

homogenous Church'. He'd been impressed by their missionary activism. By the 1930s Morningside Congregational Church had supplied 43 missionaries overseas which it could place on its Missionary Roll of Honour, including Eric Liddell in China.

One prominent member of the church at that time who contributed to the building effort was the philanthropist Charles Edward Price, Liberal MP for Central Edinburgh (1906-1918).

He was a deacon of Morningside Congregational Church for more than 40 years and left a great deal of his biscuit manufacturing fortune to charity in his will. He was a partner in McVitie's Price, the Edinburgh biscuit manufacturers and inventors of the Jaffa cake and the chocolate digestive biscuit.



Above: Charles Edward Price, MP, 1906

Cover page, below: The former United Presbyterian Church, also known as 'the old Atheneum' which was demolished to make way for the present church building in 1926.

Left: 'The abbey looking west', that is, the view from the chancel looking out towards the front of the sanctuary along Bruntsfield Place / Morningside Road; snapshot of the current church under construction 1927-28.

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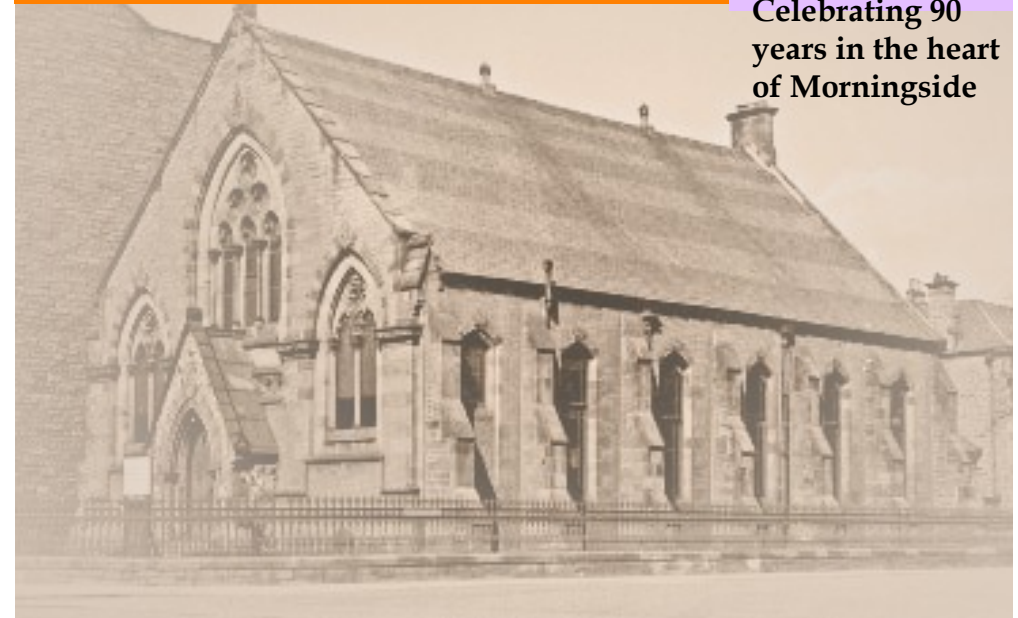


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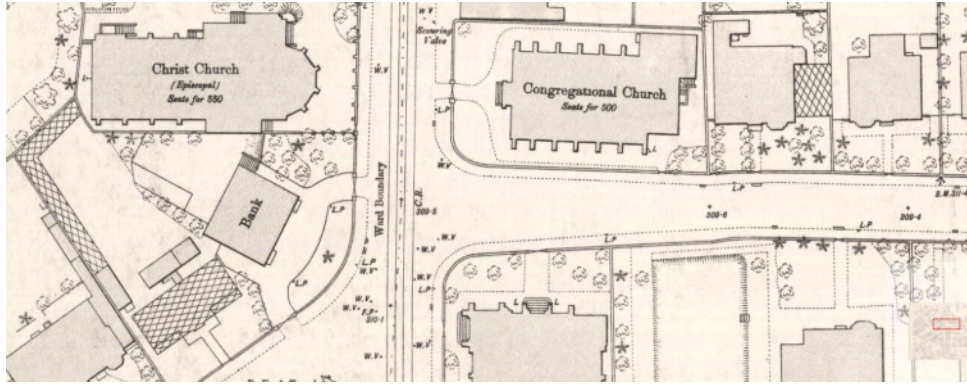
90th
Anniversary

Morningside United Church

Celebrating 90
years in the heart
of Morningside



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AT MORNINGSID



O.S. Map 1894

The congregation of Morningside Congregational Church traces its foundation back to November 1887 but the present church building dates from 1929.

The church's origins begin with three young men who decided to found a Congregational church in the growing suburb of Morningside in the 1880s, Joseph Burns, Frank Sonley Cownie, and Andrew Melrose. They leafleted the area to drum up interest and hired the Atheneum for their meetings. This was a former church building standing on the corner of Chamberlain Road and Morningside Road on the present site.

This building had been used as a lecture hall and library by the

Morningside Atheneum Club from 1881 but it was originally built as a church by the United Presbyterians. It was soon too small for the UP's, so they sold it and began building a much larger church across the road which is now the Eric Liddell Centre.

The wee Congregational fellowship began meeting in 'the old Atheneum' and was formally constituted as a church in December 1887. It had 25 members! It grew, and was soon able to buy the building, in 1890. By 1926 the membership had grown to over 500. The building was too small, even with weekday services and several on a Sunday. A fund raised to extend the church was started before 1914 but was put on hold due the Great War.

The 1920s began the bold plan to demolish the 'old Atheneum' and build the present church, complete with teaching rooms and caretaker's flat but it was soon realised that the original £10,000 estimate raised before the war fell far below the real costs. The building project was re-started in 1926 and completed in November 1929 at an eventual cost of £24,000 (including a new manse).

First, a large hall was built behind the Atheneum to accommodate additional activities. This was used for worship while the new sanctuary was being built. The minister of the time, Rev. Roderick Glyn Davies, saw through the completion of the work. The architect who designed it in an Art Deco-Romanesque style was James McLachlan FRIBA.

The foundation stone was laid in 1928 and the opening service of dedication in October 1929.

The last of the £24,000 debt was cleared in 1937 following a large three-day fun-raising bazaar held in the Central Hall Tollcross which raised £1454. The Scotsman reported that the Lord Provost had commended the new church as 'a tremendous asset to the city of Edinburgh'. (15.3.1937)

People in Scotland, he said, 'were proud of the Congregational churches. They floated in a sea of Presbyterianism which was a friendly supporting medium in some ways'. Yet he thought the Congregationalists, 'were right to preserve their own outlook... as it would be a distinct loss to Scotland if they were to amalgamate in one

O.S. Map 1933

