

Annual Reports

2024



St. Cuthbert's
Scottish Episcopal Church
Colinton

Rector's Report

**Revd Nicki McNelly will give her report at the AGM on
Sunday 24 November 2024**

St Cuthbert's Reports:

1. Badminton Club
2. Choir
3. Eco congregation
4. Events & Fundraising
5. Flowers
6. Foodbanks
7. Forget-Me-Notes
8. Garden Team
9. Lay Representative
10. Leprosy Mission Scotland
11. Pastoral Visitors
12. People's Warden
13. Phoenix Group
14. Property Group
15. R&R
16. Rector's Warden
17. Sacristans
18. Safeguarding
19. St Cuthbert's Playgroup
20. St Raphael's Prayer Group
21. Thursday Afternoon Service
22. The Sign
23. Website

Badminton Club

St Cuthbert's Badminton Club is a welcoming and inclusive club for all ages and abilities that meets for 2 hours on a Monday evening in the church hall. The atmosphere is one of friendly competition where we organise a rotation of doubles games throughout the evening with a short break for tea and biscuits about halfway through. Our playing season runs from late September until the week before Easter.

There are usually eight to thirteen players on any evening, and we are rotated by the nominated game organiser to play doubles throughout the evening enjoying friendly conversation between games.

The club continued throughout the 2023/2024 season with a healthy number of members comprising a small core of players from the church congregation who help to run the club, but with most players currently coming from outside of the congregation. Julia Roberts is Treasurer and Archie Clark who is now standing down from running the club has continued to carry out the communication and advertising role for this season. We advertise in local magazines each year to aim to maintain a healthy membership and this has meant several new people have ventured to join us at the start of the 2024 season.

The club provides a place for gentle exercise and friendly chat where there are caring friends if wanted. New players from the congregation would particularly be very welcome.

Julia Roberts

Choir

Over the past year, the choir has greatly benefitted from the addition of a small number of singers who are able to sing with us on a part-time basis. This has made an enormous difference, and we are very grateful for this additional support.

Over the past year, the choir has continued to rehearse every other week on a Wednesday at 12 noon, and at 9.45am on a Sunday. Despite small numbers, we have managed to add a few anthems to our fairly extensive repertoire, and have maintained the practice of singing an anthem at every service, except on a very small number of occasions. The selection of anthems, however, has to be made very carefully to allow for absentees. Overall, it has been astonishing that there have been very few services at which we have been unable to sing the anthem that has been planned.

As in previous years, apart from singing at the 10.30am service, the choir has played a leading role at the Advent and Christmas carol services and at the Good Friday service. Evensongs have taken place each month over the summer, with a full choral evensong taking place in June and at Harvest. The choral evensong which took place in June marked the Royal School of Church Music's *Music Sunday*, at which the hymns, psalm and anthem celebrated the role of music in our worship. Although the choir has been affiliated to the RSCM for many years, this was the first time that we have marked this occasion at St Cuthbert's.

My thanks go to all members of the choir for their committed and enthusiastic contribution to our activities, and to Andrew Matheson for deputising at the organ on my holiday Sundays.

Philip Rossiter

Eco Congregation: Engaging with Nature for the future

As an Eco congregation we have been quiescent this year, but that is not to say unaware of the wider need for thoughtful consideration of climate issues, and how St Cuthbert's does its part to improve on such things as energy usage, recycling and buildings efficiency.

The Eco congregation Scotland website (www.ecocongregationscotland.org) is a valuable resource to find out about what other churches (of all denominations) are engaged in, and gain ideas and inspiration, special events and study and worship resources.

Our Season of Creation just ended was very inspiring and Margaret has given insights in the Sign on observing the beauty of the world around us – surely the best affirmation for caring for it. On the Eco congregation website there are in addition short presentations for study. Rev. Prof. Gordon Graham gave a truly inspiring sermon on 15 September on a Christian's view of the general environmental concern all around us. It was affirming of our need for humility and trust in the fact that we cannot control Nature ultimately; we do have a special part in it all to do our best to care for the world around us; but that we have to be careful not to

overburden people with doom-laden messages which can have the negative effect of adding to depression and mental issues.

As to next year, we might consider the following:

- Continuing with tending the wildlife/meadow area
- Rebuilding a bug hotel
- Organise a discussion together of those involved in relevant activities to share information and ideas
- Support Eco congregation Scotland financially (they now have a 'crowd-funding' appeal on their website).

'Keep our trust and hope on God'

Kay Dalley

Events & Fundraising

It has been a busy year for the Events group who have built on well attended events from previous years and also tried some new things. Although not every occasion was solely about raising money all have given something to help church funds.

We started the year with the Bake Sale in March a great success and we repeated this in September with the addition of cards made specially for us by Christa. Thank you to everyone who donated the tasty bakes we could not do these sales without your support. These sales have been very popular so we might see more in the future. In April we had a Springtime Tea. Perhaps not quite so well attended as the previous tea, however it was much enjoyed by everyone.

May was our Walking Challenge. Some hardy hikers covered 100 miles and others, including some of the not quite so young members of the congregation, aimed for 10 or 30 miles. Thank you to everyone who walked and sponsored. With entry fees and sponsorship we raised a really good sum. We intend to repeat this challenge in 2025 and hope that more people will join in or sponsor walkers. The focus was then on the Welcome Weekend in July. This involved many people beyond those in the Events team. Thanks go especially to Megan for organising an entire morning of children's activities, to Margaret for the garden prayer walk, Wendy for reflective activities, Monique for sharing her experience of painting, Lana for her talk on Icons, Margaret Temple for stone painting, the Forget Me Notes team, the Ukulele band and Iain for the delicious Pimms. We are very grateful to all who volunteered on the days the church was open, this could not have taken place without you. We are now planning the Harvest Soup and Social Lunch and Evensong with wine. We have, over the spring and summer, had a couple of Soup and Social lunches and several Evensongs followed by wine and nibbles. We hope to put some more dates into the diary next year. The third Christmas Fayre will be on 30 November and already we have booked a number of stalls, some familiar and some new. We shall be asking for Tombola gifts again. Please support this special event in our calendar and bring a friend.

To close this year's events we plan to have a Christmas Tea on the afternoon of 14 December. In January we hope to be able to revive Burns Night in a slightly different way.

Thank you to all those who have supported and contributed to our events during the year, we hope that you have enjoyed them. We are always looking for new ideas so do speak to one of the group or think about joining us to help with planning.

**Judith Mackintosh, Joan Smith, Philip Rossiter,
George Bungay, Susan Leishman, Bev Henderson**

Flowers

There are flower arrangements in church almost every week of the year except during the periods of Lent and Advent.

Most of these beautiful displays will have been the work of Diana Hughes and Christine Nimmo. However, the Festivals of Easter, Harvest and Christmas are celebrated with lovely, brightly coloured arrangements on every windowsill and accessible flat surface, produced and provided by the Flower Fairies and hopefully enjoyed by the congregation.

If you would like to harness your inner Constance Spry and join the group, please let me know or if you would like to do an arrangement on a date significant and important to you, just pop your name on the rota - or join us in December to help decorate the church for Christmas - you would be most welcome.

Coffee and cakes provided!

Margaret Holmes

Foodbanks

Holy Trinity Foodbank:

We have supported this Wester Hailes Foodbank for over 12 years. A number of members of the congregation now make a direct payment to this Foodbank so that Gift Aid can be collected on their donations. However some people still prefer to give me cash to forward to them so I do that on a monthly basis. Do speak to me if you would like to know more. Last Autumn they put out an appeal for new toys so that foodbank clients were able to choose a gift for their child/children when they came to collect their food. Congregational Members responded generously and I was able to deliver almost 50 gifts: toys, books and games. At the beginning of the year Fiona Watson wrote:

'We would like to say thank you to the people of St. Cuthbert's for the most generous support given to the Holy Trinity Foodbank at Christmas and throughout the year. We truly could not do what we do without you'.

Susan Clark

St Salvador's Community Food Initiative:

To the Congregation of St Cuthbert's, Colinton:-
A word of thanks from everyone at St Salvador's Community Food Initiative for your gifts and donations. We are currently assisting around 80 people each week. This is something that we simply could not do without your support.

Ross Jesmont, Curate & Michael Pearson

Forget Me Notes

Two o'clock on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month has become a popular date for a sing song.

Two gentlemen visit us to play and sing traditional songs and hits, such as "Bing and Elvis". We all join in and enjoy forming a 'choir', sometimes as many as twenty of us. ALL ARE WELCOME.

After about an hour, we have tea and biscuits, and I would like to thank the ladies who provide our tea.

Donald Mackintosh

Garden Team

All successful gardens are a work in progress, and a happy group meet twice a month to tend our own grounds. We have had two new volunteers this year which brings our number up to eleven with a combined age in excess of 860! We have varied skills and can manage most horticultural requirements with the exception of tree surgery, which unfortunately is becoming a more frequent necessity due to the age of our trees and new diseases. Our witch elm has finally died and is about to be removed. Vacant spaces are being filled with floriferous shrubs.

My thanks are due to all in the gardening team.

Bryan Dale

Lay Representative

No report submitted at time of printing

Leprosy Mission Scotland

In the course of the last year THE LEPROSY MISSION SCOTLAND has joined with THE LEPROSY MISSION in England and Wales to become:

THE LEPROSY MISSION GREAT BRITAIN.

We have continued to support the work of TLM as ongoing research, to find a way to eradicate Leprosy from the world, still needs money to fund it.

Thank you for your continued support by filling the Blue Tubs with your loose change. It is amazing how this mounts up. Thank you also to members of St Cuthbert's who support TLM by giving donations.

I hope you will continue to support TLM in which ever way you can.

There is a monthly article in THE SIGN to keep you up to date with the latest news.

Barbara Tatlock

Pastoral Visitors

The pastoral visiting team comprises 12 members of the congregation, all of whom have been trained in safeguarding and have PVG certification. We complement the work of the ministry team.

Our role is to maintain contact with church members who may be housebound, in care homes or unable to attend church very often. We visit or keep in touch by phone and through listening, conversation and prayer keep the link with the church. Currently 24 people are on our visiting list. We always welcome news of other members of the congregation who would like a visit.

Hilary Pritchard on behalf of Rev Nicki McNelly

People's Warden

Let me start by saying, that to carry out my duties as a People's Warden, I have relied on the support and assistance of not only the members of the congregation, but also my fellow Vestry members, especially the Rev Nicki, Rev Margaret, Marie (Administrator), Martin (Treasurer), Robin (Book-keeper) and June (My Boss).

During the year, the Events and Fund-Raising Group, have had a number of successful and well attended events. Members of the Congregation have also played a massive part in the Fund Raising. Events included:

- CHRISTMAS FAYRE

This was held on the 25th November, 2023. This year's event is being held on Saturday 30th November, 2024, and we are looking forward to it be well attended by the congregation, their family and friends.

- VESTRY & MINISTRY TEAM TRAINING DAYS

The main Training Day was held on the 6th January, at St Cuthbert's, and was followed by a lovely meal. I also attended 2 other Vestry Training Days, which I found to be most helpful and informative.

- OPERATION UNICORN PRESENTATION

On Friday the 8th March 2024, Mr Tim Purves of Purves Funeral Directors, attended and gave a very interesting, and at times emotional talk, regarding the planned events, following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11, on Thursday afternoon 8th September 2022, at Balmoral. The talk was followed by wine and canopies.

- In addition, other events held included: Afternoon Teas, Cake and Card Sales, a Family Open Weekend, and, Soup and Social lunches

I would like to give a special mention, and huge thanks to our Treasurer Martin, and Bookkeeper Robin, who after many years of serving this congregation, are standing down from their important roles. I wish them well for the future.

I will close by saying that I am always willing to help where I can, and I look forward to serving as People's Warden throughout the coming year.

Thank you and God's Blessings.

George Bungay

Phoenix Group

The Phoenix Group continues to thrive and our events during the year since the last AGM have been very successful and well attended - some have been/are being repeated by popular request.

Our CHRISTMAS LUNCH at Kingsknowe Golf Club, last December, was most enjoyable with delicious food, helpful staff and much laughter, chat and exchange of life and other stories. The Golf Club was an ideal setting with 3 tables in a secluded section of the lounge bar with the green of the golf course as a very pleasant backdrop. We are going back to KGC again for our CHRISTMAS LUNCH this year on THURSDAY 12 DECEMBER and places may still be available.

We are very grateful to Caroline Seville for organising 2 FUN AFTERNOON QUIZZES in the church hall, one in February and one at the end of September. There were breaks for conversation with tea and cakes and a raffle for church funds. Caroline sets all the mainly straightforward questions herself and presides over the event in a very jolly and amusing way.

On a sunny day in May, 16 of us went on a very interesting Visit with a Guided Tour to ROSSLYN CHAPEL, followed by LUNCH at The Original Rosslyn Inn. It was very special to spend time in the Chapel itself and wander round the Visitor Centre and garden and the lunch was very good too.

In July, a group of 22 of us enjoyed every moment of a three and half hour round trip on the canal from RATHO on two boats with THE SEAGULL TRUST. It was a delightful outing and we are going to go again at the end of OCTOBER, when we hope to see some Autumn colours along the banks of the canal. The Seagull Trust provides such an excellent service to so many groups.

We welcome suggestions for future events and gatherings and we hope to have a new event next year - CROQUET on the MEADOWS suggested by Jean Wood, who regularly plays croquet there.

Margaret Kieran, Jean Myers, Margaret Temple

Property Group

Thanks are due to Ross for everything he does throughout the church grounds and to Marie for organising and overseeing the annual inspections.

Tod and Taylor carried out the Quinquennial Survey of the church property, and priority recommended work and repairs will be undertaken.

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

If you are able to assist with our property management requirements, in any way, please speak to Nicki.

Property

R&R

Since our inception in October 2018, following a 4 week prayer course organised by our Rector, Nicki, R&R has gently evolved into a regular space for prayer and reflection, mainly following Ignatian Spirituality. We have met weekly, in the South Transept, taking breaks over the festive season and summer months, and have tended to follow particular themed books to guide us during Advent and Lent. Initially facilitated by two members from St Cuthberts', we are now a team of four, only one of whom is a member of this church community.

Like everything, our ways of working shifted during the pandemic, and we all adjusted to meeting on Zoom very well during 2020-22... in fact we were quite amazed how easily a sacred space could be created online, with the presence of the Holy Spirit clearly felt. As Covid receded, we gradually started to meet Face to Face once a month, continuing online for the other weeks. For a season, our numbers became quite small- we sadly lost Margaret Cowan and Rosemary Yeoman, both very faithful members, and some others moved on. In consultation with our original group members, and with Nicki, we decided to open the group up

and advertise through The Epiphany Group, a Scottish - based Ignatian Spirituality network. From this, R&R has become very much an ecumenical group, and meeting regularly online has enabled the group to widen its membership- friends join us from various parts of the UK and even, occasionally, from overseas. Initially those not living in Edinburgh were unable to join our monthly Face to face gatherings, so for the first half of 2024 we experimented by offering a “hybrid gathering” in the south transept, once a month. This could not have been done without initially the wonderful help and support from our Administrator, Marie. With such patience and expertise, she helped set up the projector, laptop and screen, ensuring WI FI was working and all the technology came together effective. The first couple of meetings were really exciting, as our friends from Stonehaven, Elgin, Cambridge, London, to name just a few locations, could participate. However, things were not ideal, and we began to accept that trying to hold technology, group dynamics, sharing and reflection was not possible.

As we begin our gatherings once again after the summer break, our Face to Face meetings will occur every 6 weeks and only for those who can physically join us.

At the moment R&R has no capacity for additional members. There is a small waiting list. Please contact Wendy. The Epiphany group offers various courses that may be of interest to anyone looking for different ways of praying and deepening their relationship with God. Please take a look at the website. www.epiphanygroup.org.uk

Wendy Pearson

Rector's Warden

This year has been very challenging, with many changes throughout the year.

Many tasks had to be sorted out before the start of Nicki's sabbatical.

Our Events Team has been kept busy with bake sales, Springtime Tea and many others. Our Welcome Weekend in July took a lot of organising. May I take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers.

As most of us are aware, Martin and Robin stood down this year from their positions as Treasurer and Bookkeeper. Thank you both for all your hard work over the years.

I would also like to thank the Vestry for their support , especially over the months of the Sabbatical. Special thanks to Hilary and Jean who come off Vestry this year.

The months during Nicki's sabbatical have not been easy. I hope I have managed to carry out my responsibilities satisfactorily.

Finally, thank you so much to Marie for all your support and everything you do for us.

Judith Mackintosh

Sacristans

The job of sacristan goes on behind the scenes each week. There is regular laundry and preparation for Sunday services and making sure there are sufficient supplies of wafers, wine and candles. In addition over the summer this year I have had remember to remove and replace the cross and candlesticks from the altar while the church has been open during the day.

It has also been important, while Nicki has been on sabbatical, to ensure that any visiting clergy have what they require and know where everything is.

The new storage for frontals in the tower is much appreciated and makes changing seasonal colours so much easier and quicker.

As ever my thanks to Bev Henderson for stepping in to help when I cannot be there.

Joan Smith

Safeguarding

John Wyllie as head of Diocesan Safeguarding together with his assistant Daphne Audsley, ran various training sessions within the Diocese to which both Reverend Nicki and I attended.

There will be a change to the administration of the PVG scheme expected to be implemented by Disclosure Scotland

in 2025. This will mean that paper applications will no longer be processed, and everything will move towards online PVG applications. I expect to attend a training course at a later date.

All information regarding Safeguarding contact telephone numbers is on display both in the church hall and in the porch. Further information regarding safeguarding can be accessed from the diocesan web pages.

Christine Nimmo

St Cuthbert's Playgroup

The Toddler Group is run by the church as an outreach into our local community. It operates every Monday morning in term time in the church hall from 10-11.30am. I have now been running it for 16 months in a voluntary capacity with a rota of willing helpers (Margaret Temple, Christine Sanderson, Jean Wood, Julia Roberts Caroline Seville and Margaret Holmes) We arrive at 9.20am to get the toys out, set up the seasonal craft activity (Sand art, pipe cleaner octopuses, planting bulbs, leaf rubbing, pictures with pressed leaves, blow painting for fireworks, making an oasis of autumn flowers & herbs and printing poppies are just some of the craft this term) set out refreshments both for the adults and children. During the course of the session we talk to the carers and serve refreshments. I sit with the craft activity which is a great way to get to know the families. In the last 15 minutes I lead singing of nursery and action rhymes. After the families leave we put all the toys away

(they are very good at tidying up & placing them near the door for us) and wash up, finishing our duty at around 12 noon. We have grown in number over the year with around 30 families registered and a weekly attendance of between 12 to 20 families. There is a lovely atmosphere of companionship and support. The parents and carers really value the sessions and are appreciative of our hard work. At Christmas and Easter we link our art to the Bible stories and do trails around the church building and garden. We will have a Nativity dress up corner during advent.

Megan Emmerson

St Raphael's Prayer Group

Once a month, a small group of us meet to pray for the sick and needy in our congregation. This meeting is held in the church on the first Wednesday at approximately 1.15pm. Cards and flowers are sent out where appropriate.

Everything we discuss is confidential. Our numbers are rather low. If anyone would consider joining us, please contact myself or Nicki.

Judith Mackintosh

Thursday Afternoon Service

These monthly services, which take place at 2.30pm on the first Thursday of each month, continue to be an integral part of our pattern of worship at St. Cuthbert's. Our team - myself, Joan Smith and Caroline Seville - meet at regular intervals to plan our forthcoming services. Apart from Advent and Lent, when we share the leadership for these significant times in our liturgical calendar, each service is led by one of us, frequently with some input on the day from the other members of the team. Our services, which consist of reflections, readings, prayers and hymns, follow a different theme each month. The topics vary from seasonal offerings, such as Epiphany, Michaelmas or Creationtide, to considering saints, such as Paul, Dominic or Luke or a variety of spiritual subjects, including Pilgrimage, The Transfiguration, Jesus as a Child and Sayings and Stories from the Old Testament.

Everyone attending - which has included members of St. Fillan's since their vacancy and under their new leadership - is invited to take part in singing the hymns, joining in prayers and sometimes in short readings, though we would be delighted to have more congregational participation in the future. Each service is followed by refreshments and fellowship in the hall – an important part of gathering together. Although numbers attending are generally good, we did have a dip in the summer, due principally to holidays and unseasonably extremely inclement weather.

Please take this report as a very warm and firm invitation join us, if not each month, then whenever you are able, and please feel free to bring friends or members of your family – everyone is welcome.

Rev. Dr. Margaret McCrindle

'The Sign' (St Cuthbert's Church Magazine)

'The Sign' magazine, produced each month (double issues in December/January and July/August) continues to inform us of forthcoming services in church, duties, 'events', and any other information to keep the St Cuthbert's community connected. Paper copies are printed and distributed (some posted) to around 40 people, and around 120 'digital' copies are sent by email. I now upload a copy to the National Library of Scotland each month, and of course an archive copy is also filed. It has been a pleasure to publish this well-loved magazine each month.

Thank you for your contributions and continued support.

Marie Neil

Website (and Live-Streaming)

The St Cuthbert's website continues to provide updated information on church services, events and contact details.

www.stcuthbertscolinton.org.uk

St Cuthbert's also uses social media channels, Facebook and Instagram mainly, reaching further than just the website page. If you use social media, and see a post from St Cuthbert's, please 'like', 'share' or 'comment', as your feedback is much appreciated.

We have been unable to live-stream services continuously recently, as we have some technical issues with the cameras/wi-fi. The Harvest service in October was successfully recorded (with one or two interruptions), and we hope to have more services live-streamed in the future when the issues are resolved. If you or someone you know might be able to volunteer to help with this, please let me know! Of course, we also require volunteers control the live-streaming on the day of the service. It is actually quite easy to do – when it works! The services are then available to watch at any time, on our YouTube channel.

Marie Neil

www.stcuthbertscolinton.org.uk

Facebook: @stcuthbertscolinton

Instagram: stcuthbertscolinton

YouTube: St Cuthbert's Scottish Episcopal Church

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