

BLACKHALL BULLETIN

March 2021

PRODUCED BY BLACKHALL ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH FOR THE COMMUNITY

No. 163



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Greetings to all in the Blackhall community.

“How is your 2021 shaping up?”

By now, the excitement of a new year has probably waned a bit at least. New Year, along with Hogmanay in Scotland, is a big thing for many people. It marks a transition. It is a time when people re-evaluate their lives. They examine what has happened in the previous year and look forward to what might be in the year to come. It is a time of New Year resolutions. For example, gym memberships traditionally increase as people think about ways in which they might improve themselves.

I remember last year many people, especially in the Church, talked about 20/20 vision. I preached on this myself. When I was looking at that subject, I discovered something interesting. 20/20 vision does not necessarily mean perfect vision. 20/20 vision only indicates the sharpness or clarity of vision at that distance. Other important visual skills, such as peripheral or side vision, eye coordination, depth perception, etc. are not part of that equation. With it being the year 2020, having 20/20 vision or clarity of purpose, seemed an oddly appropriate subject.

What I did not envisage, and I don't think any of us did, was that 2020 would turn out to be the year that it was. As we began last year with a sense of hope, none of us had the vision to see not only a global pandemic looming but also the numerous effects that it would have on our society and our world.

I got the sense this year that many people just wanted to see the back of 2020 as they perceived that whatever 2021 brought it couldn't get any worse. There was a general sense that people had great hope in the dawning of a new year. Facebook and other social media were full of comments and memes. How long did the hope of a new year last for you?

I remember seeing a post from an American friend which referred to this hope for the new year. It appeared on January 7th, the day after the riots and attempted insurrection at the Capitol Buildings in Washington. The picture showed a man with a glass of beer saying “Well, that was a solid 5 days, roll on 2022!”

In my own personal life, I was delighted to get a break for the first two weeks in January. Any hopes of a lively, uplifting start to 2021 were somewhat reduced by some frozen pipes, a car that needed to have its engine stripped and rebuilt and, as with everyone else, the announcements of the further pandemic restrictions.

Why do I bring all this up? One of the questions that some people have asked during this pandemic is what God's role in it is. Many people have started to ask themselves some big questions about the subjects of God and faith. The first thing I would say is that God doesn't cause our problems, we do! Even the coronavirus can be put down to how humankind treats and interacts with God's creation. We have precedents for creating our own disasters. In what I accept is an oversimplification of the issue, Creutzfeldt–Jakob disease (CJD) is known to have been transmitted to humans eating contaminated beef. The contaminated beef was affected by Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), commonly known as mad cow disease. The cattle are believed to have been infected by being fed meat-and-bone meal (MBM) that contained either the remains of cattle who spontaneously developed the disease or scrapie-infected sheep products. The outbreak spread throughout the United Kingdom due to the practice of feeding meat-and-bone meal to the young calves of dairy cows. Now, I may not be a farmer, but I firmly believe that this is just one recent example of where humankind, in an effort to make more money etc. interfered with the laws of nature (cows are herbivores and certainly not cannibals) and created a serious problem.

So where is God in all that is going on in the world? God is still there offering the same unconditional love and acceptance for all people that he always has.

Having faith will not protect you from life's troubles. Being a Christian is not like having a lucky charm that saves you from illness, accidents or any of the other issues that life throws at us. What faith does do is give you the confidence to face problems and issues and the strength to deal with them. Christ calls each and every one of us to have a personal relationship with God. That relationship allows us to speak with God through prayer. It allows us to thank him for all the blessings we do have in our lives and, in this country, there are many, but it also allows us to go to him when we have problems. I am reminded of the words from Paul's letter to the Philippians which says, at chapter 4 verses 6-8: *“Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

In addition, there is a bonus to this relationship. Through that personal relationship, a person becomes a member of God's family, part of his wider community of believers who form a family. My experience of this community, this family of church goers is that it is full of people we can turn to in a crisis. The members of this family are all people who, if they cannot actually help in a practical way, can help with the all important emotional support that we all need.

At Blackhall St Columba's Parish Church our faith does not protect us from any of the ills or worries that everyone else in the world has. However, our faith does give us the peace and comfort of knowing that there is a God who is there for us, who cares for us and loves us. It gives us the peace and comfort of knowing that we are part of a community which will try to support its members and, indeed, anyone it comes into contact with whatever is going on in the world. Our faith allows us, even during a global pandemic, to fulfil our mission statement of glorifying God, proclaiming Christ and serving others.

Best wishes and blessings to all
Fergus Cook

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

In these days many of us are feeling isolated and lonely

TAKE CARE

is something we often say to others and right now it is something we need also to say to ourselves

Different things help different people.

Have a look at the list below and see what helps you or what you might try

- Phoning someone each day, maybe different people on different days



- Sitting outside or at an open window or door, looking at nature; growing plants, birds & wildlife, watching clouds in the sky

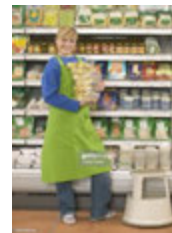


- Creating a routine – get up and dressed for the day; have your meals at the same time, going to bed at the same time, having a walk. The rhythm of a routine can help to create a feeling of security and safety you can rely on



- Limit the amount of time listening to the news and social media, restrict to once or twice a day for a set time

- Spend several minutes each day feeling grateful for all the people helping in your life and in the hospitals, in the supermarkets, delivering things or driving buses.



- Putting on



music and dancing



either literally or in your imagination

- If you want to be more energetic do a workout, 10 minutes workouts available at <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/move-more/home-workout-videos/>

- Doing jigsaws, word-searches, crosswords



- Remembering good times, people you have loved, jobs you enjoyed

You can find more information at

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/>



For support please phone 0131 466 7503 to speak to our minister Rev Fergus Cook. It is usually good to talk, to name the things that are bothering us and know that we are listened to and heard. Whilst we can always talk to God in prayer *sometimes* we can also benefit from speaking directly to another person with whom we can share our own unique situation.

Wishing you all peace and hope



To glorify God... to proclaim Christ... to serve others.

“Five Hundred, Twenty-five Thousand, Six Hundred Minutes.....”

.....“how do you measure, measure a year?”

Discovering this song, from the musical “Rent”, at our choir rehearsals this month, I’ve found it has that combination of melody and lyrics that very quickly become embedded in my mind. So many more important things I can easily forget, yet I keep hearing that question....how DO I measure - not just the vast number of minutes in my own 64 years, but even the 44,640 that have been mine in January?

We all have our own plans and priorities for 2021, but the past year has surely taught us to reconsider what we hold as valuable, what we really need in our lives to make each day count.

The chorus of that song goes on to suggest that a year can be measured –
“in daylights, in sunsets, in midnights, in cups of coffee”
and we’ve certainly had time to be more aware of these significant times of day, especially the amazing shades of rose and gold that, in a clear sky, transform even the most ordinary landscapes at the start or the end of the day. We’ve also learned the value of just a cup of coffee together, as we’ve lived through the ever-changing restrictions that were vital to protect life itself.



But, after the chorus, the soloist then asks the more penetrating question -
“How can you measure the life of a woman or man?”

It’s a question that has been asked since the start of life itself, and is just as relevant for us in Blackhall, March 2021, as it was in Judah, 1407 BC, when the psalmist wrote -

“Teach us to number our days”,

reminding his people that we need to be aware of the brevity of life and encouraging them to make the most of their days by seeking “a heart of wisdom” above all else. Believing God was the giver of life, they also acknowledged him as the source of true wisdom, by which they measured their lives.

Have we gained in wisdom in the last year, the last month? Have we looked beyond our own limited understanding to question what life is worth, what gives each life value?

“Seasons of Love”, the title and final line of the song I keep hearing, gives a clear indication of how we might make the most of each person in our lives -

“Remember a year in the life of friends.

Remember the love!.....Measure in love.”

Wise advice, as we look back over the last incomparable year, but especially as we cope with the demands of the year ahead; and Jesus, too, speaks of love as the most important measure for life -

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind

And love your neighbour as yourself”.

Remember the Love!

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Margaret McArthur

3rd August 1939 – 13th February 2021



Readers of the Bulletin when it started 40 years ago as well as those reading the more recent 40th anniversary issue in September will be aware that Margaret founded the Bulletin in 1980. But there is much more to know about this very special lady whose death has saddened many in the community and in Blackhall St Columba's church.

Margaret was born in Edinburgh, the second child to Rose and Andrew Wilson. From childhood she suffered with asthma and due to frequent attacks during her childhood years she learned to love reading and drawing – loves reflected in her later years with her writing and painting. After leaving Tynecastle school she started work in the offices of The Scotsman. Then she was finally able to take up her nursing career becoming a staff nurse and a midwife doing home deliveries a là Call the Midwife.

Hogmanay 1967 was a very memorable one for Margaret, for it was the night she met George at “the dancing”. It was a whirlwind romance with their marriage on 24th February 1968 and going to Umtata, South Africa where George was a missionary, having been on furlough when he and Margaret met. Recently I asked Margaret how she knew he was ‘the one’. Her reply was very simple – “I knew my husband had to be a Christian and a good dancer. George was both!” It was a marriage that lasted 43 years until George's death in 2011. No time was wasted in starting a family, George was born on December 5th 1968, followed by Barbara on 27th January 1970. On their return to Edinburgh, they moved to Craigmillar Road which was to be their home for the next 44 years.

Margaret began writing in a variety of genres. Short stories, prize winning plays, her centenary book on the history of Blackhall St Columba's, then two photographic reminiscence books on Blackhall, followed by one on Davidson's Mains and Silverknowes. She also taught creative writing at night classes, worked with further education on living memory and cross generation projects. As well as that she managed to study with the OU for her BA degree. Her love of history inspired her to trace her Wilson family ancestors at Register House.

Then Margaret decided to develop her other love, art, and joined the Blackhall Art Club where she created many beautiful pastel works – she favoured sunsets, sunrises, landscapes and seascapes. She tried watercolours and oils, but pastels were her medium. Many homes in Blackhall and beyond have a Margaret McArthur original.

Celebrations of George receiving an OBE and then Barbara marrying Kevin and giving Margaret and George twin granddaughters, Emma and Rachel, who gave them a new spring in their step and energy they didn't know they had. They were truly devoted grandparents and, after George died in 2011, Margaret found her girls gave her happiness in abundance and helped her cope.

Throughout this time Margaret also coped with health problems. She enjoyed country dancing and more recently helping run the Cameo Club. I understand from Jess Park that Margaret and George and Jess and Jim used to go on reconnaissance trips to places they planned to take the group and sample the available restaurants to make sure they were up to standard. Sometimes more than one visit being necessary!

Margaret and George also introduced their love of South Africa to Blackhall St Columba's and set up the Pirie Group to help that former mission station by raising funds so that they could build their own church there. Reciprocal visits were arranged so each could see how the other church worked. Margaret had a lot of organising with 121 for these visits.

More recently Margaret's health wasn't so good. She developed COPD and that began to curtail the activities she loved so much. She had to leave Craigmillar Road in 2016 as the house was too big, but she was very happy in her lovely flat in Cockburn Court and made many new friends, joining in with the activities in the lounge and outings.

All I can say is she was the best sister I could have had, and I will miss her so much.
Barbara Wilson

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Many of our art club members find it difficult to generate the enthusiasm to paint when we do not have others around us to share ideas and get inspiration from club members. To try to help with this, we have started doing challenges every month. In November we had a photograph of a still life to tackle, in December it was a photograph of a landscape of a wooded area with a stream flowing through it and January's challenge is to draw or paint an animal. We have had some lovely renderings of each of the challenges and we put them on the Art Club Facebook page for members to see. All of January's paintings are not yet in at the time of writing, but we have had elephants, tigers, a leopard, birds, and dogs so far.

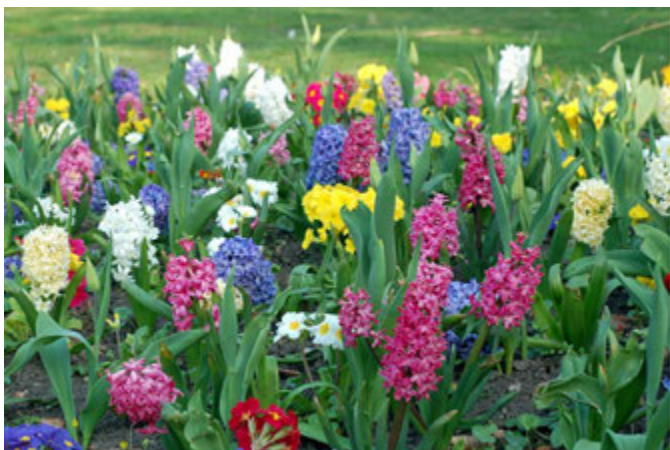
With the weather so cold and damp, the garden does not have the same pull as it did in the first lockdown when we had some wonderful weather, so it is good to see so many members passing their time with pencils and paintbrushes just now.

We would normally start the planning for our May Art Exhibition in January but as we are unlikely to get together as a club for some months yet and as we do not know what will be allowed by May we are having to postpone this planning. However, we do hope that we will be able to have an exhibition some time in 2021 as there have been so many wonderful paintings produced by our members over lockdown and they deserve to be exhibited.

Valerie Gordon

Edinburgh Floral Art Club

Edinburgh Floral Art Club is unable to open during this time, but it is hoped to meet again on the second Friday of September 2021 at 2pm. Until then we send all our members and friends best wishes for a safe and healthy New Year.



TUESDAY TOPICS

Hello from Tuesday Topics, Blackhall St Columba's Church.

We have not forgotten all our lovely members and friends, and hope you have all been coping well during the pandemic. It is hard to believe that our last meeting was a year ago on 18 February, when we thoroughly enjoyed a presentation by Andrew Thomson of the Backhouse Rossie Estate, by Ladybank in Fife. His family estate is the home of Scotland's Daffodil Festival. As well as their National Collection of Daffodils, they have beautiful restored Walled Gardens and Grounds, their Kitchen and Pantry serves coffee, cake, lunches, and sells a range of items such as heritage apple juice, seeds, bulbs and plants. Those of us who had booked were able to attend our annual theatre outing in early March, and were very well entertained by the Southern Light Opera's production of 'Anything Goes' at the King's.

Shortly after that, we were all put into the first lockdown of the pandemic, and at the time of writing we are again in lockdown. Sadly, we still cannot say when we may be able to re-start Tuesday Topics, but we will let you know when we know.

Finally, you may like an update about Eleanor's Red Eared Turtle, Bubbles, we told you about in the December Bulletin. He hates the cold (like me) and is more or less in hibernation and refusing to eat!

Take care, keep safe, and our very best wishes to all members and friends.

Jacky Cowie, Secretary

Eleanor Lowrie, President

Meet Mollie Douglas – another lockdown friend



Mollie has been a lifesaver to John and I during the lockdown she is now three years old and loves to entertain enjoys her walks especially on the golf course when allowed and meeting people is her great pleasure although she is not too good at social distancing.!

KNIT AND NATTER

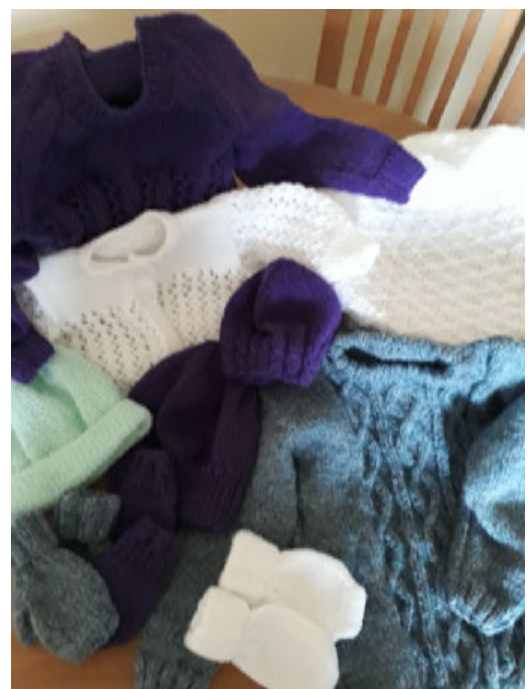


Towards the end of last year after discussions with our minister, our Knitivity was brought out, dusted off and added to. As so few people would be able to come to church it was decided to take it to the community in the form of a trail telling the Christmas story. From what I have heard it proved to be very popular and we were delighted to see it being put to use again.

Although we of course cannot get together as a group, the needles are still going and we will have a goodly selection of items to hand over when we are able to. I know some of us have been knitting for family and friends too and have perhaps not have had quite so much time as usual. The hands do need a rest from time to time.

If anyone is interested to find out more about what we do or would like to join us, I can be contacted at stcknitnatter@gmail.com

Lilian Cockburn



Ideas for Spring in the Garden

Looking out of the window the signs of life can be seen, even if it is the footprints of the urban foxes in the snow or the rather forlorn birds tweeting in the trees, and perhaps reminding us to feed them. However, the signs of plants growing can also be seen.



In my case I can see the pink of the early flowers of Cyclamen coum (Eastern Sowbread), together with the purple of Iris histrioides, and looking at these Cyclamen, and their source being John Nicol, one of the original mainstays of Blackhall Horticultural Society and regular past contributor to the Bulletin, encourage me to don my gloves and jacket and venture outside.

There is much discussion on the merits of 'no dig' with its advantages of not exposing the soil fauna to the elements and reducing weed competition or following the idea that exposed soil by nature becomes covered with new growth, often termed as weeds. The principle is that organic matter in the form of garden mulch is spread on the soil surface which is absorbed into the topsoil by the worms digesting it, as well as providing a covering which smothers any 'weed' growth. To be fair the jury is out on 'No Dig' as the exercise one receives by single digging or even forking over the soil is so beneficial for clearing the winter cobwebs!! Perhaps there is value in

both, meaning leaving some areas undug and allowing the minute soil animals to do their work, and cultivating other areas leaving soil clods to be broken down by the frosts.

My tomatoes are now ready to be pricked out. Last year was the first time I had sown tomatoes for over forty years having been lazy and bought plants at nearby garden centres. I get quite a thrill to see the new shoot popping out of the seed compost, and then, when the first true leaves are showing, to move them on into an 8cm pot, remembering not to touch the main stem as those fine hairs are very sensitive to damage. This year I have a few pots of 'Sungold', and their cherry size fruits, which are very juicy, have a high sugar content, plus the skins are not too thick! To deter aphids why not plant some basil or chives around the base of the plants in the greenhouse, and even outside in a sunny sheltered position. My son in law always remarks that home grown tomatoes have a better flavour than those in supermarkets; this is due to being grown in the soil or potting media rather than on lumps of rockwool and grown by hydroponics, and of course the fruits being picked when just turning red rather than just turning from green.



Do you grow any 'cut and come again' lettuce? At this time of year those extra green leaves do brighten up a cheese, or ham sandwich, but take care to only sow four or five seeds as unless you have a rabbit or guinea pig, four plants will certainly keep you in leaves! Remember to make monthly sowings so that the leaves are always young, fresh and tender.

There are various ways to find out more gardening. Locally there is the Blackhall Horticultural Society but due to the lockdown restrictions there is no face to face activity, although plans are afoot to have a late summer get together. There are also several Friends of Greenspace groups such as Friends of Saughton Park, Friends of Starbank Park, and Friends of Lauriston Castle Estate, and they provide an ideal opportunity to share knowledge while working outside. All three groups have a live Facebook presence as does 'the horti' - do look them up or if you want more information on any of the above please just email me

johnmaclennanuk@googlemail.com

John MacLennan





Feeling inspired? Join the Virtual Kiltwalk 2021!

If you would like to take on your own challenge for Fresh Start and really make it count then please consider signing up for the Virtual Kiltwalk. Taking place over the weekend of the 23-25th of April, you can choose your own challenge and location for the event to keep in line with restrictions. Every penny that you raise will be matched by 50% so if you've been thinking about it then this is the perfect time to get started! For more details head to our website, www.freshstartweb.org.uk/get-involved/virtual-kiltwalk-2021



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With your support, anything is possible

Fresh Start's Pantry opened back in June and has become an essential part of the community, as well as inspiring the opening of other branches throughout Scotland to help even more people access affordable and nutritious food. The Fresh Start Pantry was recently featured in a video by My Community Pantry and tells the story of our members and volunteers and the impact it has had, click below to watch.



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Blackhall Community Trust



We hope residents are keeping safe and well in these difficult times – hopefully spring and better times are not too far away. Blackhall Community Trust’s activities for residents (coffee group, walking group) are still on hold but we are looking forward when they can safely restart.

The Blackhall Community Trust AGM is being held online on Wednesday 31 March at 7.30pm. It would be great if residents and BCT members could join us. Please email blackhallcommunitytrust@gmail.com to let us know you would like to attend, and we will send you the meeting link nearer the date.

If you are interested in becoming a trustee/director, please get in touch by email. It is free to become a member of BCT – email us to join via blackhallcommunitytrust@gmail.com. Also email us and let us know if you would like to sign up for our e-newsletter. Visit our website www.blackhallcommunitytrust.org.uk or follow us on Facebook [@blackhallet](https://www.facebook.com/blackhallet) or Twitter [@BlackhallCT](https://twitter.com/BlackhallCT).



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PALM SUNDAY & HOLY WEEK



The events of Easter took place over a week, traditionally called Passion Week.

It began on Palm Sunday. After all His teaching and healing, Jesus had built a following.

On the Sunday before He was to die, Jesus and His followers arrived at Jerusalem. The city was crowded. Jewish people were arriving from to celebrate Passover. This commemorates how they had escaped from slavery in Egypt nearly 1,500 year earlier.

Jesus rode into the city on a young donkey. He was greeted like a conquering hero. Cheering crowds waved palm branches in tribute. He was hailed as the Messiah who had come to re-establish a Jewish kingdom.

The next day they returned to Jerusalem. Jesus went to the temple, the epicentre of the Jewish faith, and confronted the money-changers and merchants who were ripping off the people. He overturned their tables and accused them of being thieves. The religious authorities were alarmed and feared how He was stirring up the crowds.

On the Tuesday, they challenged Jesus, questioning His authority. He answered by challenging and condemning their hypocrisy. Later that day Jesus spoke to His disciples about future times. He warned them about fake religious leaders; the coming destruction of Jerusalem; wars, earthquakes and famines; and how His followers would face persecution.

By midweek the Jewish religious leaders and elders were so angry with Jesus that they began plotting to arrest and kill Him. One of Jesus' disciples, Judas, went to the chief priests and agreed to betray Him to them.

Jesus and the 12 disciples gathered on the Thursday evening to celebrate the Passover meal. This is known as the Last Supper. During the evening, Jesus initiated a ritual still marked by Christians – Holy Communion – which commemorates His death. Jesus broke bread and shared it and a cup of wine with His disciples.

Judas then left to meet the other plotters. Jesus continued to teach the others and then went outside into an olive grove to pray. He even prayed for all future believers. He agonised over what was to come but chose the way of obedience. The Bible book, Luke, records Him praying, *'Father if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done'*. Minutes later Judas arrived with soldiers and the chief priests and Jesus was arrested.

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Blackhall Guiding



202 Rainbows are working on the Be Well Theme badge during their Zoom calls. They had a visit from Ted Bears hospital and are learning why sleep, healthy eating and exercise are all important. We also had a visit from Cool Creatures during Zoom and learned all about some exotic animals and reptiles".

Nicola McDermid- 202 Rainbow leader



202 and 202B Brownies have been very busy. We met outside from August until December and were lucky to have good weather. We are back online this term and have already had a busy start from crafting, baking and learning facts about some animals from with a visit from Cool Creatures. We are looking forward to getting back to face to face meetings at some point. **Nicole Harland 202 and 202B**

Brownie Leader



202 Guides started back this term with a full programme of "Finding our Way". We hope to be able to meet outdoors again soon. Until then, we are continuing to meet on Zoom to do badges, play fun games and do some lovely baking!

Lorna Kelly - 202 Guide Leader.



Rangers have enjoyed a variety of online activities the past term including a Zoom Murder Mystery and a Ready, Steady, Cook challenge! Next term we're going to learn about chocolate making and enjoy a pamper night. We're looking forward to having meetings in person once we're able to do so!

Chelsie Wyatt - Ranger Leader.

Volunteer with Girlguiding Edinburgh?

Could you spare some time to volunteer with us? It's an exciting time to be part of Girlguiding as we get to grips with our most exciting (and biggest) programme overhaul in 100 years!

We are looking for enthusiastic adults to help with Rainbow, Brownie & Guide units city-wide,

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<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/become-a-volunteer/>

GGUKBlackhallDistrict@outlook.com



THE PINK PANTHER EXPLORERS



The Pink Panthers have had a very eventful term finally getting back to face to face scouting each week. This term especially we put an emphasis in getting our older Explorers involved in program planning with our patrol leaders each taking on a night to run for the rest of the unit. One particularly memorable night had to be the sports night when it did not stop raining and as we were outside, due to covid restrictions, the park had become a bit of a mud bath. However, the explorers took it in their stride and had very energetic football, hockey, rounders and volleyball games which ended with many of the

explorers looking more mud monster than person. We also hosted a fire madness night at Davidsons Mains park where the explorers were challenged to build fires in different demanding scenarios as well as learning about fire safety and the consequences of putting extremely flammable substances on fires.

The past term has been an incredibly diverse and different program of activities as the covid-19 restrictions has led to us really having to think outside the box for ideas. An example of this would have to be in our Christmas party, usually we play games and have fun in our nice warm hall however this could not happen this year. Instead, we chose to celebrate an international Christmas with food and games from all around the world. Our explorers especially enjoyed the food brought by some of our leaders from further afield. Talking about food, another interesting activity we ran was I'm an Explorer Get Me Out of Here! The explorers plunged their hands in cold cooked spaghetti, ate some rather interesting food and had their general knowledge tested (with truly rank smoothies as punishment for incorrect answers of course!) all to win stars for their patrol, which all added up to a chocolate prize.

Now of course we are back on Zoom over the last two weeks we have been researching and discussing some global issues such as homelessness and refugees. Near the end of January, we did a food collection for Fresh Start Food Bank filling Fraser's entire car with non-perishable items and essentials. Some of our explorers have also been seeing how hard it is to live on a small budget by trying to eat for three days on a budget of £2 each day.

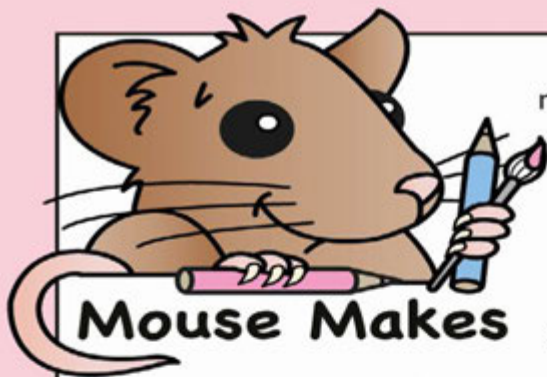


We also held another salmonberry clear up in December which was incredibly successful in helping to remove the invasive species and hopefully encourage the native plants and animals on Corstorphine hill to flourish this spring. Hopefully we will be able to hold this event again later on in 2021 so that salmonberry can eventually be eradicated or at least a lot more tightly controlled on Corstorphine hill.



Overall, we have had a very exciting term and we look forward to more innovative and enjoyable zoom meetings each week. From the explorers, we are sure everyone would agree that in these challenging times it is incredibly impressive that our leaders have managed and continue to manage to pull off an amazing weekly programmes like they do and we would all like to say a huge thank you for continuing Explorers no matter the boundaries and challenges. On the plus side now, we are back on Zoom at least we have that all important mute button back!

Niamh



Mouse Makes

Who is my mother?
Look up the Bible verses then find the mother's names in the word search

CAIN and ABEL
Genesis 4:1-2

JOSEPH
Genesis 30:22-24

ISHMAEL
Genesis 16:15

TIMOTHY
2 Timothy 1:5

RUBEN
Genesis 29:32

GAD
Genesis 35:26

SAMUEL
1 Samuel 1:20

OBED
Matthew 1:5

ISAAC
Genesis 21:3

Jesus was **loved** by his mother Mary, she looked after him, worried about him and prayed for him. She **cuddled** Jesus when he was born, **cried** when he died and **rejoiced** when he rose from the dead.

SOLOMON
1 Chronicles 3:5

JOHN
Luke 1:57-60

ESAU and JACOB
Genesis 25:24-26

JESUS
Acts 1:14



R	A	C	H	E	L	M	A	R	Y	A	V	Z
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E	T	M	U	M	L	E	A	H	N	N	L	P
K	M	O	T	H	E	R	R	T	N	I	E	A
A	I	S	H	H	A	G	A	R	A	C	G	H
H	S	T	A	B	A	T	H	S	H	E	B	A

There are two other words in the word search, can you find them?

Blackhall Nursery News Spring 2021



Blackhall Nursery is situated within the wonderful nature resource of Ravelston Park and Woods. At Blackhall Nursery, we put the children at the heart of everything we do. We provide a safe, healthy and happy environment where children grow and develop through play and active learning.

Following a settled period for the Nursery children from August until December 2020, we once again find ourselves 'up in the air'. As I write this we are open only for the children of keyworkers and are awaiting a date when we can welcome everyone back, hopefully mid-February. Staff are working to provide a variety of online activities, as well as taking part in the RSPB Bird Watch, celebrating Burns Night and we are hoping to have our children back in the setting in time for World Book Day on 4th March.

Blackhall Nursery is a registered Scottish charity working in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council. We offer full day (6 hours) places for 3-5 year olds during term time.

We are a feeder nursery for Blackhall Primary School and **all places are free and funded by the City of Edinburgh Council**. The Nursery enjoys an excellent reputation within the community but don't take our word for it, please take a look at the parents' comments on our Care Inspectorate report available at www.careinspectorate.com.

You can place your child's name on the Nursery waiting list from their 2nd birthday by downloading an application form at www.blackhallnursery.co.uk or by contacting the Nursery for an application form on 0131 332 8296.



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We would be delighted to
assist you.



BLACKHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Before the schools closed for winter break, Primary 7A were busy creating Winter Wonderland scenes using watercolours to create a magical background for their forest scenes.



Primary 3A have looked at thistles and have created these fantastic pieces of art using pattern and colour to add detail.





BLACKHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Primary 7 created some spectacular African art inspired by one of their class topics. They used colour and pattern to draw an African animal of their choice and looked at African patterns to create a border.



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GOOD NEWS ABOUT BLACKHALL LIBRARY



Local Councillors Kevin Lang and Louise Young are pleased to say that Blackhall library is set to reopen at the end of March. Major work to refurbish the library has been underway for a number of months. This work has inevitably been disrupted due to the COVID restrictions. However, we have had it confirmed by council officials that plans are progressing which should mean the library can open from 29 March- depending of course on Covid restrictions.





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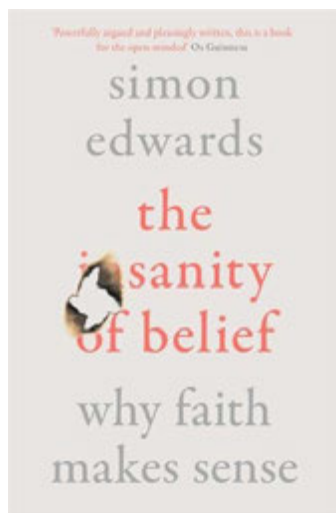
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REVIEWS OF SOME BOOKS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST TO YOU



The Sanity of Belief - why faith makes sense By Simon Edwards, SPCK, £7.99

This thoughtful, engaging book challenges the assumptions that may lead us to reject a faith and doubt something that we've never really had the chance to understand. From our need for meaning and significance, to our desires for truth, goodness, love and hope, he explores the things that matter to us as human beings and shows us why the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ might just make sense of them all.

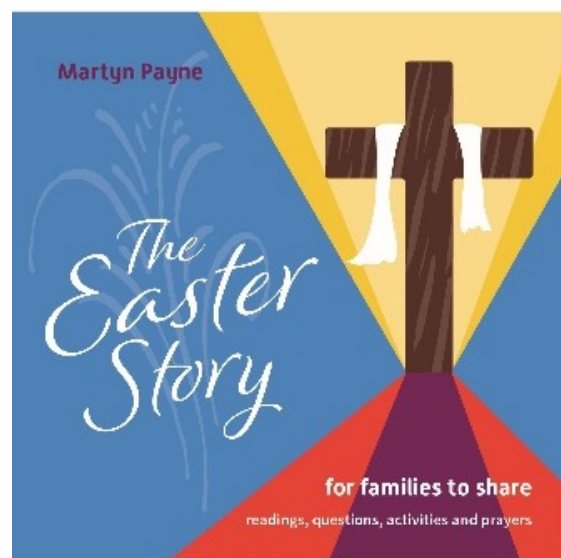
It may be ideal for anyone looking for a clear, down-to-earth introduction to Christianity, or for those wanting to reaffirm the foundations on which their faith is based.

Wild Lent – discovering God through creation By Rachel Summers, Kevin Mayhew, £7.99

Wild Lent could change how you experience Lent this year. Instead of a nice cosy room, coffee, biscuits and lots of discussion about the meaning of Lent, you'll be wrapping up warm and heading off into the wilds!

You could get up close and personal with creation and make a shadow clock, have a sunrise breakfast walk, go on a giant egg hunt, hug a tree, walk barefoot... and share God's creation with others. The book gives you lots of ideas for things to make and do, whatever the weather.

Rachel Summers is a Forest School Practitioner and runs Curious Wilds, which provides forest school sessions.



The Easter Story – for families to share By Martyn Payne, BRF, £2.50

The Easter Story is written for parents, grandparents and carers to engage with their children through a fun and stimulating family Bible and prayer time. Each section provides a brief comment on the passage, questions to discuss, a visual aid to encourage engagement with the story, an activity idea, a prayer idea, a key verse and an Old or New Testament story link.



The Blackhall Probus Club is part of a UK-wide group which organizes social events for retired gentlemen in the local area. With a membership of around fifty, we normally meet on the first and third Thursday of the month from October through to April at the Blackhall Bowling Club on Keith Row at 10:00 to chat over tea/coffee/biscuits before listening to a talk given by experts and enthusiasts across a diverse range of subjects. We also organise two lunches and a summer outing each year to which partners are invited.

Due to Covid-19, our programme has been curtailed this year, but we are now having monthly Zoom presentations and quizzes which have been well received by our members. Talks so far have included topics as diverse as *“The life and times of Deacon Brodie”* and *“Edinburgh surgeons and the link to golf”*. We hope to re-start our face-to-face meetings later this year, subject to Government restrictions being lifted, but in the meanwhile our monthly Zoom presentations will continue.

We are always pleased to welcome new members, so if you would like to join us for our Zoom presentations, please contact the Secretary for more details.

Keith Gilroy, Secretary, Blackhall Probus Club.

Phone: 0131 312 6060

Email: ksgprobus@virginmedia.com

Between attending our highly successful Zoom style meetings, and receiving our Covid 19 vaccines, the early spring has flown by, although it may be too soon to say that life has or is about to, return to normality. The initial teething problems of setting up our meetings using Zoom were soon overcome and as well as having social chats among ourselves on alternate Wednesdays, there was, and is, a fair amount of informal banter before and after our talks. To cheer ourselves up some of our talks have not been that academic, with an example being Stan da Prato's talk about East Lothian Wildlife during which he asked us to identify bird calls as well as discussing the virtues of making gin from the berries of the Sea Buckthorn.

We have three talks arranged for March to conclude our winter session starting with, on 3rd March, Eric Melvin's fact finding talk on the Porteous Riots which will be followed on 17th March by Ken Williamson entertaining us with his memories of North American Railroads. As it is unlikely we will be able to nip across to the States this summer, Ken's talk will bring the trains, their horns, and rich scenery to us. On 31st March our retiring President, Bob King, will tell us about 'The Phantom Regiment of WW2', sometimes also known as GHQ Liaison Regiment who were involved in special reconnaissance.

Our meetings are always open to all, and this spring we have enjoyed the company of several spouses of members - past and present. Do give us a try and for more information just email us at infocpc21@gmail.com or drop me an email to me at johnmacleannanuk@gmail.com But remember that no Probus meeting is ever complete without a mug of coffee (or tea) and a few chocolate biscuits carefully taken from the biscuit tin without being noticed!

John MacLennan: Past President

<https://craigleithprobus.myfreesites.net>.

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Two puzzles – for those springtime shower days

A medium difficulty sudoku and a crossword that will have you searching for your Bible !

	5		8			4	6	
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Crossword clues

Across

- 1 The earth is one (6)
- 4 'On a hill far away stood an old — cross' (6)
- 7 'I am the — vine and my Father is the gardener' (John 15:1) (4)
- 8 The Caesar who was Roman Emperor at the time of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:1) (8)
- 9 'Your — should be the same as that of Christ Jesus' (Philippians 2:5) (8)
- 13 Jesus said that no one would put a lighted lamp under this (Luke 8:16) (3)
- 16 Involvement (1 Corinthians 10:16) (13)
- 17 Armed conflict (2 Chronicles 15:19) (3)
- 19 Where the Gaderene pigs were feeding (Mark 5:11) (8)
- 24 What jeering youths called Elisha on the road to Bethel (2 Kings 2:23) (8)
- 25 The Venerable —, eighth-century Jarrow ecclesiastical scholar (4)
- 26 8 Across issued a decree that this should take place (Luke 2:1) (6)
- 27 Come into prominence (Deuteronomy 13:13) (6)

Down

- 1 Where some of the seed scattered by the sower fell (Matthew 13:4) (4)
- 2 Sexually immoral person whom God will judge (Hebrews 13:4) (9)
- 3 Gospel leaflet (5)
- 4 Physical state of the boy brought to Jesus for healing (Mark 9:18)
- 5 Tugs (anag.) (4)
- 6 To put forth (5)
- 10 Nationality associated with St Patrick (5)
- 11 Leader of the descendants of Kohath (1 Chronicles 15:5) (5)
- 12 'After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping — heel' (Genesis 25:26) (5)
- 13 At Dothan the Lord struck the Arameans with — at Elisha's request (2 Kings 6:18) (9)
- 14 'Peter, before the cock crows today, you will — three times that you know me' (Luke 22:34) (4)
- 15 Spit out (Psalm 59:7) (4)
- 18 'When I —, I am still with you' (Psalm 139:18) (5)
- 20 Concepts (Acts 17:20) (5)
- 21 Thyatira's dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (5)
- 22 Does (anag.) (4)
- 23 The second set of seven cows in Pharaoh's dream were this (Genesis 41:19) (4)



Blackhall St Columba's Church of Scotland, Edinburgh
Scottish Registered Charity No SC008756

Minister
Rev Fergus Cook
5 Blinkbonny Crescent
Edinburgh EH4 3NB
Telephone 466 7503

Session Clerk
Eddie Thorn
158 Craigeith Road
Edinburgh EH4 2EQ
Telephone 332 5702

Church Secretary
Ms Joy McGonigal-Paget
in Church Office from
Tues-Fri 10.00-12.30p.m.
Tel/fax 332 4431

DEADLINES

Kirk News – Sunday 21st March

Please send all items to the Editor;
Christine Denham, c/o Church Office
Home tel: 336 5943 or e-mail:
kirknews@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

Blackhall Bulletin- Sunday 2nd May

Please send all items, including Advertising
Enquiries to the Editor: Barbara Wilson, c/o Church Office
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