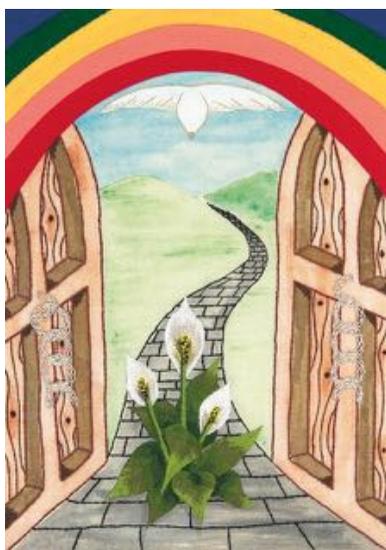
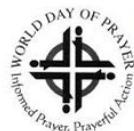


to glorify God ... to proclaim Christ ... and to serve others

FEBRUARY 2022

No. 832

## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



*'I know the plans I  
have for you'*

*Jeremiah 29:1-14*

*See page 7*

**Friday, 4 March 2022 at 2 30 pm**  
**in Davidsons Mains Parish Church**  
**Quality Street, Davidsons Mains**

**All are very welcome!**

World Day of Prayer Scottish Committee - SC020446

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**Minister**

Rev Fergus Cook  
5 Blinkbonny Crescent  
Edinburgh EH4 3NB  
Tel. 466 7503

**Session Clerk**

Mr Eddie Thorn  
Tel. 332 5702

**Church Secretary**

Mrs Joy McGonigal-Paget  
Home Working  
Mon - Frid, 9a.m.-Noon  
[secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk](mailto:secretary@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk)  
Temp. office contact no. 07735405251

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**BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND****STATED ANNUAL MEETING****SUNDAY, 27 MARCH 2022**

The Stated Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held in the Church following the 10.30 am service on the morning of Sunday, 27 March. All members of the congregation are invited to stay after the service to attend the meeting.

The agenda and reports from the Minister, Session Clerk and Working Team Conveners will **not** be delivered to each household prior to the meeting but the full report and annual accounts will be made available on the Church website. **For those without access to the website a small supply** of printed copies will be available in the Sanctuary for members requesting a copy.

Please note that while morning worship will be live streamed in the usual way the meeting following the service will **not** be live streamed. Participation in the meeting will require members to be present in the Sanctuary.

Eddie Thorn  
Session Clerk

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## From the Minister



### 'A Place at the Table?'

Dear Friends,

As I write this article, I am thinking ahead to February when it will be published. However, I am also caught in the moment and thinking about what is being reported in the news around the world at this moment in time.

As I look forward, I note that February brings with it another Communion Service. It is quite possible that we will sing one of my favourite Communion Hymns - 'CH4 685. For everyone born, a place at the table.' Quite apart from the wonderful tune that this hymn has, the words capture for me the all inclusive nature of what I understand God's love to be. The words are beautiful and meaningful but, right at this moment, I find myself particularly challenged by them. The hymn begins, "*For everyone born, a place at the table, for everyone born, clean water and bread, a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing, for everyone born, a star overhead.*" This rhythm and phrasing set the tone for the hymn and it is a refrain that gradually includes more and more categories of people.

Thinking about this moment in time and the news that is hitting the headlines, I find myself especially challenged by the words of the hymn. On Sunday 16 January, during our church service, we read about 'The wedding feast at Cana'. I commented at the beginning of the sermon that it was a story where everyone goes to a party and afterwards nobody is quite sure what actually happened. I said that, nevertheless, the party gets discussed and debated for ages afterwards. I was clearly referring to the revelations about Boris Johnson and the various 'work events/parties' that went on at the height of lockdown. I then questioned why some people think the Bible lacks contemporary relevance!

Although I made light of the situation, it is, at this moment of writing, a very serious situation. What does it mean for society when those placed in positions of leadership believe that the very rules they make should not apply to themselves? It seems to be an ongoing feature of the news that is dominating the headlines at the moment that some people seem to believe that the rules do not apply to them or that some people seek to use their positions of power, status or influence to have special allowances made for them.

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## From the Minister continued

In relation to the situation in Downing St, the BBC reported that *'Some Tory MPs said their inboxes have filled up after No 10 apologised to the Queen for two staff parties the night before the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral.'* The papers ran images of Her Majesty the Queen sitting alone, in black and masked, at the funeral of her husband, the late Prince Philip. Those images contrasted with the images of members of the government partying in the gardens at no 10 Downing Street and with the questions being asked about how many bottles of wine could be fitted into a suitcase.

Although the images of the Queen were seen as showing the country true leadership and sacrifice at a time of crisis, the Royal family has not been without issues. Prince Andrew has just been stripped of all his military titles and has given up patronages of the majority of charities with which he was associated. Although it would be wrong to pre-empt any findings of any forthcoming trial, much of the criticism of Prince Andrew has centred round his perceived sense of entitlement which has manifested itself in his decisions, initially, not to make himself available for interview and his ability to remain outwith the reach of those tasked with serving him legal papers and so on.

Finally, we have the case of Novak Djokovic who had been detained in Australia ahead of a court hearing to determine whether the unvaccinated tennis star could stay in the country. Although we now know the result of that hearing, it is more the attitude that was displayed by the tennis player in the run up to the final decision that I find noteworthy. Djokovic decided that it was his right not to get vaccinated. That, in itself, is his prerogative and each of us has to make such a decision for ourselves. However, having taken that decision, Djokovic then decided that he did not want to undergo the required quarantine period that the Australian Government set for anyone entering the country without a vaccine. For me, the argument that he made about being exempt from quarantining, as he had contracted Covid in December, was seriously undermined by the fact that, one day after having contracted the disease, he was photographed without a mask shaking the hand of someone presenting him with a copy of a stamp in his honour in Serbia and that was not the only public engagement he went to when still infectious with Covid.

All of these are examples of hubris - what, in my previous job in the Police Force, I used to refer to as examples of someone suffering from delusions of adequacy!

I firmly believe that God's love and invitation to join him is all inclusive and so extends to those who think they are above reproach. Why then, in the light of the foregoing examples, am I challenged by the fourth verse of the hymn I talked about? -

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**From the Minister** continued

*“For just and unjust, a place at the table, abuser, abused, with need to forgive, in anger, in hurt, a mindset of mercy, for just and unjust, a new way to live.”* I guess, like many people, I have a strong sense of right and wrong, of what is just and unjust.

Perhaps, a closer examination of what is being suggested both in the hymn and in the Bible will help. In 1 Peter 2:21, it says, *“For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.”*

All are welcome at the Lord’s table but, if they are truly called, then they are also called to follow Christ’s example and follow in his footsteps. This means that they should apologise for what they have done and make efforts to change their ways.



Politicians, in particular, are now famous for making an apology that is not an apology. They say that they are sorry that someone took offence but not that they are sorry for what they did or what they said. The hard task for us is that, on a personal level, we need to give people who apologise the benefit of the doubt. We need to try to accept and, if possible, to help and encourage those who say they are trying to do the right thing. This is why we try to adhere to the words of 1 John 2:6, *“whoever says, “I abide in him,” ought to walk just as he walked.”* If we walk the way Jesus walked, we are mixing with sinners, like ourselves, and making a welcome for all of them in our place of worship. We can do this in the confidence that, whatever is said here on earth, our God knows our innermost hearts and knows everyone’s true calling and motives.

God bless all, Fergus



**Sacrament of Communion**

The Lord invites you to His Table  
on Sunday 27 February at 10 30 am  
in the Church Sanctuary and on Live Stream.

All welcome.

25 January 2022

The Faith Impact Forum has been in touch with members of our partner church, the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia, Ukraine (Egyházkerület Kárpátaljai Református). Like all of us they are watching with concern as armed forces mass at the Russian border and the threat of conflict grows.



Lord Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly, and Very Rev Dr Susan Brown, convener of the Faith Impact Forum are asking all of us to join them in praying for those who are frightened and at risk in Ukraine.

### **A prayer for Ukraine:**

The news can be difficult to listen to and to read.

When that news relates to faces we know

And to voices familiar to us,

It becomes all the harder to hear.

Lord God,

We ask you to hold the people of Ukraine deep in your heart.

Protect them, we pray;

From violence,

From political gamesmanship,

from being used and abused.

Give, we pray,

the nations of the world the courage

and the wisdom

to stand up for justice

and the courage too,

to dare to care - generously.

Lord in your mercy,

Take from us all,

The tendencies in us

That seek to lord it over others:

Take from us those traits

that see us pursuing our own needs and wants

before those of others.

Teach us how to live in love

And dignity

And respect - following your example.

In your name and for your sake,

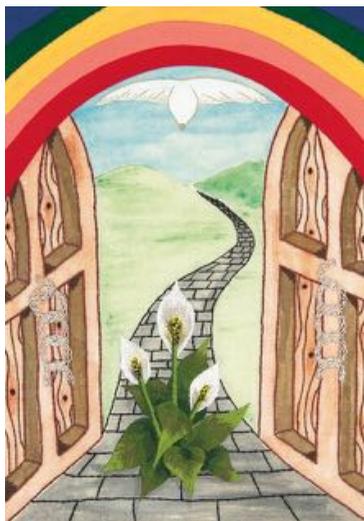
Amen

## World Day of Prayer

*'I know the plans I have for you'*

**Jeremiah 29:1-14**

**Written by Christian women of  
England, Wales & N. Ireland**



The artwork, created by Angie Fox using a combination of embroidery, appliqué and metalwork, depicts key words such as, **Freedom**, represented as an open door to a pathway across an endless open vista; **Justice**, represented by broken chains; **God's Peace and Forgiveness**, represented by the dove of peace and a peace lily breaking through the pavement.

Over all, a rainbow which has come to represent all these things from the story of Noah through to the modern day. It is a symbol of the overreaching love of God.

We are given a seed of hope to ponder where it needs to be planted in our lives and in our communities. Take this opportunity, to raise awareness on the needs of your community and offer the gifts of prayers and commitment. A seed, nourished by prayers of intercession and actions of love, bind us together around the world.



**A date for your diary**

**Saturday 5 March at 7 30pm**

**FOOTBALL & FAITH**

**An interview with Scottish Internationalist**

**Brian Irvine**

**Blackhall St Columba's Church  
Admission Free. All welcome**



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# Kirk Session Report

The Kirk Session met on Tuesday 4 January 2022.

## **Tribute to Alan Notman**

The Clerk paid tribute to Alan who had sadly passed away on 11 December. Alan was a faithful and well respected District Elder and had been fully involved in many activities taking place across the Church. He served as our Congregational Treasurer for nine years and then as Assistant Treasurer for a good number of years.

## **Correspondence**

A letter had been received from Bethany Christian Trust thanking us for the £294 they received as a result of the October 2021 Communion Retiring Offering and also Poppy Scotland in respect of the £110 they received as a result of the Poppy Appeal. Donald Cameron had also received a letter of thanks from Bethany as a result of money raised following the Choir's Christmas Carols at St Andrews Square in the lead up to Christmas.

## **Defibrillator**

The Clerk informed Session that he believed that Presbytery would pay for a second defibrillator for the Church. This is part of a Presbytery wide initiative and would enable us to provide a defibrillator outside the Church. The Clerk confirmed that Presbytery would also pay for the cost of installation including the cost of the case in which the defibrillator resides.

## **Happy Bench**

James Burr spoke to the paper which he had provided on this initiative which is one of many attempts to provide lonely people with the opportunity to have a chat with someone. It is already operating in parts of the City and James proposed that we should have such a bench within our Church grounds facing Queensferry Road. It was agreed that this was an excellent initiative and will be taken forward.

**Presbytery Consultative Document** - see page 9

**Rededication Service** - see page 11

This is planned for Sunday 20 March 2022. The Accessible Toilet work is scheduled for completion on 18 March 2022. Should this overrun it need not deter the Service going ahead on 20 March. A small committee will oversee the necessary arrangements including invitations and catering.

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## Retiring Offerings

It was agreed to support the following charities from the retiring offerings.

February 2022 Communion	Afghanistan Appeal
Easter Services	Barnabusfund
June 2022 Communion	A mental health charity
October 2022 Communion	Bethany Trust
Christmas Services	Scottish Bible Society and FreshStart

## Roll

Lindsay and Mrs Barbara Duguid, Easter Park Drive were admitted to the roll by Certificate of Transference.

Eddie Thorn, Session Clerk

## Presbytery Consultative Document

In advance of the special Presbytery meeting being held on Saturday 15 January this was a major item of discussion. The Kirk Session would be represented by the Moderator, Dianne Fulton and Jim Logan while the Clerk will also be there as a member of the Presbytery Planning Group.

The meeting was mindful that:-

- This is a consultative document and has to be agreed following which it would become a Draft Plan to go forward to central committees for consideration and approval.
- Going forward, there will be no such thing as a single charge Ministry.
- General Assembly has decreed that there will be a 40% reduction in Ministerial posts (not all Ministers of Word and Sacrament) here in Edinburgh.
- Importantly, any adverse comments on the Mission Districts and makeup of the proposed Unions should be balanced with alternative structures or suggestions. Negativity should be avoided.
- Congregational life as we know it will change.
- We need to acknowledge what Presbytery is trying to achieve but that we may have a better suggestion.

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- We also need to be mindful that Presbytery will make the final decision on the content of the eventual Draft Plan and that Presbytery is a collection of Ministers and Elders from across Edinburgh.

The main thrust of discussion was as follows:-

- Over the past two years the congregations making up the West Forth Cluster (Cramond, Davidson's Mains, Old Kirk Muirhouse, Drylaw, Granton and Blackhall St Columba's) had built up a good relationship with areas of co-operation identified. There was a feeling of real togetherness in the Cluster which would help when discussing the deployment of a reduced level of centrally funded posts in the Cluster and the need to identify potentially surplus buildings. The West Forth Cluster already had a history of working together in the past which could have developed further. The consultative document now proposes that Clusters be replaced with Mission Districts (We would sit in the Mission District D – West that encompasses the Corstorphine churches, Murrayfield, Gorgie Dalry Stenhouse, Palmerston Place, Cramond, Davidson's Mains, Old Kirk Muirhouse, Drylaw, St Stephen's Comely Bank and ourselves) and seems to be based solely on geography with no regard to existing relationships.
- The Moderator commented that the establishment of the 7 Mission Districts would offer more scope for economies of scale.
- There was concern regarding the need for theological alignment and to be part of a Union with people who share the same view on Christianity. Divergence of view would not be conducive to harmony and could lead to conflict. The "new union" would suffer if one group tried to dominate another.
- It was recognised that this 'plan' was borne out of necessity and would disrupt every congregation.

The Clerk then reminded Session what a union means: one legal entity with one Kirk Session and one Session Clerk and Treasurer, unless a different management structure is agreed. With regard to the proposed Union there would be a new name for the Churches in the Union with two Ministers, one of whom would moderate the Kirk Session but both would have equal status and share new and more innovative ways of Ministry.

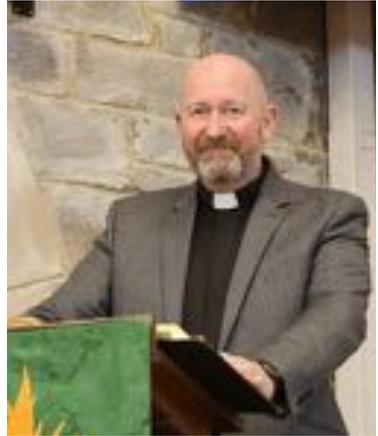
The Moderator also pointed out that a union should result in new blood and new ideas. It was noted that in our proposed union the pre pandemic levels of attendance at Sunday Worship were : 1) 215 at Blackhall St Columba's, 2) 200 at Davidson's Mains and 3) 70 at St Stephen's Comely Bank.

Eddie Thorn, Session Clerk

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**Date for your diary**  
**Sunday 20 March 2022**

**On Sunday 20 March 2022 at 3 pm** there will be a special service to celebrate two important milestones in the life of Blackhall St Columba's Church which couldn't be marked at the appropriate time.



We'll take time to rededicate the Sanctuary following the transformational refurbishment which was completed last year, and we'll join with friends from near and far to celebrate the induction of Fergus as our minister ...  
two years after the actual event!

After the short service there will be time to share fellowship and enjoy afternoon tea in the halls.

We look forward to seeing you there.



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## James Alan Notman

**18 October 1944 - 11 December 2021**

James Alan Notman, known to all as Alan, was born on 8 October 1944 to James Oliver Notman and Aileen Notman. Together with his brother Graeme Alan grew up in Davidsons Mains where his father ran the Notman Nursery, a family-run flower nursery.



On completing his education at Daniel Stewarts Alan left school to spend his working life in banking, beginning his banking career in the 1960's, at the North Leith branch of the British Linen Bank and retiring in 1994 as the Assistant Manager at the Chamber Street Branch of the Bank of Scotland. Although officially retired, he continued to work at the Royal Bank of Scotland's cash centre for a further 8 years.

The bank was to provide more than just employment for Alan for it was whilst working for the British Linen Bank in Shandwick Place that he was to meet his future wife, Margaret, whom he married on 17 September 1968. In September 1973 Alan and Margaret's son Euan was born.

For the family banking provided the opportunity to travel when Alan took a job with the National Bank of New Zealand. There, in May 1976, their son Ross was born and later that year the family moved back to Scotland. Something must have made an impression on the young Ross as he later emigrated to New Zealand and now lives in Melbourne, Australia, with his own family.

Alan didn't just use his banking skills for the bank. He was an elder at Blackhall St Columba's for 35 years and was heavily involved with the church finances. He was a member of the Finance Committee, serving as Treasurer for 9 years and as Assistant Treasurer for a further 6 years. Alan also helped with the church youth club and did the Scout accounts for many years. He began his Scouting at the 32nd Midlothian (Cramond) and records show that he became Assistant Scout Leader in 1966 holding the post till 1970. Family and work commitments were a priority till he was persuaded to become Treasurer for the now Inverleith District, a position he held from 1997 to 2009. Alan, was described in his Scouting role as a quiet, calm gentleman, who would appear never to be flustered, even when it was clear that some Scout Leaders had no financial skills! It was said that collecting the annual census, a job hated by most, seemed no trouble to Alan. Advice was given to all who needed help, enabling leaders to meet the deadline required by the Scout Association. /continued

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## Alan Notman Tribute continued

The Scouts wasn't the only organisation where Alan used to volunteer his help. He was always helping or giving his time to the Church, but not just at Blackhall St Columba's. As a volunteer guide he showed people round Greyfriars Church; he helped in the cafe at St Andrews and St Georges Church and also with the money side of their Christian Aid Booksale.

As one of the 'Friends of Edinburgh Prison' Alan helped to serve teas and coffees for visitors. He was seen as very kind to visitors and as 'great to work with' by other helpers.

Sport was another big part of Alan's life and although his own rugby career was affected by a broken collar bone he loved watching rugby, football, cricket and tennis. A shared love of walking and travel took him with Margaret on many trips at home and abroad.

However, among Alan's many interests there is no doubt his main interest and love was his family. The boys always regarded Margaret and Alan as a 'perfect team' sharing so much together. Alan was very supportive of the boys growing up and they recall instances of practical help from giving lifts to paying flat deposits. He is also, of course, remembered as a loving papa and his visits 'down under' were treasured both ways.



Sadly after a spell of ill health Alan died on 11 December last. There have been many cards and notes written to the family describing what Alan meant to numerous different individuals: wonderful friend over many years, kind, considerate, gentle, a real Christian gentleman, genuine, one of Life's good guys, generous, polite, caring, thoughtful, devoted, a hard worker, funny, had a great sense of humour, would do anything to help, a great example of how to live your life. All speak of a man who loved and was well loved in return. He will be sorely missed.

## Family News

### New members

We welcome to our fellowship by Certificate of Transference:

Mr Lindsay Duguid and Mrs Barbara Duguid

### Deaths

30 December Miss Elizabeth Wilma Bowden

22 January Miss Zoe Gordon McMillan



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## Cameo Club (Come And Meet Each Other)

Cameo Club started up again on 14 January when we met as usual at 10.30-12.00 in the large hall, this meeting for coffee and chat only. The Convenor welcomed everyone back and said it was good to see all the friendly faces again. There were twenty-seven members and volunteers present, with Covid measures in place. Everyone was happy to sing Happy Birthday to one of our number who also received a Cameo card to wish her well.

Our February meetings will be on 11th and 25th when we hope to start our entertainment programme once more. All are welcome – if new, contact one of the numbers given below.

Keep well and stay safe.

Margaret Brown 332 5957

Fiona Drinnan 343 6762

## Tuesday Topics

It was with sincere regret that we were forced to cancel our opening meeting on 11 January due to Covid restrictions.

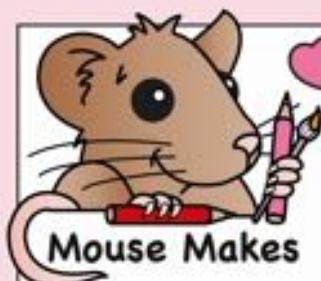
However, now that restrictions have been changed, we are preparing to go ahead with our planned meeting on 25 January when Peter Thomson (Photo), Director of Music at St George's School, will entertain us with music by Robert Burns.

Thereafter, we hope to meet again fortnightly. On 8 February Rosie Ellison will show films of Edinburgh on the Screen while on 22 February Roy Johnstone will present a talk on Women on the Home Front in WW1.

Members and visitors are welcome at all our meetings.

Eleanor Lowrie, President  
Jacky Cowie, Secretary





Lord, you are a God who shows \_\_\_\_\_ and is \_\_\_\_\_  
...You have great \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 86:1

Love the Lord your God with all your

  
How did God show He loved us?  
Read 1 John 4:9

with all your \_\_\_\_\_  
and with all your \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 22:37

See what great love the Father has for us that He would call us His

1 John 1:3



  
Love is ..  
Read 1 Cor 13:4-7

\_\_\_\_\_ is love.  
Whoever lives in love lives in \_\_\_\_\_,  
and \_\_\_\_\_ lives in them.  
1 John 4:16

Love your \_\_\_\_\_  
the same as you love \_\_\_\_\_  
Matthew 22:39

**Love is:**  
PATIENT • KIND • GRACIOUS • JUST • TRUTHFUL • TRUSTING • HOPEFUL  
PERSEVERE • ENDURES • GOD

**Love is not:**  
JEALOUS • ENVY • BOASTFUL • PROUD • SELFISH • ANGRY • RUDE • EVIL

**God's love is:**  
LOVE • MERCIFUL • FAITHFUL • UNFAILING • ABUNDANT • COMPASSIONATE



BLACKHALL  
ST. COLUMBA'S  
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Keep up with news of  
the Blackhall St Columba's Church community -  
in-Church services  
our Live Stream services  
the various Zoom meetings  
Coronavirus updates  
and 'live' events -  
by regularly checking  
our website  
[www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk](http://www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk)

our Facebook page -  
search for 'Blackhall St Columba's Church'

Follow us on



@BStCC\_EH

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## DEADLINES

### **Kirk News -tbc**

Please send all items to the Editor:  
Christine Denham c/o Church Office  
Home tel: 336 5943 or email  
[kirknews@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk](mailto:kirknews@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk)

### **Blackhall Bulletin - Sunday 30 January 2022**

All items, including advertising  
enquiries, should be sent to the  
Editor, Barbara Wilson  
c/o Church Office  
Home tel: 312 6035 or email  
[bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk](mailto:bulletin@blackhallstcolumba.org.uk)