



**Link** *The*  
*Magazine of*

**Morningside United Church**



**February 2024**

## A message from Rev Sarah...

Dear friends,

It sometimes seems like January is the longest month. The weather is still cold, the nights continue to be dark, and never mind it's 31 days! It can feel like there are at least double or triple that!

Throughout the last month, our Sunday worship services have picked up on the epiphany theme of unwrapping. Starting with the unwrapping of the gifts that the magi presented to the infant Jesus and his parents, and moving through a gradual unwrapping of reflecting on who Jesus was, and is, both in his own time and for us today.

In 2024 Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, and St Valentine's Day coincide. Valentine's Day can provoke all sorts of different responses in people and is observed in different ways in various parts of the world. In the United States, for example, people might send Valentine's cards to family, friends, colleagues; certainly not only to someone who is, or is hoped to be, a partner or romantic interest. People though can struggle with this celebration of coupledness, for all sorts of reasons, with some holding a critical view of yet another day in the calendar that has been appropriated for commercial ends, and there's also the experience of diminishment that can occur for those who feel like they're missing out on something.

Valentine's Day is a date in the calendar, among others, that is about relationships. Whether we warm more to the American concept of celebrating a wide range of relationships, prefer the British version of a romantic Valentine's Day, would like to ignore the entire concept altogether, or something else, relationships are central to all our lives.

As we move into Lent our Sunday theme will reflect on social justice. This is something that is front and centre in the work of many churches, faith communities, and among all, people of goodwill as we seek and strive to make the world a better place. As Christians we are a people who are called to change the world. We understand that the

furtherance of justice in all spheres of life is a central part of this aspiration.

The authors of the Spill the Beans resource that inspires much of our worship this year connect St Valentine, Lent and Social Justice thus:

*“Implicit in seeking social justice is an understanding of the interrelatedness of creation and people on this planet. We are bound together and seeking to live well and in harmony with creation means recognising the relationships around us, nurturing them and encouraging them.”*

Through Lent, in worship, we reflect on the interrelatedness of humanity and of humanity with the created world around us. We inhabit a world where many people do not have enough; where habitats are under threat; where justice is not always done or seen to be done.

Also, through Lent here at Morningside United Church, I invite everyone connected with our church to reflect on our relationships with one another. There are many rich friendships between people connected with our church and a web of family networks within our fellowship too. The footfall of people who come into our buildings for various activities must run to the hundreds, if not more.

We are called together as fellow disciples and pilgrims on our life’s journeys. Each of us has a distinctive story that has brought us to our current stage in life. All of us have a part to play in our fellowship; be that small or large, hidden or public.

As I learn more about MUC and the folk who make us who we are, I am aiming through Lent to visit, or meet, with as many people who are on our church rolls as I can. I am happy to meet with people individually, or as couples and families. I can come to people’s homes, or meet in mutually convenient cafes, other public spaces, or at church. I am flexible about days of the week and times of day. Sometimes an elder may join in with these conversations too. The purpose of these conversations is to help me get to know everyone better and to learn

what individuals' hopes and dreams are for MUC in the present and future.

We are always in need of more folk to be more involved in the life of MUC, so conversations might include discussion about ways to support our work. Who might make a good elder or office bearer? Who has particular interests or passions that might enhance our work and witness in our parish? What do we need to stop doing, both individually and as a community, so we can start doing something else that energises and interests us?

I recognize that many people are incredibly busy, but would ask for the opportunity to meet, converse and discuss. One of the most awkward things that sometimes gets said to ministers and others embarking on these sorts of projects goes something like, 'you're so busy, there must be more deserving people than me for your time'. Please be rest assured that this is a chance for everyone to be offered time to catch up. Everyone has views that need to be heard. Of course, if anyone doesn't want a conversation for whatever reason that's fine, but I really hope that this is something that will be a pleasure for everyone and not an inconvenience or something to be nervous about.

I look forward to meeting folk over Lent, and hope to strengthen and deepen relationships between MUC, our community and parish.

With love and prayers  
Sarah

The Revd Sarah Moore  
Transitional Minister

## February Prayer

May this month bring you more love, beautiful blessings and fulfilled dreams that bring you closer to God.

## Musings From Mary Taylor, Pastoral Assistant, MUC

### Musings from November

Rev Sarah Moore's lovely and memorable Introduction service was held on Monday 27 November here in Morningside United Church.



From the November edition of Synod enews "Recognising that a significant proportion of the Synod Transition Minister's work is going to be with Morningside United Church, on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November a Service of Introduction was held in Morningside for the

Rev'd Sarah Moore. Morningside is a Local Ecumenical Partnership with the Church of Scotland and so the service was co-led by the Moderator of Edinburgh and West Lothian Presbytery, Rev'd Moira McDonald and the Synod Moderator, Rev'd Paul Whittle. Rev'd David Scott, who had served as the Interim Moderator for the congregation reflected on the journey of the two disciples to Emmaus and the importance of really noticing and recognising what is before us. In her role as Transition Minister Sarah will enable the congregation to continue their own journey of discerning the road ahead in relation to their congregational, ecumenical and community context."

### URC Leading your Church into Growth, Preston

Late in November, a number of people from the Synod of Scotland attended a conference entitled Leading Your Church into Growth. Rev'd Jan Adamson, Synod Clerk was part of the administrative team supporting the presenters. I was privileged to attend this conference on behalf of MUC and I look forward to speaking about it more in the

year ahead and encouraging folk to think more about numerical, spiritual and missional growth. The first session was about “Creating a Prayerful Culture of Growth.”

The Leading your Church into Growth Prayer

*God of Mission*

*Who alone brings growth to your Church,*

*Send your Holy Spirit to give*

*Vision to our planning,*

*Wisdom to our actions,*

*Joy to our worship,*

*And power to our witness.*

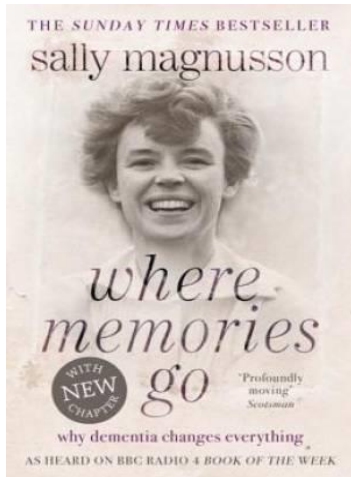
*Help our church to grow in numbers,*

*In spiritual commitment to you,*

*And in service to our local community,*

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Amen*



A good book to read

“Where memories go” by Sally Magnusson

Scottish broadcaster and author Sally Magnusson cared with her two sisters for their mother Mamie during many years of living with dementia. Sad and funny, wise and honest, this deeply intimate account of insidious losses and unexpected joys is also a call to arms that challenges us all to think differently.

Mary Taylor  
(Pastoral Assistant)

# Christian Aid Booksale

MUC members can also bring books on Sundays and put them in front of the sound desk.



## Holy Corner Booksale

Saturday, May 11 & Sunday May 12 2024

# WANTED!

### Book Donations

- We will be accepting book donations from Wednesday, January 17 until the end of March, 2024
- 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
- Scottish books
- 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>

## 2023 Charity Update –

The donations we made in 2023 to outside charities were £1,907 to the Salvation Army Gorgie Foodbank (£945 of this was from the 2022 advent collection which is usually paid out at the start of the next year). £962 was from coffee mornings during 2023 at request of people at the coffee mornings. Our harvest collection of non-perishable food also went there. The 2023 Lent collection of £445 went to Christian Aid. From the 2023 advent collection £1,170 has now been sent to Fresh Start for their 'Cookers for Christmas' appeal. Edinburgh-based Fresh Start help people who have been homeless get established in new homes.

## Timetable for Ministers during February

4 February	Rev Mary Taylor
11 February	Layperson Peter Ranscombe
18 February	Rev Sarah Moore
25 February	Rev Sarah Moore

## Eric Liddell 100

Eric Liddell is best-known for his athletic achievements, particularly his gold medal in the 400 metres at the Paris Olympics in 1924. In association with the Eric Liddell Community's celebration of the centenary of that victory, this event will focus on the other aspect of his life, which was perhaps even more important to him, namely his life and work as a Christian missionary and teacher in China.

In this half-day programme, three scholars of the University of Edinburgh will focus on Liddell's life and work in China, his legacy there, and the subsequent history of Chinese Christianity, worldwide and in China itself.



## ***The life & death of Eric Liddell and the rebirth of Chinese Christianity***

On Saturday 3 February, 10am-12.30pm, there will be a talk held at The Playfair Library, Old College, University of Edinburgh, South Bridge with contributions from Prof Brian Stanley, Dr Alexander Chow & Dr Mark McLeister.

For full details, and to register, see

<https://eric-liddell-china.eventbrite.co.uk/Morningside United Church>

## **Reading and Flower Rota for February**

### **Readers:**

4 February	Maggie McKenzie
11 February	Hamish McKenzie
18 February	Lesley Donald
25 February	David Donald

### **Flower Rota:**

4 February	Hannah Tekliuk
11 February	Fiona Purves
18 February	Yvonne Burnett
26 February	Vacant

If you would like to help with the Flower Rota in March, or even volunteer to read in one of our services, please get in contact, everyone is most welcome.

*Maggie McKenzie*  
261 4908

## Church Life at MUC – An Update

**Coffee Mornings** – February dates for our fortnightly coffee mornings are Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>. As is custom, doors open at 10.30am and there will be warm drinks, warm company and some lovely cakes. Please put the dates in your diary and join us.

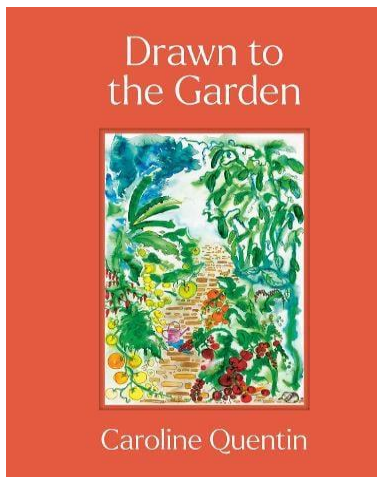
**New Group at MUC** - A new Ju-jitsu group meets in the main hall on Friday evenings. It is organised by Napier University but is open to all - please ask if you or someone you know is interested. The number of mats they needed to store was more than we thought.



They are now snugly in the outside shed and brought in and out each week. The group had some fun after packing in the mats as the photo shows. Now we need to get a tool store for the group working on the garden!

**Edinburgh Napier Lunchtime Concerts** – We are so lucky to have the Edinburgh Napier Lunchtime concerts returning to MUC. If you've not been able to attend one so far, please come along, because they are the perfect pause for a busy life. The Napier University music students are so talented, the concerts provides them with experience playing to audiences and to show case their talents. The concerts will be held on Wednesday 6 March, 20 March, 10 April, starting at 1.15pm. A varied programme of instrumental and vocal music will be performed. The doors will be open, it is a free event, so please come along and take a short time out of your day to sit, listen and relax.

**Edinburgh Bookshop Author Event** – On Thursday 29 February, Caroline Quentin will be introducing her new book here at MUC. Tickets will be available at The Edinburgh Bookshop next door.



Illustrated by Caroline herself, this gorgeous book mixes personal stories of her life and experiences in the garden, with practical tips, recipes for food and drink, and even the occasional favourite poem. As she likes to misquote Dorothy Parker: 'Take to horticulture, it's cheaper than a shrink'.

**Afternoon Communion** - There will be an afternoon communion service on Wednesday 14th February at 2.30 p.m. followed by refreshments.

Although this service is intended for those who may find it difficult to attend morning worship on a Sunday, everyone is most welcome.

**Mahjong Group** – Classes for beginners, intermediates etc are taking place both here at Morningside United Church and Eric Liddell Centre. The group is meeting each Friday afternoon 2pm-4pm. The first meeting here will be on Friday 9 February in the Small Hall. Everyone is most welcome to come along and try their hand. If you'd like more information, email us here at [churchoffice.muc@gmail.com](mailto:churchoffice.muc@gmail.com) .

Front page photography by Sarah McKernan

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](mailto:churchoffice.muc@gmail.com).

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