



Magazine

No. 188 February 2024

Dear Friends

Filling in my new diary for 2024 a few weeks ago (I still like to keep a written pocket diary as I don't quite trust electronic versions), I was going through the notes at the back of my 2023 diary to see if anything needed transferring over. Some lecture notes on God and theology and creation. Some holiday dates. The change of addresses for old friends. Plays and concerts possibly worth seeing.

For all that we talk about a New Year and a fresh start and blank sheets, we all of us carry over things from our past. Good, bad, and indifferent. The DNA of our years on earth shapes us daily, from the colour of our eyes to our taste in music to our habits and traditions. In short, all the things that make us, 'us'. Oscar Wilde said, "Memory is the diary we all carry about with us." No New Year can ever begin with a really clean slate, which has its positives as well as its negatives.

Of course, there are things that we would like to forget. The hurtful things said. The clumsy actions that went wrong. There may be some great disasters, but I rather think it will be the small, petty, embarrassing things that show what is not good about us for all to see that we will wish to expunge.



Which direction will you go in?

But life is also not one long vale of tears. There will be much that is good about who we are and what we do. Times when we've shone. Times when we've said and done the right thing. Times when we provided that support and help that made all the difference in the world to someone. And that should never be discounted.

The Christian season of Lent which begins on 14th February is traditionally a time for reflection on what we are, and what we might yet be. It is a season not only of giving up, but of taking up, so that the things we need to change, and the things we ought to celebrate in our lives, are put in their proper place. As

the years go by I see it less of a time of misery and despair, and one for positive thinking and a desire to change for the better. We use the word 'repentance' at Lent, which can mean showing contrition and expressing regret. Its root meaning in Greek, the language much of the New Testament is written in, has to do with shifting or changing your mind and attitude. It

means a kind of turning around, and setting off in a new, and better, direction.

This Lent, what will shift in your life? What will change in your mind and attitude? And once turned around, in what better direction will you be travelling?

Very Revd Dr Derek Browning

MORNINGSIDE HOPE CONCERTS - NOVEMBER 2023

At the end of November, we were delighted to offer a weekend of choral singing, a virtual Two Choirs Festival, with two very different but equally engaging choirs participating.

Our first visit from the impressive Edinburgh Rock Choir was amazing, with wonderful zest and energy shown in their varied programme of beautiful singing with their dynamic conductor, Elaine Williamson, who introduced and presented every item with infectious and engaging humour throughout. After a rousing start, the programme was wide ranging with hints of Christmas to come in the 'Carol of the Bells' and 'I Wish it could be Christmas Every Day' as a feel-good encore. The concert attracted a huge audience who filled the church and who were invited to 'sing and dance' as well as clapping mostly in time to 'Loco in Acapulco'.



The following day, we were delighted to welcome back the Chamber Choir from George Heriot's School under the inspiring direction of Judith Buttar with wonderful organ playing by Graham MacLagan. We particularly enjoyed the input from cheerful school age pupils and they in turn brought



many parents and friends to swell the audience. Lovely to have a beautiful piano solo by Emily Macfarlane, one of our Morningside Parish Church Choral Scholars, playing Einaudi's haunting 'I Giorni' and Philippa Burgess performing Ian Clark's 'Sunstreams' as an evocative flute solo

accompanied by Graham MacLagan. We enjoyed some stunning choral works including Howard Goodall's atmospheric 'Love Divine' and Andrew Carter's 'Mary's Magnificat'. Again we had some early Christmas Music and the chance to join in a few well-chosen carols with organ and choir accompaniment.

We enjoyed post-concert refreshments on both days. A special thank you to catering and door staff for assisting with the two concerts as well as church staff and Alistair Keil for his warm words on both occasions. Douglas Paterson's excellent photography throughout the year is so much appreciated and thank you to the Tor Foundation and Morningside Parish Church for their invaluable support.

We hope you have enjoyed our five Dementia Friendly concerts in 2023 and we look forward to welcoming you back in March 2024. We start on Saturday 2 March at 2pm with an organ recital by Morley Whitehead, our accomplished Church Organist and Choir Master, who gave us a memorable concert last year. It will be great to welcome him back to start our 2024 series.

Other highlights in the planning include a Scottish Traditional Music Concert in May, and a proposed Musical Pilgrimage in September should be an exciting musical venture. Thank you for all the wonderful support we have received and we look forward to welcoming you again later in 2024.

Jennifer Rimer



CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

We thought it a good idea this year to invite the other three churches that we are aiming to form closer relationships with to decorate a tree. This was successful – in addition to their attractive trees - in bringing in visitors from their congregations.

The trees were up for longer than last year, the weather was kinder and the event provided a lot of pleasure to a large number of people. Apart from those who came specifically for the festival, a large number of people rent our sanctuary at this time and all commented favourably. A

particular highlight was the singing from the Buckstone Community Choir whose sound and company were much appreciated.

Our craft stall was well stocked with a wide variety of seasonal items - some of it made by house bound members - and many visitors took the opportunity to buy.



We thank William Purves who generously provided the trees for the second time and those who participated by decorating their trees so imaginatively to publicise the work of their organisations. It was not primarily intended as a fundraiser but we made £1,862 which will be donated to the church's charities.

TRULY FAITHFUL STEWARDS – Many thanks to all our Crafters at MPC – the Craft Stall at the Christmas Tree was **SUPERB**. We are tremendously lucky to have a church full of many talented people ready and willing to contribute their wares – take a bow! At the last count I think it raised in excess of £700. Extremely well done all of you. Can you start again now for next year please?

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

KIRK SESSION NEWS

The Kirk Session met in December:

December Communion: The Moderator reported that the December Communion Service had offered the Common Cup which had been much appreciated by those who wished it. It was proposed and agreed that this should be the pattern for future 10.30 am quarterly Communion services.

Presbytery Plan: The Moderator advised that it had now been established that there had been a misunderstanding between Presbytery which had referred only to a “collaboration” between the 4 churches. However, Deployment of Resources Committee had always intended that any proposal acceptable to the Presbytery and the central authority at 121 should include at least one or more unions albeit the union(s) could be deferred unions. However, notwithstanding several meetings with Presbytery representatives, this had never been clear until the Moderator had pressed for clarification.

The approved Presbytery Plan indicates the group will be served by three full-time Ministers of Word and Sacrament (which we currently have due to the vacancy at Greenbank), along with locally appointed staff. Under the plan, all four church buildings will be retained. What has now to be discussed is what number of unions will take place as a number of options are available - from one or two unions of two leaving respectively two or none independent; or one union of three leaving one independent; or a grand union of all four.

In practice, it will not be possible for a congregation to be served by a locally funded (as opposed to centrally funded) minister as such a minister would be an employee of the Session and because of a conflict of interest could not act as Moderator of that Session. This option is not therefore available to Greenbank.

A date for the next meeting of representatives of the four churches and Presbytery has now been set for 8 February 2024.

Staff: Robin Stimpson, convener, reported that the main staffing change this year was prompted by the resignation of Jan Goulding as Office Administrator. After advertising and interviewing, Leigh Malaihollo was offered the job and is providing excellent leadership and efficiency in the Church Office. Her working hours were increased from 25 to 30 to cover the wide range of work needing attention.

The caretaking team, Steven Watson and Phil McPhail, continue to work well together, liaise closely with Leigh and provide the church and its tenants with a welcoming and helpful oversight. During the Pandemic, and until recently, the caretakers took over the work of cleaning, as of course usage of our halls was reduced. However, with the return of tenants and indeed additional lets arranged, it became clear that it was impossible for them to maintain standards to their and the church’s satisfaction. We are however grateful to them both for taking on the cleaning during the Pandemic and in the process saving the church money. Cleaning work has once again been outsourced to a cleaning company but the caretakers have retained responsibility for the sanctuary and also for “top up” cleaning during the hours the building is open.

The Church Officer, Alex Bleck, continues diligently to perform the role of Church Officer and is always willing, helpful and friendly.

Jacqui Lindsay continues to perform with excellence the role of Pastoral Assistant and has not only developed the role of the work under the umbrella of Morningside Hope but has raised significant funds towards its continuation after the current three year grant expires. Funds have been raised by a range of concerts which, as well as fundraising, being “dementia friendly” are also much enjoyed by the large numbers of attendees.

The results of the Heart for Art scheme were displayed in the church at a concert and at the service the next day, to the delight of the artists whose talent had been developed or rekindled and also to the appreciation of those privileged to view their works.

Morley Whitehead continues to enjoy the role as Organist and Choirmaster and each year recruits and trains choral scholars and its longstanding members to provide a high standard of choral work. He too continues to be involved in raising funds by his regular programme of three lunchtime concerts during the Edinburgh Festival. Money so raised complements funds from the Friends of Morningside and individual donors.

Annual staff appraisals will be carried out in the New Year.

Stewardship and Finance: Chris McNeil, Treasurer, had circulated a draft budget for 2024 which had been previously scrutinised and agreed with the committee. He highlighted the following - FWO budget had been increased by £20k in anticipation of the Stewardship campaign proposed in the Spring; a 5% increase is proposed for new lets in 2024; investment income was likely to drop as withdrawals had been made from capital. On expenditure, he noted that inflation had increased by 47% in the last 5 years which continued to impact on costs. He was pleased to note that the installation of the "Hallmaster" computer programme in the office had allowed more effective rendering and recovery of rents. He noted a donation of £5K from the Friends of MPC towards the funding of choral scholars and reported that the number of scholars would be limited to 8 in 2024.

Compared to 2023, budget increases were highlighted in - Staff salaries by £5,500; cleaning costs by £15,000 as we return to employing a cleaning firm; heat and light by £8,000 with an increase in utility costs following the end of the very favourable fixed rate negotiated for the last four years by the General Trustees, the new negotiated rate

being 70% greater than before; and overall, the net deficit will increase by just over £5,000. There is in addition a substantial contingency of £51,200 for one off property maintenance costs.

The Moderator commented that following the completion of building works in 2019 and the period of the Pandemic, the investment in the buildings is beginning to pay off through rentals. However, it was recognised that inflation was impacting on everyone's budget. After discussion, Session approved the accounts.

The Moderator thanked the Treasurer and the Stewardship & Finance committee for their work in preparing the budget and general supervision of the church's finances throughout the year.

Presbytery Elder: Robin Stimpson reported on the meeting of the Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian on 5th December.

The December Presbytery meeting began with the celebration of Communion before addressing a wide range of business.

Presbytery Plan - By far the greatest proportion of the business was in relation to the Presbytery Plan. Authority was given for a number of redundant manses to be sold.

However, it was noted that because one congregation has requested a formal review of the approved Presbytery Mission Plan, regrettably the plan was not yet signed off. The Deployment Committee has provided two sets of required paperwork within the timescales given. The process began in July 2023 and Presbytery sent its information to the Office of the Principal Clerk on 4 August 2023. A review panel was set up at the beginning of September but no ruling has yet been received. "The Deployment Committee is greatly concerned and disappointed that the timescales have meant that several congregations have not been able to move forward towards adjustment or implementation as a result"

Notwithstanding the above delay, some congregations have been able to proceed with unions proposed by the plan – Breich Valley with Whitburn South; Blackburn and Seafield with Whitburn Brucefield; Abercorn with Pardovan, Kingscavil and Winchburgh.

The proposed union of Gracemount, Liberton, Liberton Northfield, Reid Memorial and Tron Kirk Moredun/Gilmerton in a team ministry has had to be reviewed as, although all the others agreed, Reid Memorial has rejected the proposal. It is now proposed that the union will proceed without Reid Memorial and further conversations will be had with Reid Memorial.

One of the shortest but most encouraging and dignified statements came from the interim

moderator of Bathgate St John's Church. In the proposed union of the Bathgate churches. St John's had not been chosen to be the church used. The interim moderator reported that they were devastated by that decision, but accepted it and were determined to work together to make a success of the union.

Retirement of James Byers – after many years in the role of Presbytery Treasurer, James has intimated his resignation. He said that officially he had held the role “at the pleasure of the Presbytery” but the reality was that the pleasure had been his. His short speech was greeted with prolonged applause.

SUNDAY CLUB –

We hope you enjoyed our “different” Nativity Play this year – *A Super Christmas*. It was great fun with adults and children working together – grateful thanks to Jacqui, Neil, David and Tom – all great role models for our young people and good sports too. Not to mention the younger cast members too – Harry, Martha, Chloe, Jamie, Katie and Annika – You were all FAB-U-LOUS!



The cast of A Super Christmas

WORSHIP NOTES

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

The next Communion will be on 3rd March at 9.30am (in the chancel) and 10.30am – the annual all-age communion service

Holy Week (25th – 29th March) will be hosted by Greenbank Church. The Holy Saturday service will be in Morningside Parish Church on 30th March. Easter Day is Sunday 31st March.

OUR NEW INTERNATIONAL CHARITY

As you may already be aware from the Sunday intimations, the time has come to change the international charity supported as one of our three charities. The chosen charity is The David Nott Foundation <https://davidnottfoundation.com/> which delivers Trauma Medical Training for doctors serving in areas affected by natural disasters or wars, thereby enabling them to save more lives.

David Nott is a general and vascular surgeon working for the NHS in major London Hospitals. For more than 25 years he took periods of unpaid leave to volunteer in some of the world's most dangerous war zones including Sarajevo under siege in 1993, spells in Afghanistan and in clandestine hospitals in Aleppo. At various times he worked for the British Red Cross and Médecin Sans Frontières. However, his experiences led him to observe that, while it was useful for him to bring his skills to these areas, his time in these locations was limited and more could be achieved for the wounded if he spent time training local doctors who were perfectly competent in peacetime but lacked the necessary specialised skills to deal with injuries resulting from wars or natural disasters.

The charity set up by David Nott uses a diverse mix of teaching methods and materials led by a world class faculty of experienced and distinguished surgeons, including using the internet and bringing doctors to the UK for brief training experience. Their vision is a global network of medical professionals providing the best care to patients in austere or hostile environments.

None of us can fail to be moved by the daily reports on the television and in newspapers of the suffering of people of all ages as a result of wars or natural disasters. Support of this charity will mean that we don't just sympathise with their plight but in a small way do something to help alleviate the problem.

P.S. More information about David Nott and his work can be found in his autobiography "War Doctor", a Sunday Times no1 Bestseller.



ROLL CHANGES

Please remember in your prayers:

Mrs Elizabeth Watson, who died on 17 November 2023,

Mrs Georgina Fletcher, who died on 24 December 2023, and

Miss Susan Watson, who died on 5 January 2024.

FLOWER LIST

The flowers in January and February were donated and arranged as follows:-

		Donated by	Arranged by
Jan	7	Joan Burnett	Joan Burnett
	14	Alison Calder	Eleanor Watt
	21	Frances Bruce	Karen Keil
	28	Euan Murray	Ruth Henderson
Feb	4	Lorna Graham,	Anne Armour & Issie Paterson
		Doreen Reekie	Marjory Watson
		Hsien-Lin Ro	Irene Wilson
		Norma Wilson	Penny Graham & Liz Munro



The Flower List for 2024 is now complete. May I take this opportunity to express our thanks to all those who have indicated their willingness to contribute to the cost of the flowers each week. It is an important part of the church's outreach and as well as being enjoyed by those attending the service, are more especially enjoyed by those to whom they are delivered after the service.

The cost is £45. Cheques should be made payable to 'Morningside Parish Church Flower Fund' or payment can be made by bank transfer if preferred. If you are a UK taxpayer and can give by Gift Aid, please fill in one of the Gift Aid envelopes or advise me if you have 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 clearly marked for my attention. If you would prefer to pay by bank transfer, please contact me direct for bank details for the Flower Fund on irene_a_wilson@btinternet.com ; Tel: 449 2866.

Irene Wilson, Convener - Flower Committee

THE LOCAL ECUMENICAL SERVICE for the
WORLD DAY OF PRAYER
on **FRIDAY 1st MARCH 2024**



Theme: "I beg you...Bear with one another in love" (from Ephesians 4:1-3).

Service written by Christian women of Palestine.

Our local WDP service will be held this year at Greenbank Parish Church, at 10.30 am, in the Braid Room, followed by refreshments. It is hoped a good number from Morningside will be able to join our neighbours for the service, to which you are all invited.

There will also be a service at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Palmerston Place, Edinburgh, at 11.30am, in which it is hoped people from a number of city centre churches will participate. That service will be livestreamed on the Cathedral's YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@stmarysepiscopalcathedrale9988/streams>

This is not a political event. No flags will be allowed.

11 Days of Prayer lead up to the World Day of Prayer. These short prayers or meditations begin on Tuesday 20th February and will be posted on the Scottish WDP Committee website and Facebook: www.wdpscotland.org.uk. A list of other WDP services in Edinburgh or further afield will be available on that website under Service Arrangements.

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



Morningside Hope



This is the umbrella name for the projects made possible by the generous grant received from TOR Christian Foundation and additional 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.

For more details, just contact our Pastoral Assistant, Jacqui Lindsay, on: 07834 364 628 or e-mail: pastoralassistant@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk

2024 DATES:

HEART FOR ART: workshops for those with dementia and their partners/carers
Held every Tuesday in the St Matthew's Hall 11am - 1pm



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

Held in the Cluny Hall, 2- 4pm.

February:	Monday 5 th	Friday 23 rd	May:	Monday 13 th	Friday 31 st
March:	Monday 4 th	Friday 22 nd	June:	Monday 10 th	Friday 28 th
April:	Monday 8 th	Friday 19 th			
	Monday 29 th				

GENTLE EXERCISE CLASSES Dementia friendly but **open to all 60+.**

The class will last 40-45 minutes, followed by tea, coffee and the chance to chat.

Held on Mondays in the Cluny Hall 2-4pm

12 th & 26 th February	11 th & 25 th March	15 th April
6 th & 20 th May	3 rd & 17 th June	<i>No classes in July</i>

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

14 th February	13 th March	17 th April
15 th May	19 th June	<i>No games July & August</i>

ANIMAL AFTERNOONS:

Tuesday 16th April Therapy ponies 2-4pm Wednesday May 8th Alpacas 2pm

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DEMENTIA FRIENDLY CONCERTS

We offer 4 dementia friendly concerts each year. Open to all, this will be a varied programme.

2 March	Morley Whitehead	14 September	Santiago Project
25 May	Traditional Scots	30 November	Forget me Notes

PASTORAL SKILLS COURSE, an Introduction: running over two evenings,

Tuesdays 19th and 26th March

Braid Hall

Caring for one another is the responsibility of each and every one of us and so we are offering a brief introduction to Pastoral Skills running from 6 –9.30pm each evening, hopefully starting with a light supper.

There is a maximum of 16 places on the course **and it is open to anyone** interested in finding out a bit more about pastoral care, without the necessity of making 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.
- Dementia

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.

PASTORAL SKILLS COURSE, PART 2: running over two evenings, Tuesday 22nd & 29th October

Open to those who have completed the introductory course above and want to further develop their skills and knowledge. Specialist subject for the level two will be bereavement.

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're going to need a lot of willing hands to enable this exciting project to happen.

Or 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

BACK TO BASICS WITH NUTRITION - A TALK BY DR NEIL MILLIKEN

We are delighted that Dr Neil Milliken has agreed to give us a talk on nutrition.

Neil initially trained as a dentist then as a medical GP. Over the last 20 years he has retrained again as a naturopath, treating chronic disease with safe, natural approaches, delving into the deeper causation of illness and the use kinesiology, (muscle testing), nutrition and hands on therapies as a way of addressing these illnesses.

Monday 18th March: 2.30 – 3.30pm, in St Mathews' Hall

The talk itself will last 30 – 40 mins. There will be time for questions and then teas and coffees will be served for those who wish to partake.

Entry is free, donations are welcome. All donations will go towards the work of Morningside Hope.

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

MUSICAL NOTES



Some readers may remember the publication, a few years back, of a copy of "Choir Regulations, St Matthew's Parish Church, May 1911" (found pasted into the flyleaf of an old anthem book.) I may have

written something along the lines of: some things don't change much...

On a fairly recent visit to a famous church in East Lothian, I found the following attached to the back of the organ case, and so facing into the choir's robing area. It is, I guess, just a little "tongue in cheek", but there is a grain or two of truth in it too, I shouldn't wonder:

CHOIR RULES IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS, circa 1915.

- i) The practice shall commence at 8.30 or at such later time as a sufficient number shall have gathered together. Members are thought more of if they arrive late.
- ii) The choir meets one evening a week for the following purposes: to discuss politics, tennis, scandal and/or church affairs; to arrange socials, excursions, etc., and of course, to flirt. N.B. If there is any time not occupied in the foregoing manner, and, if the members feel so inclined, it might be desirable to engage in a little singing.
- iii) The choir shall consist of sopranos, altos, tenors and basses. All those ladies who cannot read music shall sing alto. Should any lady with a high-pitched voice object to singing alto, she is recommended to consult a voice specialist, who will be almost certain to pronounce that she is a deep contralto with a faulty method of voice production.

iv) The tenors shall consist of as many fair gentlemen[sic] who do not mind straining their voices. All gentlemen left over shall sing bass. Basses are at liberty to sing tenor if they feel that their extensive compass is not being duly recognised. He must be a poor worm of a bass who cannot sing tenor if he likes.

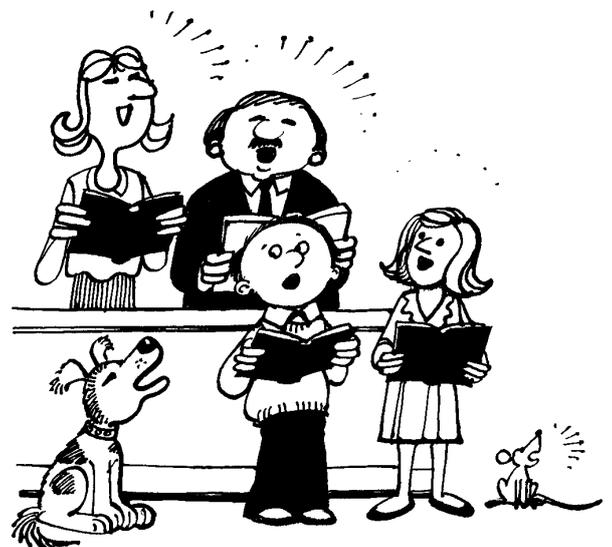
v) No notice shall be taken of the conductor. Do not trouble to look at his beat. He should tap. What your neighbour is saying is of far greater importance and interest.

v) The conductor is always pleased to receive advice from individual members. He likes to receive hints about choir management, suggestions as to tempo and expression and is delighted to be instructed in the elements of musical grammar. If you think he has made a mistake, please tell him so.

vi) Members of the choir are recommended to take home copies of the music to look over at their leisure. It doesn't really matter if the music is not returned, as choir funds are flourishing and further copies can always be purchased.

Thank goodness that things are not like this(!) at MPC.

M.W.



MARCH MAGAZINE

Material for the March issue of the magazine should be with the editor, Alison Riddell, by **Friday 16 February 2024** and it will be available by Sunday 3 March. Contributions should be emailed to editor@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk .

Friendship Elizabeth Jennings

*Such love I cannot analyse;
It does not rest in lips or eyes,
Neither in kisses nor caress.
Partly, I know, it's gentleness*

*And understanding in one word
Or in brief letters. It's preserved
By trust and by respect and awe.
These are the words I'm feeling for.*

*Two people, yes, two lasting friends.
The giving comes, the taking ends
There is no measure for such things.
For this all Nature slows and sings*

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