

Parish Church of St Cuthbert

Parish Profile

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Our Vision

Our core vision in St Cuthbert's is: Living out the Gospel of Jesus Christ at the heart of our city as God's people nurturing hearts for God; offering a home to friend and stranger; and providing a hub to equip the people of God for the mission of God.

St Cuthbert's is entering a new chapter in its life. The Kirk Session has reappraised the vision for the future and the particular role of the congregation in responding to the challenges and opportunities of modern life. These arise not only within our own parish, but also in our relations with our neighbouring congregations. We shall be seeking to work ever more closely with St Andrew's and St George's and St George's West. We have a long-standing Local Ecumenical Partnership with St John's Scottish Episcopal Church, and we shall be discussing extending that LEP to include our Church of Scotland neighbours also.

We see our future as continuing to be pioneering, as it has been over the past 1300 years, seeking out new ways of serving God by serving our fellow men and women in our parish and beyond. Our parish is distinctive. It is not primarily residential, but is part of the city centre to which many people come for work and for leisure. It includes one of the largest financial centres of Europe. At night, it is a hub for leisure activities. Each offers a different and demanding opportunity for the further development of new forms of outreach. The parish area is also a magnet for the homeless and vulnerable, and that too offers an opportunity for service.

Development Group

The Development Group is responsible to the Kirk Session for the development and implementation of the Vision and Plan for St Cuthbert's, our relationship with other churches and for monitoring progress. To assist the Development Group there are a number of Task Groups – Pastoral Care and Faith Development, World Church, Worship and Spirituality, Communication, Hospitality and Finance and General Purposes. The Conveners of the Task Groups are members of the Development Group. Each Task Group reports annually to the Kirk Session and the Development Group reports to the Annual General Meeting of the Congregation in March each year.

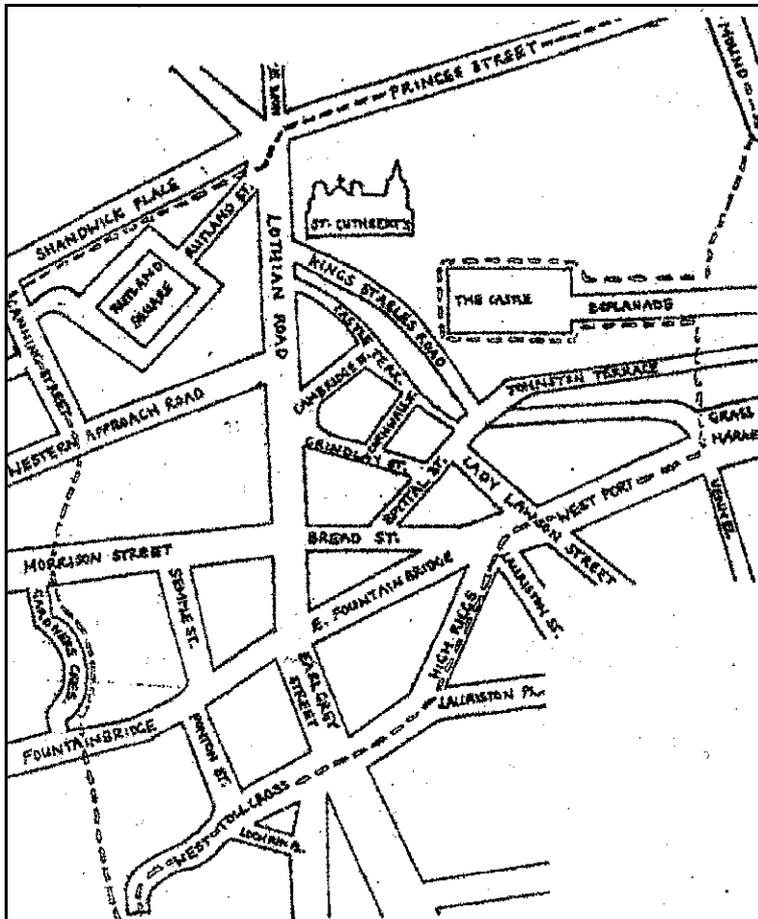
Constitution

In 2005 we adopted the Unitary Constitution.

Where are we?

Location and Parish Boundaries

St Cuthbert's Church is located beyond the west end of Princes Street Gardens on the corner of Lothian Road and King's Stables Road.



Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care Task Group incorporates the Friendship and Bereavement Groups, the Flower Ministry and Prayer Circle. A House Committee of St Cuthbert's members support the staff and residents of Cherryholme House, a successor to the Abbeyfield Scheme.

Healing Ministry

Since 1986 a Team Healing Ministry has operated in St Cuthbert's. The Sunday Evening Service is a Service of healing and at lunchtime on a Tuesday the Team offers Healing and Intercessory Prayer. Prayer for healing is available through our Prayer Circle.

Youth

Over the years the numbers attending the Sunday School have fluctuated and at the present time there is no Sunday School. There is an active Boys' Brigade Company which meets in a primary school within the parish.

Worship

Our present pattern of worship is:

9.30am Holy Communion

11.00am Morning Worship

6.30pm Healing Service

Monthly Reflective Services – lunchtime and evening

Quarterly Formal Communion and a less Formal Communion Service four times a year.

Annual Bereavement Service at All Souls Tide.

Ministry of the Building

St.Cuthbert's church building is one of the congregation's greatest assets as the physical hub of our activities. This is where we maintain regular worship, promote outreach, offer hospitality and engage with a wide range of other city centre operators. This remarkable building – the seventh on the site- combines an outward austerity with richness of interior decoration, colour and atmosphere. It imbues a strong sense of the splendour and majesty of God and of the beauty of holiness.

Retention of the building can only be justified for as long as it remains fit for the purpose of equipping the congregation to fulfill its mission. That requirement varies over time so the building was extensively remodelled internally in the late 1980s to provide more flexible meeting spaces and a smaller sanctuary. That adaptation has proved extremely successful in enabling St.Cuthbert's to contribute to the life of the city centre community as a place of worship, meeting place, night shelter for the homeless. chaplaincy to the business community, healing centre, visitor attraction, concert venue et al.

With its spaciousness, dramatic impact, capacity, acoustics, organ, belfry, central location, parking and the facilities it has to offer, St.Cuthbert's is well placed to aspire to a cathedral type of focus. It lends itself to celebratory, festival style worship for the big occasions as well as providing a quiet mid week haven in the heart of the city for personal prayer and devotion.

As a vehicle for the practical hospitality featured in our 2003 “Vision and Plan”, the building each year welcomes several thousands of people otherwise rarely exposed to such a distinct atmosphere of Christian influence, to:

- Regular worship
- Large gatherings e.g. the launch of CH4
- Charitable fund-raising events and school concerts especially at Christmas
- Professional and amateur performances
- A Festival Fringe venue
- Conferences and training workshops
- A steady stream of visitors to see the building itself with guides to welcome them.

The ministry of the building is distinctive and undoubtedly has an impact both quantifiable and otherwise. If we are not exactly a Church without Walls, we are working to make our walls sufficiently porous for the stranger and the outcast to be drawn inside and for the gospel we proclaim to permeate the secular world outside.

The churchyard is in local authority hands. At present it is not as well maintained as it might be but there are encouraging intimations of possible plans for the future.

MISSION

World Church

Through its remit the World Church Task Group endeavours to help the congregation to become more aware of the world church family of which they are part; to experience and enjoy sharing in God’s mission as partners with others and to promote worship, witness and service with other churches and organisations in order to further these objectives.

At present, together with other congregations in the Presbytery, support is being given to the Rev Roy and Dr Jane Dodman our Mission Partners in Jamaica. We are also actively involved in Christian Aid.

Homelessness

Because of our position just off Lothian Road and King’s Stables Road we have been conscious of the number of homeless people in this area. A number of these people were sleeping in our churchyard and this stimulated a number of members to take an interest in this. One of those members was later instrumental in setting up the Rock Trust. The congregation’s interest in homelessness continues in the shape of participation in the provision of night shelters. In the winter 2007/2008 there will be weekly provision of night shelters in partnership with the Bethany Christian Trust and other churches using our premises.

Raven

Raven originated under the title “Exploring Church for Clubland” as an attempt to reach young people visiting the city centre by taking the gospel to them in the clubs and cafes where they meet. The project was supported by the congregation by providing substantial finance, and by members who assisted in it. The greatest part of the work of the project was carried out by a small group of younger members who felt particularly called to it. As time went on, it became clear that the project had developed its own sense of identity, and that it could function better if it ceased to be directly under the charge of the Session and/or congregation. At this point, it was renamed, and arrangements were made by which it would operate independently, but still with some connection with St Cuthbert’s. There is a Board of Trustees and an Elder of St Cuthbert’s is Chairman.

OASIS

OASIS was established fourteen years ago as a means of outreach to the business community. The idea arose from the thinking about the very large number of employees of major financial and other institutions who come to our parish every working day. Many of them may have church connections in the places where they live and it has never been the intention to encourage any of them to move to St Cuthbert’s. The objective is to meet them in the places where they spend their working lives, to seek to understand the conditions under which they live and work and to try to show them what the church and the Gospel may be able to offer. In these terms the project is successful.

Statistics

Membership as at 31 December 2007	471
Number of Elders	58
	(30 men 28 women)

Website

St Cuthbert’s has an excellent website – www.st-cuthberts.net

Manse

The present Manse is the lower flat of a converted detached villa in the Murrayfield area of Edinburgh. It has seven rooms, large well fitted kitchen and second kitchen – laundry room, front garden, backyard and triple garage. Good schools are within a two mile radius. There is office provision within the church.

Minister can park in the churchyard.

Finance

The accounts and financial strategy of the Church are relatively complex in comparison to many other parishes, largely because of the history and funds left over the years by benefactors and the fact that we have a large listed building and an ageing Congregation. The unrestricted funds of the Church amount to somewhere in the region of £2 million if you take the full value of the investments and properties into account. Our contribution on an annual basis to the Church of Scotland for Mission and Ministry amounts to £135,000 and in addition we are budgeting a further £85,000 of salary costs for other staffing and a further £78,000 for office costs and necessary heating and repairs. Against this, we enjoy an income from our investments and hire of premises and property rents of around £90,000 per annum and our normal offerings come to around £100,000, leaving a shortfall of £100,000 which historically has been made up by generous legacies. We understand that many of our members are on fixed incomes and therefore the normal weekly giving does not expand as much as it would in other places but is off set by the generous legacies which we receive.

It is our policy to use our capital resources wisely for Outreach and the maintenance of the building at a high standard for dignified worship and other uses. We intend to increase our income from the letting of premises as time goes on and also are presently carrying out a campaign to increase our Gift Aid income during the vacancy period. In addition to the General and Fabric Funds, there are other Funds such as the Poor Fund which is available to the Minister to look after needy situations and the OASIS Fund for Outreach activities.

New Minister

The new minister of St Cuthbert's needs to be someone whose qualities will include an openness of mind, an empowering nature allowing his/her congregation and those around it to take risks with new ideas, a will to work with colleagues in the other city centre churches and a respected preaching ability which recognizes the traditionalist as well as the modernist. This is an exciting challenge and an appointment for someone with vision and energy who, without question, will have encouragement from a supportive Kirk Session and congregation.

Interim Moderator

Rev Dr George Whyte, Colinton Parish Church 0131 441 2232

Clerk to the Nominating Committee

Miss Margaret I Pollock, vacancy@stcuthberts.net 0131 332 2650