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Our High Point

Welcome to Our High Point the Newsletter for Westhills Parish Church!

This February '26 edition follows on from the meeting of the Trustees on 9th February.

Pastoral Care

The Trustees express thanks to elders who completed and returned the short survey. There are 12 non-trustee elders in the congregation some of whom we know are not able to continue in the duties of eldership while others expressed a desire to retire from eldership at this time. This leave us with seven non-trustee elders. Trustees are currently working to the broad guideline that they will not be covering elders districts especially at this early stage when there is a lot of planning and admin to do. This does mean we are a long way away from being able to uphold a traditional system of Elder's District. Trustees are therefore looking toward some form of Pastoral Team in order to offer care, contact and support. It is envisaged that the church website will begin to play a more central part in communications for members.

Door Duty

We have 12 people on the rota for Door Duty. Thank you to each and every one of you. It is most heartening when a Congregation responds to these appeals. It shows that we are willing to make this work, get involved, and make Westhills the best church that we can make it. Before the Door Duty Teams get under way it would be good to meet with those who have volunteered to go over what is expected and try to answer any questions. A date and tie for tatt meeting will follow shortly

Teams

Whatever you call them - Committees or Teams - they all form a way of bringing enthusiasm, talents, skills and knowledge to bear upon the life of our church. Initially the Trustees have identified the following areas where teams of people would be highly desirable; *Catering, Communications, Pastoral Care, Finance and Property*. Other teams may come in the future. What we are clear on is that all of that input from all our Teams needs to focus on building up the life of the church, not just maintaining it; but helping it grow.

Ecclesiastical Furnishings

Fiona Skellet and Judith Roebuck from the General Trustees met with representatives on Thursday 5th Feb to take an inventory of Ecclesiastical Furnishing at Greenhills (Westhills Community Hub). We will receive a report in due course but conversation with the two ladies only reinforced the conversations previously held within the Working Group around this subject of furnishings and items to be brought from Greenhills to the Westhills Church building. Let me list those things we are talking about; seating

(very comfortable blue seating) Communion Table, Lectern and Font (all modern pieces and a matching set), a stained glass window mounted within a light box, communion ware and the church organ. Some of these items were gifted to the Greenhills congregation and should continue to be used. There are other smaller incidental items.

Aware that the former Westwood congregation also has furnishings gifted to it e.g. the Minister's and Elders' chairs behind the Communion table and the font hand made by Mr Orr, (there are other items too) we need to take care and exercise sensitivity around the display, use or disposal of surplus items. We do not want furnishings to just become ornaments gathering dust in a corner. They must serve a purpose and be used regularly.

By now, you are probably beginning to realise the extent of the task before us as Trustees and as a Congregation, to properly honour the heritage of two congregations now become one. There is the potential for the environment of the Sanctuary and Hall of Fellowship to be transformed. At times it will be strange to the eye as new items are brought in and set in place until the eye grows accustomed once again. We hope to complete most of this process by end of June. What may take longer will be the process around the Church Organ as there are rules and guidelines to follow. The same applies to surplus Communion Ware. One step at a time though...we will begin by working out the suitability of the more comfortable blue seating within the Sanctuary.

While we are on the subject of furnishings, we would want to note that the Lectern Bible formerly used within Westwood has been professionally refurbished by a Glasgow Bookbinder firm and inscribed for Westhills Church 1st January 2026. The quality of the work is quite outstanding. We express thanks to the church members who gifted this work to the congregation and who wish to remain anonymous in so doing. The Lectern Bible will be dedicated for use in worship on Sunday 22nd February, the first Sunday in Lent, and used thereafter Sunday by Sunday.

Safeguarding

The Minister is the proud owner of a new certificate indicating that he has completed Minister's Safeguarding Training (and I'll tell you it was two very long days working through the background reading, workbook and online training day!). More of the same old stuff I hear you say... well not really. Safeguarding or Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) is well established within Church life. Currently, Westhills has joint Coordinators in Morag Kokott and Mary Coles and a Safeguarding Panel who are ready if (God forbid) we ever had a reportable incident in the church. Now, however, we are moving beyond the process of responding to an incident and reflecting on how we make the church environment a lower risk environment. It is quite possible that in some areas of church life we have grown overly familiar or a little blasé about keeping ourselves and others safe, irrespective of age group. One such area may be the places of overlap between groups and the Out of School Care. There may be room for improvement!

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to read through this edition of "Our High Point". Changes and challenges lie ahead of us both of which I hope will bring something new and fresh and exciting to the life of Westhills Church.

Rev Mackenzie