning. If transferring funds to the account or making a one-off donation, please ensure that the payment is marked as expressly for mission work (including which project, if you wish to prioritize one).

For more information, or if interested in joining our mission committee, please speak to me or email me (tulloch.peter1@gmail.com).

Peter Tulloch

Our website

The main objective of our congregational website is to provide information that is helpful for visitors to Geneva looking for a place of worship. As such it provides an important external window into our church community.

We are able to assess this role from the statistics we collect. There were 4,000 site visits in 2018, slightly down from 2017. 39% were from Switzerland, 13% from the USA, 18% from the UK, 5% from France, and the remaining 25% were from the rest of the world, a wider diversity of access than previously observed.

Last year we added a page on the big conversations on faith and contemporary issues, which we encouraged you to attend. We include special links for Advent and Lent reflections.

The regular reports from our mission projects in Ekwendeni, Malawi, and Lalgadh, Nepal are available on the site, as well as a link to the Lalgadh Facebook page.

Announcements for concerts in the Auditoire and regular events like the annual church fair and cèilidh are included as well as announcements of benefit concerts.

We provide a link to *The revtwaddle's Podcast (revtwaddle.podbean.com)*, where our minister stores audio recordings of his Sunday sermons. These recordings can be easily downloaded from the site and have proved popular.

We would like to remind you that in addition to the main web site pages there is a Facebook link that anyone can use to add their own contributions in the form of comments, photos, and announcements.

Eric Gerelle, webmaster

Finance

Treasurer's report

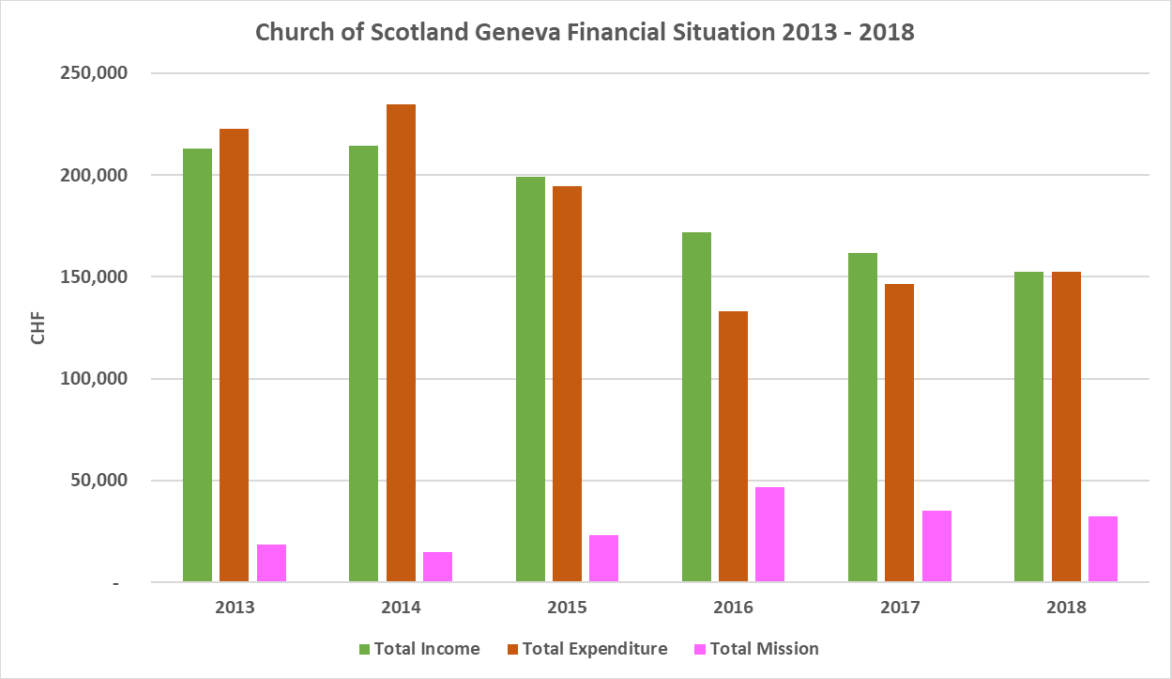
This report on our finances in 2018 has been prepared on the basis of pre-audited accounts.

Key points

- In 2018, the Church succeeded in essentially *balancing its income and expenditure* (the net deficit was only CHF 172), Given that a net deficit of CHF 7,000 had been budgeted for, this was a positive achievement, although it did result more from savings (CHF 12k lower expenditure than budgeted) than from increased income (CHF 5k lower than expected).
- Income was *lower than budgeted in terms of cash receipts, but an increased level of donations and a strong performance by the church fair* helped to offset this. Freewill offering income was almost to the level planned.
- The most *significant savings on budgeted expenditure* were seen in the renovation and upkeep of the manse. Other costs were largely as budgeted. This is something which needs to be monitored since there is no additional space at the moment for any substantial increase in manse costs, such as renovations or repairs, without the risk of a marked deficit.
- Nonetheless, the Church did *live within its means*, also doing so without external benefits such as support from the Salvesen Fund, which supports Scots Kirks operating abroad.
- *Sustainability* remains an issue. Fixed costs, mainly related to employment, will not decrease, nor will those associated with the Auditoire and the Salle. An encouraging

possibility has emerged, however, in the shape of a potential collaboration with other congregations in the international presbytery to find ways to reduce the dues payable for centralized services from the Church of Scotland. This will be followed up in 2019.

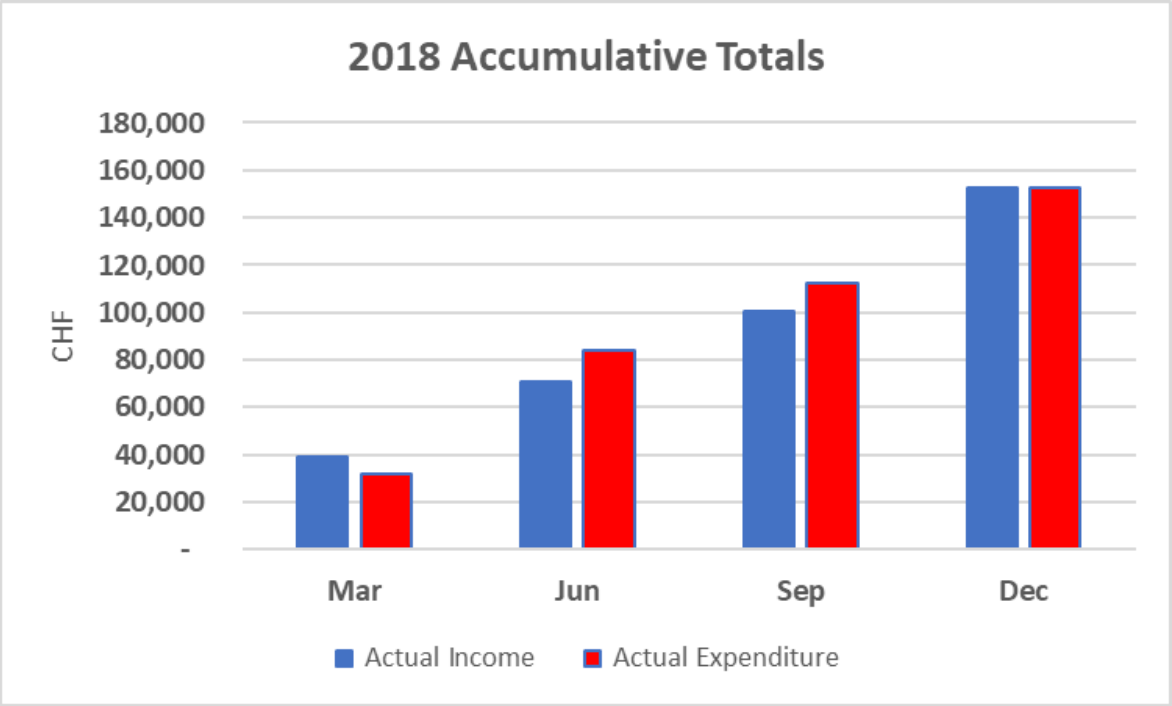
- *Scale* is another issue for consideration. Although the Church is operating sustainably, the actual level of operations has been decreasing in a financial sense for some time. This can be seen in the chart below:



- Since a peak in the scale of operations in 2014, this has declined each year, although the trend does at least seem to be stabilizing. The main question, which the figures alone cannot answer but the congregation may want to consider, is *whether increased expenditure would lead to increased income* (i.e. by reaching out more, would more people come to the church), or is it the other way around, and the church simply has to live within whatever it earns for no extra outlay? This is a key question, which needs to be considered from all angles. The financial aspect only quantifies (to a degree) the overall life of the church.

Financial performance (excluding mission income and expenditure)
As referred to already, income and expenditure stayed essentially equal across 2018.

As in previous years, the total, cumulative expenditure exceeded income across the middle of the year, not least due to the one-off payment of the annual Auditoire rent in April. The balance was recovered in the last quarter, mainly by virtue of the Church Fair, and also a degree of additional giving traditionally seen towards the end of the year.



Mission

For the mission work of the congregation, see that section of the report (above). From a financial perspective, 2018 saw a total income of CHF 32,212. This was split at approximately CHF 18k for work in Nepal and CHF 20k for work in Malawi.

This was not too far behind the levels of mission giving seen in 2017 (CHF 35,174 in total). Extensive support was provided to both projects, essentially at the level of income in the case of Nepal but more than that in Malawi. This is possible because although mission income and expenditure are recorded on an accrual basis, a cash balance can be carried over from one year to the next. In effect, the income received is considered expensed, although part of this stems from an effective commitment made payable in the following year. In practice, it means that the cash flow of mission funds can remain high enough to sustain operations from one year to the next.

Unfortunately, however, while the support for both projects was, as noted, generous, this does mean that the church ended 2018 with quite low levels of cash reserves for mission work. Work is being accelerated to raise mission resources on various levels, and it should be hoped that the congregation can regain the ability to provide its usual levels of support.

Conclusion

In relation to the scale of church life raised above, it is worth considering what precisely drives the increase in income in the last quarter. The answer, “Christmas spirit”, is easy enough to deduce and conveniently fits the bill, but the level of increase (one third of income is received in one quarter of the year) seems to encourage more in-depth thought. Is it because people are more generous? Do more people come to church because it’s Christmas? Again, the figures alone do not provide an answer but they raise some interesting questions.

Our church finished 2018 in a reasonably favourable situation. Without external support, it met its commitments, and continued much of its vital work. With sound management and

oversight, together with some creativity, this should remain the case, but in terms of longer-term viability, the Congregation may want to consider its overall strategy for sustaining itself.

If anyone would like to ask further questions or discuss ideas concerning the Church finances, please feel free to get in touch on *mackenzieje@hotmail.com*. I can't always promise to respond the same day, but I'll do my best to get back to any points or issues as soon as I can.

Ewart MacKenzie, treasurer

Free will offering (FWO) scheme

In 2018, the free will offering scheme generated CHF 90'313 in income, in line with budgeted donations for the year, and 2.7% lower than 2017. The total number of donors participating in the FWO scheme increased from 50 to 51. The average annual donation per donor was CHF 1'771 in 2018, down from CHF 1'857 in 2017.

	DONATIONS 2018	BUDGET 2018	DONATIONS VS BUDGET 2018	DONATIONS 2017	2018 vs 2017
		EXPECTED DONATIONS			
ENVELOPES	29'273	34'688	84%	34'523	-15.2%
BANK TRANSFERS	61'040	55'795	109%	58'330	4.6%
GRAND TOTALS	**90'313**	**90'483**	100%	**92'853**	**-2.7%**

DONORS	2018	*CHF / donor*	2017	*CHF / donor*
ENVELOPES	21	1'394	23	1'501
BANK TRANSFERS	30	2'035	27	2'160
total	**51**	1'771	**50**	1'857

2019 estimate
For 2019, FWO income is estimated at CHF 90'000, based on pledges and estimates based on giving in 2018.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to serve the Church as FWO/Mission partnerships treasurer. If you have any questions or suggestions for improvement, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me (*sneaux@gmail.com*; 076 396 89 64).

Tom Snow

Keep in touch!

Our kirk session maintains a confidential *contact list* of all those connected to our congregation: name, address, telephone, email.

If any of your contact details have changed in the last year or so, please update them by emailing our clerk, Alice Tulloch: *alicetulloch@gmail.com*