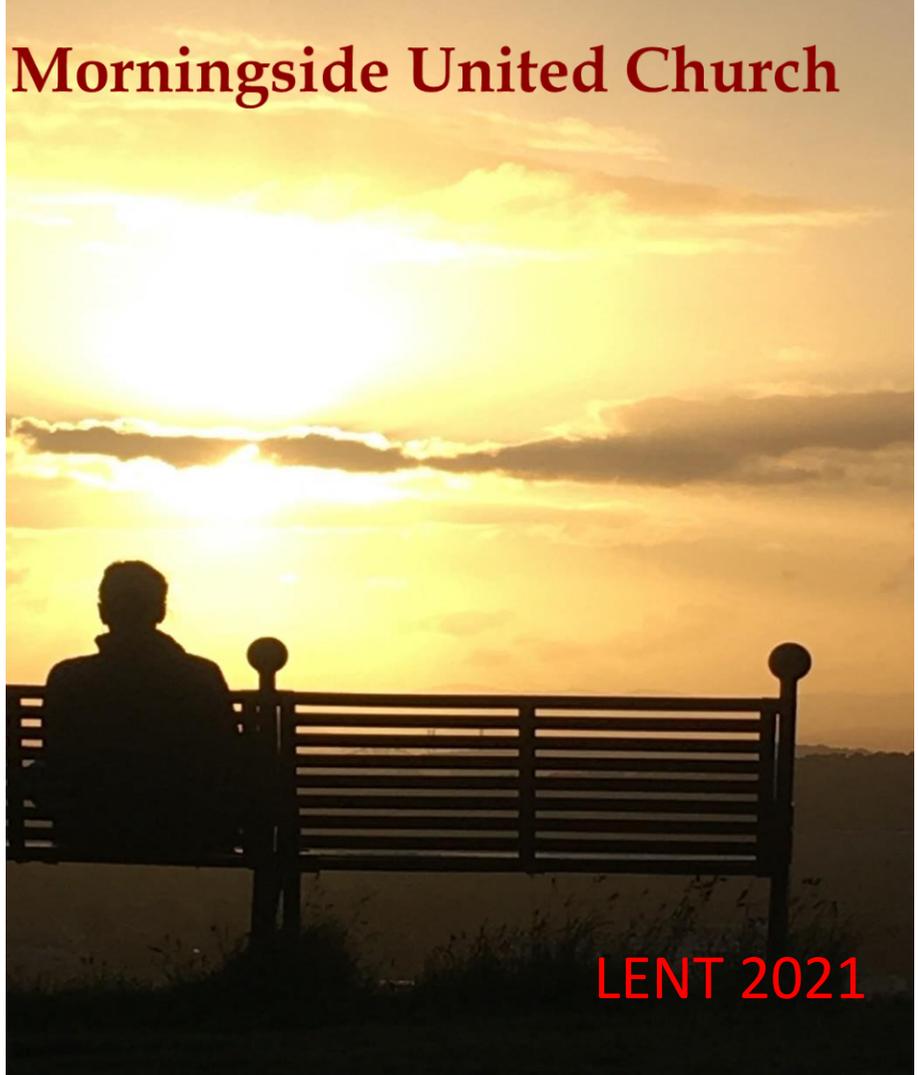




**Link** *The Magazine of*

**Morningside United Church**



**LENT 2021**

## A Word from the Manse

Dear friends

I never imagined that I would ever see the church closed. I never imagined that as a community of faith we would be unable to gather and worship in our lovely building. I never imagined that I would have to make YouTube videos weekly to proclaim the Gospel. I never imagined I would spend a year being unable to visit people or see friends and most importantly family. I never imagined so many would feel wearied and overwhelmed by a pandemic whose affect is worldwide. I never imagined that in our four nations that make up the UK that there would be over 100,000 deaths. This figure is not just an abstract figure. Each number is a person: someone who was loved and someone who loved others. We also believe that each of these people was known to God and cherished by God.

So how should a minister write to those who are socially distanced, home schooling or working, lonely, anxious, and depressed or just trying to get on with it. Well, surely our duty as Christians is to speak of God's consolation, His encouragement, and ultimately in the hope of Jesus Christ. The God who comes to us in Jesus knew grief and suffering himself. On the cross, Jesus shares the weight of our sadness and he leads us to a better tomorrow.

And none of this is easy. Too many of us are experiencing isolation, loneliness, anxiety, and despondency like never experienced before. People have lost their livelihoods. Our economy struggles and the necessary restrictions we live with have also prevented us from being alongside loved ones even at hospital and at the graveside. Therefore, we need to support each other. We do this by reaching out to each other with care and kindness and by trusting God.

Jesus said "come all of you who are weary and burdened with care and I will give you rest" Mathew 11 v 28.

This lent, as we journey towards Easter, might you discover strength and hope in our Father in Heaven who will not leave us comfortless. Therefore, this Lenten magazine has articles suggesting prayer and helping others as an antidote to our own worries and the struggles of people we know. Hopefully, it will help you look towards Easter and the promise of resurrection and renewal that we all need in the story of the Cross and empty tomb. The pandemic will pass.

If this time of lockdown Lent can help us to move us away from just 'giving up' or 'fasting', to 'additionally feasting on blessings and good habits', then our lives will discover more of the transformation that the Christian journey invites us to walk in.

The reflection below invites us to discover the joy of living through fasting and feasting.

## During Lent, let us...

Fast from judging others; feast on the Christ within them.

Fast from emphasis on difference; feast on the unity of life.

Fast from apparent darkness; feast on the reality of light.

Fast from thoughts of illness; feast on the healing power of God.

Fast from words that pollute; feast on phrases that purify.

Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude.

Fast from anger; feast on patience. Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism.

Fast from complaining; feast on appreciation.

Fast from worry; feast on trust in God's Care.

Fast from unrelenting pressure; feast on unceasing prayer.

Fast from facts that depress; feast on verities that uplift.

Fast from lethargy; feast on enthusiasm.

Fast from thoughts that weaken; feast on promises that inspire.

Fast from shadows of sorrow; feast on the sunlight of serenity.

Fast from problems that overwhelm; feast on prayer that undergirds. Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness.

Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others. Fast from personal anxiety; feast on eternal truth.

Fast from discouragements; feast on hope.

*(William Arthur Ward teacher and pastor, 1921-1994)*

This Lent, may we learn not just to 'fast from' but also to 'feast on' all that will help us to live more generous and fruitful Christian lives so that our post COVID-19 world might be love and hope filled.

'But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.' (2 Peter 3.18)

With the assurance of the prayers of all at Morningside United Church.

Rev Steven

### Recorded services every Sunday morning

Every week there is a recorded church service being provided by Rev Manders and Max our organist. You can view this via Facebook or through the church website [www.morningsideunitedchurch.org](http://www.morningsideunitedchurch.org). Alternatively, if you would like this to be sent to you each week please email [Churchoffice.muc@gmail.com](mailto:Churchoffice.muc@gmail.com).

## Choose the World you Want

Fairtrade Fortnight is from Monday 22 February to Sunday 7 March. The Augustine United Church in Edinburgh launched its' first campaign on 12 February 1997, urging every supermarket across Scotland to stock Fairtrade products. It was such a success that it spread throughout the rest of the UK the following year. Inevitably this year the events will take place online, so we cannot share coffee and baking at MUC, but perhaps you can choose some more products with the Fairtrade logo if you are able to shop for food. More information about events and activities can be found at

<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight/>

## A Young Person's Take on COVID-19

So... COVID. It is not the best of things and is not how we expected our year to go. As young people, it can be scary looking at the future... Many are still isolated, and we don't know what the future will bring.

For me, this is not how I expected my S1 year to be... The first year at a new school, wearing masks in the halls and sanitizing desks before leaving classrooms. It has been disappointing for the other grades as well.

The holiday season was hard too, as so many people wanted to travel, meet relatives, and get together for Christmas - but many couldn't. Right now, it is especially nice to have friends because we can get through this together. Even if we are not *meeting* with them, just texting or emailing with friends can cheer you up.

I love going to church and singing in the church choir. My sister and I are in the children's choir, and normally we sing a song at almost every service. I really miss singing with the others in the choir. I like memorizing the lyrics... Now they are tunes I hum to myself when I'm bored.

All in all, we have a lot to be thankful for. I don't know what the future will bring but I have to hope that it will be good.

Zara Stubbs

## Music at MUC

Roundabout Christmas 2019, MUC was 'concert central' with a wide range of musical events being held in the church. The same was obviously not going to happen this year, but in fact two vocal concerts were recorded in the church which some of you may have been able to watch on YouTube.

On 11 December Max, our organist, arranged a performance of Britten's *Ceremony of Carols* with musician friends from far and wide, recorded here in the church. This was closely followed (with cleaning in between, of course) by a rehearsal by Octavoce, led by our former junior choir leader, Jenny Sterling. They then recorded their Christmas Concert. As many candles as possible and the Christmas tree, meant that the church

looked lovely, as well as being filled with beautiful music. In addition, for the few services we were able to have in December, we enjoyed carols sung by Suzanna Davis.

Hopefully we will soon be able to enjoy such delights again soon.

## Renovation Update

As we mentioned in the December edition of the Link, the Kirk Session have taken the opportunity of Covid lockdown to renovate the Main Hall. It has now been completed with the help of Ewen McLeary of Cramond Woodcare, who stripped and varnished all of the woodwork on the stage, doors, pillars and floor. The walls and ceiling have also been painted (courtesy of Henderson & Paterson).

The whole effect provides a much brighter hall for everyone to use, and is ready to welcome back our hall users, whenever that maybe.



## **We commend to God's care three of our members**

The Rev Peter Mackenzie who was minister at Saughtonhall for many years. Peter was described to me, by several people, as a true gentleman and the epitome of all that a Minister should be. He was discrete, kind, infinitely patient and deeply compassionate. He is well remembered in his ministries there and Carluke, and for going the extra mile for his flock no matter their circumstances.

He was a devoted husband and father to Betty, Sue and Jane and a wonderful grandfather. Above everything he was good and faithful Pastor whose integrity and wisdom allowed him to be a rock for many. He shall be missed.

We give thanks to God too for, Eoin Galloway who passed away just short, by a couple of weeks, of his 100th birthday. He was the congregation's oldest member. Eoin will be remembered as a great support to his wife Edna, who helped MUC so much in the Sunday School. He spent a lifetime working in telecommunications, and his expertise was used by BT for both Edinburgh based Commonwealth Games. Eoin's connection to MUC goes back to his grandfather being one of its founding members when we worshiped as the congregational church in the Atheneum building that precedes our current building.

We remember his son's Colin and Donald at this time.

We also give thanks for the life of Jimmy Whyte who died recently. Jimmy and his wife Jeanette joined the congregation on their move from the Borders three years ago. Jimmy was a Berwickshire farmer possessed with a fine intellect and gentle humour who was skilled in working the land. He was a devoted Elder and former Treasurer and Session Clerk at Leitholm Parish Church where he is well remembered in his border community for his kindness and wisdom and old-fashioned courtesy, and there is little doubt that he was held in high esteem by all who knew him. Please remember his devoted wife Janette and loving daughters Alison and Dorothy and their families.

## Donations update

This started as the Lent collection – but stretched out somewhat! Thanks to several generous individual donations and the collections at the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services we were able to give £412 to the Salvation Army Christmas Toy Appeal at Gorgie Corps. With our help and the help of many other donations, The Salvation Army managed to provide over 1000 families with toys and food parcels. Thank you so much for your generosity, it is very much appreciated.

## How to donate

Our thanks to all those who have continued to give while the church has been closed for worship.

There are a variety of ways that you can donate if you would like to. If you use online banking and would like to donate to our Church, the details are as follows:

Morningside United Church    Sort Code: 80-02-85    Account No:  
00551871

An alternative is to fill out a standing order form, which can be handed into your bank. If you are not able to do any of the above but would like to make an individual donation, a cheque payable to Morningside United Church posted to the church is another possibility.

Anyone that pays income tax on earnings or pension can sign a Gift Aid declaration, increasing the donation by 25% from the Government. If you are eligible and have not yet signed a declaration, please ask for the very simple form.

Any queries or requests for forms mentioned above, please contact [churhoffice.muc@gmail.com](mailto:churhoffice.muc@gmail.com) or you can call 0131 447 3152.