



Edinburgh Diocese

YOUTH & CHILDREN

Christmas 2024

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CHRISTMAS

2024



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Welcome to the Christmas 2024 Youth & Children Newsletter!

Welcome to this edition of our Diocesan Youth and Children's newsletter. Lots of exciting things have been going on around the diocese in the second half of 2024, and we are keen to share these stories with you. Please do encourage any young people in your churches to reach out to our Advisor for Christian Life, [Fee Reynolds](#), to find out about events happening in the Diocese or across the Province. Additionally, anyone can sign up to our regular "Youth and Children's Update" mailer, which details events and training: [register via this link](#).

Keeping in Touch

There are various ways to keep in touch with what is happening around the Diocese and to receive information about events, training and resources. Please follow or sign-up if you have yet to do so.



[Diocese website Youth & Children Page](#)



[Sign up for email Updates: https://tinyurl.com/YCEdin](https://tinyurl.com/YCEdin)



[@edinburghdioceseyouthchildren](#)



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Note that the **Provincial Youth Team** are updating how they share their news. [Sign up to the various mailing lists here](#).

Christ Church, Holy Corner

Christ Church, Holy Corner, launched a Children's Choir in January 2024. This venture is about getting young people in their community singing and taking part in music together. There is also a hope to inspire choir members of the future, as the role of music grows in the life of Christ Church.



These new, young singers have come together wonderfully, taking well to a repertoire which covers everything from Taize chants, traditional hymns, and choir anthems, to popular pieces and folksongs. Elements of music theory are explored in relation to what is being sung. They have even sung with the 'main; choir several times, sharing in pieces such as *Look at the World* by John Rutter, *Ave Verum Corpus* by Elgar, and *Seek Him that maketh the seven stars*, by Whigham.

The plan for 2025 is to build on this solid foundation, growing both their repertoire and opportunities to sing. The choir will also be advertising their presence to families across Bruntsfield and Morningside, to (hopefully) encourage more young singers to join.



6a Morningside Road, Edinburgh
EH10 4DD



www.christchurchmorningside.org



rector@christchurchholycorner.org

St Michael & All Saints, Tollcross

The choir at St Michael and All Saints in Tollcross is an intergenerational one, and recently there has been a focus on including younger voices. Musical Director Sandy Chenery, who grew up singing in an SEC choir, is passionate about encouraging the next generation in “enhancing worship and giving a glimpse of something ‘beyond’.” He says, “I am thrilled that we have a small, but



growing number of children now participating in our choir. Each Sunday we sing a choral Mass setting and an anthem as well as hymns, creed, plainsong propers

and other responses. Very quickly, all the young choristers pick up the music that is sung each week, such as the Merbecke Creed, and are also able to make a strong contribution to hymnody and plainsong tunes.”

The breadth of ages in the SMAS choir engenders a supportive and nurturing space for all: “Our teenagers willingly assist and support newer members and our adults take the musical lead but are always keen to let the children be the focus of attention when appropriate.”



28 Brougham Street, Edinburgh
EH3 9JH



www.stmichaelandallsaints.org



rector@christchurchholycorner.org

Singing Across the Diocese



Singing is one way for children and young people to get involved in the life of a congregation. There are lots of opportunities across the Diocese. Here are a few (more) examples...



The Cathedral

Our Cathedral's young choristers are well-known, but there are other opportunities to sing in the Cathedral. There are regular "Be A Chorister Afternoons" for children in P3-5 who enjoy singing. There is also the new Youth Choir "Benedicite" for confident young singers aged 13-18.

St Peter's

The Junior Choir at St Peter's, Luton Place, is for anyone aged 8-18, and as they often sing with the 'Adult Choir' on a Sunday, the Thursday rehearsals overlap. However, there is time dedicated at the start of each Thursday evening to the RSCM's Voice for Life programme, which builds knowledge of music theory and liturgy alongside singing prowess.

St Ninian's

The youngest member of the choir at St Ninian's Comely Bank is 9, and everyone of any age is encouraged to join. For singers in their late teens and early twenties, there is the opportunity to become a choral scholar. The rehearsals and Sunday morning practices offer an encouraging space where all can flourish.

Does your child love to sing?

BE A CHORISTER AFTERNOON

FRIDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 2025, 2pm

St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral

In this special afternoon, we aim to give children and parents an insight into what life is like as a chorister. We welcome Primary Pupils P3-P5 who enjoy singing for a special opportunity to participate alongside the Choristers of St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral.

For more information and to register, scan the QR code or visit www.stmarysmusicschool.co.uk



www.cathedral.net/music



<https://stpetersedinburgh.org>



<https://sncb.scot>

Military Cadets



The Church of the Good Shepherd, Murrayfield, and St Cuthbert's, Colinton, are amongst the congregations to welcome military cadets into church over the past few months.

These smart, engaged teenagers also assisted in the leading of worship, as well as bear their standards.

Connecting with local military cadet units, either for special services or as a chaplain, is one way to offer ministry to/with young people. See links below for more information.



www.sea-cadets.org



www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets



armycadets.com

St Andrew's, Kelso

The congregation took a large step out in faith when they decided to re-start Sunday School after many years, especially considering they only had a single one-year-old child who attended church regularly. They were, therefore very excited to collect the names of 18 children who might like to attend by the beginning of November!

The initial team of four teachers grew quickly when three others were so inspired by the idea that they freely offered their services. And so, even the numbers of adults surpassed expectations!

The group began in October 2024 and plans to meet every first Sunday of the month for the rest of the academic year. A cross and candle are taken from the church into Sunday School to remind everyone that they are part of the church family, even whilst in different spaces. These return with everyone in time for the administration of communion.



As this is the first Sunday School for a while, the team decided to focus exploring some of the key Bible stories this year. As well as telling a story each session, there are prayers, singing, and crafts.

Children remain very welcome in church on all the other Sundays of the month. At the door of the church, there are a range of "Children's Bags" with items to play with in the pews.



Belmont Place, Kelso
TD5 7JB



www.standrewskelso.co.uk



rectorofkelso@gmail.com

St Matthew's, Roslin

Ministry with, to, and amongst children and young people continues to flourish in St Matthew's, Roslin. A community highlight was the "Labyrinth of Giving", constructed in the chapel grounds as part of the congregation's Harvest Festival celebrations. Members of the village and Roslin Primary school joined forces with the Congregation to turn the 400+ collected tins into a walkway of prayer. The labyrinth was walkable for a week in September/October, before the tins were donated to the nearest foodbank in Penicuik.



In the photos below, you can see the church's children and young people taking part in the Harvest Thanksgiving service and getting ready for zzzzzzzd's at the Provincial Sleepover!



Chapel Loan, Roslin, Midlothian
EH25 9PU



www.stmatthews-rosslynchapel.org.uk



stmatthewsrosslyn@gmail.com

St John's, Princes Street

The Ark at St John's Princes Street is a wonderful intergenerational Eucharistic service. It takes place every Friday morning, with pre-schoolers right at the centre of it all. There are songs, percussions instruments, holding crosses, wooden chalices and patens, and everyone is encouraged to copy the priest. After the service, there is tea and coffee for the adults, and juices and snacks for wee ones. And this is not just an opportunity for fellowship between families and across generations, but a chance to play or engage with a themed activity: the bottom right photo is from their "Stir Up" theme, getting the Christmas puddings ready!



Princes Street, Edinburgh
EH2 4BJ



stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk



davidb@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk

Christ Church, Falkirk



Bishop John confirmed five young people at Christ Church in Falkirk on 29 September. This special day, which happened in the midst of the congregation's 160th Birthday celebrations, was marked not only with a moving service but a rather unique cake as well!



55A Kerse Lane, Falkirk
FK1 1RX



www.christchurchfalkirksec.org.uk



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Ring Out for Climate Justice

This unique, youth-led initiative continues on the fourth Saturday of every month at St Mary's Cathedral. Whilst other churches and cathedrals have rung their bells ahead of COP meetings, this has become a monthly feature of life in Edinburgh. It serves to call the city to action in the face of climate and ecological catastrophes.



The group gathers every fourth Saturday at 11:30am, ready to ring the bells at 12noon for 20mins. Thereafter, there are additional activities and discussions until 1:30pm. Any young person aged 11-16, of any faith or none, is welcome to attend. The first date of 2025 is Saturday 25 January.



Play Church

Our Play Church has been much on the move over these last 6 months. It spent a short period of time at St Cuthbert's, Colinton, for their summer Open Weekend. It was unmissable, being directly across from where people walked into the church!

For the rest of the summer, and into autumn, the host was Holy Trinity, Haddington. The Revd Liz O'Ryan shares the following about Play Church:

"It is compact and accessible to the children - and it has been enjoyed by the youngsters. One girl loved dressing up in the wedding dress. One young lad set up the altar just as he has seen me do so often. Others were fascinated by opening the boxes and seeing what was inside! It is such a good resource and well worth having however many or few children we have in our congregations."

Now the Play Church has reached St Baldred's in North Berwick, where it nicely fills a space in their developing Children's Corner. It will be available to use throughout the Christmas period, right through Candlemas, and until the end of February. The photo to the right shows that young members of the congregation already have the knack of donning the vestments!

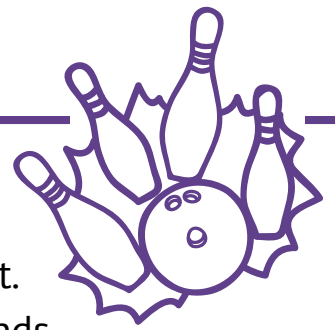


[You can read more about Play Church on the Diocesan website.](#)



[If you are interested in hosting for a season, email Fee Reynolds.](#)

Diocesan Youth



This year's Pizza-Bowl was held in August at Fountain Park, where we were able both to bowl and then enjoy a pizza feast. This was a time for Yeek delegates to catch up with their friends from across the Diocese, but we were also able to welcome some new faces to the group. There was much competition within, and between, the lanes, with age proving to be no determiner of success.

The team at Pizza Hut looked after us very well, led as they were by a one-time member of an SEC Youth Group! Towards the end of the meal, we used the **table talk** app to explore some serious and not-so-serious questions together...what are YOU really good at?!



Provincial Sleepover, Edinburgh



October's Provincial Sleepover in Edinburgh was fully-subscribed! With over 40 young people and 12 leaders involved, axes were thrown, mysteries were solved, pizzas were eaten, friends were made, worship was prepared: God was in it all!

Provincial Youth Committee

Membership of the Provincial Youth Committee is made up of two 12-18 reps and one 18-25 rep per diocese, with the diocesan youth and children's worker also attending meetings. Edinburgh Diocese is represented by Phoebe Pryce (who is also the PYC Chair), Michael Crumb, and Sage Vause, who are supported by Fee Reynolds. If there is anything you wish the committee to consider, please either contact Fee or speak with any of the reps at our events.



YEEK 2024



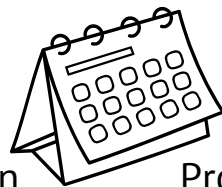
This year's Yeek was themed "Another Planet". Fancy dress was 'out of this world', and Edinburgh Whovians demonstrated their remarkable knowledge, pitted against author Joe Brewer-Lennon. There was a guest appearance from PYC Chair, Phoebe Pryce, who joined a panel of illustrious guests to answer questions serious and silly from the delegates.

2025 Provincial Events

Sleep-Overs

Dates for Provincial Sleep-Overs in 2025 have been agreed: exact locations are still being finalised. Mark your calendars so you do not miss out...and subscribe to Diocesan Update emails to hear all the details in the New Year!

1-2 March
4-5 October



Yeek

Provincial Youth Week 2025 takes place, once again, in Glenalmond, Perthshire. Delegates arrive **Sunday 27 July** and depart **Saturday 2 August**. Planning is well underway and we will let you know as soon as booking opens. The website remains:

<https://yeek.scot>

Planning for 2025...

In the Diocese Office, we have slotted various dates into our diaries for activities in 2025 for children, young people, and young adults. Details are still being finalised, so save the dates and sign up for our Update emails to find out more!



Church Bagging is new for 2025. We are inviting our **12-18 year olds** to join us for Sunday evening worship at the following places and days...

19 January - Ps & Gs

16 February - St John's, Princes Street

16 March - Old Saint Paul's

18 May - St James-the-Less, Penicuik

8 June - St Peter's, Luton Place

We also have a special invitation to Christ Church, Holy Corner, on **1 June** for their Anniversary Evensong, where Archbishop Cushley will be preaching.

Saturday 26 April

A social event for those aged 10-14 years in the late afternoon/early evening.

Saturday 10 May

A day for the whole Diocesan family in St Mary's Cathedral.



Saturday 31 May

End of Exam Picnic, for 12-18 year olds, we will meet in Edinburgh and head to North Berwick for fish & chips by the sea!

Thursday 7 August

We hope to mark National Play Day in some wonderfully playful way in 2025!

Saturday 30 August

Annual Pizza-Bowl in Edinburgh for all 12-18 year olds, including Yeek graduates.

A very BIG thank you to everyone who shared their stories with us for this Newsletter. If you have something you want to share with us in the next Newsletter, please do get in touch.

In the meantime, everyone in the Diocese Office wishes you a joy-filled and blessed Christmas, and best wishes for 2025.



Edinburgh Diocese

YOUTH & CHILDREN

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