

THE PARISH
CHURCH OF
ST CUTHBERT EDINBURGH



Church Magazine



August/September 2025

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Contents: Locum Minister's Letter (p3), From the Tower Room (p4), Reports from St Cuthbert's (p5) including: Congregational lunch (p5), Bible Fellowship Group (p5), News from the Ukrainian St Margaret's Saturday School (p7); Leading Worship (p8), Reflecting on Luke Chapter 9 (p11); Out and About (p12) including Life and Work (p12), 20 Guineas Reward (p13); General Notices (p13), including Joint Church services (p13), Welcome Guides (p15), Tuesday and Saturday Coffee Mornings (p15), photos from the Congregational Lunch (p18)

Front cover: The Edinburgh Festivals may soon be among us, but St Cuthbert's predates them by hundreds of years – this depiction is of the church that stood in 1772.

Locum Minister's Letter

Dear Friends

Strangers, Friends and Neighbours

'The Kindness of Strangers' was the title Tim Bell (former Chaplain to the Port of Leith) gave to the sermon he preached for us on Sunday 13th July, the day we joined with churches across Britain to celebrate 'Sea Sunday' remembering seafarers and those who support them, an initiative suggested by the Sailors' Society. It was super having Tim with us and he reflected on his encounters with sailors from around the world who found themselves anchored in the Forth or docked in Leith. Many of these people are away from home and family for many months at a time and chaplains like Tim extend the hand of friendship to any and all.

The passage from Acts 27 and 28 describes how Paul (a prisoner aboard a Roman ship) was shipwrecked on Malta where the locals welcomed the entire crew and all the prisoners by lighting fires to keep them warm as it was raining and cold. This 'unusual kindness' is remarked upon and will resonate with anyone who has found a warm and caring welcome offered by those they have not met previously.

We often talk about holy hospitality and I believe that is one of the marks of our congregation. The church is now open to visitors and our Guides offer just that sort of warm welcome, allowing people to find peace in our sanctuary or helping them to find out more about the history of the church and its people. Of the thousands of visitors who enter our building each year our hope is that the kindness of those they meet will stay with them long after they have left Edinburgh. We hope, too that some of those who join us on a Sunday mornings as visitors may return as friends.



On another tack it has been good to be involved in other things that happen in the Parish, I was invited to participate in a service of Remembrance at The Call where visitors from the St Andrew's Society of Washington Color Guard gathered to celebrate the links forged between our two countries (see photo).

I was asked to participate in a similar way on Wojtek Day but was not free to do so, and our friends at St John's stepped in. Clephane

Hume took part in that service and it was rather fitting because as a youngster she had visited the bear at Edinburgh Zoo.

The chance to reciprocate came when David was looking for someone to solemnise a wedding – in the end a retired minister known to the family was able to do the necessary but how good it is to be working alongside such splendid neighbours where we know we can call upon each other. As I write I know our prayers are with all at St John's as they move forward in their search for a new Rector.

Whether you are staying at home (wherever home may be) or are going off on holiday, I hope that you enjoy the summer and that you are shown all manner of kindness by those you meet along the way.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like a visit or home-communion, I will be back from annual leave on Saturday 8th August, and Kirsten Kooy will be available as usual.

Suzie

FROM THE TOWER ROOM

Welcome to the summer edition of the church magazine.

We include our usual update from the Bible Fellowship Group and report on another successful year for the Ukrainian St Margaret's Saturday School. The school's second year ended with the prizegiving and a special treat – a train journey to North Berwick. We are grateful to St John's Episcopal Church for stepping in at (almost) the last moment when St Cuthbert's was belatedly unavailable – another example of what Suzie describes in her Minister's Letter of "working alongside such splendid neighbours".

Have you ever wondered how much thought and preparation goes into planning Sunday morning worship? John Kirk has conducted a few services over the years and he shares with us just how much work goes into planning a service. It's a fascinating insight into something that we tend to take for granted.

Following the inclusion of the 'job advertisement' for the beadle in St Cuthbert's which appeared in the last edition of the magazine, this time we include a newspaper advert for a 20 guinea reward the Kirk Session offered 200 years ago for the conviction of a couple of grave robbers who "violated" the burial ground by stealing a recently buried parishioner. Burke and Hare were finally captured and the Session never actually parted with the reward money.

We finally highlight our recent congregational lunch and a special birthday treat for someone synonymous with the Tuesday coffee morning - Valerie Blackburn. We enclose some pictures from these two events.

Stewart Cowe

Congregational Lunch

On 3rd July, St Cuthbert's hosted a summer congregational lunch in the Lammermuir Hall.

The lunch was very well attended by both well kent faces and some friends from our past and it was considered a great success.

Suzie opened the lunch beautifully with a prayer and the hymn "The King of Love my Shepherd is" accompanied on piano by Ian Cassells, fresh from his Carillon Festival triumph in Perth.

We all joined in a hymn for Grace, "All good things around us" then had a choice of two home made soups, smart sandwiches and fancy cakes together with tea, coffee and fizzy juice. Each table had its own little rose flower arrangement, courtesy of Jean Watt.

Sadly, some parishioners couldn't attend this event due to ill health or holidays but they were remembered in the prayers and we do hope they can attend the next event.

Many, many thanks go to Anne Robertson and her wonderful sister Lynn, to Angela the unseen hero of the hot kitchen and to Christine and her father Stuart, both calmly efficient in the serving and then clearing afterwards.

Kirsten Kooy

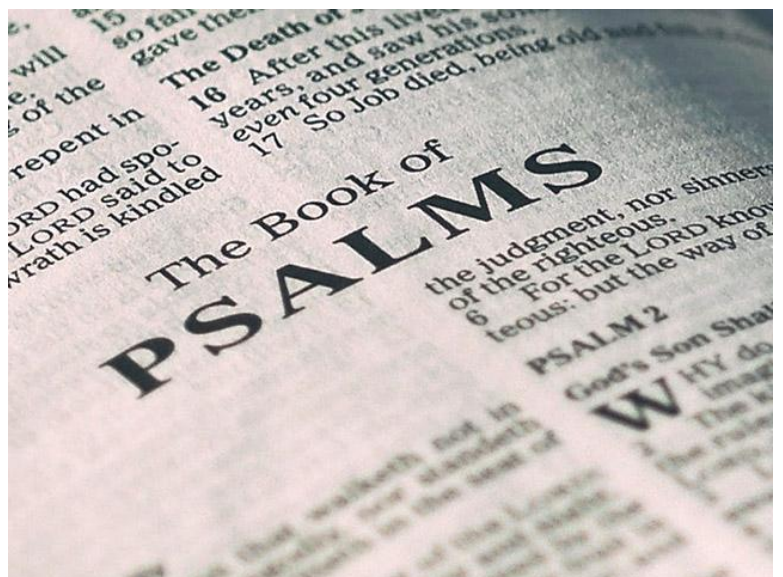
Pastoral Assistant

Please see page 18 for some photographs of this event.

St Cuthbert's Bible Fellowship Group

Such is the enthusiasm of the Bible Fellowship Group that when asked whether we should continue to meet for a sixth year, the reaction was a unanimous "yes." Hence, we will meet again through the autumn **starting on Thursday 4th September at 7.30pm via Zoom**. All are most welcome to join us whether you come occasionally or regularly. You can sit back, or join in the conversations as you wish.

What I can suggest with confidence is that is a worthwhile hour spent with trusted members of the church family. We try to share our understandings of scripture and some of the mysteries of



God, and our time of fellowship races by.

Please give this group a try if you have not had the encouragement of a Bible based fellowship Group before. If you need help with getting on Zoom, please let me know.

Our next topic for discussions is the Psalms and given there are 150 of them in the Old Testament we will not be short of inspiration, and reaffirmation that God is indeed the Almighty God and his love endures for ever.

Here are some background notes about the Psalms:

1. The Psalms are collection of prayers, poems, and hymns that focus the worshipper's thoughts on God in praise and adoration. Many were used as a hymnal in the worship services. The Psalms include such subjects as God and His creation, war, worship, wisdom, sin, evil, judgment, justice, and the coming of the Messiah.

2. David is listed as author of 73 of the psalms. David was far from being a perfect man or leader but whatever he did, he never stopped believing, praying, and listening to God. Two of the psalms (72 and 127) are attributed to Solomon and Psalm 90 is a prayer attributed to Moses. There are other authors; about fifty of the psalms have no designated author. All inspired by God perhaps?

3. The oldest psalm, Psalm 90, is the prayer of Moses, and the latest psalm is probably Psalm 137, a song of lament written during the time when the Hebrews were being held captive by the Babylonians, from about 586 to 538 B.C.

4. Prophetic pictures of the Messiah are seen in the psalms. For example, Psalm 2:1-12 portrays the Messiah's triumph and kingdom. Psalm 16:8-11 foreshadows His death and resurrection. Psalm 22 shows us the suffering Saviour on the cross - all of which were fulfilled perfectly.

We can bring all our emotions to God—no matter how negative they may be—and we can rest assured that He will hear us. The psalmist teaches us that the most profound prayer of all is a cry for help as we sometimes find ourselves overwhelmed by the problems and challenges of life.

Psalm 51:10, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

Every blessing,

Martin Pearce

email: martin.pearce2109@outlook.com

Update on the Ukrainian St Margaret's Saturday School

The School comprising thirty pupils ages 5 to 16, seven dedicated Ukrainian teachers, parents, and grandparents, ten trustees and co-opted members, and supporters including 10 members from St Cuthbert's celebrated the completion of the School's second year at the Prize giving Ceremony held at St John's Church on 21st June. The prizes given to each child comprised a £10 Tesco gift token, a certificate, and a report card – and a bag of sweets of course!

The children entertained the supporters with their singing, dancing, and poetry all done with much enthusiasm. Katrina Balmer, the Deacon Convener of Edinburgh Trades, and Joyce Landy from the Mission of Innocents presented the prizes. The Ukrainian Consul, Andriia Madzia-novski, was also present among many of our private donors. This very joyful occasion was followed by refreshments and tasty Ukrainian cakes, enjoyed by all.



The School has received outstanding support from St Cuthbert's throughout the last two years when we have used the Lindisfarne Room for extra-curricular activities, and occasionally other rooms when George Heriot's classrooms have not been available. Our final event of the second year was a visit to North Berwick beach by train on 28th June when 27 children and 20 adults enjoyed a wonderful day out by enjoying the beauty and peace of the beach. What a contrast to the dreadful scenes of war in Ukraine that we see on television so often.

Sadly, the Ukrainian families continue to suffer the loss of family members and homes with the never-ending war, and yet, we would not know the pain they suffer from the way the children, teachers and parents interact with such enthusiasm and joy.



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 as we prepare to start our third year in August. In the meantime, we continue to raise funds over the summer months. The School continues to thrive. Thanks be to God.

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

Leading Worship

Have you ever wondered what goes into planning Sunday morning worship? John Kirk has conducted several Sunday services over the years, and in this article, he shares with us just how much work goes into planning a service, the resources he uses and some other insights of the preparation needed.

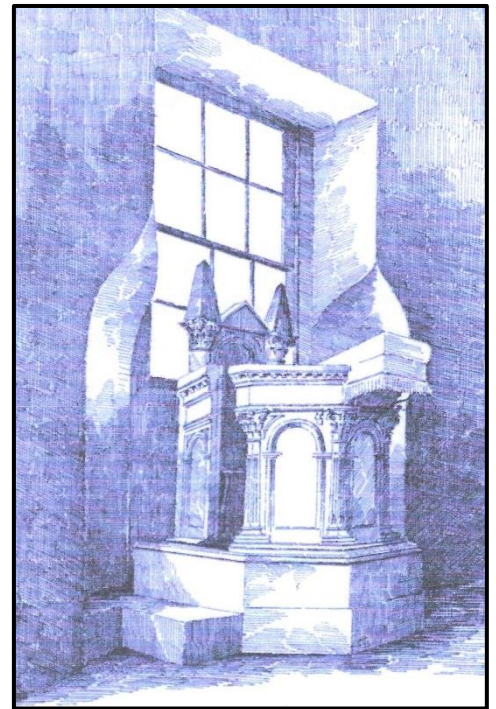
As someone who has only recently begun to lead Worship, I thought it might be of interest to look at what all goes into preparing a Sunday Service. I had been comfortable doing the occasional reading however Peter encouraged me to do more through involvement in Soul Space and in Sunday Worship. I hadn't envisaged doing a whole Service but that is what came to pass. I do wonder what my parents would have made of this, especially delivering a Sermon from the same pulpit my father preached from in the 1950s. Presbytery has a set of courses for lay Worship leaders and I have completed the first two with the third stage on the horizon. These sessions have been interesting and eye opening.

Now I am very lucky that I receive plenty of weeks' notice of leading Worship. My first port of call is the Lectionary which provides the Readings and Psalms for each Sunday and then to read the passages; can I identify without help the thread that will run through them? I will also read through Tom Wright's commentary on the Epistle and Gospel readings. There are many scholars and commentators whose works can be consulted but I like Tom Wright's style so his works are my "go to" resource (see books, below).

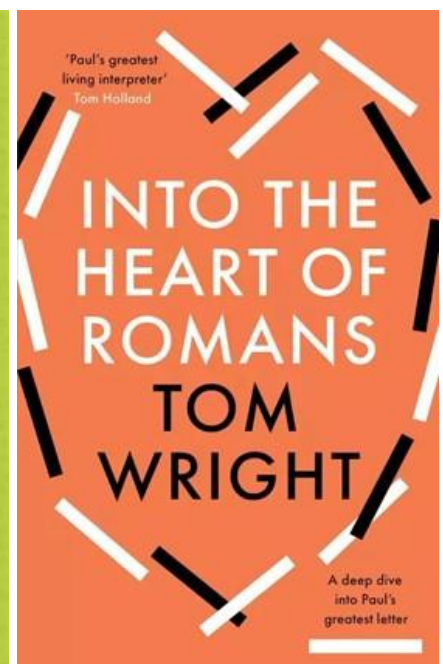
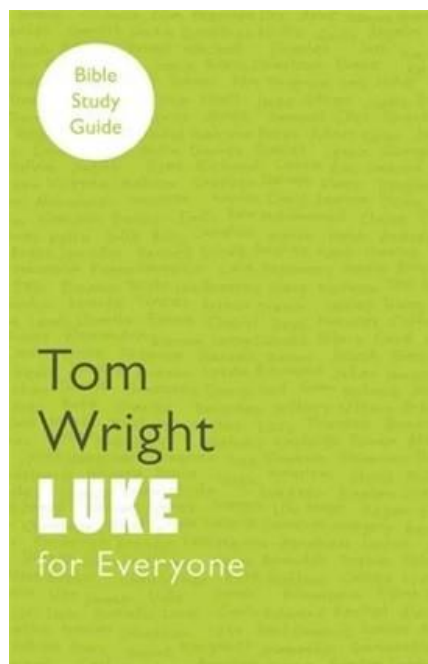
"Resources" are important in planning out a Service and can assist with hymn choice, prayers, Sermon ideas and so forth. Of course, the internet makes things even easier with direct and immediate access to so much material. Gone are the days when the Minister would have to write a 20 odd minute Sermon from his or her own thinking. But that does not mean that there is no background reading or research to be done or indeed that personal thinking will not form part of Prayers or Sermons.

After reading the Scripture passages (and I confess considering if using Gordon Hay's excellent Doric translation might be a possibility), I consider the Praise list. CH4 has its own section about linking Hymns to Bible passages. There is also guidance via the Church of Scotland website in the "Weekly Worship" section which refers to a wide range of potential praise. I confess that the first time I was asked to lead Worship, I chose Hymns that I liked and were good hearty sings. But that really isn't the way to do things so I discuss my thinking with Graham (Maclagan), especially as regards the Psalm, and try to select Praise that is relevant to the Service. That said I do like big sings! So: Praise list sorted; I turn to the Sermon.

I mentioned "weekly Worship" which is usually a most excellent resource to point you



Pulpits come in all shapes and sizes. This one was used in St Cuthbert's up to 1773 when it moved to the poorhouse which was situated where the Caledonian Hotel now stands.



in the right direction for a Sermon, giving ideas about what to focus on and what the message from the Scripture readings is. Of course, that is only one of many similar websites which can be used as a resource for crafting a Sermon. It is important for me to link the message into our local circumstances if possible. I also like to use examples from real life (either my own or from resources) to illustrate the theme at hand.

My father used to sit down and write his Sermon in one go, usually on a Saturday night, but I have the luxury of time so tend to write in sections reviewing what I have written each time I go back to the draft. Once completed, I confess that as very much an amateur at Sermon writing, I submit my work for professional scrutiny. The draft is e mailed to the North East for my sister to review! Hopefully it will come back with “BVA Certification” (Buchan Vicar Approval).

The Presbytery course has shown that there are very many ways to craft Sermons, opening words and Prayers. You might well have noticed that my Call to Prayer words always sound similar and that is because they come from a modern Worship song called “Who am I” and I think the quotations I use ask us important questions just ahead of Worship. If I were Preaching more often, I would have to find other inspirations. Writing Prayers is really hard I find and I am regularly impressed by the work of those who contribute our intercessory Prayers. Again, there are resources to help but of course we need to keep an eye on current events so there might be some last minute alterations.

As a general rule I have the Service typed out in full; Speaking parts in black, music in red and stage directions (reminders of where I need to be) in blue. Again, I am indebted to Graham for preparing the Order of Service which provides the opening line and collect for the day. I doubt I could do a Sermon without notes as some Ministers seem to be able to do. The reading and thinking and writing has been done, the Service is good to go so let us go to the Sunday morning.

I find that Leading Worship is not too far from conducting a Criminal Court and the Sermon is not unlike conducting a Jury speech. I like to arrive early and give myself time to check; that I have an Order of Service, there are no last minute problems, that the organist, reader and intercessor are there (there is an emergency intercessory Prayer in my folder) and to see if any of the intimations need to be mentioned. I do like some quiet time to read through my parts. I have a copy of the Service for the organist.

The Service starts in earnest with a short Prayer with the choir and then in we go. Just like conducting a court the experience is demanding and nerves are certainly in the mix and if things go awry, well things can be sorted often without anybody noticing. Having spent a fair amount of time preparing the Service it is remarkable just how quickly it goes and in no time at all we are back in the Lammermuir Hall saying the Grace with the choir and Elders.

Perhaps the most important thing to note is that preparing for and conducting a Service is very much a team game and there is a dedicated team working away in the background to make our Worship on a Sunday come to pass. So next time, please do spare a thought for all those involved in enabling us to enjoy Worship each Sunday. Of course, I only have to prepare a Service now and again and knowing how much work goes into it I take my hat off to the Ministry who have to prepare a Service week in and week out. No mean feat!

John Kirk

A Reflection on Luke 9:51-62 Following Jesus

We read in this Bible passage that some people wanted to follow Jesus, but each have their own conditions attached; bury my father, sort out my affairs, say goodbye to my family.

The unnamed man mentioned in verses 57 and 58 boasted that he would follow Jesus anywhere, but following the Son of Man involves great hardship.



⁵⁷ As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

⁵⁸ Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

⁶¹ Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.”

⁶² Jesus replied, “No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

Following Jesus is not easy. It is a hard life for many. Some of you will have found that over the years. If we want to follow Jesus with renewed enthusiasm, we must go where He would go and do what He would do.

Jesus invites us to make a serious commitment to following him. Not just when life is good, but also through some of the tough times. The commitment to following Jesus is what we reflect upon from this reading.

When we look at our church, country, and world today and all that is happening, it can be easy to become disillusioned. It can be easy to wonder where God is in all of this. Yet by the grace and power of God, we can make a difference.

In the same way, the Israelites passed on their shared history of God's saving grace.

What 'God given stories' do we have to pass on?

This is a difficult passage for us to reflect upon. But ultimately, this is the truth of Christian discipleship: that no earthly distractions could possibly compare with following Jesus.

But of course, the cost of not following him is even greater ... Jesus said, "I have come so that you may have life in all its fullness." If we do not follow Jesus, we will never know fullness of life.

It may not be easy, but it opens a whole new way of living life to the full when we sense his love and forgiveness, and experience his joy and peace.

Jesus says to each of us, follow me or continue to follow me. And when we all do, then the Church in Scotland will grow again.

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

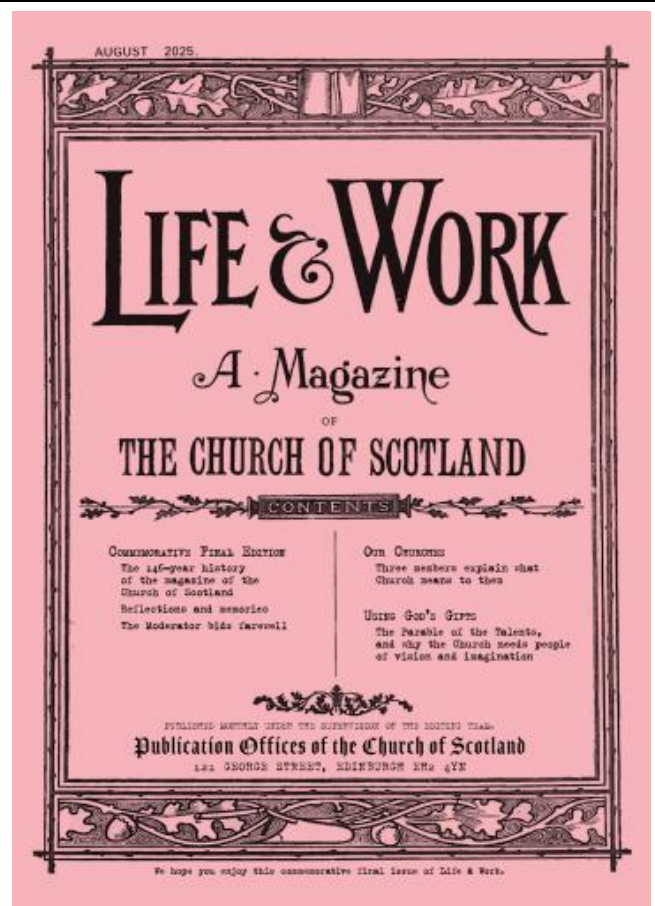
OUT AND ABOUT

Life and Work

As many of you will know, the Church of Scotland is discontinuing Life and Work and the August edition is the last in the line which started 146 years ago.

This final one looks back over the last century and a half.

- Thomas Baldwin takes a brief look at the history of Life and Work
- The Moderator bids Farewell
- Our Churches: three members explain what church means to them
- Using God's Gifts: the parable of the Talents and why the Church needs people of vision and imagination.
- Ministers, a former editor and readers from Scotland and abroad reflect on what Life and Work has meant to them.
- The Rev Ruth Kennedy explains how Life and Work has sown seeds of faith over the last 146 years.



Errata: VE Day celebrations – the other side of the coin

In the last magazine, we ran an article about the liberation of Belsen Concentration Camp. In it we referred to the BBC War Correspondent David Dimbleby. It should have referred to David's father, Richard. We apologise for this error and thank those who pointed this out to the editor.

20 Guineas Reward

Whereas on the morning of the 9th April, after the watchman had left his duty, the West Church Yard was daringly entered into and violated by the raising of a body by certain persons who effected their escape.

A reward of 20 guineas is hereby offered by the Kirk Session of the West Kirk to any persons who may give such information as to lead to the discovery of one or other of the parties concerned.

To be paid by the Session's treasurer on the conviction of the offender or offenders.

This notice appeared in the Edinburgh newspapers in 1825 following another illicit visit to Edinburgh burial grounds by the so called resurrectionists. The main protagonists then were the infamous William Burke and William Hare, both Irish immigrants, though there is no proof that they were involved in the above.

Twenty guineas (£21) was a huge amount for a reward then – equivalent to £1,700 in today's money, but there is no indication that the Kirk Session were required to pay the reward.

GENERAL NOTICES

Joint Church Services



St Cuthbert's Parish Church



Greyfriars Kirk

Please note that joint services with our union partner, Greyfriars Kirk, are held on the last Sunday of every month. These services alternate between St Cuthbert's and Greyfriars. There will be NO service in St Cuthbert's on 27th July when the joint service will take place at Greyfriars.

As Rev Suzie Stark is on annual leave and Greyfriars are without a Locum Minister, the joint service will take the form of an agape meal. All are welcome.

Future joint services will be held as follows:

27th July at Greyfriars Kirk

31st August at St Cuthbert's

28th September at Greyfriars Kirk

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

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.

Valerie Blackburn is the absolute hero of these Tuesday coffee mornings, but recently, the regular attendees had the chance to spoil her on her birthday.

Alistair Bryson provided the beautiful cake (see picture on the next page) and “happy birthday” was sung lustily by all. It is an historic picture as Marks and Spencer's online service was not available due to the well-publicised cyber attack so Alistair had to

choose an appropriate cake from their shop. You can see that he chose something splendid for Valeries's big day.



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:

- 26th July 11am to 2pm
- 30th August 10am to 1pm (see below)
- 27th September 11am to 2pm
- 25th October 11am to 2pm
- 29th November 11am to 2pm

Please note that the August coffee morning on the 30th will be held in the Lindisfarne Room at the above earlier time to suit a Festival event.

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:

October/November by Friday 19th September

December 2025/January 2026 by Friday 21st November

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

Pictures from the Congregational Lunch held on Thursday 3rd July





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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