

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

JANUARY 2020

No. 817

## New Year, new look for Blackhall St Columba's



Wishing you all  
a very Happy New Year in 2020

---

<b>Minister (Vacancy)</b> <b>Interim Moderator:</b> The Very Rev Dr Russell Barr <b>Locum:</b> Rev Gordon Farquharson Tel. 343 1047	<b>Session Clerk</b> Mr Eddie Thorn Tel. 332 5702	<b>Church Secretary</b> Ms Julie Nicol In Church Office from Mon-Fri, 9.00-12.30pm Tel. 332 4431 <a href="mailto:secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk">secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk</a>
--	---	--

---

## **Prayer for a New Year**

O God who changes not with our changing years, we look back along the road we have come and we thank You for the loving-kindness and dependability that have seen us through along its way.

When the road has been dark, You have shown us light.

Continue Your help so that we may travel in the right direction.

We look forward, without knowing what lies in store in the year we begin.

Help us to live day by day, trusting You as much in shadow as in sunshine for the guiding compass of Your will.

In Your companionship may we find our strength to journey in peace, in friendship and in harmony with all Your Creation.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(after Leslie Weatherhead 1958)

---

## From the Minister

### 20/20 Vision



Dear friends,

Elizabeth and I send our best wishes to you all for the New Year.

As I write things are uncertain as we prepare for a General Election. It is difficult to have a vision of 2020, remembering that it means “what a ‘normal’ human being should be able to see when standing 20 feet away from an eye chart”! We have to look ahead in faith and live in hope.

One of my favourite poems for the season of New Year is Tennyson’s lyric, best known as “Ring out wild bells”, from his long biographical work ‘In Memoriam’.

I hope the bells will ring out cheerfully for Ne’erday. I won’t be ringing that midnight, though I have in the past had to perform the New Year bell-ringing in Tobermory and in Kirm when the regular ringers were off duty. It’s a job that makes you a bit more reflective than usual. As Tennyson, the Victorian Poet Laureate, suggested, the bells are ringing out the old and ringing in the new. Maybe he was the first with the idea, but I doubt it. He certainly provides a thought-provoking list of what has to be left behind with the Old Year: - ‘falsehood’, ‘the grief that saps the mind’, ‘the feud of rich and poor’, ‘ancient forms of party strife’, ‘want, care, sin, the faithless coldness of the times’, ‘false pride’, ‘disease, greed, wars’.

Tennyson’s list is not an old one, but surprisingly up-to-date, for the world’s worst evils seem persistent. What might change from year to year are the hopes of the people. As he pulls on the rope, the bell-ringer should think about the meaning of the bell’s chimes for all those who hear them. To some they may mean a lot. Some will be glad to have their regrets and sadnesses rung out. Some may welcome the change as they leave part of the past behind them. Some may be encouraged to move on. The poem recommends the positive values that should replace what has been abandoned in terms of justice, ‘sweeter manners, purer laws’, ‘the love of truth and right... the common love of good’, ‘the larger heart, the kindlier hand’. All of the wishes are just as appropriate now as when Tennyson wrote them in the 1840s, and so is the final one that we all ‘Ring in the Christ that is to be’.

May He be rung in with your New Year and may He be our guide through all that 2020 brings.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Farquharson, Minister

---

## In Memoriam, [Ring out, wild bells]

*Alfred Lord Tennyson – 1809-1892*



Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind  
For those that here we see no more;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.



---

## Wednesday Prayer Group

There is a small prayer group meeting on alternate Wednesdays at 10.30 am in the Small Hall which started as the Nominating Committee was elected. The format is simple, we have a series of Bible verses or passages which tell us something about prayer, we look at them together and folk are encouraged to take one element from the passage and make that the focus of a simple prayer.



If you are not accustomed to praying in public then this is the meeting for you. There is no pressure to pray out loud. Some may use a hymn verse for their prayer, others just a “one-breath prayer” with just one thought. Some look at the passage and comment on it. All of that is fine and encourages everyone present.

Prayer is, of course, just one of the ways in which we can contribute to the work of the church and perhaps when it gets harder to take on heavy responsibility prayer becomes our unique opportunity to make a difference.

We certainly have plenty to pray about: the refurbishment process, the new minister, the Alpha Course, our friends and family, the Session, Gordon and Eddie as they carry the burden of ministry and administration week by week. All of these matters need God’s strength and guidance and prayer is the way in which we contribute to that process.

The meeting lasts one hour but consider it as a “drop in” time where you can pop in for 10 minutes, say nothing and disappear or join in prayer in some way but feeling under no compulsion to speak out loud. Fortunately, God knows our hearts.

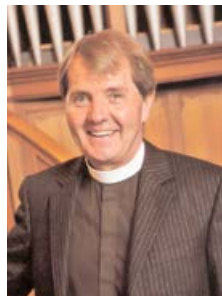
The next meetings will be **15 and 29 January**. Perhaps joining in would make a very appropriate New Year’s resolution!

We look forward to seeing some new faces in 2020.

Tiggy Herbert

---

## A New Year Message from the Very Rev Dr Russell Barr Interim Moderator



*I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year  
'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.'*

Written in 1908, as well as being a great favourite with many people, Minnie Louise Haskin's poem offers some valuable insights at the beginning of a new year.

Recognising that any new year holds many uncertainties, the poet asks for a light so that she can see clearly the path that lies ahead of her.

Given that there are lots of uncertainties at the beginning of 2020 -

will the world finally awaken to all the challenges of the climate crisis and finally resolve to do something about it?

what does the future hold for the union of the United Kingdom and for our relationship with our European neighbours ?

will all the work being done to refurbish our sanctuary be finished on time and on budget?

and will we find a new minister?

it is all too tempting to do the same.

Instead of a light however, the man standing at the gate of the year offers the poet something much better;

*'Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the hand of God.  
That shall be to you better than light, and safer than a known way.'*!

Although we would all like a degree of certainty to know what will happen in the coming weeks and months, rather than certainty the Christian faith invites us to trust.

With the birth of Jesus, God has come into the world to share all the joys and sorrows of the human condition as well as all the opportunities and challenges of human life.

And because God has come among us and understands all our hopes and dreams and fears, we can trust that whatever the coming days hold for us and our church and our world, it will be embraced in the kindness and compassion of our loving God. /continued opposite

---

## Vacancy

### Nominating Committee Update

The Nominating Committee was elected by the congregation in August to select a single candidate to be nominated as our next minister. Much effort was applied by its members to draft and finalise our Parish Profile to inform and attract potential applicants. This splendid document was published on-line on 1 November within the church's website and members of the congregation should inspect it to see how we have portrayed the mission and work of the church. (And particular thanks to our Church Secretary, Julie, for her design and type-setting skills.) In the Profile we have stated clearly the challenges we face but also the many strengths which we enjoy - such as the enthusiasm of our members, the range of church and community activities we host, and the worship opportunities provided by our current church transformation.

The publication of the Parish Profile is effectively the starting gun for interested ministers to contact us. However, the restriction of confidentiality means that we can say very little about the expressions of interest we have received at this point (early December 2019) other than to report that the Committee is pleased that a good start has been made. It will be understood that it is also difficult to predict what the time-table will be for any firm information to be released, so please continue to support us by being patient but continuing to pray that the right person will come forward and be appointed as our new minister in due course.

Brian Duffin  
Convenor

---

### **A New Year Message** continued

So in wishing you and yours a very happy New Year let me encourage you to do as the poet did and to put your hand into the hand of God, that is, to trust in God's continuing care and concern and like the poet you too will discover to your joy such trust is much better than light and much safer than a known way.

The Very Rev Dr Russell Barr  
Interim Moderator

---

# Church Diary

## January

5	10.30 am	Morning Worship
8	12 noon	Mid Week Service followed by light lunch
12	10.30 am	Morning Worship
19	10.30 am	Morning Worship
22	12 noon	Mid Week Service followed by light lunch
26	10.30 am	Morning Worship followed by short communion
28	4.00 pm	Service at Strachan House

## February

2	10.30 am	Morning Worship
5	12 noon	Mid Week Service followed by light lunch
9	10.30 am	Morning Worship
16	10.30 am	Morning Worship
19	12 noon	Mid Week Service followed by light lunch
23	9.30 am	Sacrament of Communion
	11.00 am	Sacrament of Communion
25	4.00 pm	Service at Strachan House

## Flowers

During January the flowers in church will be donated as follows:

- 5 Mrs Margaret McArthur
- 12 In memory of Mary Gillie
- 19 Mrs June Logan
- 26 Mrs Margaret Edington

Mrs Ann Pugh and Mrs Elspeth Williamson will deliver the flowers.

Violet Troup  
Flower Convener

## Family

### DEATHS

#### September

- 24 Mrs Alison Brown  
Murrayfield Care Home

(With apologies that the above notice was not included in the November issue of Kirk News.)

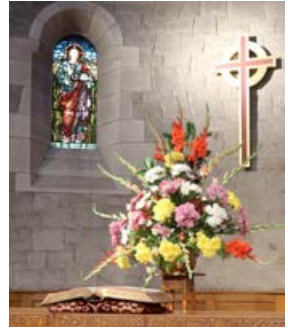


---

## Church Flower Team

We are going to set up a rota for arranging the Sunday Flowers so that one person does not have to carry the full responsibility of doing this every week.

To make this rota as good as possible we are inviting anybody who would like to arrange the Sunday flowers to let us know of their interest. These people would then be able to arrange the flowers for anyone who contributes flowers for the church but who does not want to arrange them themselves.



Swaps would be possible as in all rotas if you get a date you can't manage. The more people who are interested, the fewer occasions you would be doing the flowers.

For those who are interested but have not done the flowers so far you would only have to contribute your time. Bowls and foam for holding flowers are provided and the money comes from another list of people who donate for different weeks.

Team members all join together to decorate the church (large hall at present) for Christmas, Easter, Harvest and other special occasions which have included weddings. Its great fun to do these things and we enjoy ourselves and get to know one another better over a cup of tea or coffee.

Please don't be shy, tell us if you would like to help.

Alison, Lyndy, Liz, Norma, Violet [or contact via Church Office 332 4431]

### Edinburgh Floral Art Club

Our Club meetings are held on the second Friday of each month (September to December and February to June) in Blackhall St Columba's Church Hall from 2 to 4 pm. Visitors welcome (£7).

#### **Forthcoming meetings:**

We have no meeting in January and have a Club Day in February so our next demonstration will be on -

**13 March** when **John Dalton** from Carlisle will demonstrate on the theme '**Spring is in the Air**'.

Isabel Ingram  
[iingram@btinternet.com](mailto:iingram@btinternet.com)



In a busy week Donald Cameron, our Director of Music, led members of our Church Choir as they sang for Edinburgh's Christmas Nativity and Carol Concert at the Mound on Sunday 1 December.



On Thursday 5 December he led members of Blackhall St Columba's in carol singing at the switch-on of the Christmas Tree lights at Blackhall Dip.



---

## The First and Second Candles of Advent



The first candle of Advent, the Candle of Hope was lit by the Roddam family on Sunday 1 December and the second candle of Advent, the Candle of Peace, by the Rogers family on Sunday 8 December.



---

## Gift Service and Nativity

Sunday, 8 December, the second Sunday in Advent, was a day when children 'took centre stage'. Gifts brought for the children of prisoners, were laid by the Christmas tree, and the Advent candles, (Hope and Peace) were lit by the Rogers family. Then the Junior Singers, under the leadership of Amy Donaldson, with older children as narrators, gave a lively and most enjoyable presentation of 'Hosanna Rock' the musical story of the Nativity. For the production Amy was supported by Marge Whiteside, Ann Pugh and Betty Watt, As we have come to expect of Amy's coaching the children sang beautifully: the costumes were most impressive.

Once again well done and thank you to all involved.



Hosanna Rock! Hosanna Roll!  
In the Heavens above and the Earth below  
Let all men sing. Let Hosannas ring.  
We have seen the baby, we've seen the King.  
Hosanna Rock! Hosanna Roll! Hosanna Swing!



---

# Alpha Course

The Local Church Review completed by the Presbytery during the year made one of the three elements on which they based their positive report, the idea of running Alpha to bring in new folk and teach our existing folk more about sharing the Christian faith. Libby and I then volunteered to run the course since we have run similar courses elsewhere and the Session agreed this would be a positive course of action as we complete the refurbishment and trust some visitors will be coming along to see what has taken place.

The Session has agreed the course will run in Costa Coffee in Craighleith Retail Park on Tuesday evenings from 7.30-9.00 starting 28 January 2020. Costa will not charge for the facilities but expects food and drinks purchased to cover their staffing costs. The Church will underwrite this cost but donations will be accepted on the evenings.

The new Alpha weekly films are very professionally produced and they answer very basic questions about the Christian Faith. The course series will run as follows:

1. Is there more to life than this?
2. Who is Jesus?
3. Why did Jesus die?
4. How can I have faith?
5. Why and how do I pray?
6. Why and how should I read the Bible?
7. How does God guide us?

**On Saturday 14 March we have an away day,  
venue to be decided.**

**Then back to Tuesdays for the final 3 weeks  
ending 31 March.**

8. How can I resist evil?
9. Why and how should I tell others?
10. What about the church?

The draft structure of the evenings will be:

7.30 pm Arrive and have some food panini/sandwiches which will be prepared beforehand by Costa. /continued

---

## Alpha Course continued

- 7.50 pm Watch the video for the day
- 8.15 pm Coffee/hot drinks and break into discussion groups of 6-10
- 8.45 pm Closing remarks and information
- 9.00 pm Close

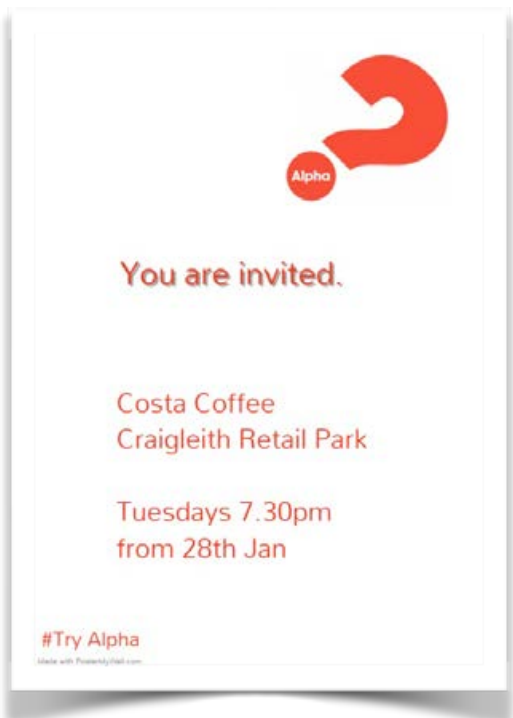
This course will give church members and adherents information to enable us to answer questions that visitors to our newly refurbished church may have. No matter where we are on the journey towards living as our Lord Jesus Christ wants us to live we can all learn more about the Christian faith and this course will help us all make sense of the road on which we have embarked.

The course is also aimed at those have no Christian faith and do not attend church regularly so the challenge to us all is to consider prayerfully who we could invite along amongst our friends and family members.

Without doubt this requires a commitment from participants and it is understood that not everyone can make all the evenings and away day. However the videos are available on You Tube and so they can be viewed at home but the sharing of discussion time and getting to know others in the group is an essential component in the whole programme.

We will provide invitation cards in the church and you will see a banner on Sundays to remind us all of the plans and in the meantime I am sure the whole Session would want to commend this project to your prayers and support in any way you can.

Donald and Libby Cameron



---

Work in the Sanctuary is progressing very well and is on target. The way it will eventually look is beginning to take shape. The pews have all gone; the extended apse is in place and the



underfloor heating should be installed by Christmas. This will enable the contractors to get on with replacing the floor. The virtual tour has been updated and can easily be viewed by anyone who is interested. It is accessed by going to the church's website, [www.blackhallstcolumba.org](http://www.blackhallstcolumba.org), clicking on Building for the Future and then on Virtual Reality Tour.

As many will be all too well aware, the main problem we have had is with the heating to the Halls while the boilers were disconnected. This, of course, was necessary to enable the contractors to remove all old pipework and equipment and completely refit the boiler house with up to date fittings and boilers to support the heating in the Sanctuary and halls. The good news is that the new boilers were commissioned at the beginning of December and heating has been restored to the halls. The bad news, of course, was that the temporary system which was put in place to heat the halls while this work was being done did not work properly. The reason for this was entirely to do with the electrical wiring in the halls themselves and not to do with any work being carried out in the Sanctuary. Essentially, the wiring system was very old and it simply could not cope with the number of heaters needed to make a difference in such a large area. Although it might be a little difficult to see it that way when you are shivering in November weather, in some ways this has been a blessing in disguise because the work on the wiring would have had to be done anyway sooner rather than later and it is now much more robust than it was. It is still a pity that it had to happen at this particular time and apologies to everyone who has been inconvenienced.

Services held in the Large Hall have continued to have a refreshing feel to them and, at time of writing, we are looking forward to the busy Christmas period. The Family Gift and Nativity Service will be on 8 December and a small platform will be put in place to the left of the minister as the congregation looks at it so that everyone will be able to see clearly what is going on. We then move on to the Choir Service on the 15<sup>th</sup>, the Band Service on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and the Christmas Eve, Watchnight and Christmas Day Services. The focal point for these services will be the stage where the choir and band will be – it is also where the Christmas tree will be – so the seating will be laid out differently so that everyone will be facing the stage. / continued



---

## **Building for the Future** continued

Thanks to a great deal of hard work by a number of people, and patience and tolerance by everyone, things are currently going well and it is good to be able to think that we have now just about reached the half way point. In fact, the steering group is already starting to think about the logistical challenges of moving back into the Sanctuary and about organising a re-dedication service. This will probably be in June although we expect to be back worshipping in the Sanctuary for a few weeks before that.

---

## **Dates for the new diary**

The Outreach Team are working or assisting on a number of projects for 2020 so here are some dates for your diary:

**Tuesday 28 January 2020 7 30 pm** Supporting the Alpha Course launch.  
(See pages 14/15)

**Saturday 21 March 2020 7 pm** Family Church Ceilidh to welcome in the Spring.

**Sunday 12 April 2020 8 am** (well a late sunrise) Early Easter Sunday morning service in Ravelston Park with coffee and bacon rolls back at the church hall.

### **Dates to be arranged:**

We are in discussions with Sainsburys at Craigleith Retail Park to see if we can run a “Messy Church” event on their premises but yet to finalise dates.

In addition we are looking at starting a men’s fellowship on a Friday afternoon and again more on this later.

Also looking ahead to the hand-back of the church from the contractors and having some exciting events around that and the re-dedication of the Sanctuary.

Michael Cockburn  
Outreach Working Team

---

## KIRK SESSION REPORT

The Kirk Session met on 29 October and 26 November.

### **Alpha Course**

Donald and Libby Cameron volunteered to run an Alpha course and this was readily supported by the Kirk Session. The start date will be late January 2020 with the course being held in Costa, Craighleith Retail Park. Full details on pages 14/15 of this issue

### **Church Secretary**

It was noted, with sadness, that Julie Nicol had tendered her resignation. While Julie was required to give two month's notice, she has agreed to stay on until the end of February to allow us more time to recruit a successor.

### **Correspondence**

An acknowledgement was received from Poppy Scotland thanking the Congregation for the donation of £82.31 from the retiring offering on Remembrance Sunday.

### **Elder to attend General Assembly**

It was agreed that the Session Clerk be nominated as the Congregation representative with the role (the daily attendance) being split between him and Fay Stirling.

### **Finance Working Team**

Adrian Johnston, Congregational Treasurer, advised (at the October meeting) that year to date income was declining and expenditure increasing while there had been a noticeable drop in money banked each Sunday since the move out of the Sanctuary. It was added that comparison of overall income and expenditure with last year was not straightforward because of certain variables and timing issues. While the trend this year is not good equally no conclusions can be drawn or action suggested at this time. A further report with the full 12 month figures for 2019 will be presented to the January meeting of the Session.

### **Legacy**

It was noted with grateful thanks that £2,000 had been received from the Estate of the late Dr M F M McPhail.

### **Re-dedication of the Sanctuary**

It was agreed that a working group be set up to plan for a re-dedication Service to celebrate the move back to the renovated Sanctuary after the works have been completed. / continued

---

## **KIRK SESSION REPORT** continued

### **Retiring Offerings**

It was agreed that retiring collections following the Communion Services in February and June 2020 would go to YMCA and MAF respectively while, as previously agreed, the Christmas retiring collections should go to the same recipients as before, namely the Scottish Bible Society and Fresh Start.

### **Stated Annual Meeting**

It was agreed that in spirit of overall efficiency that from next year:-

- The full report would be made available on the Church website.
- Elders will no longer hand deliver the papers to members in their District.
- Some papers will be available at the entrance to the Large Hall for any members requiring a copy.

---

As this report has been written the new boilers have just been installed and the heating in the halls back to normal. During the period that the new boilers were being installed there were issues with the electric supply which were unrelated to the work in the Sanctuary and this impacted on what heating could be provided on a temporary basis. We were grateful for all the hard work done by Jim Bishop, our Fabric Convener, and Fay Stirling, our Project Manager, in resolving matters with the assistance of Sandy Horn and Mike Whiteside.

Kirk Session is grateful for the patience and understanding of the Congregation over, for what was in most part, a very cold period.

Eddie Thorn  
Session Clerk

---

## Christmas Fair



The Watch Committee would like to thank everyone for making the Christmas Fair on 30 November such a happy and successful event. We appreciate the support of the stallholders, their helpers and everyone who made donations and/or attended on the day. Our thanks also go to the Curry Club for the very efficient “get-in” and “get-out” and to Santa who made a visit to meet the children in his Grotto.

This year the Fair was opened in some style by Interim Moderator, the Very Rev Dr. Russell Barr.



On a freezing day both outside and inside, **£6,240** was raised for this year’s charities, **Kindred** and **Beach Wheelchairs Portobello**.

We intend to present the results of our 2019 fundraising to the charities at a Sunday service during January.

George Millar  
Watch Committee





---

## Jack Burton

### 7 October 1935 - 16 October 2019



Jack Burton was born to parents Flora and Tom in 1935. When war broke out Tom, a sergeant in the airforce, was stationed near Cambridge and Jack and his mother moved to Gamlingay, Cambridgeshire, to be near him. In 1947 sister Joyce was born and the family moved to Kinross with Jack continuing his education at Perth High School.

Jack completed his education at Buckhaven High School, excelling in all subjects, but particularly in art which made him determined to have a career as an architect. Jack was a beautiful writer which led to his being given the task of writing cards and invitations whenever these were required.

On leaving school Jack became apprenticed to a local firm of architects but, after meeting with some miners while playing with Tommy Stewarts Band, he came home to announce that he wanted to train as a mine surveyor. He then went into work study with the Coal Board and later with the Hospitals Board in Edinburgh. On his retirement from the Health Board Jack was thanked for his hard work and commended for his fairness in the treatment of staff.

Anne and Jack first met at a barn dance in Dunfermline. Romance led to marriage in Cupar Church in 1960. They set up home in Edinburgh before moving back to Fife and finally back again to Edinburgh where they settled in Queen's Avenue here in Blackhall. A devoted couple, family has meant everything to them. With two sons, Christopher and Steven, they have welcomed Susan, Fiona and, Angela to the family and grandchildren Andrew, Megan, Jamie, Grace, Ross and Emma. Jack was never happier than being in their company and enjoyed a very happy early birthday party celebrating his 84<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Jack had a lovely boy soprano voice and made a 78 rpm record of 'Bonnie Mary of Argyle'. Introduced to piano lessons in his younger days in Buckhaven he quickly tired of the practice routine and told his teacher he was not coming back. But, musically very gifted, he taught himself to play the piano and later the piano accordion which his grandfather bought him. Jack couldn't read music but, after hearing a tune once, could sit down and play it - apparently never playing the same piece/ continued



---

## **Jack Burton Tribute** continued

of music twice in the same way. There were many occasions when Jack's musical gift was put to good use in and around the church, as evidenced by the photo (opposite) of his playing the piano accordion for the Early Morning Easter Service at the Tower on Corstorphine Hill.

Church life mattered greatly to Jack: he had a strong faith. Ordained to the Eldership at St Cuthbert's, he was inducted to the Eldership of Blackhall St Columba's in 1980. About a year ago he was presented with a Long Service Certificate marking 50 years of Eldership, although not able to be present in church to receive it personally. Jack loved his church, was faithful in attendance and served in so many different ways - Chairman of the Congregational Board, Session Clerk, Presbytery Elder, Welcome Teams Convener, was hugely supportive of the Midweek Service/Lunches to name just a few. In his time as Session Clerk to Alex Douglas he put pressure on Alex to celebrate his Silver Jubilee in the Ministry. Initially much opposed to the idea, Alex was no match for Jack's determination. Alex clearly enjoyed the celebration and doesn't regret succumbing to Jack's persuasion.

It was with sadness that we heard of Jack's terminal illness and of his earlier than expected death, but we give thanks for the joy he had in life, particularly in his family and many friendships. After Jack became ill the family placed a seat at Cramond for Anne and Jack to enjoy while he was still able to be out and about. So, when you are passing, stop, take a seat, enjoy the view and give thanks for a gentleman who gave so much to the life of Blackhall St Columba's. Our thoughts are with Anne and the family at this time.

### **See and admire our beautiful new stone wall**

The corner section of the church wall, demolished by a car in mid-May, has now been rebuilt.

Another item ticked off Fabric Convener, Jim Bishop's, never-ending list of items needing his attention.

Jim, what would we do without you?



---

## Midweek Services

After the break for Christmas and New Year we start again with the fortnightly services on Wednesday 8 January. Our speakers for January are:

8 January - Bill Campbell

22 January - Maha Campbell

We still **desperately** need some more drivers willing to pick people up around 11.30 am and return them home about 1.15 pm. No need to stay for the service if you can't, however, you might find you enjoy it. There is no pressure to be on duty every time and the more people willing to do this the fewer occasions you may be needed.

Any queries to Elspeth Williamson:

336 2600 or [elspethwilliamson@gmail.com](mailto:elspethwilliamson@gmail.com)

### Thursday Study Group

After the break for Christmas and the New Year the weekly study group which meets at Barnton Grove will recommence on 23 January at 2 30 pm.

The Group will be studying 'The Parables of Jesus' over the following 12 weeks.



At the start of a New Year I would like to thank everyone who has helped

Fresh Start in 2019. Help has taken many forms – taking an active part in the hit squads, sorting donations in the warehouse, persuading an employer to have Fresh Start as their corporate charity, using their PAT testing service, responding to the Cookers for Christmas appeal and providing food and household items for the Starter Packs. Everything makes a difference to someone moving into a tenancy after homelessness.

Having celebrated their 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, Fresh Start is looking to the future. They know that they are good at delivering their core services, but would like to be able to increase these. As they are asked for more Starter Packs than they can currently deliver, they would like to double the number which they can provide.

It is hoped that a hub can be opened in 2020 beside the warehouse. Working with partner charities, the intention would be that clients collecting Starter Packs would be able to go next door to receive the help and advice which they might need.

In 2020 can we help Fresh Start increase the number of Starter Packs they provide? A list of the items which they need for their Starter Packs is on the notice board in the corridor. The most recent update sheet from Fresh Start listing items they are short of is also there. Thank you again for your continued support.

Fiona Cooke

For the benefit of any who may not know, the Very Rev Dr Russell Barr, our Interim Moderator in this time of Vacancy, was founder of FreshStart and used his year as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (2016/2017) to highlight the ‘scandal of homelessness’ which he has called an “obscene” and “damning indictment” on modern society.

---

## Promises, Promises

At the joint Stewardship/Outreach Teams' service on 6 October Promise Papers were distributed to each member of the congregation and on subsequent services in the month. These were revised versions of a Commitment Card that had been used in a Stewardship Promotion some years before and subsequently given to every new member joining us. They were intended to remind each of us of our individual promise to our faith and the commitment to it that should follow. An effort was made to inform or remind readers of what goes on in the Church and its halls giving them the opportunity to sign up to participate in activities or to offer added help in their organisation. Methods of giving were included as a reminder of how this vital resource can be done.

The Promise Papers were asked to be returned signed, not purely in the hope of finding recruits but simply as an acknowledgement that each person receiving one had taken the time to read and absorb it. Then it might also have been a timeous and perhaps opportune encouragement for them to inspire others they know to join in our fellowship in a way that would be appealing and productive.

Thirty-five Papers were returned of which 2 were simple acknowledgements while 6 reported current involvement in activities and 13 more confirmed the methods of financial support. However 14 appeared to indicate interest in something new to participate or help in.

Thank you to everybody who completed a Promise Paper. I will pass on relevant names to organisers and if you have not heard by the end of January let me know, via the Church Office if necessary, when I will investigate.

Sandy Weir  
Stewardship Working Team Leader

---

## Tuesday Topics

We have had a good Autumn term at Tuesday Topics and have enjoyed excellent talks. Topics recently have included the Water of Leith and the work of the Conservation Trust, the History of Riddles Court and the work of the Chest Heart and Stroke Society. The latter speaker came as a Superhero, dressed in a pink cape and shorts!

On 3 December Christine Murdie gave a fascinating illustrated talk about her cruise on Orca to the North Cape to spot and count whales and other sea animals. Her photographs showed very clearly the effect of global warming causing the glaciers to melt and destroying the habitat of polar bears and other marine life.

We are now looking forward to our post Christmas meal on 14 January then on 28 January Roy Johnstone will entertain us about the Life, Poetry and Songs of Robert Burns. Future topics include Wine, Women and Song and the Rossie Estate.

All welcome at any meetings.

Eleanor Lowrie, President. Jacky Cowie, Secretary

---

## DEADLINES

### **Kirk News: Sunday 19 January**

Please send all items to the Editor:  
Christine Denham c/o Church Office  
Home tel: 336 5943 or email  
[kirknews@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk](mailto:kirknews@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk)

### **Blackhall Bulletin: Sunday 2 February**

All items should be sent to the Editor:  
Barbara Wilson c/o Church Office  
Home tel: 312 6035 or email  
[bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk](mailto:bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk)

Enquiries about advertisements should  
be sent to Kay Rich:  
8 Queen's Ave South      Tel: 332 8502



## Mouse Makes



### FRANKINCENSE

A sweet smelling incense used in the Temple to worship God. Reminds us that Jesus is God.



**EPIPHANY** is the time in the Church year that we remember when the 'wise men' or 'Magi' followed a star that led them to the Christ child Jesus.

They bowed down and worshiped him and left *three* special gifts:

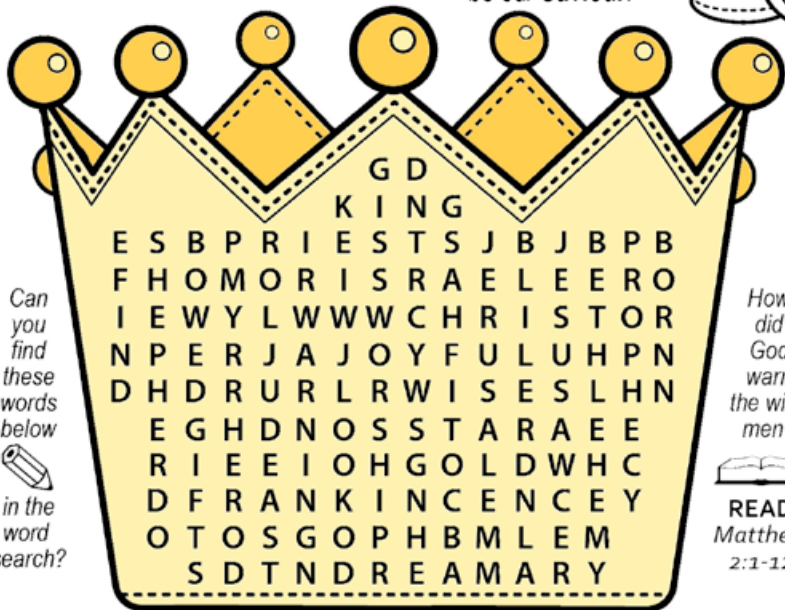


### GOLD

A valuable metal. Reminds us that Jesus is **King of Kings**.

### MYRRH

A fragrant spice put on a body before burial. Reminds us that Jesus was to die so that he could be our **Saviour**.



Can you find these words below in the word search?



How did God warn the wise men?



**READ**  
Matthew 2:1-12

JESUS • BORN • BETHLEHEM • JUDEA • WISE • EAST • JERUSALEM • KING  
STAR • WORSHIP • HEROD • PRIESTS • CHRIST • PROPHECY • SHEPHERD  
ISRAEL • GO • FIND • LOOK • SAW • JOYFUL • MARY • BOWED • GIFTS  
GOLD • FRANKINCENSE • MYRRH • WARNING • DREAM