

URC National Synod of Scotland Vision Day

On Saturday 14 June 2025, the URC National Synod of Scotland will celebrate its 25th anniversary in St. Matthew's Church, Tay Street, Perth from 10am-4pm. This is a day of worship, workshops and fellowship as we celebrate 25 years and look to the future. The theme for the day is from the first letter of Peter, 'Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an account of the hope that is in you' (1 Peter 3.15). Booking forms (due 21 March) are at the back of the church on Sundays, or you can register online.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=UaljurjDIE-D8FgMvALYzihx5jJ2W1NqOW9p1AcQ55UQkNUMVNZWIdENzJVM0g2U09TOVdJOVFHSC4u>

Church Life at MUC – An Update

Coffee Mornings - Our fortnightly coffee mornings this month will be on Thursday 6 March and Thursday 20 March in the Small Hall at 10.30 am. All are welcome. For your dairies in April, the coffee mornings will be held on Thursday 3 April and Thursday 17 April.

Afternoon Communion - There will be an afternoon service with communion on Tuesday 8 April at 2.30 p.m.

The service is intended for those who may find it difficult to attend morning worship on a Sunday, but of course all are welcome. We hope residents from Chamberlain Care Home will join us.

Digital Advice Sessions - Please come along if you need help with using a tablet, computer or mobile phone on Thursdays in the vestibule, starting at 1.30pm. As these have proved to be so popular, the sessions will extend for a further 5 weeks (from details given on the flyers) through to 27 March.

Holy Corner Booksale Donations - As well as the Wednesday and Saturday times on the poster on the notice board, you can bring books along on Sunday as well until the end of March. Please leave beside the sound desk.



Musings From Mary Taylor, Pastoral Assistant, MUC

Recently I heard a poem with the phrase “apprentice in stillness” and it seemed very apt to me to reflect about it during Lent and the next three months. In Morningside United Church we continue ecumenical ministry being aware of Sarah Moore’s lovely stole gracing our pulpit while she is on sabbatical leave. The very special sabbatical blessing from last Sunday’s communion service, Sunday 23rd February is included in this Link. We wish Sarah a time of rest, relaxation, reflection, refreshment and re-energising during her three month sabbatical.

Side by side with times of worship and reflection in MUC we are making very practical preparations for the Christian Aid book sale in May here. May I invite you to remember 2025 marks 80 years since the founding of Christian Aid.

At a service in Paisley Abbey on 26 January to mark the beginning of the 80th anniversary year, the Synod Moderator, United Reformed Church National Synod of Scotland, Rev. Lindsey Sanderson offered these prayers which I have abbreviated for inclusion in this Link.

Gracious God,

Today as we begin the celebrations for the 80th anniversary of Christian Aid, we offer our praise and thanksgiving that justice and compassion are at the heart of your being and at the heart of the relationship you desire to have with us and for us to have with our neighbours and the earth itself. We bring our thanks that justice and compassion have been and continue to be at the heart of Christian Aid’s vision of the world where all are included in the feast of life. And so we thank you for the vision and commitment of all those who 80 years ago, recognised their neighbours’ need and were prompted to action. We thank you for Douglas Lister (Church of Scotland minister) and others who persisted in their care for German refugees.

We thank you for the generosity of early supporters without whom not have come into being and still exist today and for all who have been supporters during the last 80 years raising awareness, raising

This was introduced to us by Fergus Munro of Cornerstone, who some of you may remember when Cornerstone Free Church shared our building. The Kirk Session hopes that this will be a valuable event for our own congregation and as others as we can invite to reflect on Easter. Along with other churches in our Presbytery we will shortly receive a payout from a fund that specifically has to be used for mission purposes. Using this money to defray the costs associated with the play fits in with this.

Reading and Flower Rota for March

	Readers:	Flowers:
2 March	Elizabeth MacGregor	Daphne Paton
9 March	Judy Wagner	Judy Wagner
16 March	Pam Brindley	Sheila Cadger
23 March	Rev Mary Taylor	Mary Taylor
30 March	Rose Kumbanga	Elizabeth MacGregor

Timetable for Ministers March

2 March	Rev Mary Taylor
9 March	Eilidh Young
16 March	Rev Jack Dyce
23 March	Rev Kristina Herbold-Ross
30 March	Rev Nick Brindley

Lent Collection

Our Lent Collection this year is for Andy’s man club. It has free support groups nationwide, where men can join the fight to reduce the rate of suicide in men. In these groups, men can open up about the storms affecting their lives in a safe, judgement-free and non-clinical environment. There is no obligation for men to speak - they can simply listen if they wish. The only rule at ANDYSMANCLUB is “It’s Okay to Talk”.

The usual applies for our special collections - cash or cheque (payable to MUC) in the bucket or an online donation to the church bank account (80-02-85, 00551871) using reference Lent.

water where it can add so much, we lose so little. The gratitude of our Maker is easily won.

If we are feeling more ambitious, pre-formed ponds are widely available, provided only that we have space for them. The greater volume allowed reduces the need for constant attention and widens the range of wildlife helped. Perhaps a hedgehog might drink from it. In any event, a pre-formed pond full of water will bring a smile to the face of God.

As an Eco congregation, we are committed, as Christians, to the promotion of biodiversity. We believe that God values creation for its own sake, not simply as the setting for a human story separate or superior. Putting water in our garden is one way we can live out our discipleship. The peace we get from its contemplation is a second aspect of this placing that we should not overlook. God wants us both to be good stewards of creation and to be happy.

Rev Dr Nick Brindley

You can read more from our member Nick Brindley at

[About me
loveswork.wordpress.com](http://loveswork.wordpress.com)

Easter Play

Following on from the well-received plays that were performed in the church last summer, we have a new venture for Easter on Sunday 13 April (Palm Sunday) at 7:30 pm of 'The Passion' performed by LAMPS collective. The LAMPS Collective are a group of professional artists whose Christian faith underpins their work and lives. They create and perform live theatre events and produce creative resources for churches to use.

The play is performed by a cast of three talented professional actors, with the life, death and resurrection of Jesus are recreated in a moving, memorable and ultimately joyful retelling of the Easter events. Told from the perspectives of Peter, Mary Magdalene and a Roman centurion named Marcus, The Passion leads us up to and through the events of Holy Week, the cross and beyond.

money, raising prayers in solidarity with the world's poorest communities.

Gracious God, justice and compassion lie at your heart and lie upon our hearts so this day we commend the work of Christian Aid to you. We ask your blessing upon the churches and individuals which support Christian Aid. In this 80th anniversary year may we commit ourselves to a vision of a world in which the poor hear good news, captives are released, those whose lives are diminished find restoration and the oppressed are set free. As we give, act and pray may we proclaim the year of the Lord's favour in which all are included in the feast of life and where justice and compassion flourish. We pray in the name of Jesus,

Amen

Litany of blessing for sabbatical

Mary: Today we give thanks to God for Sarah and ask for God's blessings as we send her forth on sabbatical leave.

Sarah: Today I give thanks to God for this congregation and for the gift of this time away.

People: This spring, may God dwell with you while we are away from one another. May God's wisdom, God's peace, and God's Spirit guide you during this time away.

May you find the needed time and space for a renewal of soul, a refreshed spirit, an energised mind, and a cared-for body.

Mary: This spring, may God dwell with you while we are away from one another. May God's wisdom, God's peace, and God's Spirit guide you during this time away. May you too be renewed and energised to serve in God's name.

People: We will pray for you and for our elders, worship leaders, musicians, staff and volunteers.

Sarah: I will pray for you, and for elders, worship leaders, musicians, staff, and volunteers.

Mary: The primary and unique symbol for ministers is their stole. It points to their being set apart by the church as a Minister of Word and Sacrament.

Sarah will now remove her stole and place it on the pulpit, where it will remain until she returns.

The presence of Sarah's stole will remind us of our mutual commitment to pray for one another this spring.

People: We send you off with our blessing and will greet you with joy when you return.

Sarah: Thank you for your blessing, I look forward to the ways God will lead us and guide us when we continue in ministry together.

Minister's Sabbatical

The Rev Sarah Moore will be on sabbatical leave from 1st March to 31st May 2025. All URC ministers are entitled to 3 months leave for every 10 years of ministerial service. Sarah celebrates her 20th anniversary of ordination in 2025. MUC will welcome a range of ministers and lay preachers to lead worship during this period. For pastoral needs please contact Yvonne Burnett or Mary Taylor. We pray for Sarah during this time of refreshment.

Congregational Meeting

The annual meeting to approve the Trustees' Report and Annual accounts for 2024 is planned for Sunday 16 March at noon after service at back of church – a sandwich lunch will be provided.

Flowers 2025

A big thank you to everyone who has put flowers in the church over the last year. They really do brighten both the church and everyone's spirits.

We have a Flower rota, and I would be delighted for anyone to get in contact and volunteer to fill a Sunday slot or two. You do not have to be an expert flower arranger: a bunch of flowers from a supermarket, a small posy in any vase, a pot plant or a full arrangement as you wish - all will be enjoyed, and variety is a good thing. Some people wish to do flowers for a special occasion or anniversary, others just when it suits. Men are as welcome and able as ladies to do this, and we welcome families and children arranging flowers together also. Please just have a go, you may surprise yourself and enjoy it. Your help would be much appreciated.

If you wish to put flowers in the church but cannot do so yourself, please ask someone else if they are able to do them for you.

Alternatively, you can give money to a flower fund, and the arrangement will be done for you. If you are interested in this option, please talk to myself, or Lesley Donald.

Maggie McKenzie

0131 261 4908

The Garden Pond

Introducing water to your garden is both easy and a form of prayer. It is easy to place a bird bath or small container in your garden and these simple acts will be gratefully received both by birds and by God. It is even better to create a pond where frogs can spawn and blackbirds can bathe. Water in a garden both creates an atmosphere of tranquillity and promotes biodiversity. Both tranquillity and biodiversity are pleasing to the Almighty.

The most straightforward thing is to put a saucer of water on the ground as part of a morning routine and this will provide a valuable source of refreshment for birds and insects. As these fellow residents of South Edinburgh have their lives enhanced, God will thank you. In putting

knew know who it was; Pauline had been standing on a wall holding on to railings when another pupil pulled her legs, causing her to fall face down splitting her chin from ear to ear.

She was a Girl Guide in her teens. On her first camping trip her father unfortunately packed her kit bag. Pauline couldn't quite manage to get everything back in and arrived home with more belongings in her arms than in her kit bag.

After school she attended secretarial college, before joining a private health insurance company where she stayed until she was 49 years old, when along with half the staff, she was made redundant to make way for the introduction of computers. Thereafter she had temporary clerical jobs, mainly in banks and hospitals, but she was rarely out of work.

Pauline had two great interests in life, eating and travel, but the greatest of these was eating. She would have made a good restaurant critic. When asked about a new restaurant she had recently visited her reply was "I couldn't find anything to complain about". Praise indeed!

Friday night was always "Girls Night" when a group of faithful friends met, and still meet, to enjoy a meal together.

Travel home and abroad played a big part in Pauline's life. Along with her friends, she would enjoy planning trips both home and abroad. She had a great memory for all the dates and places they had visited over the years.

The last ten years have been a great trial for Pauline. Unable to go out for meals and coffees she became "Queen of Meal Delivery" from every type of restaurant available in Merchiston.

After a spell in hospital last Christmas, she moved to Murrayfield House Care Home where the wonderful staff attended to her every need.

The Low Road written and directed by Stephen Mulhearn

Mary Taylor and I recently went to the screening of The Low Road at Napier University.

This powerful and moving film tells the story of two students, Ellie and her best friend Lewis. Ellie is consumed by feelings of grief and guilt when Lewis takes his own life.

She decides to escape the confines of University life and sets off on a trip to the West Highland Way, a trip which Lewis had planned.

An important part of this trip for Ellie is to arrive unannounced at the home of Lewis' mother, an encounter that proves cathartic.

Somehow amidst glorious scenery and lonely places, Ellie finds healing strength to overcome her troubled past and emerge with hope.

The film aims to encourage conversation around suicide, self-harm and mental health. I truly believe that this film has a valuable role to play in the effort to reduce the high rate of suicide particularly amongst the young.

Screening can be organised in places of education or with interested groups.

Elizabeth MacGregor

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 Friday 14 March, 28 March, 2 May, 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.

Obituaries

Elisabeth Penman

Elisabeth was born in 1937 and had a peripatetic childhood; her father David was a schoolteacher, and the family moved round as he built his career. Initially living in Glasgow - one of her first memories was of being banged on the head as she was carried downstairs to the Anderson shelter during the Clydebank Blitz, then Dunfermline, and finally Duns, when her father became Rector of Berwickshire High School.

After leaving school, Elisabeth moved to Edinburgh and took a job in the Scottish Office working in the Private Office, serving the government Ministers of the day where she met her future husband, Ian. They'd actually met once as children - both sets of parents were in education and were slightly acquainted. Ian apparently showed no interest in Elisabeth...

But in 1963 they were married - and would remain so until Ian's death in 2022. Elisabeth had three sons - David, James, Richard and was a very committed and loving mother. The boys have lots of fond memories of family holidays, events, and individual moments when the power of a mother's love shone through.

When the boys were into school, Elisabeth did teacher training and did placements in a couple of primary schools with a view to returning to employment. But she didn't follow it through, finding that motherhood, combined with looking after elderly parents and parents-in-law, still demanded too much of her time.

After the boys started to leave home, and as Ian headed towards retirement, threw herself busily into voluntary work including the Viewpoint charity shop in Goldenacre and the Undercroft Cafe at St Andrews and St Georges church on George Street.

The church was always a big part of Elisabeth and Ian's lives. In Edinburgh they belonged over the years to Wardie church, then to St Andrews and St Georges, then St Stephen's Comely Bank and latterly to Morningside United. They both served as elders at Wardie. Elisabeth

continued to attend Morningside United when she could in her final months.

After Ian's retirement they also enjoyed a second home for about 15 years in Galloway - a part of Scotland they'd always especially loved - and where they holidayed with the boys every summer. She and Ian also enjoyed the opportunity to travel, in north America and Asia as well as Europe.

In later years she took pleasure from her children and grandchildren - David having found success in academia, James in finance and Richard in the civil service. She beamed with pride on the day of James' wedding to Jeanette and subsequently took much pleasure from her two grandchildren, Jonathan and Millie. To the last she never stopped nagging David and Richard to find a wife.

In her final years she became more restricted, having suffered cancer and a stroke, and latterly being diagnosed with dementia. But she took pleasure where she could still find it, for instance in voracious reading and - as always - in family. She received outstanding care from Brightcare, whom the boys would especially like to thank for their dedication and professionalism.

She lives on in her boys, and each of them recognises her influence in parts of their personalities: David took from Mum a strong desire to do the right thing and to broaden horizons culturally. James mentions a desire to be true to oneself and to encourage people. Richard quotes a mutual stubbornness, and a shared love of reading (trips together to Morningside library being a feature of life almost up to the end).

Pauline Murdoch

Pauline, the elder daughter of Ella & Douglas Murdoch was born on 5th April 1944. She and her mother lived with her grandmother in Gorgie Road during the war to enable her mother to run the family newsagent's business. Four years later she was joined by her younger sister Helen.

She was a quiet, shy child at school, except one day her mother was hanging out the washing and heard a scream from the playground. She