

# KIRK NEWS

November 2024  
No.843



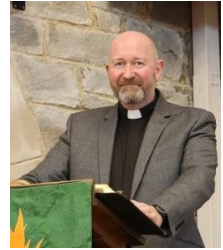
BLACKHALL  
ST. COLUMBA'S  
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

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



### What's in a name?

Recently, we have been exploring the possibility of a union with our friends and neighbours at Drylaw Parish Church. As many, if not all, of you by now know, that will not be going ahead as first envisaged. We will need to wait on Presbytery and the Central Office finalising what the way forward is now.



Leaving the eventual outcome aside, the process we went through was an interesting one. Many people were able to express their opinions on numerous different matters. I always say that, as Christians, we do not have to agree with each other on everything and that it is how we disagree that sets us apart. The world tends to see issues as polarising with social and other forms of media seeking to delight in setting one group of people against another in direct conflict. You only have to think, historically, about the debates around Scottish Independence, Brexit and each General Election we have to see that this is true. As Christians, we should be able to disagree with one another in a respectful way where, even if agreement is not reached, we remain friends and followers of Christ.

In our discussions about union, one of the issues that seemed to be of great importance to some people was the name of the united Church. To be fair, this is one of the most hotly discussed topics in every Church union. In particular, the proposed 'removal' of St Columba's from the united church's name troubled many. We should note that the Church was not always called Blackhall St Columba's Parish Church. Indeed, quoting from Margaret McArthur's excellent book "Blackhall St Columba's Church, The First Hundred Years", she writes, 'In the beginning the new church was sometimes referred to as Blackhall Chapel of Ease or the Church at Craigcrook and the name St Columba's was finally decided upon as the original parish church of Cramond had been dedicated to that saint.' So, Church names can and do evolve and change.

## What's in a name?

Indeed, Cramond Kirk, whose minister gave the name St Columba's to Blackhall Church, is now officially known as Edinburgh: Northwest Kirk. The Northwest Kirk formed as a result of a union between Cramond Kirk and the Old Kirk and Muirhouse. The Old Kirk and Muirhouse, whilst sharing the name Northwest Kirk with Cramond, has now also amended its name and is now calling its buildings Pennywell Kirk!

Whilst I completely understand people's concerns over proposed changes such as this, we need to always remind ourselves of and focus on our mission statement to the people of Blackhall; to glorify God, proclaim Christ and serve others.

Of course, where there is a will, there is a way. Compromise and an ability to adapt are key. Even though a union between our two churches is now held in abeyance and, therefore, there will be no immediate name change, I have proposed to the Kirk Session that we rename the North Transept, also known as the North Aisle, 'The St Columba's Chapel', and they have agreed. This means that, when we have our regular afternoon communion, we will hold it in The St Columba's Chapel. This will be the same for other services including some memorial services. This should ensure that, irrespective of any future decisions about union, the name 'St Columba's will continue to be associated with our Church.

At the same time as, hopefully, reassuring those who were concerned about any loss of a connection to the name St Columba, we should also remind ourselves that the only truly important name we should always cling to is that of Jesus Christ Himself.

## What's in a name?

It is recorded, in the Acts of the Apostles, that John spoke before the Council and said, “let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is ‘the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.’ “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:10-12)

Best wishes Fergus





## Harvest Thanksgiving 2024



HARVEST  
THANKSGIVING



# Session Clerk's Report

## **The Kirk Session**

The Kirk Session met on Tuesdays 3 September and 15 October 2024.

## **Building For the Future 2**

The Clerk informed Kirk Session that the balance of the fund as of 31 July 2024 stood at £83,642. These monies are held in a restricted fund in respect of work specifically at Blackhall St Columba's Church. The Clerk asked Session if there was any wish to carry out project work in the halls area or defer for a future debate. Jim Bishop and Mike Whiteside were delegated to review papers connected with the initial refurbishment programme (for the Sanctuary and adjoining halls) and report back to the January meeting.

## **Correspondence**

Notes of thanks were received from Ferryhill Primary School in respect of food donated by the Congregation.

## **North Sanctuary**

The Moderator put forward a proposal to rename the North Sanctuary and suggested 'St Columba's Chapel'. After discussion the Kirk Session voted in favour of the proposed name.

## **Office Staffing**

For the time being Ruth Laidlaw and the Session Clerk have been dealing with Office matters while Sheila Mackintosh has been handling all hall bookings. The plan was to review this arrangement post the Union.

**Roll**

The Kirk Session was pleased to admit to membership: -

By certificate of Transference:

Kathleen Younger, Orchard Brae Gardens.

It was noted that Angus Troup, whose association with Blackhall St Columba's spanned over 80 years, had transferred his membership to Livingston Old Parish Church.

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*Fergus at our Harvest Thanksgiving Service*

## The Presbytery Plan - An update on the planned Union with Drylaw Parish Church.

On Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> of October, the congregations of Blackhall St Columba's and Drylaw Parish Church voted an acceptance of the Basis of the Union. The results were as follows:

<i>Union of Parish</i>	For	Against	Abstentions
Blackhall St. Columba's	124	13	0
Drylaw Parish Church	25	4	0

Drylaw Parish Church was required to vote on the acceptance of the adoption of Rev Fergus Cook as their Minister. The voting was as follows: -

<i>Adoption of Minister</i>	For	Against	Abstentions
Drylaw Parish Church	11	15	3

Consequently, the planned Union cannot now take place. At the time of writing, the Kirk Session awaits to hear from the Presbytery Deployment Committee. The Committee must now meet to assess the outcome and look at the options for going forward.

## The Future

Mr Cook has intimated that, whilst no one knows the future, he has no plans other than to continue as the Minister of Blackhall St Columba's. He has been immensely grateful for the huge amount of support afforded to him at this time.

The Congregation will be kept informed of pertinent developments.

**Eddie Thorn, Session Clerk**

## Sunday Worship





A stylized illustration of a nativity scene. In the foreground, three camels with riders are silhouetted against a yellow and orange gradient ground. In the background, a stable structure is silhouetted against a blue sky with a bright yellow star. Inside the stable, the figures of Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus are visible.

# Nativity Trail & Christmas Tree Festival

at  
Blackhall  
St Columba's

Admission Free

All welcome to  
both events on

**Thursday 19th December 15.00-19.00**  
**Friday 20th December 16.00-19.00**  
**&**  
**Saturday 21st December 10.00-12.00**  
**(Tree Festival only)**

**Tearoom, Crafts & Escape Room**

Made with PosterMyWall.com

# Nativity Trail

## Follow Mary's Journey on Blackhall's Nativity Trail - 2024



and enjoy our **Christmas Tree Festival** as well!



<b>THURSDAY 19th DECEMBER 2024 (5.00 -7.00pm)</b>
<b>FRIDAY 20th DECEMBER 2024 (4.00 - 7.00pm)</b>
<b>SATURDAY 21st DECEMBER 2024 (10.00 - 12 noon)</b>
<i><b>Tree Festival only with crafts and tearoom</b></i>

This Christmas something very special is happening at Blackhall St Columba's. Many members of the congregation are working very hard to produce our second community Nativity Trail and we can't contain our excitement. We have made some changes from last year and we hope they will make the Trail even better than before. Come along, bring your grandchildren, children and friends and support this event. You won't want to miss it!

Get your diaries out and note down the details.

Our doors will be open wide on the 19th, 20th and 21st December (at the above noted times) 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: Mary's Journey Nativity Trail"**.

We will be spreading the Good News by hosting this interactive exploration of the Greatest Story Ever Told using the church itself and all its halls and buildings. We want members of our community to join us in finding out the true meaning of Christmas in a novel and exciting way. You will hear the Angel Gabriel's message and go, with Mary, on a journey to Bethlehem. You will follow the star and discover the shepherds, King Herod and some busy innkeepers on the way until you finally reach the stable with Mary and Joseph and discover for yourselves 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. There may even be a more advanced one for the adults! 🔍

## Nativity Trail

In addition, we will be serving Christmas treats along with teas, coffees and juice in the Sanctuary. Our little visitors can enjoy making crafts in our craft area before taking home a small gift from their visit to the trail. This year, we also have a wonderful Christmas Tree Festival running at the same time in the Sanctuary. Come along and find out its theme and see for yourself the beautiful, inventive and creative decorations. Add to all of that some carol singing and you will have a truly special event.

There couldn't be a better way to start your Christmas celebrations!

Ferryhill Primary and Blackhall Primary are coming along earlier on during the days of the event and there is no reason why some older members (unaccompanied by any children) shouldn't come along in the afternoon or evening and see the fantastic scenery created, enjoy hearing the Christmas story acted out by our cast and generally join in the fun. Age is no barrier to coming along.

I would like to express my thanks to all those involved with this project whether you have said "yes" when asked to do something specifically, volunteered your services or supplied props, materials or monetary donations. Your willingness to help has been a wonderful example of what can be achieved when we all work together. Many of you lent us items last year and we will be in touch soon to see if we can borrow them again. Thank you all.



There are a few more things that we are needing to ensure the experience is the best we can make it. Can you help us out with the following items?

**Our WISH LIST: -**

Several sets of battery-operated fairy lights  
Large beanbags for sitting on

Old, dark coloured sheets

If you could donate/ lend any of these, that would be brilliant.

# Nativity Trail and Christmas Tree Festival 2024

If you don't have any of the things on the wish list but would like to contribute, a small monetary donation would help us to buy any of the things we can't source. **Please just let Shona Cook know how you can help by emailing or calling her [shonacook505@gmail.com](mailto:shonacook505@gmail.com) or on 07981 970054.**

Last year, we welcomed about 300 people from the community through our doors in one day. Let's double that number this year. So come on Blackhall, let's show them what we can do to spread the Good News this Christmas, "To glorify God.....to proclaim Christ.....to serve others".

Thanks, Shona Cook



## The Christmas Tree Festival

The Christmas Tree Festival will be running alongside the Nativity Trail. It will take place in the church on:

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December

5pm - 7pm

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December

4pm – 7pm

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December

10am until 12noon



Come and see the artfully decorated Christmas Trees and enjoy some coffees, teas or juice and a few festive treats. The themes for the Christmas Tree Decorations this year are a Christmas Carol, a Christmas Song or piece of Christmas Music. We hope that you will encourage as many friends and family to visit as possible.

If you require any more information, please do not hesitate to contact Ruth Laidlaw 07513 967974 or [ruthlaidlaw@gmail.com](mailto:ruthlaidlaw@gmail.com)

# Church Family News

## We welcome a new member admitted by Certificate of Transference

Ms Kathleen Younger

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

### August 2024

26th Mr James Laing

30th Mr Christopher Marryat

### September 2024

6th Mrs Irene Wood

19th Mrs Janet Patterson

19th Mrs Morag Thomson

### October 2024

5th Mrs Elinor Shiel



## Wedding

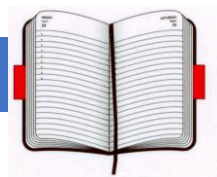
12<sup>th</sup> October 2024 Laura Kaminioti Dumont to Fergus Mair



The wedding of Laura Kaminioti Dumont and Fergus Mair was held at Dundas Castle on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2024.







## November 2024

3 <sup>rd</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship
9 <sup>th</sup>	10.45am	<b>Saturday Morning Short Service of Remembrance at Blackhall St. Columba's Church War Memorial</b>
10 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Service of <b>Remembrance</b>
17 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship
24 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship

## December 2024

1 <sup>st</sup>	10.30am	<b>Gift Service</b> (You are invited to donate a Christmas Gift to a child in need)
8 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	<b>Service featuring the St. David's Brass Band</b>
15 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship
15 <sup>th</sup>	3pm	Blue Christmas Service
19 <sup>th</sup>	5 – 7pm	Thursday Nativity Trail and Christmas Tree Festival
20 <sup>th</sup>	4 - 7 pm	Friday Nativity Trail and Christmas Tree Festival
21 <sup>st</sup>	10 12pm	Saturday Christmas Tree Festival
22 <sup>nd</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship
22 <sup>nd</sup>	7pm	Lessons and Carols led by the Choir
24 <sup>th</sup>	6pm	Christingle Service at 6pm
24 <sup>th</sup>	11.30pm	Watch Night Service (mince pies and mulled wine at 11.15pm)
25 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Christmas Day Service
29 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Favourite Carols

## January 2025

5 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship
12 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship
19 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship
26 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship

### REMEMBER, DINNAE EVER FORGET



Owen, Sassoon, Brooke & Rosenberg were poets who wrote passionately about the horrors of the First World War, which they experienced when serving in the army. Only one survived this War and he got to know another when both were in hospital in Edinburgh to get them fit to return to the front. This other poet like the remaining two died when only in their 20's. They left their poetic legacies however and are well known today. Like me google or otherwise research a little more about the poets but just for now think on –

*“The poor brave sodger*

*Never despise nor count him as a stranger*

*Remember he’s his country’s stay*

*In day and hour of danger” \*\*\**

\*\*\* {Inscribed on Davidson’s Mains Village War Memorial where wreaths will be laid, as they will at Blackhall’s Memorial, on Remembrance Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2024}.

Words from a different time and society but from another poet, who also died young (37) and left his mark indelibly on both English and Scots tongues and international music. Burns is still celebrated all worldwide. He wrote not just denouncing war but also denouncing man’s inhumanity to man generally, railing at hypocrisy wherever its roots, but all the while recognising human frailties and faults including his own. Of course, he still wanted, like us all, to live a life not just free of evils like war and other depressing situations but to spend time with others all enjoying themselves. He wrote about all that too. We can and should always remember those who serve and served their country, some of whom died doing so.

# Celebrating life with Burns

Nor should we forget that we have an opportunity to celebrate life at our Burns Supper when we gather to enjoy ourselves in excellent company with words, laughter, music and something to eat and drink fore by!!



**The Burns Supper will be held comfortably in the Large Hall on Saturday 25th January 2025, doors opening 6 p.m. For tickets & details contact Sandy Weir, mob 07737780209.**

An excellent Christmas present!

Sandy Weir

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*George discovered Christmas this year is December 25th*

## The Junior Singers performance of "Joseph and His Technicolor Dreamcoat"



*The Junior singers perform "Joseph". Photography by James Burr.*

## Introducing Connect

**An opportunity to discuss and explore the Christian Faith.**

The work of the Worship Team at Blackhall St. Columba's church included the recent presentation of The Alpha Course. The Alpha Course started after Easter, and it has now completed its run. Several of the attendees found the course challenged their understanding of the Christian Faith in new yet encouraging ways. We are following that up with a new series of evening "Connect" events. **Connect** started on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> of October and runs from 6 to 7pm. Over coffee and pastries and with something to prompt discussion, we then explore what we thought of what was presented. This can be observed without any pressure to contribute. It is open to all who want to explore and increase their understanding of the faith we profess every week in our church.



Alpha have produced a brand-new Youth Alpha Series aimed at 12–16-year-olds and some of those who attended our recent Alpha are going to training evenings in November to see what it is all about. We hope to run a course for young people specifically in the New Year. This would be an opportunity to invite our young people, grandkids and their friends and our neighbours' youngsters to a low-charge exploration of the Christian faith. If we are serious about growing our church, our message must be presented in a way that is relevant to this age group.

Donald Cameron, Director of Music



## Watch Committee Fundraising Events

### Craft Coffee Morning

A big thank you to all who attended our Annual Craft and Coffee Morning on the 5th of October 2024. Thank you to all those who helped with the setting up of the halls, who made donations of food, manned the stalls and served the coffees. It was a great success, notwithstanding that it was also a lovely sunny morning, a change from the past few years!! Here are some images of the morning



*A big turn out!*



*Craft produce stall*



*Pottery Stall*

**The Christmas Fair** is on **Saturday, 7th of December at 2pm in the Church Halls.**

Santa has popped the date in his diary, and he will be in attendance. There will also be a lucky dip, face painting, loads of toys and books for the children to rummage through!

For the adults, we will have many stalls including our famous Grand Tombola Stall and amazing hampers. There will be some stunning cakes, craft produce and sweets. The Bottle Stall, Book Stall and of course the Bri-a-Brac Stall will also be returning.

Once you have perused all these stalls, you will be glad to stop for a festive refreshment. In the Sanctuary, you can sit and listen to some Christmas music.

Donations to the stalls will be welcome! If you require assistance to donate, please contact Lynn 07742271878 or Rosi 07533955025. Many Thanks!



## CHRISTMAS FAIR

The WATCH committee fundraising has had a wonderful start with the Summer Coin Collection



and the Craft Coffee Morning.



Now we are planning the Christmas Fair!

All the Stalls will appreciate donations of  
Baking, Books - adults & children, Bottles, Bric-a-Brac,  
Crafts, Fashion Accessories, Hampers, Sweets and Tombola.

The Tombola Team

will appreciate help from the Congregation and 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....  
just a few of our ideas but hopefully you can think of others.



Your help will be greatly appreciated.  
Please contact Rosi Watt 07533955025 [rosijwatt@outlook.com](mailto:rosijwatt@outlook.com)  
or Lynn Bunney 07742 271878 [lynnbunney@gmail.com](mailto:lynnbunney@gmail.com)

**Thank  
you**

## Coin Collection



*Sunday Morning Coin Collection*

Our coin collections in July and August at the Sunday morning service were, once again, so well supported by our amazing congregation.

The song sung during the coin collection sums up the ethos of our campaign!

I'll play my part,  
You'll play your part,  
We will all play our part together  
Bring along your cash to help B C U.K.  
Let's play our part together

We are raising money for the charity Blood Cancer UK. Blood Cancer is an illness effecting young and old. It's the 5th most common cancer in the UK. We cannot help with treatment or research, but we can raise money for Blood Cancer UK to support those who do!

Thank you all so much for your generous support.

Lynn Bunney, WATCH Committee

## CrossReach Christmas Cards

### CrossReach - the Social Care Council of the Church of Scotland

Once again, I will be selling Christmas cards on behalf of CrossReach. These will be available for purchase in the Sanctuary after morning worship on Sunday's 3rd, 10th, 17<sup>th</sup> and 24th of November. The CrossReach Catalogue is also available on the table at the back of the church.

Over many years, members of the congregation have been most supportive of this vital section of the Church's work. Thank you in anticipation.

Margaret Brown, Church "Link".

## The Christmas Shoebox Appeal

### The Samaritans Purse Operation Christmas Child Appeal

Bring some joy to an underprivileged child this year with the gift of a Christmas Shoebox!

You are invited once again to collect a flat-packed shoe box from the table at the back of the Sanctuary. Full instructions on how to fill your shoebox will be provided.

Packed shoeboxes can be returned any Sunday or handed in to the church office during the week. **The filled shoeboxes must be returned to the church by Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> of November, or they will miss collection.**

Thanking you in anticipation of another year of your generous support.

Adrian Johnston, Co-ordinator



### Church Flowers

We shall be decorating the church for Christmas on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December from 10.00am. If you would like to take part, please let me know. It's usually great fun deciding what goes where.

This year we are taking into account the Christmas Tree Festival which will take place in the body of the Kirk, so there may be a few changes in what we do.

Once again, we have had a busy year decorating the church every week with the help of those who generously pay for the Flowers and those who arrange them and those who devotedly deliver them all over the Parish. We deliver to those who might need a wee boost and to those who are celebrating an occasion. The letters and emails we receive are testament to the pleasure these flowers give countless people. Thank you to all the swans gliding over the surface while their feet are furiously paddling unseen. Your work is much appreciated. New volunteers for all these jobs are welcome. Please feel free to contact me if you would like some more information about each role.

Alison Hewat ([rajahewat1@btinternet.com](mailto:rajahewat1@btinternet.com))



### Life and Work



We've come round to the time of the year to order paper copies of the Church of Scotland magazine. If you would like to look at a copy to see what it is you are missing please ask as I have a couple of spare copies you can read.

Alison Hewat ([rajahewat1@btinternet.com](mailto:rajahewat1@btinternet.com))



## PEACE Service

The fortnightly PEACE service is a great opportunity to meet with fellow Christians in an informal setting. We meet at 12 noon in the Small Hall.

There is a short act of worship (see the syllabus) followed by a lunch of homemade soup and sweet treats. It's a great opportunity to meet up with old friends and make new ones.



Don't worry if you can't make it under your own steam, transport can be arranged. For more information, please contact - Ruth Laidlaw [ruthlaidlaw@gmail.com](mailto:ruthlaidlaw@gmail.com) or 07513 967974

## PEACE Syllabus 2024 -2025

13<sup>th</sup> of November – Chaplain to Veterans – Rev. Philip Patterson

27<sup>th</sup> of November – The Railway Man – Charmaine McKeekin

11<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Celebration – Shona Cook

8<sup>th</sup> January – Pastoral Care – Fiona Cooke

22<sup>nd</sup> January – Chaplain to the Royal High School – Rev. Dan Robertson

5<sup>th</sup> February – Pioneers UK – Ruth Box

19<sup>th</sup> February – Church Planting – Rev. Alan Childs

5<sup>th</sup> March – Alpha – Donald Cameron

19<sup>th</sup> March – Chaplain to the Lodging House Mission – Deacon Claire Herbert

2<sup>nd</sup> April – Chaplaincy at St. Columba's Hospice – Rev. Suzie Stark

16<sup>th</sup> April – Chaplaincy in the Royal Navy – Rev. Fergus Cook

30<sup>th</sup> of April – Prospects Across Scotland – Ivy Blair

14<sup>th</sup> May – Review of the Year – Shona Cook

28<sup>th</sup> May – Communion – Rev. Fergus Cook

### **Cameo Club**

At this point in time, we have forty Club members on our books, eight of whom are gentlemen, and a rota of eighteen volunteers, eight of whom are drivers, for our fortnightly meetings.

On Friday 15<sup>th</sup> of November, our entertainment will be a game with Antigone Herbert. She has previously organised a team game where contestants must guess whether to go higher or lower – in this case using giant playing cards. There is usually mounting excitement as the game progresses and the competitive spirit gets going. The winning team do get some chocolates to mark their success at the end! Our second meeting this month on 29<sup>th</sup> of November is a members' Christmas lunch at the Leonardo Hotel at Clermiston.

The only meeting in December will be a Christmas themed one in the Church halls on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> at the usual time of 10.30-12.00. Regular meetings resume on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025. There is already an entertainment programme arranged from January to June.

Volunteers are always welcome to give car lifts or help with the teas/coffees. We would love you to consider giving an hour and a half of your time on occasional Fridays on our rota. Please contact Fiona Drinnan Tel 0131 343 6762 if you can help.

### **Tuesday Topics**

The next meeting of Tuesday Topics is on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2024. We meet in the Small Hall at 7.30pm. The topic is "Malta - Paul's Island and Its George Cross" presented by Prof. Anthony Busuttill.

In 2025, the meetings resume on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January when the topic of the presentation will be "The Killing of St. Kilda" by Katherine Hay. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2025 the Tuesday Topic will be "Beekeeping" by John Jeffrey.

Contact Lyndy Paton 07460212174 for more information.

### Scottish Country Dancing



As I plan the programme for our Thursday evening class, I am so encouraged by having a great group of dancers coming together every week. With five new members and almost all of last term's class returning, we usually have four full sets of 8 in the large hall – a good number to work with and a whole range of experience amongst us.

As a mixed ability, inclusive group, we are gradually building our repertoire of formations, encouraging one another with friendly nods and helpful gestures, so everyone can participate and enjoy the music. A recording made by Blackhall St Columba's accordionist, Alistair Wood, has been the source of music for many of our early dances this year.

At the end of last session, it was agreed that we should give to charity some of the funds we have built up. At the suggestion of 94-year-old Helen Gall, who has been dancing at Blackhall for years, we chose Mary's Meals. (Mary's Meals provide schooling and nutritious food for children whose families could not otherwise afford to keep them in education). This December, Helen is moving out to Thailand to stay with her son and his partner, and the dancers wish her all the very best in this new chapter of her life.

We look forward now to several more weeks of dancing before our Christmas Celebration on Thursday 12th December, when we have Matthew McLennan providing live music and we expect to be joined by our seasonal "surprise" guest with his sack of gifts to share.

New dancers are always welcome – just call Muriel on 07908 805 364 for further information.

# Around St Columba's

## Blackhall St. Columba's Watch Committee Calendar

The Blackhall St. Columba's Watch Committee Calendar featuring pictures of the best-looking pets in Blackhall, is now on sale! The proceeds from the sale of the calendars will go to our charity this year - **Blood Cancer UK**.

The Calendar will be on sale at the back of the Sanctuary after the morning service on Sundays or you can order from George Tel. 07717 023550.

The cost, including an envelope, is £8.00.

### WATCH Committee



*Calendar Sample Page*

## 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 [lzbthwatt@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lzbthwatt@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, marked "Prayer Requests," on the table at the back of the church.

## Around St. Columba's

### BUON APETITO



Calling all ladies! Whether you are a relatively new member of our church or have been at 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 to 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 too. Hence, the "Buon Appetito" Club which meets periodically throughout the year to enjoy an Italian meal.

Keep checking the website under "events" for details or, if you don't have access to the internet, give your name to Shona Cook ( 07981 970054) and she can keep you advised of the outings.

**The next outing is to Zizzi's on Queensferry Street on 29th November 2024 at 7pm. If you wish to be added to the list of those attending, please give your name to Shona by 5th November.**

Shona Cook

### Harvest Table

Thank you to all who contributed and to all those who attended our Harvest Thanksgiving lunch. The salads were varied and all very delicious, as were the sweets. It was gratifying to see so many in attendance and enjoying the social event.



Many thanks, Lynn Bunney

## Edinburgh Floral Art

Edinburgh Floral Art Club meets on the second Friday of the month from 2pm-4pm in the large hall at Blackhall St Columba's Church (excluding January and our summer break which runs from June to August, inclusive).

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of November our demonstrator will be Louise Littlejohn from Dunfermline, visitors welcome (£10) and there is no need to book for this event, just turn up on the day, enjoy the demo and join us for refreshments afterwards.

Our last meeting before Christmas, 'Creative Christmas', is on Friday December 13<sup>th</sup>, when we are delighted that we will be joined by Katrina Howells from STEMS florists. Katrina will be leading us as we each make a festive table decoration and hopefully, we will hear about some of her floral adventures.

If you would like to attend this hands-on workshop (cost £10) please book by Monday 11<sup>th</sup> of November by calling Suzie Stark on 07888 942561. Booking is essential for this particular event because we will have to order all the materials needed (flowers, containers, candles etc) well in advance of the workshop



***Karina beside a slightly larger festive floral arrangement than the ones we will be making!***



## Music@St Columba's

The series of events under the banner of “**Music@St Columba's**” continued to show us the remarkable talent of young people in our country. On Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> of October, we were treated to a wonderful evening of classical piano music from Maltese pianist, Bernice Sammut Attard. The audience was treated to an eclectic mix of composers from Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy and Glass.

On 16<sup>th</sup> November, we will have a completely different sound in our church, that of “Father's Song”. This is a male voice choir culled from the larger Praise Gathering Choir, and you will enjoy the range of music they produce. There are more bookings ahead in 2025 - so watch this space.

**Donald Cameron**

The poster features a textured, light-colored background with musical notes and a large, stylized treble clef on the left. At the top, the text "Music@St Columba's" is written in blue, with a small golden musical note to its right. Below this is a blue silhouette of a choir. The main title "Father's Song" is in large, bold, blue letters, followed by "Male Voice Choir" in a similar font. The date and time "Sat 16th Nov 2024 19.00" are in blue. Below this, the text "Come and hear a wide range of Gospel music sung by these men from all over Scotland." is in black. Further down, "Free entry and refreshments. Donations welcome" is in black. At the bottom, the venue "Blackhall St Columba's Church" and "Columba Road, Edinburgh" are in blue. A vintage-style microphone is on the right. A small watermark "Made with PosterMyWall.com" is at the bottom left.

**Music@St Columba's**

**Father's Song**  
**Male Voice Choir**  
**Sat 16th Nov 2024 19.00**

**Come and hear a wide range of Gospel music sung by these men from all over Scotland.**

**Free entry and refreshments.**  
**Donations welcome**

**Blackhall St Columba's Church**  
**Columba Road, Edinburgh**

Made with PosterMyWall.com

## Dates for your diary for the Christmas Season

The Worship Team is busy planning a series of musical offerings for Advent.

On Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December, **the Junior Singers** will participate in the **Gift Service** when we are invited to donate gifts to be distributed amongst the children of prisoners.



On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December, our old friends, **The St David's Brass Band**, will lead the singing and perform a number of well-known pieces during the service. This is an annual treat not to be missed and if you have not been to church for a while you will be especially welcome.

On 15<sup>th</sup> of December, we hold our annual much appreciated **Blue Christmas** for those who have been bereaved or are remembering someone who has passed away whether recently or many years in the past. It is an opportunity to allow the emotions associated with personal loss to be acknowledged and shared.



On the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December, we will hold a **Lessons and Carols** event, perhaps shorter than the traditional 9 lessons and Carols. We will be using the King James version of the Bible, which is very familiar to many. We trust these readings will bring many memories of past Christmases to life, as we share a message of hope. This year some members of the Art Club, which meets in our church hall regularly, are creating some new pieces of artwork that will portray some aspect of the Christmas story. We look forward to showing these on the big screen on the night.

Donald Cameron, Director of Music

### **Church of Scotland submits written evidence on Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill**

The Church has submitted written evidence to a group of MSPs who are investigating the case for legalising assisted dying in Scotland.

The purpose of the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill is to introduce a lawful form of assisted dying for people over the age of 16 with a terminal illness.

Scrutiny is being undertaken by the Scottish Parliament's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee and is at stage one of a three-part process.

The Church is "partially opposed" to the legislation becoming law due to its historic opposition to assisted dying while recognising that this position is currently under review following debates and decisions made by the General Assembly in 2023 and 2024.

The Church has extensive experience of walking with people in the final stages of their lives and for many the current societal prohibition on killing means that our role in Christ's call to care is clear.

However, for others this may lead them to support giving terminally ill people the option of an assisted death – views informed by profound and intense personal experience.

A working group formed by the Theological Forum and Faith Action Programme Leadership Team is currently exploring more deeply the diverse views held by Church members on the subject and will report to the General Assembly next year.

# Remembrance 2024



This year Remembrance includes several significant dates from past wars.

2024, marks the 110th anniversary of the start of World War I.

2024 is 80 years since D-Day. The Normandy Landings of 6<sup>th</sup> June were the largest seaborne invasion in history, and began the Allied invasion of Normandy, which led to the liberation of France and laid the foundations of the Allied victory on the Western Front.

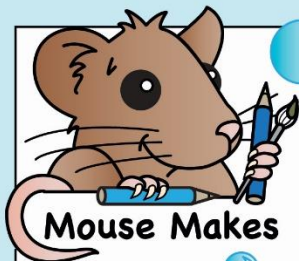
2024 marks the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Monte Cassino in Italy, the bloodiest battle of the Italian Campaign, when Allied forces finally broke through the Germans' notorious 'Gustav Line' and freed Route Six and the way to Rome.

2024 marks the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battles for Kohima and Imphal, where in northeast India the Imperial Japanese Army was held off by much smaller numbers of British and Indian troops. In Kohima alone, the defenders held off a staggering 25 Japanese attacks over 14 days in appalling conditions. When Indian troops arrived to relieve the defenders, the Japanese encirclement was broken. Amongst the liberators was Havildar Major Rajindar Singh Dhatt of the Royal Indian Army Service Corps, from the Punjab.

2024 also marks the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Operation Market Garden in the Netherlands, when the Allies managed to free Eindhoven and Nijmegen, but famously failed to capture the bridge at Arnhem. (The story is told in the film *A Bridge too Far*)

This year the British Legion is also looking beyond the Second World War, to Kosovo and Afghanistan.

It wants to pay tribute to those who served and currently serve in Kosovo 25 years after the deployment of the NATO peacekeeping force, KFOR, and to those who served in Afghanistan, as this year marks 10 years since the end of Operation Herrick.



## "DO AS I HAVE DONE FOR YOU."

The disciples had met with Jesus in an upper room to share a meal together, but there were no servants to wash their dusty feet. Jesus got up from the table, took off his outer clothing, wrapped a towel around his waist and began to wash the disciples' feet just like a servant would do.

Then Jesus said:

*"Do you understand what I have done for you?"*

*Now that I, your Lord and Teacher have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.*

*I have set you an example, that you should do as I have done for you."*



**READ**  
the story in  
**John 13:1-17**



By washing his disciples' feet, Jesus showed that as God's people we are never too important to serve and care for others.

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

JESUS  
DISCIPLES  
PASSOVER  
FEAST • SUPPER • MEAL

PETER  
SCRIPTURES  
LORD • TEACHER  
SERVANT • MASTER

GARMENTS • CLOTHING • TOWEL • WAIST • WATER • BASIN • WASH • FEET • WIPE  
CLEAN • UNDERSTAND • OTHERS • EXAMPLE • DO • LOVED • CHOSEN • BLESSED

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## Publication deadlines

### For contributions to Blackhall Bulletin:

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

December 2024 issue

23<sup>rd</sup> Oct 2022 (you may just have missed this)

March 2023 issue

27<sup>th</sup> January 2025

### For contributions to Kirk News:

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

February 2025 issue

17<sup>th</sup> January 2025

May 2025 issue

18<sup>th</sup> April 2025

We are happy to take articles on any relevant subject.

Thank you to James Burr, our Church Photographer.