



Magazine

No. 161 February 2021

Dear Friends

For some this second lockdown feels worse than the first. The hope that was on the horizon is still there, but still out of reach. One of the persistent things about our faith, which both frustrates and sustains, is that quality of hope that will not let us go. A favourite Old Testament scholar, Walter Brueggemann has written, challengingly, "Hope does not need to silence the rumblings of crisis to be hope." Or, from another angle, John Cleese said in the film *Clockwise*: 'It's not despair I mind; it is hope I can't stand.' Hope challenges our fatalism, which is why it is so unsettling. As the late Jonathan Sacks, former Chief Rabbi wrote, "All I know is that the greatest achievement in life is to have been, for one person, even for a moment, an agent of hope."

The Christian season of Lent can be a challenge for some people when forced to look at their lives and wonder what needs changing and what needs transforming. It's

not so much about bad habits needing giving up, it's good habits needing taking up.

It's one of the many things the Church has to offer the world. Back to Walter Brueggemann. He writes: "The prophetic tasks of the Church are to tell the truth in a society that lives in illusion, grieve in a society that practices denial, and express hope in a society that lives in despair." In this



time of extended lockdown, illusion, denial and despair are all around. Look at much of the world of politics today. The Christian Church has a great opportunity, however weak and on the margins we may feel, to tell the truth, be honest about grieving what is hurtful and

wrong, and express that, nevertheless, hope remains.

That takes some doing. Our opportunity is in whatever way we can to be Jesus' people who get this done. In Lent, in Easter, each day of our lives.

Very Revd Dr Derek Browning

DECEMBER KIRK SESSION

The December meeting was a Zoom meeting.

Planning for the future - The Moderator reported that a second Zoom meeting of the South Group to consider Presbytery Reform took place on 11th November. Each congregation had submitted a paper setting out how they had already or were proposing to respond to the 5 Marks of Mission. From these it was clear that all three churches were active and busy. This meeting was more focused on what future part the three churches might play in the Presbytery given the envisaged decline in numbers in the Church of Scotland. It was noted that there had already been significant reduction in the number of congregations in Morningside – five having come together over a period of 60 years to form MPC. The Revd Dr Martin Ritchie had drafted a short statement which was approved by all the representatives -

“The congregations of Fairmilehead, Greenbank and Morningside recognise the unique histories that have led us to inherit three dynamic congregations with distinctive strengths and buildings which are tremendous centres for mission. We commit to support and encourage each other in our uniqueness, to learn from one another in our differences, and to collaborate where we can be more effective in our mission together.”

It was suggested that consideration should be given to identify where collaboration might be more effective, possibly through staffing on a temporary or permanent basis or joint working on specific projects.

Reports – Stewardship & Finance - Chris McNeil, Treasurer had circulated the figures for the year to 31/10/2020 but the focus of the presentation was on the budget for 2021 which included anticipated outcome to December 2020. The budget, having been discussed within the Stewardship & Finance committee, was recommended for approval. Both the estimated outcome for 2020 and the projected budget for 2021 had been significantly affected by the effect of the Covid19 pandemic. The principal effect had been that, since the closure of the building under lockdown restrictions in March 2020, income from letting and social events had virtually dried up and although services had resumed in August, attendance being restricted to 50 persons had significantly reduced income from the open plate. The loss of the Christmas season of services will also have an adverse financial effect in 2020. However, on a positive note, income from Freewill Offering had held up well, indicating that previous work to encourage giving by standing order had proved its worth. We have benefited from the Chancellor's furlough scheme (now extended into 2021) which has contributed to the cost of the caretakers and church officer.

Prudent estimates of income had been used to set the budget on the basis that restriction on numbers at services, the return of tenants and the start of social and fund raising activities will continue for some time yet. This leads to a consequential saving in cleaning costs as the caretakers have taken on the cleaning duties until the number of lets build up. Because of the pressure on the income of congregations, the levy set by 121 for Ministries and Mission had been reduced for 2021 by 16% and Presbytery had reduced its dues, for 2021 only, by one third. The annual deficit in 2020 with another annual deficit budgeted for

2021 means that there will also be a drop of income from investments as funds have been withdrawn to meet the shortfall. No salary increases have been awarded to staff, as there have been no increases proposed by the Church of Scotland and the University of Edinburgh whom we use as comparators in setting salaries. If, however, the Government proposes any increase in the Living Wage in April we will ensure that none of our staff falls below that level.

Overall, the income budget for 2021 is set for £226,127 (estimated at £225,648 for 2020), and the expenditure budget for £283,127 (estimated at £317,087 for 2020). The estimated operating deficit for 2020 of £91,446 is budgeted to reduce to £57,000 and, taking into account one off premises' costs, the estimated deficit for 2020 of £139,624 reduced to £78,582 in 2021. Session approved the budget, but it was agreed that it would be reviewed in April by which time hopefully a clearer picture will have emerged of the effects of the pandemic.

The Treasurer also reported that the contactless CollecTin machine was now operational. He did not envisage it would be a significant source of income initially but it will be another opportunity for people to contribute. In the last two weeks £90 had been raised in this way.

The Moderator thanked the Treasurer and the Stewardship & Finance Committee for the considerable work in producing the budget and their oversight of the congregation's finances throughout the year.

Pastoral Assistant's report – Jacqui Lindsay reported that things remain pretty much the same since last month's report. However, South Morningside Primary School had offered Christmas gift boxes to eleven people in our congregation. These had been gratefully received and are destined to be given to members who are on their own.

Education – Kenny Robertson, Convenor, reported that the focus had been on Sunday Club and praised the "power of work" being undertaken by Norma Wilson and Rona McLaren to provide weekly online meetings which attracted about 6-8 children each time. They are currently working on creating "stained glass windows" which will be displayed on the windows of the Cluny and Braid Halls.

PVG - Paul Cackette, Convenor, reported that there had been few new volunteers so little action had been necessary. A new online procedure had been created for registration. His focus was now on checking with organisations as to who was currently involved in relevant work with a view to being able to complete the annual attestation due in March.

Social – Fiona Stimpson, Convenor, had nothing to report because of the pandemic restrictions. At the time of the cancellation of the Summer Lunch she had hoped that the Christmas mulled wine might be possible. However clearly this is not the case but optimistically she hoped that perhaps Easter treats might yet be possible.

Communication – Issie Paterson, Convenor, reported that the project to send Christmas cards to the congregation had been well received. This had largely been possible by the work of Jan Goulding and Fiona Stewart who had had to create the lists necessary to achieve delivery of a card either with the Magazine to those who still receive a paper copy or posting to households who receive the Magazine by e mail.

Property – Moira Clark, Convenor, reported that the work by Zenith to the roof and fleche was nearing completion. The removal of the old switchgear from under the stairs in the vestibule had been completed but there was still some concern and ongoing appraisal work will continue. She paid tribute to the work of the caretakers and was grateful to them for being both so flexible and willing to undertake tasks.

Outreach – Fiona Stimpson reported that she was extremely grateful for the generosity of the donations made to the Edinburgh Clothing Store in response to the Christmas Appeal. Over 100 items of new children's clothing had been donated as well as over £700 to purchase more. This would not have been possible without the work of Fiona Gossip who had collected donations from the congregation. Some of the items have already been distributed and although face to face meetings are currently not possible because of the pandemic, she is in no doubt, from previous years, of the delight which these new items will bring to children in need.

In other business, **Hugh Crawford** floated the idea of creating for sale a CD of our church organ and choral music. He is in contact with someone with the necessary technical expertise and asked for an indication of interest from Session before proceeding. Although numbers were not taken there was clear support for the idea, and it was felt there would be further support from the congregation.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES



We were lucky enough to welcome back former choir scholar Jack Harris to provide some singing for the socially distanced Christmas services which were recorded and available through our website. [Photo: Douglas Paterson]

WORSHIP MATTERS

Sunday services

At time of writing restrictions mean that all 10.30am services from the Church are live-streamed, and can be watched later on in the week. The order of service and the sermon are also available to read online.

March Communion

Given the current restrictions, it is unlikely that the March Communion will take place with a congregation present. It is likely that, as in June and December last year, an online communion service will be arranged, and those watching will be invited to take part at home.

ONLINE LENT COURSE 2021

This year's Lent Course will be held online, via Zoom. The theme has been prepared by St Martin-in-the-Fields Church in London around the idea, 'Inspired to Follow: Art and the Bible Story' The course is entitled 'Who is my Neighbour? – A journey through Lent'. It will be led by our Probationer Minister, Dr Conor Fegan, assisted by the Minister. There will be four sessions, either on Wednesday evenings or Thursday mornings.

Wednesday 3 March	7.30pm	Thursday 4 March	10:30am
Wednesday 10 March	7.30pm	Thursday 11 March	10:30am
Wednesday 17 March	7.30pm	Thursday 18 March	10:30am
Wednesday 24 March	7.30pm	Thursday 25 March	10:30am

The course includes the following sessions:

- Giving Hospitality to Strangers - Luke 10: 25-42 and 'Christ in the House of Martha and Mary', Diego Velázquez, probably 1618, NG1375
- Standing Up for the Oppressed - Mark 11: 4-12 & 15-19 and 'Christ driving the Traders from the Temple', El Greco, about 1600, NG1457
- Carrying Another's Load (Simon of Cyrene) - Luke 23:26-33 and 'Christ carrying the Cross', Italian, Venetian, about 1500, NG6655
- Being a Neighbour to Those on the Road - Luke 24:25-35 and 'The Supper at Emmaus', Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, 1601, NG172

To get the link for the Zoom meetings, and for further details, please contact Conor Fegan, c.fegan@churchofscotland.org.uk

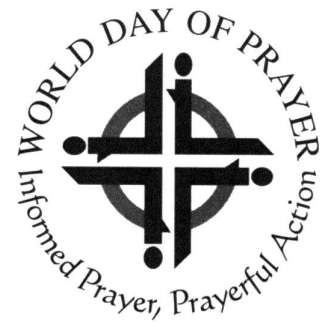
WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 5TH MARCH 2021

Updates from City of Edinburgh Committee, and Scottish Committee for WDP

For Edinburgh, an online Bible Study will be held via Zoom on

Friday 12th February 2021, 10:30am-12.00 noon

Leader: Revd. David Coleman, EcoChaplain



Details for joining will be sent nearer the time to anyone who requests them from the Morningside Parish Church WDP representative, (Marie, see below).

The WDP theme for 2021 is: “Build on a strong foundation”.

The service has been written by women of Vanuatu.

From Tuesday 23rd February Scottish WDP Committee has planned for “10 Days of Prayer”, which will be posted on www.wdpScotland.org.uk/ and their Facebook page. Leaders of ten denominations have been invited to share a Thought for the Day, focussing on Vanuatu.

As it seems unlikely any other form of worship could be held on 5th March, the **Scottish Committee invites those who have access to join them in a live WDP service at 2pm, hosted on Zoom by Augustine United Church.** The service will be recorded and posted on the website (www.wdpScotland.org.uk/) and Facebook page for later access. Details for joining the live service are available on request, and will be on website and Facebook page of World Day of Prayer Scotland.

At date of writing (12th January), it is not known whether any local WDP services could be held some weeks after 5th March for those who do not have internet access but would like to attend a booked event once this is permitted.

Marie Ogilvie
(email: marieogilvie@btinternet.com; tel: 668 1759)



ROLL CHANGES

Please remember in your prayers the family and friends of the following members:

Mrs Marjory Whitton who died on 25th November 2020

Mrs June Clark, who died on Christmas Eve 2020

Mr Jim Sneddon, who died on 19th January 2021



FLOWER COMMITTEE

After eight years in charge of the Flower Committee, Eleanor Watt has decided to retire from the position of Convener. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank her for her leadership and all her hard work over this time. We are delighted, however, that she is only retiring from the Convenership and will continue with her flower arranging duties once these can be resumed.

The decision was taken at the start of lockdown to suspend the provision of fresh flowers in the church pending the resumption of normal services. As those of you watching the services on-line will have noticed, silk flowers were purchased from the Flower Fund and are currently being changed on a seasonal basis. Although there are no fresh flowers in the church, flower deliveries are now taking place which are being financed by monies received for the provision of flowers in the church over this period.

Donations in February are as follows:

7 February 2021	Donation from Lorna Graham
14 February 2021	Donation from Ruth Henderson
21 February 2021	Donation from Kenny Robertson
28 February 2021	Donation from Frances Bruce

Uptake of the Flower List for 2021 has been poor to date with dates still available on

- 7, 14 and 21 March;
- 11, 18 and 25 April;
- 2, 9 and 30 May;
- 6 June; 4, 11, 18 and 25 July;
- 8, 15 and 29 August;
- 12 and 19 September;
- 21 and 28 November and
- 5 December.

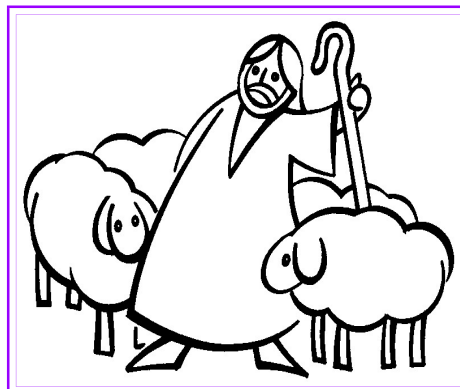
I understand that many people prefer to see real flowers in church, but until such time as restrictions permit and flowers can safely be arranged and delivered, monies donated will be used to provide flower deliveries which I know are much appreciated by those who receive them.

As the flower list cannot be displayed as usual in the vestibule, if you would like to supply flowers one Sunday, please contact Irene Wilson (Tel: 449 2866 e-mail: irene_a_wilson@btinternet.com). Cheques for £45 should be made payable to 'Morningside Parish Church Flower Fund'. If you are a UK taxpayer and can give by Gift Aid, please fill in a Gift Aid envelope or advise me if you have registered with the Gift Aid Convener. Monies can be sent to me at 66 Thomson Crescent, Edinburgh, EH14 5JS, put in the Flower Committee pigeon hole or sent to the church office (marked for the Flower Fund). If you prefer to pay by bank transfer, please contact me direct for details.

Irene Wilson
Convener - Flower Committee

PASTORAL CARE AT MORNINGSIDES PARISH CHURCH DURING COVID-19

The Minister, Pastoral Assistant and Probationer Minister, with district elders and others, continue to phone, email and write to congregation members, particularly those who are vulnerable or on their own. Please let us know if there are any people who you think might appreciate a phone call or email at this time. And if you would like a call – do not hesitate to contact us! At time of writing, home visits, along with hospital and nursing home visits are still not possible.



Now that I am 91 and past my sell-by date

Life is not always jolly fun:

There's some things that I hate.

One is my tendency to spill

From plate and spoon and cup.

But as I've lots of time to kill

I've time to mop it up!

Annot Lighthouse



FINANCIAL GIVING TO THE CHURCH DURING COVID-19

Please keep up to date with your financial giving via standing order or direct debit, or save your envelopes and other financial gifts and bring them to church when we re-open.

Increase regular donations: please consider instructing your bank to increase your existing standing order **if you are able**. Cheques can also be posted to the Church Office for processing.

If you would like to make a one-off donation, please use the new 'Donate' button on the Church website, or on the Weekly Email from the Minister.

There was a significant impact on Church finances last year and this will continue well into this year. Your continuing, or increased, generosity will be particularly important. It enables so much to happen in and around our Church.

Thank you to everyone who continues to be generous with their financial giving at this time.

SHROVE TUESDAY AND ITS TRADITIONS

Shrove Tuesday (Shrove is derived from shrive, to receive absolution for your sins through confession) is the day before Lent, the season of the Christian year where followers of Jesus are encouraged to reflect on their lives in the forty-day period leading up to Easter. Some people give up luxuries at this time, whilst others take up positive habits and practices.

In some countries the day is celebrated by a carnival (derived from the Latin which means to put away meat). The carnival is sometimes called Mardi Gras (fat Tuesday), where people would use up all their luxury foods like butter, eggs and milk before the fasting days of Lent.

Shrove Tuesday was once known as a "half-holiday" in Britain. It started at 11:00 am with the ringing of a church bell. On Pancake Day, "pancake races" are held in villages and towns across the United Kingdom. The tradition is said to have originated in 1445 when a housewife from Olney in Buckinghamshire was so busy making pancakes that she forgot the time until she heard the church bells ringing for the service. She raced out of the house to church while still carrying her frying pan and pancake, tossing it to prevent it from burning. The pancake race remains a relatively common festive tradition in the UK. Participants with frying pans race through the streets tossing pancakes into the air and catching them in the pan while running. The pancake race at Olney traditionally has women contestants who carry a frying pan and race over a 415-yard course to the finishing line. The rules are strict: contestants must toss the pancake at the start and the finish, and wear a scarf and apron.

Alas, no pancake races around Morningside this year, but enjoy making your own at home on Shrove Tuesday, 16th February. Here's a recipe for Scotch pancakes, harder to toss but just as easy to eat! (*from Good Housekeeping*)

100g self raising flour	1 egg
15-25g sugar	about 150ml milk

Preheat a griddle. Put the flour and sugar in a bowl, add the egg and half the milk and beat until smooth. Add the remaining milk and beat until bubbles rise to the surface. Drop the mixture onto the griddle in small rounds from the end of a dessert spoon, spacing well. When bubbles rise on the surface, turn the pancakes with a palette knife and cook for a further 30 seconds – 1 minute, or until golden brown. Place inside a clean tea towel over a wire rack while the rest are cooking. Serve buttered. (Makes about 15)

Another recipe for your spare moments - Basil and Lime fruit salad dressing

½ cup sugar	½ cup fresh basil leaves
½ cup water	Zest and juice 1 lime

Boil sugar and water till sugar dissolves. Stir in basil, lime zest and juice and let cool.

Strain out all solids. Toss into a fruit salad of your choice.

MARCH MAGAZINE

Material for the March issue of the magazine should be with the editor, Alison Riddell, by **Friday 12th February 2021** and it will be available by Sunday 28th February. While there are restrictions on church opening, please email contributions to editor@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk. As the magazine is not being printed for general distribution during the pandemic, if you would like to receive it by email, or know of any member of the congregation who would like this, please contact the church office. It will be put on the church website, where you can also find previous issues.

'Sometimes', by Sheenagh Pugh

Sometimes things don't go, after all,
from bad to worse. Some years, muscadel
faces down frost; green thrives; the crops don't fail.
Sometimes a man aims high, and all goes well.
A people sometimes will step back from war,
elect an honest man, decide they care
enough, that they can't leave some stranger poor.
Some men become what they were born for.
Sometimes our best intentions do not go
amiss; sometimes we do as we meant to.
The sun will sometimes melt a field of sorrow
that seemed hard frozen; may it happen for you.



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Join us for worship each Sunday, by clicking on the link on our website to join us online either live at 10.30am or at a later date. www.morningsideparishchurch.org.uk