

THE PARISH
CHURCH OF
ST CUTHBERT EDINBURGH



Church Magazine



June/July 2025

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Contents: Locum Minister's Letter (p3), From the Tower Room (p4), Janice Todd (p4), Reports from St Cuthbert's (p6) including: Congregational lunch (p6), Bible Fellowship Group (p6), News from the Ukrainian St Margaret's Saturday School (p8); Job Advertisement (p9), Out and About (p9) including Life and Work (p9), VE Day – the other side of the coin (p10); General Notices (p11), including Joint Church services (p11), Coffee Concert (p11), Welcome Guides (p13), Tuesday and Saturday Coffee Mornings (p13).

Front cover: The General Assembly – see Locum Minister's letter.

Locum Minister's Letter

Dear Friends

Sunday by Sunday we have been reflecting on Christ's post-Easter appearances and also on how, before his death, he prepared his disciples to take forward his ministry. We have also been considering the development of the early Church, specifically Peter's ministry in Acts and dipping into Revelation and pondering some of the lessons to be learned from there.

This year these passages seemed especially poignant as Pope Francis was called home to his eternal rest and Pope Leo became the new leader

of the Roman Catholic Church. Maybe for the first time at St Cuthbert's we reflected on the inaugural speech of a Pope, and this one was very much a speech for all Christians (in my opinion!) and one about peace and unity.

Peace is one of the most enduring themes post-Easter and coupled with the vision in Revelation of the unity and peace in heaven there is a strong message for our troubled world. At home the General Assembly has had to make some hard decisions this year, and our prayers must be for strength and unity in the Church of Scotland as we face the challenges and changes at national and at local level.

On a local level it has been lovely for me to settle into a new routine at St Cuthbert's. It has been a privilege to visit some of you at home, renewing old friendships and working alongside Kirsten Kooy, our Pastoral Assistant, as we reinforce existing bonds with those less able to attend church. I would like to remind you that anyone wishing a visit or Communion at home should not hesitate to get in touch and we will ensure that it happens.

The Church is always changing, nothing stands still, and like other congregations we face the challenges that change brings as discussions about our future continue. In the midst of these uncertain times we continue to do what we have always done, to reach out in love to support others, the work of Steps to Hope, Ukraine St Margaret's Saturday School and the Spiders. Our ministry here is the sum of many different parts, especially over the summer when thousands of visitors come into our sanctuary and are touched by the peace they find in the midst of the busy city.

Go well, and please, continue to pray for each other, for the Church and the wider world that Christ's peace and unity might prevail and his love for one another might be the mark of us, his people.

Suzie



FROM THE TOWER ROOM

Welcome to the early summer edition of the church magazine.

Martin Pearce reports on the news that the Trustees of the Ukraine St Margaret's Saturday School have decided to continue this welcome initiative for a third year. Any donations to assist with the running would be appreciated as the costs mount up.

As the school nears the end of its second session, we are all invited to the school prize-giving, being held here in the church sanctuary on Saturday 21st June. The ceremony will include entertainment by the children, as well as the prize giving (see page 8). I am sure the children would appreciate your attendance.

Easter may be past for another year but it is always timely to ponder Jesus's suffering on the cross. The Bible Fellowship Group debates his final words which still resonate today (page 6).

VE day, 1945 was certainly a day of rejoicing but we reflect, not on the joy that peace had been restored again – at least in Europe – but on the horrors that one member of St Cuthbert's witnessed a couple of weeks before hostilities finally ceased in Europe (page 10).

In a more light-hearted fashion, we attach a job advert (see page 9) from 200 years ago. I wonder how many of the congregation would pass the desired requirements set by the Kirk Session for applicants. Any stout fellows about?

Finally, we include an invitation to a concert immediately following the morning service on 15th June when the Robert Sharon Chorale group of singers from Florida will be entertaining us (page 11).

Stewart Cowe

Janice Todd – Elder Emeritus

26th November 1937 – 3rd March 2025

Janice was born in Edinburgh and lived part of the time during the war years in Whitley Bay returning to Edinburgh before the end of the war. Her parents divorced and Janice spent some years in Aden where her step-father was posted. She had an older brother Gordon and a younger brother Alastair.

On leaving school she joined the Civil Service where she worked until she took early retirement to look after her mother. She had a career that she loved and in which she excelled, highlights include working in the Scottish Land Court which meant trips to the remote



parts of north west Scotland including the outer islands. She enjoyed this immensely and it started her love of that part of Scotland.

Later she became the Private Secretary to the Secretary for Education in Scotland (Sir Norman Graham), who effectively ran government policy in Scotland as a senior Civil Servant (no devolved government then!!).

This was an extremely demanding job involving long hours and numerous trips with her boss to London for meetings with Westminster ministers. She was working on policy for mental health in Scotland at the end of her career.

In her free time, she was a Captain in the Territorial Army, in charge of the women's undergraduate unit. Janice was also a keen bridge player who enjoyed the social aspects of the game as much as the competitive side.

Janice enjoyed travel to South Africa to visit Gordon as well as spending time with Alastair's extended family either in Edinburgh, where she hosted many family gatherings in her delightful home, or down in England and for her 70th birthday she travelled to, and loved, New York.

Janice came to St Cuthbert's when her own church St George's West went into a union with St Andrew's and St George's. She was a dedicated Elder, worked tirelessly to promote Business Matters and OASIS, the outreach to local businesses and she also raised awareness of McCrae's Battalion, dear to her heart because of a family connection.

Her passion for the Battalion led to St Cuthbert's becoming increasingly involved, notably with a service on Thursday 27th November 2014 in commemoration of the centenary of the Raising of McCrae's Battalion in our parish and the service on 1st July 2016 to commemorate the centenary of the start of the Battle of the Somme, when a special video was sent from the army of the service in Contalmaison for us to watch here.

Janice was a great friend to many at St Cuthbert's, enjoying holidays with some and being greatly involved in the life and times of the congregation. She approached everything in life with a desire to give of her best, a desire to see things done properly but she was also great fun to be with.

Janice was always impeccably turned-out in all she did, methodical and thorough. Her love of her family and friends was clear for all to see, her desire to live out her faith and serve her church was evident throughout her life.

Janice moved to England to be nearer to family as her health failed, and she died on 3rd March.

We are grateful to Janice's younger brother, Alastair, for sharing some family memories with us.

REPORTS FROM ST CUTHBERT'S

Congregational Lunch

After the successful Christmas lunch, there is now a plan afoot to have a summer lunch, hosted at St Cuthbert's.

The date will be Thursday 3rd July at 12.15 pm.

Please do let Kirsten Kooy know if you are able to attend. There will be a sign-up sheet available also.

All welcome, but especially those who have been unable to attend church for health or other reasons. Our friends at Greyfriars Kirk will also have some spaces available so we can mingle over lunch.

Any questions please contact me.

Kirsten Kooy, Pastoral Assistant.

St Cuthbert's Bible Fellowship Group

We continue to meet on Thursday evenings at 7.30 pm via Zoom throughout May and June. All are welcome to join us, as and when you can. You do not have to attend each week. We will have a summer break in July and August.

Below is an example of a Bible topic which we reflected upon after Easter that resonated well within the group, namely, the **Seven Sayings of Jesus on the Cross**.



"Then said Jesus,
"*Father*,
forgive them; for
they know not
what they do."
—Luke 23:34

First Saying: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23: 34.

The first words that Jesus spoke after being nailed to the cross were ones of forgiveness. Jesus was referring to his enemies – not just the soldiers who mocked, tortured, and nailed him to the cross but the Jewish establishment who wanted him dead because Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. Christ displayed his limitless compassion to all his enemies, even from the cross.

And the question for us is, can we as Christians forgive those who are difficult to get on with and hurt us through their insensitive words or inconsiderate actions?

Second Saying: "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43

Christ said these words to a man who is being crucified next to him. God generously opens the door to heaven for those who truly repent of their sins. The sinner recognised Christ for who he was. The mercy of God is always ready to reach out and

save a soul, even at the last minute if that person is genuine in his repentance. If we truly repent and acknowledge Christ as our Lord and Saviour, then we too may be invited into the eternal home.

Third Saying: About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, ‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?’ (which means ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’). (Matthew 27:46).

Jesus expressed feelings of abandonment. God placed the sins of the entire world on Him, which overwhelms the humanity of Jesus.

It was by His death that we are redeemed. Redemption refers to both deliverance from sin and freedom from captivity of sin. It is why the Christian faith brings new life, new attitudes, and hope for the life to come.

Fourth Saying: But before he died, he said to John and his mother: “Woman, behold your son. After that, he said to the disciple: Behold your mother.” John 19: 26-27. Yet again Jesus is continuously compassionate to those around him, making sure that his mother was cared for after his death.

Fifth Saying: “I thirst.” (John 19:28)

It was customary in those days to give an anaesthetic drink for those about to be crucified. To appease the soldiers Jesus took a sip, but not enough to deaden the pain. Jesus’ thirst on the cross was more than a physical thirst; it was a thirst for souls for whom love compelled him to redeem.

Sixth Saying “Jesus therefore, when he had taken the vinegar, said: It is finished.” John 19:30

Amazingly, Jesus is still conscious after being on the cross for several hours. This expression, “It is finished” means He had fulfilled his mission. His ministry and resulting death would pay the debt of sin for all humanity.

Seventh Saying: Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. And saying this, he gave up the ghost.” Luke 23:46

These are the very last words Jesus spoke on the Cross according to the Gospel of Luke before His final breath. Jesus willingly gave up His soul to His Father in Heaven. An example to us that when our time comes to pass from this life, that we pray “Father into your hands I commit my spirit” in the expectation that God is there to accept our souls.

Comment on the Seven Sayings: By reflecting on the last words of Jesus, we can better appreciate Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. Christ Jesus died on the Cross to redeem mankind, to save us from our sins because of God’s love for us.

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him, shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16)

Martin Pearce (email: martin.pearce2109@outlook.com)

Update on the Ukrainian St Margaret's Saturday School

The Trustees, in consultation with the parents and teachers, have decided to run the School for a third year, such is the benefit to the Ukrainian children, not just academically but in social skills and building confidence. It also supports the teachers and families of the children.

The School has received outstanding support from St Cuthbert's throughout the last two years, not least through the leadership of Rev Peter Sutton and the support of congregation members. In addition, we have been able to use the Lindisfarne Room and occasionally other rooms when George Heriot's classrooms have not been available. Members of the congregation have given generously to fund the school as well as making donations of books, paper, and art material.

And once a year, we use the Sanctuary for the Annual Prize Giving to which all at St Cuthbert's are invited on Saturday 21st June from 12 noon to 1 pm. Refreshments are available after the ceremony. The ceremony will include entertainment by the children, as well as the prize giving. Given all the support we have from St Cuthbert's, it would be wonderful if some congregation members would come to this celebration, and show your support for the Ukrainian refugees in our care.

The Ukrainian families continue to suffer the loss of family members with the on-going war and many of their homes have been destroyed. Your continued support for the School is much appreciated. In fact, the teachers and parents never stop saying thank you to St Cuthbert's and many other supporters, including St John's Church and Greyfriars Kirk, where we have also met recently for our Saturday lessons.

This summer term has allowed us to make some visits after morning lessons to the Museum of Childhood, The Edinburgh Museum, Craigmillar Castle, South Queensferry, and in June to the beach at North Berwick by train – a special end of school year treat – which is being funded by one of our private donors.

One implication of deciding to run the School for a third year is that we now need to raise another £15,000 to fund the teachers and pay expenses. Like last year, we hope funds will come from church congregations, private schools, personal donations, parental donations, and grants.

God is an amazing God, and the School continues to thrive. Our thanks to the Kirk Session for use of the church rooms and everyone at St Cuthbert's who continue to support and encourage the Ukrainian families through the St Margaret's Saturday School.

Martin Pearce (Secretary and Treasurer) – email martin.j.pearce@blueyonder.co.uk

Job advertisement

The Position of St Cuthbert's Beadle

Wanted – a stout, active person, in the vigour of life and of the most obliging disposition.

Salary £15 per annum

If you were thinking of applying, then you'll be disappointed to learn that you're too late! This advert was placed 200 years ago and the position was quickly filled.

It's an interesting description of the person the Kirk Session wished for the job. Very 19th century! I wonder how many of our members today would pass these Kirk Session requirements?

OUT AND ABOUT

Life and Work

The June edition contains:

Vital Volunteers: the value of the Church's unpaid team of helpers.

God has guided my journey: snapshot of a 36-year journey.

Memories of Pope Francis: former Moderators' encounters with the late Pontiff.

'I still feel very blessed to have survived': the Lord High Commissioner to this year's General Assembly.

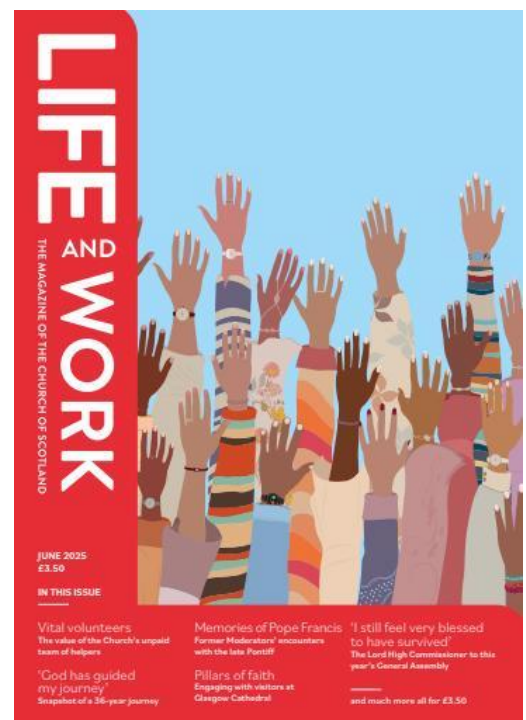
Pillars of faith: engaging with visitors at Glasgow Cathedral.

The Church cares for people: do you care for the Church?

Building relationships: Rev Roddy Hamilton reflects on the invitation to communion.

Plus: official update from the Assembly Trustees, readers' pictures, letters, reviews and puzzles – all for £3.50.

www.lifeandwork.org/subscribe or contact St Cuthbert's Life and Work co-ordinator.



Warning This article contains descriptions that some readers may find upsetting

We have all been aware of the recent 80th anniversary celebrations of the ending of the Second World War in Europe. Television programmes plus newspaper articles described in detail how the end of the war affected servicemen and civilians alike. Almost without fail, those scenes of 80 years ago were ones of great joy, but more importantly, all were delighted in the knowledge that peace had returned and that life could get back to some sort of normality.

But not all the news at the end of the war 80 years ago was quite so uplifting.

Some of you may have caught a video clip on the BBC website of a report from the acclaimed broadcaster David Dimbleby in April 1945. He was a BBC war correspondent and was used to seeing some upsetting scenes, but even he was unprepared for what he was about to see.

It was the 15th of April. He was in the feared Belsen concentration camp in north Germany and was the first journalist to witness at first hand the horror that presented itself. Several prisoner-of-war camps had already been liberated but Belsen was the first concentration camp to be liberated. In the video, he described the scarcely believable scenes of hundreds, no thousands, of emaciated prisoners just waiting to die. In fact, so graphic was his radio report, that initially, the BBC did not believe him and refused to broadcast it, but backed down when he threatened to resign.

The world had had inklings of what was going on in these camps, but this was the first tangible proof of the genocide that had been taking place. That broadcast cast a shadow for many over the official ending of the war, VE Day, just three weeks away.

But Dimbleby was not the only one to report home of the scenes there. St Cuthbert's own William (Bill) Drummond, a captain in the British Liberation Army, sent back the following harrowing article, which was published in the Church Magazine in June 1945.

"I was early into Belsen Concentration Camp and have quite a lot of evidence from the survivors. The press are concealing too much – at least the papers I see here. The people of Britain must realise just what it all is. Even now, 24,000 people have yet to die – there is no hope for them. That's only one camp. I saw children playing among heaps of dead, naked bodies – all the toys they ever knew.

The German people are quite indifferent to it all. The typist who was making copies of the evidence was quite unmoved. Her only request was to ask me for a room with sunshine as it was cold where he was working.

The best of everything is here – a land of plenty: butter, eggs, ham, wine and clothes."

Capt W. O. Drummond, British Liberation Army

Dimbleby's and Drummond's reports were some of the first of many similar that shocked the world. Some prisoner-of-war camps had already been liberated but Belsen was the first concentration camp to be liberated in April 1945, three weeks before hostilities formally ceased. The reason for the German surrender there at that time was because so many of the inmates were diseased – there was no running water in the camp and epidemics of tuberculosis, typhus and typhoid were breaking out. Historians later stated that over 28,000 of the 38,500 inmates remaining at the time of liberation subsequently died.

On demobilisation, Bill returned to his work as a lawyer. He was also a town councillor and an officer in St Cuthbert's Boys' Brigade Company. He died in 1965. In the 20 years from the end of the war till his death, it's unlikely Bill ever forgot the scenes he saw at Belsen that April day in 1945.

GENERAL NOTICES

Joint Church Services

Please note that joint services with our union partner, Greyfriars Kirk, are being held on the last Sunday of every month. These services will alternate between St Cuthbert's and Greyfriars. The May joint service is taking place at Greyfriars on Sunday 25th May and future joint services will be held as follows:

29th June at St Cuthbert's

27th July at Greyfriars Kirk

31st August at St Cuthbert's

28th September at Greyfriars Kirk

Quarterly Holy Communion will be taken during the June joint service.

Unless otherwise stated, services on the other Sundays of the month take place in St Cuthbert's.

Sunday 15th June: Coffee Concert

After morning worship on Sunday 15th June, we will have the Robert Sharon Chorale performing a concert in the Sanctuary with a retiring collection in aid of St Cuthbert's ongoing mission.

The Chorale is based in Florida and is on a tour of Scotland. It is a community organisation that strives to present the best types of chorale music – both sacred and secular – in a concert setting.



Their mission is to share the magical sounds of choral singing with the public, aiming not only to convey the joy of making music but to foster music appreciation, as well. They believe music is the "universal language of the heart", which can be understood and appreciated by all.

Communication

It would be helpful if members moving house would notify either their elder or the Church office of their new address.

Church Flowers

Anyone who would like to donate flowers on an anniversary or other special occasion or give a financial donation to the Flower Fund is invited to contact the Flower Committee via the Church Office or place a donation in the offering bag clearly marked Flower Fund.

We would also like to welcome new members to the Committee and shall be very pleased to hear from any member interested. Help will be provided if required.

Recordings of 10.30am Sunday Services

Recordings of the Church services are available on the Church website (stcuthberts-edinburgh.uk).

Telephone Prayer Circle

Requests for prayer in a crisis situation or in time of trouble should be sent by email to Irene Gill at prayercircle@stcuthberts-edinburgh.uk

Prayer is normally offered for one week. Names of those for whom prayer is required in the longer term should be entered in the Intercession Book (which can be found on the table in the vestibule).

All information will be treated in confidence.

Fresh Start

Fresh Start are very grateful for all our donations of household items and non-perishable food. Please continue to place your donations in the “Big White Box” in the vestibule.

If you are unable to deliver them, please contact Jim McLean and leave a message with your name, phone number and that the call is about Fresh Start. Alternatively, email jamesangusmclean@gmail.com

Steps to Hope

Our charity partner continues to provide, on Sunday and Monday evenings, a hot home-cooked meal for people who find themselves in difficult situations.

Would you be interested or do you know of anyone who would like the opportunity to support the local community and volunteer to assist with the Sunday meals at St Cuthbert's?

The main duty is to open and close the building to ensure that our Charity partner can continue to provide the meal service.

Please get in touch with the church office for more details.

Welcome Guides

The 2025 Guiding Season has started and we are pleased to welcome our Guiding Team back into operation. The usual friendly faces are there together with several new faces. We are, of course, always looking for new volunteers and if you are interested please contact us on the number below or by email.

Lyn and Derek Deans

07704 131 276 deans_d@sky.com

Tuesday and Saturday Coffee Mornings

A reminder that St Cuthbert's have two dates for coffee mornings in the Church.

Every Tuesday, you can come for a coffee and a chat in the Lindisfarne Room between 10.30 am and 11.30 am.

We also host a coffee morning on the last Saturday of each month. As always, all are welcome and we really appreciate the dedication and skill of our regular home baking suppliers. Thanks to you all.

Please note that due to external bookings in the Sanctuary, we occasionally have to adjust the time of the coffee morning. Unless otherwise stated, the times of the coffee mornings are 11 am to 2 pm.

The next ones are as follows:

31st May 11am to 2 pm

28th June 11am to 2pm

We look forward to seeing you, the more the merrier.

Further information from Lyn & Derek Deans Contact: 07704 131 276:

Future Church Magazines



Are you receiving the magazine the way you would prefer? Are you receiving a printed copy when one sent by email would suffice? Do we have the correct postal address (or email address) for you? If not, please get in touch so that we can sort it out and provide you with the magazine the way you want it.

Please contact the Magazine Editor either by email (to magazine@stcuthberts-edinburgh.uk), by post to Magazine Editor (at St Cuthbert's Parish Church, 5 Lothian Road, Edinburgh, EH1 2EP) or leave notification in the Magazine Editor pigeon hole in the Church Office.

Thank you for those who have already contacted the magazine, but if at any time in the future, you would prefer to receive the magazine in a different format, please do get in touch.

Thank you for sending in articles for the magazine. Please keep sending them in. If you wish to contribute items to the Church Magazine, please note the following deadlines for the upcoming editions. Material should be sent to the editor by:

August/September by Friday 18th July

October/November by Friday 19th September

either by e-mail to: magazine@stcuthberts-edinburgh.uk or please leave in the 'Magazine Editor' pigeon-hole in the Church Office.



STANDARD WORSHIP AT ST CUTHBERT'S

SUNDAY

9.30 am **Holy Communion**, Memorial Chapel, on the first Sunday of the month

10.30 am **Morning Worship**
Communion is included in the service on the last Sunday of each month

We celebrate a more formal Holy Communion service on a quarterly basis: on the last Sunday of January, June and October and on Easter Day

On the second Sunday of each month, Holy Communion is celebrated after the morning service in the Anam Chara Chapel

FIRST TUESDAY IN THE MONTH

12.15 pm Post Coffee Morning Worship, Memorial Chapel

FIRST WEDNESDAY IN THE MONTH (not January, July and August)

12.30 pm-5 pm **soul space** *Come and go!*
Reflection at 1 pm and 4.30 pm,
Soul Space takes place in the Church and is
also available online



THE VISION OF THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST CUTHBERT

To be living out the Gospel of Jesus Christ at the heart of our city as God's people in the West End of Edinburgh; sharing God's love, offering a home to friends and strangers alike, and providing a hub to discern the Vision of God.

St Cuthbert's is a congregation of the Church of Scotland. We also belong to the ecumenical parish grouping Edinburgh City Centre Churches Together. We are also part of the HeartEdge network of churches initiated by St Martin-in-the-Fields, London

St Cuthbert's is an 'eco-congregation'



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