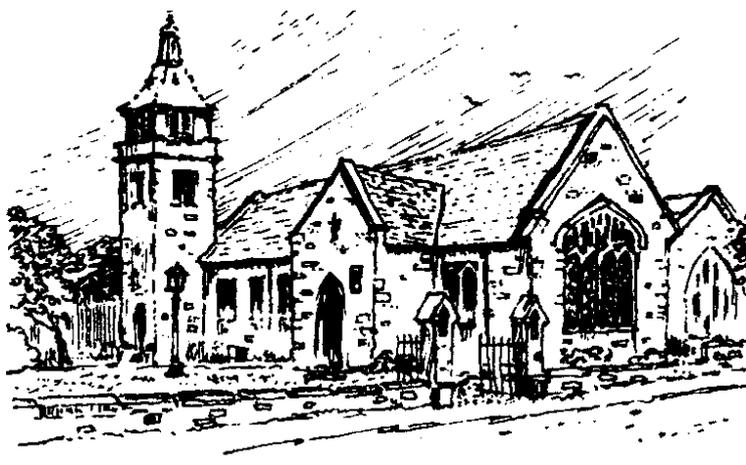


Annual Reports

2021



St. Cuthbert's

Scottish Episcopal Church

COVID-19

Rector's Report

**Revd Nicki McNelly will give her report at the AGM on
Sunday 21 November 2021**

St Cuthbert's Reports:

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Badminton Club

Owing to COVID-19 restrictions, as the Church Hall was not available, the 2020 session was cancelled.

Archie Clark

Choir

Writing this report in October 2021, the picture for the choir is a much more positive one than was the case a year ago, but we are still some distance from a complete return to “normal”. The monthly choir newsletter, referred to in last year’s report, continued until last June, which kept choir members in touch with each other, and more elaborate publications were timed to coincide with Christmas and Easter. As before, we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Caroline Seville and Archie Clark for all the hard work which they put into this project. All choir members felt the lack of singing in their lives particularly strongly at Christmas and Easter, so the special newsletters produced at these times were greatly appreciated by all.

Having missed the singing of carols at Christmas, another lockdown followed, and for the second year running, Holy Week and Easter were again casualties of the restrictions, although services without singing were able to resume in time for Easter. From the start of July, we were able include a little singing in our Sunday and Wednesday services, involving a soloist: I am extremely grateful to Donald Mackintosh for taking this on for a couple of weeks each month – it really did make a difference to our services.

Further relaxation of restrictions followed in August, enabling congregational hymn singing to restart, wearing masks, led by a quartet of choir members: again, I am most grateful to everyone for so willingly taking their turn on the rota for both Sunday and Wednesday services. This really gave a “lift”, to our services, and even seemed a little strange at first, after such a long period without communal singing. September saw the return of the full choir, wearing masks to sing. At this point, in addition to the hymns, we returned to singing the Gloria and an anthem during the administration of communion. On Harvest Festival Sunday, we returned to having a full sung eucharist – truly, a real service of thanksgiving.

However, we are still some way off from the return of “normality”. Singing in masks behind perspex screens is far from easy and not altogether a rewarding experience. We have therefore decided to wait to reintroduce the singing of a psalm between the first two readings and a hymn after the anthem during communion until the need to wear masks is removed. It is also important to choose anthems carefully whilst masks have to be worn. However, all choir members are undoubtedly pleased to be singing again.

As ever, the choir continues to need to attract some new recruits, even on a limited / special occasion basis, despite the fact that we have recently had a couple of new / returning members. At present, our only rehearsal is at 9.45am on a Sunday morning, when I would be pleased to welcome singers who could help with our Advent and Christmas carol services, without the need to commit on a

weekly basis. Please let me know if you are willing to help to maintain the choral contributions which play an important role in the services in St Cuthbert's.

Philip Rossiter

Christian Aid

The past year has been difficult, as is the case for many charities. We were not able to do our Christmas Carol-Singing, but through the wonders of technology (and Marie's ability to understand it) and Wendy's equally wonderful organisational skills, we had an amazing Quiz Night on Zoom. As a result we raised just over £750.

Christian Aid Week was, like most things, different this year: envelopes delivered, but not collected, + a JustGiving page. We raised just over £5,000.

In August we were asked by Christian Aid to help fund a new Community Partnership in Bangladesh. The Committee has agreed to raise £5,000 over 3 years. This will be match-funded 5:1 by the EU, thus raising in total £30,000.

The Colinton Christian Aid Committee is made up of volunteers from the two churches, the Parish Church and our own. Two people have recently resigned: one has moved away from Edinburgh, the other has worked tirelessly for Christian Aid for about 30 years, and deserves a rest.

We are recruiting! Come and join us (from St Cuthbert's you will know Wendy Pearson, Margaret Temple, Jean Wood and Patricia Brignall).

Patricia Brignall

Eco Congregation: Engaging with Nature for the future

I am writing this on the first day of the much-heralded UN 'COP 26' Climate Change conference in Glasgow. In the past year leading up to it the amount of discussion and news about climate change and the environment has been huge.

This was clear from the many topics highlighted in Eco Congregation online workshops and zoom meetings as the organisation has stepped up to the challenge. Issues highlighted have included divestment from fossil fuels, Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES) of the Scottish Government, greener travel, air pollution, 'Love food, Hate waste' and new clothes. Hence I am delighted that St Cuthbert's now has an Eco Group, comprising Caroline, Beverley, Julia and myself, with assistance from Marie, which met for the first time on 27 October. The group is looking into applying for the Silver Eco Award, and has several ideas for initiatives at St Cuthbert's. It is all about doing what we can, individually, in our families, our communities and in the Church. One of the first things may be a check sheet for us all to fill in and share about what we are doing for the planet already.

Early in 2021 the church was not open but the youth group, through zoom meetings, we began thinking about the things we can do to reduce global warming. Caroline planned a Climate Sunday service in June looking at the environment locally and globally. The young people highlighted important environmental issues and things that we can do to reduce, reuse and recycle.

For the first session back with the Sunday School on the Sunday after Ascension we had a special visit from Bishop John who blessed the bee house which we have sited in the garden by the wildflower area. Hopefully some bees and bugs will use it over the winter! A next step would be to plant more flowers and plants favoured by bees, butterflies and other pollinators, making the church garden part of a national network of varied habitat.

During Lent Caroline sent out a weekly video link to the young people with a prayer and Bible reference on the topics Light and Energy; Water; Land and Plants, Stars and Seasons; Creatures of the Sea and Sky; Humans and Other Animals. Further inspiration came from Creation Tide in church during September and October when we had a special green order of service celebrating 'Creation and God's Wonderful World'. Also in the Sunday School we made an image of the Earth for the wall display and added animals and people after listening to the Godly Play story of Creation.

Having so many ideas to follow up, and help available to put into action the need for change in our own lives, through this lead of Eco Congregation is heartening and hopeful.

I finish with a quote (anonymous) which I came upon by chance on the back of a Craigmillar Festival booklet from 2004:

*we either
re-act in fear or anger
to the state of the world,
thus becoming part of the problem,
or respond creatively
and be part of the solution.*

Kay Dalley

Flowers

I am sure that we all enjoy seeing the church decorated with flowers and we are very fortunate at St Cuthbert's to have such a talented Court of Flower Fairies who work their magic almost every week of the year.

But I am especially grateful to Diana and Christine who plan, design and go to the flower market to purchase flowers for their pedestal arrangements, not only for festivals, but for weddings and special occasions.

If you would like the opportunity to release your hidden talents in floral artistry, to emulate Constance Spry or Sarah Horn and to join this happy throng, please let me know, you would be made most welcome.

Our next gathering will be on the morning of Christmas Eve when the church will be a hive of activity.

Alternatively, if you would like to do an arrangement on a date which is particularly significant to you, just add your name to the rota at the back of the church.

Margaret Holmes

Foodbank

This has been the ninth year we have supported this Foodbank in Wester Hailes. Despite all the Covid 19 restrictions they managed to keep supplying food to growing numbers of people in food poverty.

Every month, Patricia Brignall and I collect cash from anyone who wished to contribute. Because of the generosity of members of the congregation the total amount we were able to transfer to the Foodbank account over the year was £2,750.

Patricia and I plan to go on collecting money, rather than food, for this Foodbank.

If you would like more information, about supporting, this outreach project of ours, please contact me.

Susan Clark

Garden Team

This has been a great year for Edinburgh gardens due to long sunny periods and warmth after a fairly hard winter. The church garden has responded well and is rarely without some colour.

There have been three significant events over the last year. We have gained three new volunteers to join our group which has been a great help in making the workload more manageable. After a long slow process lasting several years we have finally cleared all the overgrown footpaths behind the church and hall, and they are now covered by a good layer of Red Lanark gravel which will make maintenance much easier. The principal church lawnmower which has

given sterling service over many years and despite Ross Addison's skilled running repairs has finally bit the dust. It has been replaced by a much lighter model, so though petrol consumption will be reduced, the striping of the lawn may be less distinct.

My sincere thanks go to Ross Addison, Vivien Bremner, Nick Brignall, George Bungay, Susan Clark, Mary Dale, Margaret Holmes, and Caroline Seville who have all contributed greatly to keeping our grounds attractive.

Bryan Dale

Lay Representative

Since the last AGM there have been three meetings via Zoom of Edinburgh South Area Council (ESAC). In addition to St Cuthbert's ESAC comprises Christ Church Morningside, St Fillan's Buckstone, St Matthew's Roslin, St Michael and All Saints Tollcross, St John's West End and the joint charges of St James' Penicuik and St Mungo's West Linton. Each of the seven Diocese in the Scottish Episcopal is divided into a number of Area Councils that meet three times a year to discuss matters of common concern. These meetings usually occur shortly before the spring and autumn Diocesan Synods and in the summer before the General Synod which is a gathering of representatives from the seven diocese.

Area Council meetings focus on the main agenda items of upcoming Synods and a rich variety of experience and views are shared. As Lay Representative of St Cuthbert's I come

away feeling that I have learnt so much from others and hope that I make a meaningful contribution to the shared dialogue. February's meeting focused on the main agenda item at the forthcoming Diocesan Synod in March; the proposed changes to Canon 4 which concerns the election of bishops. Two options for change being proposed. Option 1 would offer a significant revision of the present Canon but would retain the Electoral Synod as the key decision-making body. Option two would be to replace the Electoral Synod with an Electoral Council.

Discussion was energetic and diverse with a number of key concerns emerging with regards to the current process of selection. Overall SEAC favoured option 1 (retaining the current system in a more simplified form) with a significant minority supporting option two; the meeting was informed that any church member from any Diocese could make a nomination with the agreement of the nominee. Many of those present were not aware of this and raised the question of how widely this knowledge was available amongst church members.

Openness in all aspects of the electoral process emerged as key along with kindness and courtesy being evidenced in all aspects, whilst highlighting the importance of confidentiality. Our attention was drawn to the importance of 'prayerful discernment and careful listening for the guiding voice of the Holy Spirit' (Canon 4). Selection a bishop is not an ordinary process of application for a position and the Holy Spirit might be calling someone who could be seen as the least suitable nominee and equally failure to appoint does not display a

failure in the Holy Spirit. I was pleased to present the reflections of SEAC at the Diocesan Synod which overall favoured retaining the current practice of Electoral Synod as the key decision-making body in the election of bishops. This view was taken forward to the General Synod meeting.

Other priority areas for consideration have included the challenge for churches of becoming Carbon Neutral by 2030 and the urgency of working collectively across the Diocese in considering realistic priorities. In closing I would like to add the value at ESAC meetings of the sharing of news from the charges which highlights the importance of maintaining a focus on the ordinary daily life of the church with its joys and challenges.

Margaret Temple

Leprosy Mission Scotland

We have continued our support of the work of TLMS throughout the year. I have sent cheques from the accumulated contributions from the Blue Tubs and donations for £375. The work of The Leprosy Mission is ongoing. Thank you to everyone who has supported this cause and hopefully will continue to do so in the coming year.

Barbara Tatlock

Open Forum

Since Open Forum has not met since February 2020 there is nothing to report.

Pastoral Visitors

The telephone ministry team continued their support to those in need, but other members who did not live alone, had family support, or informed us that the contact was no longer required were removed from the contact list. This released the telephone ministry team to focus on those in need. Home visits and Home Communion were also restarted when restrictions allowed.

I thank all those who have offered me support in caring for our congregation in the second year of Covid restrictions and the concerns and difficulties it has brought.

Revd Nicki McNelly

People's Warden

I am sure that we are all pleased that we are beginning to return to the normality that was pre-pandemic.

It is lovely to be able to meet and chat over coffee, with no concern over distancing and hopefully, this will continue.

This is also the time for me to step down from the role I have held on and off since 2007, through two interregna and during the tenure of four Rectors.

Most of that time has been interesting, occasionally challenging, sometimes frustrating but always with the knowledge that the congregation were supportive.

There have been picnics in the garden, a WW1 street party, Doors Open Days, Burns Suppers and charabanc outings for afternoon teas. But, none of these social events could have been attempted without the support and commitment of the Catering Crew of Hilary, Susan, Judith, Joan, Christine and Mary.

Nor would I have been able to do it without the unstinting support and practical help of Robin. He has willingly set up tables, watered flowers and, when I couldn't sleep at 2 am on Christmas morning, worrying that the candles had not all been extinguished, taken me to church at check all was well.

I must also thank Martin who has been Rector's Warden throughout most of that time. I will always be grateful for his knowledge of the workings of the Episcopal church, for his patience and support, and his sound, considered advice when I thought some problems were insurmountable. It was reassuring to know that his help was only a phone call away. I would like to thank you all for your support.

Margaret Holmes

Phoenix Group

We are delighted to say that 14 of us enjoyed a lovely lunch at Osteria Dei Saponi in Colinton at the end of October this year. The food was delicious and the staff were very welcoming and, as always, it was a very friendly and convivial occasion.

It was all the more special in that it was our first such get-together since our Christmas Lunch in December 2019. Thinking of that occasion and many more, we remember fondly Diana Kinnear, Inez Mephram, Helen Sealey and Carol Tyler who were very valued members of our group and are much missed.

Our next event is our Christmas Lunch at Dantes in Colinton on Thursday 9 December. We would welcome ideas and suggestions for future gatherings and events for the year ahead.

Margaret Kieran, Jean Myers and Margaret Temple

Property Group

Property Group comprises: Martin Fairley (Chair), Ross Addison, Iain McNelly and Margaret Holmes (People's Warden)

The Church is very grateful for their assistance. If any issues are found please enter them in the property books in the church or email – stcuthbertsprop1@gmail.com

Thanks are due to Martin for his chairmanship and direction, to Iain and Ross who undertake small repairs throughout the church and extended to Marie (Church Administrator) for her continued assistance in organising and overseeing most of the annual inspections.

The work undertaken over the past year mainly results from the Quinquennial report.

Inspections of the church and rectory roofs have been completed. Church roof minor repairs were completed. Tower lightning conductor repaired/replaced. Two significant areas of work have been identified on the rectory roof/windows and this work is scheduled to commence shortly.

Work has been identified for the Rectory walls but this will require discussion with the adjoining neighbours to participate in a scheme of repair. It has also been delayed by the stonemason failing to submit a report for that and also the church walls. It appears a new stonemason will need to be instructed.

Rectory interior –Ground floor lino has been replaced throughout removing trip hazards caused by loose fitting and ripped lino.

Defibrillator - Canon 35 application approved by Diocese with caveats about installation. Sykes have been approached to do installation.

Noticeboards – A new noticeboard was erected to the front of the church grounds.

Rectory Windows – Work is ongoing to refurbish glass panes with double glazing and to fix all sash windows. At the moment it is about 30% complete.

Electric contractor (Sykes) has completed inspection of Rectory. Two minor safety issues were identified which will be resolved shortly.

Hall Door lock replaced due to wear and tear.

Church water supply tested for Legionella. No issues found.

Church organ – an asbestos inspection has been completed.

All the regular testing and maintenance of equipment has been carried out.

Property Committee

R&R

**From Isaiah 30, "In returning and rest you shall be saved;
In quietness and in trust shall be your strength."**

Between 6 and 10 of us have continued to meet weekly on Zoom over the past year. We have found our time of reflective prayer, stillness and sharing both enriching and calming in these strange and often isolating times. It is wonderful to see how "connected" we feel, with one another and very much in The Presence of God, despite meeting online. We used two books, "Art in Advent" and "Rooted in Love" as a focus for the seasons leading up to Christmas and Easter.

We loosely follow the Ignatian spirituality tradition, with our leaders coming from different denominations but all being trained through The Epiphany Group. It has been particularly good to see new faces this year as we continue our journey together. All are made most welcome.

Wendy Pearson

Sacristans

Like so many aspects of life in our community attending to Sacristan duties has not been as normal since the last report.

We began the year with churches once again closed and it was not until Easter that regular services restarted and there was a need to supply, prepare and look after all the requirements for these services. Numbers in church were still of course restricted as was access for all but essential people into the Vestry. I continued to receive little bags of laundry, kept supplies up to date as required and helped with changing of linen and frontals.

From October I have also been beginning to help with clearing and cleaning after the Sunday service. Each little change a small indication of a step forwards in opening up. So not a lot to report this year but these behind these scenes tasks go on and hopefully there will be even more to do in the year to come.

Joan Smith

Safeguarding

Safeguarding has mainly been focused on Church services to ensure that all SEC and Scottish Government guidelines have been observed. To comply additional safeguarding information is now also on display in the church porch as well as in the hall.

The current advice from the SEC Advisory Group is that they are still urging to proceed with caution as Face Coverings continue to be a legal requirement. Churches should assess the level of risk in their own context as some may wish to continue with restrictions.

Churches should ensure good ventilation, cleanliness, the disinfection of 'hand touch points' and engagement of NHS Test and Protect, all of which St Cuthbert's has followed.

I would like to thank all those who have been responsible for carrying out these requirements in keeping St. Cuthbert's safe, and to the members of the congregation for complying with the regulations.

I shall shortly be invited to attend a vestry meeting to answer any questions regarding safeguarding. A copy of this report will be sent to the Diocesan Protection Officer.

Christine Nimmo

St Raphael's Prayer Group

St Raphael's is a small group who meet on the first Wednesday of every month at four o'clock in the church. We pray for the sick and all those who need our prayers, provided permission has been granted. Despite the adverse conditions throughout COVID, we have continued successfully with zoom meetings.

If anyone would be interested in joining us, please contact me.

Judith Mackintosh

'The Sign' (Church Magazine)

We have published an uninterrupted year of 'The Sign' magazine this year! The months of December & January and July & August are double issues.

Each month, hard copies are sent to those who have subscribed for a paper version, and it is also sent by email to our online members and others – currently 127 email addresses. There are various internet 'links' printed in each issue, and 'clicking' on a link directly connects to the page of interest. The Sign can also be viewed on our Website, and is offered to any visitors to St Cuthbert's.

The Sign continues to inform us of forthcoming services in church, Covid Updates, 'events', duties, and any other information to keep the St Cuthbert's community connected.

Thank you for your contributions and continued support.

Marie Neil

Verandah Café and Boutique

The cafe opened in 1973, and one of the founding members was Norma Beilby from St Cuthbert's. Sadly the cafe and boutique closed formally at the end of March 2021 though, of course, it had, in fact been closed for almost a year. While Covid-19 hastened its end we had been struggling for several years to find sufficient volunteers to keep going and numbers using the cafe had been falling. St Cuthbert volunteers have covered Thursday afternoons from the beginning. Over the years money from the cafe and boutique has been given to the wards (up to £10,000 pa) and has funded a wide range of activities: football kits for the hospital patients' team, basic literacy courses for patients going back into the community, art and craft materials, emergency toiletry kits, visits to Fringe Festival shows, breakfasts out in Morningside, and many more. The end of our work will be a loss, not only to the wards who greatly appreciated the money in a stretched NHS system with nothing to spare for extras, but also to the volunteers who enjoyed meeting the customers and also getting to know fellow volunteers better.

Perhaps some time in the future another group of people will find another way of reaching out to help the patients of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital.

I would like to thank all those in St Cuthbert's who have volunteered over the years. Thank you for your support.

Hilary Pritchard

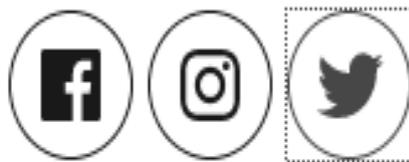
Website

In the year to 31st August 2021 our website has been visited 2,873 times. Approximately 20% of the traffic on our website was in December. Three new items have been added to the Menu Bar namely, 'Services', 'Families' and 'Watch Our Space'. Marie has been keeping these Menus up to date.

Throughout this period the website has had a link to St. Cuthbert's weekly written Order of Service as well as a link to St. Cuthbert's YouTube Channel enabling people, who had the right technology, to watch the weekly Service online.

There have been updates on the latest Covid 19 restrictions as they have affected churches and the Pew Notes have had information about activities connected to the Church including Zoom meetings.

Remember St. Cuthbert's also has accounts with:



Susan Clark

Young People

The angels last Advent were a big success and lots of people saw them and scanned the QR code to access the content had been put up online. It was lovely to see some of the children from Colinton Primary posting about their finds online.

The first half of the year was difficult under lockdown restrictions and the majority of Sunday School disliked doing yet another class on zoom. When we came back in April we started doing Sunday School twice a month in person and spent a lot of time outside so the children did not have to be masked and it allowed us to look at the eco-issues as I was working with the Youth Group on this issue too. It was lovely to get the Bishop to come out and bless their Bee House. We had a wonderful Godly Play style outdoor service at the end of term which was fun. After the summer holidays, we were back full time in Church which was great and we have had a wonderful time with our Creation Project and look forward to doing more of these similar things in the future.

The Youth Group chose eco-issues in our January zoom meeting as their subject to look at over this year. We sent them away to look at specific things they wanted to look at and discuss. We used this as a basis of the service that the young people led in June. They put in a huge amount of work and it was a lovely thoughtful service. They also led one of the Compline Services during Holy Week which they enjoyed doing and I am looking forward to being able to work with them to do more similar things in the future.

On the 31st October, we had our Hallowe'en Light Party – this is the first family event I have had the opportunity to run and it was amazing to see so many families looking for things to do together. This would be an event I hope we can run every year given the attendance at this one. I look forward to being able to run other events over the next year and encourage these families to be a part of our Church family.

Caroline Daye

Dear Nicki,

As the ability to attend church increases, and we hope for more recognised ways of being able to worship being open to us, I wanted to take a moment to thank you for the superb support through the pandemic.

Since the first lockdown in March 2020, St Cuthbert's has provided a way for my mum and I to share a weekly service. The full text of the weekly service, hymns, readings, sermon and prayers kindly sent to her hard copy every single week, and to me by email has been a wonderfully kind action. We have been able to share this together every Sunday morning: what we thought would be a period of a few weeks has extended for such a long period, and yet you have never failed to provide us with the service sheet, giving us the ability to spend an hour each week sharing all the parts of the service other than communion. It has become a focus each week for us both, and I can honestly say such a really valuable part of the week. Mum does not let me change the time we take to pause and worship together each Sunday unless there is a very good reason for doing so!

In addition, your phone calls to Mum, the visits to her nursing home window while excluded from entry, making it possible for me to take her communion, and doing so yourself when possible has been a vital part of keeping mum going over these challenging months. The loss of some dear and close friends has been shared with you and comfort provided by your understanding and thoughtful prayer with her.

In what I know has been a very difficult period for the Church and rectors, I am so grateful for all the help and support provided and the manner in which you have sustained our worship and provided such food for thought over the period. I know you are kindly looking again at the possibility of getting mum back into the Church to share worship, but I would also hope that the new ways of worship that we have found through this period could be sustained as they have been so very valuable.

Thank you, and all at St Cuthbert's so much for the kind and unfailing support. We are so grateful to be part of your loving community.

Kind regards,
Pippa
(Philippa Snell)

www.stcuthbertscolinton.org.uk

Facebook: @stcuthbertscolinton

Instagram: stcuthbertscolinton

Twitter: @stcuthbertsSEC

YouTube: St Cuthbert's Scottish Episcopal Church