

THE SIGN

DECEMBER 2016 & JANUARY 2017

**ST CUTHBERT'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
COLINTON**

THE INTERREGNUM: AN UPDATE

To keep you informed this is what has happened so far: In June the Bishop met the Vestry and indicated that he was happy for us to begin the process of moving towards selection of our new Rector without undue delay.

In September The Vestry met the Dean who was also happy that we should move ahead.

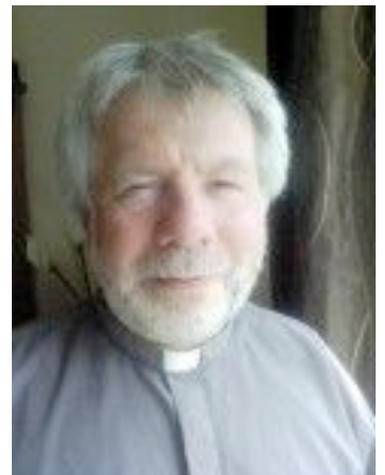
In September a number of people were asked to consider the church Profile and what ought to be included. The first draft of the Profile was sent to the Dean and the Bishop for approval in early October. Following comments from some members of the congregation there was a redraft of the Profile. In the first week of November the Bishop & the Dean responded with their comments on the Profile. It will now undergo a further redraft before being submitted. The congregation was invited to attend a short meeting to raise concerns. Apart from Vestry, 9 members of the congregation were present. The vestry will now consider issues raised and the rewording of the Profile. The time frame is difficult to determine but certainly it will be well into 2017 before interviews are likely to take place.

**St Cuthbert's Episcopal Church
Westgarth Avenue
Colinton
Edinburgh EH13 0BD**



St Cuthbert's endeavours to be a community in which all are encouraged to participate in worshipping God and serving the wider community. It welcomes those who are doubters and sceptics as well as those who are committed in faith, and has a particular concern for those who have been hurt by their experiences of life.

**From our Interim Pastor
Fred Tomlinson
A Christmas Note**



Dear Friends

Christmas Angels

A newspaper ran a story reported by the staff members of Dorset County Hospital. It concerned a little boy's personal account of his recent tonsillectomy at the hospital. He said, "When I went into the big room it was very bright there were two lady angels dressed in white. Then two men angels looked down my throat and one said, "God! Look at that child's tonsils." Then God looked and said, "I'll take them out at once."

The lad obviously mistook a doctor for an angel. And yet, it seemed perfectly natural to him that angels should be in the operating room watching out for him. Are angels just a figment of a child's imagination? Or, is there something to the whole idea of angels with whom it is possible for human beings to experience a close encounter of the spiritual kind?

During the Advent and Christmas season we will all hear and sing the traditional songs:

"Hark the herald angels sing..." "Angels from the realms of glory..."
"While shepherds watched their flocks by night, all seated on the ground..." ".... the angel of the Lord came down..." "It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old..", "...from angels bending near the earth..." "Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation..." "The first noel, the angels did say... "

And... all of our traditional Christmas stories speak of:

An angel who brought news to Mary that she would be with child by the Holy Spirit. An angel who told Joseph not to break it off with Mary... An angel who broke through the heavens to tell shepherds that the Saviour had been born...

Is this just something it's okay to speak and sing about in church, but not something we'd even countenance speaking of outside? In our modern, sophisticated, scientific, rational world, is there a place for all this singing and reading and discussion of angels? I hope so!

So let me encourage you in the coming season to be open to God and his messengers. Remember their function... To bring you a message from God - To bring you strength, hope, peace - that is to minister to you in your inward spirit.

Please continue to pray for your Vestry members as they work to help us find a new rector for St Cuthbert's. Already good progress has been made - pray that the right person may respond to the advert for the post when it appears.

God bless

Fred Interim Pastor

SARAH'S VIEW

Light in the darkness

One of the great themes of Advent and Christmas is that of light appearing in the darkness. From John's Gospel chapter 1, usually read at the Midnight service on 24th December, we hear these words: 'The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world'. In that well-known Christmas hymn, 'O come all ye faithful' (also usually sung at the Midnight service), we celebrate the coming of Jesus as 'God of God, Light of Light'. The idea of Christ as the light of the world is echoed too in the words of the prophets, for example: 'The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined,' (Isaiah 9:2).

Writing this mid-November, I wonder how it would feel to hear those words if I was living in a place of conflict, violence and fear? Mosul, or Aleppo, for example? These are dark days for many. I can't imagine what it would be like to wake up regularly to the sound of gun shots or bomb blasts. And even in this relatively peaceful part of the world, many of us may fear what the future holds, following the Brexit vote earlier in the year, and the US presidential election which has caused such division in that country. Where is light to be found?

When I was pondering this, these words came to me: Just because we can't always see the light, it doesn't mean it isn't there. Just as, during the winter in our hemisphere, we experience shorter days and less light, it doesn't mean there is more darkness in the world as a whole. Even now, beyond all darkness, fear, conflict and grief, there is hope. What we see around us is not the whole picture. And sometimes we get glimpses of that bigger picture. In the unlooked-for generosity of a stranger to someone in need. In forgiveness given and received in a difficult relationship. In the hope symbolised by the birth of a child in a conflict zone. And finally, and miraculously, in this: The Light that came down at Christmas wasn't just for *that* time, or for only some of us – but for *all* time, and for *all* of us. Something changed with the Advent of Christ. In the coming of the Christ-child God came to us, became one of us, knew darkness and suffering; but in his life, death and resurrection showed us that although darkness may appear to hold sway, light and life do, ultimately, reign.

Thoughts to Ponder

We know little about the life of Jesus before he began his public ministry. Most mainstream scholars - according to Professor Marcus Borg - believe that the stories about his birth and childhood are not historical records. We know rather more about his later ministry. Borg writes 'the stories may not have happened that way, but they are true!' So what does he mean?

There are powerful truths in the accounts given - symbolic narratives revealing the nature of this Jewish baby who would impact the world to this day. One of the strongest themes is light into darkness, with its many-layered nuances....

It's been impossible this year to approach the season of Advent without a sharper awareness of the plight of refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers seeking refuge, a place of safety, freedom from oppression and a chance for a better, happier life for themselves and their children.

The Biblical narrative of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem evokes thoughts about the discomforts, risks and dangers of travel in the first century, and now for countless individuals who have left their homes risking everything - including their lives - to reach a new beginning. All too often the response has been 'No room at the inn'... So it's hard to be enthusiastic about the signs of an impending secular Christmas overly geared to consumer needs and desires. Shops fill with stuff we don't need but may learn to want. This year especially, when the vast inequalities of power and wealth have been challenged by populist votes both here and now in the U.S.A. it does make us stop and think.....

The arrival of the Oxfam gift catalogue last week helped in my small corner! As you know, it enables the buying of a gift which will, in some way, help in a developing country. The recipient here gets a card. So, probably trebling my street-cred, my two grand-nephews will this year each receive 'a pile of poo' - organic fertilizer to help ensure good growth of seeds, and my great-niece is in line for a goat!

Across the world, a majority of people will struggle this winter - at home as well as abroad - and while each of us can do so little, it is surely still 'better to light a candle than to curse the darkness....'

Mary McMahan

The Bread of Life

On Sunday 16 October John Hampton led our service on the theme of Holy Communion. The Collects, readings, hymns and sermon all referred to this theme. This is John's sermon.

“How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” This is a question that some people in the crowd listening to Jesus teaching about himself as the Bread of Life were asking, according to the Gospel of St. John (ch.5, v.62). I've been going to Communion for over 70 years and I sometimes ask myself the same question; why am I doing it and what does it mean to me.

First of all I come because I believe in God as shown to us by Jesus and Jesus told us to do it – ‘Do this in remembrance of me’. Then I come because I know I'm not yet the person God wants me to be – I fail him in all sorts of ways and I don't love my neighbours as I ought. I need to be given a fresh start, restored, renewed, refreshed to try again, to become a bit more like he wants me to be. Thirdly, I come because I need to learn more about our Lord and what he wants of me. That's why I receive Communion week by week, but what does it mean?

On the night before he died Jesus took some bread and broke it and gave it to his friends, saying, “Do this in remembrance of me”. Ever since then people have done that and it has helped them to remember and I find it helps me. Nearly all Christian people do this and agree that it helps them. But is that all there is to it? Is it just a service of remembrance of a person who lived and died a long time ago? Is he dead? By that I mean is he just a hero of the past like Socrates or Julius Caesar or John Wesley? Well, all Christians are agreed about that as well. They all agree that Jesus is alive in a special way, although they don't all agree about what actually happened at the resurrection. They all believe that he is near and powerful to help. St. Matthew's Gospels records him saying, “Lo, I am with you always to the end of the age”.

There is a mystery involved here, something very deep that can neither be explained or proved. Some people don't like mysteries and I'm not speaking of detective novels, of course. Life and death are mysteries in this sense, things that can't be explained in anything other than chemical terms. The world is full of mysteries still and the mystery of the living Christ is just one of them, perhaps the most important of them all. It is the basis of the Christian faith that Jesus is alive in a special way that I can't explain, but that I can experience.

One of the things that being alive means is being able to communicate with other living people. I am alive and you are alive and the proof of that is that I can communicate with you and you with me. There are many ways of doing it, talking, writing, signalling, e-mail, but they have one thing in common – they all need a body, yours and mine. I use my tongue and lips to speak; you use your ears to hear. I use my hand to write; you use your eyes to read. Whatever way my living spirit communicates with your living spirit, it must use the body.

Now, on the night before he died, Jesus said a strange thing about the bread which he broke and handed round and told us to repeat in memory of him. He said, “This is my body”. What did he mean? There have been arguments over the centuries about that, as you may remember if you studied the Reformation in your history lessons at school. What could he have meant when he said about a piece of bread ‘This is my body?’ Perhaps we can never know all he meant and there have been many interpretations. For my part, I am sure he did not mean: ‘Watch me, I’m going to turn this bread into flesh’ and, I suppose, there are few, if any, who still believe he meant that. I’m sure he does not mean that now.

What I believe he meant was this: ‘I am going to die. My body will no longer be with you. I shall not be able to use it to communicate with you. I shall not be able to use my mouth to speak, my hands to touch, my eyes to look at you. But when you do this as I bid you, when you take bread and break it in remembrance of me, I will use it as a means of communicating with you. When I speak, look, touch with my body you know that my living spirit is with you. You know I am here. When my body is gone and you meet together for love of me and take bread and break it remembering me, you can be sure that my living spirit will be with you. You can be as sure of my real presence with you as you would be if I came and laid my hands on your head.

That is one of the things at least that I believe that he meant. How he uses the bread as a means of communication I don’t know. I don’t know precisely how I use my body or you use yours as a means of communication. The relation of the living spirit with the material body and with material things are all part of a mystery. Even though neuro-scientists may be able to explain some of the thought processes involved they can only go so far. How the spirit of the sculptor gets into the statue or the spirit of the painter gets into the picture or the spirit of the musician gets into a series of vibrations and air pressures in the ear to make the music, no one knows. But they do and most of us can recognize it. How the spirit of the living Jesus gets into the bread we break, as he told us to, in remembrance of him, nobody knows, but I believe it does.

The bread will remain bread, but it will be used by our Lord as a means by which he does two things: make us sure he is present and inspire us with his Spirit. I may come and get no good. St. Paul warned about the danger of receiving the

bread unworthily, i.e. of not discerning the body, as he put it. When he was on the earth many people met him but discerned nothing special. They saw only an ordinary carpenter or an impostor or a man who was mad. He was there all the same. Some come now and see only nonsense, superstition, ordinary bread and wine, but I believe he is there all the same.

There have been disputes over the centuries as to how he is there. Perhaps you remember hearing some of the long words that have been used – consubstantiation and transubstantiation, for example. Well, what do they mean? Transubstantiation means changing the substance, but what is substance? We use that word in two ways. You might ask me, ‘What is glue?’ and I might say, ‘A sticky substance’. Or you might ask me, ‘What was that letter about that you received this morning?’ and I might reply, ‘I can’t remember the exact words but I can tell you the substance of it’. That is to say, the meaning or the sense of it.

It’s in the second way, not the first, that I believe we can use substance if we say that the substance is changed in Communion. The bread and wine are the same substance to look at, to touch or to analyse chemically. It is the meaning or sense of them which is changed. They mean the living spirit of Jesus. That is what they stand for and bring to me when I take them in my hands. They become something special.

Ordinary things often become very special. You see this thing I am wearing round my neck – a stole, as it is called. It’s a length of cloth with some embroidery on it in yellow silk. It is a symbol of the cloth which Jesus used when he washed his disciples’ feet at the Last Supper and it is intended to remind a priest that she or he is a servant of God and his people. For me this stole is not an ordinary one that might have been bought from an ecclesiastical supplier, however. This length of cloth is very special to me because it was made for me by my wife, Ann, for my ordination 63 years ago, when we couldn’t afford one of the professionally made ones with damask and gold wire embroidery which were usual then. It has no commercial value at all and after all this time is looking decidedly tired, but for me it is priceless. It is a length of cloth, but for me it is a great deal more. The substance of it has been changed because of who made it and gave it to me and the love it represents.

I shall go to the altar shortly and take bread and wine which will be brought up from among you, to represent your whole lives offered to God for his service. It will be ordinary bread and wine. We shall offer it to God and he will give it back to us and it will be a good deal more than ordinary bread and wine. The substance, the meaning or sense of it will be changed because our Lord gives it to us. He gives it and uses it to assure us that he is really present and to strengthen us with his Spirit to become what he wants us to be, his Body in the world.

PLAY CHURCH

Our young people were delighted to be asked to help lead the service of dedication of the new diocesan play church at St Mary's Cathedral on Saturday 12th November. Alice, Euan, Thomas and Emma read the dramatized readings with great expression and actions (complete in costumes as disciples & Jesus). Kate wrote the intercessions, chose pictures for prayer cards and read them beautifully. We all enjoyed seeing the play church unveiled, complete with our donation of the communion set and look forward to it visiting St Cuthbert's in the future.
Megan Emmerson

From Claire Benton Evans, Youth & Children Officer Diocese of Edinburgh

Thank you so much for your involvement in Saturday's play church service and please pass on my particular thanks to Alice, Thomas, Emma, Euan and Kate. They did a wonderful job reading, intercessing and serving with great confidence, grace and poise. It was really important to have this service led by young people as well as for them, and I enjoyed working with them all. Thank you for encouraging and enabling their involvement, and thank you too for the beautiful Communion Set! It was great to see it all being played with straight away at the end of the service.

VESTRY REPORT – OCTOBER

At the October Vestry meeting held 11.10 16 the following issues were discussed:

It was noted under **Matters Arising** that canon 35 consent had finally been obtained for the proposed new church doors, that the Lone Worker policy had been sent to the Interim Pastor for approval as had the

Human Resources Policy, and that discussions about the Memorial Book were ongoing.

The amended **congregational profile** had been sent to the Bishop and Dean for approval and there were concerns that delays might result in no new Rector being in post until after Easter.

Property: it was agreed that a survey of church ground and rectory trees was needed, that maintenance and repairs to the rectory were ongoing, that lighting and security were being reviewed and special thanks were given to Gavin Wye for all the work he undertakes.

It was agreed that **trees** to offset the church's carbon emissions should be purchased via two charities, Trees for Life and The Woodland Trust Centenary Woods Project.

An update was given on ongoing **work with refugees** and plans to host a tea party in the spring as part of the Weekend Project were noted. The collection of clothes for Edinburgh Direct Aid for Syria was approved.

Details of the **St Cuthbert's Lecture** in March were given, the proposed speaker being Rev. Ruth Scott.

Notice was given of a **Good Grief lunch** on November 5.

A copy of the minutes is at the back of the church and copies may be obtained from Hilary Pritchard

EDINBURGH DIOCESAN SYNOD

The Bishop's welcome and opening remarks mentioned his visit to ESPO, and how the delegates had compared current day church politics and world problems with five centuries ago at the time of Martin Luther, Cranmer and Michaelangelo "Whatever changes God does not".

The Diocesan financial position past, present and future occupies the main part of the Synod. It is in reasonable order. The diocesan Treasurer is now and will be a member of the Standing Committee, which can now co opt temporary members. The Audit and Governance Committee has been disbanded and their remit is included in the Standing Committee. These measures were approved by Synod. The new Communications Co ordinator, Sian Harris, was introduced and spoke of her plans, including a new web site, which will be available soon. There will be an Editor's Day in January 2017.

Rev John Conway then introduced Rev Annie Nash who is appointed new Enabler of Mission. She spoke very positively giving a powerful presentation of her new challenge in the Diocese, "interdependent" not independent, "sharing God's saving love in Christ"

The Adventures in Faith Co ordinator, Elizabeth White, then spoke. She produces a quarterly newsletter, publicising events and trying to initiate more learning opportunities. She and the two new appointees hope to be able to inspire and communicate with every church in the Diocese.

Finally the Dean, Susan Macdonald, announced that she is standing down as Dean but will continue as Rector of Christ Church.

Jan Shepherd.

The Synod was attended by Jan Shepherd, Margaret Kieran and Sarah Shaw

SCOTTISH FAITHS ACTION FOR REFUGEES

Brief Update:

Following our discussion about ways in which we as a congregation can become more involved with supporting refugees at a local level I thought you'd be interested to know that I have been selected to join a team of volunteers to help plan and run monthly events with The Weekend Club. This is a new initiative under the auspices of SFAR, that seeks to respond to the social isolation experienced by many refugees, asylum seekers and new migrants arriving in Scotland. The club's purpose is to foster the integration of refugees, asylum seekers and new migrants in Edinburgh by creating an atmosphere of welcome. By providing a relaxed and fun environment the Edinburgh Weekend Club enables its participants to meet new people, build friendships, improve their English and learn more about Scottish culture and history. This week I met for the first time with the team of 7 volunteers and our brilliant manager Sabine Chalmers, who is employed by SFAR. We are a diverse group from different religious and ethnic groups, but are all very keen to make the project work and evolve in whichever way seems to serve the communities we hope to reach. Following a training day in December, the first event will be held at St Pauls and St Georges Church, at the end of January- Robbie Burns Theme! partly because they have already very successfully held a n event to welcome Syrian Refugees. Future events will take place in different venues, including our own, hopefully.

Wendy Pearson



NOTES FROM THE CHOIR

Organists and Music for December

Philip Rossiter will play every Sunday this month

Sunday 4 am	From the Rising of the sun	Gore Ousley
Sunday 4 pm	Said Service	
Sunday 11	Never weather beaten sail	Charles Wood
Sunday 18 am	Gabriel's Message	Old Basque Noel
Sunday 18 pm	Nine Lessons & Carols	

Please note that the Nine Lessons and Carols will contain some anthem settings sung by the choir alone, whereas Christmas Eve at Midnight and Christmas morning will be traditional congregational carols for all to join in. **If you would like to sing with the choir at the Nine Lessons (especially if you are an alto or a bass) please do come to choir practice on 1st December at 6.00pm and on 8th & 15th at 7.30pm.**

Donald Mackintosh

HELP NEEDED

There is a need for additional volunteers to help with the sound system on Sunday mornings. If you would like to help please contact Gordon McMurray

I would be most grateful to any man or woman who would be prepared to volunteer for Coffee duty. We have lost eight ladies from the rota in the past two years and have only been able to attract three new volunteers. I am reluctant to ask the present volunteers to take on further Coffee rota duties as many of them already have other commitments within the Church. This is not an onerous job and only requires you to be available on eight days every year, if we have a full complement. If the date you are given does not suit it is very easy to swap with someone else. I hope you will give this request your serious consideration.

Mary Dale

CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 2016

YEAR A

1st Thursday 2.30pm The Thursday Service

Sunday 4th – Second Sunday of Advent

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Sung Eucharist

7th Wednesday 10.30am Holy Communion

4.00pm The St Raphael's Prayer Group

8th Thursday 2.30pm The Thursday Service

Sunday 11th – Third Sunday of Advent

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Sung Eucharist followed by the
Annual General Meeting

13th Tuesday 7.30pm Vestry

14th Wednesday 10.30am Holy Communion

2.00pm Service at Cairdene

3.00pm Service at Thorburn Manor

15th Thursday 2.30pm The Thursday Service

Sunday 18th – Fourth Sunday of Advent

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Sung Eucharist

06.00pm Nine lessons and Carols

21st Wednesday 10.30am Holy Communion

22nd Thursday 2.00pm The Thursday Service followed
by Christmas tea

24th Saturday 4.30pm The Crib Service

11.30pm Midnight Eucharist

Sunday 25th – Christmas Day

10.30am Christmas Service

28th Wednesday 10.30am Holy Communion

29th Thursday 2.30pm The Thursday Service

CALENDAR FOR JANUARY 2017

YEAR A

Sunday 1st		The Naming of Jesus	
		8.30am	Holy Communion
		10.30am	Sung Eucharist
4 th	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion
		4.00pm	The St Raphael's Prayer Group
5 th	Thursday	2.30pm	The Thursday Service

Sunday 8th – Epiphany

		8.30am	Holy Communion
		10.30am	Sung Eucharist
10 th	Tuesday	7.30pm	Vestry
11 th	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion
		2.00pm	Service at Cairdene
		3.00pm	Service at Thorburn Manor
12 th	Thursday	2.30pm	The Thursday Service

Sunday 15th – Epiphany 2

		8.30am	Holy Communion
		10.30am	Sung Eucharist
18 th	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion
19 th	Thursday	2.30pm	The Thursday Service

Sunday 22nd – Epiphany 3

		8.30am	Holy Communion
		10.30am	Sung Eucharist
25 th	Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion
26 th	Thursday	2.30pm	The Thursday Service

Sunday 29th – Epiphany 4

		8.30am	Holy Communion
		10.30am	Sung Eucharist

READINGS FOR DECEMBER 2016

Year A

Sunday 4th – Second Sunday of Advent

First Reading Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Second Reading Romans 15:4-13
Gospel Matthew 3:1-12

Sunday 11th – Third Sunday of Advent

First Reading Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm Luke 1: 46-55
Second Reading James 5:7-10
Gospel Matthew 11:2-11

Sunday 18th – Fourth Sunday of Advent

First Reading Isaiah 7:10-16
Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18
Second Reading Romans 1:1-7
Gospel Matthew 1:18-25

Saturday 24th – Christmas Eve

First Reading Isaiah 52: 7-10
Psalm 98
Second Reading Hebrews 1: 1-12
Gospel John 1: 1-14

Sunday 25th – Christmas Day

First Reading Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Second Reading Titus 2:11-14
Gospel Luke 2:1-14

READINGS FOR JANUARY 2017

Year A

Sunday 1st – The Naming of Jesus

First Reading Numbers 6:22-27
Psalm 8
Second Reading Philippians 2:5-11
Gospel Luke 2:15-21

Sunday 8th – Epiphany

First Reading Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Second Reading Ephesians 3:1-12
Gospel Matthew 2:1-12

Sunday 15th – Epiphany 2

First Reading Isaiah 49:1-7
Psalm 40:1-11
Second Reading 1 Corinthians 1:1-9
Gospel John 1:29-42

Sunday 22nd – Epiphany 3

First Reading Isaiah 9:1-4
Psalm 27:1, 5-13
Second Reading 1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Gospel Matthew 4:12-23

Sunday 29th – Epiphany 4

First Reading Micah 6:1-8
Psalm 15
Second Reading 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Gospel Matthew 5:1-12

FLOWER ARRANGERS' NEWS

December and January Flowers

During Advent there will be no flowers in church, other than those in the Advent wreath. Christmas Eve however, will see a flurry of ladies decorating the window sills, and arranging the pedestals in preparation for Christmas Day. In spite of this being an extremely busy time of year for everyone, the atmosphere in church on the morning of 24 December is always buzzing with excitement. There is chatter about family visits and anticipation of a day to be spent with family and friends.

If you would like to help with the decorating, the preparation of the oases, making coffee for the florists, or by watering the flowers during the week, please let me know.

Margaret Holmes

FOOD BANK

PLEASE NOTE

In **January** we will be making our collection for the **FOOD BANK** on **Sunday 8th**
NOT Sunday 1st

A BREW AND A BLETHER

Please join us in

St Cuthbert's Church Hall,

between 2-4 pm on

Saturday 3 December

**and be entertained by our own young
people**

**The first meeting of 2017 will be on
Saturday 7 January 2017**

Burns Supper

Saturday January 28

Supper by Haddows Catering

Entertainment by friends

**More information to follow in the
Pew Sheet**

SHALOM – In the presence of God

Light in the Darkness

Evening Prayers for Advent

The Lady Chapel, 6.30-7pm

Thursdays in December,

1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd

To mark the season of Advent these four short weekly services will follow an informal Celtic Liturgy for evening prayers, using appropriate readings.

Please note that we are meeting just before Choir Practice except on the 1st, when we will meet at the slightly later time of 7pm as Choir are meeting earlier that week.

For more information please contact Wendy Pearson

We will meet again in the New Year on Saturday 28th January, in The Lady Chapel at 10am. Sarah Donaldson will offer us seasonal reflections.

All are welcome to join us.

Enjoy coffee and cakes afterwards!

Shalom seeks to provide a 'sacred space';

A space to reflect, pray;

A space to find peace, stillness and refreshment.

Wendy Pearson and Jean Myers

THE OPEN FORUM

The Open Forum meets on the First Sunday of each month
at 9.15am in the Church Meeting Room.

WESTGARTH WALKERS

Dates for your Diary:

Sunday 11 December I have booked the Spylaw Tavern for 13 of us, however if any others would care to join us please let me know asap and I will contact the Spylaw. The cost is £17.95 and everyone is welcome.

Please note that because of the AGM the lunch will be at 1245

May I take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported us in this past year and wishing everyone at St Cuthbert's a very Merry Christmas and a Happy 2017

June & George Bungay

PHOENIX GROUP

Our CHRISTMAS LUNCH will be served at 12.30pm on Wednesday the 14th December at the Royal Scots Club in Abercromby Place. All women in the congregation are very welcome to join us. The 3 course lunch with coffee and tea and mince pies, served in a private room, will cost £28 which includes a small gratuity. Those who wish to do so are welcome to meet earlier in the lounge bar downstairs, where drinks can be bought. Drinks can also be bought upstairs with lunch.

The Club has been an ideal venue for this popular event in the last few years.

Please contact Jean Myers or myself if you would like to come along and let us have your deposit of £10 as soon as possible. If you decide you wish to join us, please just ask Jean or myself, as there may still be places. We also require to pre-order nearer the time.

Margaret Kieran

THE LEPROSY MISSION SCOTLAND TLMS NEWS

I sent a cheque to TLMS on your behalf for £320 at the end of October. This included all the donations from the Blue Boxes collected over recent months. So thank you all very much.

Did you see the Autumn Watch programmes a couple of weeks ago about Red Squirrels carrying the Leprosy virus? It was discovered in Scottish Red Squirrels about two years ago and is now found in Red Squirrels across the UK. At present, a small group of scientists on Brownsee Island, in Poole harbour, are studying the colony there and monitoring them. Lesions have been found on ears and muzzles. Unlike for people affected by Leprosy, for whom there is multi drug therapy, the squirrels are not given any treatment, just checked and observed.

Please don't worry about catching Leprosy from Red Squirrels, as 95% of us have a natural immunity in the UK. It is sad however that these lovely animals, native to the UK and decimated by the loss of habitat and Grey Squirrel invasion, should have another threat to their continued existence.

Barbara Tatlock

CHRISTIAN AID

After a most enjoyable Festive Wine tasting Evening last night, I am delighted to report that we raised more than £400 which is a fantastic total. Thank you so much to everyone who came along! Majestic Wines certainly know how to choose an excellent selection for us to 'sip the night away' with! The event was expertly organised by Patricia Brignall- a big thank you to her!

Our next event will be the annual Carol Singing round Bonaly on Monday 19th December. This is a really lovely way to start Christmas Week and I know the residents of that part of Colinton really appreciate the festive music. We will meet at the junction where Bonaly Rise, Grove and Crescent meet, at 7PM. Once again Megan will expertly lead us and we will be finished by 8pm. Please come and join us- wrap up warm and bring a head torch!

Into the New Year and your local committee will be organising various events, some ever popular, like the quiz Night, and some new ideas. We always welcome new folk so if you have some spare time and would like to get more involved, please contact one of the committee:

Patricia Brignall, Wendy Pearson, Margaret Temple or Jean Wood.

Christmas Appeal

This Christmas, Christian Aid will focus on the plight of the world's refugees. With over 65 million of them, the need is great. *'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it'* Jesus, light of the world, bring comfort to those in need of it, be a beacon where hope is in short supply. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.

LONE WORKER POLICY

On being advised that it was important to have a policy to give guidelines to those, both paid and volunteering, in the congregation who are likely to be alone in the course of their activities, there is now a Lone Worker Policy. This has been seen and approved by our Interim Pastor.

Copies will be available on the church notice boards in the hall and at the back of the church. If you are to be on your own at any time on a church activity it is important that you read these guidelines.

Joan Smith

**ST CUTHBERT'S AGM
SUNDAY 11 DECEMBER
AFTER 1030 SERVICE**

**NOMINATION SHEETS FOR VESTRY. LAY
REPRESENTATIVE AND ALTERNATE LAY
REPRESENTATIVE ARE AT THE BACK OF
THE CHURCH**

THE SIGN

There are still temporary arrangements in place for producing the SIGN and a special thanks goes to Elspeth Miller and John Peacock for giving extra time to ensure it is printed and distributed as usual.

Thank you also to everyone who is continuing to provide content about activities and events and of course the ongoing rotas.

Some interest has been shown in the possibility of an editorial team but we still need to find some who would like to gather and collate articles and information, and lead the team. If you think this is a task you would enjoy please speak to one of the wardens.

THE SIGN Subscriptions

Forms for renewal of The Sign subscription are with this edition

The annual subscription for THE SIGN is £10, £16 if you want THE SIGN posted to you, and £10 for the new magazine “Inspires” – the successor to “The Scottish Episcopalian”. Cheques should be made payable to St Cuthbert’s Church and handed in or sent to The Rectory, 6 Westgarth Avenue, Edinburgh EH13 0BD. Thanks to all our regular subscribers. We value your support.

St Cuthbert’s Episcopal Church

Westgarth Avenue, Colinton, Edinburgh EH13 0BD

Phone/Fax: 0131-441 7580

E Mail: stcuthbertscurate@gmail.com

Website: www.stcuthbertscolinton.org.uk

Usual Sunday Services

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Sung Eucharist

A sung service, with sermon

Children & Young People during term-time

Mattins on occasion (see notices)

6.00pm Evensong

On the first Sunday of each month

Weekday Services

Wednesdays

10.30am Holy Communion followed by coffee

Thursdays

2.30pm The Thursday Service

A short Ecumenical service designed with elderly people in mind. Followed by tea.