



OPENING DOORS

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

CITY OF EDINBURGH  METHODIST CHURCH



OPENING DOORS MAKING FRIENDS



“Our message is that God was making all human beings his friends through Christ.” 2 Corinthians 5:19



BELINDA LETBY, MINISTER

This message is such good news! And we are continuing to find new ways to share the good news that God makes us all his friends in Christ. Our city-centre location in Edinburgh, a base for witness and mission, is a key part of that.

This has been a year of opening doors – through which we welcome; look in and look out; step in and step out. Developing relationships and friendships are a key strand in our life together. A particular focus of worship in the past year has been to pray for and encourage people in their discipleship within and beyond the Church community.

We raised substantial funds towards Water Aid projects in Ghana - the links we have with that country and others in Africa are very important to our church family.

Cover photo: The Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2015 Credit: Timothy Kelly Photography

OPENING DOORS MAKING FRIENDS



We have opened our doors to many new people. This includes groups as diverse as Victim Support, a Salsa Society and Workplace Chaplains. We're delighted that the Edinburgh Inter-Faith Association are now based in office space here, and that the ethical and fair trade shop, the One World Shop, has moved here as well. We have hosted art exhibitions and concerts. Our Well Café has also gone from strength to strength and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe continues to open our doors to literally thousands of new people.

We keep challenging ourselves to be a welcoming and inclusive church, sharing and living the good news of Jesus. A mission to keep on opening doors.

With love and prayers,
Belinda





OPENING DOORS GATHERED TOGETHER



DOORS OPEN DAY

The **Doors Open Day** scheme gives ordinary people curated access to buildings of interest. In Edinburgh, it is a chance to explore some of the city's most architecturally and culturally significant buildings. We took the decision as a church to apply to be part of the scheme for the last weekend in September 2014. It was an honour to be accepted and over that weekend we welcomed more than 300 visitors through our doors!



More than just visiting quickly and heading on elsewhere, people really engaged with our story and enjoyed our hospitality as well as being amazed by our building. That was very rewarding and pleasing.



OPENING DOORS GATHERED TOGETHER



*God sets the task, chooses the
servant and makes sure there is
no getting away!*



CHRISTMAS AT NICOLSON SQUARE

BELINDA BECOMES A LOCAL PREACHER

In July 2015, we hosted a special recognition service for Deacon Belinda Letby, our minister, as she became a fully-accredited local preacher in the Edinburgh and Forth Methodist Circuit.

From 2014, we decided to link all our Christmas events and services together under the umbrella of [Christmas @ Nicolson Sq](#), using the inspiration of the Fringe Festival ([Greenside @ Nicolson Sq](#)) - making sure everyone knew where to come! There were our regular services, the children's Breakout Nativity play and carol singing in Nicolson Square on Christmas Eve. A special Celebration Christmas Concert raised funds for the church project, the Ghana Water Project. There were special meetings for Advent - daytime Bible discussions in the Well Café - and a special short lunchtime service in Christmas week to which local workers, students and residents were invited. The church was lit up and welcoming.



OPENING DOORS GATHERED TOGETHER

“Slow Food Scotland was delighted with the venue for our meeting in March 2015. The organisation, set-up and facilities were faultless, and staff could not have been more helpful in the run up to and during the event. The catering was superb; excellent quality, value for money and delicious! The café manager went the extra mile to meet our brief, too.”

FIONA, SLOW FOOD SCOTLAND

“I would like to thank you and your team for the great support around and during our AGM. We got so much positive feedback. Thank you.”

ALICE, FRIENDS OF THE EARTH SCOTLAND

“Thank you so much for allowing us to use your lovely venue. All the members were VERY impressed with facilities and the very welcoming and comfortable atmosphere in your church.”

JONATHAN, SOKA GAKKAI INTERNATIONAL

“The party went well, even the sun came out. :) The caretaker was very kind and helpful. There was a lot of good feedback on the venue as well - it is a really good space.”

EWA AND BEN, FRIENDS INTERNATIONAL EDINBURGH



EIFA The Edinburgh Inter-Faith Association (EIFA) is now based at our premises at Nicolson Square. EIFA was officially formed in 1989 to promote and facilitate positive engagement between the faith communities in Edinburgh and is now considered one of the most experienced and developed Inter-Faith bodies in Britain. Recently the Association has played a lead or supporting co-ordinating role in the visits to Scotland by religious and spiritual leaders including His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

OPENING DOORS

GATHERED TOGETHER



WWI COMMEMORATION

In 2014, the centenary of the beginning of World War One was marked in public life here in Edinburgh as well as around the world. Some in our church come from families who were pacifists in the world wars; others are personally affected by recent or current conflicts. Few of us have any direct connection to those named on our memorial plaques. Some are known to have suffered in wars, and even lost their life, where no plaque exists to commemorate them. By gathering all the names together, we want to produce a book of remembrance - a visible unified reminder of those who lost their lives in the two world wars. And, as people research their family histories, World War connections may bring them to us.

Forgiveness is the key which unlocks the possibility of reconciliation, between people, and between people and God. It unlocks the possibility of any true and lasting peace.



OPENING DOORS GROWING TOGETHER



HEART & SOUL

We were an ecumenical partner at the Church of Scotland's 2015's Heart & Soul festival, giving tasters of projects Heat Hack, Hope's Garden, creative workshops from our alternative worship group, The Gathering, and - not least - chocolate brownies from our Well Café.





OPENING DOORS GROWING TOGETHER

HEAT HACK

The Heat Hack project was launched in September 2014, the result of a two-year grant from Scientists in Congregations Scotland and run jointly with Christ Church Morningside. The project celebrates and uses the gifts that the science-curious can bring towards understanding how to get the most out of our buildings. Temperature and humidity monitoring networks provide the kind of information energy efficiency consultants need, partly for us, but also to share with other local churches; time lapse photography for gas meters, draught measurement, as well as some inventive designs to help people who use the buildings think about how they work and what they are for.



We're up for just about anything as long as it's interesting and helps people understand church buildings - especially if it involves balloons.



OPENING DOORS TOGETHER IN THE WORLD



WATER AID

A 15-month period of fund raising from June 2014 to August 2015 resulted in a sum of £7,739.66 sent to Water Aid for their work in Ghana. The church has members and friends from Ghana which inspired the choice of project. Water Aid has been present in Ghana since 1985, working with policy makers and local development partners, helping to improve access to water and sanitation for some of Ghana's poorest people.

< **A woman using an overhead standpipe at a WaterAid water kiosk in Asanyansu in the Eastern Region of Ghana.** Photo copyright WaterAid/Nyani Quarmyne/Panos

Over 4,000 children under five years old die annually from poor water and sanitation in Ghana.

OPENING DOORS TOGETHER IN THE WORLD



THE WELL CAFÉ Our Well Café at Nicolson Square is now open every day from 9am to 3pm. The café is owned and run by the church as part of our mission and service in the community, and is professionally staffed with invaluable help from volunteers. We aim to help the local and wider community by providing a bright, pleasant café that serves wholesome food at a reasonable price. The café also adds value by training staff and volunteers. There is free Wi-Fi and an outdoor space which is a great place to sit in the sun – when it is out!



Since May 2015, every Monday, The Well Café has hosted the Bite'n'Blether lunch club for people over sixty. A special-price 2-course meal and a loyalty card for a free soup!

Photos by Monika Holkova



OPENING DOORS TOGETHER IN THE WORLD



FINANCIAL GOALS

We took some big steps towards our financial goals in 2015. The Church's operating deficit more than halved to c.£59,000. Further effort will be needed to eliminate it altogether, as planned by the beginning of 2017.

The greatest stride forward was in the hire of Church premises where income was 2.6 times the level achieved in 2014. Happily, there is both capacity and demand to keep the momentum going in ways that chime with our mission to be an inclusive, welcoming community in the heart of the city. Income from investment properties has been held back by a rent-free period and a vacant shop unit, but we are working hard to secure a new tenant.

Collections and donations grew by 8%, most notably for the Annual Church Project (Water Aid in Ghana), and were supplemented by c£34,000 of generous bequests.

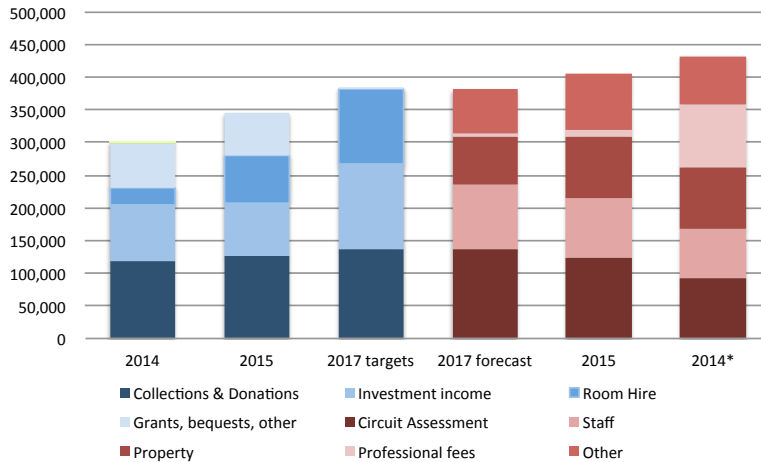


OPENING DOORS TOGETHER IN THE WORLD

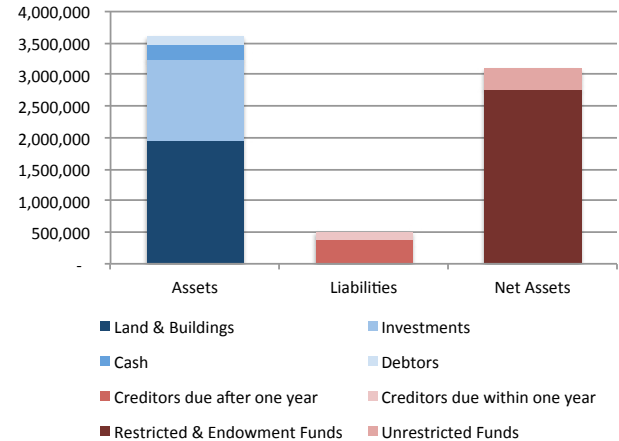


Methodist Chapel Aid have helpfully agreed to extend the term of their loan and also refinance the loan due to the Edinburgh & Forth Methodist Circuit. A combination of annual surpluses and asset sales will be needed to meet loan repayments of c£483,000 over the next seven years.

Balancing The Budget



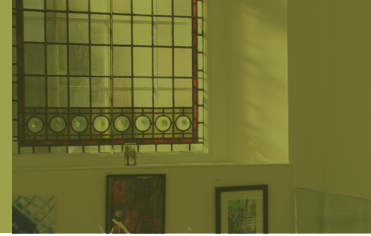
The Balance Sheet



This finance section is an extract from the full audited Annual Report and Accounts for the financial year to 31 August 2015. A copy can be obtained from the Church Treasurer via the Church Office.



OPENING DOORS MOVING AHEAD



While we welcome people in, we won't stay behind our doors. We look forward to completing a new, more welcoming entrance for the church; we now host the One World Shop – Edinburgh's pioneering fair trade shop – here at Nicolson Square; our new church project is a multi-faith court's chaplaincy initiative in the city; our Away Day planned for 2016 is all about pilgrimage. We look forward to moving ahead further. Always.

OPENING DOORS MOVING AHEAD



Our vision as a church is to be an inclusive community in the heart of the city where we share God's love through working with and for others, to transform our community and the world.



OUR PRIORITIES

- + provide a range of worship services which draw as many as possible closer to God.
- + nurture the development of faith in all people at whatever stage of their faith journey.
- + seek actively through prayer, pastoral care and other spiritual disciplines, to allow the kingdom of God to grow.
- + follow the example of Christ in caring for and championing the needs of the most vulnerable with an emphasis on working with others, and using our buildings to serve these aims.



CITY OF EDINBURGH METHODIST CHURCH

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his friends through Christ.” 2 Corinthians 5:19*

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