



Our High Point

Welcome to the very first newsletter for Westhills Parish Church!

This January '26 edition follows on from the first meeting of the Congregation on Sunday 4th January when we celebrated the Lord's Supper and the first meeting of the Trustee Elders on the evening of Monday 5th January.

It's a long time since I wrote a "From the Manse". Even now I'm not sure that's what I'm doing. Nonetheless, this is our first newsletter and it is designed to inform you from the outset who it is that's doing what around Westhills Church. So here we go...

The Trustees

It's time to introduce the twelve Trustees to you...

Ella Mathieson, Norma Clare, Mary Coles, Lynn Martin, Maureen Thomson, Fiona Mitchell, Mark Williams, Janet McKay, Yvonne Gallacher, June Cormie, Sandra Burt, Lorna Lee, and Rev Kevin Mackenzie as Minister and Moderator makes 13 (baker's dozen!)

The Trustees appointed the following people to particular roles...

Session Clerk – Sandra Burt

Treasurer – June Cormie

Roll Keeper – Janis Ramage

Safeguarding Coordinators – Morag Kokott & Mary Coles

Property Conveners – Robert Porterfield (Westhills Church & Manse) and Tom Sorbie (Westhills Community Hub)

Presbytery Elder – Janet McKay

Health and Safety Coordinator – Elizabeth Porterfield

We are mindful of those elders within the congregation who are non-trustee elders who still have a valuable and necessary roll in the life of the congregation which, has yet to be shaped and defined. The Trustees have not forgotten about you!!

The life and admin of the Westhills Congregation

At the outset of a new congregation, we will be merging the information from two Communion and Supplementary Rolls. This will involve the additional task of complying with Data Protection requirements. Each Church member will need to provide consent for Westhills Church to hold their personal information and make sure it is up to date and accurate (this is normally name, address, phone number and email address). It will take a little time to organise this process – be patient with us!

In order to help everyone find a sense of belonging and participation we will be seeking to establish a variety of committees and rotas. Some will be new to us while others are more familiar. If you wish to take your turn at reading the Scriptures lessons on a Sunday morning just let Sandra Burt our Session Clerk know.

If you want to be involved with the Flower Committee or simply donate flowers or funds for a particular Sunday of the year best to chat with Lorraine Dewar or Kay Whitehead.

We can see the possibility that Pastoral Care (elder's visits) will have to be managed in a whole new way. Again, it will take a little time to work out just what we need to do and who we have to do it so, bear with us.

In Westhills Church we will not be making use of Freewill Offering Envelopes. We encourage everyone to use a Standing Order at their bank so that your giving goes straight into church accounts. We also encourage the use of Gift Aid if you pay tax on your income (which could also be tax on your pension). Gift Aid does not commit you to any particular level of giving, it is simply a way for Westhills Church to claim back some of the tax you paid on your giving to the church. Forms for Standing Orders and Gift Aid are available on the Hall of Fellowship. There is also an open offering plate in the Hall of Fellowship if you don't wish to use a Standing Order. At this time, we encourage everyone to take a few moments to consider their giving to the church. Standing Orders are very reliable but sometimes out of sight and out of mind. The creation of Westhills Church brings with it a much increased contribution to the central church funds from £41,000pa to £68,000pa.

We remain fortunate at this time to have a church and parish that has two buildings and we are likely to be in that position for 18 months to two years. Being clear on how we refer to those buildings is important. *Westhills Church* is the building we worship in on Sunday mornings. *Westhills Community Hub* is the former Greenhills Church buildings. It will take time for these names to sink in but it will in the long run keep us on the right track.

Naturally we hope to build up our communications in both email and printed form in order to keep you informed and also the wider parish that we serve.

Presbytery

Presbytery will be conducting the service of Union in Westhills Church on Thursday 29 January at 7pm. It is a time for both congregation and minister (that's me) to rededicate ourselves to the shared ministry of the church. It looks like I'll be renewing my vows in Ordination! So please do put the date in your diary and make every effort to be there. It will **not** be a formal occasion with lots of ministers parading about in black robes – those days have gone! The tone of the worship will be like a Sunday morning in Westhills – and of course there will be tea afterwards. Perhaps even a scone. Who knows????

Okay. That's us for now.

I'll be in touch again before long.

Kevin