



Magazine

No. 165 June 2021

Dear Friends

How tired are you? Speaking to people in and around our congregation, the Presbytery, the wider Church, and amongst friends, many are talking about feeling tired. Or, perhaps to be more accurate, weary. The lockdown has diminished or wiped out entirely many of the usual distractions, entertainments, social markers that make up most of our lives. It has created, for many, a long, unremarkable flat space in life when days, weeks, months have merged into each other. I know for everyone it has not been one long vale of tears, but time seems to have stretched and the things that mark it, and distinguish one thing from another have seemed ironed out.

We have tried to build order and definition into our living, but it has for many of us been a hard time. In some ways we've never felt busier for the days have not exactly been empty. But the sheer, unrelenting nature of these times have left many of us feeling flat and minus our usual sparkle.

Maybe the summer months will be better. Though we might not be able to travel too far, a change of scene, a different horizon might begin to add some of the lustre and the definition that so many of us have felt lacking. We have discovered that most of us like some degree of organization in our lives, and the erasing of routine has left us still busy, but rudderless at times.

I am turning my thoughts to sentences that begin with, 'when we...'. When we get back to 'normal'. When we start meeting up again. When we get to sing. When we start to organize events. When it comes to how we live out our faith, Pope Francis has said that after these difficult times, many of us may feel the need to migrate from 'organised religion' to 'organising religion'.

As Christian individuals and congregations migrate from organised religion (organised for self-preservation) to organising religion (organising for mission and the common good), Christians will ask new questions that



have hardly been on our radar in the past. As we look back over these last months, what have we lost and need to let go? What have we missed and need to take up? What might we, or must we, do differently - in our personal and community

lives, and in the life of our Church?

That thought might terrify or drain you; or it may, after the rest that many of us need, begin to energise and open minds and hearts to the opportunities that God is already preparing for us.

Have a good rest this summer, get fresh air, refresh your hearts and minds and souls if you can, and begin to wonder what, when everything, please God, starts up again, we might, as Morningside Parish Church, do next.

Very Revd Dr Derek Browning

MAY KIRK SESSION

The Kirk Session had a Zoom meeting on 11th May.

Wi-fi in the Church: the proposed works, including addressing the issue of Wi-fi blackspots, have been delayed because the contractors had indicated, after their estimate for the work had been accepted, that they were withdrawing from doing such work. Alternative contractors are being investigated.

Emerging out of Lockdown – recent Scottish Government announcements of a relaxation of numbers allowed to attend weddings and funerals in church would not result in a significant rise in numbers as social distancing remains at 2 metres. The relaxation of the rules relating to indoor exercising may result in an increase of groups returning to use our premises. A new legal regulation requires us to display the capacity of each of our halls and the caretakers and administrator are working on this.

Communications:

The Church Magazine has been delivered either digitally or in paper form depending on restrictions throughout the lockdown. The number of paper copies has been halved to reduce costs, and those who have email addresses have been asked to receive their magazines that way. It seems to be a wise thing to do for a variety of reasons: safety, effort, cost to us and the planet.

Website - This is undergoing a 'refresh' by the Church Administrator to give it a more up to date appearance but primarily to add a link to our letting potential. After this has been achieved, we will update the content.

Christmas and Easter cards - thought is being given as to how we can reduce the time and effort of a heroic minority who have delivered these twice a year to 5,500 households. Recent events have forced more information to be spread digitally and we aim to give serious thought as to how we might go in this direction. We could make more use of social media or more eye-catching banners; we might make better use of our notice boards. There's even the idea to project the details of the festive services by means of projecting onto a wall or even the roof!

The Kirk Session acknowledged the work involved in achieving personal deliveries but thought they had proved valuable and do reach every household in the parish in the way communication by e mail would not. The cards had proved their value by making contact with every home in the parish and had impacted positively on attendance at services at the festivals. It encouraged the group to make further investigations to see how this task could be addressed.

September Street Event –because of the pandemic it is uncertain if this will be allowed this year for safety reasons. A suggestion instead is for a kind of 'Open Day' at the church. It would involve more than the Communications Group and will depend on when social distancing regulations permit larger numbers in the building. An elaborate occasion is not envisaged as we would probably be doing it at short notice, but we will be seeking active congregational support if an Open Day event is held.

Pastoral Assistant: Jacqui Lindsay reported on her ongoing work, delivering flowers to members of the congregation, and now, in a very limited way, exploring the possibility of visiting those of our members in care homes who do not have family, or family nearby. The restrictions around visiting remain fairly tight.

She also reported that there might be two possible concerts in early July to support the work of the Church, but also to begin exploring our work with music and dementia care. The Choir from

Emmanuel College Cambridge has offered to give two concerts for us, one on the evening of Saturday 3rd July and one a lunch time, dementia-friendly, version on Monday 5th. MPC would be the first stop on their mini-British tour. The only cost to the church would be the use of the venue. Entry would be by donation and any proceeds would be split 50/50 with the choir and the Church. As long as Covid restrictions allow, these would be something to look forward to and a lovely way to herald the start of a new season in the life of the church. These events are inevitably dependent on circumstances.

Future Funding - Jacqui is currently working on an application for future funding for our work with Music and Memories in Morningside and its possible expansion over the coming two to three years. With the Minister, she has identified a possible new source of funding - the Tor Christian Foundation which had been created from the proceed of sale of the former Tor Christian Nursing Home. She will investigate if they are likely to be sympathetic and if so will submit an application.

Presbytery Elder's Report – Robin Stimpson, our Session Clerk, is our representative elder on Edinburgh Presbytery. The Presbytery meeting on 27th April 2021 was again a virtual meeting. The wide range of business included -

Presbytery Reform - As previously reported, the proposal will be put to the General Assembly 2021 for Edinburgh Presbytery to unite with the Presbytery of West Lothian with effect from 1st January 2022. However, the target set by the General Assembly of 2019 is to reduce the number of Presbyteries from 43 to 12 by 2024. This will probably require larger, more regional-sized, Presbyteries to be formed and conversations are underway with Presbytery representatives of Edinburgh, West Lothian, Lothian, Duns, Melrose & Peebles, and Jedburgh for the possible scenario of a single Presbytery of the South East being proposed at the General Assembly of 2022 with a start date of 2023. Consideration is also being given to the east part of Falkirk Presbytery joining with Edinburgh.

New Plan for Edinburgh Presbytery:- The Planning Steering Group reported that:

Cluster groups - The approach by the different clusters have varied, some seeking to tackle the impending shortages of ministry posts, some considering new ways of creatively working together, but with many not addressing the impending reduction in ministry posts. There is much work remaining to be done in this area which will fall to the Strategy Team. The priorities emerging from the cluster reports are mission (particularly around new housing developments), lay training, and a priority to the poor.

The progress of Presbytery Planning has been delayed *inter alia* by the year's delay in the General Assembly agreeing the Radical Action Plan. A new development which will change both the timeline and content of the proposed Plan is a proposed new Act called the Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021. If passed, some features of the new Act are:

1. Presbytery Mission Plans should be guided by the Five Marks of Mission.
2. There will be close consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum and General Trustees
3. There will no longer be 10 year plans but 5 year rolling Mission plans, to be reviewed annually; all Plans to be approved by the end of 2022.
4. A fixed number of ministry posts which will be allocated to each Presbytery.
5. The reduction in numbers will be more severe than previously anticipated.
6. The previous four categories for buildings will be replaced by two: to retain or dispose.
7. The process of appeal will be replaced by a process of review.
8. Implementation of the Plan is urgent to achieve the reduction to 600 posts by 2025.

Formulating the Plan - the Strategy Team will propose a Plan describing how the Presbytery will:

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- i) be shaped around Mission taking note of what is agreed in Local Church Review reports;
- ii) sustain the commitment to a territorial ministry;
- iii) conform to the numbers of posts and timescales set by the General Assembly;
- iv) ensure that new ways of being Church are reflected in the Mission Plan, beyond ministers of Word and Sacrament and Development Staff appointments.

In doing so the Presbytery will categorise each ecclesiastical building as either:

- (a) to be retained beyond the five years from the point at which the Mission Plan is approved, or
- (b) to be sold, let or otherwise disposed of by a specified date within five years from the point at which the Mission Plan is approved.

Property Toolkit – Presbytery has now requested that each congregation will complete the detailed questionnaire on each of the congregation’s properties rating its merits on a scale of 1-5. These returns together with the reports from cluster groups and quinquennial inspection reports will be considered by the Strategy Team in formulating their proposals.

The Strategy Team stressed that while there will undoubtedly be losses and reductions coming, it was important not to lose sight of new possibilities. Many have expressed the need for training whether in leadership, worship leading, pioneering, or discipleship. They suggest that change can be an impetus to growth. While the pattern of one minister, one congregation, one set of buildings may no longer be the norm, there are surely many gifts within congregations to be developed and put to service in mission. It is their hope that congregations will approach future discussions in a positive way and not in defensive mode They hope that in the light of new information congregations will continue to build on their relationships and to feed ideas of new ways of shaping church life locally and considering ways in which the Presbytery as a whole can make use of its resources through its physical and online presence.

Nomination of Presbytery Elder - Robin Stimpson was nominated to continue in the role for another year. The Moderator also advised that Robert Armour would be appointed as an Equalising elder, Chris McNeil having resigned from the role.



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 you can.

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 ‘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.

WORSHIP MATTERS

The situation around Worship in Church continues to develop. At the time of writing we are still adhering to social distancing requirements, mask wearing and no singing, but there has been some informal indication that these are being reviewed, all dependent on the Covid-19 virus being reduced in prevalence. One casualty of the ongoing restriction is our June Communion. Few churches are holding communion services and those that are report very mixed responses to the 'bring-your-own' bread and wine, and do not pass things around. The Minister and Kirk Session feel that until we can hold an in-person Communion, the restrictions make holding a communion service impersonal and isolated within the church building, and will review the situation in time for the possibility of a Communion service in October. There will be another recorded online communion service available in June, more akin to a home communion, which some people have found helpful. There will be an ordinary service at 10.30am on 6th June in the Church.

At time of writing, wedding and funeral services in Church can now have 50 people present, with the same guidelines that apply to Sunday services.

With the restarting of Sunday Club on 6th June (held in the St Matthew Hall with the young people entering the building via the Cluny Gardens door), we plan to hold an all-age service on Sunday 13th June at 10.30am, with some of the young people taking part in the service. At time of writing we will still only be allowed 50 people in the sanctuary, with the usual booking.

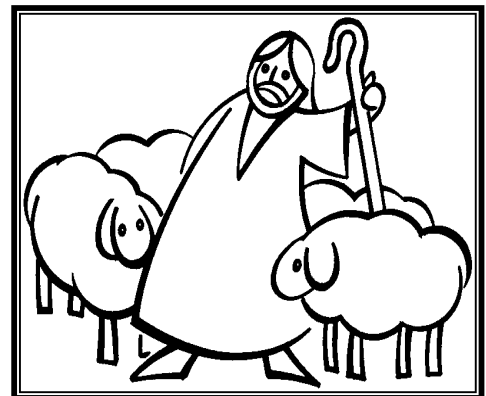
At the end of June there will be a wedding in Church, the first one in over a year, and we also look forward to a baptism on the last Sunday of the month.

Looking ahead to the autumn, there may be a possibility of restarting the 9.30am service in the Cluny Hall if the restrictions have been removed, but everything is dependent on national Church and Government guidelines.

These months have been particularly hard for our worshipping community, and it is to our credit that when we have been able to gather together for worship, we have done so gladly, enabled by a variety of people. We should also not overlook the benefit to many that the services are available to watch online, and this will be something that will continue once things return to the new normal.

PASTORAL CARE AT MORNINGSIDE 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! Things are beginning to shift a little, though there are still restrictions, but if we can help, we will.



A CONCERT BY THE CHOIR OF EMMANUEL COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

The choir has offered to make us the first stop on their tour, with a performance on **Saturday 3rd July at 7pm**

and a further, shorter Dementia Friendly concert on: **Monday 5th July at 12.30pm.**

During term, the Choir of Emmanuel College sings weekly services of Eucharist, Evensong, and Compline, which members of the College, the University, and the public are welcome to attend. The Choir members are drawn from across the University and further afield: around half are members of Emmanuel College; almost all are currently studying at Cambridge.

In addition to the round of services, the Choir gives concerts, makes recordings, and sings at events in - and outside College. Recent tours have taken the Choir to the United States, Canada, Northern Ireland, Italy, and Spain; other engagements have included Elgar *The Dream of Gerontius* in London, and Evensong at Ely Cathedral.

Forthcoming plans include performances in Edinburgh, Sheffield, Chester, Edington, and Epsom, as well as a recording of music commissioned for the Choir: over the last three years, a continuous programme of commissions has generated over twenty new works.



The tour will be led by the Director of Chapel Music, Peter Foggitt.

The tour programme 2021: Passiontide to Corpus Christi

The music for our concerts this summer reflects the liturgical seasons recently passed: modern and medieval music for Passiontide and Easter gives way to Tallis' seven-voice anthem *Loquebantur variis linguis*; Byrd's virtuoso setting of the last Psalm, *Laudibus in sanctis*, is counterpointed by new works by Milo Flynn and Alex Patel. At the end of the Saturday programme, Jonathan Dove's minimalist *Missa brevis* is followed by one of the largest and most spectacular anthems in the repertoire, Finzi's *Lo, the full, final sacrifice*.

Entry will be by donation, all proceeds being split equally between the church and the choir.

A seat can be secured in the same way as a place at Sunday worship, booking through the church office. Currently 50 places are available but this may increase as regulations change

As with all things at present, the concerts are dependent on Covid restrictions but currently, by 3rd July we are meant to be in level 0 which allows for events to take place.

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FLOWER COMMITTEE



Flowers over the coming months will be provided as follows:

6 June Donated by Nyria Bailey
13 June Donated by Charles and Irene Wilson
20 June Donated by Dorothy Mushet
27 June Donated by Annette and Jim Jenkinson

4 July Donated by Sheila Rowand
11 July Donated by Moira Forsyth
18 July Donated by Bill and Catriona Reid
25 July Donated by Gretta Miller

1 August Donated by Robin and Fiona Stimpson
8 August Donated by Nyria Bailey
15 August Donated by Roger and Jane Prince
22 August Donated by Margaret Gossip
29 August Donated by Irene Wilkie

With restrictions gradually being lifted, it is hoped that "normal service" will resume as soon as safely possible, and that real flowers will reappear in the church at some time over the summer.

Our small band of Flower Ladies is, as always, looking for people to help with our displays. As someone who doesn't have an artistic bone in her body, I can safely say that you never know what you are capable of until you try and we are more than willing to pair up with anyone who would like to give it a go. There is no restriction on gender - if there are any gentlemen in the congregation who would like to join us, we would quite happily become Flower People. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you are interested. I can be contacted at irene_a_wilson@btinternet.com (Tel: 0131 449 2866).

Irene Wilson. Convener - Flower Committee



ROLL CHANGES

Please remember in your prayers the family and friends of
Miss Doreen Stout who died on 21st May 2021

CHURCH MAGAZINE

During the Covid pandemic, and the consequent lockdowns, it was not possible to produce a printed copy of the Church magazine every month. However, despite the restrictions, a copy was available to read either via the Church website or by receiving an electronic copy from the Church Office.

Printing the magazine every month for over 200 Church members is not a good use of our resources on either cost or environmental grounds. For those reasons, at the end of 2020, magazines were only delivered/posted to those who we knew did not have an e mail address. We would like to encourage everyone who has an e mail address to read the magazine online or to receive an electronic copy via the Church Office. We do, however, appreciate that not everyone has access to a computer and so printed copies will still be delivered or posted to them.

In order that we have an up-to-date record of those who wish to receive a printed copy of the magazine, or who wish to receive an electronic copy, please complete the form which is enclosed with this edition of the magazine and **return it to the Church Administrator by 2nd July**. If you do forward your e mail address please be assured that, in accordance with data protection measures, it will only be used to forward the magazine to you and for no other purpose.

Once we have this list, we will be in touch with all who previously delivered copies to ask if they wish to continue. It is unlikely we will need the same number of volunteers as before, but we would like to thank everyone who has delivered over the years and to those who "stepped up to the plate" when we resumed deliveries at the end of last year. Your efforts are much appreciated.

Fiona Stewart and Issie Paterson



SCOTTISH LOVE IN ACTION

For over twenty-one years, Scottish Love in Action (SLA) has worked with grassroots NGO partners in India to provide care, protection and education for some of the world's most vulnerable children. We have supported over ten thousand children and young people, giving them the tools to break free from the poverty trap and transform not only their own lives, but the lives of generations to come.

An unprecedented crisis

India is facing an unprecedented crisis: the official death toll from the coronavirus pandemic is over a quarter of a million, but experts believe the real figure to be up to five times higher. The health system is over-run and alarming numbers of people are dying due to lack of oxygen, medication and appropriate care. Our partners in India tell us that '*India is reeling in the second wave*' and '*the general morale is that of anxiety and panic*'. They want supporters in Scotland to know how much our '*solidarity and support*' means to them and the children and young people they work with.

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Our partners on the ground

Our partner organisations demonstrate extraordinary resilience. Arunmai Racherla, State Programme Manager of Rainbow Homes reports: *'as of now the Homes are stabilised and able to manage the virus spread, with the help of day-to-day increased hygiene practices and basic healthcare like checking temperatures daily, monitoring for symptoms of illness and preventative practices such as ensuring good general health through a diet of salads, fruit and protein.'*

She confirmed that none of the children or staff in the ASRITHA Rainbow Home whom SLA support have caught Covid – testament to the very high standards of care and protection provided by the excellent staff team. It is chilling to imagine what the fate of the children could have been, had they not been rescued from the streets by Rainbow Homes.

Anusha Bharadwaj, CEO of VOICE4Girls has described how they have continued to reach out to girls and boys throughout the pandemic. Over 1,100 girls have been contacted via mobile devices and attended VOICE programmes remotely, reporting how vital this link to the outside world is for them. They are taking the messages they learn out into their communities and even passing on the learning to their own mothers, often still young themselves. Over 500 adolescent boys have also been through VOICE programmes in this period, as VOICE recognise the importance of including and educating boys to create truly sustainable social change.

SLA is needed now, more than ever

While children in the U.K. have now returned to school, most schools in India have been closed since last March. This has had a devastating impact on children: many will never go back to education, robbing them of any opportunity to escape the poverty trap. British Deputy High Commissioner to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Dr Andrew Fleming highlights that: *"The need for and impact of SLA's support will only increase in the weeks and months ahead, to protect vulnerable young people and ensure they have the best chances in life."*

The work we do with our partners today, changes children and young people's lives: it is needed now more than ever.

How you can help

If you would like to make a donation to help with the immediate crisis, the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) at www.dec.org.uk has launched a Covid Crisis appeal. They are raising funds to provide medical supplies, treatment facilities and logistics support.

You can also support the ongoing work of Scottish Love in Action, creating life-long change through 'Education' for some of the world's most vulnerable children and young people, by making a donation to SLA today at: <https://www.sla-india.org/product/single-donation/>

SEPTEMBER MAGAZINE

As there are no magazines in July or August, material for the September issue of the magazine should be with the editor, Alison Riddell, by **Friday 20th August 2021** and it will be available by Sunday 5th September. While restrictions on church opening continue, please email your contributions to editor@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk.

Love after Love by Derek Walcott

The time will come
when, with elation
you will greet yourself arriving
at your own door, in your own mirror
and each will smile at the other's
welcome,



and say, sit here. Eat.
You will love again the stranger who was your self.
Give wine. Give bread. Give back your heart
to itself, to the stranger who has loved you

all your life, whom you ignored
for another, who knows you by heart.
Take down the love letters from the bookshelf,

the photographs, the desperate notes,
peel your own image from the mirror.
Sit. Feast on your life.

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Join us for worship in Church in person at 10.30am each Sunday, having first booked a seat through the Church Office, or click on the link on our website to join us online either live or at a later date. www.morningsideparishchurch.org.uk

We hope to be able to meet more of you in person by the time of the next magazine!