

# KIRK NEWS

August 2023

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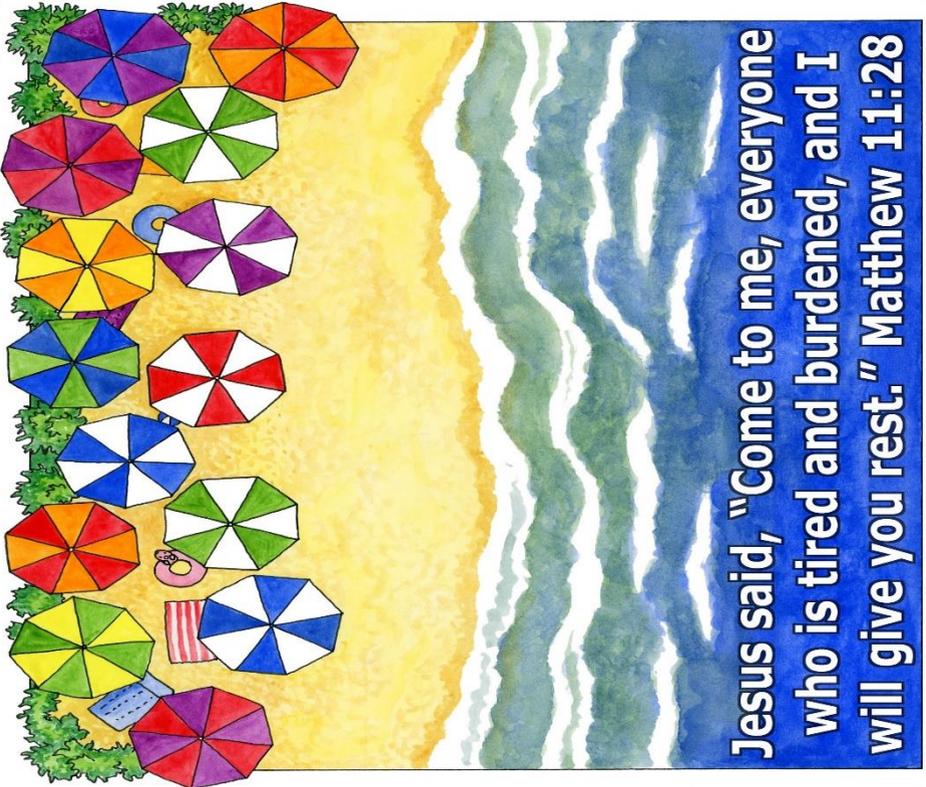


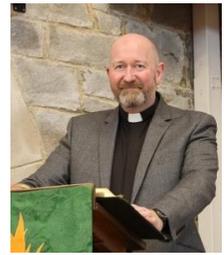
BLACKHALL  
ST. COLUMBA'S  
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

To Glorify God.....To Proclaim Christ.....and To Serve Others



August  
2023





### ‘What is our role?’

Before anyone thinks I am about to speak about the demise of Morton’s Bakery earlier this year, please note that I said ‘role’ and not ‘roll’ in my title.

Recently, I have been reading a book called ‘*A Christian Theology of Chaplaincy*’ which contains a number of articles from various Christian chaplains involved in different chaplaincy settings, primarily universities and hospitals. Those of you who know me, know that chaplaincy is an area of work that interests me and that, during my training to become a minister, I not only spent a period of time working in a multi faith chaplaincy environment at HMYOI Polmont but also spent a year working at The Lodging House Mission, the homeless persons’ charity in Glasgow. I also believe that school chaplain is one of the most important roles I have in the parish.

One of the questions the book I was reading asks is ‘what generally speaking is the role of a chaplain?’ When answering that question, there are, I believe, a couple of important factors to bear in mind.

Firstly, the role of a chaplain is conducted away from a Church building. To quote the book; ‘*Christian chaplains serve and live the gospel in different social domains, in workplaces of many different kinds, in criminal justice settings, in healthcare, in the armed forces, in sport and theatre, to name but a few. In living in such domains alongside people, they encounter their values and beliefs, their rituals and ways of being and doing, along with a vast array of social identities and existential questions.*’

Secondly, I believe, the role of a chaplain is not to indoctrinate or convince those they serve that their beliefs are the correct ones. You could imagine the outcry if a school chaplain started to try to convert a child from another faith to that of their own!

Instead, the role is about encouraging an individual to think about spirituality, about faith and, ultimately, about God. Whilst a chaplain can guide someone, they should ultimately allow the individual to come to their own conclusions.

In addition, chaplaincy is an expression of the relationship the Church has with the various bodies with which it interacts but does not govern. It is true that some universities and hospitals, for example, have sought to define themselves, to some degree, as being opposed to the superstitious thinking with which religion is associated. However, those same institutions are undergoing a crisis of identity themselves and are questioning their role and the role of the chaplain is perhaps more necessary because of this. Do universities simply exist to increase a student's employability and earning potential? Do hospitals simply exist to prolong life as long as possible with little consideration given to care or quality of life? Do they have a role in preparing patients for the inevitability of death? Do prisons exist merely to contain dangerous people? A regular question asked at Polmont was about the role of a prison. Are people sent to prison *for* punishment or *as* punishment. The difference is quite marked. A chaplain's input in these discussions is valuable.

This question about the purpose of a chaplain, ultimately, leads me to think about what our role as a Christians is? I have spoken before about the Westminster Confession and the Shorter Catechism. The Catechism is a question-and-answer way to remember religious truths. The answer to the question, 'what is the chief end of man?' (We should include women as well, of course) is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. This purpose is something that religion, as a whole, generally gets a bad rap for. If you ask the general population how they might recognise a Christian, I'm pretty sure their answer would not be because of their obvious enjoyment of life and the joy they express in living. Too many people see religion in terms of commandments not to be broken, rules to be followed and restrictions being placed upon what they can do.

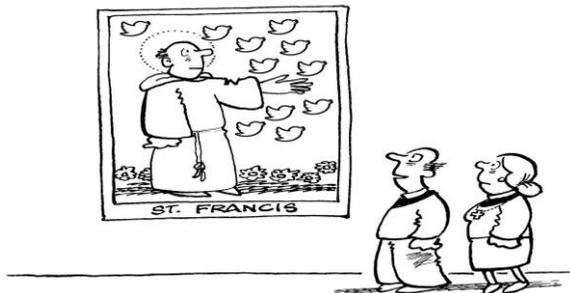
The truth, as those of us who follow Jesus know, is that our religion both frees us and secures us. It frees us from many worries by being a place of stability and security when things are difficult for us. We know, and have a relationship with, a God who is unchanging in His love for us. However, at the same time as being safe and secure, we also know that God can be challenging and scary. We are invited to leave our comfort zones because we are also asked to share our knowledge of God and the gospel message with others, with strangers. This is perhaps best summed up in what is called The Great Commission;

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

Our role is to glorify God in our worship but also to carry out his commandments and the commission that Jesus has left us with. However, what about the enjoyment part? Jesus also said what his purpose in life was. He said, “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10) Ultimately, I believe our role, as Christians in the community, is to be chaplains to the world, to show the joy and enjoyment we get from our faith and to allow others to ask questions, to come to their own conclusions and to join us.

God Bless all.

Fergus



*He's been updated. He's now the patron saint of tweeting!*

## Baptism



**Harris Malcolm John Briggs** son of Graham William Briggs and Laura Ann Briggs was baptised by the Rev. Iain Moir on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2023. Grandson of our Elder Donald Mackie and his wife, Barbara.

THE LORD BLESS YOU  
AND KEEP YOU, THE  
LORD MAKE HIS FACE  
SHINE UPON YOU,  
AND BE GRACIOUS TO  
YOU, THE LORD LIFT  
UP HIS COUNTENANCE  
UPON YOU, AND GIVE  
YOU PEACE.

# Kirk Session Report

The Kirk Session met on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> of May and 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2023.

## **Christmas Community Event**

It has been agreed to hold a Christmas Community Event from the 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> of December to be organised by Shona Cook with support from members of the Congregation.

The event is a Christmas Nativity Trail for the whole family with a Nativity Escape Room for slightly older children. The working title is “Christmas Community Event”, but it will probably be subtitled “The Greatest Story Ever Told”. Contact has been made with the local primary school and the head teacher is on board with the idea. In the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December, we will run the trail for children from primaries six and seven and then, after a break, the trail will be open to the wider community until around 3pm. We will be using the entire church and all its halls/rooms including the sanctuary. Families will be welcomed into the vestibule of the large hall by St Nicholas who will ask them to come in and discover the real meaning of Christmas. They will then follow a trail through the large hall, using other rooms in the building and ending in the Sanctuary. The trail will take them from an encounter with the Angel Gabriel, to the shepherds tending their flocks on the hills to King Herod’s palace and then to the stable itself via the “wise women” in the East. Each set piece will tell part of the Nativity story and involve small quizzes or puzzles for the children to do.

## **Correspondence**

A letter of thanks was received from the Monte Cassino Society for the recent Service of Remembrance and the Dedication of the Seat beside the War memorial. A letter was received from Drylaw Rainbow Club Daycentre thanking the Congregation for the donation of £974.98 raised from the Easter retiring offerings.

**Finance**

Concern was expressed at the drop off in offerings which is projected at £10,000 for the calendar year. The Clerk said that as a Session we should be concerned and needed to give some real thought to this issue. We are an ageing congregation and whilst the impact may not be immediate there could be real difficulties in 2/3 years' time in the absence of any solution.

**Outreach Working Team**

It was intimated that Michael Cockburn was stepping down as Convener after seven years in the role. Michael was thanked for his sterling service and commitment over that period. Shona Cook volunteered to take on the role and this was accepted by the Kirk Session.

**Roll**

The Kirk Session was pleased to admit to membership: -  
Caryl Dick, Ravelston House Road, Edinburgh

**Soup 'n' Chat**

This initiative started on Friday 28 April (running from 12 noon until 2.00pm) and operates every second Friday – the Friday when CAMEO is not taking place. This Club is for everyone from the local community and members are encouraged to invite neighbours and friends. It was pleasing to note that attendance has been excellent, surpassing initial expectations. A grant of £500 has been secured from a Presbytery Fund to assist with this initiative.

**Stage Curtains**

Kirk Session was pleased to note that the stage curtains had been re-instated following cleaning and repair.

This had all been organised and paid for by Hamish Stears and the Clerk undertook to write and thank Hamish for this gracious gesture.

### **Watch Committee**

The Kirk Session overwhelmingly supported Hopscotch as our charity partner for 2023. Based in Silverknowes, they support children from the age of 5 – 14years. These are young carers or children from difficult backgrounds who do not have a holiday. They are referred to Hopscotch and they organise a break for them. One third to half of the organised breaks are attended by children from Edinburgh, with many from or near the EH4 area.

Lynn Bunney has taken on the role of Convener of the Watch Committee.

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### **Presbytery News**

At the Presbytery meeting held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> of April, the Presbytery Mission Plan Consultation Document was approved and as no objections were forthcoming during the subsequent 14-day period the Presbytery Plan came into being.

So far as our Congregation is concerned this involves a proposed Union with Drylaw Parish Church.

To reach a formal Union there is a lengthy process to go through and this can be summarised thus: -

- A draft Basis of Union is prepared.
- This must be agreed by both the Kirk Sessions of Blackhall St Columba's and Drylaw.
- Both congregations vote on the Basis of Union document.

Throughout this process there are a number of requirements in terms of church law, charity law and financial regulations which must be completed prior to a union of congregations within The Church of Scotland.

In summary, a standard Basis of Union encompasses (amongst other matters)

- The name of the united charge.
- The charity number.
- The places of worship.
- Who will be the minister.
- Which manse will be retained.

A number of Unions across the Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian are already underway.

As has been previously reported a steering group has been established with six members from each congregation. The steering group is working towards the formalisation of a draft Basis of Union. However, with the number of Unions already in the pipeline it is only reasonable to expect our Union will not be considered by all bodies until well into 2024. Meantime we are looking to working together with joint Sunday Services (initially every two months on the last Sunday) along with various social event initiatives being planned for both congregations to meet and get to know each other.

The Congregation will be kept fully posted as matters move forward.

Eddie Thorn  
Session Clerk



*Painted stones in the church garden with a positive message!*

## Edinburgh & West Lothian Presbytery Youth Representative at General Assembly 2023



### *The theme*

This year I was fortunate to attend the Church of Scotland General Assembly from 19th May - 25th May. This year's theme introduced by the new Moderator Sally Foster-Fulton was 'Remember who you are'. There were lots of thought provoking and challenging debates throughout the week which encouraged us all as delegates, and the Church of Scotland to challenge ourselves for good.



*The Youth Representatives and Staff team with the Moderator, Rev Sally Foster-Fulton*

## General Assembly 2023 Report

I was fortunate to attend many of the committee presentations, debates, lunchtime events, evening receptions and enjoyed getting to know the delegates and Youth Reps from all across Scotland as well as our Ecumenical partners from around the world who all enjoyed the Edinburgh sunshine that week.

I enjoyed the discussions and receptions and if you were at the Sunday service when I presented my reflection, you will know I also enjoyed the sweets and the parachute that was brought out for one of the evening worship services the youth reps held!



### *Evening worship*

I would encourage anyone who wants to get involved to go for it, the public gallery is available throughout the week to listen in on proceedings, and you'll probably make a new friend or two whilst there.

It really is an educational, inspiring and faith nurturing week.

*"Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong."* [1 Corinthians 16:13](#).

Amy M L Foster

## The Monte Cassino Service of Remembrance

The annual **Monte Cassino Service of Remembrance and the Dedication of the Monte Cassino Memorial Bench** was held on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 at Blackhall St. Columba's Church. The service commemorated the Battle of Monte Cassino and the Italian Campaign of 1943 to 1945.

The service of remembrance was held on behalf of the **Monte Cassino Society**. Our minister, Rev. Fergus Cook conducted the service which was attended by the representatives of the regiments who served in the Italian Campaign from 1943 to 1945. The congregation consisted of relatives of those who fought in the Italian Campaign, members of the public and members of our congregation. The new Memorial Bench, which was donated by the Monte Cassino Society, was dedicated.



Pipe Major Mark Macrea piped the congregation to the War Memorial for the Laying of Wreaths. The Last Post and Reveille were sounded by bugler Tony Laidlaw. Our organist, Donald Cameron led the worship.

# The Monte Cassino Service of Remembrance



The dedication of the Memorial Bench



The Laying of Wreaths at the War Memorial

## The Presentation of The Honours of Scotland

Eric Turnbull, who sings in our choir and is one of our Elders, also deputises in the St. Giles' Cathedral Choir. He had the privilege of singing in the televised Honours of Scotland Service on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July 2023, when King Charles III was presented with the Regalia of Scotland.

The hour-long service at Edinburgh's St Giles' Cathedral included traditional Scottish music, a Psalm sung in Gaelic and a bible reading in Scots, as well as greetings to the King from representatives of the Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist and Humanist faiths. The current Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland the Rt. Rev. Sally Foster-Fulton preached the sermon on an environmental theme.

The service, which was built on a similar service held at St Giles' Cathedral seventy years ago to mark the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, also saw the Honours of Scotland – the Scottish crown jewels – presented to the new King. Unlike the 1953 service, the Stone of Destiny, on which ancient Scottish kings were crowned, was present in the cathedral.

The presence of the Stone of Destiny or Scone in the High Kirk of Edinburgh on this occasion is an historic moment in the life of Scotland. Carved from the earth, this is a simple piece of stone. Yet, in its simplicity, it has precious and significant symbolism for the people of Scotland. The Stone of Destiny – An Lia Fáil – is an ancient symbol of Scottish Sovereignty.

## The Presentation of The Honours of Scotland

Eric is pictured next to the Stone of Scone or Destiny in the Cathedral - unfortunately he did not get the opportunity to try on the crown!



## Around St. Columba's at Christmas!

**\*SAVE THE DATE\***

### **FRIDAY 22ND DECEMBER 2023**

I know it seems quite early to be mentioning Christmas BUT this year something very special is happening at Blackhall St Columba's and we can't contain our excitement. As soon as you hear about it, I am sure you will want to be involved as well!

Our doors will be open wide to welcome everyone, young and not so young, to come into the church at the heart of the Blackhall community and experience for themselves our "Follow the Star Nativity Trail".

You will not want to miss this event and so get your diaries out and note down the details now.

**What - FOLLOW THE STAR NATIVITY TRAIL**

**Where - BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S**

**When - FRIDAY 22ND DECEMBER 2023**

On the last Friday before Christmas, throughout the day and early evening, we will spread the Good News by hosting this interactive exploration of the Greatest Story Ever Told using the sanctuary and all the church halls. We want members of our community to join us in finding out the true meaning of Christmas in a novel and exciting way. They will hear the Angel Gabriel's message and go on their own journey to follow the star to find the shepherds, King Herod and some wise women on their way, until they finally reach the stable and discover the most wonderful gift we have ever been given.

As if that wasn't enough, we are also planning to offer a Christmas Nativity Escape Room for the older children who come along.

## Around St. Columba's at Christmas!



As you can understand, such an ambitious project needs the help of many people to ensure that it is the best that it can be, and this is where you all come in. We need lots of help before the day itself and then during the event as well. More information will be provided as we get closer to Christmas but now, we are looking for volunteers. We need people to help set up our trail which involves scenery and props, and we need others who can be helpers on the day to ensure everything goes smoothly. We also need folk who can help prepare crafts for the children beforehand and who can supervise the crafts on the day. Then, of course, we need bakers and people who can serve refreshments. If you feel that you can help in any way, however small, please get in touch with Shona Cook by email or by 'phone (07981 970054). Any help you can give will be gratefully received and just makes everything easier AND more fun.

We are looking for several items/ props to help create our trail and ensure the experience is the best we can make it and, in the very near future, we will be making available a full list of things we are needing. But, for the moment, you will find below a list of a few items that would help enormously.

If you could donate/ lend any of these, that would be brilliant. Please just let Shona know how you can help. Here is the Wishlist....

## Around St. Columba's at Christmas

### WISHLIST

A white gazebo

Another gazebo (of any colour)

Several sets of battery-operated fairy lights

Some Christmas stockings

A selection of wooden toys

Lots of white card

Battery operated tea lights

Large beanbags for sitting on

Old white sheets

A green rug or sheet or even a piece of astroturf

Wind chimes or bells

Velvet tablecloth

Gold or brass-coloured items including candelabra, goblets, and ornate plates.

If you don't have any of the things on the list but would like to contribute, a small donation would help us to buy any of the things we can't source - like craft materials.

Friends from a church, in Glasgow hosted their own trail last Christmas, and they welcomed over 200 people from the community through their doors in an hour and a half! If they can have that kind of response, then so can we. So come on Blackhall, let's show them what we can do to spread the Good News this Christmas.

Thanks,

Shona (shonacook505@gmail.com)

A date for your diaries.

**All welcome to follow  
the star on the  
Nativity Story Trail**

at  
**Blackhall st Columba's**

**Friday 22nd Decenber**



**Fun for all the family**  
crafts, activities, story  
telling, escape room  
refreshments

Entrance Free

### CHURCH FLOWERS



Thank you to all who have donated money for the Church flowers. You have brought some love from the Church into the homes of people with the gift of flowers. The flowers are sent to people who may need an uplifting gift or to people who have something to celebrate, like a big Birthday. Some flowers have been given as a thank you to people who have worked hard in various church functions.

If you feel that someone you know would benefit from flowers, please let your Elder know and they can pass it on to the Flower Team. Thank you also to the people who have arranged the flowers week by week. They bring colour and delight into the church and many of you have commented on them. If you would like to be part of this team, please get in touch with me ([rajahewa1@btinternet.com](mailto:rajahewa1@btinternet.com)) or tell the Church Secretary and she will pass it on.

Thank you also to the people who kindly deliver the flowers. None of this Ministry would work if there was no-one to deliver the flowers. If you would like to help with this rewarding task, please let me know.

Alison Hewat

### **SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING**

We hope all the members of the Scottish Country Dance class are enjoying lots of happy and carefree summer days.

If the proposed dates for the autumn term are agreed by the church office, the class will resume on Thursday 21st of September and finish with our Christmas Party on 7th December 2023.

We will be delighted to welcome any new ladies and gents to the class. We meet in the large hall of Blackhall St Columba's Church from 7.30 - 9.30 pm with a cuppa and biscuit at half time. Muriel Stenhouse, our teacher, is very patient and walks us through the dances - some old and some new. You can be assured of a warm welcome.

Margaret Brown – Tel. 0131 332 5957

### **SINGALLOUD**

Singaloud has not met for some time, certainly before Covid was the last time, however the group were invited to come and sing to CAMEO on the 2nd of June.

Not many previous singers and musicians were available, so I invited folk from the choir and church who enjoy singing, to come along and join us for this performance. Amy Donaldson kindly played for us on piano, and we sang a variety of songs around a theme of song. 🎵

No longer 'Singaloud', we all enjoyed singing to CAMEO and they made us very welcome. A big thank you to our singers.

Marge Whiteside

## Around St. Columba's

### THE PRAYER CIRCLE



Do you know someone in need of prayer? A friend or relative perhaps who is unwell, grieving or find themselves in a position where they don't know where to turn? Blackhall St. Columba's Prayer Circle is a small team of people who will pray frequently for anyone in need of help in complete confidence. We are also happy to accept prayer requests giving thanks for a happy event or asking for God's help with any forthcoming personal endeavour or challenge. Please contact Prayer Circle secretary Betty Watt at [lbthwatt@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lbthwatt@yahoo.co.uk) or Fergus Cook at [Fcook@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:Fcook@churchofscotland.org.uk) or 0131 466 7503. Alternatively, please put your request slip into the locked box on the table in the church vestibule.

## The Pilton Equalities Project

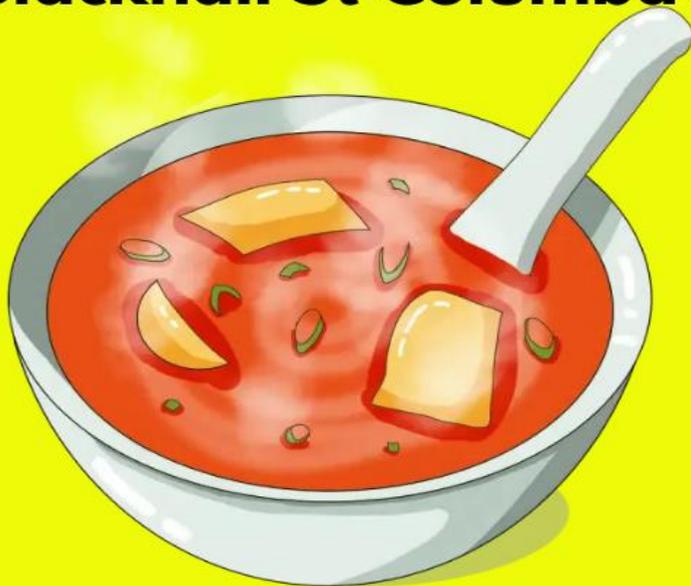
**The Pilton Equalities Project (PEP)** was our WATCH Charity last year. Could you be the person they are looking for?

### **Trustees Needed for P.E.P.**

*Pilton Equalities Project (PEP)* is seeking trustees to join its Board. PEP is a charity supporting the elderly and vulnerable in North Edinburgh and the Board has overall responsibility and accountability for the project. It meets once a month for 2 hours via Zoom.

If you are interested in finding out more about the charity or becoming a trustee, please contact Diane Palmer on 315 4466 or at [Diane.Palmer@pepscot.org](mailto:Diane.Palmer@pepscot.org)

# **SOUP n CHAT** at **Blackhall St Columba's**



**Every fortnight from  
4th August**

**12pm to 2pm**

**All Welcome**



### PEACE Service

The 2022/23 session has drawn to a close and we would like to thank everyone who helped to make it a success; speakers, soup makers/servers, pianists, drivers and of course, all the attendees.

From the contributions we received, we have been able to donate £200 to Social Bite and £200 to Hopscotch (the Watch Committee charity for 2023).

We are always looking for additional drivers (you don't need to commit to every fortnight) and soup makers/servers (you would only be required twice a year) so if you think you can help, please contact Ruth Laidlaw (ruthlaidlaw@gmail.com) or 07513 967974.

The 2023/24 session will begin on the 13th of September 2023 and everyone's very welcome.

Shona Cook and Ruth Laidlaw

### JUNIOR SINGERS

The Junior Singers have had a busy 2022 / 2023 session. They sang for the residents of Queen's Court and Strachan House. They also joined with the Senior Choir to sing at the Ross Band Stand, and they sang in church.

The Junior Singers are looking forward to their new session which begins on **Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2023**, in the **church Upper Hall from 3.45 - 4.30pm**.

We are always happy to welcome new singers. If your child enjoys singing and is in P3 to P7, please come along any Thursday and see what we do. We don't hold auditions; we only require an enjoyment of singing. Our aim is always to produce good singing, but fun is a huge element in our sessions. We try to finish each afternoon with one or two of the choir's favourite singing games. If you would like more information, please phone Amy Donaldson (332 1354)

### EDINBURGH FLORAL ART CLUB



The Club starts up again on **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> of September at 2pm in the large hall**. At our monthly meetings, we invite a qualified Flower Arranger to come along and create around five floral displays. They generally chat whilst arranging the flowers and, in that chat, we find out what foliage and flowers are being used, so we all learn something new. The floral arrangements are then raffled at the end of the session. After the Demonstration, Members can stay and chat. Sometimes there is a workshop so that people can have a hands-on opportunity to make their own arrangement.

We have a full programme and meet at 2pm on **the second Friday of the month** from September to December and February to June. If you are not a member but are interested in coming, do come as a Guest. You would be most welcome.

Alison Hewat

### FAY and DONALD STIRLING

Rarely have people who have joined our congregation contributed so enthusiastically, comprehensively, and quickly to the life of the church. Always willing to help, well organised, determined and friendly in demeanour, Fay and Donald have truly been a source of inspiration and encouragement to our congregation. As Editor of the Kirk News until the last but one issue, Fay embraced this along with many other challenges. Most notable was her role as Project Manager for the Building for The Future undertaking through which she leaves a superb legacy for us all. Donald will be missed as our Church Photographer and member of the Audio-Visual Team. There was never an occasion when one or other or both were not present at our church events. They have truly left us in a better state than they found us. We will miss them and wish them well in their new home in Dumfriesshire.

Hamish Mair, Communications Team

### CAMEO CLUB

Since last writing, we have had a very successful Summer Outing to Pettycur Bay. The sun shone giving us spectacular views across the Forth, and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Our next meeting will be on Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> of August when our entertainer will be a Clarsach (Celtic harp) musician. Whether you are a member or not, you are welcome to come along for fellowship over a cup of tea/coffee and enjoy the music. Meetings are from 10.30am to 12 noon in the church halls.

A frequently asked question is "Do we ever take holidays?" Apart from December, when we only have a Christmas Outing, we meet every two weeks throughout the year.

Our membership is mainly ladies but there is a small core of gentlemen, which we would like to see increasing. If you feel you are too young to become a member, you are welcome to become a volunteer and join our band of drivers and helpers.

If you have any questions, you can call the numbers below.

Margaret Brown 332 5957

Fiona Drinnan 343 6762



## Around St. Columba's

### BUON APPETITO CLUB

Calling all ladies

Whether you are a relatively new member of our church or have been to Blackhall St. Columba's for years, it is always good to gather over delicious food for a time of fellowship with friends old or new and get to know each other better. There is a Curry Club within Blackhall St. Columba's for the men amongst us and therefore, it seems only fair that there should be something for the ladies. Hence, the "Buon Appetito" Club which meets periodically throughout the year. We mainly enjoy the delicacies of Italy but, occasionally, we may play a wild card and try another culture's cuisine.

Our next outing will be for dinner **at 7pm on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2023 to La Piazza at 97-99 Shandwick Place.** If you are interested in coming along, please contact Shona Cook by email ([shonacook.505@gmail.com](mailto:shonacook.505@gmail.com)) or mobile (07981970054) by 15<sup>th</sup> August 2023. A £10 deposit will be needed nearer the time. We normally are limited to around twenty in number or it becomes too big a group and so we operate on a first come first served basis. So don't delay. Get in touch and secure your place today.



### Outreach Team Update

The last few months for the Outreach Team have been busy and although we are now off to enjoy a summer break, plans are already well advanced for the new session in September.

Looking back, we have had a very successful big screen showing of the Coronation Ceremony which was followed by afternoon tea to mark this historic day. This event was enjoyed by church members and community friends.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, we had a well-attended grand concert by The Foot Stomping Gospel Band. This event really tested the church's sound system with their big sound!

On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> of June, we took our gazebo to the Blackhall Childrens' Sports Day in Ravelston Park. On the day, the team of volunteers encouraged children to play table hoop throwing and mini skittles whilst engaging with parents/carers about church activities on offer all year round. The Sports Day was well supported by the community and returned with a bang after a gap of three years (2 years cancelled due to covid restrictions and last year's event cancelled due to high winds).

In late April, "Soup n Chat" began meeting fortnightly on a Friday afternoon. Soup n Chat is a great opportunity for church members and the wider community of Blackhall to come together to enjoy soup, bread, tea/coffee, and biscuits but most importantly to enjoy the chat. Together, with the kitchen team, chat volunteers, church, and community members, we have around 30-40 people join in this relaxed and informal social gathering. Soup n Chat will continue through the summer and into the new session.

Looking ahead, the Outreach team is organising a **Harvest Ceilidh on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> of September in the large hall**. Full details on how to buy your tickets will be out shortly. There is also a concert to look forward to, please see details on page 35 of the Kirk News.

## Around St. Columba's

Lastly, in September I shall be demitting office as Outreach Team Leader, after 6 years and many events, but not until after the Ceilidh. I take this opportunity to thank past and current members of the Outreach Team and the many members of the church who have supported me in the Outreach Team's events and projects. A Big Thank You to you all!

Michael Cockburn  
Outreach Team



The Blackhall St. Columba's Stall at the Blackhall Children's Sports Day Ravelston Park, June 2023.

### WATCH Committee

This year the WATCH committee is supporting HOPSCOTCH (Charity Number SCO28660). Hopscotch has a base in Silverknowes, Edinburgh and an estate in Ardvullin, in the Western Highlands, which is used to provide holidays and respite breaks for children. These children, through difficult circumstances, whether they must provide care for parents or siblings or for financial reasons, would not normally have a holiday or break from their everyday lives. Hopscotch provides a well needed holiday for these children and gives them an opportunity to interact with peers, who live under similar circumstances. The children can enjoy being carefree for a little while on a Hopscotch holiday. They can spend time working with animals, learning water sports, and exploring the countryside.

Although Hopscotch is “property rich,” the cost of providing the children with these holidays requires “cash” and that is why we have chosen to help this charity.



Our fundraising started in July with our **coin collection**. The coin collection will continue throughout the summer. Please bring your spare change to church and donate it to Hopscotch. Our fundraising will continue with the WATCH Committee Coffee Morning and Christmas Fair.



**Craft Coffee Morning**  
**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2023**  
**from 10am to 12 noon**  
**in the large church hall.**

Tea and coffee, delicious scones and tray bakes will be served. There will be craft stalls offering garden produce, lovely handmade greetings cards, knitting and sewing and more delicious home baking to buy. There will also be Flower arrangements/ demonstrations.



**The Christmas Fair**  
**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2023**  
**at 2pm in the large church hall**

In the church halls you will find stalls to explore, Tombola, hampers and bottles, books, Bric a' brac, afternoon tea and Santa will pay us a visit! A quieter moment can be found in the Sanctuary, where you can enjoy a tea/coffee and listen to Christmas music. WATCH this space for more information.

Lynn Bunney  
WATCH committee

## CHRISTMAS FAIR TOMBOLA

### TOMBOLA

With the warmth of the summer, it seems very early to be highlighting the tombola in December!

However, for it to be successful the planning starts early.

### The Tombola Team

will appreciate help from the congregation, their family, and friends.  
with ideas of who to ask for a voucher.

Many businesses donate to charities, but they plan ahead!

Please could you help us by asking a business that you use or know of to donate a voucher or a prize.

These may include

beauticians, cafes, florists, garden centres, hairdressers,  
restaurants, shops, sports clubs or events....

These are just a few of our ideas but hopefully you can think of others.

Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Please contact

Rosi Watt 07533 955025 [rosijwatt@outlook.com](mailto:rosijwatt@outlook.com)

or

Lynn Bunney 07742 271878 [lynnbunney@gmail.com](mailto:lynnbunney@gmail.com)

***Thank you***

### **FRESHSTART WINS AN AWARD!**

On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June the Scottish Council Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) held the Scottish Charity Awards 2023 and we are proud to say FreshStart was the winner of the "Community Action" Award. This award is for establishing the needs of the communities and then meeting those needs. The successful launch of the pantry shop, community meals, cooking classes, helping with basic school uniform, home starter packs (from your donations of household items) and Conversational English classes were all praised for the positive impact on the communities FreshStart serves.

FreshStart had some stiff finalists to compete with but the judges were clear that the Award was very well deserved, largely because of the input of the volunteers and the level of donations from the wider Edinburgh society to meet the demand.

We are grateful for your donations of both household and food items and do hope you will continue to support FreshStart going forward. Every Friday between 10 to 11.30am our volunteers are on duty in the church halls to accept your donations.

Lastly, we are always looking for new volunteers for Friday morning collection duties and as the new rota will be starting in September it is a good time to join. Please contact Lilian or Michael Cockburn for further information or to add your name to the group of volunteers.

Lilian & Michael  
07427 855199  
(cockburn\_carfrae@yahoo.co.uk)



## **Baptism**

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2023

Harris Malcolm John Briggs was baptised by the Rev. Iain Moir.  
The son of Graham and Laura Briggs, Blackhall.

## **Deaths**

Sadly, the following members have passed away. Our thoughts and prayers are with their family members and friends.

## **May**

10<sup>th</sup> Mrs Christine Morrison

24<sup>th</sup> Mrs Margaret Young

## **June**

6<sup>th</sup> Mr George Walker

23<sup>rd</sup> Miss Janet Finnie

## **July**

6<sup>th</sup> Mr Kenneth Fraser

## **New member**

We welcome a new member to the congregation admitted by Resolution of the Kirk Session.

Mrs Caryl Dick

Music @ St. Columba's

A date for your diaries! A musical evening with Bruce Davies. If you enjoy easy listening, Country and Western style music - then this may be the event for you!



*Music at St Columba's*  
**Bruce Davies**  
*Acoustic music at its best*

**Saturday  
14th October  
at 7.00 pm**  
Free entry, donations welcomed

**BLACKHALL  
ST COLUMBA'S  
CHURCH**  
*Columba Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3QU*

*"One of Scotland's best singers..."  
- Tom Paxton*

*"crisp acoustic guitar playing that perfectly  
complements his wonderful voice..."  
- Edinburgh Evening News*

[www.brucedavies.com](http://www.brucedavies.com)

# Praise Gathering 2023 at the Usher Hall

## **PRAISE GATHERING 2023**

### **Join us at the Usher Hall**

Several of us from the church are singing in the massed choir for Praise Gathering 2023. We've been rehearsing with Christians from around Scotland, and we are looking forward to having Graham Kendrick as our special guest on the night itself. (He wrote some of the hymns we sing at Blackhall, like The Servant King and Rejoice Rejoice!)

It's so good to have the concert in Edinburgh this year, on **the 16<sup>th</sup> of September**, and we hope we can fill the Usher Hall. Folk can order tickets through a choir member to save the Usher Hall booking fee - just speak to me, or to Libby, Amy D, Amy F or Marge.

It would be brilliant to see lots of our church fellowship in the audience for a night of gospel praise.

Muriel Stenhouse



## **ORIGIN CHRISTIAN MUSIC**

The **Origin Christian Music Organisation** is running a new Big Band event at **Charlotte Chapel, Shandwick Place on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> of August 2023**. The time is to be confirmed. I shall be playing the piano for this event.

If you enjoy this style of music, please come, and join us. The entry is free. Please see me for information.

I would be delighted to see you there!

Donald Cameron, Director of Music Blackhall St. Columba's



# PRAISE GATHERING 2023

FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY

**USHER HALL, EDINBURGH**  
SATURDAY 16 SEPTEMBER AT 7.00PM

with  
**The Praise Gathering Youth Choir**  
and special guest  
**Graham Kendrick**



**TICKETS NOW ON SALE**

# Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

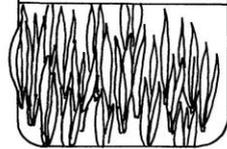
It can be read in the Bible in  
Matthew chapter 13: 24-30, 36-43

Jesus told this story to help explain  
what his Kingdom, the Kingdom of  
Heaven, is like...

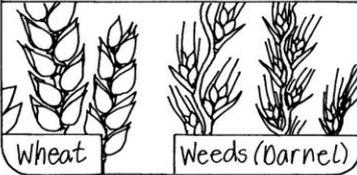
A farmer's workers sowed  
good wheat seed in his field.



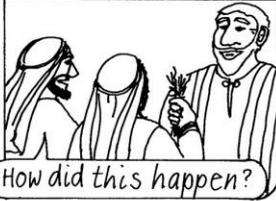
When the seeds  
sprouted they  
looked the same



When the plants grew bigger  
the workers spotted the weeds



They asked the farmer



An enemy did this



No, you might pull up  
some wheat with them.  
Wait until harvest time



You will be able to sort them  
out, and put the wheat in the  
barn ... and burn the weeds



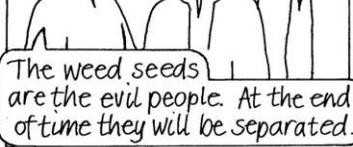
People asked



The field is the world  
and the good seeds are  
the good people

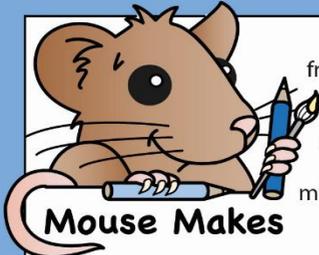


The weed seeds  
are the evil people. At the end  
of time they will be separated.



The angels will bring  
the good people to me  
in heaven.





## Mouse Makes

After Jesus miraculously fed 5,000+ people from two fish and five loaves, he sent his disciples off in a boat across the Sea of Galilee before going up a mountain by himself. Later in the night, as the boat was being blown and buffeted by the wind, Jesus came miraculously walking on the water towards them...

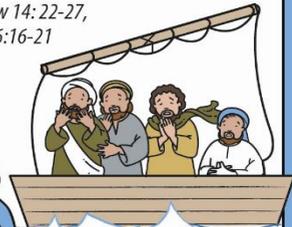
Read the story in: *Matthew 14: 22-27, Mark 6:45-56 or John 6:16-21*

**What did Jesus do when he went up on the mountain?**

\_\_\_\_\_ *Matthew 14:23*

**What was the boat struggling against?**

The \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_  
*Matthew 14:24*



**What did Jesus say to his disciples?**  
Do not be \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ *Matthew 14:27*



**What did the disciples think Jesus was when they saw him walking on the sea?**

A \_\_\_\_\_  
*Matthew 14:26*

**Who walked out on the water to Jesus?**

\_\_\_\_\_ *Matthew 14:29*

**What did Jesus say to Peter?**

Oh you of little \_\_\_\_\_ why do you \_\_\_\_\_  
*Matthew 14:31*

W F W A F R A I D                      Y C K O C S  
I N O T F E A R W A T E R M R B B O J  
N N R L A L O N E K I N T O O O E M E  
D I S C I P L E S A V E E U W A V E S  
G G H E T E R R I F I E D N D T E S U  
H H I A H T L G U D O U B T S Y N I S  
O T P S S E A K P R A Y W A L K I N G  
S F E E A R N O T H E R S I D E N K S  
T O D D T V D G K N F S O N O F G O D

JESUS • DISCIPLES • BOAT • OTHER SIDE • CROWDS • MOUNTAIN • EVENING • ALONE • LAND • NIGHT • SEA  
WALKING • TERRIFIED • FEAR • COME • WATER • SINK • SAVE • INTO • CEASED • WORSHIPED • SON OF GOD

Answer the questions then find them in the word search

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 <p><b>BLACKHALL ST. COLUMBA'S</b> CHURCH OF SCOTLAND</p>	 <p>@ BStCC_EH</p>
<p>Website</p> <p><a href="https://www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk/">https://www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk/</a></p>	 <p>Blackhall St Columba's Church</p>

<p><b>Minister</b> Rev Fergus Cook 5 Blinkbonny Cres. Edinburgh EH4 3NB Tel: 0131 466 7503 <a href="mailto:fcCook@churchofscotland.org.uk">fcCook@churchofscotland.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Session Clerk</b> Eddie Thorn Tel: 0131 332 5702 <a href="mailto:sessionclerk@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk">sessionclerk@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Church Secretary</b> Joy McGonigal-Paget Office: T/W/Th 9.15-12 Home: Mon/Fri 9-12pm Tel: 0131 332 4431 <a href="mailto:secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk">secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk</a></p>
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## Publication deadlines

**For contributions to Blackhall Bulletin:**

([bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk](mailto:bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk))

September 2023 issue – deadline passed.

December 2023 issue - deadline for contributors 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct 2023

**For contributions to Kirk News:**

([judith.mair@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:judith.mair@hotmail.co.uk))

November 2023 issue – deadline for contributors - 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023

February 2024 issue – deadline for contributions - 12<sup>th</sup> January 2024

We are happy to take articles on any relevant subjects.

A huge thank you to **James Burr** our Kirk News and Church photographer.