Link

The Magazine of

Morningside United Church

July/August 2024

A message from Rev Sarah…

Dear friends,

During the month of August, Morningside United Church will be hosting the *Spirit Justice* exhibition by artist and retired United Reformed Church Minister, the Revd Elizabeth Gray-King. Elizabeth describes on her website,

> "The Spirit-Justice tour is my new exhibition series that started in Exeter in March 2024, ending in Edinburgh in August 2024. The paintings on show depict images which call for justice alongside images which speak of the power of God's Spirit to respond to that injustice."

Elizabeth understands herself as a visual theologian meaning that she sees her faith and how that responds to politics and the events of life rather than thinking it.

Immediately prior to the exhibition opening here, it has been displayed in Aberdeen hosted as a joint project by Aberdeen Methodist and United Reformed Churches. Because Aberdeen URC does not have its own building, and the Methodist church building while located in the city centre is rather tucked away, the decision was taken to host the exhibition in an empty shop in one of the shopping centres in order to enable more people from the wider community engage with the work if they chose to do so.

It has been fascinating to see who is willing to cross the threshold of a shop and look at the paintings. People from all walks of life. People who have come into the exhibition because they are interested in art, or justice, or the other themes highlighted. People who are at a loose end in the city, either chronically or unusually so and who pop into the shop because doing so is a pleasant way to pass a little time. Waiting can feel less onerous if there is something to do while doing so!

What has caught my attention is how the exhibition has enabled conversations to happen between church folk and people from the wider community who not only would never or rarely cross the threshold of church premises, but who are willing to be drawn into or even initiate a conversation about faith and spiritual matters. Who find themselves willing to step back, pause, and consider their own response to the injustices of our world and what sort of person they want to be as they consider that response.

One of the reasons that the Kirk Session has agreed to host the *Spirit Justice* exhibition is to offer a space for these sorts of conversations in our community. We might ponder what exactly is the purpose of church and faith in our time, and to some extent this is part of the answer. We ponder what we are able to offer to our community, some of which is shared with other partners of good will and some of which is more uniquely ours. We are able to offer physical space for groups to meet; our buildings host a variety of the sorts of groups one might expect to see: music and exercise groups, children's and young people's organisations, our own coffee mornings and other events one might expect. Beyond that are gathering activities that might be thought of in some quarters as less usual: the Peace Garden and the Spiders making the camouflage nets for Ukraine. Others too might be surprised to learn of our relationship with the Romanian Orthodox Church in Edinburgh in a time when different church traditions can be perceived as being opposed to each rather than actually having more in common than separates us.

But back to the exhibition. Here is a means for us to talk with our community. Hopefully curiosity will bring all sorts of our neighbours in from the road to see the paintings. Hopefully this will be received as an invitation to think, feel and look. I wonder too if the experience of hosting the paintings will change us, probably not in a way that looks so different to how we operate now, but in a way that reframes our understanding of ourselves, our God and our neighbours. Here we provide, as we always do, but this time in a particular way, an

opportunity to speak about what we truly value, both as individuals and as community.
With love and prayers
Sarah

The Revd Sarah Moore
Transitional Minister

Discussion Group

Our next discussion group will be taking place on Monday 19 August, 6.45pm to 8.15pm in the McLeish room.

If you are interested in joining the group but the times do not work for you, please let me know and I will see if an alternative time is possible. All are welcome to attend.

Revd Sarah Moore

Spirit Justice Exhibition

This exhibition comprising work from retired URC Minister, the Revd Elizabeth Gray King, will be visiting Morningside United Church between Friday 2nd and Sunday 25th August 2024. It comprises 11 paintings and will be displayed in the McLeish room and at the back of the church.

Formal Opening of the Eric Liddell Peace Garden & Garden Party

Saturday 10 August 2024 MUC Garden 2pm - 4pm

Please come and enjoy the beauty of our Peace Garden in memory of Eric Liddell and enjoy some refreshing nourishment and lively conversation with friends old and new.

Musings From Mary Taylor, Pastoral Assistant, MUC

Well what a lovely time we are having just now in Morningside United Church linked to Eric Liddell 100 and connecting more with global visitors from the World Church!

During June we welcomed and hosted Blanka, a Polish intern from Coventry Cathedral linked to the Community of the Cross of Nails. It was Blanka's first time in Edinburgh and Scotland.

As well as being a tourist around Edinburgh seeing Wojtek, the Polish bear in Princes Street Gardens and Greyfriars Bobby, the faithful Scottish dog, Blanka learnt about Eric Liddell and the Eric Liddell Community and asked a lot of questions about Scottish churches and history. She also kindly planted the border of golden begonias you can see as you enter the Eric Liddell peace garden. These beautiful flowers help us to remember the story of Eric Liddell's gold medal in Paris in 1924, exactly 100 years ago on 11 July.

During Carers' Week Fi Brown, from the Eric Liddell Community gave Blanka and myself the chance to have a most enjoyable trip along the canal from Polwarth Church. Canal trips cater for up to 11 people. Would anyone in Morningside United Church like to go on such a leisurely, canal trip? Please speak to me if you are interested.

The final highlight of Blanka's trip was going to Marygate House, Holy Island. Marygate House is an international partner of the Community of the Cross of Nails.

On Saturday 22 June some of us were privileged to attend the very special Eric Liddell 100 service in St Giles and we really appreciated Rev Lindsey Sanderson's sermon. Princess Royal and Patricia Russell, Eric's oldest daughter read the lessons from Scripture.

It was a great delight to welcome Patricia and Mervyn Russell and Sue Caton, Eric's niece to worship on the Sunday, to spend time with them in Morningside United Church and in the Eric Liddell peace garden.

They appreciated how much it had changed in a year thanks to our hard-working gardening team.

On 11 July MUC welcomed 2 performances of Rich Swingle's play, Beyond the Chariots, a one man play when Rich told Eric's story using 10-12 voices. Remarkable performances!

Looking ahead - dates for diary:
25 July to 12 September
The Eric Liddell - Legacy of an Olympic Legend Exhibition, as part of the Eric 100 exhibition series will be held in the Scottish Parliament. There is no charge.

In the midst of all this activity this summer let us remember the words of Eric's favourite hymn:

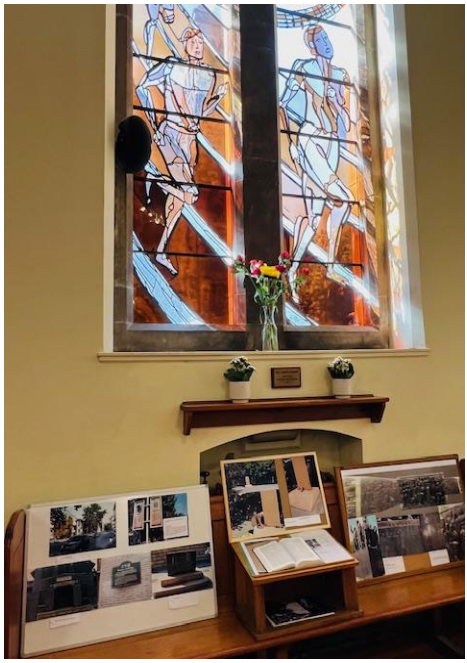
"Be still my soul: the Lord is on your side;
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
leave to your God to order and provide;
in every change he faithful will remain."

Beyond Chariots

The one-man play *Beyond Chariots* on 11 July brought some distant visitors. Leslie Freitag from Harpenden in Hertfordshire made the long journey to see the play. He brought with him some large photo prints of Chinese locations associated with Eric Liddell, and kindly gifted them to MUC, and also some to Rich Swingle who performed the play. These are now on boards under the window in the sanctuary with brief captions. Leslie explained that these were taken when he and his wife Linda visited China in 2013.

His own words continue below:
The visit was at the end of a long study tour following the footsteps of George Hogg (from Harpenden) and Rewi Alley (from New Zealand) who were much respected Europeans doing good work in the country. Hogg organised evacuation of over 50 teenage boys from advancing Japanese army - his actions, like those of Eric, were subjects of two

movies *The Children of Huang Shi* and *Ocean Devil*. Hogg died in 1945 in China, one wonders if he and Eric's paths crossed? Huge country but identical time periods.



The memorial to Eric was the best kept in our entire tour, looking at the web apparently it is now regarded as very important by the Chinese government. After all, based on birthplace, he was their first Olympic medal winner. At one time, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission had the memorial as the sole Commonwealth grave in China.

We added Weifang to our trip due to the family connection. Eric was related to my granny - Liddell her middle name. She only mentioned it a few days before her death, telling Linda that she had seen a film that afternoon in the care home about Wee Eric! (*Chariots of Fire*) She finished by saying "I told you there were good runners in the family!" Somewhat of an understatement!

BBC Radio 4 Recording: Eric Liddell

The BBC is recording a special service of Hymns and Choral Music to be broadcast on Sunday 11 August 2024 at 8.15am.

All are invited to take part in the **recording** in the Sanctuary at MUC on Tuesday 6 August 2024. Please arrive at 6.15 and the recording should be completed by 7.30pm.

Michael Harris – organ; Brigitte Harris – choir direction

Edinburgh Bookshop Author Event:

Tickets £5-22
This is a live, in-person event in the Small Hall.

We're delighted to welcome Callum Robinson to The Edinburgh Bookshop with his evocative literary memoir, Ingrained: The Making of a Craftsman.

Blending memoir and nature writing at its finest, Ingrained is an uplifting meditation on the challenges of working with your hands in our modern age, on community, consumerism, and the beauty of the natural world – one that asks us to see our local trees, and our own wooden objects, in a new and revelatory light.

Timetable for Ministers during July/August

28 July	Rev Sarah Moore
4 August	Rev Mary Taylor
11 August	Rev Sarah Moore
18 August	Rev Sarah Moore
25 August	Rev Sarah Moore

Church Life at MUC – An Update

Coffee Mornings - Our fortnightly coffee mornings return on Thursday 1 August in the Small Hall, starting at 10.30am. Who knows, if it is a lovely day, maybe we can sit out in the garden. Here's hoping.

Eric Liddell Peace Garden - Please would anyone who would like to help or support the Eric Liddell peace garden in any way speak to Fi Brown, the Eric Liddell Community or Mary Taylor. We are usually there on Wednesday afternoons between 1pm -3pm. Thanks for all recent offers of plants. We are still collecting golden plants.

Special Performance of Eric Liddell: The Chariot of Fire

Set in Paris, during the Olympic Games of 1924, we see the struggles Eric Liddell faces around him in staying true to his principles. When given the chance to become the fastest man in the world, will his convictions buckle? Should he stay true to his beliefs? And can he bring home a medal for King and country?

This production, first toured in the UK in 2012, and has been performed in Canada, USA, Australia and New Zealand. It will tour throughout 2024 to mark the centenary of the Eric Liddell's achievements, with special performances in Paris and the Royal Albert Hall.

Friday 16 August at 1.30pm here at Morningside United Church

Tickets £12.30 Concessions £10.50

Reading and Flower Rota for July/August

	Readers:	**Flowers:**
July 28	Judy Wagner	Judy Wagner
August 4	Pam Brindley	Maggie McKenzie
August 11	Rose Kumbanga	Maggie McKenzie
August 18	David Donald	Maggie McKenzie
August 25	Hamish McKenzie	Maggie McKenzie

Maggie McKenzie

Thanks from the Salvation Army at Gorgie

We received note of thanks as below after taking the donated food from the box in the church along with a cheque. In round terms £350 of the total came from Thursday morning coffee mornings and the remainder from some individual donations.

We would just like to take this opportunity to thank you and the members of your congregation very much for the very kind donation of £500.00 which you sent us for the work of the food bank here at Edinburgh Gorgie Salvation Army. Thank you for considering us in this way.

As you are aware your donation is vital for the ongoing work within the community and will enable us to support and provide food for families that are experiencing difficult situations in their lives at the present time.

Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity.

Gorgie Salvation Army

Organ Recital at Morningside United Church

Saturday 17 August at 3pm
You are warmly invited to an organ recital on Saturday 17 August at 3pm in Morningside United Church.

Ella Bottomley, our Organ Scholar at MUC, Evan Cruickshank and Brigitte Harris will present a programme of music by J.S. Bach, George Thalben-Ball, Sigfrid Karg-Elert and others.

Admission is free.

Donations in aid of SCORE Scotland https://www.scorescotland.org.uk are welcome.

Refreshments after the Concert.

Diary for July/August

Sunday 28 July	11am Worship led by Rev Sarah Moore, including the sacrament of Holy Communion
Thursday 1 August	10.30am Thursday coffee morning in Small Hall
Saturday 3 August	10am-12am Art Exhibition – Spirit Justice
Sunday 4 August	11am Worship led by Mary Taylor
Sunday 4 August	1pm-5pm Art Exhibition – Spirit Justice
Tuesday 6 August	6.15pm BBC recording special service of Hymns and Choral Music
Wednesday 7 August	10am-12pm & 7pm-9pm Art Exhibition
Wednesday 7 August	5.30pm-6.30pm Choir practice in the Small Hall
Thursday 8 August	1pm-5pm Art Exhibtion – Spirit Justice
Saturday 10 August	10am-12pm Art Exhibition – Spirit Justice
Saturday 10 August	2pm-4pmDedication of Eric Liddell Peace Garden
Sunday 11 August	11am Worship led by Rev Sarah Moore
Sunday 11 August	1pm-5pm Art Exhibition – Spirit Justice
Wednesday 14 August	10am-12pm & 7pm-9pm Art Exhibition
Wednesday 14 August	5.30pm-6.30pm Choir practice in the Small Hall
Thursday 15 August	10.30am Thursday coffee morning in Small Hall
Thursday 15 August	1pm-5pm Art Exhibtion – Spirit Justice
Friday 16 August	1.30pm Searchlight Theatre: The Chariot of Fire
Saturday 17 August	10am-12am Art Exhibition – Spirit Justice
Saturday 17 August	3pm-4pm Organ Recital by Brigitte Harris
Sunday 18 August	11am Worship led by Rev Sarah Moore
Sunday 18 August	1pm-5pm Art Exhibition – Spirit Justice

Monday 19 August	6.30pm-8.30pm Discussion Group – Vestibule
Wednesday 21 August	10am-12pm & 7pm-9pm Art Exhibition
Wednesday 21 August	5.30pm-6.30pm Choir practice in the Small Hall
Thursday 22 August	1pm-5pm Art Exhibtion – Spirit Justice
Saturday 24 August	10am-12am Art Exhibition – Spirit Justice
Sunday 25 August	11am Worship led by Rev Sarah Moore
Sunday 25 August	1pm-5pm Art Exhibition – Spirit Justice
Wednesday 28 August	Bookshop Author Event: Callum Robertson, Ingrained, the making of a craftsman
Thursday 29 August	10.30am Thursday coffee morning in Small Hall

The Link Magazine is available on our website to view, and in Church. If you would prefer to have it emailed to you, please email churchoffice.muc@gmail.com.

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