

THE SHUTTLE

April/May 2016



1a Kilgraston Road, Edinburgh, EH9 2DW

Meeting Matters

Every Tuesday

10.00 Prayers & Reflection South Transept

April

10 9.50 Family Service
10.30 Morning Worship - Junior Church in south Transept
11 10.00 Toddler Church
7.00 Christian Aid Envelope Filling
17 9.50 Family Service
10.30 Morning Worship & Sacrament of Baptism
18 7.30 Kirk Session - Non Business Meeting
19 7.30 Guild AGM & Hearing Dogs for Deaf People
24 9.50 Family Service
10.30 Morning Worship

May

1 9.50 Family Service
10.30 Morning Worship
8 9.50 Family Service
10.30 Morning Worship
Articles for the May/June issue of The Shuttle should be submitted to the Editors **no later than today.**
14 10.00 Christian Aid Coffee Morning & Bake Sale
15 9.50 Family Service
11.00 Joint Christian Aid Service - in the German Speaking Church, Chalmers Crescent. *Note time !*
16 10.00 Toddler Church

Front Page

The National Youth Assembly has launched a backpack appeal to help young Syrian refugees settle into Scottish schools.

Reflections

I was told I would need a hanky but I didn't believe it, however when Sister Evangelina died in *Call the Midwife*, even that grumpy straight talking, extremely professional nun brought a tear to my eye. But what I found even more sad, as usual on *Call the Midwife*, was the unexpected. It was the response of Sister Monica Joan to the possibility of a post mortem, and her understanding of the traditional and ingrained teaching on the Resurrection of her body, which drew gasps from me.

It has been a long time since Christians of every denomination became more comfortable with the thoughts of the resurrection of the body not being a literal event, which in turn led to the advent of the crematorium. The change of theology began to change most radically in light of the destruction of life in the world wars of the last century. The pain of this free thinking nun, felt almost more bitter than even the loss of her friend.

So what is resurrection?

One thing I know is that this world is hungry for the good news of resurrection: a real fleshy, meaningful resurrection but more than that, the world is in need of a far more profound spiritual understanding of God bringing Christ home and working in the world. Whatever happened in that cave, which is far beyond our human understanding, what we are assured of, as people of faith, is that the Eternal brought grace and love into that place and transformed the disciples, which led to us taking it out into the world.

Even today, it is still our sacred calling to take that Resurrection of body and faith out into the world. In St John's Gospel Mary is told not to touch Jesus because he had not yet ascended to his Father, yet in more or less the next verse Thomas is touching his hands and his side. The difference is the recognition of Jesus in his resurrected form being part of God.

We witness resurrection every day. You see it in families who've been through great changes and tragedies but are still together: you see it in young women, like Malala Yousafzai, and girls who've been inspired by her, who recognise they have a valid voice and a right to education and a future; and you see it when the Church has a spiritual attitude of welcome, which leads us to work for people

who are vulnerable and marginalised and need our help, even if sometimes we feel uncomfortable.

Call the Midwife is one of those TV programmes which provide both a sentimental look back at our past and where we have come from, but also provides a counterpoint to where we are now. The story of the thalidomide babies, reminded so many of what they had been through or almost been through. I grew up along the road from a boy who was a few years older than me, who had been affected by his mother's use of the drug. The babies who survived grew up to have lives of value and importance, but that doesn't make anything right. The events of the early 60's are a reminder of what can easily happen when there are not strict enough safeguards in place to protect vulnerable people. Bodily perceptions in relation to resurrection is an interesting debate when your limbs are not what they should be and that is why for this and many reasons, the idea of a physical resurrection has been largely shelved.

Learning how to both recognise and embody resurrection is a lifetime journey. It is about being open to acknowledge that there is so much that we don't know. It is both in the not knowing, in the emptiness and darkness; you might even say the nothingness of the cave, that miracles happen and there is life. It is also in knowing that broken, questioning and grief stricken friends came to a cave and found nothing, because he was already where God always is, out there in the world, both going before us and working within us and all people.

Sister Monica Jane had obviously found some level of comfort by the end of the episode, when she placed Sister Evangelina's shoes on her coffin: a symbol of not only what she had done, but also who she was as a person. It was a very ordinary sign of her life, but beneath that showed the love and respect that her people had for her. It was also a sign that life continues and that her influence was still with the people who had experienced her service, life, love and plain talking. Perhaps that is earthly resurrection? Perhaps we need to leave the eternal resurrection to Eternity.

Karen Campbell

Moderators' Challenge

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland is swapping his dog collar for sports gear to take part in a 13-mile charity tandem bike ride around an iconic loch to raise money to help thousands of refugees. The Right Rev Dr Angus Morrison is teaming up with Hannah Mary Goodlad, Moderator of the NYA, who is nearly 40 years his junior, to navigate the shores of Loch Leven near Kinross on April 16. He said he was "very much looking forward" to the Moderator's Challenge event along Loch Leven Heritage Trail to assist vulnerable men, women and children from the Middle East and Africa who have sought refuge in Egypt.



The St Andrews Refugee Service (StARS) is one of the first organisations in Egypt dedicated to improving the quality of life of refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants and will help 11,500 men, women and children this year.

Both Moderators have described the project run by St Andrew's United Church of Cairo as "inspirational".

Built by the Church of Scotland over 100 years ago, St Andrew's occupies a tight compound in central Cairo which is now a haven of relative peace and security for those who arrive here fleeing oppression.

"Associated with St Andrew's Church, staff and volunteers work tirelessly and selflessly with more than 11,500 refugees each year from many countries, including Syria, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan. They work on a tight budget providing education, legal advice, healthcare and other support. With Hannah Mary, I was deeply moved by the dedication, skill and compassion of the StARS team, as well as by the desperate plight of those they serve."

"The Moderators' Challenge will bring people together from different parts of the church, some to take part by cycling round Loch Leven, others cycling in their local communities and still others in organising and sponsoring the event."

"Please give as generously as you are able to this extremely worthy cause."

<https://mydonate.bt.com/events/moderatorschallenge16/291450>



15th - 21st May 2016

In one direction, a well signposted path leads towards a promising future, one in which an increasing number of vulnerable communities could be lifted out of poverty, protected from injustice and allowed to flourish.

In the other direction lies misery for millions of people, who will continue to find themselves trapped in impoverished lives, at the mercy of forces beyond their control.

We in our small community are able to help with monies collected through door-to-door collections, coffee mornings and dinner parties organised by Heinz Brinkmann. I know it is only a drop in the ocean, but every penny we collect counts - your contribution is really important - **Thank You!**

June Wilson

Dates to Remember

Monday 11th April - Envelope Stuffing

Saturday 14th May - Coffee Morning & Sale

Sunday 15th May - Joint service including Junior Church in the German Speaking Congregation Church.

Sunday 15th - 21st May - Door-to-door collection

Please contact June Wilson (447 7572) if you wish to help with the door-to-door collection or Frances Brown (672 3329) if you can help with the coffee morning and/or baking. All contributions will be very gratefully received.

ETHIOPIA DROUGHT

More than 10 million people in Ethiopia urgently need access to food supplies and water as the country faces its worst drought in three decades.

Farmers haven't been able to harvest any crops for two consecutive planting seasons, and supplies are dwindling.

In the hardest-hit communities, families are going hungry as they struggle to find enough food to eat. More than 400,000 children are experiencing severe malnutrition.

Without urgent funding to address the food shortages, the humanitarian situation will deteriorate even further.

Millions of vulnerable people urgently need food assistance. We must act now.



What we're doing

Earlier this year we released £50,000 of emergency funds to help some of the most vulnerable members in the hardest-hit communities.

Our partner HUNDEE used this money to provide school meals for more than 4,000 children whose families do not have enough food to give them even one meal a day.

We have also made sure that 700 children in two more schools have access to safe drinking water.

AROUND THE AISLES

The **Easter Services** were very moving and thought-provoking for those who attended them during the lead up to Easter Sunday.

A Time of Reflection is following the Church of Scotland's prayer resource, Living Stones. Every Tuesday at 10 - 10.30am - all welcome.

The **Meadows Explorer Scouts**, over 30 of whom meet at MSG on a Monday evening, have asked to be involved with the planning and preparation of this year's Remembrance Service in November. As well as involving some of our youth organisations this will also help them to work towards achieving some of their badges. Des, our Church Officer, is going to make a flag stand for them as they hope to get their own flags instead of using borrowed ones.

It is so encouraging to see these youngsters wanting to belong to our Church Family and they will once again be delivering envelopes to the local tenements for the Christian Aid Committee.

Meantime discussions are ongoing to provide accommodation for a new group of Cubs/ Scouts covering all sections who are keen to meet in our premises.

The **Induction of Rev Stuart Irvin to St Catherine's Argyle Church** will take place on Thursday 28th April at 7pm and we are all encouraged to attend.

With the recent amalgamation of the Property and Church Centre Management Committees, a heartfelt **Thank You** is due to **Cathy Murray** and **Moira Murray** for all their service to the Church property committee, given over many years.

A **Hustings Event** with candidates standing for election to the Scottish Parliament for Edinburgh South is being held in the Church Halls, Morningside Parish Church on Tuesday 19th April 2016 at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

Presbytery Report

The meetings for Edinburgh Presbytery are ongoing on a regular basis and always very interesting. Recently there have been some major decisions regarding the future of some of the churches in Edinburgh and this is never easy. However the work done by the various committees of Presbytery and the wider Church is very evident in the reports which have been presented to us lately. All parties are given every opportunity to have their say and the decisions which are going to affect them are not taken lightly - you are very aware of the weight of responsibility on your shoulders - and I am sure that the same can be said for those who attend the General Assembly.

At the latest meeting on the 15th March we had a very interesting and thought-provoking presentation from the Mercy Corps who are on our doorstep in Sciennes. Their values are to alleviate suffering, poverty and oppression by helping people build secure, productive and just communities.

As always, I leave feeling I am a member of a large family who, despite their ups and downs, are there for everyone no matter what colour, creed, age or lifestyle.

Local Church Review (LCR)

In November we will be undergoing our Local Church Review which seeks to encourage the congregation, facilitate them in setting out their priorities and plans for the next 5 years and support the congregation as it begins to execute their plans following the completion of their review.

At every Presbytery meeting there are reports presented from varying churches across the city giving a summary of their LCR. A member of their review team also gives a supplementary report which gives an overview of the vision of these congregations. It doesn't stop after the review is completed - we are open to all!

At our next non-business Kirk Session we will be looking at our SMART Goals and ensuring that we are following our Mission Statement and constantly striving to serve our local and wider community - this is the first step to a positive future.

Family Focus

Easter and all its events and build up has just past and now we are looking forward to spring and new ventures.

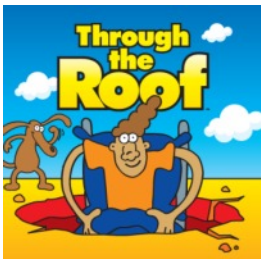


Easter Saturday saw bread-making, egg decorating, bonnet making and decorating the church with flowers along with some reflective time in the church with hand washing, bread and juice shared with the children. It was wonderful to welcome new faces, connections we have made through Toddler Group and Toddler Church and those that have been to Kids Club. It is great how our activities, groups and connections with families are beginning to join up.

The 'joining up' continued on Easter Day with visitors and fresh faces there too. A joyous weekend indeed!



Our second Kids Club, the Sheep Mystery, was a fun event with 13 children from P1 to P4 (roughly 5-8 year olds) coming along for the Lost Sheep story, songs, games and crafts. Our numbers were up from the first time, partly due to lowering the age, but also many new faces and folk who heard about the last one.



Our next Kids Club, 'Through the Roof' is on Saturday, 28th May, 3 - 4.30pm, similar format and age range with lots of team games and challenges, using LostSheep.com resources again that have proved engaging for the children the last couple of times.

Toddler Church is thriving and we love to welcome our littlest friends from the café, Toddler Group and Sundays for songs, a story and prayer. Our themes last term, were 'God made the world', featuring play dough creations, and 'I am special' (Psalm 139) with musical instruments. Our next set of Toddler Church days are Mondays 11th April, May 16th and June 13th.

The Creative Learning workshop that I attended recently was inspiring and I came back with good ideas for planning and delivering Sunday morning sessions using a wider range of styles which will equip us for the increasing age and numbers of our 'Comets' (7years +).

At this point I would like to thank Karen, Katherine and Barry for leading various Junior Church sessions last term. It is great to have new styles, ideas and a change of pace for all concerned. Godly Play, new songs, technology and getting to know each other better are all part of working and growing together and all 4 of us seeing more of 'how the others live'. Don't worry...no permanent swaps; the pulpit is safe from me!

I would also like to thank our continuing Sunday morning team... "we're on this road, you, me, everybody together" (Fischy music quote) and all of you that keep us supplied with cardboard tubes, egg boxes and other odd and unlikely supplies for our crafts and projects. Last but not least a big Thank You to the Guild for giving us a Sharing Easter Egg which the children enjoyed very much!!

The next project I have been trying to get to for 6 months now, but hope to launch very soon, are 'Cosy bags' (working title!): soft bags with soft, quiet toys such as books, finger puppets etc for babies and littlies to use during morning service until they are too old or restless to want to stay in and so join us in Junior Church. If anyone would like to help with this small project let me know.

And finally... Happy Spring!

Bettina

GUILD NEWS, April 2016



In mid-March we heard from Paul Merchant of Prospects in Scotland about the second project we plan to support, which is about helping churches to welcome people with learning disabilities, and to include them more in congregational life. This was an inspiring meeting, seeing how the young folk responded to stories, songs and sympathetic friendship.

Our final meeting of the session is on **April 19th**, beginning with the business meeting, when we will allocate this year's funds, followed by a visit from **Hearing Dogs for Deaf People**, which the congregation supported at Christmas 2014, resulting in our Church Treasurer, Jessica, acquiring Echo for his training period. We will be visited that evening by Rico, with Billy Falconer. We hope that Echo will be able to come along too!

Refreshed by the Easter break, the Saturday morning coffee ladies resume duty on Saturday April 16th and will wield their coffee jugs and teapots till late June; as ever, do pop in, 10 till 12.

Please remember that **your support for the Saturday Morning Coffees is much appreciated**, and vital in allowing the Guild to give support in so many different directions. **Thank you.**



Youth Moderator urges people to donate school bags for refugee children

The NYA has launched a backpack appeal to help young Syrian refugees settle into Scottish schools. Church of Scotland members are being urged to donate backpacks packed full of essential items to help prepare refugee children for school.

The rallying call to congregations across the country has been issued by the National Youth Assembly (NYA) who want to "do something practical out of Christian love" to help vulnerable people aged 4-18 who have been forced to flee war-torn Syria with their families and settle in Scotland.

NYA Moderator Hannah Mary Goodlad said she and her team hoped to collect and distribute between 150-200 school bags, filled with items like pens, pencils, erasers and rulers, this year.

Around 2,000 Syrian refugees are expected to settle in Scotland by 2020 – about 10% of the UK total. The NYA also intends to distribute some of the backpacks to the St Andrews Refugee Service (StARS) which is run by St Andrew's United Church of Cairo. Established in 1979, it is one of the first organisations in Egypt dedicated to improving the quality of life of refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants and will help 11,500 men women and children this year. (See also page 5 - Moderators' Challenge)

Miss Goodlad said: "The team and I have launched our Backpack Appeal with the first round of school bags going out to Syrian children arriving in Scotland. "We wanted to do something practical out of Christian love to help these vulnerable children. Following on from our discussions on child exploitation, human trafficking and the importance of education at last years' Youth Assembly, we decided to take action."

Life changing

Miss Goodlad said education was a "route out of exploitation" for many children. Education is quite simply life-changing and life-saving. The deadline for collecting backpacks from individual churches is June 12 . People are also being encouraged to make donations to the Backpack Appeal. A total of £170 has been donated against a £500 target to date.

In the News

Non EU immigration

Recent press reports have detailed the experiences of immigrants and refugees from strife torn areas of the world, families who were faced with life changing decisions. Less well reported has been the situation of families in the UK after a change in the UK Government Immigration policy for Non European immigrants.

In this situation one of the qualifying conditions to remain in the UK is that there must be a minimum income of £18,600. If this and the other conditions cannot be met the non EU spouse must leave the UK or be deported.

One such family facing this is our former Church Officer, Dominic James, who married Katy some nine years ago. They returned to the UK and had a baby girl, Madelaine but a change in legislation over the last few years now makes their future unthinkable, unless their case is reviewed favourably, Katy will be deported from the UK later this month.

Moderator Designate

The Church of Scotland has named the founder of a homeless charity as the next Moderator of the General Assembly.

The Rev Dr Russell Barr, chairman of Edinburgh-based Fresh Start which has helped 2,000 people get back on their feet in the last year, will take up the 12-month leadership role in May 2016.

The 62-year-old, who is minister at the city's Cramond Kirk and set up the charity more than 15 years ago, said he was "excited, honoured and overwhelmed" to have been appointed.



Reflecting on being chosen to suc-
the Right Rev Dr Angus Morrison, Dr Barr, who has held his current charge since 1993, said: "It is not a role that I ever imagined being asked to do.

"It is humbling to be elected by your peers to serve the Church in this way.

"I will seek to use the role to raise moral and ethical issues and publicise the important part the Church plays in public life."

And Finally.....

An Aberdeenshire farmer, James Nicol, made his fortune in Angus cattle. He later purchased and presented to the Church of Scotland a hotel in Stonehaven. His idea was that the Church would run it as an Eventide Home and that he and his elderly sister might spend the latter years of their life there. The Church agreed, calling the home after his farm, Clashfarquhar.

A young reporter from the Press and Journal sought an interview with Mr Nicol. During the interview the reporter asked how he, a young man of twenty four, could set about becoming a millionaire. "Are you married?" inquired Mr Nicol. When the reporter said he was, the old man smiled ruefully and said, "Well son, you don't have a chance."

And Finally Finally....



Dr Morris, the minister of Glasgow Cathedral, was formerly Chaplain to Peterhead Prison. He tells how his wife sometimes came out to the prison in the car and waited to give him a run home. On one occasion, she was sitting with her son in the car. David at that time was about five. A couple of prisoners' wives and their offspring arrived and waited for the gate to be opened to admit them for their visit. One of these children, catching sight of David said, "My Dad's in there." To which David replied with pride and innocence, "So is mine."

And ABSOLUTELY Finally....

A child coming out of the music examination said to her Mum, "I think the examiner must be a very religious man . He kept putting his head in his hands and saying, "Oh my God!"

All above are from Laughter Lines by the Very Rev James Simpson

MARCHMONT ST GILES' PARISH CHURCH

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Church Centre Office

(Monday - Thursday 9.00am - 1.00pm)

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