

BLACKHALL BULLETIN

September 2022

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

No. 169



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'SQUARING THE CIRCLE'

Greetings to the Blackhall Community

In May this year, I was a Commissioner at the Church of Scotland General Assembly. During the course of the week, I was struck by a number of things one of which was the number of contributors to various debates who used the expression 'squaring the circle'. They would say things like 'we need to square the circle on this' or even 'we have squared the circle on this matter'. It was used so frequently that it appeared to me that the expression is now part of common parlance but what does it actually mean?



If you are not familiar with it, the expression is an odd one. It's meaning is a little technical but, very briefly, it is all to do with Euclidean geometry which is the study of geometrical shapes and figures based on different axioms and theorems. An axiom is a statement or proposition which is regarded as being established, accepted or self-evidently true. Squaring the circle was originally a problem first proposed in this form of Greek mathematics. It is the challenge of constructing a square with the area of a circle by using only a finite number of steps with a compass and a straightedge. The problem proved to be so difficult that it raised a number of questions as to whether the axioms I mentioned above were in fact accurate. Enough mathematics! Suffice it to say, in 1882, the task was proven to be impossible! There is a long, complicated mathematical explanation as to why squaring the circle is impossible but, as I said, enough mathematics! If you are really interested, feel free to google it.

Why then did all the people at the General Assembly keep referring to needing to do something or actually having done something which was impossible? Clearly, the expression appears to have taken on different meanings from the original geometric meaning.

Philosophically and spiritually, to 'square the circle' means to see equally in four directions—up, down, in and out—and to be whole, complete and free. Circles can sometimes represent the spiritual because they are infinite and have no end. The square is often a symbol of the material because of the number of physical things that come in fours such as four seasons, four directions and the four physical elements of earth, air, fire and water. However, despite the speakers I am referring to being at the General Assembly, I do not think they were using the expression in this philosophical or spiritual sense. I believe these individuals were using the expression as a metaphor. The fact that no one was ever able to 'square the circle' goes some way to explaining its use as a metaphor meaning to attempt a seemingly impossible task such as finding world peace. (It is different from the metaphor, attempting to fit a square peg into a round hole, which implies two things are inherently incompatible.)

The Church of Scotland, as a whole, is facing a number seemingly impossible task. It is trying to take the gospel message of Christ out into a society which increasingly seems disinterested. It is doing this at a time when many of its ministers are reaching retirement age and fewer and fewer people feel called to ministry.

One of the biggest problems we, in the Church of Scotland, face is getting people, including those who continue to attend or support the Church, to understand the magnitude of the problem. Many just want to see the church continue as they have always known it, with one minister looking after one parish church. The problems facing the wider Church have been brought into perspective, here in Edinburgh, by the Consultation Presbytery Plan. There is a need for a plan to be agreed by the end of the year. The plan has to project a way of working that results in a reduction of 40% of ministry posts and 30% of our buildings. This is a huge undertaking. We can see this as an absolute example of 'squaring the circle' - an impossible task or we can look at it as an opportunity to examine how we have been doing things over the years. Personally, I feel there is little point in looking back and regretting the fact that this matter wasn't dealt with decades ago when it should have been. Instead, we need to move forward with openness and positivity. We have an opportunity to do things differently. This will mean that churches need to come together in partnerships and possibly work as team ministries. It will mean having to make ourselves be open to losing some of the things with which we are familiar be that a building, a style of

worship or even just the music we use to praise God. In reality, we aren't actually losing anything, we are just going to have to adapt to new ways of doing things.

The one thing we can be sure of is that, with God behind the plans and changes we make, the task ahead is far from impossible no matter how daunting it may appear to us. The Bible has numerous references to God's capability in this regard. Here are just a few:

Jeremiah 32:17 - "Ah Lord God! It is you who made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.

Job 42:2 - "I know that you can do all things and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.

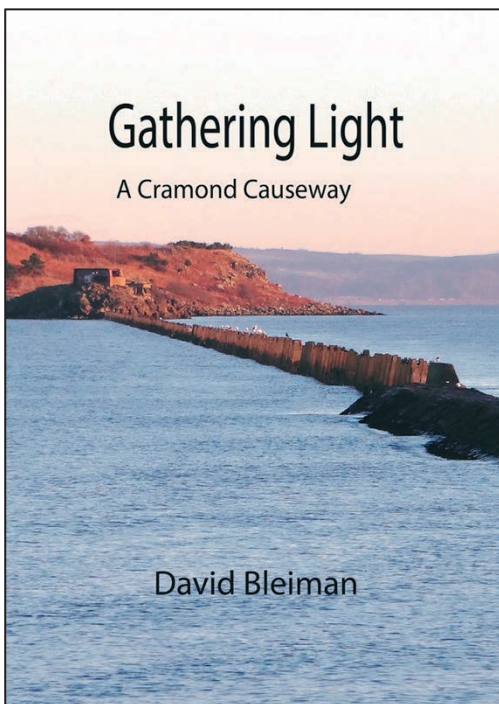
Mark 10:27 and Matthew 19:26-Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible."

These expressions of the infinite power of God to work through us as human beings can be applied in our personal lives as well as to problems such as those that face the wider Church. Each of us faces problems in our daily lives. Some may appear to us to be so hard that we encounter the problem of 'squaring the circle'. Consider these words from the Old and New Testament, from people who have found that, with God's help, nothing is insurmountable and you will realise that no circle cannot be squared!

Best wishes and God's blessing to all,

Fergus

***Gathering Light* by David Bleiman**



Reverend Ian Gilmour begins his foreword to David Bleiman's booklet by observing that 'Cramond is certainly worth a poem', thus signalling the commitment of a good (locum) parish minister to both his territory and to the arts.

The title poem opens with these beautiful lines,
This was the day we went out
to collect the light . . .

At the time of a pandemic, what could be more important? During the days of winter, what could be more inspiring? For a congregation, for children, for anyone depressed by the cold, the damp, the dark, this collection of poetry brings a light but knowing touch to Cramond and its people.

Cramond Commemorates has involved the whole community. The first tree was a sessile oak, planted by children from Cramond Primary and Cargilfield. Trees are known to talk to one another underground, and in the poem put together from the words of P4 children, we have 'every root is an emotion', and 'my seed drops down', so that 'a tree will reach out like a friend'. I think what is true of trees will be true of poetry like this also.

While the poetry is simple enough to understand – which is not true of all contemporary poetry – there are some nice tongue-twisting sequences to startle you out of just skimming through. How about 'lockdown-quiffed goosanders dip', from 'Not Seeing the Wood for the Words', or 'the door of the loo in Woolloomooloo' from 'Fair-a-Far Fish Ladder', or 'pert potholes cup the murky slosh' from 'February Flashback'?

One of my favourite poems is 'Unoaked', an elegy:
Innocent of ill intent, our great oak shaded

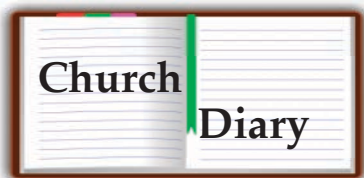
Mrs Rankin's renowned Refreshment Rooms . . .

But now the Council has cut it down to half its height, leaving the magnificent tree 'unlimbed, unleaving and unboughed'. And though the pun implied when you read that final word is a final tribute to the spirit of the tree, the reality is spelt out with these sad words, leaving the roots of the tree to deal with their emotions and ours.

The penultimate poem ends with a single word on a single line: 'Imagine!' This booklet, like all good poetry, will let you do that.
Jock Stein (poet, piper and preacher)

***Gathering Light: A Cramond Causeway* is available for £5 from *Envelope & Bacon* (at Barnton P.O., weekday opening) or online from <https://poetrykilt.bigcartel.com/>**

All proceeds go to *Cramond Commemorates* for the planting of trees to remember what we have lost through Covid.



HARVEST FESTIVAL SERVICE

The Harvest Festival Service is one of the highlights of the Church year when we celebrate the fruits of the land although in the past we have also acknowledged other contributions like the fish caught in the seas round the British Isles.

We decorate the church with fruit, vegetables and flowers which are not wasted but are passed on to people who will enjoy them. If you feel able to contribute anything from your garden or allotment, please feel free to do so.

We decorate the church on the Saturday morning the day before the Service (8th October this year) and would welcome any contributions. If you would like to help to arrange them you are also most welcome to join us.

Alison Hewat (rajahewat1@btinternet.com or contact the Church Secretary for further details)

Mid-week PEACE Service
(People Enjoying a Christian Encounter)

The 2022/23 session will resume on Wednesday 14th September and fortnightly thereafter, to which all are welcome. The format is a short act of worship at 12.00 followed by fellowship over a soup lunch. The first service is a service of Communion led by Rev. Fergus Cook.

We will welcome back all those who have attended previously and would love to see some new friends.

For further information please contact Ruth Laidlaw on ruthlaidlaw@gmail.com or 07513 967974


SEPTEMBER

4 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
11 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
18 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
25 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship


OCTOBER

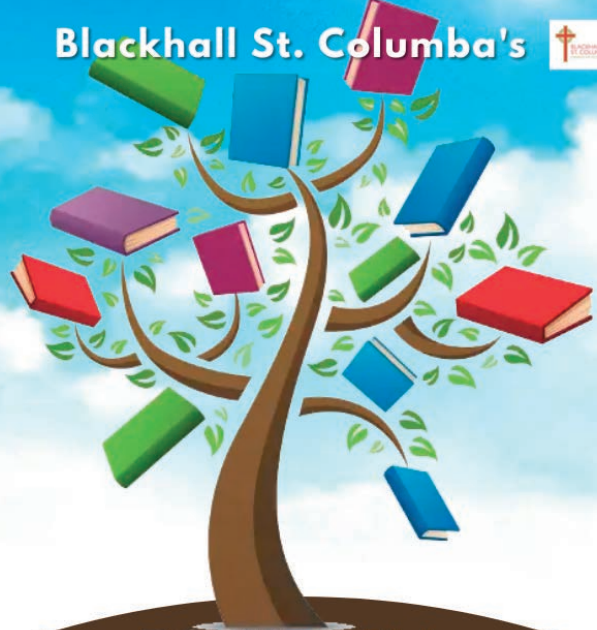
2 nd	10.30 am	Morning Worship
9 th	10.30 am	Harvest Festival
16 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
23 rd	10.30 am	Morning Worship
30 th	10.30 am	Service of Holy Communion

NOVEMBER

6 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
13 th	10.30 am	Remembrance Sunday 
20 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
27 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
		First Sunday in Advent



Blackhall St. Columba's 



BOOK STALL

Come and browse our second hand Christian books at the back of the Church. No need to sign for them, just choose, take away and return when finished.

In the autumn we will have a small selection of new books to purchase, which will be appropriate for the time of year and sermon themes.

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NORTH WEST HERITAGE GROUP

All talks held in Davidson's Mains Parish Church North Hall at 7.30 pm

Thursday 22 September 2022 - Through Ice and Fire: a Russian Arctic Convoy Diary 1942. Speaker Leona Thomas

Thursday 20 October 2022 – Davidson's Mains Past and Present. A journey through photographs. Speaker Neil McIntosh

Thursday 17 November – “They all Wore Blue” – The Story of the Woman's Auxiliary Air Force. Speaker Roy Johnstone

Charlotte Cowe

EDINBURGH FLORAL ART CLUB



The Club starts its Autumn Programme on Friday 9th September at 2pm in the large hall. Our Demonstrator is Linda Soutar and her title is 'Reflections'

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. 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.

If you are not a Member but are interested in coming, do come as a Guest. You would be most welcome.

This year we celebrate our Platinum Jubilee and will be celebrating with a lunch and Demonstration on Sunday 6th November 2022 at the Braid Hills Hotel. Tickets are available for those interested in attending and cost £30.

For more information contact

Alison Hewatt

Email: rajahewat1@btinternet.com

Phone: 332 4842

TUESDAY TOPICS

Tuesday Topics is please to announce a new session of talks and entertainment for all our loyal members starting on Tuesday 4th October 2022.

We are a very friendly group which has been going for 36 years and though we started off as a group for women only, we now welcome anybody who is interested in our talks to come along to St Columbia's Church Hall on alternate Tuesdays. We mainly meet in the small hall at 7.30 We support a different Charity each year, this year's being “Scottish Love in Action”.

The syllabus is just finalised and you can see the details below. We have a small Membership fee for the whole year or guests can just pay for attending the occasional meeting. If you have never joined us, why don't you come and try a meeting? The talks last about 45 minutes and then we have coffee/tea and some time to chat and make new friends.

You don't have to be a member of the Church to join us as our main aim is friendship and an opportunity to have an evening out!

For any further information, you can phone Lyndy Paton (Secretary). on 0131 332 7377 or Eleanor Lowrie (President) on. 0131 332 4827

Our syllabus up to December 2022

4th October : Women in the First World War: Roy Johnstone

18th October : Elephants : Carol Barrett

1st November : Cabinetmaking: Zoltan Eddie

15th November : Textile Work: Debbie Pearce

16th November : Christmas Fayre

29th November: Scottish Love in Action, our charity for the year: Rev Fergus Cook

13th December : Christmas Quiz

BLACKHALL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



Known fondly as “The Horti”, we are a small group of gardening enthusiasts. I myself am a bit of a beginner and have become hooked on growing vegetables, some crops more successful than others, unless you are a slug, snail or caterpillar and then my garden is a roaring success! I’m writing this at the end of July, it’s been a long dry summer so far but today we have the welcome relief of rain.

I’ve had a great rhubarb crop this year and I’ve been busy mastering the art of rhubarb and ginger jam making, more mastering required!

My honeysuckle is usually buzzing but it’s all quiet today apart from the sound of raindrops! My sunflowers are blooming, the nasturtiums in red and orange are tumbling in and around the garden and the shasta daisies have well and truly taken over. It’s fair to say my garden is blooming and a little bit wild.

What’s working well in your garden? Do you have a specimen plant that’s your pride and joy?

During the 2021/22 session, we had talks and demonstrations on a wide range of topics including composting, propagation, Edinburgh community gardening and Orchids.

Preparation for our first meet up in September this year will be underway shortly and I look forward to sharing our programme of events soon.

Why not come along and join us? We would be delighted to welcome new members to the club, no experience necessary.

Is there a project or do you have an idea you think we’d be interested in? Then please do get in touch.

The Horti meets at 7.45 pm on the second Monday of the month from September to May in the small hall at Blackhall St Columba's Church. month's poster displayed locally in the Blackhall area.

If you would like more information please email Sheena, Horti President, at blackhall.horti@hotmail.com

Louise Wood



You may remember that in the last Bulletin the Art Group were looking forward to holding its first exhibition in the church halls for two years. I am pleased to say that the exhibition was a great success, with 39 pictures and many hand-painted cards sold. This meant that the art group was able to donate £1000 to the Scran Academy, which is a social enterprise that aims to improve the confidence and employability skills of some of Edinburgh’s most vulnerable young people.

We were delighted by the support from the congregation and local community, and would like to thank all those who attended.

The Blackhall St Columba’s Art Group is currently on its summer break and we hope everyone is enjoying the summer weather and longer days. The club will resume on Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th September when we look forward to welcoming back members old and new.

Joyce Whytock



Committee members Myke Graham and Anne Henderson presenting the cheque for £1000 to The Scran Academy

Cameo Club

Although affiliated with the church, Cameo Club is for the community to Come And Meet Each Other.

We have had some younger volunteers coming forward in the past two years and are looking to build on that. We offer car transport for members in the area and new drivers are always needed – driving can be occasional and does not have to be every meeting.

Our programme is every second Friday and is held at Blackhall St Columba's Church between 10.30 – 12.00. Volunteers can also help with teas and coffees or simply talk to members and listen to our entertainers.

On September 9th we have Dougie Anderson who sings and plays traditional Scottish and Irish music, and on 23rd September we will have Allan Crocker playing guitar music. We are delighted to have both performers booked.

There will be a warm welcome to anyone who wishes to join us either as a member or a helper. Further details can be provided by phoning the numbers below.

Margaret Brown 332 5957

Fiona Drinnan 343 6762

Knit and Natter

Summer has come and we are taking a well-earned break from our weekly meetings, though I suspect perhaps not entirely from knitting.

Pregnancy Counselling and Care were delighted to receive our last donation and have asked us to keep knitting for them as the need for their help increases. The Fort nursery have tucked away a supply of hats, mitts and scarves for the winter and FreshStart have received some beautiful blankets.

We resume our Monday evenings on September the 26th in the Sanctuary at 7.30pm. If you have an interest in knitting and would like to join us, please do come along then or if you would like further information, please contact Lilian Cockburn at

stcknitnatter@gmail.com





Who dunnit?

There aren't many of us who don't enjoy an episode of Miss Marple, Midsummer Murders or Death in Paradise when we can try to examine the clues and work out whodunnit before all is revealed.

Why not come along to our own murder mystery event at the church on Saturday 8th October and see how good your detective skills really are?

Professional actors will provide the background, story and evidence for you to consider over a delicious high tea of fish and chips (and treats for after). Then, they will finish off the evening by performing the "solution" for us.

There are a limited number of places available, and they will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Tickets are £20 each for the entertainment and the meal. Why not take a table and bring some friends along?

Please contact Shona Cook on 07981 970054 or by email - shonacook505@gmail.com to book tickets.

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Thank you for your generous support in recent months which has been greatly appreciated by FreshStart.

Unfortunately the need for food support is ever growing during the current economic problems. FreshStart also continues to distribute Starter Packs of household items, emergency food packs and has a Pantry Shop getting busier than ever.

The church halls are open each Friday morning from 10am until 11.30am to receive donations. Any help you feel able to give with non perishable food or Starter Pack items will be greatly appreciated.

The poster on the left of this page shows another new way you can provide support to FreshStart, by becoming a mentor to someone learning to cook.

Lilian & Michael Cockburn
Fresh Start co-ordinators

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Consider Yourself at home!

I've just come back from the Rose Theatre with these words still echoing in my ear, after a wonderful performance of "Oliver" by Captivate Theatre. Their talented young cast, including several boys and girls from Blackhall, sang and danced their way through this well-known musical with an enthusiasm and professionalism that would delight Lionel Bart himself.

When the Artful Dodger and Fagin's street urchins convince Oliver of their warm welcome if he joins their gang, it's a transforming moment for him, after all that he has suffered before arriving in London. No wonder his face lights up as he gradually feels confident enough to join in with the chorus!

Starting a new life at any age is challenging, of course, even without the "back story" of deprivation and cruelty suffered by Dickens' young hero. After six decades in Fife, I retired to Edinburgh five years ago, keen to make the most of this new chapter in my life, hopeful that I would find my feet as I settled into my new home. It was actually the Blackhall Bulletin that proved to be my "welcome song", giving me an insight into the local community and offering useful information about activities, groups and businesses. Following up on those relevant to my own interests helped me to make the transition easily – and, like Oliver, I very quickly felt "at home".

In Blackhall St Columba's church, in particular, I met folk who helped me lay the foundations for my new life here – not just because they were responsible for producing the Bulletin and delivering it to all the homes in the Parish, but because I found myself spending more and more time with them as there were so many activities on offer within the church and its halls. From Scottish Country Dancing to singing with Jubilo; taking my grandchildren to ballet, Brownies and Beavers; I was there several times during the week, as well as Sunday mornings, and soon felt I was really "one of the family".

Whether you are new to Blackhall and looking for ways to become involved with the community, or if you have lived here much longer than I have and are simply thinking about what you might like to do when the activities and groups all start up again after the summer break, "Consider yourself one of us". Details of all of the church activities, and the wide range of secular groups who meet in the three halls, can be found on our website, where you will find there is something for everyone, from babies and toddlers to great grandparents. We are also the ideal venue for regular "Music at St Columba's" concerts, with performers from all styles of music, classical and contemporary.

Finally, do consider coming along to one of our morning services. Harvest Sunday, on 9th October, when we have the Junior Singers taking part and will be collecting food gifts to distribute, might be a good time to try. With comfy seats instead of pews; an age-based activity session for children; and informal refreshments afterwards, we hope we might offer you an opportunity to take time out from your busy week, for reflection and renewal. Whatever your experience of "church" in the past, do re-consider and allow us to welcome you at Blackhall St Columba's.

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ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH INVOLVEMENT 88 GOLF TOURNAMENT

After a three year break the Church golf outing was held on the Friday 8th July 2022 at Ravelston Golf Club. 14 played 18 holes and a further 4 played 9 holes and all enjoyed a lovely afternoon.

The winners this year were:-

Involvement 88 Cup	1. Alan Francey
Murrayfield Handicap Cup	1. John Turner 2. George Millar 3. Brian Duffin
Murrayfield House Ladies Cup	1. Diane Ross 2. Pam Harrington 3. Frances Douglas
Nearest the Pin 5th Hole	Eric Turnbull
Nearest the Pin 18th Hole	Eric Turnbull
Booby Prize	Barbara Halliday
9 Hole Prize	Mike McKinnell



Once again, a big thank you to Ravelston for the use of their Course and afterwards for the delicious meal which was enjoyed by all. Thank you to Frances Douglas for sorting out all the Score Cards and also to Murrayfield House to whom we say thanks for their support and sponsorship of the Event.

We now look forward to next year when we hope to return to holding the Event in June.

Mike McKinnell

SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING



We hope all our members are looking forward to the new term beginning this Autumn.

The Scottish Country Dance Class will resume on Thursday 22nd September 2022 in Blackhall St Columba's Church Hall; 7.30 - 9.30 pm. As well as our regular members, we would be delighted to welcome new ladies and gentlemen to the class. Why not give it a try?? - our teacher Muriel Stenhouse is very patient and encouraging and walks us through the dances. The term finishes on Thursday 8th December with our Christmas party.

If you would like further details, please don't hesitate to phone.

Margaret Brown
332 5957

WA†CH COMMITTEE

The Blackhall St Columba's Church WATCH Committee started this year's fundraising, in line with our remit of supporting and raising awareness of local charities, with the coin collection during every Sunday morning service in July and August.

This year we are raising funds for the local charity Pilton Equalities Project (P.E.P.). They support older people and vulnerable groups and have now restarted their lunch clubs and other activities. Currently they are using their minibuses to transport displaced families from Ukraine. It seems appropriate that we can help our neighbours to help their neighbours.

We will follow the traditional program after the Summer Coin Collection with the **Craft Coffee Morning on 1st October and the Christmas Fair on 26th November**. Please note these dates in your diaries and more details will be published in future editions of the Blackhall Bulletin and through intimations at church services.

The WA†CH Committee appreciates the support of organisations which meet in the Church halls and hope that they will continue by running stalls at the Christmas Fair and other fundraising activities. We thank the local businesses who support our Tombola with vouchers and other means and hope that they can continue to do so. Our P.E.P. fund is already benefitting from events held by the Outreach Committee throughout the summer months.

Dates for your diary

- **Craft Coffee Morning on Saturday 1st October from 10.00am to 12 noon**
- **Christmas Fair on Saturday 26th November at 2 pm**

George Millar
WA†CH Committee Convener

BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH CHRISTMAS FAIR IS HAPPENING THIS YEAR!

We wish to thank businesses, the congregation and friends for all their support over the years. We appreciate that businesses have had a difficult time financially during Covid, but we are hoping that you will be able to support us once again with our fundraising. This year for the local charity, Pilton Equalities Project (P.E.P.)

The Tombola Team are looking for your ideas for vouchers,
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.*

Your help will be greatly appreciated thank you

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

FRIENDS OF BLACKHALL LIBRARY NEEDS A CHAIRPERSON

Friends of Blackhall Library (FOBL) was set up in June 2022 to support general improvements to Blackhall Library and develop activities that increase the awareness of the library and improve access for all. Our priorities are to fundraise and to gather ideas from the community. Tess Storr, Lifelong Learning Development Leader who works at the library has been a huge help in establishing the FOBL.



At our first meeting in June, we prioritised the garden as an area that needed some improvement and where volunteers could make a difference. In the last few weeks FOBL have worked hard to make this into a lovely space for all to enjoy. Pop in and see for yourselves – why not sit and read a book!



If you are interested in gardening, please feel free to join us on Thursday mornings, or if a craft group is of more interest, try our Knit and Natter group on Thursdays 1.30pm – 3pm meeting in the garden.

In the future, we aim to raise funds for comfortable seating in the library, find ways to attract teenagers to use the space, have a pop-up cafe and investigate how we can make the front of the library more attractive (including solutions to the unsightly bins and dealing with the accumulating rubbish).

The committee comprises nine members meets every two months on a Saturday afternoon in the community room in the library. Minutes of meetings are publicly available, and we are spreading the word on Facebook and through community newsletters and noticeboards. We have a secretary and treasurer, but we desperately need a Chairperson! Could this be you?

Our next meeting is on Saturday 24th September 2022 at 3.30pm. All welcome.

For more information or to chat about what is involved please contact Tess Storr on Tess.storr@edinburgh.gov.uk Please also let us know your ideas for the library.

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BLACKHALL COMMUNITY TRUST NEWS



The Board of Blackhall Community Trust (BCT) is very much hoping that community events will be on the cards again shortly and we look forward to seeing everyone again in person, and to resuming activities and fundraising events.

At the time of writing, we are still waiting to hear the outcome of a re-run of the Community Asset Transfer consultation process, but hope that this will finally allow Ravelston Park Pavilion and adjacent land to transfer from the City of Edinburgh Council to Blackhall Community Trust, on behalf of residents. There is an urgent need for a new fit-for-purpose building to accommodate Blackhall Nursery so that local families can access their government-funded 1140 hours early learning and childcare entitlement, and for more community space. The Board is very pleased that ongoing work with architect Malcolm Fraser of Fraser Livingstone towards final designs has allowed us to reduce considerably the area of land being requested under the CAT process.

If you'd like to support Blackhall Community Trust, you can do so by donating through BCT's JustGiving page <https://www.justgiving.com/blackhallcommunitytrust>, or by texting **BCT**, followed by the amount you would like to donate (max £20) to **70085** e.g. BCT10 to donate £10. Texts cost the donation amount plus your network's standard charge.

Please consider becoming a Trust member, or better still, share your skills by becoming a volunteer member of the Board! Blackhall is defined by the Blackhall Primary School boundary.

Email blackhallcommunitytrust@gmail.com for more information about membership/becoming a director or to sign up for the newsletter.

More information about BCT is available on the website www.blackhallcommunitytrust.org.uk and you can follow us on Facebook @blackhallet or Twitter @BlackhallCT.

Blackhall Community Trust is a company limited by guarantee (SC551774) and a Scottish charity (SC047250)

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JUNIOR SINGERS NEWS

This has been quite a year for St Columba's Junior Singers! Covid prevented us from meeting and from recruiting new singers and by the time we were allowed to meet again in the church halls, our older members had moved on to secondary school. This meant that on our first choir practice in September 2021, only two children remained from our pre-covid choir. From that shaky start, however, the choir has blossomed into an enthusiastic, hard-working group of 17 girls AND boys! We have sung several times in church and performed last Christmas in the Edinburgh Nativity Service and, although it hasn't been possible so far, we hope we can at some point return to sing in Strachan House.

We will be starting our new session on Thursday, 8th September'22 in the upstairs hall at Blackhall St. Columba's Church. We start rehearsals at 3.45pm (some children come straight from school) and finish at 4.30pm – all during term time. Our sessions usually consist of warm-ups for the voice, learning new songs / polishing up known songs and then finishing with some singing games. We would be delighted to welcome any new singers in the P3 - P7 age range and, if your child enjoys singing, invite you to bring them along on Thursday 8th September (there is no charge or audition involved) or phone Amy Donaldson (332 1354) if you'd like some more information.



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SUNDAY CLUB AT BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S

The children of Blackhall St Columba's Sunday Club have been busy over the summer. Having listened to the story of Noah's Ark, they have been busy drawing, cutting, colouring and pasting to make a wall display in the small hall. Have a look at the photograph which shows some of the psychedelic as well as conventionally coloured animals in this ark!!

Sunday Club provides activity sessions for children during the Sunday morning service. The children sit with their families or with the Sunday Club leaders at the start of the service at 10.30am then leave with the leaders after the "children's talk" by the minister, to do their activities, coming back into church just before the end of the service around 11.30am. Come along any Sunday – we'd love to see you – but if you would like more information, then contact Amy Donaldson – 332 1354



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Blackhall Nursery

News Autumn 2022



Blackhall Nursery is situated within the wonderful nature resource of Ravelston Park and Woods. At Blackhall Nursery, we respect the children's rights, encouraging them to choose, to play and to voice their opinion. We focus on our Values of Respect, Kindness, Responsibility, Inclusion, Confidence and Integrity which we hope set the children up well for life.

As I write this the Nursery year is about to start, with some children returning after the summer for their second year and others starting with us for the first time. They will soon be learning through play, both indoors and out. We are outdoors in all weathers and once they have settled in we will regularly head out in small groups to explore Ravelston Woods too.

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 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.



Blackhall St Columba's Church

WATCH Committee

Craft Coffee Morning

Coffee/Tea

Hand made goods for sale

Saturday 1st October
10 am - 12 noon

In St Columba's Church Hall

All proceeds to
Pilton Equalities Project (P.E.P.).



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BLACKHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

With school just restarting on the 17th of August, we take a look back at a few things some classes just before they broke up for the summer holidays and wish all new and returning pupils a very successful 2022-23 session.



P5A after being wonderful tour guides on the Royal Mile.

P7 taking part in the tree of knowledge transition event.



P4 doing their Stoney Enterprise project.

Blackhall Guiding

202A Rainbows had a visit from Elaine and her working guide dog Tessy



202c Brownies are really looking forward to the return of the Gang Show. Its great to have some of our girls involved. The show is on at the festival theatre Tue 1st- Sat 5th Nov.
Abbott - 202C Brownie Leader

202A Rainbows showed their creativity at honeypot ceramics



S'mores at the beach in the sun what more could you want!



157 Rainbows have welcomed some new members and the girls have come up with lots of ideas for activities and trips they'd like to try this term
Caroline Murray- 157 Rainbow Leader

202A Rainbows had a busy summer term with a visit from some animals, A visit to Ravelston Park to have some sausages on rolls and s'mores. We ended the term with a trip to honeypot ceramics to do some pottery painting. This term we are working on the skills for my future theme and looking forward to welcoming some new rainbows.
Barbara Bon - 202A Rainbow Leader

Before the summer 10 girls from 202B and 4 from 202 Brownies were presented with their gold award. 19 girls were also presented with bronze and 18 with silver. Well Done girls!!



202 and 202B Brownies have had a busy start to the term learning first aid from Corstorphine First response. Some girls have just come back from a very exciting adventure visiting Alwnick Castle taking part in a tour of the castle and completed some Broomstick training. They then carried on the adventure to Beamish Museum in County Durham where they got to sleep in the museum. They are looking forward to a day trip to the safari park with many other Girlguiding Scotland members. They will take part a camp to PGL Dalguise at the end of September. This term we are working on the know myself theme. Learning about our Local History and what makes each of us special and unique. We are also very excited to watch many our girls in this years Edinburgh Gang Show.
Nicole Harland 202 and 202B Brownie Leader

Important Message from the Blackhall Guide leaders:

Both Guide Units are looking for help.

157a Guides need more volunteers to assist the Unit leader from August this year.

202 Guides need one or more people to come forward and take over the Unit from summer 2023 as Unit leader(s).

Volunteer positions may be filled on an individual or job-share basis. Full training will be provided, including safeguarding and first aid training. This is a great opportunity for someone to get involved in Guiding, either with their daughter, or if you know a young person (aged 18+) whose future career it might benefit.

If volunteers cannot be found for these positions, there is a risk that the Units will not be able to run.

If your Brownie is on a Guide waiting list, priority will be given to them for a place in any Unit in which a family member volunteers.

Please contact Lorna if you would like more information or to discuss - blackhall.districtcomm@gmail.com



As we come to the end of the Scout year, we can reflect on how the year started with Covid-19 regulations in place and now we are almost back to 'normal'. All sections have held their summer term meetings in Ravelston Park or further afield, providing the opportunity to brush up on or learn new outdoor skills – a major area for developing #SkillsForLife. In June we held a whole Group parents' evening in Ravelston Park, the Big BBQ. This allowed us to re-establish some links with the parents which had been difficult during Covid. The Group is flourishing and increasing in size, particularly the Scout section. Waiting lists are full, and we need to recruit more Leaders to spread the load and accommodate the increases.

On 24th June we held a Group Parents' Evening in Ravelston Park attended by over 200 people. The Pink Panther Explorers bravely put on a programme for the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, allowing the Section Leaders to spend time with the parents explaining the programme and progression through the Sections. We finished with a BBQ prepared by the older Scouts. A very worthwhile evening despite the rain at the end.

The Big BBQ



Congratulations!

To those who received awards at the Big BBQ: Chief Scouts Gold Award to Scouts Rufus Reid, Charles Evans, Ben Scholes, Alexander Bain, Tait Woodhouse, and Fraser Duffy; Chief Scouts Silver Award to Cub Scout Kyle Crawford; Commissioner's Award to Scout Leader Dave Duffy; and Long Service Award to Cub Scout Leader Steve Palmer. Our District Commissioner, Mark Hesketh, joined us for the evening and presented some of the awards.

EXPLORERS



The Pink Panthers Explorer Unit arrives in Helsinki enroute to the Finnish International Scout and Guide Finnjamboree 2022 at a forest site.

The party included 14 former Scouts from the 23rd Craigmaldon and one of our Scout leaders. There will be a full report in the next edition of the Bulletin

Vacancies

Beaver Leaders Secretary
Cub Leaders Treasurer
Scout Leaders



Can you Help?

Every week we give over 200 young people the skills they need for school, college, university, the job interview, the important speech, the tricky challenge and the big dreams: resilience and the skills they need for life.

Will you help us to give more skills to even more young people?

We are looking for Leaders, helpers, admin, sharing a specialist skill. If you're not keen on working directly with young people that's OK too. Trustees do lots of things out of the spotlight, and there's lots you can do from home

If you think you could help, please contact:
23rdgsl@gmail.com



PROBUS NEWS



Blackhall Probus Club

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 will be meeting this coming session on the first Thursday of the month from October through to May 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 wide range of subjects. We also hope to organise one or two lunches and a summer outing year to which partners are invited.

Due to Covid-19, our programme for the past two years was curtailed somewhat but we still held regular meetings via Zoom which were well received by our members. Talks have included topics as diverse as *“The life and times of Deacon Brodie”*, *“Wildlife Conservation in South Africa”* and *“Spitfire Women”*. This session’s programme promises to be equally diverse and entertaining.

Our first meeting will be on Thursday 6th October at the Blackhall Bowling Club. We are always pleased to welcome new members, so if you would like to join us, please contact the Secretary for more details.

Keith Gilroy, Secretary, Blackhall Probus Club.
Phone: 0787 327 5854
Email: ksgprobus@icloud.com

CRAIGLEITH PROBUS CLUB

The summer heatwave has passed and with our endeavours on the golf course probably matching those of Tiger Woods at this year’s open, it is time to think about our Wednesday mornings at Blackhall Bowling Club amid our friends. Arranging our programme of talks is always fraught but Jim Martin, our Speakers Secretary, ensures me that from learning about Edwardian Literature to the work of a Silversmith all breadths of interest will be covered !

Wednesday 5th October at 10.30am is our first meeting and with a warm welcome with a coffee or tea, plus biscuits we look forward to seeing you all again. Do remember that Craigleith Probus does not just serve the Craigleith area as its name may suggest. With reliable buses passing close by in Blackhall village plus adequate parking near the bowling club our door is open to all retired gentlemen - from Merchiston to Muirhouse, Dalmeny to Duddingston, and Balerno to Blackhall.

John MacLennan : Former President 2013-15
<https://craigleithprobus.myfreesites.net>



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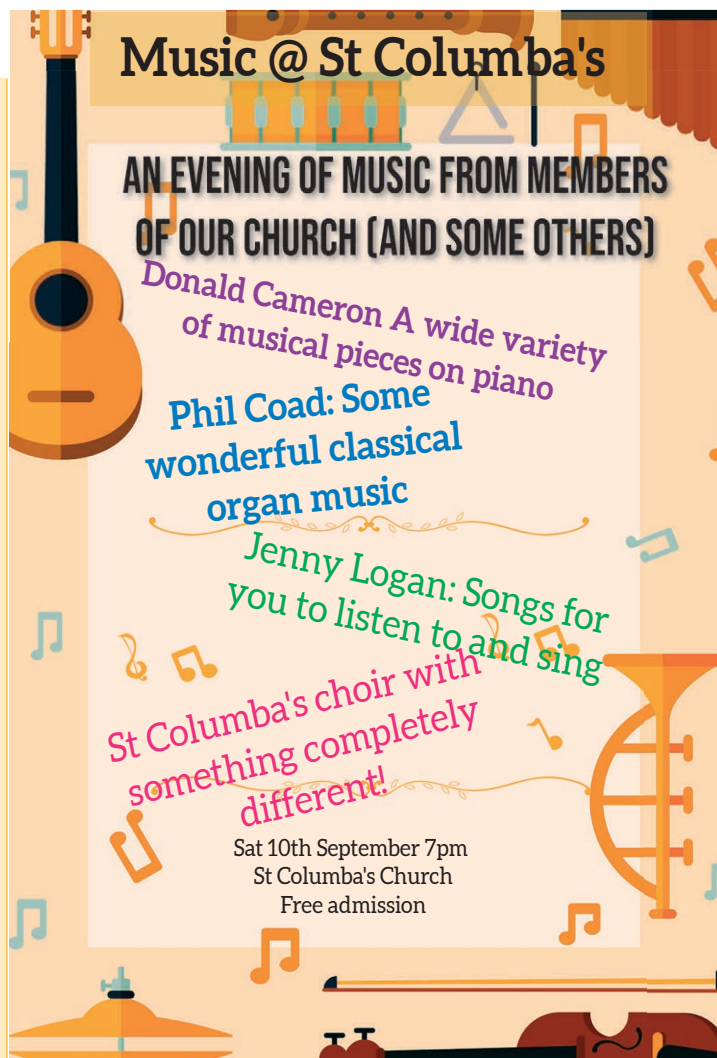
At Blackhall St Columba's church we use different sorts of music. Some old (some very old) and some new with songs just written in the last year. The organ is a wonderful instrument especially for leading classical hymns, but it is not great for leading some new music. Therefore, we would love to have some young people help us by playing in the services once a month or so. Music would be provided for whatever instrument you can play but you do need to be able to play at least at Grade 3 level.

There is no better way to improve your playing than playing live in front of friends and family and alongside musicians who are just a bit better than you are. If you fancy a challenge and like playing fun music this is the place for you to start.

Any instrument would be useful (except probably not piano since that's my job) but guitars, saxophone, drums, trumpet, violin and all the other strings would be great to have. We also have a group of about 17 young folk who sing together and they contribute to our services every two months or so. If you think you would enjoy singing in a different setting from school maybe that's something for you to think about.

I do hope you will get in touch, and, with your parents' help, we can meet up without you committing to anything just to see where you could fit in.

Donald Cameron Director of Music Blackhall St Columba's Church



Music @ St Columba's

AN EVENING OF MUSIC FROM MEMBERS OF OUR CHURCH (AND SOME OTHERS)

Donald Cameron A wide variety of musical pieces on piano

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St Columba's choir with something completely different!

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HELP FOR PARENTS IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES



The last two years have put families under great pressure - working from home, children home schooling, Covid and perhaps the loss of family members. And on top of that we have a cost of living crisis.

*The Parenting Children Course (based on Christian principles) has been running for over twenty years in many forms. Its aim is to help parents with children under 11 years of age cope with these and other challenges. We would like to invite **all** interested parents to come along and find out some ways to understand and help your children cope in these difficult times.*

Light refreshments will be provided and you will have a chance to meet with others with similar concerns to you and be able to learn different strategies to help with the most important job any one of us can ever have – raising happy children who have the tools to cope in society

When? Thursdays 6th, 13th, 27th October and 3rd and 10th November from 7 – 9 pm

Where? Costa Coffee, Craighleith Retail Park

To reserve your place please call - The Parenting Course on 07957573695



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 Craigleith Road
 Edinburgh EH4 2EQ
 Telephone 332 5702

Church Secretary
 Ms Joy McGonigal-Paget
 in Church Office from
 Tues-Fri 9.00-12 noon
 Tel/fax 332 4431

DEADLINES

Kirk News – Sunday 14th October

Please send all items to the Editor;
 Fay Stirling, c/o Church Office
 Mob: 07518 293976 or e-mail:
fay@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

Blackhall Bulletin-December edition Sunday 23rd October

Please send all items, including Advertising Enquiries
 to the Editor: Barbara Wilson, c/o Church Office
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READING THE BULLETIN FOR THE FIRST TIME?

Welcome to the area. We do hope you enjoy living here. To help you find your feet, Blackhall St Columba's Church website gives you all you need to know about activities happening there for young and old. From leisure activities like painting and dancing to our youth groups and junior singers. You can find it all at www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk or contact the office by phone (see above) or e mail secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk or

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