Church Diary for September

Tuesday 1 September	5.45pm Choir in Small Hall
Thursday 3 September	10.30am Coffee Morning in Small Hall
Sunday 6 September	11am Worship led by Linda Farrer
Tuesday 8 September	5.45pm Choir in Small Hall
Sunday 13 September	11am Worship led by Rev Sarah Moore
Monday 14 September	3pm Kirk Session in the Vestibule
Tuesday 15 September	5.45pm Choir in Small Hall
Thursday 17 September	10.30am Coffee Morning in Small Hall
	1:30 pm Digital Session in the Vestibule
Sunday 20 September	11am Worship led by Brian Drummond
Tuesday 22 September	5.45pm Choir in the Small Hall
Sunday 27 September	11am Worship led by Rev Kristina Herbold Ross
Tuesday 29 September	5.45pm Choir in the Small Hall

cover photograph by Sarah McKernan

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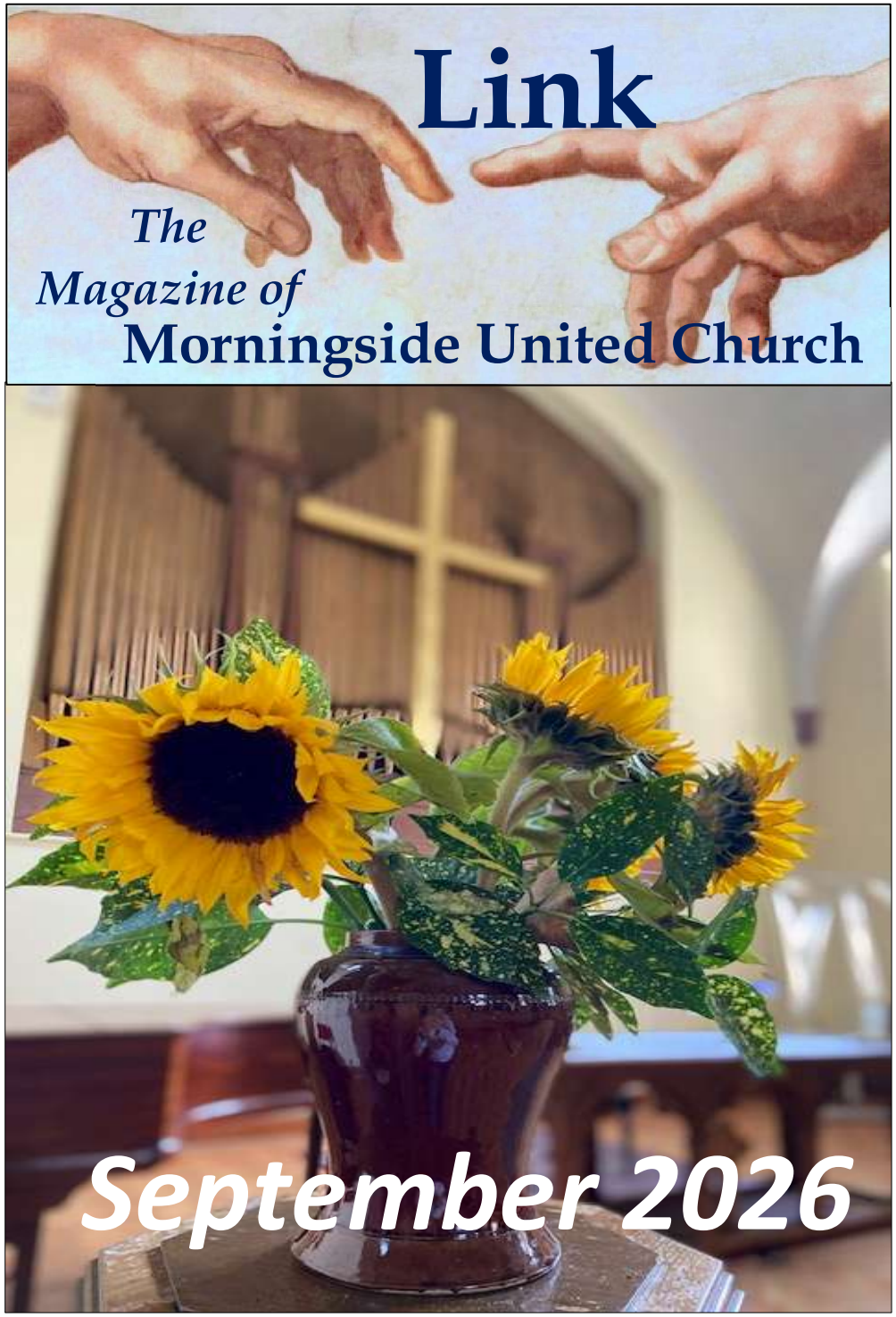


A message from Rev Sarah…

Dear Friends,

One question that has arisen on several occasions between Morningside United Church and representatives of the Edinburgh and West Lothian Presbytery is this one: Why is it important to members of the congregation at MUC that our church be a local ecumenical partnership (LEP)?

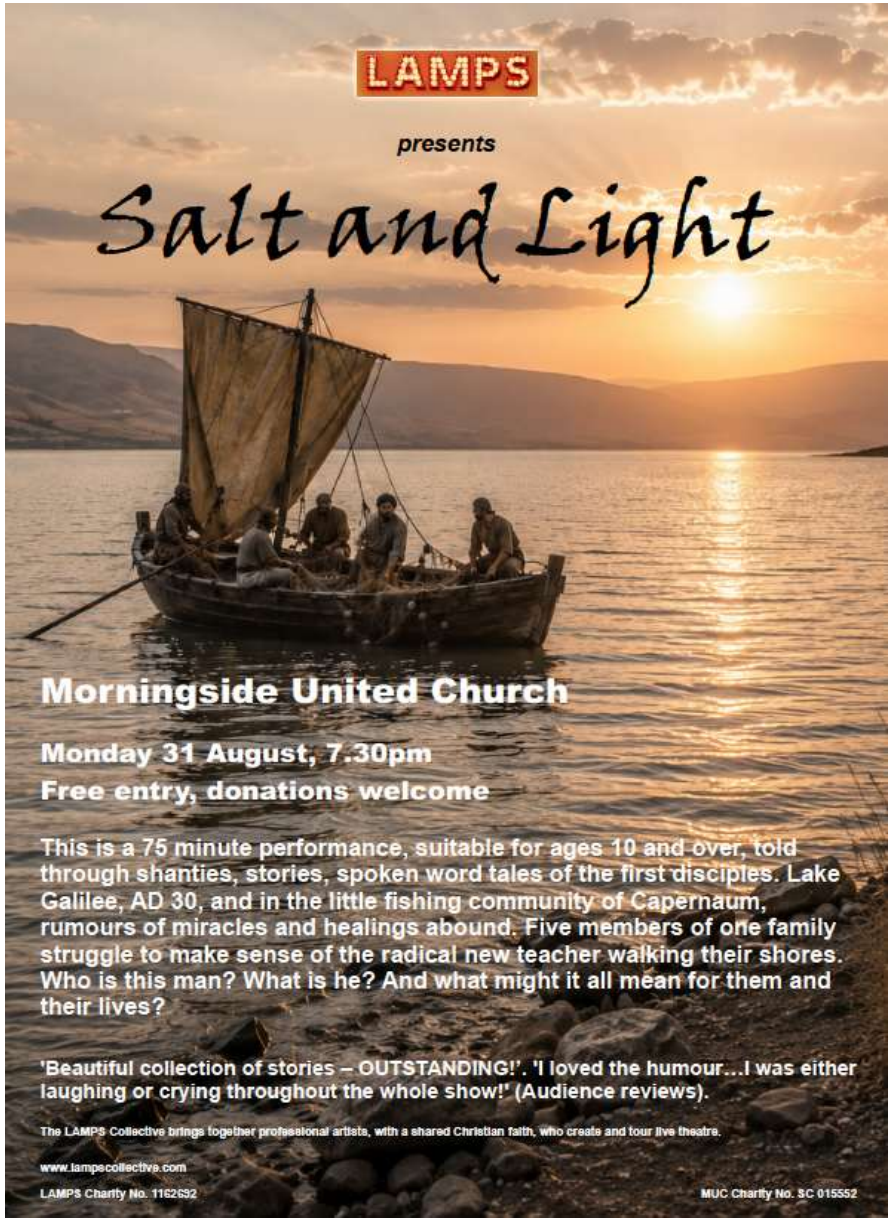
Representatives of the Presbytery have observed that when they have asked this question, members of MUC have struggled to give much of an answer beyond recognising that the LEP has existed for a very long time. Of course, some of our older members will remember before the union.

There are several ways that this question might be answered.

One that doesn't apply to us at MUC, is that a congregation exists as an LEP from the very beginning of its life. An example might be when several denominations create a congregation together in a new housing estate or scheme.

While at theological college, I spent a year on placement in a four partner (Church of England, Baptist, Methodist and URC) LEP in a new housing development. Such congregations are often the only formal Christian presence in their area.

Another reason might be the LEP is formed in the wake of a financial problem. A place I had a connection with at one



Technically August rather than September a quick reminder on our play performance on 31 August. Please come along and bring a friend if you can.

You will find the art exhibition around the sanctuary and centre vestibule. It will be up from 20 September for about a month. There are pictures in the small hall by Euan Cameron from our choir who is also an Urban Sketcher.

Urban Sketchers is a global community of sketchers dedicated to the practice of on-location drawing, indoors or out, capturing what the sketcher sees from direct observation (not from photographs). Edinburgh Urban Sketchers is an active group that offers three meet-up events every week. The events are free of charge due to the philosophy of the international Urban Sketchers movement. It is a varied group of people, with all levels of experience, from "I haven't drawn since primary school" to professional artists.

Golden Leaves

We see signs of summer's passing in golden leaves,
shortening days, misty mornings, autumn glow.
We sense its passing in rain that dampens,
winds that chill, Harvest's bounty placed on show.
Creator God, who brings forth
both green shoot and hoar frost,
sunrise and sunset,
we bring our thanks
for seeds that have grown,
harvests gathered,
storehouses filled,
mouths fed.
And, as your good earth rests
through winter's cold embrace,
we look forward to its re-awakening
when kissed by Spring's first touch.

time formed a LEP because of a condemned boiler. The boiler at one congregation failed, they did not have the resources to repair or replace it, so they united with a neighbouring congregation.

Further, sometimes congregations choose to unite because they are becoming smaller and/or older. Therefore they consider bringing their resources to a neighbouring church, or pool resources with another congregation in the same community, in order to create a stronger fellowship and maintain Christian witness in a particular place.

These are very practical reasons to create LEPs. As we consider why being an LEP is important to us, we should also consider some of the spiritual or philosophical reasons.

We might hold as a core value an understanding that division between Christians is at most a sin or at least deeply undesirable. A couple of years ago when we hosted the Spirit Justice exhibition, I had a conversation with family who were visiting Edinburgh. They asked what denomination MUC belongs to. I explained that we are a partnership between two denominations, the Church of Scotland and the United Reformed Church. The family, who belong to the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, in Northern Ireland, stated that such a partnership would be inconceivable in Ulster. They were positively shocked to hear a small part of our story. Church disunity is a scandal that is noticed by those who are not part of the Christian community. As an LEP we bear witness that it is possible for Christians of different denominations to work and worship together.

Perhaps related to this, LEPs remind the wider Church that there is more than one way to do almost anything.

Sometimes within all denominations it feels that there is a nervousness and reluctance to work differently to how things have always been done. Simply recognising that the Kirk does x thing one way, whilst the URC does the same thing a different way, can be refreshing, and help solve any issues. LEPs expand the horizons of Christian people, both those who belong to such congregations and those who do not.

Being in an LEP gives access to more resources than being in a single denomination. Training opportunities, grant funding, knowledge of what is occurring beyond our doors for a start. These resources aid and enable mission.

I asked a URC friend and colleague why have LEPs and this is what he said,

"They are a lived example of living creatively with differences, modelling something deeply countercultural and hopeful in a world increasingly obsessed with culture wars… a small foretaste of the kingdom as a sign of the healing of past divisions and a living hope that ever more unity might be found in Christ."

Lastly, we hold on tight to the prayer of Jesus in John 17.

20 "I pray not only for these followers but also for those who will believe in me because of their teaching. 21 Father, I pray that all who believe in me can be one. You are in me and I am in you. I pray that they can also be one in us. Then the world will believe that you sent me.

Doors Open Days

Every September you can visit hundreds of interesting buildings in Scotland for free. This year MUC will be taking part again and will be open for all to visit on Sunday 27 September from 1.30pm to 4.30pm. This is the link to our entry in the Doors Open website.
https://www.doorsopendays.org.uk/regions/edinburgh/morningside-united-church

Please make this known as widely as you can – bring a friend to see! And if you are happy to help greet visitors during the afternoon, please speak to David or Lesley Donald. You don't need to know details about the building as we have leaflets and plans available – it would be just to welcome people in and help them find their way to the hall to be able to see the garden.
Many people are interested in our building, sometime as architectural interest, or for its links to Eric Liddell. We had an arranged visit in July from a local Docomomo group, who study 20th century architecture. And a few Sundays ago, a delegate to a stained glass conference saw our glass panel *Butterflies* through the open door and recognised the artist as Christian Shaw before reading the plaque. We could then show them the Eric Liddell window inside by the same artist.

During the Doors Open time, as well viewing the Sanctuary, halls and Peace Garden and listening to music by our organists, there will be an art exhibition by Edinburgh Urban Sketchers and a craft display by our Romanian Orthodox church friends.

Update from The Edinburgh Spiders

The Edinburgh Spiders are beyond grateful to the congregation of MUC for allowing us to use the upstairs room, here we have already made 353 nets. In total, 712 nets have been made and sent to Ukraine from three locations in Edinburgh, including nets made at home by a Ukrainian woman working on a small frame. We are hopeful that our nets have saved lots of lives, vehicles and equipment.

Camouflage nets protect the military from drones in two main ways:
Firstly, they make people and equipment harder to see. The netting breaks up the clear outline of soldiers, vehicles, artillery and shelters, helping them blend into the surrounding landscape. This can make it harder for reconnaissance drones to identify a target and direct an attack. Some specialised nets also reduce infrared or thermal signatures, although ordinary homemade nets may mainly provide visual concealment.

Secondly, they can physically interfere with attack drones. When strong netting is stretched over roads, trenches, vehicles or positions, an incoming FPV drone may become tangled in it before reaching its target. The net can stop the propellers, force the drone to detonate prematurely, or cause its explosive charge to hit at a less effective angle.

Currently, Edinburgh Spiders have an order for 41 nets. On the waiting list there are 4 brigades, including the 57th Separate Motorized Infantry Brigade, SADN and 33rd Motorized Rifle Brigade.

Many heartfelt thanks, Anna

This passage is often read as being a mandate that Christians are called to be one. This has been interpreted as a church united. Quite what that means can be discussed and debated. LEPs are an expression of while we live with difference, we are not called to live divided.

With love and prayers
Rev'd Sarah Moore

Mary's Musings

What are you rich in?
What are you poor in?

Rev Roberta Ritson graciously gathered a group of us from Northern Synod and beyond to have a few days holiday in Holy Rood House. No, not Holyrood House, Edinburgh but Holy Rood House, Thirsk, a lovely place to be.

We were asked these two questions and reflected about them with a partner. Most of us agreed in the richness of having family and friends in our lives.

What are you poor in?
Here again when we got to the nitty gritty many of us agreed that we did not spend enough time with God.
The course book was "Being With" – Sam Wells.

Letter from Mary Taylor, pastoral assistant

Dear Friends,
Many thanks to Rev Sarah Moore and the Kirk Session for granting me the gift of an unexpected 3 month sabbatical which I will be taking from 1 September to 30 November.

Back in 2017 I had the privilege of being granted a sabbatical and I wanted to learn more about the Community of the Cross of Nails (CNN) linked to Coventry Cathedral. As part of that sabbatical, I visited 7 CCN churches in total across Germany.

Now, nearly 10 years later, and after being part of teams developing two very different peace gardens linked to ecumenical churches and CCN, I am preparing to go on a sabbatical which will be full of surprises.

Hopefully there will be time to visit and network with other CCN churches/retreat centres, ecumenical churches and cathedrals and peace gardens. And yes, I will set aside time for reading and studying!

The theme of this sabbatical is "Practical peace-making" following up on the May conference in Coventry.

The last Sunday of September which is Open Day in MUC is also CCN Sunday and I hope to be in Coventry Cathedral.

ALWAYS WELCOME

That was the message Canon Kate Massey sent me when I asked if we could catch up around CCN Sunday.

Finally, I am delighted to hear there is going to be an organised welcome rota in MUC. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help out.

I look forward to being back with you all and catching up in Advent.

Best wishes,
Mary Taylor

Timetable for Ministers – September

6 September	Mrs Linda Farrer
13 September	Rev Sarah Moore (Harvest Service)
20 September	Brian Dummond
27 September	Rev Kristina Herbold Ross (Communion)

While Mary is on sabbatical leave we will have some new people leading worship for the first Sunday in the month that she usually leads: Linda Farrer in the list above is a Church of Scotland Accredited Worship Leader. The same applies to Pauline Weibye at the beginning of October. Brian Drummond also in the list above is a Church of Scotland Reader (a more long-established post)

Digital Advice Sessions at MUC

These popular sessions organized by South Side Faithcare are re-starting. They are on at 1.30 pm on alternate Thursdays in the vestibule. The first one is on Thursday 17 September. If you need help with using a tablet, computer or mobile phone, help is available. It is open to all.

Although this service is intended for those members who may find it difficult to attend morning worship, all are welcome.

We hope residents from Chamberlain Care Home and The Elms will join us.

Coffee mornings for September

This month we will be holding coffee mornings on Thursday 3 September and Thursday 17 December. With the turn of the weather, we will be found in the Small Hall at 10.30 am. Please come and join us. We would love to hear what everyone has been up to through the summer months.

Reading and Flower Rotas for September

	Readers:	**Flowers**
6 September	Lesley Donald	Yvonne Burnett
13 September	Maggie McKenzie	Judy Wagner
20 September	Hamish McKenzie	Hannah Tekliuk
27 September	Pam Brindley	Pam Brindley

Eilidh Young Ordination

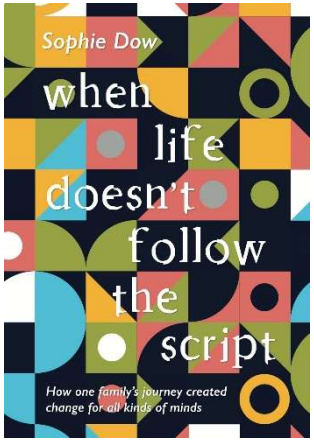
MUC members and friends are invited to the Ordination and Induction of our former student attached, Eilidh Young as Minister of Word and Sacraments at Bathgate EU United Reformed Church, Marjoribanks Street, Bathgate EH48 1AH, on Saturday 12 September 2026 at 3pm (please be seated by 2.45pm).

If you are able to attend, please let us know for numbers by responding to minister.BathgateURC@gmail.com

A Book review

'When Life Doesn't follow the script'

This is a book about a mother's determination to change the world. Written by Sophie Dow, co-founder of Salvesen Mindroom Centre (mindroom.org) a charity that champions all forms of neurodiversity and supports all kinds of minds.



At the heart of both the charity and the book is a simple belief: society should stop focusing on what neurodivergent people cannot do and instead recognise what they can. It is an inspiring, personal detective drama written with humour, passion and a determined focus on the question: Why aren't all minds valued equally?

A member of our congregation, Judy Wagner, is Vice Chair of Salvesen Mindroom Centre and has bought a copy of the book for our members to read, signed by Sophie. Please feel free to take it home and read it. It shall be placed under the painting of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane to the right of the lectern with a notebook to record borrowing.

As one reader. the mother of a neurodivergent child commented: "*You have perfectly articulated every feeling, every frustration, every moment of fierce love that comes from raising a child with additional support needs, things I have felt so deeply but could never articulate myself*."

*"A positive, thought provoking book review, I have had the privilege to read it and was very moved by Anna and Sophie's story." (*Review by Rev Mary Taylor*)*

Eric Liddell Peace Garden - September Update

The Eric Liddell Peace Garden, tucked away behind MUC, is a lovely place to sit and be still for a while.

The tall, willowy Japanese anemones are blooming now, some pale pink and others white with yellow centres.

The South African agapanthus is beautiful with its rich, dark purple flowers.

Hamish Mackenzie has revamped the herb bed with garden mint, lavender, chamomile, chives and the bumblebees are very busy on the flowers of the marjoram. There are lots of berries on the honeysuckle, autumn food for birds and squirrels.

Crocosmia, which some of us will remember as Montbretia, is looking gorgeous in its rich orange, making us think of Autumn advancing, when the crab apple, Golden Hornet, will give us its first crop of golden apples, of which there are many!

Lesley harvested the large crop of cherries we had this year and has made them into jam. Some went into baking at the Congregational Meeting and more will go to coffee mornings.

If you'd like to come and look at the garden and the work being done, we are normally at the church garden from 1.30 - 2.30pm on Wednesdays - unless the rain is very bad. There is a bell on the side door on Chamberlain Road that we should hear. The other time it can be accessed of course is after our Sunday service which starts at 11am.

All are welcome. Come and garden or sit in peace.

Pam Brindley

International Prayer of Peace

Lead me from death to life, from falsehood to truth
Lead me from despair to hope, from fear to trust
Lead me from hate to love, from war to peace
Let peace fill our beings, our world, our universe.

Amen

Afternoon Communion Service

On Tuesday 6 October we will be having another afternoon communion service at 2.30 pm followed by refreshments.