



# Magazine

No. 115 DECEMBER 2015

Dear Friends

Over the years I have frequently commented on the figure of Joseph in the traditional nativity scenes. Poor old Joseph, the tall, quiet boy in a school nativity, with his nondescript tea-towel head-dress, and an old brown dressing gown, marooned at the back of the scene. Centre-place given to Mary, seated, and all in brilliant blue, and the crib, with the infant Jesus. Joseph is further edged out by the pushy shepherds and the (slightly ahead of themselves) Wise Men in their silks and crowns, and bearing marvellous gifts. To say nothing of the noisy angels in their glistening white and sparkly tinsel. Poor old Joseph indeed.

In Nazareth today, tucked behind the vast Basilica of the Annunciation dedicated to Mary, there is a little church dedicated to Joseph. You have to look to find it, but it sits quietly in the background. It has some wonderful images of Joseph, with Jesus and Mary, including one I particularly like of Jesus and Mary looking after Joseph in his old age.

There is so little said about Joseph in the Bible. The largest section about him is in Matthew's gospel when we read of the angel coming to tell Joseph that Mary is expecting a child, and that the child is not his. We gloss over the story because it is so familiar to us, just as we gloss over many other over-familiar stories. It deserves our closer attention. It was certainly something for Mary to accept that she was going to be the mother of Jesus. It is equally something

that Joseph, whatever he really thought or felt had happened, was willing to stand-by his fiancée.

Not only through the pregnancy and the birth, but in those crucial years afterwards. Steering them to safety in Egypt when Herod plotted the death of the children in Bethlehem. Bringing the little family home to Nazareth when the threat was over. Fathering other children (the Bible speaks of Jesus' brothers and sisters). The disappearing from sight entirely.



Joseph is one of the many shadowy people in the Bible. They are on the fringes, populating its pages, giving some depth and colour, but we know so little about them, or the details of their lives. Yet without them, the human stories in the Bible would be so much emptier. What support did Joseph provide for Mary and Jesus? What faith lessons did Joseph pass on to the child as He grew up? Did

Jesus remain the favoured older son in the family? Did he preside over a happy home?

In the background, yet one of the key people in the Christmas story, Joseph stands for many who make our contemporary enjoyment of Christmas possible. Those people who provide food, warmth, music, light and so many other things that we take for granted over Christmas. Remember the background Christmas people, without whom Christmas would not be complete, and give thanks for their service. And have a joyful Christmas, and a peaceful New Year.

Revd Dr Derek Browning

## KIRK SESSION MEETINGS

At recent meetings in October and November, the Kirk Session:

- Noted the appointment of Helen Guy as the new Associate for Christian Education and Pastoral Care, and received a report from Helen outlining her first few weeks with us, and her plans for the future.
- Thanked Ruth Bowman for her service as an elder, and noted her retirement from duties.
- Thanked Bill Reid for over 30 years of service on the Christian Aid Committee, from which he is now standing down.
- Through the Communication Committee discussed the development of the Church website, improvement of noticeboards, commissioning of new banners for the Church railings.
- Thanked Paul Cackette for his sterling work in ensuring all church volunteers involved with children or vulnerable adults had been successfully cleared through the PVG scheme in advance of the 31 October retrospective clearance deadline. This has been a significant and important piece of work, and the Session expressed its sincere gratitude to Paul.
- Noted a discussion at the Presbytery of Edinburgh about the Syrian refugee crisis, and the complexities of finding appropriate and positive ways to respond. Initial thought was to encourage those who were able to make financial donations to those charities already working with refugees in camps in Europe, Lebanon and Jordan.
- Through the Pastoral Care Committee looked at issues relating to the opportunities and challenges presented by carrying out visits to members of the congregation in the C21st. Concerns were expressed about maintaining face-to-face visits for those in the congregation who wished them, but recognising that contemporary lifestyle sometimes made it difficult for elders to carry out visits. The situation will be kept under review.
- Discussed the future of the Cluny Centre and the possibility to carry out new building and other development on the Church site. The Session unanimously agreed to the sale of the Cluny Centre and approved proposals to explore new building, and agreed to call a congregational meeting to discuss the matter and to make a decision.
- Through the Outreach Committee noted that the donation commitments to Scottish Love in Action, the Edinburgh Clothing Store and The Bethany Care Shelter exceeded the targets set. The sum raised to date for 2015 is £5781, with the Christmas offerings still to be disbursed. The committee thanked everyone who has helped in any way with raising funds. It is greatly appreciated.
- Noted arrangements for the Christmas services, and was particularly pleased to hear about a baptism that will take place at the Christmas Day service.

## WORSHIP EVENTS

**Communion Sunday** is on 6th December. There will be services at 9.30am (in the choir area of the Church) and at 10.30am. We look forward to welcoming the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Right Reverend Dr Angus Morrison, who will preach at the 10.30am service.

### **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December**

The Church will be decorated for Christmas from 10am. If you would like to help with the trees in the Church, Hall, and outdoors, please come along!

### **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December**

All Age Family Christmas service: 10.30am. The children will lead the service. After this service – mulled wine and Christmas refreshments. (No 9.30am service on this Sunday)

### **Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December**

9.30am service in the Hall; Lessons and Carols at 10.30am in the Church. The children will join us for the first part of the service then go through to the Hall for Christmas activities.

6.30pm Blue Christmas service: A short, half hour service in the Church for those who find Christmas a difficult time. Sometimes it is because of bereavement, sometimes it is because of loneliness,

sometimes because the sheer relentlessness of the 'season' simply gets too much and you need a quiet place to gather your thoughts and your energy. If Christmas is a 'blue' time for you – this service is for you.



### **Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December –**

Christmas Eve

6.30pm All Age service

11pm Carols By Candlelight

11.30pm Watchnight service.

### **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Day**

10am – All Age service – with the Sacrament of Baptism. A half hour service celebrating Christmas, and including a baptism – a first for Christmas Day in this church for many years!

### **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December**

10.30am Morning Worship. The theme for the sermon is 'Be thankful'.

There will be no 9.30am service

### **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January**

9.30am service in the Hall; 10.30am Morning Worship in the Church. The sermon theme is 'Travellers'.

## CHURCH SERVICE AND MAGAZINE TAPES

We are continuing to record the Church service and the magazine. If you would like to have either or both of these tapes delivered to you each month, or Elders, if you know of anyone who might make use of this, please let one of us know.

Thank you

Joan McKenzie (337 4643); Audrey Riddell (445 2330)

## ASSOCIATE FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & PASTORAL CARE

Hello there!

For those of you who don't already know me or if I haven't had the chance to introduce myself, my name is Helen Guy and I'm the new Associate for Christian Education and Pastoral Care. I'm very excited about this role and look forward to working with you all. I've been an MDS (Ministries Development Staff) worker for the Church of Scotland for almost 8 years now and before that my work has always been children, youth and families based. I'm a child of the Manse and was born in Stirling. We moved up North to Elgin before moving to Aberdeen when I was in my teens and finally I moved here to Edinburgh where I've been for around two years now. I love the City as there's so much to do! I enjoy Art, music and drama and so it's great to have so many theatres and art galleries right on my doorstep.



The thing I'm probably most passionate about is Christian outreach and I have been fortunate enough to have gained lots of experience from working with many different Churches and teams along the way. I think the most important thing I've learned over the years is to put all of my trust in Jesus, even when things seem a bit hopeless or I'm not sure where to turn next, Jesus will

always make a way and I've always taken great comfort from this passage in Jeremiah 29 v 11 *'For I know the plans I have for you' says the Lord, 'They are plans for good and not for disaster, plans to give you a hope and a future'.*

I'm really looking forward to getting to know you all and am thankful to God for placing me here. I'd appreciate your prayers as I get started and I hope that if we haven't had the chance to chat yet that we will very soon.

Blessings, Helen

## WORK PARTY



The next meeting in the current session will be held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December in Room 2 at Cluny Centre at 10.30am/10.45am. We will have a Christmas coffee morning along with a display of a selection of the articles made by the members over the past year.

Thank you to all members for your continuing support. Please remember there is no meeting in January. I look forward to seeing you all again on 1<sup>st</sup> February, and to welcoming anyone who would like to join us.

Margaret Guild (447 6290)

### FLOWER LIST

	Provided by	Arranged by
Dec	6 Catherine Leonard	Val Mannings
	13 CHRISTMAS	Flower committee
	20 CHRISTMAS	Flower committee
	27 CHRISTMAS	Flower committee
Jan	3 CHRISTMAS	Flower committee
	10 Joan Burnet	Joan Burnet
	17 Frances Bruce	Irene Wilson
	24 Euan Murray	Marjory Watson
	31 Liz Munro	Val Mannings
Feb	7 Lorna Graham	Anne Armour/ Issie Paterson



The flower list for 2016 is now on the noticeboard in the vestibule - a number of dates are still available. If you would like to supply flowers one Sunday, please put your name and phone number against your chosen date. The cost is £40 and cheques should be made payable to 'Morningside Parish Church Flower Fund'. If you are a UK taxpayer and can give by Gift Aid, please fill in one of the Gift Aid envelopes found on the pews. Monies can be put in the Flower Committee pigeon hole or sent to the church office.

The Committee would also like to take this opportunity to express their thanks to all those who have donated to the Flower Fund over the year enabling us to enhance the sanctuary every week and provide flowers for delivery.

Do you have a hidden talent - or even a talent you don't know you have? We would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to join the Committee to arrange flowers throughout the year or be part of the decoration team for Easter, Harvest or Christmas. No previous experience is necessary as guidance can be given by members of the Committee if required. Please contact either Eleanor Watt (447 5492) or myself (449 2866) if you are interested, or speak to any of the ladies taking down the flowers on a Sunday morning for further details.

Irene Wilson  
Joint-Convener, Flower Committee

## OUTREACH COMMITTEE - CHOOSE A CHARITY!

Our two year commitment to the Bethany Trust Care Shelter will be over at the end of December 2015 and so we will be looking to support a new charity.

We are looking for suggestions for charities that we can poll the congregation for during December 2015, with a view to announcing the new charity in the New Year.

Please approach any member of the Outreach Committee with your suggestions or alternatively you can place your suggestions in writing in any of our

pigeon holes or via email to:  
[office@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:office@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk)

The Outreach Committee is made up of the following members:

Anne Armour  
David Calder  
Fiona Gossip  
Penny Graham

Kimberly Milne  
Liz Munro  
Kate Stewart  
Fiona Stimpson

Many Thanks,  
Kimberly Milne  
Outreach Convener

## ROLL CHANGES

Please give a warm welcome to our newest member, Nicholas Trowell, and his family;

and please remember in your prayers the family and friends of

- Mrs Christine McWhirter, who died on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2015, and
- Mrs Muriel Ferguson, who died on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015.



Have you looked at the Website yet?  
[www.morningsideparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.morningsideparishchurch.org.uk)

We have gradually been adding material to our new website so we hope you find it informative, attractive and easy to use.



## DECEMBER LIFE & WORK

The December issue of Life & Work includes the following articles:-

### **‘On the First Day of Christmas’**

The Rev Colin Dempster explores the religious roots of the well-known Christmas song.

### **The Pain of Loneliness**

The work of the charity ALTERnativity in offering a different Christmas.

### **Lemon Ice Cream**

An advent-themed story from poet and author Kenneth Steven

### **Behind the Scenes**

A Lanarkshire teenager’s work experience with a Church of Scotland minister

### **‘It’s a Miracle I am Here’**

Jackie Macadam learns about the work of Glasgow City Mission in dealing with the increasing numbers of asylum seekers, relating one man’s harrowing journey from Africa to Scotland

### **Bombed, Rescued – then Arrested**

Bruce Cannon relates the untold story of a Church of Scotland chaplain 75 years on from his escape from a sinking ship during World War 2.

### **70 Peaks for Christian Aid**

Thomas Baldwin joins the walkers tackling Schiehallion, the final event of Christian Aid Scotland’s 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary 70 Munros challenge.

### **A High View of Prayer**

In the final part of his reflections on the book of James, the Rev Dr Martin Fair considers the power of prayer.



### **The Superhero Youth Room**

Jackie Macadam reports on a mural with a difference at an Ayrshire church.

**Online** visit us at [www.lifeandwork.org](http://www.lifeandwork.org) for regular news and exclusive features, or find us on Facebook and Twitter.



### **WELL DONE AND**

**THANK YOU** to the 15<sup>th</sup> Brownies who, as part of their Community service, folded over 1,000 of the Christmas leaflets to be distributed round the Parish. It was a fun evening and the girls enjoyed themselves.

## CREATIVELY CHALLENGED

It's amazing what imagination and perspiration can achieve.

The challenge to our congregation was to take a five pound note and turn it into something more by effort or ingenuity. 50 members rose to that challenge and did wonderful things that delivered more than money.

It did of course raise funds for our Church, coming to £3,466 including tax relief. A great result.

But the purpose was more than fundraising. It was to release our imagination, widen our fundraising circle to people beyond the congregation and involve others along the way. Our members tackled the challenge in different ways, reflecting their talents and aptitudes.

Our Maxwell Street and Murrayfield members banded together locally to hold street coffee mornings for their neighbours and friends and sell home-made produce.

Then we had quizzes. Rona's pictures of Edinburgh quiz, born itself out of a charity challenge to walk 10,000 steps (she did 583,342 steps or 283 miles) meant she had seen the town from unusual angles - and her pictures stumped everyone - well done. Audrey's quiz was also a success with three correct returns earning the prizes.



We had the painters. Lucinda painted a series of charming watercolours set by the Open Arms, Dirleton, while Christine offered a beautiful still life of roses from her

professional painting days. And Jane's cross stitch creations of hearts and owls were widely admired.



We mustn't forget the crafters. "I found an old bit of timber in the garage and was able to fashion some trivets, copying an old Australian design." said Ken. (Still one available at £15 ). There were many wonderful, colourful and useful creations.

We also had the gardeners. I was accosted by someone wanting to buy some rhubarb before I even had it out the car reported Irene. Even the windfall apples from the manse garden sold [Now that's what I call gardening!]. Bedding plants and tomatoes brought on from seedlings have given pleasure across the summer.

The bakers made cakes and scones, marmalade and jam. Beth's cup cakes flew off the stall and Liz' home baking wowed her neighbours. Katie's offer to sell surplus items online proved a hit. Following the bids over the 7-day auction was fun itself said Marie who monitored an early bid, then tantalising "watchers" and the inevitable scramble in the last seconds. Gear shifted to a good home, space decluttered and funds raised - a real win win.

There were lots of other great schemes representing hard work and ingenuity to grow those fivers. If you were too modest to tell us what you did, but you supported the effort in your own way , you still deserve a big thank you from the congregation. So THANK YOU from us all. We hope it was fulfilling to be part of our Creative Challenge.

Robert Armour



## THE MONDAY CIRCLE (FORMER "LADIES GROUP")

The Monday Circle have had their usual varied topics since our start in September. At our first meeting, Sybelle Thomson from Thomson Roddick Auctioneers described some of the items that come up for auction in *A View from the Rostrum*. She was very informative and interesting.

In October Rev Mary Morrison told us how she wished to become a Minister from her teenage years. With support from her husband, family and friends she eventually reached her goal and dreams. Two of her daughters are Ministers. Also in October, John Macfie informed us about Robert Louis Stevenson and the house he grew up in. From an early age RLS wanted to be a writer and supported by his father who also wished to be able to write but had to join the family business of building lighthouses.

At the beginning of November Stan Cartmell gave us a superb talk with pictures of life in southern Japan and its people.

We look forward to our next speakers and will finish with a Christmas Party, when we shall have a Musical Quiz led by Evelyn Reekie followed by a cold buffet and finishing with carol-singing.

The Monday Circle meets in the Morningside Parish Church Halls on a Monday at 7.45pm. Here are the dates for our meetings in December and January.

7<sup>th</sup> December:                      Crafting for Christmas                      Mary Garbouj will show us how to make pop-up cards and give us the chance to try making them ourselves.

14<sup>th</sup> December:                      Members' Christmas party

2016

11<sup>th</sup> January                      Anyone for Tennis?                      Stewart Houston has been a tennis linesman for over 20 years at a number of tournaments including Wimbledon. Come and hear about his duties and perhaps some of the players, past and present.

25<sup>th</sup> January                      Harry Lauder                      Ian Tennant

If any of our topics appeal please come and join us. May we wish you all a Happy Festive Season with family and friends and all the best for 2016.

Catriona Reid, President/Secretary  
Anna Cunningham, Syllabus secretary

## FEBRUARY MAGAZINE

Material for the February issue of the magazine should be with the editor, Alison Riddell, by **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016** and it will be available for distribution on **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January**. Contributions may be put in her pigeonhole at church, sent by email to [editor@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:editor@morningsideparishchurch.org.uk) or by post to the church office at 1 Cluny Drive, Edinburgh, EH10 6DN.

If you receive a paper copy of the magazine and would prefer it by email, please contact the office at the above address.

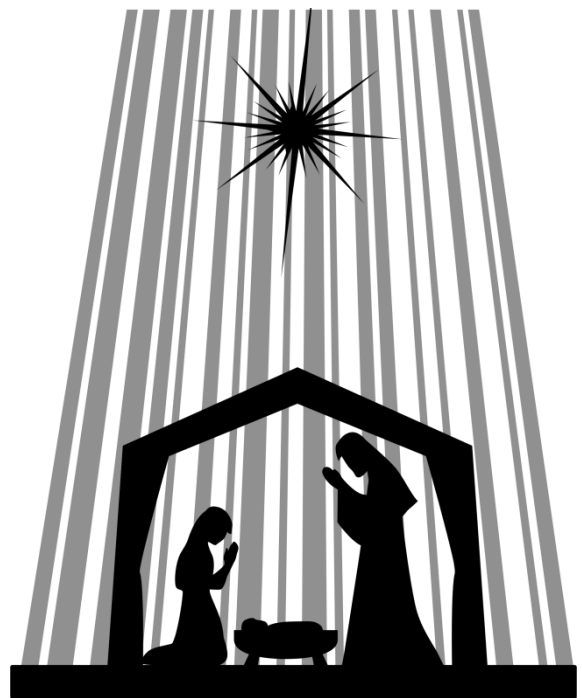
### JOSEPH'S LULLABY

*By Ron Klug*

Sleep now, little one.  
I will watch while You and Your mother sleep.  
I wish I could do more.  
This straw is not quite good enough for You.  
Back in Nazareth I'll make a proper bed for you  
Of seasoned wood, smooth, strong, well-pegged.  
A bed fit for a carpenter's son

Just wait till we get back to Nazareth.  
I'll teach You everything I know.  
You'll learn to use the cedarwood, eucalyptus and fir.  
You'll learn to use the drawshave, axe and saw.  
Your arms will grow strong, Your hands rough –  
like these.  
You will bear the pungent smell of new wood  
And wear shavings and sawdust in Your hair.

You'll be a man Whose life centres  
On hammer and nails and wood.  
But for now,  
Sleep, little Jesus, sleep.



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# A Joyful Christmas to all our Readers