



**Link** *The*  
*Magazine of*  
**Morningside United Church**



**February 2023**

## **Dear Friends,**

Since becoming Interim Moderator at the end of October there has been much going on. The Kirk Session has met on a number of occasions, the Church of Scotland's Presbytery Mission Plan has been agreed and there have been many meetings and conversations taking place behind the scenes at various levels. However, and most importantly, life in Morningside United has continued week by week.

Our 11am Sunday service is being led by a variety of people and is enriched by Brigitte's contributions on the organ, which is now back in action. Mary continues as pastoral assistant and I maintain links with Napier University. This is in addition to everything that goes on in the building and all that needs to be done to ensure Morningside United runs smoothly.

Being in ministerial vacancy is not easy but it is particularly challenging in the current climate. I am therefore grateful to everyone who has contributed and is contributing to Morningside United at this time, no matter how great or small, and especially at the special events that were held during Advent and Christmas.

As I was leading worship on 22 January I took the opportunity to reflect on where we are as a congregation. For many reasons there is much uncertainty about the future, with the only certainty really being change in some degree that goes beyond the current vacancy. The big question that we need to ponder is where is God calling Morningside United? The conversation we had after the service was warm, honest, and extremely useful as together we enter a period of discernment to address this question.

The road ahead is complex as no matter what direction MUC takes it will have implications for us and others. However, it can also be exciting as we have resources and opportunities. There is much to consider over the coming weeks but something that is key, and should help with the decisions before us, is a vision and strategy for the future so that Morningside United can be the congregation God is calling it to

be. This will require energy, passion, and commitment. As everything we do should flow from our worship on a Sunday, I therefore encourage you to make every effort to attend.

It is my intention to keep things moving. In February a meeting between representatives from Marchmont St Giles, St Catherine's Argyle and MUC is due to take place, I have arranged to meet with the minister of Marchmont St Giles, the Kirk Session meets on 27 February and our Synod Moderator, The Revd Paul Whittle, is in conversation with the Church of Scotland. I next lead worship on Sunday 12 March when I hope I can provide an update and we can have a second conversation as a congregation after the service.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch at any time if you have any questions, concerns or thoughts.

I opened our Kirk Session meeting on 23 January with this verse from Joshua 1:9. These are words spoken by God as Joshua is commissioned. I think they are useful and encouraging words for Morningside United to hear as we enter a process of discernment and consider the future.

*I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*

Grace and peace.

The Revd David M Scott, BSc BD(Min)

## **A Prayer for February**

Dear Lord, we ask that you would go before us this month. We ask for your grace and mercy to rain down on us and for your spirit to renew us. May we feel your power and strength rise up within us. We pray for help for all who are in need. We pray for comfort for the hurting, hope for the hopeless and rest for the weary. Thank you for your faithfulness. We are grateful for our blessing, your promises and your great love for us. May we live each day with an attitude of gratitude and take nothing for granted. In Jesus' name we pray. *Amen*

## **Musings from Mary Taylor** , Pastoral Assistant, MUC

At this time of change for Morningside United Church it was so lovely to be in the church on Saturday evening. What a lovely and inspiring concert there was in the candlelit church!

Many thanks to Brigitte Harris, Director of Music and her team of a vocal ensemble and music instrumentalists for such a delightful "Music and Poetry for a Winter's Night". Two of the items were the Candlelight Carol by John Rutter b. 1945 and Peace on Earth by Errolyn Wallen b.1945. Also, many thanks to Yvonne Burnett and her team for serving refreshments afterwards.

There was such a good atmosphere.

One of the poems was by Kate McIlhagga who was a minister and member of the Iona Community until her death in 2002. Her intimate, insightful prayers and poems are loved and used by people far and wide. "The Green Heart of the Snowdrop" presents the best of her work in one collection.

The green heart on the underside of the tiny snowdrop flower which so captured Kate's imagination symbolized for her an aspect of God's purpose for our lives, as did so much else in her surroundings.

Her passion for the integrity of creation and right relationship with the environment, in city or countryside, and with one another clearly provided inspiration for her writing. The wonderful inclusiveness of the work reflects an ecumenical outlook in the truest sense.

**A Green Heart** *by Kate Mcllagga*

Into a dark world  
a snowdrop comes,  
a benison  
of hope and peace,  
carrying within it  
a green heart,  
symbol of God's renewing love.

Come to inhabit our darkness  
Lord Christ,  
for dark and light  
are alike to you.

May nature's white candles of hope  
remind us of your birth  
and light our journey  
through Lent and beyond.

When I came home from church last week, Sunday 29 January, I saw the first snowdrops in my garden. This fills me with real joy.

I'm looking forward to conversations about snowdrops and other matters which are of interest as we journey through February into Lent and beyond together.

## **A Winter's Night Music and Poetry Evening Update**

This high quality concert, arranged by our organist Brigitte Harris, as advertised in the January Link raised about £250 to add to the £745 from the advent collection to go to the Salvation Army Gorgie Foodbank. Our thanks go to everyone involved and also to those that came along to the event. It was such a special evening, and definitely one to be repeated.

## Opportunities to Help

As you can imagine, and as David has already mentioned, there are a great number of events and day to day activities that go on here at Morningside United Church. If anyone is interested in helping, here are some ways you could become a part of church life – if any one item has your name on it, please contact the church office in the first instance and you will be passed on to the right person to give you further information. You can email, at [churchoffice.muc@gmail.com](mailto:churchoffice.muc@gmail.com), or phone on 0131 447 3152 (most likely need to leave a message).

Pre-Covid we had rotas in place for several tasks, and it would be great to get these started again. As you're aware, Maggie McKenzie already organises the Reading and Flower rotas every month. However, there are also a couple of other ways that you can help organise activities/draw up rotas.

- Greeting people at the door on a Sunday
- Serving tea and coffee after the service
- Helping to serve Communion

There is also a more one off and special opportunity to join with the Eric Liddell Community in planning for the Eric Liddell 1924 centenary. Rev Mary Taylor will be one of the planning group, and another member would be welcome. There is to be an initial meeting in mid February.

## Bookshop Event

On Monday 27 February, the Bookshop next door are holding an Author event here are MUC, in the Small Hall. Tickets are available at the bookshop.

Other Women: Emma Flint in conversation with Mary Paulson-Ellis  
Two brilliant award-winning authors talk about their addictive novels and the themes of love, obsession and murder against the backdrop of war.

## Reading and Flower Rota for February

### Readers:

Sunday 5 February	Lesley Donald
Sunday 12 February	Rose Kambanga
Sunday 19 February	Martin Wagner
Sunday 26 February	Stewart Drummond

### Flowers:

Sunday 5 February	Fiona Purves
Sunday 12 February	Joan Crockett
Sunday 19 February	Jennifer Gruber
Sunday 26 February	Yvonne Burnett

Thank you so much to those who have volunteered to help with the Readings and Flowers during February. Your contributions are most welcome and appreciated. If you wish to put flowers in the Church but cannot do so yourself, please ask someone else, including me, if he or she could do flowers for you, in whatever way. If you wish to give money to a flower fund, please give to me or Lesley Donald.

Many thanks

*Maggie McKenzie*  
261 4908


## Church Life at MUC – An Update

**Coffee Mornings** – This month's coffee mornings will be held on Thursday 9 February and Thursday 23 February. As ever, you can find us in the Small Hall from 10.30am. Everyone is most welcome to joining us.

Yvonne Burnett

The Christian Aid Booksale will be in the Main Hall on 13 and 14 May.

There are times for people to bring books, but you can also bring books when you come to church on Sunday. Please leave them on the pews in front of the sound desk.




## Holy Corner Booksale 2023

**Book Donations**

- We will be accepting book donations in January & February, from Wednesday, 18 January, 2023
- No home pick-ups, drop-off only, to:  
**Morningside United Church, Chamberlain Road entrance,**  
at the following times:  
Wednesdays 10 am - 12 noon  
Saturdays 10 am - 12 noon

**We Want**

- Non-fiction books; Scottish books particularly welcome
- Paperback fiction
- Children's books



**We Cannot Accept**

- Encyclopaedias
- Academic journals
- Reader's Digest
- Books in poor condition, due to mould, water-damage
- CDs, DVDs

(These won't sell, and would incur disposal costs.)

Morningside United Church, Holy Corner, EH10 4DJ  
In aid of Christian Aid: Charity No. SC039150  
Booksale website: <https://holycornerbooksale.wordpress.com>

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