



Magazine

No. 184 September 2023

Dear Friends

Whilst on holiday in London recently I ticked off at least two bucket-list aspirations. One was to go to the Proms at the Royal Albert Hall. Beethoven's Ninth was magnificent and the RSNO and chorus superb.

The other was to sail up the Thames. I sailed down the Thames to Greenwich a few years ago. But the up-river sailings only go in the summer. Three and a half long, lazy, fascinating hours sailing from Westminster Bridge, past the Houses of Parliament, and Lambeth Palace, and the headquarters of MI6 (shhh..), and the entire route of the Oxford and Cambridge boat race, and countless bridges, and quaint houseboats, and Battersea Power Station, and churches, pubs and docks, and large country houses, and small huddled-together homes on the bankside.



Given the usual frenetic pace of London life, and life in general, it was initially unsettling, even frustrating, to be forced to go along at this leisurely pace as images of London and then the beautiful countryside leading up towards Hampton Court Palace slowly slid by. We went through three locks, we negotiated the small islands, we sailed cautiously by sculls and smaller boating craft, but all done at a pace that seemed only slightly faster than a brisk walk.

As a holiday unwinding exercise for me it was utterly necessary as I went from sitting on the deck in the warm air, taking in the scenery, or sitting below deck at the bar, looking out of the windows. Time was indeed the, 'ever-rolling stream' that bore away so much of the stresses and strains of life as scenes slowly glided by and I found a different pace, and an opportunity to observe the beauty of God's Creation, and the ingenuity of human constructions beside and indeed over the Thames.

Sometimes we need to slow down, slow right down, and learn to appreciate that not everything needs to be instant. And sometimes in those slower times, God, Who has been present and speaking all along, can at last be heard as the incessant noise of living has its volume turned down.

"Be still and know that I am God", the Psalmist writes in Psalm 46. We are not always in control of the speed, or slowness, of our lives. But sometimes, just sometimes, we can manage to take that time out: to watch, and wonder, and listen, and think, and pray. Not just on summer river trips, but throughout the year too.

Very Revd Dr Derek Browning

KIRK SESSION NEWS

The Kirk Session met in June:

- **Presbytery Planning:** The Moderator advised Session that there was currently not much more to report as the next meeting of the four churches involving Ministers and Session Clerks was not due to take place until 28 June.
- **Stewardship & Finance - Robert Armour, Convenor** advised that, each year in June, the Stewardship and Finance Committee sets out the high-level plan for the year ahead. He reported – We have now returned, post pandemic, to the “new normal” which allows for better prediction of our financial position and congregational health.

There are a number of positive trends to factor into the plan:

- giving has held up well
- our financials are exactly on budget at a deficit of £23k as at end April
- investment returns have improved
- our office arrangements are working well, and our new financial systems mean we have much better visibility of our financials
- rentals in the Church and Halls are steadily increasing and our centre is an important hub in Morningside
- we are a busy church with a lot going on....supporting Morningside Hope, and our chosen charities....as well as a packed programme of church centred activities for the congregation and wider....we should not take for granted how much we currently do

Equally, there are several less happy long-term factors we cannot ignore:

- there are a number of one-off property maintenance bills to come through later this year
- we are running a deficit of £68k per annum and have run a deficit for the last decade
- our roll has suffered attrition, and the average congregational age is rising
- we are seeing stresses in the availability of volunteers (crèche, car rota, baby & toddler, Wednesday coffees, etc.)

And we know the future will see certain changes that affect us and every other congregation:

- the Presbytery plan sees us joining in some form of Union or collaboration with Greenbank, Fairmilehead, and St John's Colinton Mains by the end of 2025 which will involve change as well as opportunity
 - a priority for the coming year will be building greater familiarity with these churches, through joint events, and identifying common areas for working together.
A stewardship campaign alongside a review of giving, and a review of hall rentals, will take place this year.
- **Communications** – Isobel Paterson, convener, advised that a meeting has been arranged to discuss arrangements for the Christmas Tree Festival. William Purves, undertakers, had agreed to sponsor the purchase of the trees.

The **STATED ANNUAL MEETING OF MORNINGSIDE PARISH CHURCH** was held on 10 July 2023.

The reports highlighted all the positive work being done at MPC but also financial concerns to be addressed and the shortage of volunteers.

Annual Accounts - The Annual Accounts are approved by the Kirk Session, under charity law, as trustees for the congregation. The full narrative highlighted the work of the church in 2022. Copies of the accounts were circulated for the congregation's information.

The Treasurer reported that -

- In 2022 **congregational income** was £258,304 - the principal elements being congregational offerings of £114,015; Gift Aid of £28,197; a legacy of £6,267; a donation of £5,000 from the Friends of MPC to fund some choral scholarships: income from Weddings and Funerals £2,150; rental income for use of our premises £38,369 and investment income of £26,197.

The total market value of investments held was £809,048 at 31 December 2022 (2021: £1,039,217). The two holdings are in the Church of Scotland Investors Trust Growth Fund and the Church of Scotland Investors Trust Income Fund.

- The **largest elements of the Church's expenditure** for 2022 were – Ministries and Mission Allocation of £99,295; Staff Salaries £98,163; Fabric Repairs and Maintenance £18,522 (2021: £18,541)
- The cost of raising funds through the use of our premises amounted to £66,626 (2021: £58,858.)

Total Expenditure for the year 2022 was £325,245 (2021: £297,664).

Operating Deficit - there was an operating deficit of £66,941. However, including unrealised losses on investments of £130,164, the net deficit for the year shown in the accounts was £197,105.

The **balance sheet** has unrestricted reserves of £1,508,436. (2021: £1,697,069) and

restricted funds of £31,640 (2021: £40,112), giving **total funds** of £1,540,076 (2021: £1,737,181)



The Treasurer said that the finances of the Congregation had held up very well considering the aftermath of the Covid pandemic and the high rate of inflation. However, it remained a concern that we had a continuing annual deficit and efforts would need to be taken to address this.

Robert Armour, Convenor of the Stewardship & Finance committee said advice was being taken from Stewardship Advisors from 121 as to how the continuing annual deficits could best be addressed. The S&F committee will put proposals to Session in the early Autumn.

Robin Stimpson, Session Clerk, then spoke about **“the Rest” of the work of the church**, excluding the accounts, Presbytery Reform, or how to improve our financial position. He suggested that we each probably know about bits of the “rest” but all the bits together form quite an enterprise.

As part of our discussion about our future association with Greenbank, Fairmilehead and St Johns Colinton Mains, each church agreed to prepare a diary of events in the last six months and events anticipated in the next six months. – for MPC it extended to 10 x A4 sheets of paper listing 140 different events. However, all events are listed only once each month and if you take account of the recurrence of every event the number each year increases to 364. In addition, Sunday worship is listed as a single entry but includes not just two diets of worship, but also Sunday coffees, crêche, choir, flower arrangement, flower delivery, and car rota - these could be

counted as an additional seven events. Separately counted the total number of events would increase to roughly 726 per annum and it doesn't start to include the variety of offerings under the Morningside Hope banner, the meetings of Session Committees etc. etc. nor indeed the regular and irregular use of our halls and sanctuary for youth organisations, fitness classes, and all the other lets of our premises.

This is only achieved by the hard work of our staff and congregation together. If it is true that many hands make light work, it is equally true that many hands make the congregation work – e.g. 44 people contribute by being on welcome duty, there are 27 who read the lesson, each communion involves 29 elders on duty and the Sunday coffee rota has the names of 30 helpers. This does not cover half of the tasks willingly undertaken and it is clear that the business of the congregation only operates by the goodwill, energy and multi-tasking of an army of helpers who give so freely of their time and to whom we all owe our thanks for making it possible. But to paraphrase the words of Lord Kitchener in the First World War “your congregational army needs YOU!”.

ANNUAL REPORT

Robin went on to pick out some highlights of the past year.

One was the gradual return to so called “normality” after the Covid pandemic. It has been a challenge over the months to strike an appropriate balance between going fully back to our old ways and the continuing risk of infection, particularly among the elderly and medically vulnerable. The development of our online recording of worship has been a positive outcome, welcomed and much appreciated but it has incurred costs and care to avoid breach of copyright for music which is recorded or streamed. It is assumed that there

are no copyright issues on the sermons or prayers!

Catering matters also had to be adjusted to reflect the need for greater care during and post the pandemic and it was a joy that the celebration of the King's Coronation demonstrated that the Social Committee had not lost its flair in creating special events. The long-awaited return of the Afternoon Tea will take place in August [see report elsewhere in this magazine].

The multi-faceted work of Morningside Hope continues to develop and flourish, nurtured by our Pastoral Assistant and others.

Property matters continue to be dealt with, some arising from the continuing heavy use of the facilities and others by accident, vandalism or design. It is likely that the water ingress into the South corridor adjoining the Braid Hall is not only significantly improved but is nearing a positive solution – possibly within the next couple of months.

A satisfactory solution to the cost of repair to the pillar at Cluny Gardens has been achieved, partly by the heroics of our caretaker Stevie Watson who, with a passerby, dragged major pieces of stone from the road which both reduced the risk of major traffic accident and the cost of repair, and also by the perseverance of David Mitchell in recovering most of the cost from the car insurers.

The burden of maintenance, as ever, has fallen on the Property Committee and the caretakers who have since the onset of Covid also taken on cleaning duties. With the return of more users to the premises post Covid it is planned to employ cleaners to keep up standards.

In the last few months, we have welcomed five new elders to the Kirk Session and employed Leigh Malaihollo as our new administrator. Leigh has already made significant inroad into the rendering and recovery of a backlog of rental fees, and to upgrading the rental system. She plans in

early course to turn her attention to producing a long overdue Church Directory and thereafter assist with the development of the website.

Finally, Robin thanked Derek for his major contribution as the driving, inspiring, and sometimes demanding role of leader of this congregational army.

Presbytery Reform - The Moderator explained that reform was essential as nationwide there was an anticipated drop of 40% in the numbers of ministers and also a drop in the numbers of active worshippers. There was therefore an overprovision of church buildings. For financial and practical reasons, it was the responsibility of the Presbytery to work out what reduction would be necessary in the number of charges. MPC had originally been put in a group with Greenbank and Fairmilehead reflecting a long-term historic connection of working together. The initial proposal for a union between MPC and Reid Memorial was not favoured by the Reid congregation who looked more to the Newington direction than to Morningside. The last iteration of the Presbytery plan, now approved by Presbytery, links MPC with Greenbank, Fairmilehead and St Johns Colinton Mains (SJCM) in a union served by three ministers. All four church buildings were listed as "A" for retention. No guidance has been given as to how the Union should be established so it is for the congregations to establish how it can be

achieved. Union may not necessarily mean all four congregations join in a single unit - it may be some form of federation linking could be worked out with a sharing of resources, working together in a shared plan but with individual congregations retaining individual styles and possibly individual projects. There are many issues to be addressed, for example-

- Greenbank currently is without a minister. It is thought that this will weaken its ability to contribute to the enterprise and it has been agreed that it should approach Presbytery to see if it would consider allowing the appointment of a locally funded post.
- SJCM had plans to part refurbish/ part build a Church Centre on their site but have not been able to progress its original plans because of the moratorium imposed by the Presbytery Plan. The costs of materials and labour having now risen, they are having to review their proposals.

In the whole scenario approved by Presbytery for us there is much to be discussed to develop a possible way forward but conversations are underway.

The Moderator thanked the Session and membership for all their work and support and looked forward to a continuing development of the work of the congregation in the months and years ahead.



ROLL CHANGES

Please remember in your prayers the family and friends of

Mrs Margaret Macleod, who died on 25 May 2023.

Mrs Rosemary Drysdale, who died on 22nd June 2023.

Mrs Jane Thorpe Menzies, who died on 18 August 2023



MORNINGSIDE HOPE CONCERT MAY 2023

At the end of May, we were delighted to welcome back, by popular demand, the Brass Ensemble to continue our 2023 series of Dementia Friendly concerts with a selection of short pieces for two trumpets, two trombones and one horn which resonated splendidly in the wonderful church

acoustic. We had an excellent audience and hope to build on this success in our future concerts. Please encourage friends and family to attend.

The programme was wide-ranging and well-chosen with an excellent commentary provided by the Ensemble to educate and inform the audience as we went along the brass journey. We had a rousing start with a stirring Dukas *Fanfare* followed by a delightful selection of Maurer miniatures taken from his 12 Little Pieces for Brass Quintet. Betsy Bright's *Western Suite* concluded the set programme with some fabulous descriptive writing in the three movements with emotive titles such as 'Adventure Awaits' and 'Rowdy' where fighting trumpets were a musical feature! Practical demonstrations of the instruments were particularly appreciated with some interesting definitions of words used to describe brass instruments discussed. Some competition between the merits of the different instruments was also explored and we had our first concert quiz, with Ruari (in his gold suit) as the answer to all five questions! The amazing encore, 'Just a Closer Walk', was enjoyed greatly and we concluded the afternoon with some very convivial post-concert refreshments with the performers and audience in attendance.

Our grateful thanks to all the wonderful catering staff and caretaker. In addition, our gratitude to all the church staff and stewards, the Minister for his welcome and conclusion, Douglas Paterson for his photography and the Tor Foundation for support.

Our **next concert** is a string quartet on **Saturday 23 September** at 2 pm. Thank you for all the support we have received to date, and we look forward to seeing you again on 23 September 2023.

Jennifer Rimer



The angelic Ruari plays the hose..

WORSHIP NOTES

The 9.30am services will recommence in the Cluny Hall on Sunday 3 September.

The Choir will resume on Sunday 24 September, the day of the all-age Harvest Thanksgiving Service.

Harvest Thanksgiving

We will be focussing the Sunday Service on 24 September on our Morningside Hope and in particular the Heart for Art project. We will also continue our support for the S E Edinburgh Foodbank on that day. More details elsewhere in the magazine.



Communion Services

The next sharing of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be on Sunday 1 October at 9.30am (in the chancel area) and 10.30am in the main church.



AUTUMN LECTURES 2023

This year's theme is – **People on the Move: Pilgrimage and Migration**. The lectures will explore the spiritual possibilities and physical and mental well-being that pilgrimages offer, and will contrast this with the rise of migration, a different kind of movement by persecuted and displaced people.

The series is organised jointly with Greenbank Parish Church.

The lectures will be hosted in our church. We hope refreshments will be served at 6.30pm in the Braid Hall, and the lectures, (also online), will begin in the Church at 7pm.

Entry by donation.

Sunday 3 September: A Pilgrim's Journey to Santiago de Compostela. Revd Dr Richard Frazer, minister at Greyfriars Kirk

Sunday 10 September: Walking through by faith – Zomi migrant women's spirituality. Nuam Hatzaw, New College, Edinburgh University

Sunday 17 September: The Fife Pilgrim Way. Revd Dr Conor Fegan, minister at Markinch Parish Church (*Conor was our probationer a few years ago*)

HARVEST FOODBANK COLLECTION

Our Church has been supporting the South East Edinburgh Foodbank, based at Southhouse Broadway, for a number of years. The Foodbank is run in partnership between Blythwood Care and the Trussell Trust and provides emergency food parcels to those in need within the locality. In the last year there has been a marked increase in the number of referrals and, in the three months to the end of June, SE Foodbank helped over 1000 clients for the first time ever. There has also



been a noticeable increase in the number of large families being referred, which is of particular concern for those children living within struggling households. Clients are referred to the Foodbank via support agencies, GPs, schools and other charities with the main reasons for referrals being a shortage of money (particularly during the current cost of living crisis), unemployment, benefit delays, health issues etc. Whilst glad to support everyone in need, resources have been stretched and, at a time when food and energy bills have been rising, donations are no longer keeping up with demand.

Although donations can be made at any time of the year, particular emphasis is placed on the collection of foodstuffs and toiletries we take at the annual Harvest Thanksgiving Service, to be held on 24 September. Donations of foodstuffs and toiletries can be made at the Braid Hall immediately before the 10.30am Service and, this year, we would especially welcome donations of the following items as stocks of these are particularly low at present: tinned meat, fruit, and custard, jars of pasta sauce, jam, mayonnaise and tomato ketchup, UHT semi-skimmed milk, crisps, biscuits, chocolate and toiletries. As the Foodbank is also struggling to source strong plastic bags, donations of these items would also be very welcome.

The Foodbank cannot accept homemade jars of jams and pickles nor any fresh fruit or vegetables, and please do remember when donating foodstuffs that items must still be in date. If you would prefer to make a financial contribution to enable the Foodbank to make its own purchases, you can do so online at <https://blythwood.org/donate-to-foodbank> or you can hand in cash to the Foodbank



at 47 Southhouse Broadway, EH17 8AS, which is open from 10am-1.30pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Thanking you in advance for your generosity.



JAM, BAKING & MAKING STALL

This stall - intended as a 'one off' event by the Communications Group - has for several years been a well supported monthly event. It takes place on the last Sunday of every month during coffee in the St Matthew's Hall after the 10.30 service. It happens throughout the year except for December.

The title has changed to reflect the donations made of garden produce or of a wide variety of exquisite crafted items. Helpers on the stall - originally from the committee - have been joined by kind others who find it a worthwhile venture.

All monies raised go to our own church's funds and we are grateful both to those who regularly contribute or to those who do so when their circumstances allow, as well as to those who support by buying. In seven stalls so far in 2023 we have raised £1,442. This is a useful boost to our funds and much appreciated.

Issie Paterson.

FLOWER COMMITTEE

The flowers in September have been donated and will be arranged as follows:-


		Donated by	Arranged by
Sept	3	Bob Stevenson	Joan Burnet
	10	Audrey Grant	Eleanor Watt
	17	Moirra Clark	Ruth Henderson
	24	HARVEST THANKSGIVING	Flower committee
Oct	1	Walter Thomson	Anne Armour & Issie Paterson



Thank you to everyone donating money for the flowers in the coming year. The cost is £45 and cheques 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 are registered with the Gift Aid Convener. Monies can be put in the Flower Committee pigeon hole, given to me on a Sunday or sent to the church office marked for my attention. To pay by bank transfer, please contact me on irene_a_wilson@btinternet.com or tel: 449 2866 for the Flower Fund bank details.

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 or tel: 0131 449 2866, or speak to any of the flower ladies taking down the displays on a Sunday.

Irene Wilson, Convener - Flower Committee

DON'T MISS THIS!! 

DOORS OPEN DAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Committee of The Friends of Morningside Parish Church has arranged for our Church to take part in this year's Doors Open Day. This is one of the largest free festivals in Scotland which has been welcoming visitors to prominent properties for over 30 years.

The Church will be open from 10am-12.30pm on **Saturday 23 September**. During the event, visitors can take part in a fascinating tour of the building starting at 11am and led by our Minister. In addition, there will be a display of Communion silver from some of the local churches whose historic unions have led to the present-day Morningside Parish Church. There will also be a Heart for Art exhibition in the main sanctuary. This is the first exhibition of several stunning works of art created by highly talented members of our dementia friendly Heart for Art group which meets weekly in the Church.

Entry to the Doors Open Day is free. We hope to welcome visitors to see our lovely building and to encourage members of the congregation to come and support our participation in this year's event.

MORNINGSIDE HOPE CONCERT 23 SEPTEMBER 2023

The next Morningside Hope Concert will take place on the afternoon of the same day, Saturday 23 September at 2pm. It will feature a string quartet as part of the Heart for Art exhibition over this weekend. This will be a real treat and a great opportunity to link Art and Music. Don't miss it, and please encourage any string players and artists you know to come along, including children who will be most welcome.

ATTENTION CRAFTERS! Less than 100 Crafting Days left to this year's Christmas Tree Festival! Knitters, Crocheters, Crafters, Sewers, Artists and Woodworkers plus any other creative skills I may have forgotten, the days are drawing in and it's time to dust the cobwebs off the pins, hooks, needles, scissors, brushers, planes and saws and start on your contributions for the Craft Stall.

We are planning another Christmas crafts stall as part of the Christmas Tree Festival between 9 and 17 December and need your help. Are you needing inspiration? There are lots of ideas online. Knitting patterns will however soon be available on the Welcome Desk - look out for announcements in the intimations. But basically, we're looking for homemade Christmas Gifts and Decorations to sell.

Last year's Stall made in excess of £450 – a fabulous amount but it would be tremendous if we could exceed that figure this year. No pressure 😊 Rona McLaren (Craft Co-ordinator)





THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORNINGSIDE FROM 1800 TO 1930

If you haven't yet had a chance to hear this wonderful talk, or indeed if you would be keen to hear it again, please join us **on Friday 6 October** in the Braid Hall, 2pm. The talk itself will last approximately 35 – 40 minutes and will be followed by teas and coffees.

This fascinating illustrated talk presented by Bob Cunningham describes Morningside's development from a tiny rural village in 1800 to a modern Edinburgh suburb by 1930.

In it, he explains the factors which made Morningside such an attractive place to stay after 1800 and identifies a number of important residents who have lived there over the years.

Bob also describes how Morningside's population explosion of the later 19th century generated a vast property expansion, promoted the arrival of new sports and leisure activities and created the emergence of many new local businesses. The importance of women in Morningside society and the impact of the Great War on the local population are also covered in his talk.

FRIENDS OF MORNINGSIDE EVENT

The Friends of Morningside will be hosting a fund-raising event on **Tuesday 24 October** at 7pm in the Church. The guest speaker will be George Anderson, TV presenter on BBC's *The Beechgrove Garden*. More information soon





Morningside Hope



This is the umbrella name that we're using for the projects being made possible by the generous grant received from TOR Christian Foundation and the matched funding from the church itself. If you're like me, it's helpful to have dates in the diary well in advance so below are some of the activities that will be coming up.

DATES FOR THE NEXT TWO MONTHS:

HEART FOR ART: workshops for those with dementia and their partners/carers

Held every Tuesday in the St Matthew's Hall 11am - 1pm



ART EXHIBITION

On Saturday 23 September we are looking forward to our first Art Exhibition, a chance to see some of the wonderful works of art produced by our members. Please join us in the church between 3 – 5pm that day.



MUSIC AND MEMORIES IN MORNINGSIDE workshops for those with dementia and their partners/carers

Held in the Cluny Hall, 2- 4pm.

September: Friday 1, Monday 11, Friday 22

October: Monday 2, Friday 13, Monday 23

November: Friday 3, Monday 13, Friday 24

December: Monday 4, Friday 15

GENTLE EXERCISE CLASSES

Dementia friendly but **open to all 60+**. The class itself will last 40-45 minutes, followed by tea, coffee and the chance to chat.

Held on Mondays in the Cluny Hall 2-4pm

September: 4, 25 **October:** 9, 16, 30

November: 6, 20, 27 **December:** 11

GAMES AFTERNOON: open to everyone, these afternoons are a chance to meet up with friends old and new, play our favourite board games, jigsaws etc. and have a coffee and a catch up.

Held once a month on a Wednesday afternoon, 2-4pm

September 20 October 18 November 15 December 13

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY CONCERTS

We offer four or five dementia friendly concerts each year.

Open to everyone, this will be a varied programme. Our next concert will be on Saturday 23 September at 2pm and will feature the return, by popular demand of the wonderful String Quartet, Heart Strings.

November will see two concerts:

Saturday 25 November at 3pm will feature the Rock Choir

Sunday 26 November at 3pm will feature George Heriot's Chamber Choir

Entry is by donation – all welcome!



Pastoral Skills Course, Part 2: running over two evenings, Tuesdays 3 and 17 October 2023

Open to those who have completed the introductory course held in the spring and want to further develop their skills and knowledge.

The course will run from 6 –9.30pm each evening, hopefully starting with a light supper.

There is a maximum of sixteen places on the course. There is no necessity to make any commitment, beyond the course itself.

The course will look at topics such as:

- Communication & listening skills.
- Self-awareness & self-care
- Boundaries and why they matter.
- Bereavement

The training will be hands on/experiential in nature and the aim, to make it an enjoyable experience for those attending. There is no charge for the training and CPD certificates will be provided.

Interested in attending? Please come along to any of the above, you will be made most welcome.

Interested in volunteering? If you would like to help with any of these activities please get in touch, we need a lot of willing hands to enable this exciting project to happen.

Or if you are simply **interested in finding out a little bit more**, just contact our Pastoral Assistant, Jacqui Lindsay, on: 07834 364 628 or e-mail: pastoralassistant@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk

AN AFTERNOON OF TRADITIONAL SCOTTISH MUSIC

Back by popular demand, **Nigel's All Stars** will be performing for us again on:

Monday 16 October at 2pm in the St Matthew's Hall

This will be followed by teas and coffees and a chance to chat to the players as well as one another.

This event is open to everyone, and entry is by donation.

We look forward to seeing you there.



THE ALPACAS ARE COMING!

The therapeutic benefits of spending time with animals has long been understood - being with animals does us good.

With that in mind, we have arranged a very special visit from some of the residents of our local alpaca farm to give us a chance to pet, feed and generally enjoy the company of these gentle, gorgeous animals.

You would be very welcome to join us on:

Tuesday 31 October in the St Matthew's hall, 2 - 3pm. (Yes, indoors...) We may even be able to stretch to a cup of tea, but for us, not them 😊



Jacqui Lindsay
07834 364 628

LIFE + WORK - SEPTEMBER 2023

'Scotland was Effectively Ruined'

The 325th anniversary of the Darien Expedition

Letter from the Holy Land

The Rev Dr Stewart Gillan reflects on the hope of presence

'One More Death is One Too Many'

John Gibson and Murdo Macdonald on a Christian understanding of suicide

The New Day

The Rev Ruth Halley offers a reflection on her morning run

Beacons of Light

The Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton challenges readers to 'be church now'

Enriched by the Glory of God

Amy Tanner, Children and Family worker at New Laigh Kirk, Kilmarnock, describes her faith journey

View from the Pulpit

The Rev Josh Milton highlights the journey of a newly-united congregation in embracing challenge

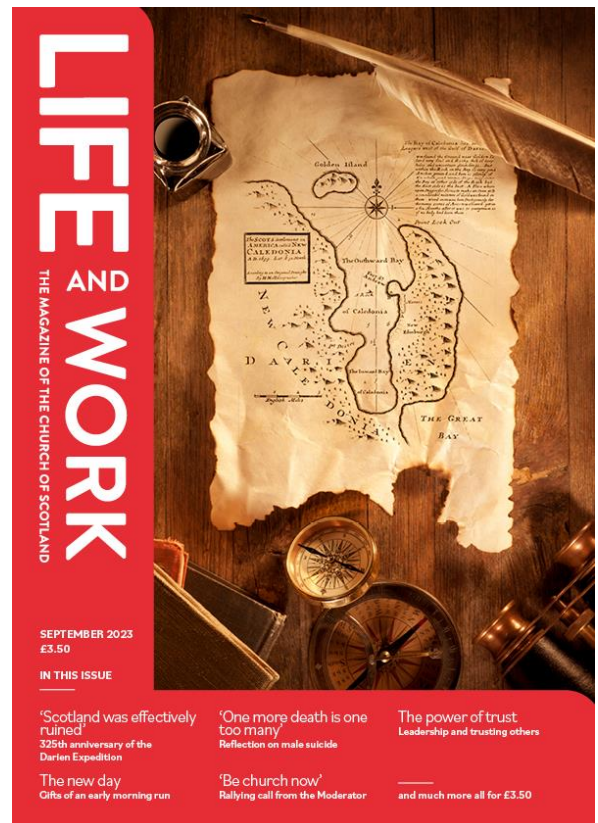
Regulars

The Rev Roddy Hamilton on worship

The Rev Dr Martin Johnstone on leadership

The Very Rev Albert Bogle on digital church

Visit www.lifeandwork.org/subscribe or speak to your church's Life and Work co-ordinator.



Reflection by the Rev Dr Richard Frazer
Bible Study by Ruth Harvey



AFTERNOON TEA AT MORNINGSIDE

Suspecting from past experience that it would be delightful, I didn't hesitate when my Dad asked me if I would like to go to a ticketed afternoon tea hosted by Morningside Parish Church. It was a most charming way to spend an afternoon, good company and plentiful, delicious food enhanced by the gorgeous sunshine outside.

I have to say, and as I remarked to my Dad once we were back at his flat the next day, I've been to many professionally catered events where the standards of the food and the warmth of the welcome came nowhere near the standards set by the team at the Church who, in addition, make the organisation and service seem entirely effortless and calm.

We had sandwiches of roast beef; smoked salmon; egg and cress; brie and grape; and I'm sure one or two others I am forgetting, but each one was fresh

and delicious. Sandwiches were followed by elegant presentation of meringues, scones and petit fours. Then my Dad's favourite, lemon posset.

Again it struck me that I could walk up and down Morningside Road or any other Edinburgh street and not find such perfect home baking on offer in coffee shops. I heard that the catering was so expertly judged that there were no leftovers but if there were, I think they should be wrapped up and auctioned to the highest bidder, I would have had my paddle up. (We did of course get a piece of the birthday cakes to take home with us, after singing to the five people who had recently celebrated their 90th birthday.)

Thank you Morningside Parish Church once again for the cheerful embrace of your friendship and hospitality; hopefully I'll have another chance to be in your company soon.

Carol Stevenson

Edinburgh:Morningside Parish Church of Scotland: Scottish Charity No: SCO34396





SUMMER CONCERTS IN MORNINGSIDE PARISH CHURCH

Concert One. *Gaudeamus*, a rousing opening prelude by Sidney Campbell, was followed by a calm, meditative *Andantino* by Franck, both on the organ. Nasreen Lofti, one of our soprano Choral Scholars, sang three beautiful folk songs, Elgar's *Pleading* together with the Iona and the Skye boat songs. Terence O'Neill, another Choral Scholar, played Purcell's and John Stanley's splendid trumpet voluntaries - duetting with Morley on the organ. William Faulkes' *Theme*

and variations in A, a colourful and inventive organ piece, came next and then we had Thorvald Hansen's sonata for piano and trumpet. Nasreen came back to sing Faure's lovely *Pie Jesu* and Morley played Vierne's *Berceuse*. The concert closed with all three performers joining together for Handel's marvellous *Let the Bright Seraphim*. Overall, a varied and enjoyable programme, with both familiar and less well-known works, which was appreciated by a large audience.

Concert Two, again very well attended, began with Mozart's gorgeous *Sonata in D* with Morley and Margaret Donaldson in perfect harmony on two pianos. Margaret had the expressive treble part - Morley the more powerful, dominant bass. Next came four little melodic portraits of Paris, Rio and Vienna by American composer William Gillick, followed by Morley singing two of Flanders and Swann's pieces - *The Gasman Cometh* (all too familiar to any of us who have had tradesmen in for what initially seemed a simple job) and the *Hippopotamus* song, the audience joining in with gusto for the chorus - great fun. Margaret was a very acceptable replacement for Donald Swann. Then we had two *Berceuses* - by Schmitt and Faure, the latter recognisable as the theme for *Listen with Mother!* The concert closed with Roger Quilter's *Children's Overture*, essentially a set of simple, enjoyable variations on twelve nursery rhymes, folk songs and carols.

Concert Three was a recital by the wonderfully talented young Italian/Scottish pianist Chiara Lordi. She opened with Granados's *Love and Death* inspired by Goya's painting of one of the *Majas*. It's a darkly passionate piece, with massive cascades of notes, chaotic and despairing at times, with a central lament and ending quietly with a single, repeated note - signifying the tolling of a bell. Then came two little compositions by Debussy - *Hommage à Rameau* (the early French composer), a relatively calm and subdued sarabande, and *Mouvement* which, as a *perpetuum mobile*, went rhythmically forging onwards. It was followed with *The Lark* by Glinka which had sweeping trills as the lark ascended and ended peacefully as it sank to earth. Three Argentinian dances by Ginastera were next, - first the *Old Herdsman*, rapid and a bit atonal, with bass and treble alternating, then the *Graceful Girl*, with peaceful melodies. I was particularly taken by the third (*Dance of the Arrogant Cowboy*) rhythmic, melodic yet dissonant, with massive bass chords. Chiara ended with Kenneth Leighton's little *Study* - brief with falling cascades. A most enjoyable 45 minutes listening to pieces I had never heard before.

These concerts were three great ways to spend lunchtimes over the Festival. We are extremely fortunate to be able to enjoy such splendid music on our doorstep, to welcome so many visitors to our church and we are very grateful to Morley for devising such a stimulating programme. As the concerts are to help fund our choral scholars, it was very pleasing that the three concerts have generated about £2,000 to date. (There may be gift aid to be added.)

Barry Hughes

WEDNESDAY CLUB FOR THE DISABLED

Once again, for several reasons and late in the day, the Council said that they were unable to provide transport for our Summer Outings. I contacted the five Community Transport Providers. Two companies said no; two companies failed to reply and the fifth could provide one vehicle and driver but only on a specific date in August for eight hours maximum – a far cry from the 12-hour day we normally get from the Council.

Although the offer of transport was for one outing only, it was better than nothing at all. It meant however that we would have two hours and thirty minutes at the proposed destination of the National Museum of Flight, East Fortune, of which one hour would be used having lunch, and more time would be spent on the road than at the venue. We therefore decided not to go ahead.

The one shining light emanating from the pervading gloom of the transport fiasco was still being able to have our day out as guests of the Biggar Bowling Club due to the generosity of members of the Congregation who selflessly transported nine Club members including two wheelchair users in their private cars to and from Biggar on 28 July. Despite being a little late in arriving at the Gillespie Centre in Biggar because of ubiquitous roadworks, we were made most welcome and thoroughly enjoyed our scones, coffee and a blether with the Centre Volunteer Staff. We then made our way up to the Bowling Club where we were welcomed by the President and some of the Club members before sitting down to an enjoyable two-course lunch provided by members of the Biggar Ladies Bowling Club. After lunch, we enjoyed a few ends of bowls. When drizzle threatened to turn to rain, we adjourned to the Clubhouse for more tea/coffee and biscuits and the customary Vote-of-Thanks.

Biggar Bowling Club is celebrating its 175TH anniversary this year and, to mark the occasion, we were presented with a commemorative banner to adorn the walls of our Clubroom. For 61 of those 175 years – technically, it is 63 years but Covid-19 took care of two of them – the Wednesday Club has been associated with the Biggar Bowling Club; initially, the Bowling Club members would come up to Wiston Lodge, drive us down to the Green for a game of bowls and afternoon tea before driving us back home; after we moved down to the Maranatha Centre in Biggar itself, we made our own way to their Clubhouse, although the format for the afternoon remained the same. When the Maranatha Centre closed and we could no longer run the week's holiday, we thought that would be the end of our association with the Bowling Club but that wasn't to be the case and we have continued to enjoy their annual hospitality. There is still one active Bowling Club member that remembers our first visit. Long may this association continue.

Assuming I can secure transport from the Council, the Club will meet weekly during the 2023/24 session. The session will run from 4 October until 13 December, and then from 10 January 2024 until 17 April. Should I have to make other arrangements for transport, the Club may not be able to meet on such a frequent basis, but time will tell.



We are always on the lookout for people to provide entertainment, a musical evening, a digital slide show, or an illustrated talk. If anyone would be willing to entertain us one Wednesday evening or knows of someone who might be able to do so, please contact Ian Hastie (447 4533) who coordinates our entertainment.

Charles S Wilson MBE
Club Coordinator

FRESH START - AN UPDATE

Morningside Parish Church has supported the Charity "Fresh Start" for many years by providing gifts in kind for its "Starter Packs".

This important service provides basic household items for individuals and families referred to the charity when moving into a new tenancy after a period of homelessness. This helps them make a home for themselves as they often face bare unfurnished accommodation which needs filling with basic household items such as kitchen and cooking equipment, bedding, and furniture.

Fresh Start works closely with other charities including Bethany Christian Trust which helps with the provision of larger items such as beds, carpets, and kitchen white goods while Fresh Start concentrates on smaller but essential items.

The following items are always very welcome and should be clean if already used and new or nearly new in the case of bed linen and towels:

Dishes and Cutlery • Dinner Plates • Side Plates • Bowls • Cutlery • Glass Tumblers • Mugs • Tea-Towels

Cleaning Items • Washing Up Liquid • Toilet Cleaner • Toothbrushes • Toothpaste • Hand Soap • Toilet Rolls • Bin Bags & Liners • Dustpan & Brushes • All Purpose Cleaners • Laundry Tablets • J-Cloths

Pots and Pans • Soup Pots • Frying Pans • Milk Pans • Cooking Utensils • Can Openers • Potato Peelers • Wooden Spoons. (well used old pans definitely not welcome as they have to be disposed of which is a cost to the charity)

Bed Linen and Towels • Single, Double & King sheets • Duvet Covers (not duvets) • Pillow Cases • Blankets • Towels • Curtains • Face Cloths - all of these items new if possible please (for hygiene reasons) or in very good clean condition if already used

Small Household Electric Items • Kettles • Toasters • Lamps • Irons • Vacuum Cleaners • Radios • DVD Player • Microwaves • Music Systems

Donated items may be left in the Fresh Start box which is situated beneath the pigeonholes in the south corridor.

Alternatively, large amounts or bulky items may be taken direct to the Fresh Start premises, address as follows: 22-24 Ferry Road Drive-open Monday-Thursday 9am-4pm.

Any queries, please contact Anne McNeil: anne.mcneil@blueyonder.co.uk 0131 668 1812

EDINBURGH FRIENDSHIP GROUP

The above group is now meeting in St Augustine's Church, George IV Bridge, every second Friday between 2-4pm. We are a very friendly group and have a varied syllabus, with talks, lunches and outings.

If you would care to come along but would like more information, contact Trudy on 447 2992.

The next meeting is on Friday 8 September.

THE OPEN DOOR - THE MUSIC FOR HEALTH & WELL-BEING PROJECT - We did win, due to your support!

We're over the moon about this! As you know it's hugely significant for us to win £29,000 and it's due to all your support. Saying "thank you" doesn't seem to express it adequately but it's sincerely meant.

If what The Open Door does has aroused your interest, and you'd be interested in doing more, please contact us. The volunteers who work with us are invaluable and maybe this is something you might consider on (very) part time basis. Please contact us, or me, for more information.

Again, a big thank you.

Euan J B Murray (☎ 07702 092174)



CHRISTIAN AID SUPPORTERS EVENTS

Christian Aid Drop-In

Come and meet us for a coffee! We're thrilled to be able to host our supporters at St Augustine's Church this year for our Edinburgh churches drop-in session. Please join Christian Aid staff anytime between 10.30am and 1pm on **Wednesday 20**

September for a cuppa and a chat. This is an informal time to meet other local Christian Aid supporters, ask questions of staff and share ideas ahead of Christian Aid Week 2024. For those interested there will be an online event with our chief Executive Officer, Patrick Watt. Anyone is welcome, so please share this invitation and RSVP by responding to Lauren Petherbridge lpetherbridge@christian-aid.org

Edinburgh Kiltwalk

Are you ready for the next Kiltwalk? If you haven't joined already, we would love for you to sign up to take part in the final Kiltwalk of the year in Edinburgh taking place on **Sunday 17 September 2023**. The Mighty Stride is 21miles, the Big Stroll is 14.7miles and the Wee Wander is 5miles - you can bring your dog too. Please do get in touch if you'd like more information. www.thekiltwalk.co.uk/events or contact lpetherbridge@christian-aid.org

Evelyn Henderson

SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

Scottish Country Dancing resumes on Wednesday 27 September at 7.30 pm in the Church sanctuary. We mainly dance strathspeys and the dances are talked through before dancing. Our evening lasts 90 minutes approx. We are a social group who enjoy dancing which is a good form of exercise.

For further information, contact Catriona Reid 443 0727

OCTOBER MAGAZINE

Material for the October issue of the magazine should be with the editor, Alison Riddell, by **Friday 15 September 2023** and it will be available by Sunday 1 October. Please email your contributions to editor@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk .

Song for Autumn by *Mary Oliver*

*In the deep fall
Don't you imagine the
leaves think how
Comfortable it will be to
touch
The earth instead of the
Nothingness of air and
the endless
Freshets of wind? And
don't you think
The trees themselves,
especially those with
mossy,
Warm caves, begin to
think*

*Of the birds that will
come – six, a dozen – to
sleep
Inside their bodies? And
don't you hear*



*The goldenrod
whispering goodbye,
The everlasting being
crowned with the first
Tuffets of snow? The
pond
Vanishes, and the
white field over which
The fox runs so quicky
brings out
Its blue shadows. And
the wind pumps its
Bellows. And at
evening especially,
The piled firewood
shifts a little,
Longing to be on its
way.*

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Join us for worship in Church in person at 9.30am or 10.30am each Sunday or click on the link on our website to join us online either live or at a later date.

www.morningsideparishchurch.org.uk