THE SHUTTLE
December 2020

MARCHMONT ST GILES' PARISH CHURCH

AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY



1a Kilgraston Road, Edinburgh, EH9 2DW
Phone: 0131 447 4359
www.marchmontstgiles.org.uk

Meeting Matters

December 2020

13	9.30	Junior Church on Zoom
	1030	Nine Lessons and Carols Service in church and on Facebook Live and YouTube
20	9.30	Junior Church on Zoom
	10.30	Nativity Service in church and on Facebook Live and YouTube
24	16.00	Christingle Service on Facebook Live and YouTube
	23.30	Watchnight Service
27	9.30	Junior Church on Zoom
	10.30	Sunday Morning Worship in church and on Facebook Live and YouTube

January 2021

3	9.30	Junior Church on Zoom
	10.30	Epiphany Service in church and on Facebook Live and YouTube
10	9.30	Junior Church on Zoom
	10.30	Sunday Morning Worship in church and on Facebook Live and YouTube
17	9.30	Junior Church on Zoom
	10.30	Sunday Morning Worship in church and on Facebook Live and YouTube
24	9.30	Junior Church on Zoom
	10.30	Sunday Morning Worship in church and on Facebook Live and YouTube
31	9.30	Junior Church on Zoom
	10.30	Sunday Morning Worship in church and on Facebook Live and YouTube

February 2021

7	9.30	Junior Church on Zoom
	10.30	Sunday Morning Worship in church and on Facebook Live and YouTube Material for the next issue of The Shuttle
14	9.30	Junior Church on Zoom
	10.30	Sunday Morning Worship in church and on Facebook Live and YouTube

Reflection



"Yesterday's Pain.

"Some of us walk into Advent

tethered to our unresolved yesterdays

the pain still stabbing

the hurt still throbbing

It's not that we don't know better;

it's just that we can't stand up anymore by ourselves.

On the way to Bethlehem,will you give us a hand?

written by Ann Weems in her book Kneeling in Bethlehem

I don't know about you – but I feel I'm half-way between a significant number of unresolved issues and in a waiting pattern, things which are deferred until ……..

Then we also have our unresolved hurts and wounds, which we carry around with us and come to the surface on occasion or are on the surface too often at the moment.

When we're honest with ourselves we cannot escape these yesterdays and these wounds really do make us who we are.

Perhaps the work of Advent is to show us, and Covid has shown us, that we can't, no matter how hard we try, stand up by ourselves? We all need a hand of support, care, comfort and encouragement every so often.

Advent is the ultimate Good News story that reminds us that we don't need to stand up on our own all of the time. We need each other. "no man is an island" we are told and at Advent time we are reminded that we can become much more than what we could by ourselves. A child in the manger called Emmanuel rescues us, entering just at the darkest point, to help us stand up and walk.

A colleague I studied with in Pittsburgh has asked for prayer in the last 3 months. He lives in Georgia and he and his wife developed Covid. He recovered very quickly, while his wife spent several weeks on a ventilator in ICU. They were told that she would probably not pull through, or if she did, her lungs would be so scarred, she would need a lung transplant. He needed the hand of the medical professionals and those of his friends to pray for his wife. He also needed the hand of God, who upheld him in his darkest days. As I write she is being weaned from her oxygen and slowly but surely, making a recovery.

I have been honoured to be given the opportunity to support someone, even far away.

It is not some imagined self-help theory that gives us strength, but rather a community of faith who are the living hands, hearts and voices of Christ here and now. We can make a difference in the lives of our community and we can be with people, whom we are called on to support.

And somehow, in the midst of our lives, a child is born, and the world is never the same.

Karen K Campbell

For some people, the twinkling lights, parties, tinsel, and non-stop caroling of Christmas stand in stark contrast to feelings of grief and loss. And so, for those suffering through these short days and long nights, this is a heart-felt and honest poem that we hope will help put the stars back into your skies, one by one. T

Social Bite - Christmas 2020

Each year Marchmont St Giles' Parish Church donates the collections from Christmas services to a worthy cause. This year the Kirk Session has decided upon **Social Bite** - a local charity with big aims - to end homelessness. Started in 2012 it now has a reach far beyond Edinburgh and has attracted the attention of a host of celebrities who have visited the Social Bite cafes to promote their work which helps a range of groups tackling homelessness.

You can help us support Social Bite by using the donate button on our website, please help us identify your donation by annotating the payment Social Bite or giving if you are attending one of our services.

MERRY CHRISTMAS
FROM
MARCHMONT ST GILES' PARISH CHURCH

JOIN US

CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2020

ALL ON FACEBOOK AT NORMAL TIMES

Sunday 13th December
10.30 am Nine Lessons and Carols

Sunday 20th December
10.30 am Nativity Service

Christmas Eve
4.00 pm Christingle Service
11.30 pm Watch-night Service

Christmas Day
10.00 am Family Service

ON FACEBOOK AND IN PERSON
Sunday 27th December
10.30 am Morning Service

Sunday 2nd January 2021
10.30 am Epiphany Service



News from the Kirk Session

The Kirk Session meets at least 4 times a year to manage the financial and worship affairs of the Church, and to plan for the future. For an explanation on how the Kirk Session functions please read the informative article written by Judith Stewart called "Church Structure", in the March 2020 edition of The Shuttle. (See Facebook or Website.)

Presbytery Planning Meeting

A 'cluster' of 7 local churches, including Marchmont St Giles, met 'virtually' to explore ways in which we can work closer together and more effectively. The 'cluster' group will meet again later in December - those attending on our behalf are the Minister, David Beattie and Sue Wilson.

Piano

The new boudoir grand piano will be featuring in one of the daily Advent Calendar videos, being played by Philip Sawyer.

Staff

Most of the staff are back working - but on a reduced hours basis only - and we are still able to claim furlough support payments via the UK Government scheme.

Groups

We have welcomed back a number of groups who use our premises regularly for their activities, and they are all now familiar with the rules for entering and exiting the building, and for distancing and disinfecting. We are hoping that when Edinburgh moves to Tier 2, more groups will feel comfortable to return also.

Donations

Thanks to the enormous generosity of the congregation and the wider community we have arranged to forward over £13,000 in cash donations to Richmond Craigmillar, as well as 27 bags of Christmas presents and a selection of children's winter coats and welly boots. Thank you to everyone who has contributed.

Cafe

The Cafe is getting busier as more people are finding it is a very safe and relaxing place to meet. The tables are spaced over 2 metres apart, there is a perspex screen at the counter, provisions are served at your table, and there is a new card machine for ease of contactless paying.

The support of members of the congregation meeting friends is much appreciated.

Butterflies will be open until close of business on 22nd before a break over Christmas and the New year, reopening on 6th January.

Ian Moss, Session Clerk

Butterflies Cafe

We wish Nicci and her band of volunteers a happy and restful Christmas. You can see Nicci on Day 3 of the Marchmont St Giles' Advent Calendar on Facebook and YouTube talking about Butterflies Cafe.





November Quiz Answer

Where in The Bible is a sundial mentioned?

Isaiah 38: 8

CHURCH FAMILY & PARISH NEWS

We give thanks for the life and service of:

Rodger Ainslie, partner of Sue Wilson, who died on 2nd October 2020.

Children and Families

The children and their families continue to meet on Zoom at 9:30 on a Sunday morning before the main worship service. As always, it is a great time to catch up and learn about the Gospel together. It's lovely to see children who have been able to come to church for the 10.30am service.

The Nativity can't be done in church this year so our families have been busy filming so that there can still be a Nativity Service on 20th December, which you can join in church and online. If planning on joining at the church please book seats ahead of time and be prepared to be flexible in where you sit as the numbers and covid restrictions will require us to be quite strict on seating.

Helping to Make MSG' Tick

Here we would usually have a rota of Who is doing What When to help MSG run smoothly. Instead, this space can be used to express our continued thanks to our Minister, Karen, for the time and energy she gives to keeping our congregation together and supported through this time of Covid and to let her know that all she does is hugely appreciated. Grateful thanks, too, to the wider team who, along with the Minister, welcome people through its doors again, while continuing to live-stream the services for those who continue to worship at home.

Covid Restrictions

Scottish Government restrictions at Tier 3 for Edinburgh mean that the Minister is currently unable to visit people in their homes but continues to be in contact by phone and Zoom.

Donations of winter coats and wellies for primary school children are still gratefully received. They can be handed in to the Church Centre.

Volunteers

We would be pleased to have more volunteers on Sunday mornings to clean and air the church before and after services. Please contact the Minister* if you are able to help. Also, Al, Andrew and Sue would greatly welcome volunteers to live-stream Sunday services. It will give you the opportunity to learn a new skill, with interesting and easy-to-use new streaming equipment and will give you a sense of achievement when a service is successfully streamed. Both of these are important tasks for the church. Cleanliness in times of Covid is vital and live-streaming means our church community can still be together without being in church.

Marchmont St Giles' Website

Our choir's singing is too good to keep to ourselves, so recordings of hymns and anthems are on MSG' website. Some Christmas carols will be added as the choir have been recording for upcoming services, particularly the Nine Lessons and Carols on 13th December.

Minister's weekly email:

If you would like to receive the Minister's weekly email please let her know.* It's a good way to keep up-to-date with MSG and Butterflies Cafe news.

*Email: kkcampbell@churchofscotland.org.uk

MSG' Online Advent Calendar

Marchmont St Giles' online calendar can be see on MSG' Facebook page and on the YouTube channel. Each day from 1st to 25th December there is advent music, readings, poetry and prayers, and someone from the church or local Marchmont community talks about their work or leisure activities, how Covid has affected them and finishes by telling us what they are looking forward to at Christmas. Have a look back at previous days and enjoy hose still to come.

Nativity

On a cold crisp day at the end of November the children and their parents gathered in a field at Bonaly to film the Nativity. Prior arrangements with the kind landowner meant filming could be done in fields and a stable. Lovely afternoon sunshine shone over the hills with views of alpacas and sheep.

The cast were all very pleased to see each other face-to-face rather than by Zoom and joined in enthusiastically, vaulting fences, donning costumes and acting their roles. Dianne directed and all the adults, wearing masks, helped with costumes, at times applying them via shepherds' crooks to ensure adequate social distancing. Small angels and livestock were valiant in the face of the cold once the sun dipped below the hills and the temperature dropped.

Despite restrictions, inside family shoots could be done as siblings co-starred together. All concerned were determined to produce a Nativity worthy of MSG's usual highly acclaimed productions. Director, cast and crew can't wait to see the final cut and hope reviews are favourable and that the love of Jesus, Light of the World, shines bright through this season.

Advent Bible Study

Everything this year is different and so is Advent as well. The hour of weekly Bible study - Thursday at 1230 and Tuesday at 8pm - enables us to put into context all that's happening with similar events from Scripture.

Julia has chosen the programme of AlterNativity as a guideline. Every week we watch first the video and then talk about the passage of Scripture, the words spoken, the prayer and the song. It is surprising how the change in circumstances leads to a re-evaluation of the things we think normal. This year's Christmas we all will sacrifice something that's dear to us: either having the whole family at the dinner table, visits to Christmas markets and joy rides on a carousel, Christmas parties with friends or colleagues, concerts, panto performances...

This year's uncertainty forces us to live our lives differently, and Alternativity helps to get into the mindset of a changed version of Christmas. **Rix**

On location with the cast of the Nativity 2020









The Guild

The Guild had their Christmas party on Zoom this year. Chatting to Guild members in Butterflies Cafe this week, I hear it was much enjoyed by all. Each person brought their own party fare which included Thistly Cross Scottish Cider, mincemeat pies and other Christmas treats.

There was a quiz and carol singing and Eileen shared this story:

Little donkey, little donkey on the dusty road
Got to keep on plodding onward with your precious load

The RSPCA have issued strict guidelines with regard to how heavy a load that a donkey of small stature is permitted to carry. Also included in the guidelines is guidance regarding how often to feed the donkey and how many rest breaks are required over a four hour plodding period.

Please note that due to increased risk of pollution from the dusty roads, Mary and Joseph are required to wear face masks to prevent inhalation of airborne particles.

The donkey has expressed his discomfort at being labelled, 'little' and would prefer just to be simply, 'Mr Donkey'. To comment on his height or lack thereof may be considered an infringement of his equine rights.

Face masks: While enjoying a Butterflies latte during the week, three people mentioned to me that Sharon has raised £200 for The Guild's Charity Donations by making face masks. A very big *Well Done* to Sharon and *Thank you.*

There are still a few Christmas stockings at Butterflies Cafe with a suggested donation of £1 towards The Guild.



December Quiz

A Christmas Riddle

(Pinched from Alan Titchmarsh on Classic FM!)

Little Miss Etticote
In her white petticoat
And her red nose
The longer she stands
The shorter she grows

What is she?

Christingle Service on Christmas Eve

Thank you to Stephen James Martin, Creative Director at SJM Performance Academy and Principal of Edinburgh Acting School for helping us film this year's Christingle Service and for sharing with us the wonderful lighting and scenery from his Christmas panto. The church is usually packed for the Christingle Service service but this year we invite you to join the service on MSG' Facebook page and YouTube channel at 4pm on Christmas Eve.





A blessing for those who mourn

In the silent cries
And the primal wails
In the soft sobs
And the raging howls
In the tears that just won't come
And the tears that just won't stop
You are blessed

In the crashing crushing waves of fear
In the winds that batter your heart
And the dark skies that blacken your vision
In the calm before the storm
or the calm in the eye of the storm
or the calm after the storm
(because some days time is marked only by storms)
You are blessed

In the prayers you can speak
In the sighs too deep for words
In the times you just want to be done with God
(if, you tell yourself, there's a God to be done with anyway)
God isn't done with you
And God blesses you

In your fears about the future
And your regrets about the past
And the what if's
And the what will be's
In the why me's and the why them's
And the why nots
There is blessing there too
Because God is there
Emmanuel
Seeing
Knowing
Loving you

At 2am or 4am or whenever it is you wake
With the painful memories that steal your breath
And the joyful memories you're terrified you'll forget
In the remembering and re-membering
That comes after the dismembering
Of your life, your love, your very being
God's still small voice whispers blessing even there
It's just hard to hear over the screams of a heart in pain

In the days that just keep coming
And the breaths you just keep taking
And the steps you just keep walking
Each leading you further away from 'before'
Into this strange lonely land of 'after'
Blessing will still find you,
Because love is always with you
(even if not in the way you might wish)

So as you mourn what you miss
And grieve those you love
May their memory be a blessing

And may you be comforted
By the eternal embrace of God
Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Amen

The Reverend Kate McDonald, 29 November 2020

Kate served in the local congregation of St Andrew's Galilee, worked as chaplain to the staff at the Scots Hotel and walked alongside the local Christian congregations and our partners in the northern areas of Israel and Palestine.

Following the sudden and tragic death in July of Scots Hotel General Manager, Peter Hehle, her friend, colleague and partner, she made the difficult decision to resign from the position of Mission Partner and Minister in Tiberias and return to her native United States of America.

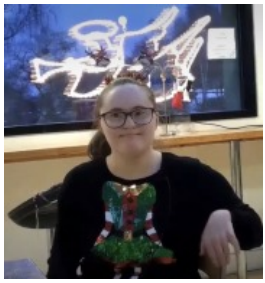
Even as we anticipate the light of the Advent Candles and the birth of a child and a time of so much joy we find grief and despair in the loss of a loved one, but their light will shine on in the eyes of those who remain.

MSG Advent Calendar

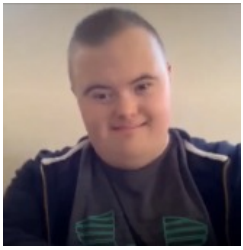
You can view our Advent Calendar on MSG's Facebook page and YouTube channel. There is a short video each day from 1st to 25th December with Advent music, readings, poems and prayers, and each day someone from the church or the Marchmont community talks about their leisure activities or work. Here are some of the people who appear in the calendar,



Day 3:
Catherine and Jess the cat from Sing and Sign shows us how to sign 'Christmas'.



Day 12:
Fiona who loves everything about Christmas, except…



Day 12:
Hamish whose favourite Christmas DVD is Scrooge!



Day 12: Who is this under the woolly Christmas hat?



Day 17:
Sue reading the words of *When a Child is Born* and trying hard not to burst into song!





Day 7:
Helen and Andy hill-running at Arthur's Seat.

Day 13:
Rabbi Mark Solomon lighting Hanukkah candles.





Day 6:
Rix from Dresden following the tradition of cleaning shoes in preparation for St Nicholas Day on 6th December.

Day 10:
Julia, MSG's postie from Royal Mail on Strathearn Road who, along with her colleagues has looked out for and chatted to people at their front doors during lockdown.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Advent Calendars. There has been a feeling of community in the church and in Marchmont while filming for the calendar and in watching it.

THANK YOU

The picture on the front cover shows the enormous pile of toys donated through the fabulous generosity of the congregation and the wider community. We have also forwarded over £13,000 in cash donations to Richmond Craigmillar, scores of bags of food, hygeine products and pet food as well as these twenty seven bags of Christmas presents and a selection of children's winter coats and welly boots to Niddrie Mill Primary School..



On arrival at the school with the presents we were directed to 'a table *(left)* where the toys would be quarantined for 72 hours'.

The reality

And that's only

some of the

bags



Thank you to everyone who has contributed in any way.

AROUND THE AISLES

- Tuesday and Thursday on Facebook-Live at 10am there is a Thought for the Day from Karen, Kate and Julia

- Tuesdays at 11am, if you are able to join Zoom, there's a coffee morning. Make a cup of tea or coffee and join in for a chat.

- Wednesday at 7pm on Zoom there's a Knit and Natter meeting. You can sew or knit or join the meeting just to chat. For either of these meetings email Karen to receive the Zoom joining code: kkcampbell@churchofscotland.org.uk

- Thursday at 1230am you can join the Advent Bible Study led by Julia on Zoom. All welcome to join this informal gathering. Email Julia if you would like to receive the Zoom joining code in an email: jcato@churchofscotland.org.uk

- As we welcome people into the church for our Sunday Services, we will continue to broadcast the services live on Marchmont St Giles' Facebook Page and also on MSG YouTube Channel. There is coffee on Zoom after the service at 1130am.

- Ann has home-made jam and marmalade for sale to support the Church Development Fund. You can phone her on: 667 8325 to order some, and make payment at a later date.

If you know of anyone who would like to receive a paper copy of the Shuttle, let us know. Charles can print and deliver to anyone who cannot see it online.



Life and Work is the magazine of the Church of Scotland

During this challenging period, Life and Work is committed to helping keep our Christian community connected. The magazine will continue to be published as normal and distributed to our loyal readers.

Like many people across the UK the Life and Work team have been working form home this year and to ease administration the subscription order for the church for the the coming year has been renewed automatically. However the team acknowledges the difficulties some subscribers face in receiving a copy via their church and have developed an offer to assist readers.

A small price increase has become necessary to cover increased costs so the offer to have a copy delivered directly to their chosen address has been modified so that for the price of 10 issues readers will receive 12 issues, all for the price of £30 with payment by direct debit.

If you wish to take advantage of the offer please complete the direct debit and personal order forms on the following pages and return direct to Life and Work, 121 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4YN.

A large print version of these forms are available on request, please contact the Church Office.

Alternatively readers may wish to take out a digital subscription for Life and Work.

Single issue £1.99, six months £11.99 or 12 months £20.99 (*£1.75 per issue*). Follow this link for more information.

https://pocketmags.com/life-and-work-magazine

and remember if you are using easyfundraising you can support Marchmont St Giles' with your online purchase.

Once downloaded your digital copy of Life and Work can be read on a variety of platforms - * mobile phone, tablet , laptop or PC.

A subcription sot Life and Work contributes to and supports the vital workof the Church of Scotland.

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Please also send a copy of your letter to us.

And finally

A few Christmas crackers!



What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck?
A Christmas Quacker.

What do elves post on social media?
Elfies.

Why was the snowman rummaging through a bag of carrots?
He was picking his nose.

What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations?
Tinsellitis.

Why are Christmas trees like bad knitters?
Because they keep losing their needles.

What carol is heard in the desert?
Oh Camel ye Faithful

What's Rudolph's favourite pop star?
Beyonsleigh

Why will Christmas be different after Brexit?
No Brussels.



Who do Santa's helpers call when they're ill?
The National Elf Service.

WHO'S WHO @ MARCHMONT ST GILES'

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Church Centre Booking Enquiries

Church Centre Office

(Monday - Thursday 9.00am - 1.00pm)

Email : office@marchmontstgiles.org.uk

0131 447 4359

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