

Magazine

No. 200 May 2025

Dear Friends

Hilary Mantel, the historical novelist famous for the *Wolf Hall* trilogy about the life of Thomas Cromwell was also the author of many newspaper and periodical articles. In them we meet not just Mantel the Cromwellcatcher, but Mantel the quill-sharp critic of contemporary life. The collection is called '*A Memoir of My Former Self - A Life in Writing*.'

In the first of her 2017 Reith Lectures, 'The Day Is For The Living', she writes:

"Evidence is not always partial. Facts are not truth, though they are part of it - information is not knowledge. And history is not the past. It's the record of what's left on the record. It's the plan of the positions taken, when we stop the dance to note them down. It's what's left in the

sieve when the centuries have run through it a few stones, scraps of writing, scraps of cloth. It is no more 'the past than a birth certificate is a birth, or a script a performance, or a map is a journey. It is the multiplication of the evidence of fallible and biased witnesses, combined with incomplete accounts of actions not fully understood by the people who performed them. It's no more than the best we can do, and often it falls short of that."

When we come to look at the history that surrounds us, when we come to look at our own lives, and when we come to look at our faith, what Mantel writes seems to me to be



persuasive. We may know little, or we may know a lot, but we do not know everything. More has been forgotten, or not recorded, than was ever remembered. Even in Bible times this was acknowledged. John, at the end of his gospel, writes:

"But there are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written." (John 21:25)

> With the Bible, and the stories about the life and words of Jesus, we do not know all that He said and did. We catch glimpses, we get a sense, we employ OUR imagination, and we watch out for our own prejudices (benign and malign) that attempt to shape Jesus into our image, and what we need, rather than Who He was, and

why He mattered, and still matters. I suspect the real Jesus is often to be found somewhere in the gaps of what is written about Him, always just beyond our reach, but not beyond our hearing, or encountering, or following.

Until the time we meet with Him, on the other side of Eternity, we make do with a few stones, scraps of writing, scraps of cloth, to begin with. Then trust Him to inspire us, even from these few fragments, to alter our lives and aspirations in a way that shows we attempt to believe, and live in hope.

Very Revel Dr Derek Browning

KIRK SESSION NEWS

The Kirk Session met in April and discussed the following:

Presbytery Reform - A report from the Presbytery's Deployment of Resources Committee had been circulated to all elders. Conversations about the proposed union between Greenbank and Morningside continue. Concern was expressed about the slowness of progress.

A tentative suggestion was made that there was in the Morningside, Greenbank and Fairmilehead congregations a need for someone to work with and attract the under 40s age group into Church life. It was suggested that this "would help to orientate the congregations towards a future of working together and to provide extra support for the three Churches". Issues of oversight and finance would have to be addressed. A fund of the National Church, "Seeds for Growth", provides substantial grants "to congregations to support imaginative mission initiatives" - this is to be investigated.

If this were to proceed it was considered appropriate to extend the group of 4 elders each from Morningside and Greenbank to involve 4 from Fairmilehead plus the two ministers and interim Moderator from these churches.

Reports – Property Committee – Moira Clark, Convenor, reported that it was the season for completing safety certifications, which were generally in hand. The works relating to the collapse of the manse study ceiling are, at last, nearing completion. Other works on the manse windows and the cupola have also been identified for attention.

Pastoral Committee – Doreen Reekie, Convenor, reported that 8 people visited 13 members of the congregation. The visitors update her regularly, especially for any change in circumstances.

Presbytery Elder's Report – Presbytery met on 1 April 2025 and a full range of business was covered indicating the widespread changes underway.

Three long serving ministers are retiring and took their leave of Presbytery - the Revd Dr James Jack; the Revd Elizabeth Henderson and the Revd Dr John Young each having had long periods of service respectively at Duddingston Kirk, Richmond Craigmillar and Richmond Hope; and Liberton.

Presbytery Review - "Presbyteries are responsible for exercising oversight and leadership in Mission and promoting sharing in the wider work of the Church." All Presbyteries are to be subject to periodic review and Edinburgh West Lothian Presbytery is among the first to be reviewed. The review is carried out by individuals from other Presbyteries.

A Presbytery Review Form had been circulated for completion by the Presbytery Clerk, Convenors and staff. A Congregational Questionnaire had been distributed to every fifth congregation from an alphabetical list of congregations. The Review Team interviewed the Presbytery Officials. The resulting 13-page report was generally positive, recognising that the commitment, time and energy of staff and members of Presbytery was excellent. However, they did note feedback from convenors and congregations which told a story of "considerable pressure and stress that had been experienced over the last few years which inevitably has affected life within the Presbytery including relationships, morale and trust." "Effort to retain and build back morale, trust and good relationships has obviously been undertaken and has been appreciated by many congregations." They made some specific recommendations but in general it was a positive report.

Retiral of Presbytery Administrator – Peter Lindsell has been appointed to this role from 31 March. However, Mrs Grace Mackay has agreed to continue on a part time basis to facilitate the handover. At the end of the meeting the Clerk thanked Grace for her diligence, friendliness and general excellence in carrying out her duties. Presbytery gave her a presentation and a lengthy standing ovation.

WORSHIP NOTES

There will be an infant baptism on Sunday 4th May.

Sunday 1st June will be when we next celebrate the **Sacrament of the Lord's Supper**. Services will be held at 9.30am and 10.30am in the Church as usual. All are welcome to share in these communion services. That Sunday is also Ascension Sunday when we mark the time of Jesus' departure from earth, after Easter and resurrection, and before Pentecost and the birth of the Christian Church.

HOME COMMUNION

Throughout the year the Minister is happy to bring Home Communion to members of the congregation unable to attend the communion services in the Church. The short service focusses on the communion part of the normal communion service, and 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 to arrange it.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, 17TH – 22ND MAY 2025

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland is the governing body of our denomination, and is made up of ministers, elders, deacons from across the Church of Scotland, and representatives from other denominations from across Britain and across the world. The Assembly usually meets annually, and in the Assembly Hall on the Mound. Its meetings are public and there is a public gallery which can be accessed off the Lawnmarket, and the proceedings can also be watched live via the Church of Scotland website.

The General Assembly, the supreme court of the Church, makes decisions that guide and mark the life of our denomination. Sometimes it deals with matters relating to governance and reform, like the ongoing Presbytery planning process and the restructuring of the Church's central bodies at 121 George Street. It also deals with complex theological and pastoral issues. This year the Assembly will be debating what the Church of Scotland's stance will be on assisted dying.

The Minister will be attending the General Assembly.

THE FRIENDS OF MORNINGSIDE

This group has existed for many years and provides a quiet but important witness and work on behalf of our Church. One of the most important things the Friends do is to provide funding for half of the choral scholarships, ensuring that we have a strong and wonderful choir to enhance our Sunday morning services. Other projects supported by the Friends include the pictures in the corridor opposite the pigeon holes, the photos of the five churches that went to make up the union that is now Morningside Parish Church, and most recently the blue cord and brass stanchions near the pulpit steps that keep the area safe for people who might not see the step down to the St Andrew Room. The Friends also saw to the publication of the history leaflet that tells the story of our Church. There are many, many more projects which have benefitted from the support of the Friends over the years.

The Friends' AGM will be held in the St Andrew Room on Sunday 4th May at 11.45am. If you would like to join the Friends of Morningside, you will find leaflets in the vestibule or enquire through the Church Office. Please join and help us to continue supporting the important work of our Church.



Morningside Hope



UPCOMING DATES:

HEART FOR ART: workshops for those with dementia and their partners/carers
Held every Tuesday in St Matthews' Hall 11- 1pm
Annual Art Exhibition: Saturday 29th November.

MUSIC AND MEMORIES IN MORNINGSIDE: workshops for those with dementia					
and their partners/carers					
Held in the Cluny Hall every 1 st and 3 rd Monday s in the month 2- 4pm					
May:Mondays 5th & 19thJune:Mondays 2nd & 16th					
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 Church 2-4pm					
May:Mondays 12th & 26thJune:Mondays 9th & 23rd					
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 catch up.					
Held once a month on a Wednesday afternoon, 2-4pm					
21 st May 18 th June <i>No games July & August</i>					
ANIMAL AFTERNOON: Tuesday 27 th May Therapy ponies 2- 4pm					

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY CONCERTS: Saturday 31st May 2pm Brass Quintet

TALK: Monday 30th June at 3.15pm.

Speaker: Mr Eric Melvin, A Brief overview of Edinburgh's History

Canal Boat Trips: Sadly, the charity that ran the boat trips has been dissolved because of funding being withdrawn. There are possible plans afoot for another body to take the boat on, but I think it unlikely that that will be fully in place until after the summer.

The church also offers **Wednesday Coffee Mornings**, every Wednesday 10 – 11.30am – everyone welcome!

For further information on any of the above contact our Pastoral Assistant Jacqui Lindsay on 07834 364 628 or e mail: pastoralassistant@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk



PLAYLIST FOR LIFE TRAINING DAY Saturday 3rd May 10 – 4pm

Guinea Pigs needed – still some spaces!

Braid Hall, MPC

We are planning on introducing *Playlist for Life* to Morningside Hope.

To do this, we intend to kick things off with a training day for up to 16 people. The day will introduce us to the whole concept of the impact of familiar music to each of us and how we create individual playlists of significant songs for those living with dementia and others. This can be done by beginning to create a playlist for ourselves.

Being a guinea pig refers to the fact that this will be the first time we have run this training so it may not be altogether perfect – it would be great to have friendly faces to try it out on. There is no commitment beyond the day itself, but the hope would be that some of those attending might, at a later date, enjoy being part of a small team of volunteers who will then offer support to others to create their own playlist.

The day will be fully catered. We will kick off with bacon rolls (or vegetarian alternative), lunch will be provided and we'll hopefully end with some delicious tea and cake.

Playlist for Life was set up by Sally Magnusson after her family's experience of caring for their mother who was living with dementia. For more information about the charity, you can visit their website: <u>https://www.playlistforlife.org.uk/</u>

If you are interested in attending or just finding out a little more, please contact the Pastoral Assistant, Jacqui Lindsay, at: pastoralassistant@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk or 07834364628



This aspect of the work is being made possible thanks to monies from both the Community Fund and R S MacDonald Charitable Trust.

COME ENJOY AN AFTERNOON WITH SOME ADORABLE SHETLAND PONIES!



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 27th May 2- 4pm in St Matthews' Hall.

We may even be able to stretch to a cup of tea, but for us, not them $\widehat{\mbox{\tiny \ensuremath{ \e$

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

REMINDER! - CHARITY RUN

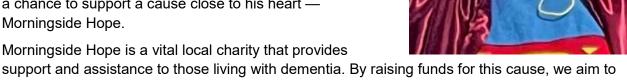
In Memory Of DAVID CALDER

Supporting Morningside Hope

On 24th and 25th May, friends and family of David will be coming together to take on various distances at the Edinburgh Marathon Festival (EMF) in a one-off event in his memory.

This special event is not only a tribute to David's life but also a chance to support a cause close to his heart — Morningside Hope.

Morningside Hope is a vital local charity that provides



honour David's memory by making a positive impact in the lives of others as he did.

Runners of all abilities will be taking part in a range of distances across the EMF weekend, from 5K to the half marathon. Whether you're an experienced runner or simply want to do a shorter distance in support, we welcome anyone who would like to get involved. If you'd like to take part, please email Kim for more details on how to join the team.

For those who may not be running but would still like to support the cause, donations are greatly appreciated. Every contribution, big or small, will help Morningside Hope continue their vital work in the community. Below is the QR code and the link to the Give a Little page.



https://givealittle.co/c/runfordavid

For those who prefer not to donate online, please put your donation, cash or cheque made payable to Morningside Parish Church, into an envelope or gift aid envelope clearly marked as 'Run for David' and put it into the collection on a Sunday morning or hand it in to the church office.

Please come together to remember David, celebrate his life, and make a difference.

Thank you for your support! For more information, please contact Kim – kimcalder2017@gmail.com

Kim Calder



ROLL CHANGES

Please give a warm welcome to our newest members, Ms Kate Hopkins and Ms Abbie Thomson, both admitted by profession of faith, and Alex Bleck, admitted by certificate of transference.





MORNINGSIDE HOPE QUIZ AND SILENT AUCTION.



Tuesday 17th June 7 – 9pm

Tickets: Adults £6 Children £3

Time: 6.30pm for 7pm start (Bar available from 6.30pm)

Tickets will be on sale for this Morningside Hope fundraiser from the beginning of May, but we wanted to flag this up now in the hope that folk might be able to donate **items** (unwanted gifts, family heirlooms that are just cluttering up the place ⁽²⁾) etc.) and **talents** that we can auction on the night.

Examples of talents might be things like:

- catering a dinner party for 4
- 2 hrs gardening
- 6 jars of homemade marmalade or jam
- 4 home baked loaves one each week for a month
- An evening's baby/dog or cat sitting
- A dog walk

- An hour's consultation with a financial advisor
- 2 hr intro to IT skills
- A batch of baking or a birthday cake for that special occasion
- 4 introductory music lessons

Any talent you might have that others could benefit from; we can probably auction it!

There will be sheets available at the back of the church and during coffee over the next few weeks if anyone would like to offer an item or talent to be auctioned.

It's likely to be a fun night so we hope that as many of you as possible can join us.

All the proceeds will go to Morningside Hope.

Jacqui Lindsay



THE SPEAKER SUPPER RETURNS

After quite a break the next speaker supper will be held on 30th May when the guest speaker will be Lady Janet Balfour.

She was the editor of the backbench diaries of Richard Crossman, and the official biographer of

Agatha Christie, and Edwina Mountbatten. Her book "The Secrets of the Rue St Roch" details how her father-in-law founded MI6. She was Chair of Bletchley Park, and her CV shows an astonishing Non-Executive Director career.

We will be charging £25 for a two-course meal, with coffee. Drinks will be available for purchase on the night. We will be taking menu options when we sell the tickets, which should hopefully be from the first Sunday in May.

CALLING ALL KNITTERS!

Thank you to all of you who have supported my earlier request for knitting and crocheting for charity. With your help we have been able to send lots of items to various areas in Eastern Europe where they are greatly needed.

The charity we were supporting had to move premises and unfortunately could not continue the Stitches for Hope project. We are now working with an amazing charity called New Forest for Ukraine. They are able to drive trucks right into Ukraine and support a number of projects and charities working there. More details are on their website. <u>http://www.newforestforukraine.org/</u>



<u>Ukraine Charity - support the people of Ukraine</u> Working with our partners in Poland and Ukraine, we react to their fast changing needs to source and ship humanitarian aid. Volunteers living in the New Forest. www.newforestforukraine.org

There is a list of knitted items required thereon which I am happy to pass on if you can't access the site. Among other things the list includes baby goods. They are also looking for items for baby boxes. Baby blankets, hats, bootees and mitts are all needed.

If you prefer to sew they have a project making tote bags. These are filled with all sorts of necessary items and given to female soldiers.

If you prefer heavier items socks are needed for soldiers but these need to be 100% wool. Please consider if you could help and have a look at the website. I am happy to collect any items directly or from the church and dispatch them onwards. Thank you in anticipation,

Morag Shankland 07977190536.

Thank you to the merry band of decorators of our Easter tree!

The tree is much admired by passers by.

MORNINGSIDE HOPE CONCERT - 29 MARCH

Outside the gale howled and the rain poured down but it was warm in church for the large audience to listen to Morley Whitehead and Caroline Trutz, who sings in the Robin Chapel and St Giles' choirs. We first heard *Pageantry* by Nigel Holdsworth, an organist in York. The stately



introduction with melodious chords was followed by a quieter interlude and it closed with a powerful section with lots of bass. Then came Mozart's *Adagio for Glass Harmonica* – its lovely little melody reminiscent of Haydn's pieces for a musical clock. The glass harmonica has a series of glass bowls, ordered by size along a horizontal rod and played by vibrating them with wet fingers. We'd heard it in the Usher Hall some years ago, but it sounds much better on the organ. Morley described Eric Thiman's Air and Gavotte as a pastiche in the 18th century style. The Air was a beautiful, calm set of variations while the Gavotte was cheerful and lively with variable louder and softer sections.

Caroline then gave us three French songs. *Les Filles de Cadix* by Léo Delibes, about dancing and lost loves, is for a high soprano voice and was powerful though rather mournful with expressive gestures. Debussy's *II pleure dans mon Coeur* was a much slower, sadder and more reflective song – the falling rain was perfectly represented by descending passages, mirrored by Morley on the piano. Marguerite Monnot was, we were told, a composer who wrote many songs for Edith Piaf. Her *Hymne a l'Amore* is a very attractive little song – the melody seemed familiar.

Michael Festing's sonata Largo, Allegro and Aria was arranged for a grand reopening of the Albert Hall organ in 1930 by George Thalben-Ball and is described by Morley as a "merry little piece". The slowish Largo has little ornamental flourishes while the faster Allegro also has treble ornamentation. The Aria, with its two variations, is more assertive and powerful – pure pleasure to listen to.

We next had two more songs. Firstly, Michael William Balfe's ballad *I dreamt that I dwelt in Marble Halls*" from his operetta "*The Bohemian Girl*" was beautifully sung by Caroline with perfect enunciation. The melody seemed very familiar and I realised I used to play it about 75 years ago when practising for my Grade 1 piano! Then Franz Lehár's *Vilja Oh Vilja*, from *The Merry Widow*, with its sweeping lyrics which Caroline sang with great feeling. It was probably known by almost everyone – indeed as it went on she was joined by several people in the audience.

Then Morley came back with George Thalben-Ball's *Elegy in B flat*. Apparently the composer was asked by Walford Davies on the spur of the moment to fill a gap in the programme for a BBC concert being broadcast live (no pressure!) so he improvised this elegy on the spot. He subsequently wrote it down because he felt it had some merit – its hymn-like opening, slow and thoughtful, is repeated in a more complex and powerful form with bass underpinning, before a calm and peaceful ending. The recital finished with Théodore Dubois' *Toccata in G*, popular with the congregation at MPC. The first part is a fast, emphatic toccata with splendid, rhythmic passages, before a slower and quieter middle section. It ended in strong recapitulated toccata form for the finale. And the sun came out.

There are few better ways to spend a wet Saturday afternoon than at a concert like this.

Barry Hughes

PASTORAL CARE TRAINING

The level 1 Pastoral Care Training ran over two evenings in March and was fully subscribed with sixteen people from some twelve churches in attendance. Topics covered ranged from communication skills, self-awareness to Dementia amongst others.

We were very grateful to the Social Committee who provided a delicious light supper on each evening – an excellent way for the group to begin to bond.

Some feedback from participants included:

"Everyone friendly, engaging delivery of the course. A great experience."

"Thank you! Way exceeded my expectations."

"I am very impressed you offered this to people from outside your own parish - very altruistic!"



FLOWER LIST

The flower list for May is as follows:-

		Donated by	Arranged by
May	4	Trudi Ferrier	Anne Armour & Issie
			Paterson
	11	Evelyn Henderson	Penny Graham & Liz Munro
	18	Eleanor Watt	Eleanor Watt
	25	Marie Ogilvie	Ruth Henderson



The cost for flowers remains at £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 advise me if you have registered with the Gift Aid Convener or alternatively fill out one of the Gift Aid envelopes. Monies can be given to a member of the Committee, put in the Flower Committee pigeon hole or sent to the church office clearly marked for the Flower Fund. Please contact me direct on 0131 449 2866; e-mail: irene_a_wilson@btinternet.com if you require details to make a bank transfer.

Remember, if you are unable to come to church on your chosen date for any reason, you can always see "your" flowers online.

Do you have a talent for, or would like to try your hand at, flower arranging? You will have noticed that the majority of our displays are now in vases as opposed to the pedestals we used previously. We are always delighted to welcome new members to join our team - men are also welcome if they have an artistic flair. If you would like to join us, or want to come along and see what it entails, please come and speak to myself or any other members of the Flower Committee on a Sunday morning. Training and guidance can be given if required.

Irene Wilson, Convener - Flower Committee

MUSICAL NOTES - MEET OUR SCHOLARS

Two more choral scholars introduce themselves:

I am Méabh Downey, a musician from Newry, Northern Ireland and am currently finishing my 3rd year studying music at the University of Edinburgh.



In Ireland I studied voice under the tutelage of Fiona Flynn at Flynn Performing Arts and now continue my studies with Susan Hamilton. I am also currently working towards my diploma in piano with Tanya Ekanayaka.

I have a love for performing and achieved numerous awards in competitions throughout Northern Ireland as well as gaining a place as a finalist in N.I Youth Musician of the Year three years in a row.

I was a member of the National Youth choir of Northern Ireland and Chamber Choir and was a soloist on their tour of Provence in 2019, furthermore, I studied clarinet with the Education Authority Music Service and was leader of the South Ulster Youth Band.

Here, I am currently a member of Edinburgh University Singers and many of Edinburgh's musical theatre societies. Keen to keep spreading my love of all things music I also produce and present a show with the university radio society!

I am Tobias Cullen and I am a Biological Sciences undergraduate at UoE. I've been singing for most of my life, often in choirs at school, but this is my first time singing in a religious setting as I used to live in the UAE. I'm finding it really interesting to learn about the Church of Scotland and I absolutely love the design of the church in Morningside. It's also given me the opportunity to visit family in the UK, as I visited London in February to see my uncle and family friends, as well as renewing my passport. I'll be in London in a few weeks' time for my cousin's christening as well, so thank you all for being so supportive.

HAVE YOU BOUGHT YOUR CD YET?

A new CD of "Organ Favourites", played on the MPC organ by our organist Morley Whitehead. Total playing time is just under the hour, the price £10, and all monies raised will go to our Choral Scholarship Fund. To buy your copy, see Morley after the morning service or contact the Church Office.

JUNE MAGAZINE

Material for the June issue of the magazine should be with the editor, Alison Riddell, by **Friday 16 May 2025** and it will be available by Sunday 1 June. Contributions should be emailed to <u>editor@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk</u>. Please note that the June magazine will be the last one until September as there are no magazines in July and August.

THE CROSS John Donne

Since Christ embraced the cross itself, dare I His image, th' image of His cross, deny? Would I have profit by the sacrifice, And dare the chosen altar to despise? It bore all other sins, but is it fit That it should bear the sin of scorning it? Who from the picture would avert his eye, How would he fly his pains, who there did die?

From me no pulpit, nor misgrounded law, Nor scandal taken, shall this cross withdraw, It shall not, for it cannot; for the loss Of this cross were to me another cross. Better were worse, for no affliction, No cross is so extreme, as to have none. Who can blot out the cross, with th' instrument Of God dew'd on me in the Sacrament?

Who can deny me power, and liberty To stretch mine arms, and mine own cross to be? Swim, and at every stroke thou art thy cross; The mast and yard make one, where seas do toss; Look down, thou spiest out crosses in small things; Look up, thou seest birds raised on crossed wings; All the globe's frame, and spheres, is nothing else But the meridians crossing parallels.



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