

KIRK NEWS

August 2024
No. 842



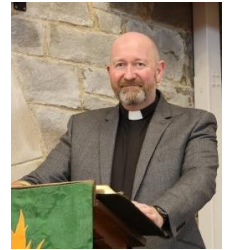
BLACKHALL
ST. COLUMBA'S
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

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



'Triskaidekaphobia and other phobias'

Recently, I have been watching a comedy programme on a streaming channel called 'Kim's Convenience'. Although set in Canada, the show focuses on a Korean family who run a convenience store. The show is full of Korean stereotypes and plays on some of these for its comedy. In one episode I watched recently, someone from the local neighbourhood was wanting Mr Kim, the shop owner, to sign a petition. Mr Kim was happy to do this until he was given a red pen to use to sign his name. As the interaction went on, Mr Kim explained that, in South Korea, it is believed that, if someone writes their name in red ink, they may die. He went on further to explain that, in traditional Korean culture, the names of the deceased are written in red-coloured ink and so people do not use this colour of pen to write the names of the living. If anyone writes a person's name with red ink, then it is believed that they must want to get that person killed. Mr Kim and his wife, whilst joking about the silliness of the superstition especially as they were Christians, were clearly uncomfortable with signing their names. In the end, Mr Kim 'accidentally' broke the red pen and got a blue one which he then gave to the petitioner.



Superstitions are deep-seated irrational beliefs that cause people to think that something can lead to either something good or bad. No matter where you go, every culture has superstitious beliefs. Most people have heard that, if a black cat crosses the road or walks across your path, it will bring bad luck. However, it appears that that all depends on where you are in the world. In Japan, for instance, black cats are symbols of good luck and, if someone sees a black cat crossing their path, they say '*konnichiwa*' and take control of their own luck.

Many superstitions are deeply ingrained in society, for example, the use of the expression 'touch wood' to either get good luck or ward off bad luck. Although incredibly well known, there appears little agreement on the origins of the phrase.

From the Minister

I have read accounts which claim everything from the expression being derived from the pagan belief that malevolent spirits inhabited wood and that, if you expressed a hope for the future, you should touch or knock on wood to prevent the spirits from hearing and presumably preventing your hopes from coming true, through to it being derived from touching the wood of the cross of Jesus.

Although I believe that, as a Christian, I have no need for superstition, I have been surprised by how many superstitions can trace some element of their origins to the Bible. If bad luck dogged a sailing ship, then many seamen believed that it was possible a 'Jonah' could be aboard. This is a direct reference to the Jonah of the Bible who tried to flee from God, incurring His displeasure and causing storms to affect the ship he was on.



Why is 13 considered unlucky?

One of the superstitions that continues to this day, despite there being no evidence to support it, is a belief that the number 13 is unlucky. This belief is so ingrained into our culture that even a down-to-earth trade like building is affected by it. Some buildings, including apartment blocks and hotels, do not have a 13th floor or a 13th room. The 13th floor may be named 12A or used to house infrastructure that the building needs rather than apartments or offices and so is named completely differently. Houses numbered 13 are usually cheaper than the rest while, in the past, some councils have actually banned new housing developments from using the number at all because residents do not like living there. The fear of the number 13 is officially called triskaidekaphobia.

Conventional wisdom has blamed a number of sources for the number 13's supposed bad luck. Prominent is a link to Christianity. There were 13 people at Jesus Christ's last supper which happened just before he was betrayed by Judas Iscariot, the 13th to be seated, and arrested for blasphemy.

From the Minister

When it comes to dates, superstition goes into overdrive on Friday 13th as a Friday is also loosely associated with bad luck because it was the day on which Christ died.

For the most part, people refer to these common superstitions without actually taking any cognisance of them. The danger of truly holding any superstitious belief is that people allow those beliefs to manipulate their lives, they allow them to control a part of their life which is beyond their personal control. In these cases, all superstition does is take people away from relying on God every day of their lives. Superstitions encourage people to trust in other people, inanimate objects or the habits we have to ensure that things will go well in our lives.

As Christians, we should ask ourselves who is in control of our lives. Do we need animal parts, icons, crucifixes, salt, four-leaf clovers, and lucky charms to bring us 'luck'? Do we put our trust in horoscopes, the stars, the moon or planets to show us what to do?

The reality is that God gives us the security and salvation we need. To believe in superstition rather than the power of Christ for protection and guidance in our lives is to diminish the power that Jesus has. Hebrews 1:3 tells us Jesus is powerful enough to 'sustain all things by his powerful word.' This means he is certainly powerful enough to save us and give us direction for our lives.

As Christians, we should be able to see through superstitious beliefs because we now know and serve God and we look to Him alone for His blessings and guidance. The Bible tells us that, if we have given our lives to Christ, then we are promised that He will protect us and guide us. As Christians, we don't need superstition in our lives because Jesus has told us God wants us to have a life free from fear.

Best wishes

Fergus



Sunday Worship at Blackhall St Columba's



Joseph is admitted as a new communicant



The Right Hand of Fellowship



Do this in remembrance of me



At worship

Kirk Session Report – General Business

The Kirk Session

The Kirk Session met on Mondays 27 May and 17 June and Tuesday 25 June 2024.

Correspondence

Letters of thanks were received from:

- Rock Trust in respect of the donation of £300 from the Easter retiring offerings.
- Mary's Meals in respect of the donation of £290.90 from the June Communion retiring offerings.

We received a letter from The Monte Cassino Society thanking us for holding their 80th Anniversary Service. The Society and their Honorary Secretary each donated £50 to the Church.

Office Secretary

Mrs Joy McGonigal-Paget finished as our Office Secretary at the end of June to take up employment elsewhere. Joy departed with our best wishes for the future along with our thanks for her service over the past four and a half years.

Roll

The Kirk Session was pleased to admit to membership: -

By certificate of Transference:

- John Campbell, Gillsland Road

By Resolution:

- Richard Main, Queen's Road
- Mrs Gillian Roberts, Ravelston House Park

The Presbytery Plan - Update on the planned Union with Drylaw Parish Church.

The Basis of Union document (at the foot of this report) has been formally agreed by the various National Committees of the Church.

The Kirk Sessions of both Blackhall St Columba's and Drylaw met separately on the evening of 17 June to vote on the planned Union

Kirk Session Report – The Basis of the Union

Blackhall St Columba's Kirk Session voted: For 27, Against Nil, Abstentions Nil.
Drylaw voted: For 4, Against Nil, Abstentions 2

The subsequent steps outlined in the last edition of Kirk News have been delayed allowing the Steering Group to have further discussions around planning for the future.

Meantime both congregations have been asked for comments and questions regarding the Union and in particular views on recent Sunday Services.

The plan is now: -

1. Sunday 29th of September 2024 an Edict relative to the Union will be read out to both congregations.
2. Sunday 6th of October 2024 the Edict will again be read out to both congregations. This will be followed by a presentation with an opportunity for questions and comments pertaining to the Union.
3. Sunday 13th of October both congregations will vote on the Union.
4. Approval of Union will go before The Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian on Tuesday 5th of November 2024.

All going to plan there will then be a new congregation - Edinburgh: Blackhall Drylaw Church of Scotland.

Please speak with me should you wish anything clarified before October.

BASIS OF UNION

The congregation of Blackhall St Columba's Church of Scotland Edinburgh (SC008756) and the congregation of Drylaw Parish Church of Scotland Edinburgh (SC005744) will be united from a date to be determined by Presbytery, and that on the following terms and conditions:

1. **Name:** The name of the united charge will be Edinburgh: Blackhall Drylaw Church of Scotland and Scottish Charity Number SC008756 will be retained.

Kirk Session Report – The Basis of the Union

1. **Transference of Property and Funds:** The property and funds belonging to or held on behalf of each congregation will belong to or be held on behalf of the united charge and any transference necessary will be duly effected.
2. **Places of Worship:** Both churches at present used and occupied by Blackhall St Columba's and Drylaw, will be the places of worship of the united charge. Services shall be conducted each Sunday at times to be decided by the Minister and Kirk Session, subject to the approval of Presbytery.
3. **Territorial Responsibility:** The bounds to be served by the united charge will be the bounds of the parishes of Blackhall and Drylaw, or as the Presbytery will determine.
4. **Kirk Session:** The Elders of both Kirk Sessions will form, with the minister, the Kirk Session of the united charge.
5. **Congregational Management:** The temporal affairs of the united congregation will be administered by the Kirk Session in terms of the Unitary Constitution, the Delegation of Assembly being authorised to issue the appropriate Deed of Constitution to the said congregation.
6. **Minister:** The Rev. Fergus Cook, currently minister at Blackhall St Columba's Church of Scotland, shall be the minister of the united charge in terms of Section 8.2 of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act 8, 2021).
7. **Manse.** The manse of the congregation of Blackhall St Columba's Church of Scotland shall be the manse of the united charge.

Kirk Session Report – The Basis of the Union

8. The manse of the congregation of Drylaw Parish Church of Scotland shall be sold, let or otherwise disposed of, subject to the titles on which it is held, and subject to the approval of the Presbytery and, if necessary, of the General Trustees or the General Assembly. The free proceeds of any such sale or let shall: (a) if falling within the scope of the General Trustees (Delegated Powers) act (Act 7, 1995), be credited to the benefit of the congregation in the Consolidated Fabric Fund; or (b) if not falling within the scope of the said Act, be held and applied for fabric purposes in connection with the properties of the congregation.

9. Ministerial Support: The stipend of the Charge will be paid in accordance with the terms of the National Stipend Scheme.

10. Power to Readjust: While the articles and terms will form the Basis of Union for the two congregations now uniting, the united charge will be free, like other congregations, to adjust arrangements under the authority of Presbytery as need may arise.

Eddie Thorn
Session Clerk



Sunday morning services

The times for morning worship can be found on the website

www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

You can also contact the Church Office. Tel: 0131 332 4431

The Monte Cassino Service of Remembrance

On the 18th of May 2024 the annual Monte Cassino Service of Remembrance was held at Blackhall St Columba's Church. The ceremony this year commemorated the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Monte Cassino and the Italian Campaign of 1943 to 1945.

The service of remembrance was conducted on behalf of the Monte Cassino Society. It was attended this year by the Consul General Mr Bijay Selvaraj, High Commission of India, who laid a wreath. The Consul General of Poland and the Canadian Honorary Consul were also amongst those who laid wreaths reflecting the international forces involved in the Monte Cassino Campaign. The service was conducted by Rev Fergus Cook who invited the congregation to remember both the combatants and non-combatants impacted in this campaign.



The Consul General of India lays a wreath



War Memorial Wreaths



Presenting the Colours



Queen's Own Highlanders

The Monte Cassino Service of Remembrance



The Monte Cassino Cross on the Communion Table

**'At the going down of the sun and in the morning.
We will remember them.'**



Poppy display



Pipe Major Macrea

Nativity Trail 2024

* SAVE THE DATES *

On Thursday 19th, Friday 20th and Saturday 21st December 2024 we have our Nativity Trail.



I know it seems early to be mentioning Christmas already BUT December will be here before we know it! Many of you will remember that last Christmas, we held a very special Nativity Trail event which was highly successful and, this year, we are very excited to announce that a second Trail will be happening. We have taken our ideas from last year, changed and adapted some of them and introduced some new features which are going to create a brand-new celebration. In addition, we are combining the Trail with the Christmas Tree Festival to create something special. 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 “Nativity Trail- Mary’s Journey” and “Christmas Tree Festival”.

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



What? - NATIVITY TRAIL-
MARY’S JOURNEY and
CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Where? - BLACKHALL ST
COLUMBA’S CHURCH

When? - THURSDAY 19TH,
FRIDAY 20TH and SATURDAY
21ST DECEMBER 2024



Nativity Trail 2024



On the last Thursday and 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 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 as they hear the Angel Gabriel's message and go on their own journey with Mary and Joseph. They will find the shepherds and encounter King Herod before they finally reach Bethlehem, search for a resting place and finally arrive at 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. This was extremely popular last year.

The Christmas Tree Festival will be running alongside the Trail on the Thursday and Friday but will also be running on the Saturday morning as well.

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, at the moment, 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 (shonacook505@gmail.com) or by 'phone (07981 970054). Any help you can give will be gratefully received and just makes everything easier AND more fun.



Nativity Trail 2024

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. 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.

Last Christmas, we welcomed over 300 people from the community through our doors in a single day. I am confident we can do even better this year. So come on Blackhall, let's show them what we can do to spread the Good News this Christmas.

WISHLIST-

A white gazebo

Another five gazebos (of any colour) preferably with sides

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

Wind chimes or bells

Velvet tablecloth or material

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



Last year, many of you kindly lent us toys, animals, ornaments etc and we would be very grateful if we could borrow these again.

Thanks,
Shona

Church Family News

Congregational Changes

New member admitted by Profession of Faith

Mr Joseph Omeiza Ibrahim

New member admitted by Certificate of Transference

Mr John Campbell

New members admitted by Resolution of the Kirk Session

Mr Richard Main

Mrs Gillian Roberts

Deaths

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

May

16th Mrs Muriel Sinclair

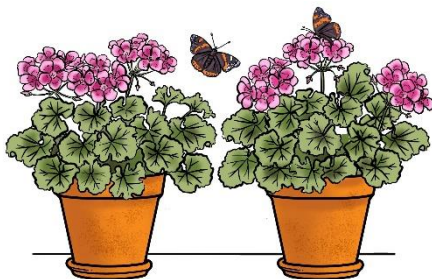
29th Mrs Wendy Pratt

June

4th Mrs Rosalyn McFarlane

16th Mrs Charmaine Twatt

20th Mr Douglas McLean



Sheila Mackintosh, Roll Keeper

**The Congregational Vote on the Union
of Blackhall and Drylaw Parishes
will be held on Sunday 13th of October 2024**

First Aid Provision within the Church Buildings and Grounds

Should anyone in the church buildings or grounds become unwell, the location of the First Aid Boxes, Wheelchairs and Defibrillators are as follows.



One First Aid Box is kept in the cupboard at the back of the sanctuary. That cupboard has a key with an orange label which must not be removed from the lock. There is clear First Aid signage above this cupboard. This box also contains a first aid dressings kit, with plasters, bandages, etc.

The second First Aid Box can be found on the table as you enter the annex room to Dorothea's office. There is clear First Aid signage on the annex room door. A duvet and a pillow contained in a duvet bag clearly marked, are available for those who may fall or need attention outside the church building. It sits on top of the First Aid box, also clearly marked. The first aid dressings kit for this box, is kept in the kitchen cupboard by the window.

There is a check list of contents inside each First Aid box. The boxes are checked regularly but should anything be missing or need attention please contact Betty Watt.

We now have three wheelchairs. All have two footplates. One is kept at the back of the Sanctuary. The other two are kept in the ladies' cloakroom area, opposite the kitchen. One is a modern lightweight wheelchair, the other is much older, heavier wheelchair which should only be used in an emergency. Its tyres require inflating periodically, whereas the more modern wheelchairs have solid tyres that only require inspection.

Defibrillators

A defibrillator is mounted on the wall in the corridor opposite the kitchen, with clear signage. It is checked monthly and available for use by anyone in an emergency, whenever the church and halls are open.

A second Public Access Defibrillator, has been installed inside a yellow cabinet on the outside wall of the large hall, behind and to the right of the War Memorial. It is clearly visible from the road. To access the defibrillator in an emergency dial 999 and the operator will give the code needed to open the cabinet. There is a light inside the cabinet that activates if needed during the hours of darkness. It is also checked every month.



Both these defibrillators are registered on The Circuit, which means the Scottish Ambulance Service know their exact location by post code, (as well as the guaranteed hours of access to the defibrillator outside the kitchen.) The manuals for both devices are kept on top of the First Aid Box in the annex room to Dorothea's Office.

An accident/incident book is positioned on the wall below the defibrillator, opposite the kitchen. Please ensure anything of note is recorded, dated and signed at the time of the incident.

Please feel free to contact me anytime, through the church office, if you have any questions. **Church Office 0131 332 4431**

Betty Watt

Alpha at Blackhall St Columba's

Alpha 2024

The last time we ran Alpha in St Columba's was in 2020 just before Covid started and caused so much disruption to our lives. The course started in Costa at the Craigleith Quarry Retail Park. It then moved to the Northcare Suites Nursing Home and finally we ran part of the course online, which was surprisingly successful.



This year we had eleven people, a few with no contact with our church, sign up for the course which we ran from Starbucks in Craigleith Quarry Retail Park. We started at 7.00pm on Thursday evenings with food and time to chat and get to know the others on the course. At 7.30pm, we showed the Alpha video for the evening and at around 8.00pm, with coffee and buns, we broke into small groups to discuss and raise questions about what we had seen and heard.

Following the 10 evenings we had an “awayday” at the Leonardo Hotel in Clermiston, where we watched a set of videos about the Holy Spirit and what it means to be “filled” with the Holy Spirit. That engendered lots of discussion as well as being a time of personal challenge and contemplation.

The universal response from feedback forms we have received is how much people appreciated being able to talk about matters of the Christian faith openly without friction and without anyone teaching the “right” answer. So much so that the group is continuing to meet informally on Thursday evenings in the church at 7.30pm to talk about other aspects of the Christian faith.

Alpha 2024 at Blackhall St Columba's

We are hopeful that this will kickstart some other home groups in the Autumn, where all members of the church can openly discuss their understanding of their faith journey. The important thing about Alpha and its follow up is that no prior Bible knowledge or theological understanding is required in order to benefit by contributing or just listening to these conversations.

There is also a new “Youth Alpha” film series being produced and we hope to encourage some of our younger members to get involved in that and share their faith with their peers.

If used carefully, Alpha has the potential to be the engine that drives new membership of the church and builds up the existing members by enriching their faith. Perhaps using Alpha judiciously can at least contribute one way of slowing the anticipated decline in church attendance.

Donald Cameron



Alpha 2024 participants at Starbucks

Outreach Events

Outreach Events from SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2024

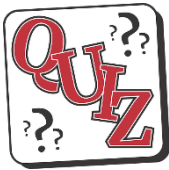
The Outreach Team has decided to produce a programme of events on a four monthly basis. We hope you will read about what's going on and support as many of the events as you can. By having the dates well in advance, you can pop them in your diaries and keep the dates clear.

As a family of God here in Blackhall, it is not only good but essential to get together regularly to socialise and enjoy a time of fellowship which encourages new friendships and strengthens existing ones.

We cannot truly love one another unless we know each other.

Autumn Events 2024

Friday 13th September 2024 - Church Quiz



This will be in the Large Hall at 7.00pm. It is hoped that people will form teams of six to take part. Refreshments will be served. Please contact [Shona Cook](mailto:Shona.Cook@blackhall.org.uk) on [07981 970054](tel:07981970054) once you have formed your team to assist with numbers for catering etc. Donations to help cover costs will be gratefully received.

Sunday 13th of October 2024 - Cold Harvest Lunch



This will follow the Harvest Service and take place in the Large Hall. It will be a wonderful way to share what the Lord has provided with friends old and new. Further details will follow later.

Saturday 19th of October 2024 - Music@St.Columba's



Bernice Sammut Ahard – classical piano concert

Please join us in the Sanctuary at 7pm to hear this talented pianist. No ticket required but donations for the musician would be appreciated.

Outreach Events

Saturday 2nd of November 2024 - Festive Crafts



Join us for a morning of Christmas themed creativity from 10am onwards. Try your hand at wreath making, be a Kirstie Allsopp at our craft table or make something tasty to take home for later. Refreshments will be served. More details will follow. There will be a small charge to cover the cost of materials. Please give your name to [Shona Cook](mailto:Shona.Cook@stcolumba.org.uk) on 07981 970054 if you wish to come along.

Sunday 15th of December 2024 - "Movies@StColumba's"



Join us at 6.30pm for a modern classic Christmas movie, "Polar Express". Featuring the voice of Tom Hanks, this lovely story is set on Christmas Eve when a young boy boards a mysterious train heading for the North Pole and finds himself on a rather wonderful adventure.

Seasonal refreshments will be served. There is no charge but donations to cover costs will be gratefully received.

A new programme for the next four months will follow later.

Shona Cook

Blackhall Book Club



We have a Book Club in the church which meets roughly every five or six weeks where we have the opportunity to discuss a book read by everyone and then to socialise more generally. We meet in the church Sanctuary at 7.30pm. We vary the day of the week that we meet to suit those attending.

If anyone is interested in joining the group or finding out more about it, please contact - Shona Cook (07981970054).

Pastoral and Prayer Working Team

Usually if members are in hospital or ill in their own home and they wish the pastoral team to be made aware of this, the information eventually filters through. The flower team try to deliver church flowers to a member on their return home from hospital but are unable to if they haven't heard that the patient has been discharged.



If you wish the pastoral team to know of a hospital admission or discharge, please get in touch with your Elder. If you don't have, or have mislaid their contact details, ask them when they visit. Their phone number will be on your Communion invitation. You might also wish to let a relative know where to find the contact details in case you are unable to get in touch yourself but would like the pastoral team to be told.

The 3pm Communion service is now firmly established in the church calendar. This service is appreciated by those who cannot attend the morning service due to timing or frailty. The pastoral and prayer team provide the opportunity for people to gather together after the service for fellowship over coffee and home-baking. Please get in touch with your Elder if you require transport to attend this service. Communion Sunday is 6th October.

Fiona Cooke

Pastoral and Prayer Working Team

WATCH Committee
CRAFT COFFEE MORNING
Saturday 5th October 2024
10am -12noon
Blackhall St Columba's Church Hall

ENTRY
Adults £4.00
Children FREE
CASH ONLY PLEASE

Fresh produce
& plants

Coffee, Tea
& Cakes

Lovely crafts, pottery
& hand-made goods

...and
home baking
stall!

All Proceeds to
Blood Cancer UK
- come along with
family & friends for a
fun morning!



And.....it's never too early
to think about Christmas ~ honest!
St Columba's Christmas Fair - Sat 7th December @ 2pm
~ put it in your diary! ~
PROCEEDS GOING TO
Blood Cancer UK



Fresh Start

Helping people make a home for themselves

Despite some encouraging economic signs during the first half of 2024, the demand for home starter packs (household items) and membership of The Pantry Shop has grown significantly. The cost-of-living crisis continues to dominate the work of FreshStart and the school holidays always create further issues for low income families.

The Pantry at Fresh Start has introduced a “family” weekly rate for the school holidays which enables families (with children) to leave the pantry with 40% more shopping in their basket. They pay £6.50 rather than the usual £4.50 however, this makes a huge difference to these families. Without this help and the Community Meals run by FreshStart, many families would have no choice but to use a Foodbank or skip meals. Donations of tinned and long dated packet food items are always appreciated by The Pantry.

The demand for starter packs continues to grow as people from the city and newcomers to the area find accommodation in the northwest of Edinburgh to set up home. If you have any surplus plates, bowls, pans, bedding, towels or curtains then please bring them on a Friday to the church hall between 10am and 11.30am where our duty volunteer will happily accept them. The FreshStart website provides an up-to-date list of items needed as will our duty volunteer.

Again, thank you for your generous support as we help those in need in our city.

Lilian & Michael Cockburn

FreshStart Co-ordinators

(cockburn_carfrae@yahoo.co.uk)

Watch Committee Fundraising



What an amazing introduction to our charity - **Blood Cancer UK** - Elizabeth Ann Holmes gave us!

Her incredible insight into this charity, having had first-hand experience of a loved one with a Blood Cancer, left us with no doubt that we are indeed helping a very worthwhile cause.

Please support our fundraising efforts for Blood Cancer UK.

Coin Collection



Our coin collection this summer is well under way. We happily fill the bucket with our coins on a Sunday morning whilst singing along to the “collections song” beautifully put together by our own Amy Donaldson with the excellent help of our young people.

Autumn Coffee Morning

This will be held on Saturday the 5th of October 2024 from 10am to 12 noon in the Church Halls. Pop along and enjoy delicious coffee and home-made treats. Peruse the stalls, which include home baking and jam, crafts, cards, sewing and knitting. We also have stalls selling pottery, garden produce, plants and flowers.



The “Pets” Calendars will also be on sale, ready for posting for Christmas.

Christmas Fair



The Christmas Fair is on Saturday 7th December 2024 at 2pm in the Church Hall. Please put it in your diary now.

The Stall Holders meeting for the Fair is on the 18th of September at 7pm in the Sanctuary. We welcome old and new stall holders and anyone wishing to help.

Lynn Bunney, Watch Committee

Sunday Worship Online at Blackhall St Columba's

Our services are livestreamed each Sunday. You can find the link to join the services on our church website at www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk in the section entitled "Live stream Services and Information." The service is livestreamed on <https://www.youtube.com/@blackhallstcolumba>

Our **Church Zoom Fellowship** is held after the Sunday Morning Service and usually takes place **on the first Sunday of each month**. Please join us through the church website www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk or at this link <https://zoom.us/j/97694542508>. You can alternatively log into Zoom and enter the **Meeting ID: 97694542508** to join.

It is hoped that a number of you will join us on the Church Zoom Fellowship link on the first Sunday of the month, at the close of morning worship. This will enhance the experience for those who can only join us in this way.

Fergus, Minister



Sunday Club

Sunday Club never goes on holiday! While some children went off on holiday during the summer with their families, coming back to tell us of their adventures, and the leaders also enjoyed having a break from routine, but Sunday Club was there throughout the summer for local children who were not away and for children who were visiting the area on holiday.

The usual format for Sunday Club is that we stay in church for the first part of the Sunday morning service, then leave to go to our own room where we take part in activities such as storytelling, crafts and games, returning to the service as it comes to an end. Below, you can see the results of one of our sessions.

If you have a child in your family who might enjoy joining in the fun, why not bring them along one Sunday? We have some children who attend regularly and some who come occasionally. It matters not – all are welcome!

Amy Donaldson



Sunday Club Activities

Christian Aid Week



We were delighted to have members of the Horticultural Society join us at our Coffee Morning in May where many plants were displayed and sold. Including the sale of baking, which was generously donated, the sum of £752 was raised for Christian Aid. A further £1,155 was received in the form of donations. Our thanks to all who contributed or helped to make the event such a success.

Sheila Mackintosh

Special Appeal

Calling all local clubs, organisations and businesses

Blackhall St Columba's church is planning a huge event this Christmas and part of that extravaganza is a Christmas Tree Festival.

You are invited to take part by getting your organisation to decorate a tree to be part of the festival. There will be a theme but more of that later!

If you would like to take part in this festive event or would like more information, please email. Ruth Laidlaw on secretary@blackhallstcolumbas.org.uk

Annual Golf Outing 2024

Blackhall St Columba's Church Golf Outing 2024

Once again, the Annual Golf Outing was held at Ravelston Golf Course, on the 28th of June, there were 14 players and 17 staying for a delicious high tea. Our thanks go to Ravelston Golf Course for a most enjoyable day.

The winners this year are: -

Involvement "88" Golf Cup – George Millar

Murrayfield Ladies Cup – Pam Harrington

2nd Frances Douglas

3rd Amy Foster

Murrayfield Cup – John Turner

2nd Sandy Weir

Nine Hole Prize – Diane Ross

Thank you to Murrayfield House for their sponsorship.

David Thomson

Frances Douglas



Cameo Club

People often wonder if Cameo meets during the Summer. With the exception of December, when we will have one meeting on the 13th of December 2024, (based on a Christmas theme), our doors are open every second Friday for men and women from 10.30am until 12pm. We come together to enjoy half an hour of chat, followed by an hour of entertainment. There will be a meeting on the 9th of August 2024 when we have the vocalist, Liz McEwan. On the 23rd of August 2024 we have Jenny Logan with pianist Margaret Donaldson.

We did have a bit of excitement at the end of May, with a visit from Alex Cole-Hamilton as part of his electioneering campaign, along with two television cameras and various photographers. Our entertainers that day were the Tuesday Ukulele Group. Alex brought along his own ukulele and was pictured on the evening television news playing to two of our members across the coffee table.

In June, we were invited to Northcare Suites in Telford Road where we enjoyed scones and cake in their bistro.

We are still on the look-out for volunteers, particularly car drivers who can deliver and return home those members who need a lift (some drivers do stay for the morning). There will also be a welcome for anyone new and thinking of becoming a member.

Further details from Fiona Drinnan Tel. 0131 343 6762.



Tuesday Topics

I'm delighted to be able to tell you that we have managed to continue Tuesday Topics for another year. At our last AGM we discussed afternoon versus evening meetings and we decided to keep evenings but to change to monthly meetings. We are also going to come under the cover of Outreach in the Church which might enable us to keep going a bit longer. The annual subscription will remain at £20 with a charge of £3 for visitors who will be most welcome...women and men.

To start us off for our new session we have:

1 st October 2024	"Butterflies of the Pentland Hills" A talk with marvellous photos by Bob Douglas.
29 th October 2024	"The Sory of the Sahara Desert" by Henry McMeekin.
26 th November 2024	"Paul's Island and its George Cross"- Malta. A fascinating talk by Professor Anthony Busuttil.

We will then have a break over Christmas and return on the 7th of January with our lunch out at Howie's. For further meetings keep an eye on Kirk News and the Bulletin

We welcome new members and visitors. You don't have to be a member of the church.... just come along and enjoy some interesting talks and friendship.

Meetings are held in the Small Hall at St Columba's at 7.30pm and all are welcome

For more details contact Lyndy Paton 07460212174 or 01313327377.

Or Sheila Mackintosh 0131336135.

PEACE Service

The PEACE service will begin the 2024 session on Wednesday the 4th of September and will take place fortnightly at 12.00noon until Wednesday the 11th of December when we will break for Christmas.



We will begin again on Wednesday the 8th of January and will meet fortnightly until Wednesday 28th May 2025.

The PEACE Service takes the form of a 30-minute service followed by a soup lunch to which everyone is most welcome. We are currently putting the syllabus together, but our first meeting will be a service of Holy Communion.

We are always looking for volunteers to make and serve the lunch and extra drivers to add to our pool. If you think you might be able to help in either capacity, please contact Ruth Laidlaw on ruthlaidlaw@gmail.com or 07513967974

We look forward to welcoming you.
Shona Cook & Ruth Laidlaw



Edinburgh Floral Art Club

A selection of posies made by members at our 'hands on' workshop in November 2023

Edinburgh Floral Art Club

Edinburgh Floral Art Club resumes its activities in the large hall at St Columba's Church on Friday 13 September. We look forward to welcoming visitors and prospective new members at any of our meetings; we are a friendly group with a shared love of, and interest in, flower arranging.

Meeting eight times a year our Session runs from September to May (inclusive) with a break in January. We gather on the second Friday of the month ready for our demonstrator (or activity) to start at 2pm and conclude with refreshments and a chance to chat, usually heading home around 4pm. The flower arrangements produced by our demonstrators are raffled off and lucky winners can be spotted carrying home beautiful flowers after each event. In December and February of this Session we aim to have 'hands on' activities where members and guests can create their own floral art. Each month we have a 'bring and buy' stall selling floral sundries, books on flower arranging and other flower-related items donated by members as well having other fundraising activities most months (e.g. quizzes, bottle stall etc).

If you love flowers and enjoy watching floral artistry at its best and if you wish a relaxing and inspiring start to the weekend, then do come and see what we are up to!

More information from our **Chairman, Mrs Suzie Stark, 07888 942561.**

Syllabus Autumn 2023

13th of September 2024 - Val Guest on Tour from Darlington, 'Flamboyance of Nature'

11th of October 2024 - Sara Barrow, National Demonstrator on Tour from Preston, 'Colours of a Rainbow'

8th of November 2024 - Heather Curry from Gosforth, 'Winter Cheer'

"Soup n Chat"



On the 24th of May 2024, **Soup n Chat** celebrated a full year in operation and there was a good turn out to enjoy the soup, company, chat and cake (well you need cake to celebrate). Regulars, Chat Hosts (on duty and not) and others involved in the venture all came along and had a great time. City Councillors Hal Osler and Vicky Nicolson and our own MSP Alex Cole-Hamilton joined us to celebrate this worthy achievement.

Soup n Chat is open to church members and to our wider community. If you would like to come along why not bring a neighbour or friend with you. If transport is required, please let us know and arrangements can be made.

In July, we announced that Soup n Chat was taking a summer break to ensure the Chat Hosts and Catering Team are rested and ready for the new session.

Around St Columba's

Soup n Chat will return **on Friday the 30th of August** in the Large Hall from 12noon until 2pm or for as long as the soup lasts! It will then run every two weeks, on alternate Fridays. Please note the dates below.

• 13th and 27th September 2024
• 11th and 25th October 2024
• 8th and 22nd November 2024
• 6th December 2024
• 3rd and 17th January 2025

Any questions or if you would like to help as a chat host, please contact me on 07875 558977.

Michael Cockburn, Lead and Admin Volunteer



Soup n Chat Catering Team

Knit and Natter



Knit and Natter produce for Pregnancy Counselling and Care (Scotland)

We finished up for our summer break at the end of June. Before I took our knitting out to **Pregnancy Counselling and Care (Scotland)**, I gave a small selection of items to Fergus so he could bless them and the families who will receive them, during the Sunday service.

They were very grateful to receive our donations as there are many families in need of their help. They are now situated out at the Gyle Shopping Centre. If you have any small baby items, toys or clothing you no longer have use for, they are open for receiving items from Monday to Wednesday, 8.30am to 4.00pm. For further details or if you have larger items, please see their website.

We start back in the Sanctuary on Monday the 9th of September 2024. New members are always welcome whether you already knit or would like to learn.

Lilian Cockburn stcknitnatter@gmail.com

Around St Columba's

Scottish Country Dancing

After the traditional "summer" break, we are already looking forward to a new session of dancing together on Thursday nights.

We had a great celebration at the end of the spring term, with more than 30 of us enjoying live music from local accordion player, Matthew McLennan, for our programme.

When we start back on Thursday 19th September, in the large hall of the church, it would be good to welcome some new folk who would like to rediscover the joy of jigs and reels, or who would like to start dancing as a sociable activity for the autumn evenings.

We meet from 7.30 to 9.15, with a break for refreshments and chat. All you need is a pair of comfortable shoes and your £15 subscription from now till Christmas. (for 12 weeks' dancing, that's quite a bargain!!!)

Do contact me on 07908 805364 for further information - and do come along in September to "give it a go".

Muriel 🎵 07908 805 364



Tea towel Appeal

Tea towels

Do you have excess tea towels lurking around the kitchen?

Perhaps you have been gifted a towel or two and your old ones could do with replacing?

We are always in need of tea towels in the church hall kitchen and in the Sanctuary. So please, if you can help, please drop off your tea towels at church or to the halls. Every little helps! Thank you in advance.

Lynn Bunney, Catering Co-ordinator



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 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 7.00pm on Wednesday 11th September 2024 at Paolozzi, 57/61 Forrest Road, Edinburgh EH1 2QP.

If you are interested in coming along, please contact Shona Cook by email (shonacook505@gmail.com) or mobile (07981 970054) by 11th August 2024. A deposit will be needed in advance as well as a menu choice. (This restaurant can accommodate wheelchair users).

We normally are 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.

For future outings, please, check the church website for details.

Shona

Ben Kearsley in Concert



Our Saturday afternoon concert by Ben Kearsley was held on the 29th of June at 12.30pm in the Sanctuary and was attended by 35 people. Ben played a selection of music written by J S Bach. This music was written originally for the organ, but such is the quality of the compositions they translate well to piano, string quartets, solo string instruments and even the modern guitar.

Ben Kearsley is an Edinburgh based musician and something of an exponent of this music. Ben treated us to a wide variety of the constantly changing, almost melismatic style of Bach's music. We listened to the changing key, the weaving intricate musical patterns, rising and falling but constantly evolving. The music of Bach remains amongst the best of all the great composers, defying the gravity of the original key so easily and yet keeping the theme running throughout the piece. It was a great concert, and we will see him again I don't doubt.

Donald Cameron, Director of Music



Ben performing in the Sanctuary

Music @ St Columba's

Dates for your Diaries!

On the **21st of September 2024** – I am playing piano with a Christian Big Band playing at Carrubbers Christian Centre on the High Street. Tickets are free. See me for more information.

On the **19th of October 2024** we have **Bernice Sammut Attard** giving a classical piano concert at 7pm in the Sanctuary.

On the **16th of November 2024** we have a visiting Male Voice Christian group called **Father's Song**. They will give a concert at 7pm in the Sanctuary. They are a subgroup of the Praise Gathering 400 strong choir that has been rehearsing in our church over the springtime. Several of our members went to their concert in the Glasgow Concert Hall and enjoyed that greatly. All concerts are free to attend but donations are appreciated.

Donald Cameron, Director of Music

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 lzbthwatt@yahoo.co.uk or Fergus Cook at 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.

Gospel Choir

This Gospel choir of 400 singers, male and female, from 150 churches throughout Scotland, has sung in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, and Belfast since they were formed in 1985. They sing a wide range of Christian music from old favourites to more modern songs.

As the choir is so large they rehearse in 3 different venues for 10 weeks between April and June. The Edinburgh choir members rehearsed in Blackhall St Columba's this year and were very impressed with the facilities and welcome, so they are rehearsing in our church again next year. There were 4 of our members singing; unfortunately, the fifth had to pull out at the last minute with Covid. You will also recognize Jill Douglas on the right of the picture! It was great fun singing this year at the Concert Hall in Glasgow, and if we get enough choir members from Edinburgh, we will sing at the Usher Hall next year as well as Glasgow.

If you are interested in joining the choir next year, please contact any of the people in the picture.

Libby Cameron



Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Mk 4: 35-41, Mt 8: 23-27, Lk 8: 22-25

Jesus had spent the day teaching big crowds by Lake Galilee, and when evening came he told his disciples..

We'll sail over to the east side of the lake



Suddenly a massive storm blew up



Even the experienced sailors panicked



But Jesus was fast asleep at the back of the boat



Master

Lord, save us!

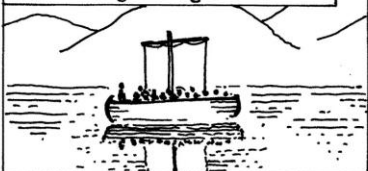
we're going to drown!

Teacher, don't you care we're going to drown?

Be quiet!



Immediately the wind stopped and everything was calm.



Why were you afraid? Don't you trust me?



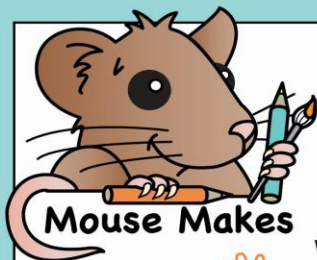
Now the disciples were even more afraid.



Who is he? Even the wind and sea obey him!

Only God has power like that!





"AND WHEN YOU PRAY,
PRAY THEN LIKE THIS ..."

Where does Jesus say
to go to pray?
Matthew 6:6



What does God know
before you ask Him?
Matthew 6:8



What can we ask God
to deliver us from?
Matthew 6:13

If you forgive others
what will God do?
Matthew 6:14



"Always be full of joy.
Never stop praying.
Whatever happens,
always be **thankful**."
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

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ROOM • PRAY • ASK • NEEDS • HEARD • JESUS
LORDS PRAYER • OUR • FATHER • HALLOWED • HONoured
NAME • THY • KINGDOM • COME • YOUR • WILL • DONE
EARTH • HEAVEN • DAILY • BREAD • FORGIVE • DEBTS
SINS • TEMPTATION • DELIVER • EVIL • AMEN

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

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Publication deadlines

For contributions to Blackhall Bulletin:

(bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk)

September 2024 issue contributions by 30th July 2024

For contributions to Kirk News:

(judith.mair@hotmail.co.uk) or to the Church Office

November 2024 issue contributions by 18th October 2024

We are happy to accept articles on any relevant subject.

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