

KIRK NEWS



BLACKHALL
ST. COLUMBA'S
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

November 2022
No. 835

To glorify God,
to proclaim Christ
and to serve others

Queen Elizabeth II 1926 - 2022



The Queen's cortege passes our Church on its way to the Palace of Holyrood House.

Tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

(As delivered by Rev Fergus Cook in church on the Sunday before the funeral)

Her Majesty the Queen has had a number of changes to her title throughout her life but I begin this tribute with her full title when she passed. I will now read a short tribute to: "Elizabeth II, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of her other realms and territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith."

Born on 21st April 1926, Elizabeth Alexandra Mary was the older child of Prince Albert, Duke of York and Elizabeth, Duchess of York. Her sister, Princess Margaret Rose, was born in 1930. From an early age Elizabeth's personality could be seen clearly and Winston Churchill described Elizabeth, when she was two years old, as "a character. He went on to say that "She has an air of authority and reflectiveness astonishing in an infant."

Third in line to the throne, with the title of Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth of York, there was no reason to believe that she would ever become Queen. However, in 1937, when King Edward, her uncle, abdicated over his affair with the divorced American, Mrs Wallis Simpson, Elizabeth's father was suddenly thrust into the limelight and was crowned King George VI making her heir to the throne. Elizabeth was tutored at home but, in order to avoid too sequestered a childhood, she became a Girl Guide – the 1st Buckingham Palace Company was formed so that she could socialise with girls her own age. Elizabeth had met already her future husband, Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark, when she was just eight years old.

When they met again, five years later when she was thirteen, Elizabeth fell in love with Philip and they began to exchange letters. The Royal Family moved to Windsor Castle in 1940 where they spent most of the war years. It was suggested that Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret should be evacuated to Canada to avoid the frequent aerial bombing. This was rejected by their mother who famously declared, "The children won't go without me. I won't leave without the King. And the King will never leave." The Royal Family was applauded for this refusal to ship the two princesses away from the dangers of wartime London. In fact, Elizabeth went on to train as a driver and a mechanic and drove a military truck in the Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service.

In 1947, Elizabeth married Prince Philip who renounced his Greek and Danish titles, was created the Duke of Edinburgh and was granted the style of His Royal Highness.

The post-war austerity of the country was lifted by the wedding which was seen as a glimmer of hope after the privations of the war years. True to the spirit of the day, Elizabeth had to collect clothing coupons for her wedding dress.

On her twenty-first birthday, in a speech broadcast on the radio from Cape Town, The Queen, then Princess Elizabeth, said, regarding the Commonwealth, 'I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service.' I think no one could suggest that she did not fully live up to that declaration.

Her first son, Charles, now, as a result of the Queen's death, King Charles III, was born on 14 November 1948 and, a few weeks later, King George VI issued letters patent, allowing Elizabeth's children to enjoy a royal and princely status to which they would not otherwise have been entitled.

Early in 1952, Elizabeth and Philip set out on a tour of Australia and New Zealand via Kenya. It was here that she heard the news of her father's death. Elizabeth hastily returned home and, on 8 February, was proclaimed Queen. Her official coronation was not held until 2 June 1953 in Westminster Abbey. Watched by a worldwide television audience of 20 million people, Elizabeth was crowned Queen with much pomp and ceremony.

Queen Elizabeth had many interests and hobbies and her patronages and charities covered a wide range of issues from opportunities for young people to the preservation of wildlife and the environment. She was known for her many corgis and her love of horses. She was an accomplished rider and most of us here will have pictures in our minds of her taking the 'Trooping of the Colour' ceremonies whilst mounted on horseback.

Queen Elizabeth has presided over a period of great transition. The post-war years saw the dismantling of the old British Empire and the emergence of the British Commonwealth, a confederation of independent states around the world which looked to The Queen as their nominal head. Over her reign, The Queen was a tireless visitor to the countries of the Commonwealth, undertaking countless tours of each Commonwealth country – she was the most widely-travelled head of state in history.

The Queen always conveyed dignity and tradition but this should not be confused with stuffiness or a lack of humour and fun. There are many stories about the Queen's sense of humour. There is the widely reported incident where, whilst walking in the Balmoral estates, she came across some American tourists. Dressed, as she commonly was in tweeds, wellies and with a headscarf, the tourists did not recognise her and asked her if she had met the Queen. She replied 'no' but then, pointing to her protection officer, she said 'but that Policeman has'.

My own favourite story about the Queen was told by an artist who had been asked to paint one of the Queen's many portraits. He expressed his nervousness at being invited to lunch with her. Rather overawed by the setting and the vast selection of cutlery in front of him, he decided that the best course of action was to emulate the Queen in every regard. At the start of the meal, a waiter came round and offered a selection of breadsticks of which the Queen took five. The artist did the same. Throughout the meal, the Queen gently nibbled on one breadstick and, again, the artist did the same. At the end of the meal, both were left with 4 breadsticks on their side plates. The doors opened and in came 4 of the Queens corgis. The Queen gave a breadstick to each of them before turning to the artist and saying quizzically, "Now what are you going to do with yours?"

In 2015, The Queen became the longest-serving British monarch, surpassing her great-great grandmother Queen Victoria. She celebrated her 90th birthday in 2016 and, even then, continued to fulfill a demanding schedule of public engagements. As we know, The Platinum Jubilee was the international celebration, earlier this year, of the 70th anniversary of her accession in 1952.

The Queen carried out her duties to the very end. On 6th September, she asked our new Prime Minister, Liz Truss, to form a government. Only two days later, Queen Elizabeth died peacefully on Thursday 8th September at Balmoral Castle. She was the longest serving female head of state in world history.

It has been reported that the Queen had intimated her hope that she would pass away whilst in her beloved Scotland. If that is the case, then her fulfilled wish is a small reward for the decades of service she has given to her people in the United Kingdom and throughout the world. She has led with integrity and dignity and has been an ambassador for Christ in her understated but profoundly evident faith.

Following her death, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was brought to lie at rest in St Giles' Cathedral. Ruth Laidlaw, one of our elders, and her husband Tony were both involved in the proceedings and reflect on the events below.



Ruth on duty helping those queuing

On Tuesday 13th September I was a Unicorn Volunteer helping to look after the members of the public queuing for the vigil at St Giles' where they would pay their respects to our late Queen.

I was stationed alongside Jane Marryat in Chamber Street which was around halfway along the line where our role was to make sure everyone was OK and to provide assistance where needed. It was such an enjoyable experience thanks to all the lovely people we met during the morning whose ages ranged from 3 weeks old to very much older than that! People had come from not only all around the UK (with very early starts to arrive on time), but from all around the world; Canada, USA, India, Australia and New Zealand plus many Europeans.

It was such a friendly group of people. One of our members joined the queue as an individual and by the time she reached us she was surrounded by new friends!

It was a privilege to be a part of this momentous occasion.



Tony (2nd from left) in full regalia

As a State Trumpeter I am honoured to have the opportunity to participate with the Court of The Lord Lyon at Royal events in Scotland. Dr Morrow, The Lyon, I am sure many of you will have seen recently, reading the Succession Proclamations and representing Scotland both in Edinburgh and at Her Majesty's State funeral in London. I was privileged to be part of his party for the Edinburgh Ceremonials. We played at both the Mercat Cross and on the Esplanade, announcing the proclamations of the Accession of The King. We then had the honour of playing to announce the arrival of Her late Majesty and the Royal Party to St Giles'. The service that followed was beautifully delivered and a credit to all.

The Lord Lyon and Officers of Arms led what I believe were truly respectful tributes, which when supported by our cities, towns, huge crowds and sunshine, showed Scotland at its finest.

I am proud and privileged to have been able to contribute in a small way to the occasion.

From the Minister



'A Christmas Message'

Those of you who have read my article in the most recent edition of the Blackhall Bulletin will know that I have been talking about some of the changes that we all will face this coming Christmas. Some of these changes are welcome but others are not.

Obviously, the ongoing war in Ukraine is unwelcome as is the impact it has made on the cost of fuel and the cost of living in general.

On the other hand, the return to a more normal way of celebrating the Lord's birth, Christmas, is very welcome. The past couple of Christmases have been over-shadowed by the Coronavirus and the worldwide pandemic that ensued. Church Services and attendance at church were adversely affected because of this as were the household gatherings of family and friends and many of our other well-loved traditions too.

However, throughout that period of disruption, there remained some constants. Clearly and most importantly, the gospel message of Emmanuel, God with us, God coming down to earth in human form, remained and continues to remain constant each year.

In addition, during the upheaval of the pandemic, there were other constants as well. One such constant, throughout that period, was the Queen and the Christmas tradition of the Queen's Speech on Christmas Day. (I assume that our new King will continue this tradition). The Queen's Speech was one of those things to which different people and different families have taken different approaches. Clearly, there are some people, such as republicans, who may have made a conscious effort not to listen to the Queen's Speech. Equally, there are many republicans who would listen nonetheless. Even among those people who would regard themselves as royalist, the approach taken by some to the Queen's Speech has not been the same necessarily as the approach taken by other royalists. In some families, listening to the Queen's Speech on Christmas Day has been as big a tradition as eating turkey, stuffing and brussel

From the Minister cont'd

sprouts is to other families. However, I know many people who would state that they are ardent royalists but would never sit down to listen to the Queen's Speech. Listening or not listening doesn't seem to have depended upon whether a person was 'royalist' or 'republican'.

Just as listening or not listening to the Queen's Speech does not categorise anyone as either a royalist or a republican as such, so attendance or non-attendance at Church on a Sunday does not identify someone necessarily as a Christian or a non-Christian!

One of the great things about our Christian faith is that we are not tied to a particular way of doing things. We are open to change. I know many 'traditionalists' in the Church might resist change but we especially, in the Church of Scotland, know that our faith is built on change. One of the cries of the Protestant Reformation was the phrase *ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda* (the church reformed, always reforming).

At the Queen's funeral, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, reminded us that we are not told 'how' to follow but that we are told 'who' to follow. There are many different ways of following Christ but we should be clear it is Him that we follow. The Archbishop went on to remind those who were at the Queen's coronation and to inform those who were not that the Queen began her coronation, in 1953, in silent prayer before the High Alter at Westminster Abbey. She gave her allegiance to God before anyone gave allegiance to her.

Her Majesty, the Queen, promised to serve Jesus, the country and the Commonwealth all her life but first she promised to serve Jesus who had Himself said, "just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many." This is one of the reasons I so like our own mission statement at Blackhall St Columba's. It is a statement we can all get behind as we try to renew our desire to 'glorify God....proclaim Christ...and serve others'.

Merry Christmas and God bless all
Fergus

Working Teams

You may not know, but the Minister and Kirk Session are supported by a number of Working Teams with different responsibilities which ensure the smooth running of Blackhall St Columba's.

A new feature puts the spotlight on some of these teams to let you know what they're about. All would welcome new members with fresh ideas, so if you'd like to get involved, contact the Team Leader. Note that members can come from across the congregation, not just the Kirk Session.

Finance Working Team

The Finance Working Team is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the financial health of the church. This includes:

- collecting offerings and other payments to the church such as hall rents
- paying bills
- maintaining financial records
- keeping Gift Aid records and claiming the tax refund
- making recommendations to the Kirk Session on what is affordable or otherwise
- making recommendations for fund raising if required
- producing accounts
- reporting on the church's finances to the Kirk Session, the Church of Scotland and OSCR (the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator).

Most of the jobs are the responsibility of individual members of the team. The Treasurer handles receipts and payments, keeps the books, produces the accounts and does the reporting. The Gift Aid Convenor, Sandy Weir, maintains the detailed records required to claim back income tax on gift aided offerings. This brings a substantial income to the church each year which is vital to the health of our finances.

The Deputy Treasurer is Sheila Mackintosh and she would fill in for the Treasurer if required. Sheila also uses her professional skills to maintain statistics on offerings that allow the Team to have a realistic idea on the trends in giving and at the start of each year to model what the church might receive from offerings in the year ahead.

The team meets four times a year, normally with the Minister in attendance. The team consists of, Adrian Johnston (Treasurer), Sheila Macintosh (Deputy Treasurer), Sandy Weir (Gift Aid Convenor), Dianne Fulton (Clerk), Eddie Thorn (Session Clerk), Michael Cockburn, Roderick Dee, Grant Macrae, Hamish Mair and David Simpson.

Working Teams cont'd

Premises and Staff Working Team

The team is led by Frances Douglas and members are Beryl Grant, Kate Harris, Jess King and Fay Stirling

The team is responsible for recruitment and oversight of the people we employ, ensuring employment policies and requirements are met, liaising with employees to ensure they have a good working environment and are happy, as well as assessing their performance.

The team also oversees the appearance of all of our premises including things like weekly cleaning and more major tasks including the cleaning of the windows. It also established and oversees the church gardening group which works hard to maintain and develop the grounds around the church.

The team work closely with others particularly the Halls Convener (Ruth Laidlaw) and Fabric Convener (Mike Whiteside).

Communications Working Team

The Communications Team is led by Hamish Mair, and members are Fay Stirling, Libby Cameron, Alison Hewat. The editors of the magazines and the Session Clerk also attend meetings.

The main purpose of the team is the direct communication of the Church's message to members and the wider community. Our main means of doing that are the church website and our two publications Kirk News and The Blackhall Bulletin. Kirk News is delivered either electronically or in person to all members, while the Blackhall Bulletin is delivered to every house in the parish, as well as to members living outside the parish boundary.

The principal tasks of the working team are to ensure that the magazines come out on time, are distributed efficiently and that the cost to the Church is reasonable. We also co-opt in other expertise as required, for example when discussing altering or upgrading the website.

Anyone with an interest in the magazines or the website who would like to become involved would be very welcome. We also welcome feedback and ideas for both the publications and the website.

Working Teams Cont'd

Fabric Working Team

There are two key posts in the Fabric Working Team, Fabric Convener, and Health and Safety Officer. These are currently filled by Mike Whiteside and Donald Stirling respectively.

The team has a wide remit encompassing:

- Maintenance and repair of the buildings fabric of the Church, Halls and Manse
- Programming and carrying out any statutory servicing of buildings (for example the annual inspection of the roof), plant (things like boiler servicing) and equipment (an example might be annual check of the fire extinguishers)
- Ensuring all obligations as Manse landlord are met
- Carry out, or arrange contractors to carry out, repair of faults occurring in the fabric and equipment.
- Provide all reports and information as required by Presbytery
- Co-ordinate any 'project' requests as directed by Kirk Session (for example the recent installation of the accessible toilet)
- Complete regular Health and Safety audits, and make recommendations for any required changes

The Fabric Convener will mostly, but not exclusively, be in discussion and dialogue with Minister, Session Clerk, Halls Convener, Premises and Staff Convener and Church Officers.

You will see that the work of the team is extensive, and additional members would be welcomed to spread the load a little. So if you, or someone you know, has a background in any of these areas, or if you're just keen to roll up your sleeves and do a little DIY, or help in any other way, Mike would be delighted to hear from you.

Hopefully this has given a little insight into some of the work that goes on in the background to keep the church operating smoothly. There are many opportunities to get involved, so please think prayerfully about how your talents could be employed.

Information on other teams, including Outreach, Stewardship and Pastoral & Prayer will follow in a later edition.

PEACE Service

The midweek PEACE service takes place every other Wednesday at 12 noon in the Small Hall. This year's theme is "Gifts from God".

Details of the remaining services right through till next May are below.

9th November- Remembrance....Alison Hewat

23rd November- Presbytery ClerkRev. Dr. Grant Barclay

7th December- Gifts from God: God's World....Fay Stirling

21st December- It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas- Christmas Party....Shona Cook

18th January- Gifts from God: Dancing....Muriel Stenhouse

1st February- Gifts from God: Health....Isobel Morton

15th February- Gifts from God: Friendships.....Doreen Barker

1st March- Gifts from God: Art.....Kathryn Westbrook

15th March- SOCIAL BITE - Helping Others....Cindy Cosgrove

29th March- Gifts from God: Jesus....Eddie Thorn

12th April- Gifts from God: The Greatest Gift-Eternal Life.... Bob Barker

26th April- WATCH COMMITTEE- Helping Others....Lynn Bunney

10th May- Be glad, be grateful....Shona Cook

24th May- Communion...Fergus Cook

Everyone is welcome to this service, and the fellowship afterwards where there is always a choice of delicious home-made soups followed by a cuppa and home baking.

Transport to the PEACE Services – we need your help please!

For a great number of years, Jane Del Viscel has arranged transport for many of the attendees of this service. Jane has decided to step down at the end of this year **and we are looking for her successor**. We thank her for all her service over the years, it has made a huge difference to many people.

It is a fortnightly task during the months of September to May and involves contacting the members who potentially require transport and matching them with a volunteer driver. The only equipment required is a telephone (preferably a mobile, although not essential).

In addition, **we are looking for extra drivers** who can be called upon on an ad hoc basis or, if it suits make a regular commitment. If you can help in either way then please contact Ruth Laidlaw ruthlaidlaw@gmail.com or 07513 967978.

Christmas Fair

After a two year break all the stall holders are working hard to prepare for
Saturday 26th November

The stalls are all listed opposite and stall holders will appreciate any donations.
Please bring them to the Large Hall on
Friday 25th November 10.00am – 12.00pm, 2.00 – 4.00pm or 7.00 – 9.00pm
Saturday 26th November 9.00am – 12.00pm

THERE ARE TWO STALLS THAT ARE LOOKING FOR HELP NOW!

THE HAMPER STALL

The Hamper creators are looking for donations so that they can plan the hampers.
Please bring items to the church office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays between 9.00am and 12.00pm or to the church on Sundays, there will be a box in the vestibule.

THE TOMBOLA STALL

Please suggest a business that you use or know of that might donate a **voucher or a prize**
They could be *beauticians, cafes, florists, garages, garden centres, hairdressers, restaurants, shops, sports clubs or events*
Just a few of our ideas, but please help us by thinking of other businesses or people with skills who might donate their time
We also need any unwanted **NEW** items.

We are in need of additional volunteers to help on the day in the tearoom (small hall) and with a variety of stalls. If you are able to help, please contact

Rosi Watt 0131 332 4027 rosijwatt@outlook.com
George Millar 0131 332 0947 georgemillar@blueyonder.co.uk

WATCH COMMITTEE Working Altogether To Care and Help

Fundraising for the local charity: Pilton Equalities Project

NOTE – all purchases at the Christmas Fair must be paid in cash

<u>STALL</u>	<u>ORGANISATION</u>	<u>CONTACT PERSON</u>
Books	Choir	Alison Hewat Elspeth Williamson
Bottle	Badminton Club	Linda Finnie
Bric-a-Brac Large & Small CDs and DVDs	Kirk Session	Dorothea Mair Fiona Cooke Marge Whiteside
Cakes	Cameo Club	Fiona Drinnan Margaret Brown
Children's Books	Brownies	Nicole Harland
Craft	Waich Committee	Ishbel Robertson
Fashion Accessories (as good as new)	Kirk Session	Christine Denham
Games + Children's Craft		TBC
Hampers		Ann Wood
Santa's Grotto		Anne Pugh
Sweets	Mother and Toddlers Tuesday Topics	TBC Lyndy Paton
Teas	Waich Committee	Anne Hamilton
Tombola	Waich Committee	Rosi Watt
Toys, Electronic and board Games, plus Jigsaws		TBC

We wish to thank the congregation and friends for the tremendous support since we started fundraising for the Pilton Equalities Project in July.



Emma and Sarah Torrance helping with the coin collection

The summer coin collection on Sundays during July and August plus a generous donation from the Outreach team raised over £1,400 - a wonderful start.

On the 1st October we held a very successful Craft/Coffee morning and at one point it was “standing room only” as people waited for a seat at a table to sample the delicious home baking from the congregation and chat to friends old and new. This year we had six Craft stalls providing a variety of goods and demonstrations. This event raised over £900 giving us a total so far this year of more than £2,300. so once again a big **thank you** to everyone.

For £1 donation, this year’s Quiz is available from the church office on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 9am – 12noon and at coffee time on Sundays.

Christmas Fair hamper envelopes for your donations are also available at the above times.

Parish Register

Since the last edition of Kirk News we have welcomed the following new members by Resolution of the Kirk Session. We hope they feel welcome and enjoy worship and fellowship with us.

Ms Gillian Anderson
Ms Judith Bell

Sadly, the following members have passed away in the last few months, and we extend our sympathy and prayers to their families and friends.

August

16 Mr Michael Galloway
23 Mrs Jean Balfour

September

1 Mrs Muriel Stears
20 Mrs Sheila Hepburn
20 Miss Joyce Moore
22 Mrs Agnes
Shepherdson

October

3 Mr John Simpson

On a happier note, on Sunday 14th August baby Clara Case was baptised by the minister and is pictured here with her parents Jed and Charlotte, her big sisters, and her godmother.



Kirk Session Report

The Kirk Session met on Tuesdays 6 September and 11 October 2022.

Building for the Future (Phase 2)

Consideration was given to what if anything should be done as part of Phase 2. With the Presbytery Consultation Document under consideration, it would be likely that approval of non-essential fabric work in excess of £25,000 would not be approved (*fabric expenditure of £25,000 and above requires Presbytery approval*). It was noted there is £68,424 in the BFTF bank account, with a projected figure over £76,000 once all the committed funds are received. There was no conclusion reached and this will be a matter for further consideration later in the year.

Communion Dates

The Moderator put forward a proposal that our Communion dates be moved from the last Sunday in February, June and October to the first Sunday. After discussion, this was agreed and would start in 2023.

DEC Pakistan Appeal

It was reported that the recent congregational appeal raised £774.80.

Defibrillator

Through the offices of Presbytery we have been given a second defibrillator. This will be situated on the outside wall of the large hall facing Queensferry Road.

Elders' Long Service

After active discussion it has been agreed that long service certificates for Elders will not be issued.

Elder Retiral

It was noted that Linnette Aitken had intimated her wish to retire from active Eldership. Linnette was thanked for her service to the Church and for the care and dedication that she extended to the members in her District.

Order of Service

Elders were asked for comment and feedback from members on the format of the Order of Service. There were several views put forward with options. After considering these options, it was agreed that the Order of Service – currently provided by the Moderator to certain parties involved in the Service each week – would now be passed out to the Elders for onward transmission as needed to those receiving the weekly details of the content of the Service

Kirk Session – cont'd

Roll

Session agreed to the following being admitted to the Roll by Resolution:

- Gillian Anderson, Cottage Park, Edinburgh
- Judith Bell, Hillpark Grove, Edinburgh

Presbytery Consultation Document

Members will recall that a Special Meeting of the Congregation was held on 27 February to ascertain views and comments on the proposals within the Presbytery Consultative Document. Embodied within the document was the reduction in ministerial posts for Edinburgh from 78.2 down to 48.5.

Subsequently there have been ongoing discussions with Drylaw Parish Church regarding a Union and both Kirk Sessions have unanimously agreed to this way forward. Such a Union has been referred to in the latest, of many, Presbytery Consultation Documents, implying acceptance.

However, the Document has yet to be agreed by The Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian and will go before a Presbytery meeting on 15 November. If agreed, it will then be presented to The Church of Scotland central committees. Acceptance there confirms that this is then the Presbytery Plan. Thereafter there would be a process leading up to the Union which would take time and probably it would 2024 at the earliest before the actual coming together of the two congregations would start happening. Later this month both Ministers and Session Clerks will be meeting to start planning ways that both congregations can work together in anticipation of the Union.

To recap, a union is the coming together of two or more congregations to create a new entity and, if this takes place, we should all look upon it as a new beginning. It is not the case of one taking over the other - it would be a marriage of equals. A union of the two congregations would bring real benefits as well as challenges and there can be no doubt that both congregations could learn from each other. The combined parish would encompass a sizeable area and one that gives great scope for mission, which is after all, what this is all about.

The Congregation will be kept informed as matters move forward.

Eddie Thorn, Session Clerk

Christmas Shoebox Appeal

Each year the members of our Blackhall St Columba's congregation rise to this Shoebox challenge bringing joy and hope into the lives of under-privileged children. With your enthusiastic support we can do that again this year.

Flat pack 'Go Boxes', and instructions for filling them, are now available on Sundays from the Church. During the week they will be available from the Church Officers in the halls.

Due to changes in the regulations toothpaste and sweets are no longer allowed. Please take care to avoid other items which should not be included. Things like socks and woolly hats and gloves are always welcome. So please, fill your shoeboxes and, if you can, include an envelope with £5 to cover the cost of sending a shoebox.

Packed shoeboxes can be returned any Sunday or handed in to the halls during the week **but they must be returned to the church by Sunday 13th November or they will miss the collection.** Thanking you in anticipation of another year of your generous support.

Adrian Johnston, Co-ordinator



Outreach

Festive Joy and Eco Matters

At the time of going to press the Outreach Team has yet to confirm details of the Christmas event in Blackhall Dip and whether we will be carol singing at Sainsburys. As soon as details are available we'll pop an update on the church's website and social media, and will ensure information is included in Sunday intimations.

Thank you for supporting the Dessert Island Discs and [Music@St.Columba's](#) events during the year. We are looking to have a similar programme to enjoy in early 2023 so watch this space.

The Murder Mystery event in October was a great success. A large number enjoyed their fish and chip teasand worked hard to solve the clues to find the killer. A number of people were disappointed that they could not get tickets, however, we are looking to repeat this type of event in 2023.

Lastly, the Outreach Team is looking at a joint eco project with the local schools in 2023 but in the meantime as an Eco Church we still collect old unwanted spectacles which will in turn allow poorer countries help to run sight clinics.

Michael Cockburn, Outreach Team Leader

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 regularly for anyone in need of help in complete confidence.

To request support from the Prayer Circle, you can contact Betty Watt at lzbthwatt@yahoo.co.uk. You can also get in touch via the Minister, Fergus Cook at Fcook@churchofscotland.org.uk or 0131 466 7503, or through your elder. There is also a locked box on the table at the back of the Church where requests can be posted.

If you would like to be involved in this key area of our ministry and pastoral care, the Prayer Circle would welcome any new members who feel they could include the needs of others in their prayers.

Fresh Start

Thank you for your continued support for FreshStart over this last year. Your donations of household items, personal hygiene products and food for the Pantry Shop are most appreciated by them.

Unfortunately, the demand for these items continues to grow and FreshStart will be grateful for your continued support. The Friday morning (10.00 to 11.30am) collection of donations in the church halls has resumed.

There is also a box near the entrance to the church where donations can be made on Sundays. Notices on the box will indicate key things that are needed.

The Pantry Shop, which only started a year ago at FreshStart continues to enable those on low incomes to purchase essential shopping at much reduced cost. It now has a membership of almost 300, so your donations contribute to making a significant difference to those families.

Lilian & Michael Cockburn
cockburn_carfrae@yahoo.co.uk

With thanks to a generous legacy given to the Church we were able to buy two pots to place at the front door.

Fergus and Mike Whiteside rolled up their sleeves and erected the urns, while Pat MacLeod filled them tastefully with plants.

They are a welcome addition to brighten up the church frontage and have been much admired.



A reminder that anyone interested in helping with the upkeep of the church garden can contact Frances Douglas on 07795 204646.

Church Flowers

The Team enjoys decorating the church for various events as well as the regular services and our next venture will be for Remembrance in November. We shall try to produce something which helps the Service.

More joyfully, we shall again be decorating the Church for Christmas and if you should like to help do come.

We need all the good ideas, foliage and hands you can offer.

We shall be decorating on Saturday, 10th December in time for the gift service although the Advent wreath will be in place for the 1st Sunday in Advent which is 27th November.

Thanks to all the many people who are involved in our Flower Ministry, those who donate the money for the flowers, those who arrange them and those who deliver them Sunday by Sunday. We are frequently told how much the flowers are appreciated both in church and in peoples' homes thereafter.

Edinburgh Floral Art Club

We have a full programme for the year and meet at 2pm on the second Friday of the month from September to December and February to June in Blackhall St Columba's church on the Queensferry Road.

Our Christmas Demonstration is on Friday 9th December in the large Hall at 2pm and is titled 'Countdown to Christmas'.

If you are not a member but are interested in coming, do come as a Guest. You would be most welcome. We provide a Newsletter every month with up-to-date details of what is happening in Edinburgh Floral Art Club, the Scottish flower arranging scene and beyond.

Cameo Club

This year we have been enjoying our entertainment programme which was restarted in January after the pandemic. At our last meeting, as I am writing, we were treated to a skilled classical guitar recital by Allan Crocker of arrangements from as far back as the seventeenth century when the music would have been played on the lute. Coming up on Friday 4th November we will be having a fast-moving team game called “Higher or Lower” when points are raised for your team when you guess the price correctly. Later in the month on Friday 18th we will welcome back Rose McBeth who sings traditional and popular music.

If you would like to join our group, we meet fortnightly on Fridays from 10.30am in the church halls. Membership is free. Local transport can be provided if needed. Tea/coffee, cakes and pancakes are enjoyed on arrival before an hour of entertainment provided by various musicians and others.

There will only be one meeting this December when members will be having a Christmas lunch at Northcare Suites.

New members are welcome, and we are also happy to have more volunteers to help. For more information you can contact:

Margaret Brown 332 5957

Fiona Drinnan 343 6762

Tuesday Topics

Tuesday Topics meets on alternate Tuesdays in the Small Hall at 7.30pm.

The session re-opened on 4th October when Roy Johnstone gave us a superb talk on the role of women on the Home Front in WW1 in supporting the war effort.

Our next speaker on October 18th is Carol Barrett on the subject of her wildlife art and conservation of animals.

On November 1st we have a talk on Cabinetmaking from Zoltan Erdrich and on 15th November our new committee member Debbie Pearce will demonstrate her Textile Crafts.

Tuesday Topics cont'd

Later in the month, on 29th, our minister the Rev Fergus Cook will tell us about his work and travels to India with the charity Scottish Love in Action which is our chosen charity for this year. This session will end with a Christmas Quiz and nibbles on December 13th. We reopen again on January 10th with a meal out at Howie's.

Meetings are open to all and we offer a warm welcome to both members and visitors.

Eleanor Lowrie, President

Lyndy Paton, Secretary

Gift Aid

Gift Aid is a British Government backed scheme allowing charities to claim back income or capital gains taxes paid on personal donations. Tax is recovered at a flat rate of 20% that always applies. This means that with a consenting taxpayer giving £80 from their taxed income, the charity can claim back the £20 tax they have paid. That turns the £80 donation into a total of £100, which is in effect a 25% uplift to the charity, in this case Blackhall St Columba's!

This is an absolutely vital source of funds for the church as clearly evidenced by the **£38,889.21** which was reclaimed from HMRC on your offering donations and funds given for specific appeals during the year to 5th April 2022. The church's thanks go to all those who can offer their gifts under the scheme. Participation is straightforward and requires only a simple form, addressed to and retained by St Columba's, to be signed by the taxpayer. That's it. End of story! If you do not Gift Aid your donations please consider it now.

If you are Gift Aiding please remember to tell the church if your situation changes and tax is no longer paid so we can stop making claims on your gifts.

Regardless of whether Gift Aided or not the church relies on and appreciates equally all donations that are given to it for its mission. Thanks to everybody for this support.

Sandy Weir, Gift Aid Co-ordinator

Dates for your diary

Details are being firmed up for some services in December and more information will be intimated (and be available on the church website) nearer the time, but so far you can fill your diaries as follows:

Sunday 27th Nov 1 st Sunday in Advent	Morning Worship Carol Service St Andrew Square	10.30 am 3.00 pm
Sunday 4th Dec 2 nd Sunday in Advent	Morning Worship (we are hoping to have the St David's Brass Band either join for morning worship or provide a separate performance in the evening)	10.30 am
Sunday 11 th Dec 3 rd Sunday in Advent	Gift Service (with the Junior Singers) Blue Christmas Service	10.30 am 4.00 pm
Sunday 18 th Dec 4 th Sunday in Advent	Morning Worship Evening Carol Service with the Choir (to be confirmed)	10.30 am 7.00 pm
Saturday 24 th Dec Christmas Eve	Christingle Family Service Watchnight Service (with Carols from 11pm)	6.00 pm 11.30 pm
Sunday 25 th Dec Christmas Day	Family Service	10.30 am

Other events:

Music at St Columba's

Guest performers Jenny Logan and Phil Coad, along with our own church choir will present an evening of light and entertaining music on Saturday 12th November at 7.00pm. Admission is free. Do come along to what promises to be a most enjoyable evening.

Burns' Supper

We are hoping to see a return of previously very successful Burns' Suppers by holding another on the evening of Saturday 28th January 2022. If possible, we hope to use the large hall and while that's about all we know just now, put the date in your diary and grab a ticket or two as soon as further details are announced. This traditional celebration is open to everybody with all welcome.

Sunday Worship in pictures



CrossReach

After a two year gap (2020 and 2021), CrossReach Christmas Cards will be available to purchase in the Sanctuary at the close of morning worship on Sundays 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th November. Over the years members of St Columba's have been most supportive of this vital section of the Church's work.

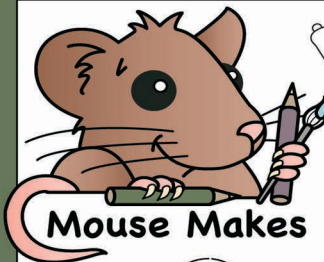
Have a browse as you leave church and hopefully select a pack of cards. Please note, only cash purchases are acceptable. A packet of 10 cards costs £3.80. Alternatively, if you wish you can order online vis the following link: shop.crossreach.org.uk

Margaret Brown, CrossReach "Link

Remembering those we've loved and lost

Local churches are offering special services over the next few weeks for those who have lost a loved one or friend to remember them. You will be made most welcome at any of the services listed below. Further information can be had from the sources listed.

CHURCH	TIME and DATE
The OLD KIRK and MUIRHOUSE PARISH CHURCH	<p>Sunday 30th October 2pm All Souls Service - 'A time of remembering for those who've loved and lost.'</p> <p>Old Kirk and Muirhouse Facebook page Church Office - 0131 467 2922</p>
CRAMOND KIRK	<p>Sunday 30th October 1000am service Celebrating Life and Loss Service</p> <p>https://cramondkirk.org.uk Church Office - 0131 336 2036</p>
DAVIDSON'S MAINS PARISH CHURCH	<p>Sunday 20th November 2:30pm Bereavement Service</p> <p>https://www.dmpc.org.uk Church Office - 0131 312 6282</p>
BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S Church of Scotland	<p>Sunday 11th December 4pm Blue Christmas Service - A time to remember, celebrate lives past & offer solace to those who have experienced the loss of a loved one and are grieving or have mixed emotions about the festive season.</p> <p>https://www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk Church Office - 0131 332 4431</p>



Mouse Makes

THE COMING OF A KING

The birth of Jesus is fortold

God sent a messenger to Mary
What was the angel's name?

Luke 1:26-28

**Mary was frightened,
what did the angel say?**

Luke 1:30

What was Mary to
name her child?

Luke 1:31

**What is her son
going to be?**

Luke 1:32-33

What happened
to Elizabeth
when Mary
went to
visit her?


Luke 1:41

**What does the angel
say about God?**

Luke 1:37
(LEARN this verse)

*Mary praises God, what does
she say God has done?*

Luke 1:46-55



Find the words
in the word
search and
the ___
words too.

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

ANGEL • MESSAGE • GOD • JOSEPH • MARY • BABY • SON • BORN
 CHILD • THRONE • KING • REIGN • KINGDOM • HOLYSPIRIT • LORD
 HOLY • WORD • ELIZABETH • BLESSED • SAVIOUR • REJOICE • PRAISE

 <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>

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

For contributions to Blackhall Bulletin:

bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

December 2022 issue	23 rd Oct 2022 (you may just have missed this)
March 2023 issue	29 th January 2023
September 2023 issue	30 th July 2023

For contributions to Kirk News:

fay@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

February 2023 issue	16 th January 2023
May 2023 issue	14 th April 2023

We are happy to take articles on any relevant subject from anyone, so don't be shy!