

Parish of Ceres, Kemback, and Springfield. Minutes of the Annual Stated Meeting held on Sunday 30th March 2025 at Springfield Community Church, commencing at 1130 am

The meeting was constituted with a prayer by the Rev. Jane Barron

1. Sederunt and apologies for absence

Present: The Rev. Jane Barron and 20 members of the congregation. Apologies had been received from Sandra Smith.

2. Minutes of the ASM held on Sunday 17th March 2024

These had been posted on the website; no corrections had been notified.

3. Minister's remarks

Rev. Barron referred to her remarks in the Annual Report, which had been circulated widely. She highlighted that while CKS had only a small congregation, its members achieve a great deal for the parish. She thanked those who were contributing to this progress, those members and others who attended worship regularly, and the Session Clerk for his work.

4. Session Clerk's remarks

The Session Clerk referred to his comments in the Annual Report, and thanked all those who assisted him by carrying out the work of the Church. He explained that the reports listed subsequently in the agenda would not be read out, but would be incorporated in these minutes which would be made widely available through the website, the newsletter circulation, and via the Kirk Session.

5. Annual Trustee's Report and Accounts

These had already been put up on the website and distributed through the newsletter circulation. They had been formally approved by Session at its meeting on 11th March, and were now noted by the ASM. There were no questions from members present. Rev. Jane Barron thanked the Treasurer Sarah Wood for all the work she puts in as Treasurer and particularly to the accounts. A briefing note had been prepared by her as follows:

INTRODUCTION

The Trustee Report and Accounts are for the period 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024. Henderson Black & Co are the Independent Examiner of the Accounts and their certificate is detailed on Page 10 of the Trustees Report. There is no matter that has come to their attention that requires them to report on.

MINISTER'S REPORT

The Minister has covered activities that have taken place in the church, the context in which the church is operating in and a look at what the future might hold. These are challenging times for any church and for our Minister. Pages 1 to 5 of the Trustees Report give full details of the Minister's report. The congregation will require to be engaged in supporting the Minister and Kirk Session as the church moves forward in its implementation of the Fife Presbytery Mission Plan as it impacts on the Parish of Ceres Kemback and Springfield.

SESSION CLERK AND FINANCE REPORTS

The Session Clerk report on Page 5 focusses on the activities of the Kirk Session who have had an extremely busy year. There is further work for the Kirk Session as it assists the

Minister in moving through the implementation of the Mission Plan which will require lots of reflecting upon to find the right way forward for the Parish.

FINANCE REPORTS

The financial aspect of the Trustees Report are on Pages 6 to 8 and cover a summary of the Overall Financial Results, Springfield Bequest, Investment Policy, Risk Management and Reserves Policy.

The financial reports are detailed in Pages 11 to 18 with a summary attached of monies held by the Church of Scotland General Trustees on behalf of the congregation (Appendix 1). The total held by the General Trustees on behalf of the Congregation as at 31st December 2024 was £1,091,104 (including the Springfield Bequest) plus £223,000 in the Stipend Fund. The figures for 2023 was £1,088,967. In 2025 the sale monies from the sale of Church Cottage, Kemback less the General Trustees levy will add to these figures.

Main Financial Figures

Income for 2024 was £128,802 with a legacy of £10,000 being received in that year. (2023 - £110,456 and no legacies were received in that year)

Expenditure for 2024 was £144,882 (2023 - £117,016)

Two major areas of expenditure accounted for the increase in expenditure and they were salaries costs which increased by £16,668 and other building costs which increased by £12,006.

Net Deficit for 2024 was £7,365 but it should be noted that the operating deficit was £16,080 and this was reduced as a consequence of the net gains of £8,715 made on investments in year. The net surplus figure for 2023 was £11,261

The Congregation despite all the challenges has continued to support the parish generously in it giving and support of events throughout the year. In summary the congregation is capital rich and revenue poor with less than half of our income coming from donations and charitable activities. Without the support of the Springfield Bequest the parish could not afford to support the paid part time employees who are all much valued and add to the life of the congregation and the parish as a whole.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

This section of the Trustees Report on Pages 8 and 9 sets out how the Parish is managed and who its office bearers are and the membership of the Kirk Session and states the name of the bankers and independent examiner that the Parish has.

Page 9 sets out the Trustees Responsibilities with regards to the Financial Statements and it is the Kirk Session who are the Trustees of the Parish.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT

Page 10 details the finding of the Independent Examiners review of the Accounts and this year as in all previous year the Independent Examiner has found no matters that require to be raised and that the accounts comply with the relevant regulations governing charities.

DETAILED QUERIES ON THE ACCOUNTS

If any member of the congregation has detailed questions on the accounts please contact Sarah Wood, Treasurer. Phone number 07758 604769 or by email –

sarah@silverandgray.com The Trustees Report and Accounts are available on the church website ckschurch.org

The Trustee Report and Accounts were approved by the Kirk Session at its meeting on 11th March 2025.

6. Pastoral Care Group

The following report was provided by Anne Lumsden.

The Pastoral Care Group continues to meet regularly via Zoom. Throughout the year the group keeps in touch, through various means, with church members in the parish who are housebound, less mobile than previously, finding times hard or who are unwell.

Easter Cards and Christmas Cards are delivered to our members annually, together with local businesses, care homes and schools in our community.

In April 2024 a Daffodil afternoon tea was organised and held in Springfield Community Church. We arranged transport for some of our members to enable them to attend, enjoy refreshments, company and be entertained by the Cupulele group.

On a one-to-one basis the group has sent cards, flowers, and visited members at home or in hospital. Jane has also, on many occasions, administered home communion.

Each month members of the team accompany Jane on her visits to local care homes and sheltered housing for a church service. The residents of Lunardi Court, Rosturk, Drysdale Gardens and North Eden make us very welcome, enjoying the services and a time of conversation. Sometimes we take items to help illustrate the theme of the service, which they really appreciate as well as the singing of hymns. These visits are held on a rotational basis with the two Cupar churches, ensuring that each care facility has a regular service.

In December a well-attended Remembering Service was held in Ceres and the Group took part in readings and prayers.

This year-Easter Cards are already out for delivery and we are underway with plans for a Midsummer Coffee Morning in June.

The Pastoral Care Group greatly appreciates all who help us with events and the preparation and delivering of cards and invitations.

Finally, if you would like to be part of our Pastoral Care ministry, we would be glad to hear from you.

7. Prayer Group

The following report was provided by Margaret Matthews:

Over the past year, due to members from Cupar Old Parish Church joining us, we are now known as the Cluster Prayer Group. We meet on the first Monday of the month in Springfield Community Church at 10.00am and in Cupar Old Parish Centre on the third Tuesday of the month at 7.00pm

An elder from Cupar Old now shares in the leading of the prayers at the Springfield meetings.

All are welcome at either of these meetings.

We continue to support, through prayer, individuals, the church, local and national, and issues local, national or world wide which are causing concern, and have been privileged to witness numerous answers to prayer.

The format of the meetings vary. In some we learn from the examples of people of prayer in the past, some are more contemplative with periods of silence when we listen instead of speak, and others have explored the use of physical expression in prayer, all of which have enriched our own prayer lives.

Though numbers attending the meetings are small, we have a large number who support from home, and any prayer requests are communicated by email.

A few of our members offer prayers as part of the church service, and once a month members of the congregation are encouraged to offer their own prayers by writing them on paper leaves which are attached to the prayer trees in Ceres and Springfield churches. We have found that people entering both the churches have attached their prayers to the trees too, showing how important prayer is in the lives of our communities.

It is our privilege to serve God and our church in this way.

8. Property report

Colin Johnson provided the following report:

All legal checks were carried out all the properties in 2024 and these were signed off by Fife Presbytery in February 2025. No major issues were found but the last major storm had caused the Fire Alarm system at Springfield Church to be burnt out and so a new circuit board was needed slates were found to be missing on both Ceres Church as well as Springfield and these have now been replaced.

The door at Springfield Church has been sticking and so these were both taken off and realigned and are now working.

Some additional garden tasks were carried out at the Almbank Manse to reduce overhanging branches at the neighbours.

A safety gate was installed at the top of the stairs to help prevent any slips and falls on the steep steps.

Due to high energy usage at Ceres Church, some monitoring work was carried out to check if the meters were faulty. This was not the case and it may have been due to the heating timer. Close checks are now being done monthly to try to optimise the energy usage for all services in Ceres Church. Work was recently carried out to repair the roof of Ceres Church.

9. Roll Keeper's report

Robin Bennett, roll keeper, reported as follows. He was thanked his work in keeping the roll, and in encouraging new members to join the parish.

During the year the number of members on the Roll dropped from 274 to 256. There were no additions to the Roll.

The reduction in the Roll is accounted for as follows:

Deaths -9
Members transferring to other congregations -6
Removal of duplicate entries -2
Resignation -1

Three of the members requesting certificates left for other congregations following the closure of Kemback church building.

Since the end of the year, there have so far been four additions to the Roll.

A number of persons who attend services prefer to retain their church membership elsewhere or to have no formal connection.

Average attendances at Ceres Youth Club, Springfield Youth Club and Springfield After School Family Club were about 30 but the total number of children who were involved during the year is quite a bit higher. Messy Church has been discontinued.

10. Stewardship Group

Peter Milne provided the following report:

Pilgrim Church.

Work has continued by the stewardship group over the past year. The Rev David Coulter has been appointed as a part time development officer to assist with furthering the Pilgrim Church project. David brings a wealth of experience and many contacts within the Church of Scotland. He has recently held discussions with Community Enterprise Scotland; Fife Historic Building Trust; Architectural Heritage Fund and the Church of Scotland Presbytery Support Buildings Committee.

A meeting was also held on the 20th February 2025 in Ceres Church attended by Katharine Isherwood, Head of Buildings and Projects, Church of Scotland. The General Trustees of the Church of Scotland have since outlined 3 options for the Church:

1. Ceres Church remains within the Presbytery Plan as a Category A building and developed as per a feasibility report.
2. The Church is transferred to a Community Trust and is redeveloped.
(There would be no Church of Scotland support or funding for this option.)
3. The building is sold on the open market.

They recommend that a Quantity Surveyor prepares an accurate cost of the work to redevelop the building and that a full business plan is prepared with a feasibility study. This will enable the group to consider all of the above options for the way forward in 2025.

Ceres Glebe.

Discussion has been ongoing with Ceres Community Trust and progress with the community peace garden continues. A 25 year lease between CKS and the CDCT is about to be signed. Planning consent is likely to be required and works should hopefully start on the garden later this year.

Springfield Church

Springfield Church continues to grow and reach out to the wider community. The youth club and after school club flourish and with RVS lunches, the Wednesday coffee club and a wide range of local activities the building is now well used throughout the week. The Church Officer has played a large part in providing a warm and welcome environment for all. Proposals to create a community garden on the south side of the church and a car parking area on the north side are currently being progressed through the planning system and hopefully these works can be completed by the summer.

Kemback Church.

With the church now sold, a church presence has been retained in Kemback with an outdoor service held on the green and several indoor services within the community hall. The former Beadle's cottage at Kemback was sold during the year.

Ceres Manse.

The manse continues to be let out and the proceeds help in offsetting the church accounts. As the proposed union with the Cupar Churches approaches there will require to be a future rationalisation of all the manses in the new union.

Financial Statement.

The detailed financial statement is contained within the annual trustees report for the year ending 31st December 2024.

This year the accounts show a net deficit of £7365 (2023 net surplus of £1261)

Fabric repairs have increased to £11,190 (£7894) and utility costs have increased considerably to £12,160 (£4,433).

Income from fund raising and charitable activities has increased to £11,252 (£5899) Giving income through offerings and Gift Aid was £26,693 (£27465) which has held steady despite the slow decrease in membership.

We continue to rely on a drawdown of the Springfield Bequest to mitigate the impact of the Mission and Ministry contributions levied on the congregation. The drawdown this year from the Springfield Bequest was £33,160 (£33,378) and from the Consolidated Fabric Fund £15,903.(nil)

Fundraising activities.

The following events are being considered by the group for fundraising in 2025-

Wine and cheese evening.

Musical concert.

Sponsored walk.

Cupar heritage evening. (old slides)

Pop up shop in Ceres.

Chosen charities to be assisted would include Christian Aid and Crossreach.

In addition, as referred to above, the following report was submitted by the Rev Dr David Coulter:

Ceres Pilgrim Centre – Vision Update

The phrase “without vision, the people perish” is found in Proverbs chapter 29 and at verse 18. It means that without a clear goal or direction, people become unrestrained, cannot focus, and cannot reach their goals – it is a verse worth reflecting upon at this stage in the season of Lent. The phrase is often used to emphasise the importance of having a clear vision and a clear goal to aim for.

Pre-Covid 2019 the congregation of Ceres, Kemback and Springfield had a vision to create a Pilgrim Centre linked to the Fife Pilgrim Way. Since then a lot of planning and thought has gone into this project, including a community consultation exercise and some architect plans and drawings being produced to convert the Church building into a Pilgrim Centre with only occasional religious use. On 21 January 2025 the Kirk Session invited me to join the Ceres Pilgrim Centre Project Team as the Team Leader. I have been a Church of Scotland Minister for 35 years and was Chaplain General of the Army from 2014-2018. I have a Master’s degree in Business Management and until May 2024 was the Clerk to Fife Presbytery. More importantly for the purposes of the project I am a member of the Church of Scotland General Trustees.

Initially I have sought to understand the vision and the progress so far. I was keen to ensure that Fife Presbytery would support this project and both the Presbytery Clerk; the Mission Implementation Officer and the Convener of the Presbytery’s Mission Plan Implementation group were in support. The next stage was to test the mind of the General Trustees as to what professional help and advice we could expect from them. The project invited the Head of Buildings and Projects from the General Trustees to visit Ceres on 20 February along with the Presbytery Buildings Officer and have recommended 3 possible options:

The Kirk Session have three options for the Ceres Church:

- Option 1 – Ceres Church stays within the congregation as a Presbytery Plan A building and is redeveloped as per the feasibility proposals
- Option 2 – Ceres Church transfers to the ownership of a community trust and is redeveloped
- Option 3 – Ceres Church is sold on the open market

We are now at the stage where we feel that more work needs to be done to determine the scale; scope and ambition of this project and what is achievable and affordable. To that end we have consulted with the CEO of Community Engagement and have applied to the Architectural Heritage Fund to fund a project feasibility grant and to help us develop a business case. We should know if we have been successful by mid-May. Meanwhile we will continue to scope the various options in terms of heritage, community engagement, Fife Council Planning and Tourism and the pilgrimage network.

We will continue to provide regular updates.

11. Youth Group

Karolina Roslewska, our Youth Worker, provided the following report:

CERES YOUTH CLUB:

The youth club continued to meet every Friday throughout the school term in 2024.

It provided a safe space for up to 12 young people with the capacity for 4 more.

Through the year the attendance has increased from an average of 6 young people attending between January 2024 and June 2024 to an average of 10 young people attending each session from mid-August 2024.

As previously agreed with young people the club become a space to relax and chat, which appears to be meeting the needs of our current young people. The noticeable positive changes in behaviours have been made, which didn't come without difficult moments and conversations, allowing young people to express their feelings and emotions, which is a sign of how safe they find the space to be. The feedback from the young people was positive and they were encouraged to share their opinions and ideas, including preparing part of the session or taking responsibility for snack time. Most importantly the young people keep coming back. We continued to have a monthly plan of activities, however as previously mentioned, they didn't take up the whole sessions to allow for conversations and relaxing time. We have a wide variety of activities from arts and crafts, through preparing snacks, games, and educational activities to walks and welcoming guests occasionally.

The club stopped for the summer holidays, however, the "keep in touch" activities were organised. We had a BBQ at the Craighall Den and a trip to Dundee.

Ceres YC was represented during a fundraiser on 23/11/24 by 3 young people and all the children attending the club took part in creating items which were sold two weeks before the event. The fundraiser was well attended, and the children represented the club well while having a nice time and meeting new people.

We finished up for the year with a nice cookie decorating/ turned Christmas karaoke session at the Ceres Community Café.

On 21/12/24 one of our Young People enriched our Christmas Family Service with the Christmas carol solo on her trumpet.

SPRINGFIELD YOUTH CLUB:

After a few months of preparation, the first session of Springfield Youth Club took place on the 7th of May 2024, with 4 young people attending. The sessions run fortnightly on Tuesdays due to the number of volunteers we have had. In 2024 we had overall 14 young people signed up for the club, with a maximum attendance of 9 young people. On average, we had 6/7 young people attending at the beginning, unfortunately, the numbers have dropped towards the end of the year to as few as 2 young people attending. This has picked up in the winter months to drop again. We finished the year 2024 with 9 young people on the list and only 3 to 4 attending regularly. It is hoped that the club is still at its establishing stage and things will improve. We are hoping to increase the number of young people with the new council housing being built in the village.

Due to the younger age of this group (P5-P7), the sessions were mostly fully planned, however, we introduced elements of a therapeutic community, chatting about children's feelings, emotions, and worries. We are all sitting together around the table during snack time, and it seems to be the children's favourite moment to chat, ask questions, and discuss their views.

Springfield YC continued to run during the Summer Holidays.

Springfield YC was represented during fundraiser on the 23/11/24 and all the children took part in creating items which were sold.

We have finished for the year with the Christmas Party enjoyed by all.

OTHER:

Both youth clubs were supported by a total of 8 regular and 3 emergency volunteers. The work was also undertaken to promote the volunteer community and create bonding opportunities for adults, as we recognise the benefits of giving back.

In 2024 we gained one more volunteer for Ceres YC and four volunteers for Springfield YC. We held meetings with volunteers from both youth clubs as well as visits to both local Primary Schools.

We celebrated Volunteering Week in June 2024 and took an opportunity to share the experiences of both volunteers and young people, as well as thank and celebrate our volunteers without whom things we do wouldn't be possible.

Volunteers represented both Youth Clubs during the volunteer Fayre at St Andrews University. We are looking forward to 2025 and what it may bring!

12. After School Family Club

Myra Todd provided the following report:

Springfield After School Family Club

The Club has now been running for over two years and is thriving. The Church provides a safe, warm and welcoming space for all families with a Springfield connection and runs every Monday afternoon from 3 until 5 during term time. We regularly have up to 35 people attending. About 20 children and their parents, grannies and grandpas.

The Club has been fortunate in 2024 in receiving a one off grant from the Scottish Children's Lottery Fund which enabled the club to simply ask for any donations that users might like to give to assist with the costs of running the Club. With the loss of the grant, we would welcome a donation of £1 per family per session to help with the running costs. CKS will also continue to contribute to the running expenses.

Craft, table games, soft darts, Lego, and the Brio train set are very popular activities and Barbie has also put in an appearance. We have a nursery mat with lots of toys for the wee ones. The children enjoy playing with their friends. We sometimes have parachute games and skipping games too. The mums, dads and grandparents enjoy chatting over a cuppa with friends. It's an enjoyable family time.

Margaret Lawrence was a great help last year and provided a story time for some of the children. We were sorry to lose her at Christmas due to other voluntary commitments. I'm hopeful that a prospective new volunteer will take on this role.

We have been very short staffed since Christmas and Rev Jane Barron has been assisting each week. We have interviewed several mums and grannies and hope that they will soon complete the safeguarding process and join the team.

More volunteers would be most welcome so that we can form a rota of helpers. Please get in touch with Myra for more information. It's fun!! Thank you.

13. Website and communications

Janice Dewar provided the following report:

Communications Team (Comms) including the Website

The team consists of Anne Lumsden, Janice Dewar, Caro Pineda-Murray (on maternity leave December to April), John McCurrach and lead by the Minister, Jane Barron. The main aim is to spread CKS information around the Parish and beyond. The meetings are arranged, when necessary and held in Springfield, usually Wednesday mornings from 10.30 am. Many topics are discussed and often others are invited to attend to give added information.

Anne is responsible for maintaining the Website and works hard to keep all the information up to date which is not an easy task. Thank you, Anne.

Janice continues to send out the newsletter and extra information when necessary to the email group. Printed copies are delivered to non-email users. Thank you to our volunteer printers and deliverers. Also responsible for tea/coffee and flower rotas in Ceres Church, keeping noticeboards up to date and collecting the Leprosy Boxes (one of our charities).

Caro deals with Social Media and has made videos, conducted interviews and posted news on Facebook and Instagram. We welcome her return in due course.

John, at Springfield is always willing to accept bookings from groups and his new free standing noticeboard inside displays much information. A bigger outside board will appear shortly to catch the attention of passers by.

We try our best to keep everyone informed and always looking for happenings in the parish needing publicity. If you have any suggestions which might help to spread the word please contact us.

14. Worship Group

Rev Jane Barron reported on the Worship Group, which had not met for some time. She is most grateful for the support the group provides, especially by taking services when she is away.

15. Cupar Cluster

The Session Clerk reported on progress towards a union with the Cupar Churches. CKS are represented by himself and Colin Johnson. There have been two fairly recent meetings, both constructive and amicable, between those involved. Most of the points on the Church of Scotland basis of union list would be straightforward to resolve. What is not known at this point is the timing of the proposed union.

16. Any other business

Rev Jane Barron thanked John McCurrach for his work in managing Springfield Community Church and all the varied activities which take place there. The building has been a great success, both as a place to conduct worship and for community use. John's assistance had contributed to that in no small measure. Stuart McLean was also thanked for assisting John

from time to time. Anne Hoggan expressed her sincere thanks to Jane for her excellent work as Minister, a sentiment which she felt would be shared by all CKS members.

The meeting was closed with The Grace