

**THE PARISH
CHURCH OF
ST CUTHBERT EDINBURGH**



Church Magazine



December 2024/January 2025

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Front cover: An unusual view of St Cuthbert's from the air.

MINISTER'S LETTER



Dear Friends,

I write this as we approach the end of the liturgical church year which culminates in the celebration of the Feast of Christ the King.

Each Sunday when I lift up and present the offering plate, my eyes are drawn through the sharing hands of Christ on the alabaster Last Supper relief to his broken hands on the cross then up to his hands of blessing for the whole world.

We too are called to share, make sacrifices for and bless all those around us. The season of Advent draws these characteristics out of us as we blindly stumble around waiting to see how we will respond to the coming of the Christ Child.

‘Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.’

If we are to do God’s will here in our small part of the earth then it will only be by sharing His love, making sacrifices so that all may encounter it and ultimately by making this place and our lives within it a blessing for others.

May the Peace of the Christ Child be with you all.

Peter

FROM THE TOWER ROOM

Welcome to a bigger than usual edition of the Church Magazine.

Christmas may be looming and we detail all the services and events being in both St Cuthbert's and Greyfriars over the period, but the Magazine also looks back on three events recently held in the Church: the Edinburgh 900 Art Exhibition, Remembrance Day, where we paraphrase one of Peter's strands in that day's sermon, and we also reflect on the sermon preached by Rev Dr Fuller on Friends of St Cuthbert's Day.

Our aim of amassing 900 art exhibits was challenging, but in the end we well and truly smashed that target with over 1,000 items on display, and which saw over 1,000 visitors come through the doors to view them. Many thanks to Erin Mantle, for curating the show, to Martin Pearce for his work 'behind the scenes' and to the children of St Margaret's Saturday School who put on an amazing display of singing, poetry reading, piano playing and we even had a display of artistic gymnastics at the opening. Thanks also are due to members of St Cuthbert's who helped set up the displays and then returned the sanctuary to its Sunday best after the close.

We welcome Kirsten Kooy as our new Pastoral Assistant and that brings us neatly to the Congregational Lunch which takes place on Thursday 19th December immediately after the Community Carol Service (see page 11 and 13).

Though we are still many months away from the start of the spring/summer guiding season, we have an early appeal for new guides (see page 14).

Stewart Cowe

REPORTS FROM ST CUTHBERT'S

St Cuthbert's Bible Fellowship Group

The St Cuthbert's Bible Fellowship Group has been reviewing the lectionary readings before the Sunday services this "term" which has generated some interesting comments and much fellowship. It is often evident how in a group discussion even familiar readings spring something new to the individual, who had not given much thought to that verse before.

All are welcome to this fellowship group. You are sure of a warm welcome.

We had a guest speaker on 14th November, Derek McIntyre, who spoke about Jesus the Evidence. Derek was an agnostic. He has written a very readable booklet that gathers evidence from outwith the Bible, as well as the evidence from the scriptures. He has been giving presentations all around the UK for several years to agnostics and atheists, and has handed out over 5,000 booklets.

What makes his presentation and booklet fascinating to those who know the New Testament reasonably well, is the information he has gathered from outwith the New

Testament and the way he argues the circumstantial evidence case that also supports Jesus as the Son of God. Here are just a three gems of information that Derek has gathered.:

1. When the Gospels were first written, there were no chapters, verses, and punctuation. Chapters were introduced about 1,000 years ago, verses about 500 years ago, and punctuation after that – when printing was introduced. We have over 5,000 papyrus Gospel manuscripts, over 8,000 Latin manuscripts and over 8,000 Ethiopian, Coptic, Slavic, and Armenian Gospel manuscripts.
2. The Roman historians Josephus (93AD), Tacitus (115AD), Pliny the Younger (111AD) describe the early followers of Jesus. No serious Roman historian doubts that the historical Jesus existed.
3. Derek also considers alternative explanations such as Jesus was deluded and a con man.

If you would like a copy of his booklet (free of charge) to pass on to a family member or friend or to read yourself, please let me know and I will be pleased to give you a copy.

Martin Pearce

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Sermon preached by Rev Dr Michael Fuller for the Friends of St Cuthbert Service

“May the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be now and always acceptable in your sight, O Lord our Strength and our Redeemer.

It’s a huge pleasure for me to be joining you this morning for this special service for the Friends of St Cuthbert – my grateful thanks for their invitation to be here. Rather serendipitously, today is St Michael’s day, hence the apocalyptic themes brought out in our readings – war in heaven, with St Michael and his angels defeating the dragon. More of this in a moment.

Friends of St Cuthbert will, I’m sure, already know the stories of the Saint’s life: how he became a monk (and then Prior) at Melrose Abbey, engaged in missionary journeys, moved to Lindisfarne where he was variously Prior, Bishop and hermit; you’ll have heard about his reputed gifts of prophecy and healing, about the miraculous preservation of his body after his death (as it was re-interred on Lindisfarne, and ultimately in Durham); and so on. It’s fitting that he is now remembered through St Cuthbert’s Way, a route from Melrose to Lindisfarne which I understand is now walked by some two



and a half thousand people a year (indeed, some of you may yourselves have made this pilgrimage.)

This idea of pilgrimage – of making lengthy, and often time-consuming, journeys to places of particular spiritual significance – is of course a very ancient one; and it's interesting to see that it has been making a comeback in recent years. Perhaps the most famous example of this is the Camino, the network of routes leading to Santiago di Compostella in northern Spain, which is walked by some 400,000 people every year. I wonder what it is that has generated this degree of interest in pilgrimages. I dare say that for many people they offer an opportunity to take time out from busy lives, to spend time in quietness and contemplation – either alone, or in a group of like-minded pilgrims – and to reflect afresh on their relationship with God. To this extent, pilgrimages are perhaps ways of encouraging, or indeed initiating, religious experiences – fresh personal encounters with the Divine.

A quick comment here in parentheses: I was at a conference recently, responding to a paper in which the speaker pointed out the way in which religious ideas and practices are often appropriated to promote secular ideas. She cited the ways in which museums can take on architectural features of cathedrals, and scientific images can be presented in stained glass windows.

I was led to wonder if there are also secular equivalents of pilgrimages. A few years ago I and my family visited Down House, in Kent, where Charles Darwin lived for much of his life, and which is now preserved as a museum honouring his achievements (see photo, below). It's a pretty remote spot, for all its proximity to London; and yet it was hosting a good number of visitors. I wonder how many of them were driven to be there by a kind of secularised religious impulse: taking 'time out' in order to reflect upon and honour that great scientist. (Whilst there, I also visited the local parish Church, knowing that Darwin and the Vicar there in his day were great friends. Given the prevailing, if entirely erroneous, narrative that sadly persists around the incompatibility of evolution and religion, it was perhaps unsurprising that the Church was relatively deserted.)

Anyway, as I say, it's long been recognised that pilgrimages offer unique opportunities for religious people to grow in their faith, and maybe even to encounter the Divine. This turned my thoughts to the whole phenomenon of religious experience. And there are some interesting links here with the readings which we heard this morning.

Now, I don't know about you, but one thing that always piques my



interest in readings set for Church services is when there is an omission of some verses. For example, if we'd been looking at the readings for the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity this morning, one of those set is Esther chapter 7, verses 1-6 and 9-10; and my immediate reaction on seeing such a reference is to think, 'Ooh, I wonder what happens in verses 7-8?' Now, in fact, the compilers of lectionaries are usually being kind to congregations when this sort of thing happens, and when I check it, the omitted material often turns out to be tangential to the main thrust of a passage. But sometimes these omissions can be of interest.

In the same way, I find the verses immediately before and after a reading can be interesting, in casting some light on the passage that we actually hear read. Consider that first reading this morning, from the book of Daniel. We heard of a vision seen by Daniel, of a powerful human figure: a vision seen by him alone (although those around him were clearly aware of something strange, causing them to flee). This figure then addresses Daniel, calling him 'greatly beloved'; and as the chapter continues, he offers a prophetic vision of 'the end of days' (v. 14). This is a fascinating story in itself, but I found it was made even more interesting by the verses immediately preceding those we heard. In these, we read: 'I, Daniel, had been mourning for three weeks. I had eaten no rich food, no meat or wine had entered my mouth'. In other words, Daniel had been fasting, a religious practice perhaps more common then as now; and one which, we can imagine, might well lead to altered states of consciousness – leading perhaps to experiences like those visions which he saw.

And there are other things which, traditionally, have been of help to people in mediating those experiences which we call religious. Sacred places, such as this Church, with the decorations they contain, their loftiness, their spacious acoustics, assist us in our reflections on the Divine. The liturgies we engage with, such as the Communion service here this morning, serve the same end, as does the music which enhances our worship. Private prayer and meditation similarly have the potential to lift us out of ourselves, and into the presence of God. As we have seen, making pilgrimages may be another means to this end. And one thing which people who engage in these activities frequently find is that they produce a feeling of calmness, of acceptance, of inner peace.

Such peacefulness stands in sharp contrast to the other readings which we heard this morning. From the book of Revelation: 'War broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, but they were defeated. ... The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver



of the whole world ... woe to the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you with great wrath’.

And from St Mark’s Gospel: ‘False messiahs and false prophets will appear ... the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven’. It’s not hard to detect false messiahs and false prophets in the world around us today, not least in the shape of those politicians who seek to use popular support to advance their own agendas. And the idea that evil walks among us can feel very real, and can lead people to feelings of hopelessness and despair.

One traditional way of responding to this idea that there are malign forces at work among us is to draw further on that imagery of warfare. I remember those hymns that were popular when I was a child, like ‘Onward Christian soldiers’. It is necessary to fight against these evil forces, in order to advance the cause of good. Well, in some cases that may indeed be the case, although I’m sure we’re all aware of the way in which religious mandates for conflict can all-too-readily be corralled by social and political ones, to the extent that religions which proclaim the power of love can be turned to ways of promoting its opposite.

So I wonder if there isn’t a better way to counter the evil that walks the Earth. Whenever we turn to those things which orientate our thoughts towards God: whether it’s fasting, like Daniel; or going on pilgrimages, like walking St Cuthbert’s way; or spending time in quiet prayer and meditation; or attending a service such as this, to focus on God and on our communion with the Divine and with the brothers and sisters around us – in all these ways, we turn our thoughts away from what is evil, and towards that which is good. And this is perhaps the best way we have for promoting and extending the peaceable realm of God proclaimed by Jesus. These religious practices have never been more in need – and so it’s really good to see their increasing popularity in many quarters. For which, thanks be to God.

Amen.

Rev Dr Michael Fuller

Edinburgh 900 Artworks Exhibition

Over 1,000 artworks from artists of all backgrounds were exhibited in St Cuthbert’s to celebrate the 900th Anniversary of Edinburgh becoming a Royal Burgh. Photos from the exhibition can be found on page 22. Over 1,000 visitors viewed the art works.

The children of the Ukrainian St Margaret’s Saturday School entertained at the Official Opening by the Lord Provost and at the Closing Ceremony.

St Cuthbert’s church family provided the church facilities once again in support of our local Ukrainian community and the City of Edinburgh. We are grateful to the latter for funding the exhibition.

Here are some comments from our visitors:

I am overwhelmed by the amount of life displayed in every single one of these art pieces. The love and devotion shown in this room is wonderful to see. Thank you to everybody who took part. Best wishes **Dira Wong, California**

Thank you for organising this exhibition. Glad that I spent an afternoon here in this wonderful church. I had a glimpse of Edinburgh of a different time through all the art work. God bless **Alan, Hong Kong**

My family and I were amazed by all the wonderful collections. Great to see Edinburgh displayed through various viewpoints. Well done all. **The Wards**

What a wonderful showcase of the City of Edinburgh through so many mediums – well done **Erin and Team student visitor**

Very interesting exhibition. Well done. **Corstorphine Art Group**

Would like to say, my name is **Ricardo**. *I am from* **Mexico**, *and I would like to say that I fell in love with this picturesque city, now one of my dreams is to live here.*

Lovely to see a wide variety of work by local artists in such a hospitable space. **Matt**

Very good pictures, drawings, paintings and history **Sandy from London (about 9/10 years old)**

Thanks to Erin Mantle, 5th year arts undergraduate, who masterminded and curated this exhibition. We wish her well in her future career after graduation from Edinburgh University next summer.

Thanks from the Ukrainian St Margaret's Saturday School to the St Cuthbert's Church family for allowing us to use the sanctuary for this art exhibition and to enable us to raise vital funds for our school comprising 40 children ages 5 to 17 years and teachers. The pupils made a very colourful addition to the exhibition – singing, reading poetry and performing artistic gymnastics (surely a first for St Cuthbert's sanctuary).

Thanks too to Martin Pearce for all his 'behind the scenes' involvement.



The exhibition was opened by the city's Lord Provost, Robert Aldridge (the 258th elected to that position and pictured, left) and we include below his opening words.

"Good afternoon, everyone.

I am very pleased to be with you all today, as we open the Edinburgh 900 Art Exhibition, which remarkably includes 900 exhibits, here in the wonderful setting of St Cuthbert's.

I understand that the aim of the exhibition is to bring people together from all backgrounds to celebrate Edinburgh's Nona centenary, or 900th Anniversary, with paintings, drawings, photographs, sculptures and other artworks.

In line with the theme of the Exhibition, our ancient city is marking 900 years of unique history, and over the next year, or so, there will be a rich programme of events, talks, tours and tales.

Quite rightly, our communities are 'front and centre' in the celebrations, in order that they can receive funding and other support to discover stories of local heritage, and take part in events which highlight the City's collections

Over the coming months, the celebrations and events programme will grow to include more groups who wish to play their part in spotlighting Edinburgh's rich history, traditions, culture, stories, inspiring groups and organisations.

The accompanying 'Edinburgh 900' website is the 'one-stop-shop' for all related events - so, plenty to look out for, and to participate in.

Today's event adds to the growing list of community events, and I encourage residents, workers, visitors alike to look at what is happening in their locality and play a part – just like all the artists have today and will do over the next week.

Exhibits have come from over 40 organisations, and from over 300 artists of all skills levels - our youngest exhibitor is 5 years old, and our oldest is 90 years young.

Clearly, many pieces are from highly-gifted artists, and feature key artworks, including stunning photographs of the City during the Covid lock-down, and the 'Steps to Hope' charity assisting homeless and vulnerable people.

Reflecting community-ownership of Edinburgh 900 events, organisations that have supported artists include:

- the Scottish Arts Club;
- Corstorphine Art Group;
- Contact Point (Wheatley Care) and Creative Express (The Junction);
- The Old Town Development Trust and Thistle Quilters;
- special interest groups; Our Tribe, and the Grassmarket Community Project;
- 12 schools, primary and secondary, public and private, and the Ukrainian and Polish Schools;
- 12 Edinburgh Churches;
- University of Edinburgh, Napier University and Heriot Watt University;
- The Surgeons' Hall Museum and
- The Edinburgh Conventory of Trades.

With over 900 artworks from so many people and organisations across the generations, this exhibition represents a substantial opportunity to enjoy the work of our local community, and our local artists.

Seeing so many pieces in a single space is a rare treat in our city, so please enjoy the show, which will, I hope, engage you, and perhaps encourage you to make new

friendships, and attend other events, as we together celebrate and share the extraordinary milestone of Scotland's Capital and its 900th anniversary.

I also hope that you feel able to support the charity partner, the Ukrainian St Margaret's Saturday School's continuing operation with your generosity.

The Ukrainian School's aim is to provide education to children and young people up to 17 years, as it works to assist around 40 young Ukrainian refugees, to learn about their heritage and culture, as well as additional help with English language, mathematics, and business studies.

I am most grateful to The Ukrainian St Margaret's Saturday School for organising the event, to St Cuthbert's for hosting, to the City of Edinburgh Council for funding, to all of the exhibitors for such wonderful work, to the groups who have assisted the artists, and to Erin Mantle, art intern, fifth year student at Edinburgh Art College and Curator of the exhibition.

I look forward to meeting with as many of you as I can.

Congratulations to you all for putting on such a wonderful show."

Our new Pastoral Assistant – Kirsten Kooy

On Sunday 17th November I was welcomed into the role of Pastoral Assistant by Dr Peter Sutton, at the service for the Bellringers.

I would like to take the opportunity, not to ring my own bell, but to introduce myself briefly and give some context to the role.

However, I would first like to give some thanks: thanks to Peter for his "ringing" endorsement and to Margaret Pollock who has taken much time to give me a very detailed induction for which I am very grateful.

I would also like to thank Dr Anne Robertson, whose shoes I will endeavour to fill, albeit for this short period. We can agree she has done so much in the role of Pastoral Assistant and since has found time to guide me, Anne and Margaret have been key in the coming congregation lunch.

If you need reminded the congregational lunch is on the 19th December at 1.30pm and follows the Community Carol Service at 12.30. Please do sign up if you have not already. We hope to have some well kent faces you may not have seen for a while. Indeed, part of the role is to reach out and contact members of the congregation who, for whatever reason, find it hard to get to church these days, or may have suffered a loss or sadly both. Please do raise the names of any people to me or Margaret that you think might benefit from such contact. I generally start with a phone call to introduce myself and if I am invited, I will also make a visit. Peter has also offered to give communion.

So a little on myself, I'm married to Frans, a civil engineer and latterly pilot, both of us are now retired. We live in the former greyhound racing track area called Powderhall. I am a qualified Psychologist and worked in Global HR for most of my career. I retired during Covid to spend time with my lovely parents sadly no longer with us. I volunteer with *Look good feel better* at Western General and also have a governance role in the Ukrainian school for which Martin Pearce does so much as does Peter, who is the Chair. I have recently completed safeguarding training with the Church of Scotland which was very well delivered by the CosSand, sadly very pertinent to our times. I have also trained with the NSPCC.

On a lighter note, Frans and I are learning ballroom dancing so any experts feel free to share tips.

I'm looking forward to the role, and the kind words that have been extended have been helpful. Please think of me in the role and pray that I provide good service to God and the church and its members.

The Christ in Christmas

After Jesus was born in the manger, he was visited by shepherds and wise men, and he was presented in the temple. Sadly, Joseph, Mary and the baby Jesus had to escape to Egypt from the cruel King Herod, who wanted Jesus dead.

After a time and further dreams, Joseph brought his family back to Israel and they settled in Nazareth. Jesus spent his early life working as a carpenter, until he was in his late 20s.

When John the Baptist began to preach beside the River Jordan, Jesus came to him and he was baptised by John. Jesus immediately received the gift of the Holy Spirit, and in the strength of the Holy Spirit withstood Satan's inducements to divert him from his mission.

He then commenced a ministry of preaching and healing during a three-year period, mainly in the region of Galilee. Jesus' message was concerned with the good news of God.

Jesus called on Jews and gentiles to repent from their sin – meaning to say sorry to God for what they have done wrong and to mean it – Jesus offered forgiveness to such people, unfailing love, new life, and new attitudes.

To accept the Good News meant accepting Jesus as one's Lord and Saviour i.e. being saved from sin, death, and judgment day.

Out of the many who responded, Jesus appointed 12 men to be leaders of his followers, and he was ably supported in his ministry by a dedicated group of women.

Jesus demonstrated remarkable power through performing miracles of healing, control over nature, and bringing the dead back to life – he always with a specific teaching purpose in mind. He also taught with remarkable authority and made amazing claims. Eventually, some followers began to realise he was much more than a teacher or prophet.

Jesus reluctantly admitted to being the long-awaited Messiah, and this claim spurred the Jewish leaders to arrest him and demanded to have him crucified by the Roman authorities. They claimed that Jesus was a political rebel working against the authority of Roman Empire.

Jesus fulfilled the role of the servant King who suffered death, whilst offering a new way of life, just as it had been written by the Old Testament prophets.

From the third day after his death, many followers saw the risen Jesus over a period of 40 days, and such eye witness accounts are well documented in the Bible.

Jesus' final commandment to his disciples was to go and make disciples everywhere. And that is why many people reflect on the Christ in Christmas, who changed the world, which he continues to do so today, through love, forgiveness, and hope. May you and your families and friends experience such love this Christmas time. God bless you.

Martin Pearce Email: martin.pearce2109@outlook.com

Services in St Cuthbert's in the coming weeks (Sundays unless stated)

Date	Day	Service	Venue
Dec 1 st	First Sunday in Advent	Morning Communion at 9.15am Joint service of Advent Carols 10.30am No services at St Cuthbert's	GF
Dec 3 rd	Tuesday	Holy Communion 12 noon	St C
Dec 4 th	Wednesday	Soul space	St C
Dec 5 th	Thursday	Midweek Prayers at 1.10pm	GF
Dec 8 th	Second Sunday in Advent	Usual 10.30 am service Gift Service with participation from the children of the Ukrainian St Margaret's Saturday School Sunday Worship at 10.30am Holy Communion at 12 noon	St C GF St C
Dec 12 th	Thursday	Midweek Prayers at 1.10 pm	GF
Dec 15 th	Third Sunday in Advent	Usual 10.30 am service Usual 10.30am service Refugio at 7pm	St C GF GF
Dec 19 th	Thursday	Community Carol Service at 12.30pm Midweek Prayers at 1.10pm	St C GF

Dec 22 nd	Fourth Sunday in Advent	Usual 10.30 am service Nine Lessons and Carols at 7pm	St C St C
Dec 24 th	Tuesday	Carols Round the Tree at noon Christmas Eve Carol Service at 5pm Watchnight Service at 11.30pm	St C St C St C
Dec 25 th	Wednesday 10.30 am	Joint Service Christmas morning worship 10.30am No service in St Cuthbert's	GF
Dec 28 th	Saturday	Christmas Coffee Morning 10.30am	St C
Dec 29 th	10.30 am	Sunday worship with Communion No service at Greyfriars	St C

Church Guides

After a slow start, we moved into the busier part of the season and ended up with a total of 10,000 visitors and around £3,000 taken in the Church shop both of which were less than last year but we had quite a few days lost for Church lets which explains a lot of the difference.

We recruited some new Guides via Volunteer Edinburgh and although five of them did do some Guiding; for various reasons they fell off throughout the year. But several members of the Congregation and adherents have joined our Team and hopefully will continue into next Season.

Visitors to the Church are always appreciative of the welcome that you as Guides give and also of the knowledge which you share with them.

Some of their comments from the Visitor Book are listed below

Lovely!

Beautiful!

Peaceful

Beautiful sculpture

Lovely Tiffany Window

Below are more detailed comments

"Inside Church we spent our 26th Anniversary" – Ding & Cora from the Phillipines

"Loved the Service" -Paul & Stephanie from Arizona

"Nice people and place"- Natalie from Spain

"Thank you for my Scotties window hanger" – Shirley from the Netherlands

"I can feel the power of God here" – Alicia from Poland

"Thank you for the nice welcome" - Marc from Bordeaux

"Our ancestors were baptised here" – Jean & Sue from Yorkshire

Our Future

We are in the process of joining up with Greyfriars as you know but until this becomes clearer we will be carrying on as normal. We will again approach Volunteer Edinburgh in the hope of reaching like-minded people who can spare some time with us and would welcome any ideas that you might like to put forward.

And, last but not least, a very big thank-you to you all for all of the hard work and (occasional) periods of boredom!! which you have endured over the past year and we look forward to working with you in the 2025 Season.

Lyn & Derek

Remembrance Service – Sunday 10th November

Our Remembrance Day service was well attended and on the right is a photo of the wreaths laid.

During his Remembrance Day sermon, Peter gave a very moving description of the experiences of one member of the congregation who fought and died during the First World War. With his permission, I paraphrase his short army career, adding some colour to the otherwise grey headlines of those who are remembered in the Memorial Chapel.



When deciding on the subject for the Remembrance Day sermon, it had to be Thomas. There was no other logical choice. But would Thomas have minded? No one knows for sure, for no-one willingly goes out their way to lay down one's life for their fellow man, do they? Unfortunately, there were many besides Thomas who did so.

Thomas (right) was a grocer's assistant when he answered the call. Just 20 and living in Dalry Road. A peacetime member of the Territorials. A horseman with the Fife and Forfar Yeomanry based in Cupar.

He was soon to find out that the gay abandon and enthusiasm with which the youth of the nation enlisted was misplaced – the conflict would not be over by Christmas and it would be a war to end all wars.

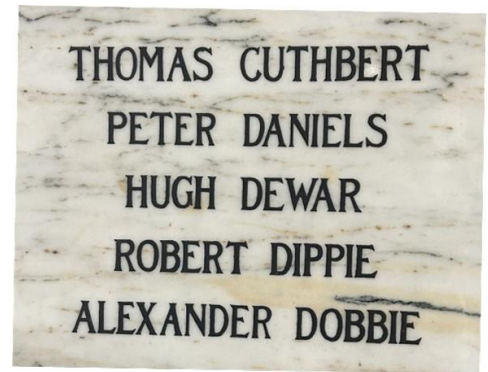


Dispatched to Gallipoli via Egypt, Thomas was taken on a journey he could never have imagined back in Dalry Road. But the reality of war soon hit home. He was wounded within weeks of arriving and was sent back to the UK. On his recovery, he was posted to the 7th/8th King's Own Scottish Borderers (a new battalion made up of two units that had suffered heavy casualties).

Further depletions of regiments pushed Thomas into the Royal Scots in late spring 1917 and sent up the line to the 16th – McCrae's Battalion.

We don't know exactly how long Thomas served with McCrae's but it was probably just a few weeks. He was killed on 26th August 1917 aged 23 and was buried in Hargicourt British Memorial Chapel.

It had to be Thomas. He and his family were members of St Cuthbert's. One of 157 names inscribed on the walls of the Memorial Chapel (see right). There are another 13 servicemen with the Christian name Thomas inscribed round the walls of the Chapel, but there is only one Thomas Cuthbert. Thomas Cuthbert from Dalry Road. Thomas Cuthbert from St Cuthbert's. Another life cut short by the war to end all wars ... which didn't.



OUT AND ABOUT

Oasis Quiz Night – Thursday 28th November

Annual OASIS Quiz Raising Funds for FreshStart

We would like to invite you to the Annual OASIS Quiz. This will be held on **Thursday 28th November. Doors open at 7pm, and the quiz starts at 7.30.** There will be a soup supper provided, and hot drinks will be available, but feel free to BYOB. Teams are to be no larger than 5 members, and there is a suggested donation of £10 per team. All funds raised on the night will go to FreshStart! Please register your team with the church office by emailing office@stcuthberts-edinburgh.uk



Fresh Start

It's that time of year again and we're asking for your help with Fresh Start's Christmas campaigns. For many parents, the pressure to give their children a magical Christmas can lead to debt, making it harder to pay rent or bills and sometimes pushing back families to the brink of homelessness.

The season, meant for joy, can become a source of anxiety. At Fresh Start, we aim to bring back the magic by providing Christmas presents not only for children but also for parents and individuals transitioning from homelessness. Everyone deserves something to look forward to at Christmas.

Our festive food hampers include special treats like advent calendars and Christmas chocolates, bringing joy to the families and individuals we support. You can help by donating items from our Festive Food list. We also collect gifts for parents and others through Giving Trees in workplaces, schools, and more.

Finally, our Cookers for Christmas 2024 - JustGiving raises funds for essential white goods, preventing families from being pushed into homelessness.

Your support means a brighter Christmas and a more secure future for those in need. Thank you for helping us make this Christmas special!

Although the deadline for delivery of goods to Fresh Start is 5th December, I would appreciate earlier donations, indeed as soon as feasible. This is for transport reasons.

As you can see there are three aspects. Please note the following:

- Festive Food Collection: Please use the Big White Box in the Vestibule. Please consider organising a collection of festive food items that would make a huge difference to the Christmas hampers we send out to families and individuals across Edinburgh. Our only requirements are that goods donated are in date, cupboard items (as in non-perishable, not to be stored in the fridge/freezer), and non-alcoholic. We ask that these items be donated sometime before December 5th.
- Christmas Giving Tree: The 5th December deadline does not fit with our own tree plans. However Fresh Start's wish list can be seen on: <https://www.freshstartweb.org.uk/donate/goods> Just use the Big White box. Please do not wrap goods as Fresh Start will need to see what there is in order to select recipients
- Cookers for Christmas: This is a matter for individuals. Not everyone enjoys a Merry Christmas. For those with little or no money, purchasing a cooker or other white goods item can be an unaffordable luxury. Fresh Start's Cookers for Christmas Campaign helps those in need by providing cookers and other essential white goods. The link is: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/cookersforchristmas2024>

James McLean

The City Nativity Blessing

The City Nativity Scene located at the top of the Mound will be blest at 2pm on the 1st Sunday of Advent (1st December). This will be followed by a procession to the Ross Bandstand in Princes Street Gardens where there will be more carol singing.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

Life and Work

The December edition contains:

Christmas:

How churches in the midst of conflict or danger are marking Christmas

Lynne McNeil learns about the growth of Christingle service

Seasonal message from the Moderator

Time to Act: As World AIDS Day approaches, Carol Finlay highlights the need for vigilance

Our Presbyteries: Forth Valley and Clydesdale

Letter from the Holy Land: The Rev Dr Stewart Gillan emphasises the need to keep the light shining, 'piercing the darkness together'.

A Trusted Friend: Walter Scott and Anira Phipon Lepcha reflect on the life and legacy of Walter's great, great, great aunt, Mary Scott, a missionary in the Eastern Indian Himalayas.

Regulars

Worship column by the Rev Roddy Hamilton

Reflection by the Rev Dr Richard Frazer

The Rev Ruth Kennedy on digital church

Bible study by the Rev Richard Baxter

My Church: Connie Anderson of Duror Church, North Argyll

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

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



GENERAL NOTICES

Christmas Tree – in Memorium

From Wednesday 4th December there will be a Christmas tree located in the vestibule on which you are invited to tie a small label with the name(s) of family/friends you wish to remember at this special time in the Christian year. Please help yourself to a label(s) from the basket beside the tree.

Christmas Gift Service

The Christmas Gift Service will be held on Sunday 8th December at the 10.30 am morning worship in St Cuthbert's. Again, the gifts will be donated to the Hailesland Early Learning Centre at Wester Hailes.

We have been especially asked for hats, scarves and gloves for boys and girls aged 1 to 6 years and baby clothes for those under 2. Please wrap and write for boy or girl and age.

For anyone not able to attend the Gift Service, gifts can be brought to the Church between noon and 3pm on Thursday 5th and Friday 6th December.

St Cuthbert's has been supporting this Centre for a number of years and your generosity has been much appreciated. I hope we can continue this support this year.

Thank you

Jean Watt

Congregational Lunch

A congregational lunch is being held on Thursday 19th December at 1.30pm following the Community Carol Service which starts at 12.30pm.

Please see Kirsten Kooy's introductory article on page 11 for further information.

Church Flowers

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

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

Communication

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

Recordings of 10.30am Sunday Services

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

Telephone Prayer Circle

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

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

All information will be treated in confidence.

Fresh Start

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

If you are unable to deliver them, please email jamesangusmclean@gmail.com See also pages 16 and 17.

Tuesday and Saturday Coffee Mornings

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

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

Support continues to grow for the monthly Saturday coffee mornings and the upcoming ones are as follows:

30th November 11am to 2pm

28th December 11am to 2pm

2025

25th January 11am to 2pm

22nd February 11am to 2pm

Members and friends are very welcome. Baking donations would also be welcomed and appreciated.

Lyn & Derek Deans



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

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

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

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

February/March by Monday 20th January

April/May by Tuesday 18th March

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



From all at St Cuthbert's

Further pictures from the Edinburgh 900 Art Exhibition





STANDARD WORSHIP AT ST CUTHBERT'S

SUNDAY

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

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

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

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

FIRST TUESDAY IN THE MONTH

12.15 pm Post Coffee Morning Worship, Memorial Chapel

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

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



THE VISION OF THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST CUTHBERT

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

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

St Cuthbert's is an 'eco-congregation'



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Scottish Charity Number: SCO10592