## OFFICE BEARERS’ AND ELDERS’ WELCOME & OFFERING DUTIES

**Dear Office Bearers and Elders.**

**I have set out below revised instructions for welcome and offering duties arising from (1) the closures of parts of the church because of the development works and (2) the change to the procedures to the count caused by the change of our night safe facility to the Bank of Scotland at the corner of Balcarres Street.**

**I have highlighted all changes in red – if they are temporary changes eg because of closure of parts of the church because of the development work I have put the changes in italics. If they are permanent changes eg banking requirements, they are in red but not in italics.**

**I have tried to think of the necessary changes but as you will appreciate it is difficult to forward guess all the changes needed until we have actually experienced it. I hope it is reasonably clear - but as ever a bit of common sense and a sense of humour will get us there.**

 **I will leave a copy of these instructions in my pigeon hole in case you have not actually managed to commit them to memory and need to refer to them on the day.**

**Thank you for your patience - and Good Luck!**

**Robin**

**Session Clerk**

TEAMS **– Office bearers and elders are divided into teams to carry out these duties each Sunday. An annual rota is set and it is then the responsibility of each elder or office bearer either to turn up for duty on the due date or to organise a swop with a member of another team. The only exception to this is choir members who are otherwise engaged on most Sundays but can still play a part after the 10.30am service in assisting with the count or delivery of flowers, and of course in the summer months when there is no choir and in the occasional evening service. Each team has a leader (whose name is underlined on the rota and changes each year) and the leader is responsible for organising the team into the various duties. On duty Sundays it is helpful if team members turn up ideally half an hour before the services starts**

SERVICES **– it is the responsibility of the duty team to cover ALL the services on the dates allocated to the team (including in September the autumn lectures). However not all the team need attend all the services. They are probably all usefully engaged at the 10.30am services and it is for the team leader to organise a sufficient number for other services. For example most 9.30am services can easily be covered by 2 team members. It is helpful if the team leader establishes a rota within the team to cover the 9.30 services at the beginning of their year in charge.**

WELCOME – **Perhaps the most important duty of all. Whatever duty each may be allocated, all members of the team should remember to greet people with at least a smile and a good morning/evening – mostly, but perhaps not always, done. Also while it always a pleasure to meet each other and other members of the congregation this is not really the time or venue for long personal conversations which can come across as exclusive and unwelcoming to others. Late comers should be encouraged to wait until any introit is completed when they, and the team, can make their way to their seats. For the 9.30 service it is preferable to place Orders of service on the seats in the hall and to welcome the congregation at both West doors.**

 ***From July 2017 the North transept, the vestibule including the Main West door and the North Aisle will be sealed off to allow the contractors to proceed with the alterations. It is hoped that the north Aisle will reopen in time for the October Communion*.**

TEAM LEADER **- please allocate duties among your team. –**

Door Duty **– at present 2 team members are needed for the external West door, 2 for the Centre aisle door, 1 for the North door and I for the door to the Braid Halls. Extra helpers can usefully be deployed in opening the glass doors in the vestibule and the doors to the north and south aisles. Ensure that an Order of Service is given to the congregation and be aware that large print editions of Orders of Service and Hymn Books are available**

**NB – strong winds from the West or North can create a wind tunnel in the vestibule and a bit of common sense might suggest occasions when one of the doors should remain closed.**

***For the duration of the alteration works starting July 2017 access to the church will only be by the North door and the West glass door. The side aisles will form the main access to the pews although the North aisle will be blocked at the transept until October. There will be no direct* access *between the North and West doors. Two Team members should be stationed at the North door with a supply of Orders of service and collection bags, two at the glass external West door and one at doors into the South aisle. One may also want to be at the door to the glass roofed corridor in case any members wish to gain access to the sanctuary by way of the large wooden door into the front of the sanctuary***

Offering Duties  **- - 10.30 services - please allocate five for these duties at the 10.30 service – one for N Aisle . one for S Aisle two for Centre Aisle and one for the cross country run of choir and balcony (if any). Team Leader should remove from (first collection bag in the window bay next to the West door)/(*Robin Stimpson’s Pigeon hole*) the keys for Bank of Scotland night safe and count cupboard in the N transept/ *St Matthews Hall* . Each member should equip themselves with 2 bags stored in the window bay/ on top of pigeon holes.**

***For the duration of the alteration works starting July 2017 the balcony is closed and the cross country run will only be relevant if there are people sitting in the chancel. After collecting from the North aisle if you can, pass the collection bag to the centre so it can be carried forward to the communion table. If you really cannot conveniently manage to do so, retain the collection bag and at the end of the service take it to the count in the St Matthews Hall***

**Please also decide who will carry the brass plate *( which for the duration of the alterations should be sited on a table at the west glass door* ) with the “loose change” offering and place it on the left hand side of the communion table during the first hymn. Also establish who is going to collect both offering plates and take them to the count at the end of the service.**

Fire Safety **– please allocate a team member to cover each of the duties set out in the cards contained in the plastic folder on the sill of the window beside the collection bags. (*Revised instructions will be available on top of the pigeon holes beside the collection bags, as the vestry door the back door and the west door will not be available for exit)***

After Service Duties – **please allocate one team member to go immediately after the benediction to the vestibule (*at the west glass door*) to be available for the minister to pass on to them people who may have enquiries or information. The person so allocated should, when the congregation has dispersed, go to the N transept /*St Matthews Hall* to help with the count.**

**Allocate one team member to help with the delivery of flowers. – they are excused any duties for the count.**

**All other team members should help with the count which currently takes place in the North transept *For the duration of the alteration works to the transept starting July 2017 the count will take place in the St Matthews Hall***

TAKING THE OFFERING **- For most** 10.30 services **a keen band of children will help but will need guided to collect , and afterwards having checked there are no strays, gather them together in the vestibule (*at the west end of the aisles* ) and send off in an orderly fashion with the collection bags down to the chancel where they will place the individual bags on the brass plates offered by the Minister (and Associate). It can be helpful for I adult member to follow them down. Other collectors can return to their seat. Obviously on the rare occasions when there is a shortage of children the adults will need to attend to their allocated collection area and follow any children down to the chancel. They all return to their seat in the pews**

9.30 services **- in the St Mathew’s Hall 2 team members should each have a bag and collect from each side of the centre aisle and on completion together present the 2 offering bags to the minister and return to their seat.**

 **-in the Chancel e.g. Communion Sundays - Again 2 will be sufficient. Perhaps it is neater if each takes a side and working from the front, together collect in the first instance from those in the seats and then from those sitting in the choir stalls. On completion together present the 2 offering bags to the minister and return to their seat.**

**After the service collect the bags and proceed to the N transept/ *St Matthews Hall* for the count**

THE COUNT - **The team leader after the 10.30 service (or duty elder after another service) should collect from the small cupboard currently in the NW corner of the North transept ( *and for the*  *duration of the alterations in the same cupboard now in the NE corner of the St Matthews* *Hall* )Record Sheet and the Bank Pay-In book and after the 10.30 service ( or other major service ) two plastic night safe bags – one for each Pay-in slip.**

**For smaller services eg the 9.30 service, banking the offering can be delayed to a later service that day but it must be separately accounted for with a completed independent Record Sheet , Bank Pay-In slip and Plastic night safe bag. The Bank has requested the “new” and “old” £1 coins should be separately recorded in the pay in slip. The collection should NOT be added into another night safe bag. The Record Sheet and any Gift Aid or Free Will Offering envelopes should be put into the relevant pigeon holes all as set out below . In the meantime the collection should be left locked in the cupboard.**

**The total offering should be divided into 4 separate areas which are separately accounted for (5 if there is a Retiring Offering ) It is helpful if two work together on the Open Plate and another two on the Free Will Offering envelopes as these tasks tend to be larger both in number and value.**

**The separate areas are –**

**1.“Loose change “ collection at 10.30 service only - needs to be counted, recorded on the Record Sheet and a separate Bank Pay-In slip prepared. The Pay-In slip should be put into the pouch on the front of a separate plastic night safe bag so the totals can be read from the outside . The money should be put into the bag and the total being banked with that bag entered on the slip at the top of the bag. The strip can then be torn off and stapled to the Record Sheet . The plastic night safe bag can then be sealed by tearing off the metallic strip and sealing it NB it is very sticky and you want to ensure that the bag is properly sealed.**

**2. White Gift Aid envelopes - to be opened and checked that the sum shown on the envelope matches the amount in the envelope. If it does not match adjust the sum on the envelope to the correct amount. Total the cash and cheques collected and double check that it matches the total of the amounts shown on the envelopes. Confirm the totals to the Team Leader. Do not intermingle with other funds at this stage.**

**3. Free will Offering envelopes - Same procedure as the White Gift Aid envelopes but in addition put the envelopes in numerical order.**

 **4. Open Plate – total the notes and coin collected in the collection bags.**

**5. Retiring Offering - to be counted and totalled separately and reported to the Team Leader**

**At this stage all the cash and cheques (excluding the loose change offering ) should be brought together and put into separate denominations to help with the completion of the Bank Pay -In slip. The Bank has requested the “new” and “old” £1 coins should be separately recorded in the pay in slip. It should then be totalled and the total should match the total on the Record Sheet. If it does not check the arithmetic and the money count.**

**The Team Leader should then complete the details requested on the Record Sheet and the team should help put the cash into plastic bank bags putting different coins in different bags , putting a slip of paper recording the amount in the bag if it does not match the suggested totals on the bank bag,**

**The completed Pay-In slip should be placed in the pouch on the front of a plastic night safe bag so the totals can be read from the outside . The money should then be put into the plastic night safe bag and the total being banked with that bag entered on the slip at the top of the bag. The strip can then be torn off and stapled to the Record Sheet with any strip relating to a loose change collection . The plastic night safe bag can then be sealed by tearing off the metallic strip and sealing it NB it is very sticky and you want to ensure that the bag is properly sealed.**

 **DO NOT include the Pay-In slip and monies from any earlier service – every Pay – in slip requires a separate plastic night safe bag . Any spare bags or papers should be returned to the cupboard which should be locked. Two members of the team should then go the Bank of Scotland night safe at the corner of Balcarres Street – not forgetting the night safe key which afterwards should be returned to Robin Stimpson’s Pigeon hole.**

**In the meantime the remainder of the team can gather the collection bags and return them in pairs to the vestibule/*to the top of the pigeon holes*. Like wise the brass plate with handles should be returned to the front of the communion table and the plain brass plate to the table in the *west* *glass door* vestibule. The Record Sheet should be put in the Administrator’s pigeon hole and the FWO and Gift Aid envelopes bundled together and put in Euan Murray’s pigeon hole.**

**June 2017**