

BLACKHALL BULLETIN

March 2026

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

No. 180



THE KNITTED BIBLE Blackhall St. Columba's Parish Church

We are very excited to be hosting the Knitted Bible in the sanctuary from Friday 13th to Friday 20th March and hope that you will come with your family and friends to see it.

It was originally created in 2008 by the congregation of St. George's United Reformed Church in Hartlepool, Teeside. It began as a single scene depicting The Last Supper and grew and grew into a full-scale exhibition created by members of the congregation and friends from other churches who knitted, sewed and built this amazing display.

There are over 30 separate scenes from the Bible from the creation in Genesis to the Last Supper and Resurrection in the New Testament. You will recognise many characters: Adam & Eve, Noah, Joseph, Moses, David & Goliath and of course Jesus and many of the miracles he performed. The skill and craftsmanship to create these scenes has to be seen to be believed.

A review in The Guardian concluded by saying *"See it if you can; I went twice. I am neither Christian nor a crafter, but you would have to have a heart of stone (unlike the boulder in scene 32, the Resurrection, neatly knitted in grey wool) not to be moved by this endearing and intricate labour of love."*

As well as being able to see for yourself this unique exhibition, there will be refreshments for all and a variety of activities, quizzes and crafts for our younger guests on Saturday and Sunday.

It will take over an hour to see all the tableaux. There will be no charge for this event, but donations will be gratefully received and divided between St. George's United Reformed Church and our own Building for the Future Fund.

WHEN CAN YOU VISIT?

Friday 13 th	10am – 12.30pm : 1.30pm – 4pm : 6pm – 9pm
Saturday 14 th	10am – 1pm : 2 – 5pm
Sunday 15 th	2 pm – 5pm
Monday 16 th	10am – 12.30pm : 1.30pm – 4pm : 6pm – 9pm
Tuesday 17 th	1.30pm – 4pm : 6pm – 9pm
Wednesday 18 th	10am – 12.30pm : 1.30pm – 4pm : 6pm – 9pm
Thursday 19 th	1.30pm – 4pm : 6pm – 9pm
Friday 20 th	10am – 2.30pm

This is only the second time it has been displayed in Scotland. You can see more photos on <https://www.stgeorgesure.co.uk/the-knitted-bible> but the photos do not do justice to the amazing work of these gifted crafters. We look forward to seeing you !





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COME AND SEE: DECIDING FOR YOURSELF AT EASTER



Jesus began his ministry by calling his first disciples. In the gospel according to John we hear how Andrew was one of the first two disciples called by Jesus to follow him. Jesus invited him and his friend to ‘*Come and see.*’ (John 1:39)

In the Christian calendar we are now approaching the time when we mark the end of Jesus’ earthly ministry, Easter. Easter is, without question, the heart of the Christian faith. Strip it away and Christianity becomes little more than a collection of moral sayings and admirable intentions. Keep it, and everything changes. The claim Christians make at Easter is breathtakingly bold: that Jesus of Nazareth, crucified and buried, was raised from the dead by God, and that this event changes what we can hope for, believe about ourselves, and trust about the future.

That is a serious claim. It deserves to be taken seriously—whether we end up believing it or not.

In a world saturated with opinions, it can sometimes feel easier to avoid big questions altogether.

Religion, politics, and truth itself are often treated as matters of private taste: “You believe your thing, I’ll believe mine, and we’ll leave it at that.” Yet Easter refuses to stay neatly in that box. The resurrection is not presented in the Bible as a metaphor, a spiritual feeling, or a comforting idea. It is proclaimed as something that happened.

The apostle Paul puts it starkly: “*If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.*” (1 Corinthians 15:14)

Paul was not afraid of scrutiny. He went on to root the Easter message in witnesses, places, and times, inviting examination rather than blind acceptance. Christianity, at its best, has never asked people to switch off their minds at the church door.

The philosopher Bertrand Russell, who actually rejected Christianity, once observed that one should be careful not to dismiss opinions simply because they differ from one’s own. He wrote, “*Do not fear to be eccentric in opinion, for every opinion now accepted was once eccentric.*” While Russell himself did not believe the claims of Easter, his insistence on intellectual honesty and careful thought is something Christians should welcome. Faith that is never questioned is rarely faith that has been chosen.

Easter invites us to decide for ourselves.

The Gospel writers do not portray the first followers of Jesus as eager believers grasping at comforting stories. They are confused, frightened, and sceptical. When the women first report the empty tomb, Luke tells us, “*These words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them*” (Luke 24:11). Thomas, often unfairly labelled “doubting,” simply asks for evidence before committing himself. Jesus does not rebuke him for asking questions, but meets him where he is.

That detail matters. Christianity does not begin with unquestioning certainty, but with encounter. It begins with people meeting something they did not expect and struggling to understand what it meant.

At its core, Easter is an invitation, not a demand. Jesus’ first words to the disciples after the resurrection are not condemnation but peace: “*Peace be with you*” (John 20:19). Peace for fearful hearts. Peace for confused minds. Peace for those who are not yet sure what to believe.

In our own time, many people carry understandable reservations about Christianity. Some have been hurt by the Church. Others find the idea of miracles implausible in a scientific age. Still others simply feel that faith belongs to another generation. These concerns deserve respect. Christianity is not weakened by honest questioning; it is weakened only by refusing to listen.

Even though Bertrand Russell stated he did not believe he engaged seriously with Christian claims because he recognised that they mattered. Easter, after all, is not about whether faith is comforting, but whether it is true.

And truth, if it exists, is worth seeking.

The resurrection speaks into some of the deepest human longings: that love is stronger than death, that injustice does not have the final word, that suffering is not meaningless, and that our lives are held by something greater than chance. “*I am the resurrection and the life,*” Jesus says. “*Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live*” (John 11:25). That is not a small or easy promise, however, it is one that has sustained countless people through grief, loss, and hope against hope.

This Easter season, we at Blackhall St Columba’s Church do not ask you to suspend your judgement or silence your doubts. Instead, we offer space; to listen, to reflect, to worship, and to decide. Come and hear the story again, perhaps for the first time as an adult. Come and see how the Christian faith understands suffering, forgiveness, and new life. Come and weigh the claims for yourself.

Whether you arrive full of faith, full of questions, or somewhere in between, you are welcome. As the risen Jesus once said to his first followers, so the Church says now: “*Come and see.*” (John 1:39) Easter does not force a conclusion. It opens a door. What lies beyond it is something each of us must consider and decide for ourselves.

Fergus

PEACE SERVICES at Blackhall St.Columba's

Our fortnightly, mid week services are called Peace services because PEACE stands for **P**eople **E**njoying **A** Christian **E**ncounter and that is exactly what happens. The services are held in the small hall every second Wednesday between September and May at 12 noon and are followed by a light lunch of soup and home baking with tea and coffee. For those who need help getting to the church, we have a pick up service – please contact Ruth Laidlaw on 07513 967 974 for more information. The services are very informal and last about 30-40 minutes and everyone is welcome.

This year we have been looking at modern musical theatre classics like *Les Miserables* and considering their theological relevance for us today. The next few services are-

4 th March	<i>Climb every Mountain</i> - Muriel Stenhouse
18 th March	<i>The Knitted Bible</i> - Shona Cook
1 st April	Easter - Rev Gordon Farquharson
15 th April	<i>Any Dream will Do</i> - Shona Cook
29 th April	<i>Tradition</i> - Shona Cook
13 th May	Cruise Scotland
27 th May	Communion – Rev Fergus Cook

COME and SEE

Taking up Fergus' challenging theme of "Come and See", it is common among church attenders to lament that they know little about the Bible, how it came to being and how it all hangs together as one story written by many authors.

On the other hand, many who never attend church claim the Bible to be full of errors and contradictions despite having never examined the book itself, its claims or its veracity.

This year the Bible Society has produced a series of 8 excellent videos presented by the historian Dr Andrew Ollerton. The aim of the series is to introduce the Bible as a story from Genesis to Revelation and help understand how the whole collection is one story. If you have ever wondered why the Old and New Testaments appear to show very different faces of God, then this course is for you. If you ever wondered if the Ten Commandments still apply or why Jesus came to the world when he did, you will find the answers in this course.

The course takes the format of meeting on Sunday evening (started 8th February) from 6-7pm, watch the video for the day and discuss or question or disagree with what was said. There are no "wrong" questions and we will all explore this book and the message it contains together since it has had such an impact on the world for over 2000 years.

By the time this reaches you, we will be well into the course but that does not matter, you are very welcome any Sunday up to 29th March and no preparation is required. We trust this will make an interesting opening for some who have never seriously looked at the Bible but also a refresher for those of us who have read parts of the Bible and struggle to see how it relates to following Jesus Christ in a modern world.

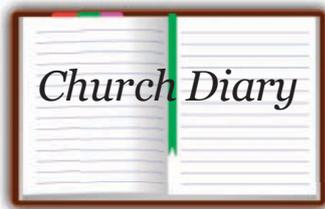
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MARCH

1 st	10.30 am	Morning Worship
6 th	7.00 pm	World Day of Prayer See below for details
8 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
15 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
22 nd	10.30am	Morning Worship
		Stated Annual Meeting
29 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship

APRIL

2 nd	07.00pm	Maundy Communion
3 rd	07.00pm	Good Friday Service
5 th	08.30 am	Easter Sunday at Cramond Foreshor – see website for more details
	10.30am	Easter Sunday Service
12 th	10.30am	Morning Worship
19 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
26 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship

MAY

3 rd	10.30 am	Morning Worship
10 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
16 th	04.00pm	Monte Cassino Service
17 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
24 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
31 st	10.30am	Morning Worship

JUNE

7 th	10.30 am	Holy Communion
	3.00pm	Holy Communion
14 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
21 st	10.30 am	Morning Worship
28 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship

JULY

5 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
12 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
19 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
26 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship

AUGUST

2 nd	10.30 am	Morning Worship
9 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
16 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship
23 rd	10.30 am	Morning Worship
30 th	10.30 am	Morning Worship

If, for whatever reason, you find yourself unable to attend any service in person you can join with us live Go to:

www.youtube.com/blackhallstcolumba

or scan this QR code with your phone's camera and click the link in yellow box



The Prayer Circle

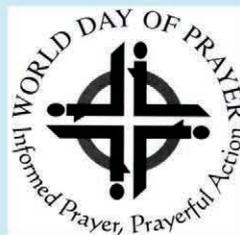


Do you know someone in need of prayer? A friend or relative perhaps who is unwell, grieving or find themselves in a position where they don't know where to turn?

Blackhall St Columba's Prayer Circle is a small team of people who will pray frequently for anyone in need of help in complete confidence. We are also happy to accept prayer requests giving thanks for a happy event or asking for God's help with any forthcoming personal endeavour or challenge.

Please contact Prayer Circle secretary Betty Watt at lzbthwatt@yahoo.co.uk or Fergus Cook at Fcook@churchofscotland.org.uk or 0131 466 7503.

Alternatively, please put your request slip into the locked box marked "Prayer Requests" on the table at the back of the Church.



The service for this year's World Day of Prayer will be held in St Margaret's Roman Catholic Church, Main Street, Davidson's Mains, on **FRIDAY 6th MARCH at 7 pm**. Please note change of time.

The service has been written by the women of Nigeria with the theme: "I Will Give You Rest: Come". Matthew 11: 28

Saturday 21st March: Music at St.Columba's- THE AMAZING LIFE GOSPEL CHOIR.

Please join us in the sanctuary at 7pm for the choir whose members come from all over Scotland and are led by Angela McKenzie, a very lively and entertaining pianist. This concert will set feet tapping and bring back a few memories of some golden oldies. Come along and bring a friend. Refreshments will be served and, while there is no charge for the event and no tickets are required, all donations will be gratefully received.

THANK YOU EVERYONE



On Sunday 18th January 2026, I was delighted, on behalf of the WATCH Committee, to be able to present Pippa Johnston from Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity with a cheque for £14,300

Pippa was able to tell us what a difference this would make to the children and their families when a child is admitted to hospital. We want to say a massive thank you to all who have supported our efforts in raising this amazing amount of money. From the Coin collection, attending the Craft Coffee morning, Country Dancing Tea Dance and of course the Christmas Fair, all contributed to this amazing total.

We also want to thank the businesses listed below for their kind donations to the Church Christmas Fair.

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The Royal Burgess Golfing Society
The Steading Restaurant – Hillend
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Tuk Tuk – Indian Street Food
Urban Vanity – Blackhall
Westwoods Health Club



Since the start of the New Year the warehouse has seen no let up in the demand for Starter Packs. With spring cleaning just around the corner, any surplus household items on the list below will be happily received by FreshStart. Any donations can be handed in on Friday mornings between 10 and 11.30am to one of our team of volunteers on duty. If you cannot make Friday but are at the church halls other days with items for FreshStart please speak to the church officer. Any issues with the above then please contact us via the church office and we shall do our best to make arrangements to collect. If you have already done your spring cleaning, but still would like to help, you can donate money via their website or something from their Amazon wish list. Their website is www.freshstartweb.org

Some of the items required for Starter Packs;

Pots and pans

Kitchen utensils, but **no kitchen knives or scissors**

Dishes and cutlery, mugs and tea towels

Bedding for single, double and king sized beds. Duvets (new or cleaned-no marks), duvet covers, sheets and pillow cases.

Blankets, good condition towels, face clothes (new/good condition) and curtains.

Small electrical-kettles, toasters, lamps, Irons, vacuum cleaners, radios and microwaves.

Personal care items of shampoo, shower gel, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste and sanitary products

A good benchmark for suitability is - *Would I be happy to receive and use this?*

Again, on behalf of FreshStart, a big thank you for all your donations in 2025 and we also seek your ongoing support in 2026.

Lilian & Michael
c/o Church Office
0131 332 4431



Soup 'n' Chat continues to be popular and if you have not tried it do come along. Dates are below and anyone from the Blackhall community is welcomed as this is not just for church members. Come and enjoy the soup, chat and good company. Why not bring along a neighbour or friend with you? The more the merrier and a warm welcome awaits everyone.

Friday 27th March 12noon to 1.30pm in the Large Hall
Friday 10th April 12noon to 1.30pm in the Small Hall
Friday 24th April 12noon to 1.30pm in the Large Hall
Friday 8th May 12noon to 1.30pm in the Small Hall.
Friday 22nd May 12noon to 1.30pm in the Large Hall.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Michael Cockburn
Lead and admin Volunteer



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BURNS SUPPER 24th JANUARY 2026

Another grand excuse to go out and enjoy good company, food and entertainment.

The first was provided by 87 who made it a full house in the church large hall given for free to allow the community to come together for enjoyment.

It was good to meet old acquaintances as well as to make new ones. Especially around an excellent three course meal with tea and coffee plus shortie of course. Alcoholic drinks were permitted if you brought your own.

If the table blether was good the speakers were as well. Hamish Mair addressed a haggis following which Rev. Fergus Cook gave the Selkirk Grace “with some extras” before an excellent Supper was gratefully consumed.

After our meals Eddie Thorn proposed eloquently the toast to the Immortal Memory of Robert Burns while Alan Hunter toasted the Lassies in good humour and Shona Cook replied similarly for the Lassies returning the compliments with a toast to the Laddies.

Musical contributions were from Lochie Scott who was our superb piper welcoming guests, leading in the top table and finally the Haggis before Supper. Afterwards Johnny Collington also known as “Sing-up-4-Scotland” entertained with song, guitar and a selection of Scottish music not exclusively the work of Burns. Johnny was excellent and everybody enjoyed joining in when prompted. So in the true spirit of the event it just wasn’t Burns alone who was celebrated but also many others before and after him who wrote and conserved the words and music that are identifiably Scottish, but are equally valued and appreciated much further afield today.



As well as the performers there are others too many to mention to credit but special thanks go to the teams of volunteers that organised the catering, fresh flower posies on all tables, prepared and dressed the hall and helped clear up afterwards. Seven Rangers guides with a leader were our waitresses and helped in the kitchen as well. Sincere thanks go to all those mentioned as well as Ravelston Golf Course, Ye Olde Inn, Davidson’s Mains and Bushmills whiskey who amongst others donated raffle prizes. This was held solely for those attending, if they wished to participate, and to help repay the church’s generosity not to mention its utility bills.

It is likely the next Burns Supper will be on 23rd January so diarise now and get your seat booked any time but before it’s another sell-out.



SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

Even though it's dark and chilly outside, on Thursday evenings at Blackhall St Columba's Church you'll find the large hall bright and warm inside. The Scottish Country Dancers enjoy a couple of hours together - mainly dancing, but also socialising over a mug of tea and a biscuit at the break.

The group has a long history in Blackhall, but even this term there are new folk coming along and discovering they CAN dance and they DO manage to remember the steps and formations, encouraged by those who have danced for many years.

Since the last Bulletin we have enjoyed learning (or remembering) a variety of jigs, strathspeys and reels. We also enjoyed hosting an Afternoon Tea Dance with a Scottish theme in aid of the Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity. We were grateful to local food shops for sausage rolls, fruitcake and shortbread, but especially to William from the Craigcrook Deli in the Dip, for his generous provision of a range of garnished sandwiches for our guests to enjoy.

Local ceilidh group "Quern" gave their time to play for the dancing and entertained with Scots music and song. From the tickets bought, the raffle prizes donated, and a contribution from the group funds, we were able to give £800 to ECHC. The first set of photographs by James Burr, church photographer, can be seen on the Blackhall St Columba's website. But one of our guests also took photos throughout the afternoon and you can see some of these below.

After our annual Christmas party, we are now back for the new term running on till our Spring Fling at the end of March, with one week off on Thursday 19th, when the local schools are on holiday.

You'd be very welcome to join us on a Thursday evening, starting at 7pm, in the large hall at the church. (entry by the blue doors) Just wear something comfortable and bring a change of shoes, and a mug for the break. At £15 a term, it's a low-cost way to exercise both brain and body.....and make new friends too.

Contact Muriel Stenhouse 07908805364



Enjoying a chat and a tasty bite to eat after all that dancing

BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S SINGERS

The Singers had a very busy December, starting the Christmas Season with performing during the church Gift Service and following this by singing for the residents of both Queen's Court and Strachan House before bringing the season to a close by singing in the Christingle Service on Christmas Eve. The major event for them, however, was taking part in the evening of Sunday, 22nd December when they took part, along with the Senior Choir, Praise Band and Praise Singers in a performance of "Joy".

After a well-earned Christmas break, the choir was again into working hard towards their next outing. They received an invite from the Edinburgh Highland Reel & Strathspey Society to sing during their annual concert in the Queen's Hall on Sunday 1st February. The event went off very well and, as is their norm nowadays, the Singers (both junior and for the first time, senior sections) performed very well and attracted many fine compliments from the audience. Attached is a photograph of The BstC Singers waiting to take their turn to perform during the rehearsal.

The Singers are open to any child from P3 upwards who enjoys singing. We meet on Thursday afternoons with Juniors [P3 – P7] meeting from 3.45 – 4.30 pm and Seniors [S1+] from 4.15pm (or as soon as they can make it) till 5pm in the upstairs hall at St Columba's Church. No charge and no audition necessary.

For more details, phone Amy Donaldson 0771165984



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BLACKHALL LIBRARY UPDATE



The modular building for the new temporary library facility at Davidson's Mains Primary School was delivered in November. Groundworks have been taking place on site with a view to the new facility opening in the spring, replacing the existing mobile library service. An opening date and details of events, activities and services offered in the temporary library will be shared once available on our website and through social media.

The Council are hosting meetings and workshops with local stakeholder groups to fully understand their aspirations and requirements for a permanent replacement for the provision of library services in the Blackhall and Davidson's Mains area. If you are a member of a local community group and are interested in participating in this engagement, please get in touch with the project team at new.blackhall.library@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Following the opening of the temporary library building, the Council will open a 12-week engagement exercise with the wider Blackhall and Davidson's Mains community for their views. This will take the form of an online survey. The project team will also host in-person drop-in sessions to listen to people's views and help them to complete the survey. The findings of all this initial engagement work will be used to inform the design of the proposed long-term solution, which will then be presented for the next stage of engagement.

You can find the latest information on both parts of the project at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/newblackhalllibrary.

BLACKHALL GARDENING CLUB

January always feels like a grey cold month to be endured, but, just as I wrote last year, my snowdrops are beginning to show buds. My enthusiastic purchases of bulbs in late summer were not followed by enthusiastic planting in the autumn and so the tips of the bulbs planted so very late are yet to emerge, but I remain optimistic.



The 25/26 season continued in November with a most interesting talk given by Bob Glen, a keen nature lover on his project to plant trees to reforest parts of Scotland and create a better environment for wildlife. Our annual Social Event in December was once again a great success with a quiz and a raffle. Alison Hewat from the Floral Art club gave a seasonal flower arrangement demonstration and entertained us with talks of her travels. In January Colin McDonnell gave us a very informative talk on bee keeping and we had the opportunity to purchase some of the honey produced by his bees. I can confirm that it is delicious.

The programme continues as shown below:

- 9th February - Local Gardeners Question Time by Gabi Brown
- 9th March - The History of Allotments and how to look after them by Stuart McKenzie
- 13th April - Talk by MT O'Donnell from Scotland Grows Magazine
- 11th May - AGM and a talk by Binny Plants on Shade Planting

The group meets at 7.45pm on the second Monday of the month from October to May in the small hall at Blackhall St Columba's Church. Look out for each month's poster displayed locally in Tescos and Sainsburys and on the church notice boards. You can also check out our Facebook page which can be found at www.facebook.com/groups/211472892232483

Talks are open to members and visitors (£5). If you would like more information, please e mail blackhall.horti@hotmail.com

BLACKHALL COMMUNITY TRUST AND RAVELSTON PARK PAVILION ASSET TRANSFER – LATEST NEWS!

During 2026, Blackhall Community Trust will be celebrating its tenth birthday. It's hard to believe! Established with the support of Blackhall residents in late 2016, the Trust immediately began a series of community consultations. These identified a number of community priorities, which the volunteer directors/trustees of the Trust have been working on ever since.

From delivering community-based activities (book and walking groups plus coffee mornings) in its first five years, to making steady progress on the top community priority - providing a community space and fit-for-purpose home for Blackhall Nursery - what better way to start this anniversary year than with a major announcement?

The Board of Blackhall Community Trust is absolutely delighted to announce that the asset transfer of Ravelston Park Pavilion from the City of Edinburgh Council to the Blackhall community has finally been completed. After delays and hiccups, unforeseen complications and more, the Trust is ready to move on with the next steps in delivering for the community. There is already planning permission in principle for a new Ravelston Park Pavilion - now there is the matter of major fundraising in front of us! This is a really exciting stage - please do consider joining the Board if you have expertise or enthusiasm to share. We'd love to hear from you - email blackhallcommunitytrust@gmail.com for more information. Experience in fundraising or project management are desirable but commitment to delivering a wonderful new community space is essential!

We look forward to making faster progress in the coming years - we thank you for your continued support!



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Blackhall Children's Sports Committee News

SPORTS AWARDS 2026 are almost open!

Are you a local community group helping kids get into sport and stay active, or an individual under 18 looking for financial support for sport? If so, the BCSC Sports Awards could be for you.

Please check our website or follow us on social media for more details including the application window.

bcsc-edinburgh.com

facebook.com/BlackhallChildrensSC

instagram.com/blackhall.sports.committee



Awards are made at the discretion of BCSC.

About Blackhall Children's Sports Committee

The BCSC was formed in 1909. We have three main roles:

1. **Sports Awards:** we make annual donations to individuals, projects, clubs or organisations to encourage and facilitate participation in sport.
2. **Sports Day:** we organise, fund and run the annual Blackhall Children's Sports Day in Ravelston Park (June 6th 2026).
3. **Events:** we organise various events throughout the year to raise money in order to fund the Sports Awards and Sports Day.

SPORTS DAY

SATURDAY 6TH JUNE 2026 12.15 PM - 4.30 PM

RAVELSTON PARK, BLACKHALL

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www.ballinaconstruction.co.uk



BLACKHALL BOWLING CLUB

Blackhall Bowling Club has been a hub of the community since it was established way back in 1898. Many thousands of people from all walks of life have passed through our doors, played on our green, spectated from the sides and taken part in our many social events. All in the most picturesque of settings.

We invite anyone who has an interest to contact us, and we will help you out - no experience is necessary. We also run Open Days which this year will be held from 2pm to 4pm on April 26th and May 3rd as well as 6pm to 8pm on May 23rd. These always prove popular, providing a chance to try your hand on the green with expert guidance as well as enjoying some hospitality in the Clubhouse.

Our playing season runs from April to September during which there are plenty of opportunities to play competitively or if you prefer in a non-competitive manner - the choice is yours. Coaching is also available on a number of Saturday mornings for new and existing members. Whatever the case, you will have on hand friendly Club members to help.

On the social side of things, we run several events throughout the year which are always popular. Some include bowling for those who wish to take part. During the non playing season we also run several interest groups - in recent times these have included table tennis, games nights, craft club and bridge club. We are also licensed and our bar is open for relevant bowling and social events.

We are known as a very friendly Club and look forward to welcoming new members to play the wonderful game of bowls (mostly played in nice weather!) or to be part of our vibrant social scene. Give it a try!

Gary Wood, President

Club Phone:- 0131 332 0335 Club E-Mail:- blackhallbc@live.co.uk



Blackhall St Columba's Art Club

The club is now in full swing after an enjoyable Christmas lunch at the Toby Carvery in Silverknowes.

We have some interesting challenges this year. Occasional additional use of the small hall has allowed us to invite 2 artists to come along and give demonstrations in water colour and acrylics. We also enjoy having our 2 models along for figurative drawing.

This year's annual exhibition will be held on 13th – 17th May in the small hall of Blackhall St Columba's church. Hand painted cards by our artists will also be available. We will soon be choosing pictures to display on our posters and flyers in advance of the exhibition, giving information about opening times.

This year we have chosen to support Maggie's Centre based at the Western General here in Edinburgh.

We look forward to creating great works of art for visitors coming along to the exhibition and hope they will support the charity by buying our artworks.

Marge Whiteside

Joyce Whytock, Secretary, at family.whytock@blueyonder.co.uk



BLACKHALL PROBUS CLUB

Our 2025-26 session continues on 5th March with a talk from **Blood Bikes Scotland** on the vital work which they carry out, on a purely voluntary basis, delivering essential medical supplies (not just blood) on demand between hospitals, healthcare facilities and patients' homes.

A fortnight later on 19th March, we shall be hearing about **Wojtek the Bear**, a Polish war hero, whose statue was unveiled in Princes Street Gardens a few years ago.

The final talk on 2nd April will be about the **Barnton Bunker**, which has had an interesting history and is being restored by a group of volunteers.

Visitors will be very welcome at any of these meetings, which are held at Blackhall Bowling Club, Keith Row from 10am, with the talk starting at 10.30.

The session will conclude with our AGM and a Quiz, Pie and a Pint on 16th April.

Indeed, Blackhall Probud Club, as presently constituted will also conclude after the AGM as from the start of the 2026-27 session in the autumn, we are joining with our friends and colleagues in Craigleith Probud Club to form a single Gents Probud Club in the area.

Much more information about this exciting development will be given in future editions of the Bulletin.

Gordon Hamilton
President
Blackhall Probud Club
gdhprobud@gmail.com
0131 332 6089



CRAIGLEITH PROBUS CLUB

The winter session of Craigleith Men's Probud Club is drawing to its close. As highlighted in previous Bulletins, we will be welcoming Prof. Adam Cumming to our meeting on 4th March and look forward to his talk on the Medieval Churches of Edinburgh. Adam is the Chair of Scotland's Churches Trust, the aims of which is to protect or conserve the vast range of ecclesiastical heritage in Scotland ; this includes stained glass, organs, and wooden features such as fonts, as well as the sanctuaries. His talk will be one not to miss and guests are always welcome - see you at 10am for coffee/tea & biscuits with the talk starting at 10.30am

Our session concludes on March 18th when we welcome back James Waugh who will tell us about the completion of the Trans USA Railway.

But at our AGM on 1st April after the overture from Blackhall Men's Probud Club, we will be merging with them from the start of the 26-27 session.. Looking through our records, although we only formed in 1990 , there are numerous local folk whose dedication ensured Craigleith Probud was an ideal place to spend a Wednesday morning.

John MacLennan - Past President

NORTH WEST HERITAGE GROUP

Our last meetings for this session are:

Wednesday 25th March 2026
History of Glassmaking in Edinburgh
Speaker: Dr. Helen Spencer

Wednesday 22nd April 2026
Life in the 19th Century Old Town.
Speaker: Eric Melvin. Followed by AGM

For more information about the history group contact the Secretary, Charlotte Cowe 0131 336 2494 email charlotte@dmains.co.uk.

CAMEO CLUB

A warm welcome awaits you every second Friday throughout the year at Blackhall St Columba's church halls where you can enjoy coffee and entertainment. There is no charge and we are a friendly group usually about 30-40 men and women. We start at 10.30 with refreshments served by volunteers, then between 11-12 we have some form of entertainment, mostly music, with the occasional quiz. On 15th May we will be guests for coffee and cake at Northcare Suites on Telford Road.

This month we will have the Cameo Singers on 6th March and will be visiting The Knitted Bible in the church on 20th March, the last day of that exhibition.

Later in our calendar we will feature acoustic guitar, Scottish accordion music with the renowned Iain McPhail, and songs around the keyboard with Marie and Robin Leach. At the end of May we look forward to a Summer Outing to North Berwick.

Come along and see what our meetings are like.

For more information please contact:

Fiona Drinnan 343 6762

EDINBURGH FLORAL ART CLUB



Our meetings for the rest of the session are detailed below. **All take place from 2 – 4 pm in the large hall of Blackhall St Columba's Church.** Visitors £10 per meeting. New members are always welcome.

If we have a demonstration, the arrangement/s will be raffled at the end of the meeting when we also enjoy refreshments.

Friday 13th March

Patti Dawson from Morland, Penrith. Demonstration 'A Special Place'.

Friday 10th April

Jane Gordon from Elderslie. Demonstration 'Coast & Country'

Friday 8th May

AGM – Speaker to be confirmed.

Saturday 13th June

Coffee Morning 10 – 12

We also hope to have an 'open garden' coffee morning during the summer.

For more details or to find out more about the club, please ring Suzie Stark, Chairperson on 07888 942 561

TUESDAY TOPICS

Having enjoyed our late Christmas lunch out at Howies in January and heard all about the work of *Therapets* and the Chimpanzees in the *Budongo* trail in February, we are looking forward to Odile Hughson coming to talk about *The Auld Alliance* on the 24th March. You may recall that her husband gave us his talk about the Edinburgh Poor House last session.

28th April is when Kath Hay comes to tell us about the *Lost Treasures of Scotland*

We hope to arrange an evening at the Theatre in May to see the Southern Light Company perform *Guys and Dolls* but that is still to be arranged.

All are welcome to our meetings at 7.30pm on the last Tuesday of the month in the small hall.

Please make sure to read the September Bulletin or Kirk News to find out about plans and dates for the 2026-27 session.

Anyone who would like to help with arranging talks etc for the future, please get in touch with

Lyndy Paton. 07460212174 or

Sheila Macintosh on 0131 336 1537

KNIT AND NATTER



We are pleased to have been able to deliver a good quantity of assorted items to Pregnancy Counselling and Care, so needles busy to fill our boxes again. We are also working on a new project with the Easter Story as our focus. This will take some time to complete, but we have made a start with disciples, palm trees and soldiers.

We always welcome new members to our group which meets on Monday evenings in the Sanctuary. These will carry on until the end of June when we will take a break until September. We will also break for the first two weeks in April.

If you would like to join us, knitter or would be knitter, do come along at 7.30pm on a Monday. Tea/coffee, biscuits and natter are important too.

For further details please contact

stcknitnatter@gmail.com

Lilian Cockburn



THE EGG THAT SHARES THE EASTER STORY



Easter Blessing Bars (from £3)



Dark (from £6.50)

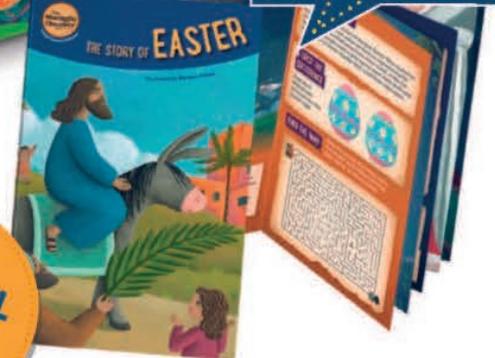


Fun Pack (from £6.00)

Original (from £5.50)

NOW PLASTIC FREE

New 24 page Easter story-activity book



PALM OIL FREE

All Real Easter Eggs come with an Easter story in the box. The stories range from simple guides to 24 page activity book versions.

So, buy a Real Easter Egg this spring and encourage others to give one to their loved ones, a school or sponsor a food bank donation.

Where to buy

The 2026 Real Easter Egg will not be available in any supermarkets. The full range can be ordered at www.realeasteregg.co.uk or by calling 01925 877004.

Out of the 80 million Easter eggs sold in this part of the world every year, The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and which supports charitable projects.

The Original and Dark eggs include a 24 page Easter story-activity book. They are Palm Oil and plastic free, and include a competition.

The Fun Pack has an Easter story activity poster and 6 milk chocolate eggs.

The Easter Blessing bar features 'The Resurrection' image. On the back it says 'May God Bless you this Easter and fill you with peace.'

See the full shop list or order at www.realeasteregg.co.uk

**BLACKHALL
NURSERY
NEWS
MARCH 2026**



Blackhall Nursery is situated within the wonderful nature resource of Ravelston Park and Woods. At Blackhall Nursery, we follow a child-led, play-based and rights-respecting pedagogy. We provide a safe, healthy and happy environment where children grow and develop through play and active learning.

As I write this we have had a very busy first term with all the usual Christmas excitement and then returning to explore icy weather in the Nursery garden. We plan responsively- meaning that the children choose how the next few months will go, but we do plan to look at Lunar New Year, Easter, Holi, life cycles/Spring, keeping ourselves healthy, people who help us and then finally transition to school for our P1 leavers. In June we hope to have our end of term trip to East Links Farm again - always a lovely way to mark the end of the nursery year.

We have begun our place offers for the 2026-27 nursery year and this process should be completed by early March. You can place your child's name on the Nursery waiting list from their 2nd birthday by downloading an application form at our website www.blackhallnursery.co.uk and we recommend doing this as close to their 2nd birthday as possible as our waiting lists continue to grow!

Blackhall Nursery is a registered Scottish charity working in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council. We offer full day (6 hours 10 minutes) places for 3-5 year olds during term time with a limited number of places for an extra hour at the end of the day (Mon-Thurs 2:35-3:35pm).

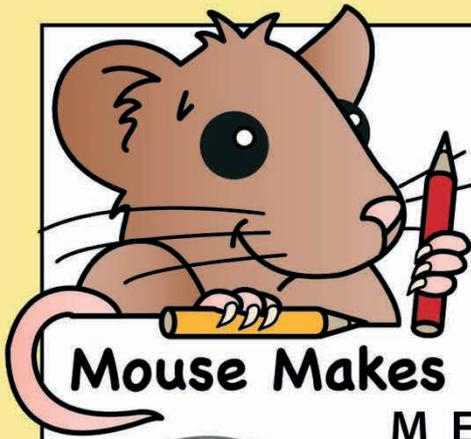


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An advertisement for Eidyn Care. The top section features the Eidyn Care logo (a heart with a knot) and the slogan 'Live life with dignity' in large yellow and white text. Below this, it says 'Personal and palliative care at home.' The middle section is a photograph of a woman in a blue uniform (Eidyn Care staff) talking to an elderly woman in a red hat. The bottom section contains several award logos: 'Award winning home care', 'Rated Excellent by care Inspector' (with three stars), and 'TOP 20 AWARD 2022' (with a ribbon). At the bottom, there is a call to action: 'Call us now: 0131 285 1221' and contact information: 'info@eidyncare.co.uk' and 'www.eidyncare.co.uk'.

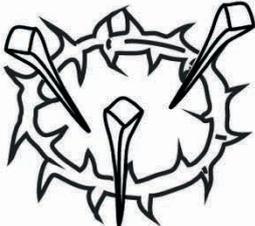


Mouse Makes



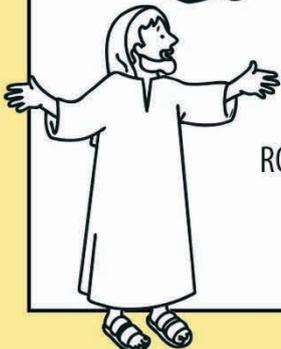
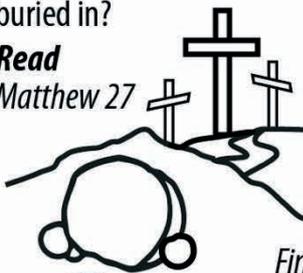
Who betrayed Jesus?
Who denied Jesus?

Read Matthew 26:17-75



What did the soldiers put on Jesus at his crucifixion?
What time did Jesus die?
Whose tomb was Jesus buried in?

Read Matthew 27



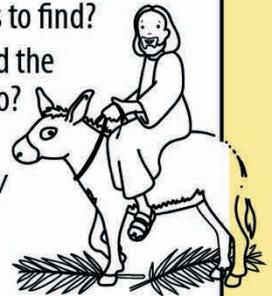
HAPPY EASTER!
Jesus has risen!
Jesus is with us!
Jesus will come again!



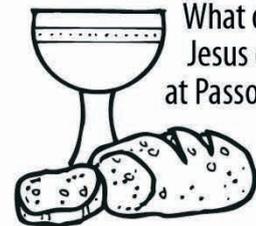
What did Jesus send the disciples to find?

What did the crowd do?

Read Matthew 21:1-11



What did Jesus do at Passover?



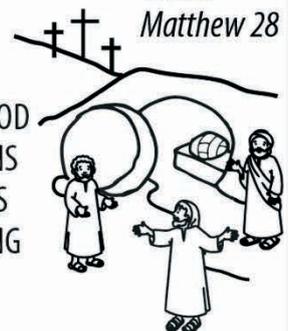
Read Matthew 26:17-30



On the third day who rolled away the stone covering the tomb?

What had happened to Jesus?

Read Matthew 28



Find these words from the Easter story in the word search:
DONKEY • ROAD • BRANCHES • PALMS • KING • HOSANNA
PASSOVER • ROOM • BREAD • WINE • CUP • MEAL • BODY • BLOOD
KISS • MESSIAH • CHRIST • JESUS • CRUCIFY • CROWN • THORNS
ROBE • TREE • NAILS • CROSS • DARKNESS • QUAKE • DEATH • LOTS
TOMB • LINEN • STONE • BODY • BURY • THREE DAYS • MORNING
MARY • ANGEL • HEAVEN • GOD • RAISED • JOY • GO TELL
GOOD NEWS • PEACE • SPIRIT • SAVIOUR • PRAISE • EASTER

cubs



Congratulations!

Cub Scouts Zac Millard, Callum Tweedie and Lewis Campbell were presented with their Chief Scouts Silver Award – the highest award available to Cubs. Well done!



Cub Camp

In November the cubs had an amazing camp at Canty Bay. They put up tents, learnt how to use stoves and then cooked their own lunch on the beach. After a quiz inside to warm up, we were back outside rock pooling and building sandcastles. A campfire with s'mores on the private beach was a perfect ending to the day. On Sunday we climbed Berwick Law for a picnic lunch at the top.

We have also enjoyed a walk in dark practicing morse code with torches, making water filters, baking fairy cakes and a trip to RNLI at South Queensferry. Well done to the three cubs gaining their Silver Award at Christmas.



Girlguiding

Blackhall Guiding

202 and 202B Brownies have been busy getting creative. Creating unique pieces of art and turning odd socks into puppets. They have been busy building bird and bat boxes to places around Cammo Estate to attract more wildlife. 13 girls and 7 leaders are very excited to go on an international trip to Disneyland Paris. In the summer term the girls are going to try out some new sports and end the term with their annual sausage sizzle on the beach. **Nicole Harland – 202&202B Brownie Leader**

202 Rainbows have enjoyed 100 years of World Thinking day and a District sleepover. Plus activities from the Take Action theme. Now looking forward to summer trips. **Nicola McDermid – 202 Rainbow Leader**



202A Rainbows made mini s'mores over candles

202 Guides celebrated World Thinking Day with a thousand other Edinburgh members after attending the church parade & service. The Guides dashed around Glasgow for a Girlguiding UK wide game to complete challenges synchronised with thousands of other Brownies, Guides and Rangers competing in cities across the UK. **Matilda Lomas - 202 Guide Leader**

202A Rainbows have been busy working on their Express Myself theme and cooking over a campfire. They are looking forward to a special end of term trip. **Nicole Harland – 202A Rainbow Leader**

The Rangers joined our youngest Guiding 'sisters' at a sleepover to celebrate World Thinking Day in early Spring. We are planning a special event for when some of us make our Ranger promise and we will be enjoying some relaxing meetings as we prepare for exam season. **Claire Slaine – Ranger Leader**



202 and 202B Brownies got creative creating a unique piece of art.

157th Rainbows: Early Spring saw us celebrating 100 years of World Thinking Day by attending a County event and holding a special sleepover. One of our Rainbows achieved her Gold Award before moving on to Brownies. As we move towards summer we continue to work on our program and learn about first aid. **Claire Slaine - 157 Rainbow Leader**

202A Rainbows, 202 Brownies and 202B Brownies raised an amazing £3,672.36 for Mission Christmas and with B&M giving 10% off our trolley dash and donations from the Blackhall Nursery families we donated over £4500 worth of gifts to Cash for Kids Mission Christmas.



Volunteer with Girlguiding Edinburgh?

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

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

Full training and support provided. See our website or register online for more information:

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

Blackhall.districtcomm@gmail.com

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TWO SUDOKUS THIS ISSUE ONE JUST A BIT EASIER THAN THE OTHER.

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LOVE AND SERVE ONE ANOTHER

On Maundy Thursday we recall the final command that Jesus gave to his disciples before his death. After the Last Supper, He rose and washed his disciples' feet. This was astonishing for a 'teacher' to do, but He had a firm purpose in mind: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." His disciples were to love through service, not domination, of one another.

In Latin, the opening phrase of this sentence is 'mandatum novum do vobis'. The word 'mundy' is thus a corruption of the Latin 'mandatum' (or command). The 'washing of the feet' ceremony was an important part of the medieval church's liturgy, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

AS	LOVE
ANOTHER	MAUNDY
ASTONISHING	MEDIEVAL
CEREMONY	MUST
COMMAND	OBEDIENCE
DEATH	ONE
DISCIPLES	PURPOSE
DOMINATION	SERVICE
FEET	SUPPER
FINAL	TEACHER
HUMILITY	THURSDAY
JESUS	WASHED
LAST	YOU
LATIN	



Breath-Works



From the week beginning 3rd of November Dee@Breath-works will start running her Monday evening class from 6-7 pm at Cramond Kirk and her classes Tuesday and Thursday morning from 9.30am -10.30am at Blackhall St. Columba's Church Livestream available Book from the the website : www.Breath-works.co.uk Email: dee@breath-works.co.uk



BOOK HERE



Yoga Moves with Mary
 Monday 9:30 am-10:30 am Yoga Sculpt
 Blackhall St. Columba's Church
 (Livestream available)
 Tuesday 6:30am -7:15am
 Online Yoga Rise - Zoom
 Thursday 6:00pm -7:00 pm Vinyasa Flow
 St Columba's Church , Upper Hall
 (Livestream available)
 From November 1st.




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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
 Telephone 332 5702

Church Secretary
 Tel: 332 4431 or email
 secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk
 for Hall Bookings
 bookings@blackhallstcolumba

DEADLINES

Kirk News (May edition) Friday 17th April

Please send all items to the Editor;
 Judith Mair, c/o Church Office
 or by e-mail to: judith.mair@hotmail.com

Blackhall Bulletin (September edition) - Sunday 2nd August

Please send all items, including **Advertising Enquiries**
 to the Editor: Barbara Wilson, c/o Church Office
 or by email to: bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk



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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

X @BSiCC_EH



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