



Magazine

No. 190 April 2024

Dear Friends

With an early Easter, we have a long haul ahead to Summer, or will it be a wonderful Spring where the lengthening days lead to beautiful flowers and leaf-budding trees. April is that between-seasons month. April showers, warm days, cooler nights still, but a month of possibilities, of letting go and of taking up. Maybe that's why T S Elliot wrote, "April is the cruellest month/breeding lilacs out of the dead land/mixing memory and desire, stirring/dull roots with spring rain."

The Kirk Session last month discussed the **possibilities** for Presbytery planning in our area - read about them elsewhere in the magazine. What will the future hold? What will stay the same, what will be different? How will we cope?

Death and taxes are two of the certainties in life, but I'd add to that 'change'. Nothing lasts for ever and how dull life would be if things were *exactly* the same as they were five, ten, a hundred years ago. Over the last two decades our church has changed radically and imperceptibly at one and the same time. Whether we approve or disapprove of how things have evolved,

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we are called to deal with things as they are, not how they were. And we're also called to be brave enough to think about how they might yet be. That's the way life is, and it should come as no surprise that that's the way the Church is too.

Particularly since our Church life is based upon the ever-changing, ever-evolving, ever-developing person of Jesus. Just when we think we know and understand Who He is and what He came to do and be, our understanding shifts and expands,

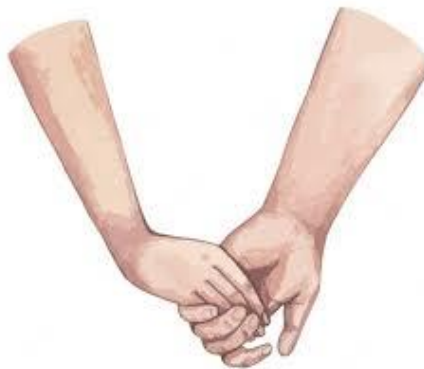
and we see the same truths through different perspectives. Does this shifting Jesus unsettle you or intrigue you; annoy you or excite you?

It's April, the in-between month, where fresh growth may appear in our lives from dead land; where our

memories of the past will mix with our desire for new things in the present and future; when God will send to our dull roots Spring rain, so that we might sustain what is good, and grow into what might be better for the times in which we live.

Put your hand in Jesus' hand, and boldly step out with Him into all that lies ahead.

Very Revd Dr Derek Browning



HOLY SATURDAY

In the Reformed tradition of which the Church of Scotland is part, the observance of Holy Saturday is not a regular occurrence. Our Church is unusual in that we do have a service of words and music on the day between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. It has allowed for a quieter and gentler time of reflection and preparation as we take an hour to think about the central events of Holy Week and Easter, which are the foundation of our faith.

There is in other Christian churches a silence on Holy Saturday. Like the puzzling, “silence of heaven” of Book of Revelation (Revelation 8:1 – ‘When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour’) there is so often a void in the middle of Jesus’ dying on the cross on Good Friday, and His rising from the dead on the morning of Easter Sunday. In some Christian traditions, Good Friday’s terror and abandonment and Easter Sunday’s impossible new possibility are given fresh insight by the voice from the grave on Holy Saturday. By the way it’s *Holy Saturday*; Easter Saturday is the following week.

Faith’s supreme drama has always told of *three* days, yet ironically the central day of the drama, the Saturday, is an empty space. All the action and emotion belong to two days only: despair and joy, dark and light, defeat and victory, the end and the beginning, evenly distributed in vivid contrast between what humanity did to Jesus on the first day, Good Friday, and what God did for Jesus on the third day, Easter Sunday.

None of the gospel writers shows any interest in the intervening day, except Matthew who has the priests and Pharisees at Pilate’s door on the morning of the Saturday begging for custodial measure to make all the more certain that nothing will happen in Jesus’ sepulchre that weekend. Otherwise, between the crucifying and the raising there is interposed a brief, inert void: a non-event surely, only a time of waiting in which nothing of significance occurs and of which there is little to be said.

Yet in the Apostle’s Creed we say:

*I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth:
And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, dead, and buried,
He descended into hell;
The third day He rose again from the dead...*



The Devil squashed beneath the gates of Hell

Ancient traditions create an image of Jesus on the move on Holy Saturday, not staying a dead corpse in the tomb, but beginning the work of resurrection, bringing a dead world to life. In Medieval times, when literacy was not widespread, as well as hearing Bible stories in Church, and maybe seeing some of them depicted in stained glass windows, there was another tradition of Medieval Miracle or Mystery Plays. These were performed in different parts of England around the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, often around the feasts of Pentecost (or Whitsun) and Corpus Christi. The plays were often held in the open air and performed ‘in the round’ as there would have been few if any theatres. Often broadly comic, these vernacular plays performed in English and not Church Latin, sought to engage the audience in the wonders and questions of

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the Bible story, and the part faith played in life. Some have seen them as crudely written Biblical scenes interspersed with occasional and unseemly knock-about. But anyone who has taken part in them or seen them will see how deep a sense of worship can combine in the richly boisterous world of simple folk and Christian feeling. It is as if the laughter intensified the power to pray, as if the sublime could best be apprehended by those who are open to the ridiculous, as if Christianity were a thing so strong that it can include all the explosions of laughter a dramatist can devise.

One of the plays in the cycle is called 'The Harrowing of Hell', imagining Jesus on Holy Saturday moving downwards from the tomb and into Hell, where the gates are thrown down, the Devil crushed, and the faithful pre-Christian world of Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Moses and David and all the rest are liberated from Hell by the victorious risen Jesus. As well as being included in the Medieval Mystery Play cycle, the Harrowing of Hell appears in Piers Plowman, by William Langland, as well as in stained glass windows and murals of the Middle Ages.

Holy Saturday in those long-ago days, in the preaching art, drama and literature were all focussed on the same end of instruction about the mysteries and questions of faith. Nor was it all done in reverent silence. The Cooks and Innkeepers of Chester who acted out this pageant in the Mystery Cycle no doubt enjoyed themselves rushing in and out of the monstrous jaws of hell-mouth they had created from wood, and clashing their pots and pans and kettles to announce the arrival of Jesus, Who had come to throw down the gates of Hell, defeat the Devil, and release the faithful dead. Maybe we should be handing out pots and pans at Communion when we sing the traditional psalm, "Ye gates lift up your heads on high, ye doors that last for aye"!

At our Holy Saturday service, this extract was read from the Harrowing of Hell play. In the image opposite, note Jesus reaching out to faithful Old Testament characters, but also note, behind Jesus, the gates of Hell thrown down, and the Devil truly squashed beneath them!

*Ah, high God and King of bliss,
Worshipped be Thy name, iwis!
I hope that time now comen is
To deliver us of danger.
Come, Lord! Come to hell anon,
And take out Thy folk, every one,
For those years are fully gone
Since mankind first came here...*

*Open hell gates anon,
You princes of pain, every one,
That God's Son may in gone,
And the King of bliss!...
Open up hell gates, yet I say,
You princes of pine that we present,*

*And let the King of bliss this way,
That He may fulfil His intent...
That Lord, the which almighty is,
There is no power like to His;
Of all joy He is king.
And to Him is none likewise,
As is smoothly seen by this,
For man, that sometime did amiss,
To His bliss He will bring.
Peace to thee, Adam, my darling,
And eke to all thine offspring
That righteous were in earth living;
From Me you shall not sever.
To bliss now I will you bring;
There you shall be without ending.*

WORSHIP NOTES

Remembering Service Sunday 7th April, 3pm in the Church.

Our Remembering Service is open to everyone in the Church and in the wider community who would like to come and sit quietly at this simple, reflective service, which will last for around half an hour. It is an opportunity to remember those we have loved and lost, recently or a long time ago. During the service there will be an opportunity to write names on stars and attach them to our Remembering tree which will be placed beside the communion table. Please let friends, neighbours and family know that the service is taking place and invite them to attend if they would like.

We will serve tea and coffee after the service.

Home Communion

Throughout the year the Minister is happy to bring Home Communion to members of the congregation who are not able to attend the communion services in the Church. The short service concentrates on the communion part of the normal communion service, and many people have found it a real comfort and encouragement, particularly being 'involved' in the spiritual side of our congregation's life.

If you, or anyone you know, would like Home Communion, please contact the Minister and he will arrange a visit.



FLOWER LIST

The flowers in April were donated and arranged as follows:-

		Donated by	Arranged by
Apr	7	Ruth Henderson	Ruth Henderson
	14	Dorothy Mushet	Marjory Watson
	21	Christine Johnston	Anne Armour & Issie Paterson
	28	Ewan & Sally Brown	Penny Graham & Liz Munro



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

KIRK SESSION NOTES

The Kirk Session met in March:

Approval of Church's 2023 Accounts – Anne Dobson of Stripe Accountants presented the accounts which had been circulated in advance of the meeting together with a commentary.

Total Income for 2023 was £315,014 (2022 - £258,304)

Total Expenditure for 2023 was £390,983 (2022 - £325,245)

Net Deficit in 2023 taking into account unrealised gains in value of investments of £46,344, (2022 – Unrealised loss in value of investments £130,164) resulted in a net deficit of £29,625 (2022 - £197,105).

Excess of expenditure over income, excluding the variation in the value of investments, in 2023 was £75,969 compared to £66,941 in 2022.

Total Funds at 31 December 2023 were £1,510,451 (2022 - £1,540,451) made up as follows –

Fixed Assets £653,808 (2022 -£660,330); Investments £825,386 (2022 - £809,048); net Current Assets £31,257 (2022 - £70,698)

The Moderator drew attention to the full narrative in the accounts highlighting the work of the church in 2023 which had been prepared by a number of contributors. No questions were raised and Session instructed the Treasurer and the Clerk to sign the accounts as approved on behalf of the Session. The Moderator particularly thanked the Accountants, the Treasurer and the members of the Stewardship & Finance Committee for their work not just in the preparation of the accounts but throughout the year.

Presbytery Reform – The Moderator updated Session on recent developments.

At the latest meeting of the Presbytery Deployment Committee it was agreed that a starting point for discussions could be exploring the following possible proposals:

- a. A three-way union of Fairmilehead, Greenbank and Morningside.
- b. A two-way union of Fairmilehead and Greenbank, entering into a Parish Grouping with Morningside.
- c. A two-way union of Greenbank and Morningside, entering into a Parish Grouping with Fairmilehead.

Our Kirk Session was not in favour of option a, a 3-way union between the three churches; which leaves options b and c for further discussion with the Deployment Committee.

The future of St. John's Colinton Mains in our present grouping was raised again. The Deployment Committee intend to explore this matter further with St John's Colinton Mains, and in the meantime that congregation will not play a part in the discussions between Fairmilehead, Greenbank and Morningside. In light of these most recent findings, a meeting between Deployment representatives and representatives of Fairmilehead, Greenbank and Morningside will take place in April to discuss the way forward now that St John's Colinton Mains may no longer be part of the future discussions with us and which of the proposals for the future might be a helpful way forward.

The future proposals, and the movement of St John's Colinton Mains to another grouping, remain subject to Presbytery's agreement.

Staff Committee – The Clerk reported that our caretaker Phil McPhail is now back home from hospital but continues to be signed off as unfit for work, currently for another 2 weeks, pending

further tests. In the meantime, Stevie Watson and Leigh Malaihollo are adjusting duties to allow the work to be shared with the assistance of a temp, Jeff Laing, working 5 hours per day.

The Tullis Bequest and the Victory Annuities were established respectively by the will of William Tullis who died in 1867 and by an endowment in 1920 after WW1. These charitable funds were administered by the original Morningside Parish Church to provide a bounty to ladies over the age of 55 and who were “poor and decayed but deserving” residing within the bounds of the parish. At the time of their instigation there was little or no welfare provision in society and the sum gifted was a boon to the recipients. Following WW2, the Welfare State came into being and pensions both state and work became the norm, with the result that there was less need for such benevolence. Nevertheless, visits were made to a dwindling cadre and the gifts distributed until the Covid pandemic in 2019 intervened. At that time there were only three annuitants left and, since then all have died.

These funds were administered by an elder of the congregation, lately by Ken McKenzie. Such was the need for confidentiality that even the minister was unaware as to who the beneficiaries were. However, in the last two years or so, there has been no call on either of the funds. It became more difficult to find annuitants who qualified for or who were prepared to accept the gift. Indeed, there was one lady who on receiving the envelope containing the money would ask for a little something be put in the plate for her as she was no longer able to attend church. The little something often amounted to more than was in the envelope which she had just received. When the union of Morningside Braid and Cluny occurred, the monies were transferred into the charitable holdings of the today’s Morningside Parish Church. Ken proposed, therefore, that both the Tullis Bequest and the Victory Annuities be closed, and that the income which they received be made available to the Minister to distribute to deserving causes which he identifies within the Parish. Currently this amounts to £200-300 per annum. Session agreed subject to the caveat suggested by the Moderator that any proposed distribution should also be approved by two elders. Ken was thanked for his diligent administration of the Fund.

Presbytery Inspections of Records – the Clerk reported that the records for 2023 had been submitted as usual to Presbytery. The information requested is considerable - excluding the property report, the information requests cover five pages and fifty questions. He was grateful to Moira Clark for dealing with the property report which contains another significant set of questions. Apart from dealing himself with questions regarding Kirk Session Minutes and Session attendance, he was grateful for answers from Fiona Stewart re Membership, Paul Cackette re Safeguarding, Irene Wilson re Data Protection and Minister re Baptisms and travel log. As ever, it was a great joint effort, and he was pleased to report that the records were found to be in order.

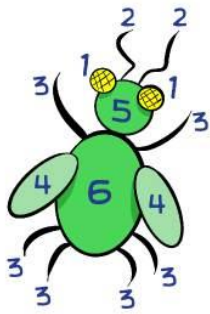


ROLL CHANGES

Please give a warm welcome to our newest members:

Dr Robert McCabe, and

Mrs Flora Brodie.



BEETLE DRIVE - Saturday 20th April at 7pm

Come along for a fun night out at our Beetle Drive on 20th April. All welcome – no prior experience required!

Tickets available from David Calder and Fiona Gossip on Sundays 31st March, 7th and 14th April at £5 for adults and £2.50 for children. Tea, coffee and juice will be on sale at the interval.

There will be prizes!

We look forward to seeing you all there, and do bring your friends. All money raised will go to our three charities.

LIFE + WORK – APRIL 2024

A Blessing to the Church - Churches taking on worship without a minister

Love in Action - An update on the work of the charity Scottish Love in Action, which has its roots in the Church of Scotland

New Life for Church Buildings - How redundant church buildings are being repurposed

Our Presbyteries - Focus on the Presbytery of Clyde

View from the Pulpit - The Rev Scott Rennie on the challenges and differences of ministry in London

God's Original Cathedral - The Rev Roddy Hamilton says outdoor worship 'invites a whole range of new experiences'

Regulars

The Very Rev Dr Martin Fair on ministry recruitment

Reflection by the Rev Dr Richard Frazer

The Rev Ruth Kennedy on digital church

Bible Study by the Very Rev Dr Colin Sinclair

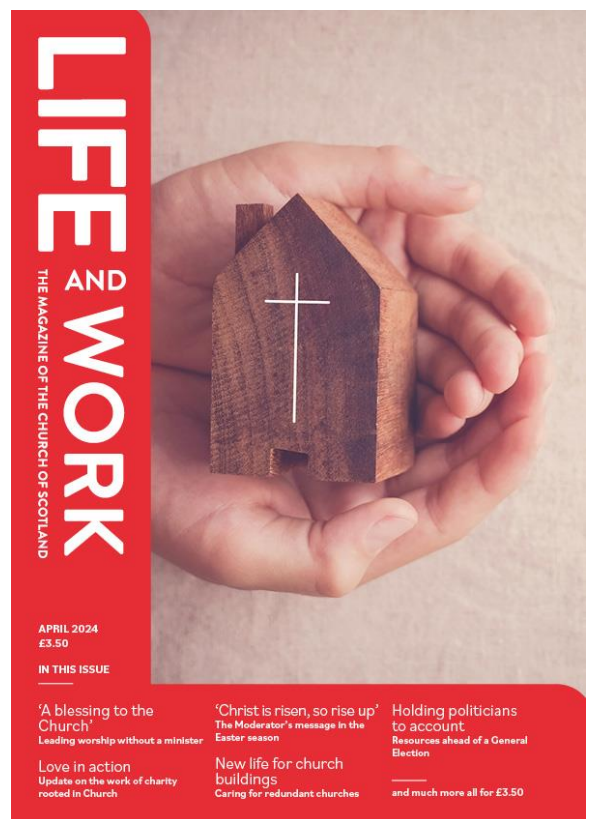
My Church: Alan Blair of St Columba's Church, Jersey

Youth: New elder Grant Henderson shares his journey of faith

May issue

In 2024, the Church of Scotland magazine Life & Work launched a series called Presbytery Focus. The forthcoming May issue will feature the Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian.

If you would like to order a print or digital copy of the magazine (£3.50 and £2.99 respectively) please visit the website www.lifeandwork.org/subscribe .





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.

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.

April: Monday 8th Friday 19th Monday 29th

May: Monday 13th Friday 31st

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

15th April 6th & 20th May

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

17th April 15th May

ANIMAL AFTERNOONS:

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

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY CONCERTS

Our next concert is on: Saturday 25th May, 2pm and we look forward to an afternoon of **Traditional Scots** music.

For more details about any of the above, please contact our Pastoral Assistant, Jacqui Lindsay, on: 07834 364 628 or e-mail: pastoralassistant@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk

MORNINGSIDE HOPE CONCERT – 2nd MARCH 2024



The concert, with Morley Whitehead and soprano Caroline Trutz, was a mix of classical organ pieces and popular songs and was enthusiastically received by a large audience. It opened with the rousing King Edward VII Coronation March, with its hymn-like melody and slower central section, composed by blind organist Alfred Hollins who, Morley told us, was organist at St George's West, designed our organ here at MPC in 1929 after it had remained unfinished for 30 years and gave its opening recital. The programme continued with the beautiful Larghetto from Mozart's Clarinet Quintet, transcribed for the organ. Then we heard three pieces from Caroline accompanied by Morley on the piano – first came the gorgeous 'O Mio Babbino Caro' from Puccini's opera Gianni Schicchi. She invited us to sing along with her – but few if any of us joined in and I don't think there was any way we could have improved her performance! Then we had two songs from Lerner and Loewe's My Fair Lady - first 'All I Want is a Room Somewhere' – it really was 'Lovely'. Next up was 'I Could Have Danced All Night' and Caroline really entered into its spirit, her actions mirroring her words as she danced down the central aisle among the audience.

Morley played 'Variations on the German/Latin Carol In Dulci Jubilo' - the four variations contrasting and becoming more complex as the sequence continued. We had three more songs from Caroline – Ivor Novello's 'We'll Gather Lilacs in the Spring Again' was followed by Jerome Kern's 'O Listen Sister' from Showboat – with soloist and piano in authentic syncopated, jazzy rhythm. She ended with the Gaelic Eriskay Love Lilt, sung unaccompanied and beautifully. The programme wound up with two organ pieces - Cesar Franck's Andantino in G with its introspective opening contrasting with the celestial, angelic ending. Morley played us out with Theodore Dubois' Toccata in G - a splendid, rhythmic foot-tapping piece with a calmer middle section and then a return to the powerful opening melody.

Overall, a most enjoyable way of spending a wet Saturday afternoon with something for everyone – we look forward to the next one, a performance of traditional Scottish music on 25th May.

Barry Hughes

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



Under the auspices of Morningside Hope, Dr Neil Milliken gave a very informative talk. He stressed the importance of the gut in digestion and absorption of foods, and quoted Hippocrates who said “All Health starts in the Gut”.

To optimize digestion, take hot water with lemon or acid cider vinegar. Many people have too little, not too much stomach acid. You should eat only when relaxed, avoid fluid with meals, take time to chew, don't take fruit or dessert for several hours after a protein meal as protein takes time to be digested and avoid most artificial sweeteners.

Try to include a varied plant rich organic diet – beans, red apples and onions, mushrooms, berries, wild caught salmon, sardines and other oily fish, organic meat, and free range eggs. Unfortunately, tuna can contain pollution from mercury. Nuts and seeds are very good but should be soaked overnight to allow them to develop. 80% of ladies were low in magnesium and should try to increase that either by foods or supplements. Herbs are also good and underused – try thyme, rosemary, basil and garlic. Things to avoid were salts (sodium), high carbohydrates, sugars, barbequed meats, processed foods especially meats such as salami and bacon, and fizzy, sugary drinks.

Dr Milliken gave us a lot more information and this is only a summary. He suggested reading the Digestive Awareness Diet Book by Dr J K Pollard, and Googling prebiotic (not probiotic) foods. Any plans to change your diet would benefit from being discussed with a medical advisor.

David Mitchell

THE PONIES ARE COMING!

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

With that in mind, we have arranged a very special visit from some therapy ponies, giving 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 16th April in the St Matthews Hall, 2 - 4pm.
Teas and coffees will be served at 3pm.

Entry is by donation; all donations will go towards our Morningside Hope Project.





LOOKING TO THE FUTURE WITH MORNINGSIDE HOPE- HELP NEEDED!

It's hard to believe that we are already in the third year of our Morningside Hope project. It has been amazing to have the TOR funding in place and all the support from the church itself. TOR funding sadly finishes at the end of December and so we are beginning to look at ways to fund the next three years.

If you know of any Trusts or Grant making bodies that we might apply to, any businesses that might be interested in sponsoring certain parts of the project or any generous benefactors who might be open to partnering with us, please let me know. Together we have begun to build a project that is having a very real and positive impact on many lives in our church, parish and beyond. Pulling the funding together for the coming three years is our next challenge.

Please get in touch if you have any thoughts or ideas, I would be really grateful.
07834 364 628 pastoralassistant@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk

Jacqui Lindsay

MUSICAL NOTES

We are always fortunate with the high standard of our choir scholars. Here one of our sopranos and one of our basses introduce themselves.

My name is Sofia Lang, I am 18 years old and currently in my final year at George Watson's College. Next year I hope to go on to study physics at university.

Music has always been a huge part of my life, and I have sung in choirs and played in orchestras from a very young age, alongside playing the piano and violin. I am very much enjoying singing in the Morningside Parish Church choir this year, especially with the sense of community that there is within the choir and the church itself, which is something that I have become very grateful for over these last months.



My name is Magnus Chapman, I'm 18, from Edinburgh, and am in my last year of high school. I'm looking forward to studying music at university next year and continuing my choral singing.

I have been a part of the National Youth Choir of Scotland for ten years, and currently sing in their main choir. For the last three years, I have studied Voice at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Junior programme, and sing in their chamber and consort choirs. This year, through RCS, I had the honour of winning the Glasgow Grand Opera Cup. Since January 2023, I have loved singing with Edinburgh-based chamber choir Calton Consort, and I am thoroughly enjoying my time here at Morningside Parish Church as a choral scholar.

MAY MAGAZINE

Material for the May issue of the magazine should be with the editor, Alison Riddell, by **Friday 19 April 2024** and it will be available by Sunday 5 May. Contributions should be emailed to editor@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk or left in her church pigeonhole.



Minister: Very Revd Dr Derek Browning 447 1617

derek.browning@churchofscotland.org.uk

Pastoral Assistant: Jacqui Lindsay 07834 364 628

pastoralassistant@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk

Magazine Editor: Alison Riddell 445 2330

editor@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk

Church Administrator: Leigh Malaihollo 447 6745

office@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk

www.morningsideparishchurch.org.uk

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