

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

OCTOBER 2020

No. 822



**Open
Doors Day**

**Sadly, not
just yet**

See page 2

**General
Assembly 2020
live streaming**

2 and 3 October

See page 5

Minister

Rev Fergus Cook
5 Blinkbony Crescent
Edinburgh EH4 3NB
Tel. 466 7503

Session Clerk

Mr Eddie Thorn
Tel. 332 5702

Church Secretary

Mrs Joy McGonigal-Paget
In Church Office from
Mon-Fri, 9.00-12.30pm
Tel. 332 4431
secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk



Blackhall St Columba's Church Open Doors Day Saturday 17 October - Postponed

If you have been wondering what's been going on behind the hoardings and fences for the last 18 months you were probably looking forward to our Open Doors Day planned for Saturday 17 October when you were invited to walk through our beautiful new doors for a look round our newly refurbished church.

Sadly, the announcement of tighter Covid restrictions has forced us to postpone our special day. But that day will come so keep checking our website -

www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

and our 'Blackhall St Columba's Church' Facebook page for up-to-date information and the announcement of a new date - and keep praying for an improvement in the Covid situation.

From the Minister



Greetings friends,

Recently, Edinburgh Presbytery held a 'zoominar' (a presentation and discussion held on Zoom) entitled 'Opportunity for Transformation'. The presentation was by Dave Kendal, the new CEO of the Church of Scotland, and it related to the Church of Scotland as a whole. The meeting was well attended and the presentation and ensuing discussions were recorded and have been made available for the Kirk Session to view.

One of the things that Dave referred to in the presentation was 'The Five Marks of Mission'.

The Five Marks of Mission originated with the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) but have won wide acceptance amongst other Christian traditions and have given various churches around the world a practical and memorable "checklist" for mission activities. The ACC indicates that these marks of mission are not a final and complete statement on mission but that they offer a practical guide to the holistic nature of mission.

They were first developed as four marks by the ACC in 1984 but a fifth was added in 1990. The ACC appreciated the missiological implications of God's creation and the environmental crisis it is facing. They decided that a new mark of mission, that captured this understanding, was inevitable. They stated at the time "We now feel that our understanding of the ecological crisis, and indeed of the threats to the unity of all creation, mean that we have to add a fifth affirmation."

Since then, they have indicated that the Five Marks need to be understood as dynamic and should be reviewed regularly. To this end, the wording of the Fourth Mark was revised by them in 2012.

Whilst I had the benefit of studying 'The Five Marks' and their application at University, I have reproduced them below for those who have not seen or heard of them.

The Five Marks of Mission are:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

/continued

From the Minister continued

When thinking about these marks of mission, one of the things that struck me was how well the Blackhall St Columba's Mission Statement "To Glorify God.... to proclaim Christ..... to serve others" dovetails with them.

We are in a time of unprecedented change, both for Blackhall St Columba's and the wider Church of Scotland. Last year's General Assembly introduced the Radical Action Plan which has included reducing the number of Presbyteries and consolidating the work that is done in each Presbytery by reviewing Presbytery Plans. One of the mantras for the Radical Action Plan is that we should have "well equipped spaces in the right places".

I believe the recent redevelopment of the sanctuary has given us here at BStC's just that, a well equipped space in the right place to serve the community of Blackhall and beyond. If we are to be successful in our previously stated mission statement, we would do well to check off each and every activity we undertake to confirm that it is addressing at least one of the five marks of mission. Although each mark can stand alone in its own right, they are not exclusive. Many of our activities could, and in fact already do, cover more than one mark at a time.

As we move forward, I am hoping that we become an 'invitational church'. By that I mean a church to which all of us will feel able to invite family, friends, neighbours, work colleagues or indeed anyone we meet to come along to activities we are hosting. Whilst clearly the worship of God is central to all our activities, we should not underestimate the value of purely social activities in introducing the wider community to who we are, what we do and importantly what we believe. We live in a society that has never been so 'unchurched'. Whilst previous generations have experienced people stopping going to church, we are in the situation that we have the responsibility to bring the gospel news of Jesus Christ to a generation who have never been to church. This is a generation where many have not had even the basic tenets of our faith taught to them by their parents or grandparents or at school or church. This is a generation to whom we have a whole new mission to introduce to God. I am firmly of the opinion that, for many people, they 'belong before they believe'. Each and every one of us needs to engage with the Five Marks of Mission in all our activities in order to create that invitational and welcoming atmosphere that will not only bring people into the church but will keep them there for God.

God Bless all

Fergus

General Assembly 2020: Online Fri 2 and Sat 3 October

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Church of Scotland's annual General Assembly will now be held online on the evening of Friday 2 October and all day Saturday 3 October.

This year the Commissioners, Youth Representatives and Corresponding Members will take part remotely — from congregations and presbyteries around the country and indeed the world.



All discussions, voting and amendments will be done online, with Commissioners and Youth Representatives signing in through the Church of Scotland's website to a new Assembly Hub, where they can ask questions and put forward amendments and new ideas. Corresponding Members will also be able to sign in to the Assembly Hub through the website. Training sessions to ensure everyone can participate effectively will be held in advance of the Assembly.

In accordance with government advice, only a small number of people will be in the Assembly Hall: those running the proceedings, those reporting to the Assembly and those live streaming and recording the event.

We will not have a Lord High Commissioner, although the Queen will write to the Assembly expressing her support and encouragement.

In addition, there will be prayer and worship led by the Moderator, and the Commissioners will be making important decisions which need to be made now so that the Church can move forward. Under consideration will be reports from the Assembly Trustees, the Faith Impact Forum and the Faith Nurture Forum.

Debate will range from church finance to the Church's engagement with the pressing issues facing our nation and the global community.

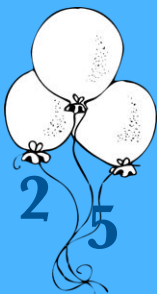
Although the General Assembly had to be postponed due to the pandemic, the Commission of Assembly has dealt with urgent business to ensure the work of the Church continued in challenging times.

How can I participate?

We invite everyone - wherever you are - to join in and [watch the livestream](#) on the Church of Scotland website or [Facebook page](#). The Friday session will run from 7pm to around 9pm and the Saturday session will run from 9.15am to approximately 5pm. On Saturday there will be coffee and lunch breaks.

Order of Proceedings and Reports

The full Order of Proceedings and the General Assembly Reports 2020 are now available on our [Reports, Speeches and Additional Documents page](#).



To our Minister and his wife -

Shona and Fergus

Congratulations
and best wishes from us all
on the celebration of your
Silver Wedding Anniversary



BLACKHALL
ST. COLUMBA'S
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Blackhall St Columba's Church
5 Columba Road
Edinburgh
EH4 3QU

CHURCH OFFICER VACANCY PART TIME - JOB SHARE 20 HOURS

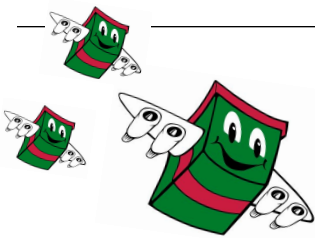
**To assist with the upkeep of the building
Monday - Friday**

Please see our church website for details

www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

or

Contact the Church Office 0131-332-4431



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX APPEAL

- another year, another challenge!

For a number of years the members of Blackhall St Columba's congregation have risen to the Shoebox challenge bringing joy and hope into the lives of under-privileged children. This year, 2020, has already been a challenging year for many. It is all the more important that this year we, who are able, respond to our gospel imperative to help others and spread the good news of God's kingdom here on earth.

This year we are again asking the congregation to donate filled shoeboxes. We hope that in this way every child who receives a shoebox from Blackhall St Columba's Church will receive a box that has been thoughtfully packed with items from the suggested packing list. This year, as a result of Covid-19, things have to be done a little differently. The decorative 'Go Boxes' and packing lists of appropriate items are available now for collection from the refurbished Church Office in Columba Road, (during Church Office hours). You can fill as many boxes as you wish but, in order that we can meet the revised 2020 National Collection timetable, **we will require filled boxes to be at the Church for Sunday 8 November 2020.**

If you have a problem about collecting an empty box or returning a filled box please contact the Church Office in Columba Road (332 4431), Adrian Johnston (07831 889932) or your District Elder and arrangements will be made for delivery of the empty box(es) to you and collection again, once filled. Please let us know as soon as possible if you need a box (or boxes) delivered and/or collected.

The need for your caring support is as great as ever.

God bless all

Fergus

To learn more please take a look at the following link: <https://youtu.be/E5VVDymhGr4>



Samaritan's Purse International is a registered charity.
In Scotland, SC039251

Church Timeline

Blackhall St Columba's.....1900-2020 and counting !

Not long ago I was asked to head up a team to devise and create a tangible, physical timeline of Blackhall St.Columba's which would be on permanent display in the sanctuary.

Being the new kid on the block, to help me with this task, I was put in touch with a number of lovely ladies from the congregation who are all very knowledgeable and creative and we have been meeting regularly to work on this exciting project.

We don't want to give too much away at this stage and thereby spoil the surprise completely before the great unveiling at some point in the not too distant future but we also do not want to miss out on the wealth of talent that exists within the congregation by not sharing some information with everyone and without asking for help.

We want this piece of work to reflect all aspects of the church and its congregations over the last one hundred and twenty years. To pinch a line from Abraham Lincoln's address at Gettysburg, we want the timeline to be of the people, by the people and for the people.

We have been gathering information from many different sources so that the timeline will reflect all the key events of the last 120 years and will reflect the different ages through which Blackhall St.Columba's has steadfastly stood at the heart of the community of Blackhall.

The timeline will be made up of six separate panels each of which will cover a period of twenty years and the panels will take several different forms ranging from painting to cross-stitch and collage. We are making good progress with the content of the panels but now we need you help. If you have any information particularly about the different organisations that exist or have existed within the church, it would be great to hear from you with the details. Just drop me a note or contact me by email. / continued

Church Timeline continued

Most importantly, we really need volunteers to give of their time and talents to help physically make the timeline. I am sure that there will be some of you who might try to hide their light under a bushel and downplay their abilities but now is not the time to be backward at coming forward. There will be many within the congregation who have talents and abilities which can be put to good use with regard to the creation of this timeline and we need to hear from you. If you have, or know of anyone who has, design experience or knowledge or you have creative abilities with fabric, threads or paint, then you can help be part of the team that creates a timeline which we and future generations can admire and be proud of, knowing that we have made a lasting piece of art ourselves.

Please give this request careful thought and, if you feel you can help in any way, great or small, contact me at the manse or by email at shonacook505@gmail.com. Let me take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your assistance.

Shona Cook

Family News



Deaths

August

5 Mrs Edith MacDonald

26 Mr Alexander Christie

September

Mrs Dorothy Christie

Mrs Agnes (Nan) Imrie

To Alison Hewat

Congratulations
on your 80th Birthday

We hope you enjoyed your
celebration.



Well, it's been a longer time coming than we expected, but at the time of writing, we have just taken back control of the church from the building contractors. By the time you read this, they will have finished the last few minor jobs, and the snagging list.

Also by the beginning of October we will have relocated all of our effects which have been in storage, re-sited the church office and will be waiting for our chairs to be delivered.

There has been so much done, by so many people to get us to this stage, it is impossible to name everyone, but I'll mention a few key players:

Lee Boyd Architects – who designed the interior and worked with us throughout to ensure the quality and accuracy of what was delivered.

John Dennis – the main contractors, and their many sub-contractors, have done an excellent job in executing the design to a very high standard of workmanship, from the carpentry to the complex carpet fitting.

D3 audio-visual – have provided a sound and vision system fit for purpose for the 21st century and future proofed to enable us to be much more creative in the use of our technology.

The **Building for the Future Steering Group**, and wider **Kirk Session** – for sound counsel, fair challenge and strong support throughout the project.

We now have a bright, warm, flexible space equipped to enable us not only to worship, but to reach out, invite and welcome as many people as possible to join us.

Fay Stirling
Project Manager

Kirk Session Report

The Kirk Session met on Wednesday 2 September 2020. This was again a virtual meeting conducted via the Zoom conferencing facility as permitted by the Commission of the General Assembly.

Building for the Future

Fay Stirling, Project Manager, reported that the contractor would hand back control of the Sanctuary to the Church on Friday 11 September when all practical work will have been completed. There will be some minor tasks to be completed the following week. The Moderator expressed his thanks and that of the Session for the selfless work carried out by Fay and members of the Working Group which was much appreciated.

Children and Communion Policy

Fiona Drinnan presented a discussion paper to the meeting pointing out that our website already welcomes children to participate in Communion Services as long as they have been baptised and have an understanding of the Sacrament. However, the Church has discretion in inviting children to take part in such Services even if not baptised. Fiona pointed to the example of 3 Churches in Scotland who had gone down this route with excellent feedback and she was interested to hear Session's views on the possibility of us following suit. Following considerable discussion the Session unanimously agreed the opening of The Lord's Table at Communion to all, including those who have not been baptised. In the case of children, the parents/guardians would be the chief disciplers ensuring any child understands the meaning and importance of the Sacrament.

Data Protection Policies

The Data Protection policy documents presented by Alison Hewat were agreed by Kirk Session with approval that these go onto the Church website. It was also agreed that the Data Protection Officer should be the point of contact for all data protection matters. This would be Alison herself, but any queries should be addressed to the Data Protection Officer c/o Church Office.

The Moderator thanked Alison for all her hard work in pulling the comprehensive documents together for consideration by Session.

Kirk Session Meetings

The Clerk intimated that, until regulations and guidance from the Scottish Government allow, we will continue to hold virtual meetings via Zoom, thus complying with Church law. /continued

Link Elder Visits

There was a general feeling that the time had come to overhaul the purpose of the Link Elder's visit to the various organisations across the Congregation and hall users with a need to look at how our vision matched their activities and expectations.

The Moderator emphasised his own view that each of these groups represented a missional opportunity and how they might become more involved with the life of the Church could be explored. He and the Clerk would now meet and discuss this question again and put forward a proposal to Session for discussion and to agree the way ahead.

Open Doors Day

Although the arranged date of 17 October is the start of the school holidays, the Moderator felt it unlikely that there would be a mass exodus of people going on holiday during the pandemic and, besides, there was a lot of anticipation among members of the Congregation to see the refurbished Sanctuary. The event will be well managed with a risk assessment carried out to ensure a safe environment. [Open Doors Day later postponed, see page 2]

Presbytery Plan

Jim Logan gave a verbal report of the meeting held by Zoom on Wednesday 26 August and which was attended by 147 people representing the 71 parishes within The Presbytery of Edinburgh. The meeting's intention was to focus on the Presbytery Plan to be implemented in 2022. The keynote speaker was Dave Kendall, Chief Officer for the Church of Scotland, his theme being "Opportunity for Transformation". Mr Kendall outlined the challenges, issues and opportunities faced by the Church and also our values of Grace, Integrity, Respect, Professionalism, Collaboration and Innovation and how these influence our attitude in working together as we prepare a radical action plan which reflects the needs of the City of Edinburgh in 2022 and the years which follow.

What is clear is that the current operational model is unsustainable. It does not reflect the declining membership of the Church of Scotland and the accompanying decline in income – Church membership has declined by 80% since the 1950s and we are half the size we were in 2000. In reality, we have too many Parishes, Church Buildings and Presbyteries. We need to contract yet expand, prune yet plant and invest all at the same time. That is the challenge the Church faces. Critical to this will be the need to "create well equipped spaces in the right places" so a critical review of the use of Church buildings is needed. /continued

Kirk Session Report continued

The Church's pace of change has been slow in the past to bring about radical reform and we need on this occasion to move with speed but also empathy. Presbytery reform can only succeed if accompanied by simultaneous reform of the central Church (i.e. 121 George Street) whose principal purpose would be to equip and support the local Church as well as the development of its staff.

So how will the local Church look? The intention is to formulate a plan around a framework of clusters of congregations who would consider their work across the broader area of their combined parish boundaries. This would include the need for and of the use of buildings, manpower and other resources and how these might be shared.

Blackhall St Columba's is, initially, grouped with Murrayfield Parish Church and Palmerston Place and it may be that the impact of the radical plan is likely to be less compared to other clusters, the aim being to reduce the number of Ministry posts in Edinburgh from 78.3 to 66.3. This also includes Workplace Chaplaincy posts.

The Moderator informed Session that he has already been networking with the North West Group of Churches, Stockbridge and St Stephen's Comely Bank in addition to Murrayfield and Palmerston Place.

Re-opening Halls

Ian Templeton, Hall Convener, reported that a Risk Assessment had been carried out of the Church Halls and the protocols governing their use issued to hall users. Hall users had also received guidance on what action to take should an emergency arise. The guidance issued by the Scottish Government continued to be followed

A new hall rota had been drawn up which resulted in no more than 2 organisations meeting in a hall each day and with a 2 hours gap between meetings to ensure that the necessary sanitisation action could be undertaken. The rota lasted to the end of October by which time the Sanctuary could be included for future planning purposes

The Moderator thanked Ian for all his hard work in drawing up the necessary documentation to ensure that we are Scottish Government compliant and for his and others' help and commitment in the re-opening of the Halls.

Eddie Thorn
Session Clerk

The Kindness of Strangers

On 3 September my husband, Donald, and I set off for a day out which we'll likely not forget in a hurry. We took a sail "doon the Water" on the P.S. Waverley.

We had a lovely time until at a quarter to five in the afternoon, the ship hit the pier at Brodick....hard.



What ensued over the next six hours reinforced how wonderful people can be in times of adversity.

Firstly, we were very fortunate not to be physically injured, and our prayers are with those who needed medical help and hospital stays; thankfully all are now released. I did, however, get a real fright as the man sitting along from us was knocked backwards off his chair, banged his head on our table and landed on my feet.

Act of kindness no.1 – a nearby passenger saw my distress, checked I was ok and brought a glass of water.

Some time later when we were let ashore, and settled in the ferry terminal building with around 200 other passengers, our phones began to run out of battery.

Act of kindness no.2 – a complete stranger offered us the use of his charging cable, and we were able to keep in contact with our families at home.

Throughout this period, there were many, many emergency service people, a lot of them retained or volunteer members of the police, fire brigade, ambulance, coastguard and mountain rescue, making sure everyone got the help and support they needed.

Act of kindness no.3 – a local GP and a district nurse arrived and took details from anyone who needed to have medication that evening, but didn't have it with them. They then sorted out supplies so no-one was left without what they required. The manner with which these two ladies carried out their task, and the way they interacted with passengers was delightful to hear.

The crew from the Waverley, obviously badly impacted by the accident themselves, and a couple were badly injured, did everything they could to help. / continued

The Kindness of Strangers continued

Act of Kindness no.4 – all remaining food supplies, sandwiches, cakes, biscuits, crisps and all soft drinks were brought from the ship and distributed to passengers while we waited to hear what was happening.

By 9.30pm, it was still unclear whether a boat would be able to take us to the mainland that night, so we took the decision to find a B&B and take a morning ferry home. The third place we tried still had no rooms, but suggested a fourth, where a double room was secured. A short taxi journey later, we arrived at a guest house in Whiting Bay. The owner, Duncan, could not have been kinder.

Acts of kindness nos.5, 6 and 7 – when he heard we'd been on the Waverley, he immediately knocked £5 off the room rate. Asking if we needed anything, my first request was for toothpaste. "I don't have any spare, but I'll bring you my tube and just take what you need". When he brought the toothpaste we asked if there was a phone charger we could borrow, and did he have anything to drink. He didn't have a licence, but brought a beer from his own fridge for Donald (I was ok).

I had posted on Facebook in the morning as we set out, and a number of friends and family knew where we were off to that day....we had so many messages from people checking we were ok and offering help, it was humbling.

The events of the day will live with us a long time, but so will the kindness of so many people, most of whom were complete strangers whose paths we are unlikely to cross again.

Fay Stirling

Cameo Club

With both government and church guidelines recommending a cautious approach to group meetings, Cameo Club will not be meeting until next year. We would expect to restart our programme in January, depending on developments over the winter.

Meantime we send our members all good wishes, and hope that we will be able to welcome you once again for coffee, chat and entertainment in 2021.

Fiona Drinnan & Margaret Brown

'Thanks for the Offering'

(With apologies to Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra and others!)

'Thanks for the memory' was the song title the above stars performed as I'm sure some of you will remember! It's been a wee while since we met in the kirk but its mission continues unabated and we've not been forgetting it! Members of the congregation and others have contributed their time, talent and treasure to try and keep us going as best we can over recent months.

Without services there have been no plate collections of course but we take this opportunity to thank all who have continued to donate by Bankers' Order, electronic payment directly to the Kirk bank account or who have delivered or posted donations for banking including some who have included Freewill Offering Envelopes.

There is no need to distinguish whether a donation is Gift Aided or not as that is picked up automatically by me as Gift Aid Convenor. Records are kept in bank statements and the Freewill Offering cash register should anybody ever want to check their giving history. Just ask me. Remember though you need to let us know if you stop paying Income or Capital Gains taxes.

Meantime thanks again for all the financial support that has been given. Clearly it is essential and whatever you can afford really does help. As the lyric in our inspirational song continues.....

"When the preacher said
For better or worse
How lovely it was"

Sandy Weir
Gift Aid Convenor



Outreach in Challenging Times

It was said to me recently that I must be enjoying the break from “Outreach work” seeing the church is closed. It was pointed out to them that even in Lockdown the work goes on only just in another way. In some ways more people are involved because it is not just the minister, elders, Outreach Team and volunteers. Perhaps you think I will do my bit but how can I help our church in Blackhall to engage with the community - easy.

- O Organise shopping or/and a visit to a housebound/ill neighbour.**
- U Universal acceptance to help all irrespective of race, gender and age.**
- T Together - we will get through this.**
- R Reach out to people you see in difficulty - they may never ask for help.**
- E Easy to be kind and enjoy a warm glow afterwards - today I made a difference.**
- A Ask people if they are well and OK-need to support those who are not.**
- C Care for God’s world, his people, nature and places of beauty - use washable masks and not disposable plastic ones.**
- H Help your neighbour and they will know we are a caring Church not just on Sunday.**

We can all do our bit for **OUTREACH** and prove, even if our Sanctuary doors are closed just now, that the Church is not only helping Blackhall to survive these challenging times but achieving good things together.

Michael Cockburn
Outreach Team Leader.

CrossReach Christmas Card and Calendar Collection 2020



Because of the Covid situation CrossReach Christmas Cards and Calendars will not be available for sale in our church hall in the usual way after church services in November.

You can, however, view the full catalogue now in the [Resources](#) area of the CrossReach website, and you can see everything on-line at shop.crossreach.org.uk

Alternatively, if you would like a copy of this year's catalogue please contact Margaret Brown. She will be happy to take orders.

margarembrown40@yahoo.com or Tel 332 5957

Let people know you're thinking of them this Christmas

The Joys and Tribulations of Musical Development in Church

The history of music in the church in Scotland is particularly fraught with much ink having been spilled over “dangerous innovations” and “slippery slopes” which, in most instances, became general practice in time with the subtlety of the closely argued opinions and passionately held views being lost just a few years down the road.

Women, hymn singing and the Bible

One of the common early difficulties, once we had hymns books in English rather than Latin, was whether it was Biblical to allow women to sing since St Paul made it clear his view was that women should remain silent in church (1 Cor 14:34). Some argued this was clearly not something for all time but simply a reflection of the Eastern culture and the time in which the words were written. Others saw the start of a “slippery slope” the end of which was the denial of the divine inspiration of the Biblical text - “Where do we stop if that section is simply cultural?”

In 1672 one Benjamin Keach Minister of a church in Horsleydown, introduced a hymn at the conclusion of the communion service but such was the negative response it was another 19 years before he had the stamina to tackle the possibility of singing hymns during a Sunday service. One member of the church took to writing pamphlets and even books on the subject of hymn singing, characterising those who supported such activities as “book-burning papists”. Others considered that written hymns were a liturgical formulation designed to aid and abet those who sought to undo the reformation since rhyme and metre were clearly carnal formalities that would rob worship of its origin in God himself. Not much room for compromise there one would have thought.

The Source of Words

A more subtle objection was that singing should only use words that God had given us and that the Psalms were clearly God’s hymn book for the church. The obvious difficulty there was that the Psalmists never knew Jesus and many of their themes do not espouse Christian forgiveness and love of enemies. Isaac Watts, that great hymns writer complained that if we were constrained to sing only from the Psalms then we would be condemned to “confessing to sins we never committed, repenting for sorrows we never felt, calling down judgement on enemies we never met, giving thanks for victories we never experienced and speaking of places and people we never knew”. His *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* of 1707 brought new music to the churches and over the next 150 years most churches, with a few notable exceptions, were singing hymns and Psalms from his book in most services. /continued

The Joys and Tribulations of Musical Development in Church continued

However, it was not until 1820 the Anglican church formally approved the singing of human compositions during a church service.

Given many folk could not read in the 17th and 18th century, some considered writing hymns down and publishing expensive books would militate against the ordinary people joining in the worship. "Lining out" was a device used to teach new hymns by rote, the congregation repeating a line sung by the precentor. This worked well enough but many hymns had several verses so by this method the congregation was effectively singing a 5-verse hymn twice through! This continued in some rural areas until the late 19th century.

New words and old tunes

In the early days there were only 7 tunes so all songs had to be made to fit these available tunes. As one can readily imagine, this would not last long until the metre of words and the tune would crash hopelessly into confusion. The resolution suggested was that each member should sing the words to such tune as they were able to imagine or construct in their head and if there was a cacophony of jumbled notes and words with all waiting on the last person with the longest, slowest tune to finish their song, that would not matter because God could sort them all out and it was to him we were singing. That may be so but does not sound like a pleasant experience.

Orchestra or organ

However, there was more conflict about whether it was Biblical to use instruments in the praise of God. This seems odd given the many instances in the book of Psalms when the players of tambourines, cymbals, harp and 10-stringed instruments should play as loudly as possible in praise of Jehovah. In the early stages flutes and fiddles made their quiet way into worship music and eventually they would form a sort of *ad hoc* orchestral group of variable competence but in the 19th century the organ grew in recognition to become the instrument of choice. True to form, this was challenged by the non-conformist churches with dire warnings of a slippery slope to Romish heresy. The wheel turned again and within 80 years these churches deemed the organ as the appropriate support for singing to avoid confusion of tempo and pitch caused by amateur instrumentalists. Some 50 years later many of these same churches warned the introduction of guitars, saxophones and trumpets would begin a slippery slope leading towards wild charismania. It is interesting to note that while the radicals were promoting the idea of organ music in worship, they were being opposed by the conservative orchestral traditionalists. One hundred years or so onwards and the radicals now want to dispose of the organs and the conservative traditionalists are keen to maintain them, sometimes at significant cost. / continued

The Joys and Tribulations of Musical Development in Church continued

Many of us will recall Sankey's *Sacred Songs and Solos* published in 1872 which were widely decried for bringing the music hall tunes into the life of the church. Ira Sankey's view was that songs should be light, easily learned and retained with a chorus that even the least literate could learn at one hearing and thus join in the worship without having to read books and listen to the tedious "lining out". By the end of the 20th century many churches of all persuasions were using Sankey's book as their main hymn book.

Love one another

Over my years in church music ministry, it has been easy to see that music has a particular ability to cause disunity and disharmony with many folk apparently confident that they and they alone have the truth on their side as to the form of music that is appropriate for worship of God. I am sure that is largely cultural and not Biblical since churches all over the world use every form of music known to the human race for the worship of God.

When we eventually get back to meeting and singing in one physical space, under the direction of our new minister, I am sure we will be introducing some new forms of music, involving old and new instruments but I trust a charitable spirit and sense of proportion combined with a modicum of good humour about the whole issue will serve us well.

Donald Cameron OBE LLCM
Director of Music Blackhall St Columba's Church



As many of you will know I would usually have been appearing in Showcase at the Churchill Theatre in September raising money for Macmillan Cancer Support.



It was a huge disappointment that we were not able to perform our 30th Show and add to the £295,000 we have already raised for Macmillan, especially in what has been a particularly difficult year for them due to the lack of fundraising opportunities.

We thought long and hard about the options available to us and the idea of a 30th Anniversary album was born. This has been done despite the difficulty of Social Distancing with each section recorded separately then mixed together to produce something we are immensely proud of.

If you would like a copy of the CD and help us break the £300,000 donation please follow the link below to make your donation and don't forget to mention you know me. Thank you

Alan Hunter

www.showcase30.co.uk

Scottish Registered Charity SC017963

Tuesday Topics

Unfortunately due to the current situation and the regulations proposed for the users of the Church halls it looks very doubtful whether we will be able to resume our meetings before January next year.

We will, however, notify all members as soon as we have definite news.

With best wishes to all our members and friends.

Eleanor Lowrie, President
Jacky Cowie, Secretary



Mouse Makes

"GOD is the **one** who gives seed to those who **plant**, and He gives **bread** for **food**. And GOD will give you spiritual seed and make that seed grow. He will **produce** a great **harvest** from your goodness."

2 Corinthians 9:10

Look out for seeds in the park and garden and in your kitchen store cupboard.



How many different seeds can you find?

Jesus said:
"The kingdom of heaven is like a **seed** that a man took and sowed in his **field**. It is the **best** of all the seeds, but when it has grown it becomes a tree, so that the wild **birds** come and nest in its branches."

Read
Matthew
13:31-32

Jesus said:
"You do not need more **faith**. There is no 'more' or 'less' in faith. If you have a bare kernel of faith, say the size of a poppy seed, you could say to this sycamore tree "Go jump into the lake" and it would do it!"
Luke 17:6

So the one who plants is not important, and the one who **waters** is not important. Only **GOD** is important because He is the one who makes things grow."
1 Corinthians 3:7

Find the words in bold on this page in the word search

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O F A I T H A T E E R
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D E U L O U G R O W A
P R O D U C E S G O D





BLACKHALL
ST. COLUMBA'S
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

'Although our buildings are shut, the Church is not a building! The Church is the worshipping community and we are as strong as we were before this crisis began'
..... Fergus Cook, Minister

Keep up with news of
the Blackhall St Columba's Church community,
our online services
and the various Zoom meetings
by regularly checking
our website
www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk

our Facebook page -
search for 'Blackhall St Columba's Church'

and

Follow us on



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Deadline for the November Kirk News has been given below in the usual way but please check online for updates.

DEADLINES

Kirk News - Sunday 18 October

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

Blackhall Bulletin - Sunday 25 October

All items, including advertising enquiries, should be sent to the Editor, Barbara Wilson
c/o Church Office
Home tel: 312 6035 or email
bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk