



Murrayfield

PARISH CHURCH

Issue no.550



Advent/Christmas Edition

LETTER FROM YOUR MINISTER



Advent got off to a good start with the joint Murrayfield Churches Together Advent Carol service. This was the first in-person joint service since January 2020 - almost 2 years ago - and it was valuable to gather and see each other face to face. The Advent Carol service was previously held, for many years, in the evening of the first Sunday of Advent at the Church of the Good Shepherd. The change of service time and location meant that it was a new experience for a lot of those attending !

The introduction to the service reminds us that Advent is the start of the Church's Liturgical Year and that this 'New Year' starts not with a party but with a season of 'thoughtfulness and waiting, of expectation and quiet'. In some ways the liturgical tone of Advent puts the Church out of kilter with the rest of society! For many people December is typically a month of parties and socialising, not to mention rampant consumerism which, these days, is set in motion by Black Friday & Cyber Monday.

The December issue of our congregational magazine has lots of information about various ways to celebrate advent - campaigns and appeals - online and physical advent calendars. There is the opportunity to join in with a Pop Up choir also (see details on pg 4). Perhaps some of you haven't been back to an in-person church service since the start of the pandemic. Or alternatively perhaps some of you haven't been around church for well before then but have felt something stirring through the last 2 years. Please feel very welcome to dip in to one of the December services.

Here is what is due to happen



On Sunday 5th December we will celebrate communion (Covid safe with the elements laid out in advance) and we will also bring the autumn series on The Rise of David to a conclusion (with a bit of McCartney/Lennon and Nelson/Hardy in the sermon). There is the chance to bring Cans for the Edinburgh North

West Foodbank and deposit these in the North Transept (the building will be open from 9.30am for this purpose).

On Sunday 12th December there will be an all age Nativity Service. This will feature some very well known carols (and the Pop Up choir) as well as a video nativity play which will be shown in segments featuring children from the congregation. There is a bring your own festive lunch/sandwich/snack/dessert to wash down with tea and coffee after the service and also a Quiz for all hosted by a couple of the church's young people. (the building will be open for cans from 9.30am).

On Sunday 19th December there will be a traditional Lessons & Carols Service. This comprises of plenty of carols and also readings that chart the biblical accounts of the birth of Jesus. The story starts back much further than the 1st century as the readings make clear! This service has been popularised by the annual broadcast of Carols From Kings and it goes back to an Anglican clergyman in 1880 (Rev Edward White Benson who later became Archbishop of Canterbury).

On Christmas Eve we have our 6pm Family Friendly service. There won't be a Nativity From Scratch but there will be plenty to keep our attention. In the last few years we have heard the Bethlehem (Bohemian) Rhapsody, the Pathway (Stairway) to Heaven, and The Nativity (Fairytale) of New York. Then on Christmas Day there is a short service at 10.30am. This year Boxing Days falls on Sunday and we will be open again for a short service at 10.30am on 26th.

Wishing you all a reflective Advent and then a Merry Christmas when it comes

Your Minister Keith

POP UP CHOIR

Do you enjoy singing carols? Are you interested in joining in with the Pop Up Choir? This will be a fun activity with a couple of rehearsals to prepare to sing at the Nativity service on the 12th December and on the 19th at the Lessons and Carols service.

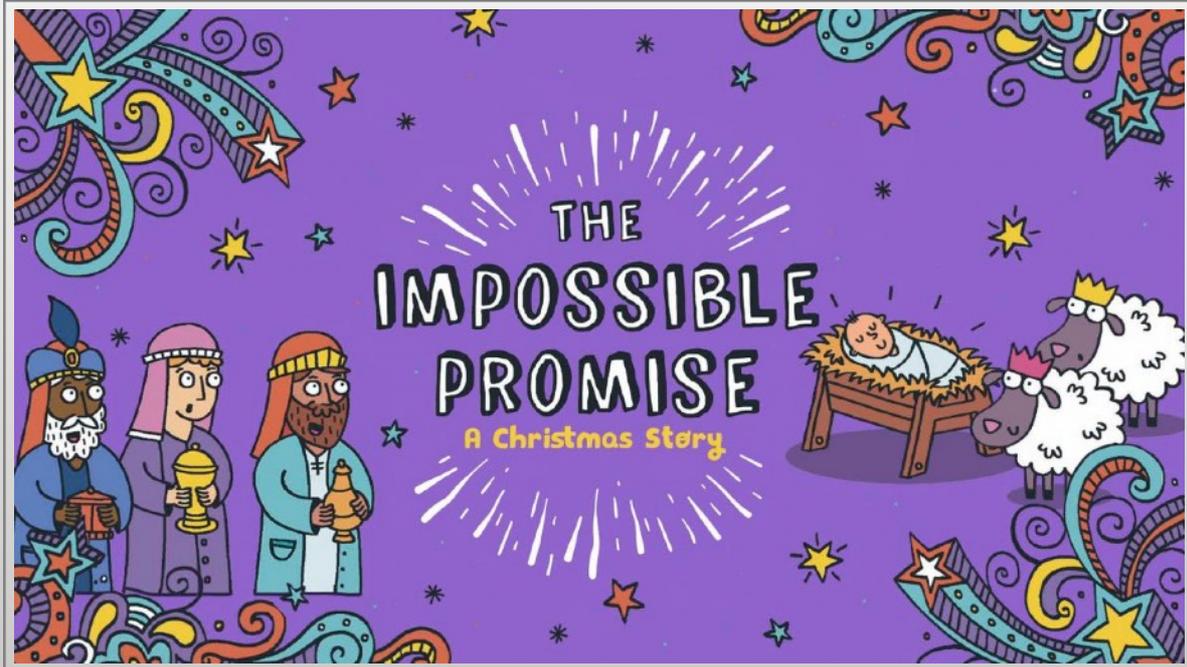


Interested ? Please come along to the rehearsal this coming Sunday 5th December. It will be after the service for approx 45 mins. The likelihood is another rehearsal on 12th and 19th also.

Please don't be put off if you can't make all the potential rehearsals (or all the services) as we want to make the Pop-Up choir as accessible as possible. Let's get singing!

S CLUB CHRISTMAS

Sunday 12th December - All age Nativity service



Christmas is fast approaching and preparations are in hand for the Nativity video which will be shown at the Family service on Sunday 12th December. After the service we would like to invite everyone to a Christmas picnic lunch in the hall. Please bring your own lunch and as usual tea, coffee and juice will be provided. It would be good to see you for this festive celebration and if you want to wear a Christmas jumper that would be good as well. There will be a quiz and some fun for all ages.

We look forward to seeing you on the day.

Julia



CANS FOR CHRISTMAS



We are now making our annual Christmas appeal for canned food and other non-perishable foods e.g. pasta and coffee, which will be distributed to folk in need in the Edinburgh area.

The two charities we support are Edinburgh North West Food-bank (supported by The Trussell Trust) and Edinburgh Women's Aid.

Your donations will be much appreciated. Please give generously. There will be the opportunity to drop off on the following dates.....

Donations of canned food and other non-perishable goods can be brought to Sunday service on 5th or 12th December, 9.30 -10.30am or ...

The church building will also be open for Prayer on Wednesday 8th December, 2-3pm when you can also bring donations along.

Thank you for supporting this much needed appeal.

What difference does a small gift make?

The first gift collection, was in 1985. It was begun by Reverend Murie who was at that time the Prison Chaplain of Saughton Prison, now known as Her Majesty's Prison Edinburgh.



He was also the Minister of Kirkliston Parish Church. As prison Chaplain, Reverend Murie was acutely aware of the difficulties faced by the families of those in the care of Her Majesty's Prison Edinburgh. Especially at this time of year. He decided that he could help prisoners and their families by arranging for donations of toys to be used as Christmas presents for prisoner's families. He asked for help from churches and Schools throughout Edinburgh and the Lothian's to support him in setting up the gift collection.

For the past thirty-six years a prison officer has asked permission of the Governor of the prison to organise the gift collection. Historically it was the prison librarian that organised the collection. There have only been three officers who have had the privilege to organise the collection, Richard for six years, Alex for nine years and myself for twenty one year's. I am no longer the prison librarian but I asked for permission to continue organising the gift collection.

Shona - Manager of the Visitors Centre



It is difficult to measure in words the difference your gifts make to the families.

The support for the gift collection over the years has helped thousands of families and children in this area. Many of these children would not have had any presents to open on Christmas day if it was not for the kindness and generosity of the people of Edinburgh.

Last year (2020) your kindness and generosity meant that 178 children from 88 family's had Christmas presents to open on Christmas day, the gifts were distributed through the visitor's centre managed by Barnardo's.

Included in this number were several Christmas parties arranged through the prison family officers and the Barnardo's staff; these were held in the visit room in the prison and were attended by the fathers and mothers that were in the prison. One of my colleagues was Santa Claus at these parties.

I would like to mention the Barnardo's staff, in particular Shona and Patrice, who's help over the last five years has been invaluable to me.

Colin O'Flaherty

CHRISTMAS EVENTS FOR OUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY



Afternoon Tea

The various weekly groups and activities that were appreciated by so many have been greatly missed during the pandemic. Until these groups can start up again a couple of events have been organised to bring people together again. An afternoon tea for some of our older members who used to attend organised activities will take place early December .

..... and for younger families a TOTs @ Christmas Nativity session will take place on Thursday 16th December, 10 -11.30am.

TOTS
Toddlers on
Thursdays
10 - 11.30am
£2
per family
TOTs @ CHRISTMAS
THURSDAY 16TH DECEMBER
10-11.30am



Showing for one night only! Arthur Christmas. A fun afternoon for the whole family at Murrayfield Parish Church Centre (upper room) 4-6pm.

Snacks and drinks provided. Come dressed for Christmas!

If you would like to come please let us know in advance. You can email the church office [HERE](#) or phone 0131 337 1091 to leave a message .

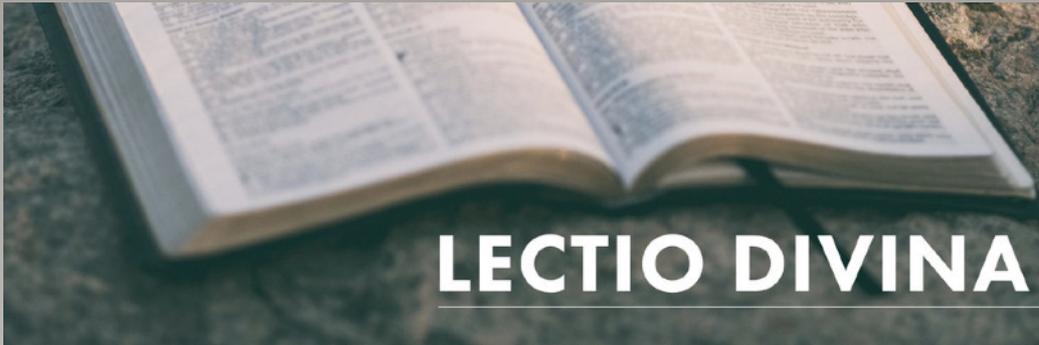
Suggested donation £1 per person. Hope you can join in!



Start the Week with the Prophets

A journey every **Monday morning at 10am** through Advent with the readings set for the Sundays of the season.

The Old Testament readings set for the Sundays in Advent this year, are worth listening to more than once each week. At 10am on Mondays I intend to offer an opportunity for us to listen again to the words of the Prophets



using the ancient Bible Study technique of Lectio Divina.

In Lectio Divina, we spend time together in silence, LISTENING to the words of Scripture and allowing those words to still our hearts and minds. In the

process we focus on the word or short phrase that comes into our thoughts. We will listen to each prophet three times, with five minutes silence between each reading; pondering, as I said above, that word that God puts into our thoughts. After the third reading you will be invited to say into the silence that word or phrase that has caught your attention.

We do not discuss what you say or question each other as this is meant to be a very personal interaction between you and God's Holy Spirit. There are no right or wrong words, only the words that you need to hear and if you choose not to, you do not have to share them. They are God's gift to you.

Sitting with Scripture in this way can often allow you to hear things you have not heard before and to ponder how what you hear affects you. Zoom, amazingly, has proven to be an effective way of undertaking Lectio Divina, as I have discovered over the past two years, as a member of the Emmaus Community of St.Benedict. Each session will last no longer than 30 minutes at the most. Come and join me and we can listen together to what God has to say to us in Advent.

Zoom login for every session

Meeting: 825 421 9887 Password: 251963

The sessions will begin at 10am but I will open the meeting at 9.50am to give us time to gather.

Monday 29th November, Monday 6th December, Monday 13th December and Monday 20th December

Jeremiah 33:14-16 Malachi 3:1-4 Zephaniah 3:14-20 Micah

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND ADVENT CALENDAR

'Light in the Darkness' (#LightInTheDarkness) is the theme of this year's Advent calendar, which runs from 1st December until Christmas Eve.

This year's theme is inspired by John 1:5 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.'

Each day during Advent, a new window will be available to open with a themed prayer, video, or story.

SIGN UP [**HERE**](#)



CAN YOU SPOT THE WINDOWS

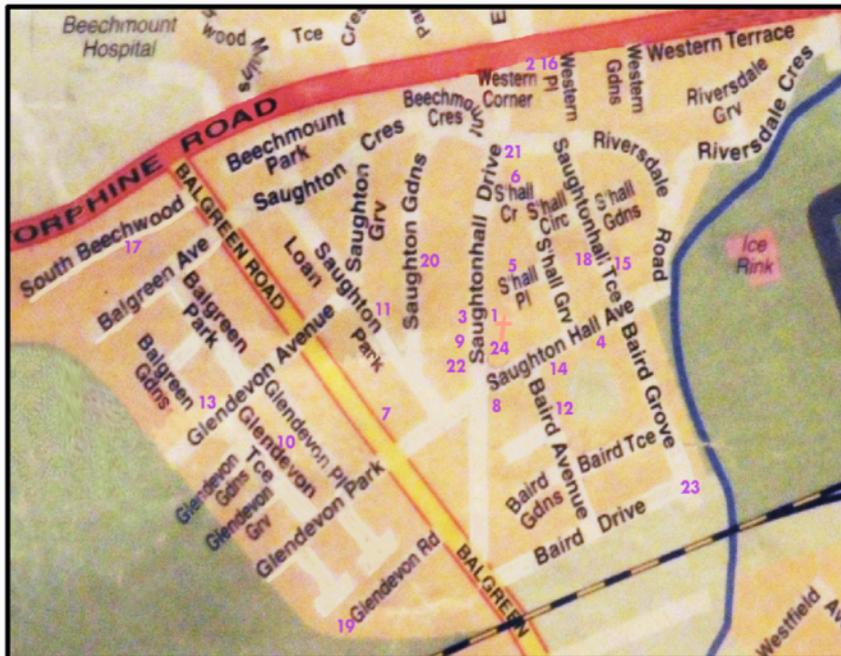
in our Community Advent Trail? When you go out for a walk see how many you can find as we journey through Advent and each number appears.



Saughtonhall Community Advent Trail



Can you spot the windows in our Community Advent Trail?
When you go out for a walk see how many you can find as we journey through Advent and each number appears.



- 1st Saughtonhall United Reformed Church
- 2nd Corey's Hair & Beauty
- 3rd Saughtonhall Drive
- 4th 'The Rec', Saughtonhall Drive
- 5th Saughtonhall Place
- 6th Saughtonhall Crescent
- 7th Balgreen Road
- 8th Sphere Health & Beauty
- 9th Saughtonhall Drive
- 10th Glendevon Terrace
- 11th Saughton Park
- 12th Baird Avenue
- 13th Glendevon Avenue
- 14th Saughtonhall Avenue
- 15th Saughtonhall Terrace
- 16th Loyds Pharmacy
- 17th South Beechwood
- 18th Saughtonhall Terrace
- 19th Glendevon Road
- 20th Saughton Gardens
- 21st Saughtonhall Drive
- 22nd Saughtonhall Drive
- 23rd Baird Drive
- 24th Saughtonhall United Reformed Church

Saughtonhall URC Registered Charity SC014175

Displayed until 5th January 2022



The Community Advent trail will be displayed until Wednesday
5th January.

MESSY CHRISTINGLE

Saughtonhall United Reformed Church
85/87 Saughtonhall Drive EH12 5TR

Murrayfield
Churches
together



Saturday 11th December 3pm
Great Crafts... Super Games...
Catchy Music... Fun Learning...

For children and parents or carers of all ages.
If you would like to know more please call or text 07881 956315.
Due to COVID restrictions please let us know if you would like to
come, using the same number, by Friday 10th December.
No charge but there is an opportunity to make a donation

Saughtonhall United Reformed Church



Service of Hope & Remembrance

Join us in person or live on our Facebook Page.

This will be a gentle service of words, music and candles offering comfort and hope at what can be a difficult time of year. The service will include space to remember those known to us who have died, whether recently or in the past.



3pm

Sunday 12th December 2021

<https://www.facebook.com/saughtonhall> Visit Facebook page [HERE](#)

Everyone is welcome - just come as you are





What happened at COP26 and what next?

As the COP26 summit closed on Saturday, countries most impacted by the climate crisis were left with mixed feelings.

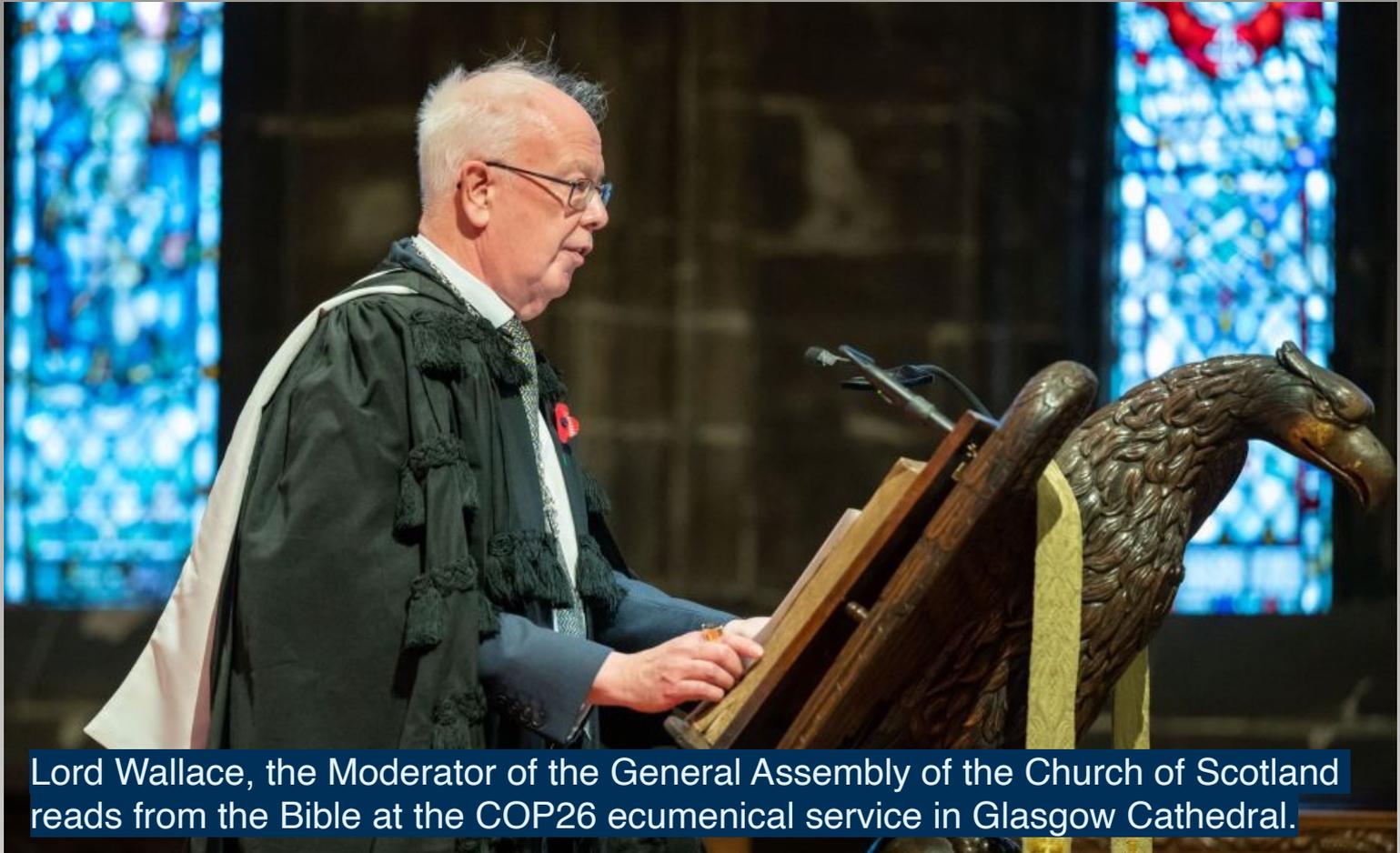
The Glasgow Climate Pact (the final deal agreed by delegates) came as a huge disappointment, leaving us with a lot to do to make climate justice a reality.

But, amongst the disappointment, we did see some progress, and there is a glimmer of hope that whilst 'keeping 1.5C alive' (ie keeping global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees) is on life support, it's certainly not dead (yet!)

The COP text also mentions fossil fuels for the first time, and - significantly for our partners in climate-vulnerable countries - the issue of compensating the hardest hit for losses and damages caused by the climate crisis has moved up the agenda.

Read more [HERE](#)

After COP26 - Moderator says 'God is with us so we have hope'



Lord Wallace, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland reads from the Bible at the COP26 ecumenical service in Glasgow Cathedral.

The UN climate conference COP 26 may be over but work to meet the challenges of climate change will continue.

COP president Alok Sharma will keep the reins for the next year and as Lord Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly, heads to London next week for meetings with political and ecumenical leaders, the issue will continue to top the agenda.

Read full article [HERE](#)

Virtual Gifts Christmas 2021

Thank you to all who took a pot of Hyacinths and gave a donation for the ECUDARE project! We raised £375 .

There will be an opportunity to buy Virtual Gifts again this year. You will be able to buy -

- A Christmas pack for a vulnerable family £10
- A blanket £5

Also a donation is always welcome. The corona virus pandemic continues to highlight the great need for ECUDARE support in Ngong. Thank you for supporting the ECUDARE project.



How to buy a gift:

Payment by cheque: Make cheque payable to:

'Murrayfield Ecumenical Development & Education Trust' or

Payment ON-LINE: transfer monies to MEDET Account

MEDET Account details:

Sort code: 80-02-78

Account No: 06000319

Payee Name: Murrayfield Ecumenical Development & Educational Trust

Create Unique Ref. No. using your initials with date and month of birth. (e.g. AMW2311)

After Payment: Send email to Steve Yates (yates.steve@gmail.com)

In email Subject field put 'ECUDARE MEDET online appeal' and Unique Ref No.

Email information: Include Name, Address, Post Code. Amount donated. Gift Aid instructions including confirmation a UK taxpayer.

NEWS FROM ESTHER

Great to hear that you are still walking to Ngong! Over the past week our pupils have enjoyed a lot of activities. Grade 5 learned how to grow vegetables in sack gardens and Grade 4 learned how to clean their clothes, how to weave and we enjoyed launching science apparatus. ps - I did 12 miles this week - not as impressive as the Stepudare team!



We have done it - and climbed a mountain!



Out of a suggestion of the Ecludare Group to the Families Group to come up with a new way of raising funds for the Ecludare Project, the Stepudare Challenge was born.

For those who don't know about Ecludare, it's a project supported by MCT since 2008 - based in Ngong outside Kenya's capital Nairobi, the project supports women and families affected by HIV/Aids in setting up ways of

generating income, ensuring children have education and other aspects.

Stepudare was simple - make a donation to the project to join the Stepudare team and then step out to count the miles you travel to get to Ecludare's base in Kenya. Almost 7,000 miles by road - far too far for any of us to do alone but if we all joined together as a team...

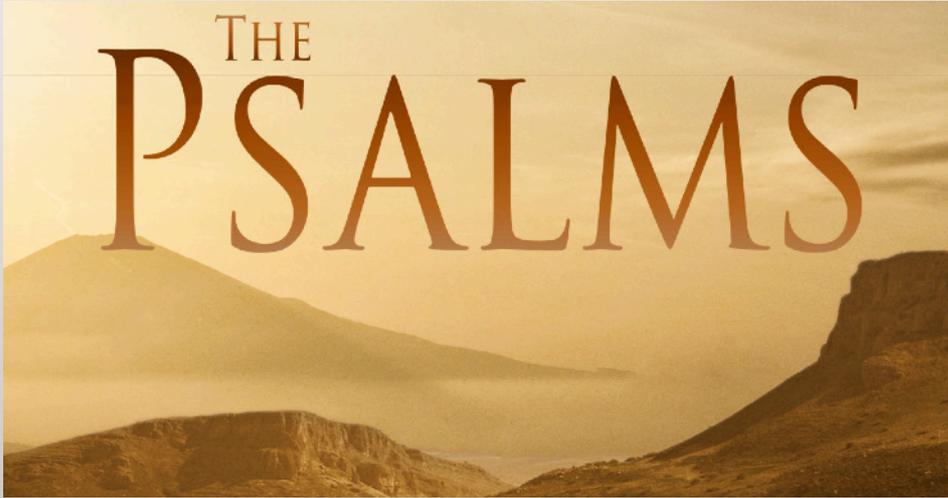
Setting out towards the end of September, the hope was that we could reach Ngong by Christmas. As word spread more joined the team and almost 30 households, young and old, have joined together to record our distances together. Any non-motorised mode of travel counted - and the group has walked, run, swum, cycled, paddleboarded and taken part in various sports to reach its destination. It's been a team effort and every contribution, large or small, has helped us on our way.

A WhatsApp Group was set up which has helped spur us along as we reported in our weekly totals and sent round photos of our exploits - and others have kept up-to-date by email. Our route has taken us across the Channel, through Austria, Ukraine, down to Turkey before heading to Damascus then through the Holy Land, past the pyramids of Egypt into Africa, across Ethiopia and finally on to Kenya where we did a quick detour to climb Mount Kilimanjaro (Africa's highest point). And amazingly we reached our final destination by the end of November, a whole month earlier than our target date.

We've been encouraged by messages from Esther, who runs the project in Ngong, and delighted to hear that the funds raised have contributed towards the MCT Ecludare Group's other fundraising enabling them to send £2,000 to the Ecludare Project. Thank you to all who have taken part and supported us. Perhaps the next challenge could be to go round the globe in the opposite direction!!

Scott Kerr

Winter meetings will be on Tuesday evenings, from 11th January in the Upper Hall at Saughtonhall URC.



We will look first at the **Book of Psalms** in a study course by Sandra Richter, Professor of Biblical Studies at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California. The book of Psalms is the Old Testament book most often quoted in the New Testament, and its quotations can be found everywhere from John Milton to Star Trek. The study

helps us to bridge the gap between the culture and practices of ancient Israel and today; how and why the people of Israel used the Psalms in worship; how the early Christians used the psalms; and much more.

In the lead up to Easter, we will watch the 4- part series, **The Real Jesus**, presented by Robert Powell, who played Jesus in the 1977 TV series, Jesus of Nazareth. Robert Powell journeys across the Holy Land to discover the real story of the role played decades ago. Guided by the Gospels, the latest archaeological and historical research, and with the help of scholars and theologians, he will examine Jesus's lost adolescent years, the start and growth of his ministry, and his death and resurrection.



We marked the close of the Murrayfield : Kwamebikrom Partnership with a special service



We marked the drawing to a close of the partnership with Kwamebikrom in Ghana with a service on Sunday 7th November. It was great to be able to reflect on the impact of the partnership upon both the community in Kwamebikrom and also on us in Murrayfield.

The service included some archive videos and some talking head reflections.

This is now ready to view [HERE](#)

CROSSREACH CHRISTMAS CARDS

The Church of Scotland Social care council is accountable for the work of CROSSREACH. Its remit is to provide social care services and specialist resources in Christ's name to further the caring work of the Church of Scotland to people in challenging circumstances.

As you know, we normally try, at Murrayfield Parish Church, to sell CROSSREACH Christmas cards. This is partly to fundraise for CROSSREACH but also to ensure that by sending out these cards more people learn about CROSSREACH and the work being carried out.

Please look at the CROSSREACH website to see how you can support their work [HERE](#)

To order Christmas cards this year you can do this online [Order cards here](#) or you can order by phoning CROSSREACH 0131 454 4374

The cards as you know are very good quality and 100% of the profit goes to support the caring work of CROSSREACH across Scotland.

Thank you for your support. If you wish more information please feel free to contact me.
0131 337 3565

Very best wishes Jane Crispin



**Stand with us
this Christmas.**

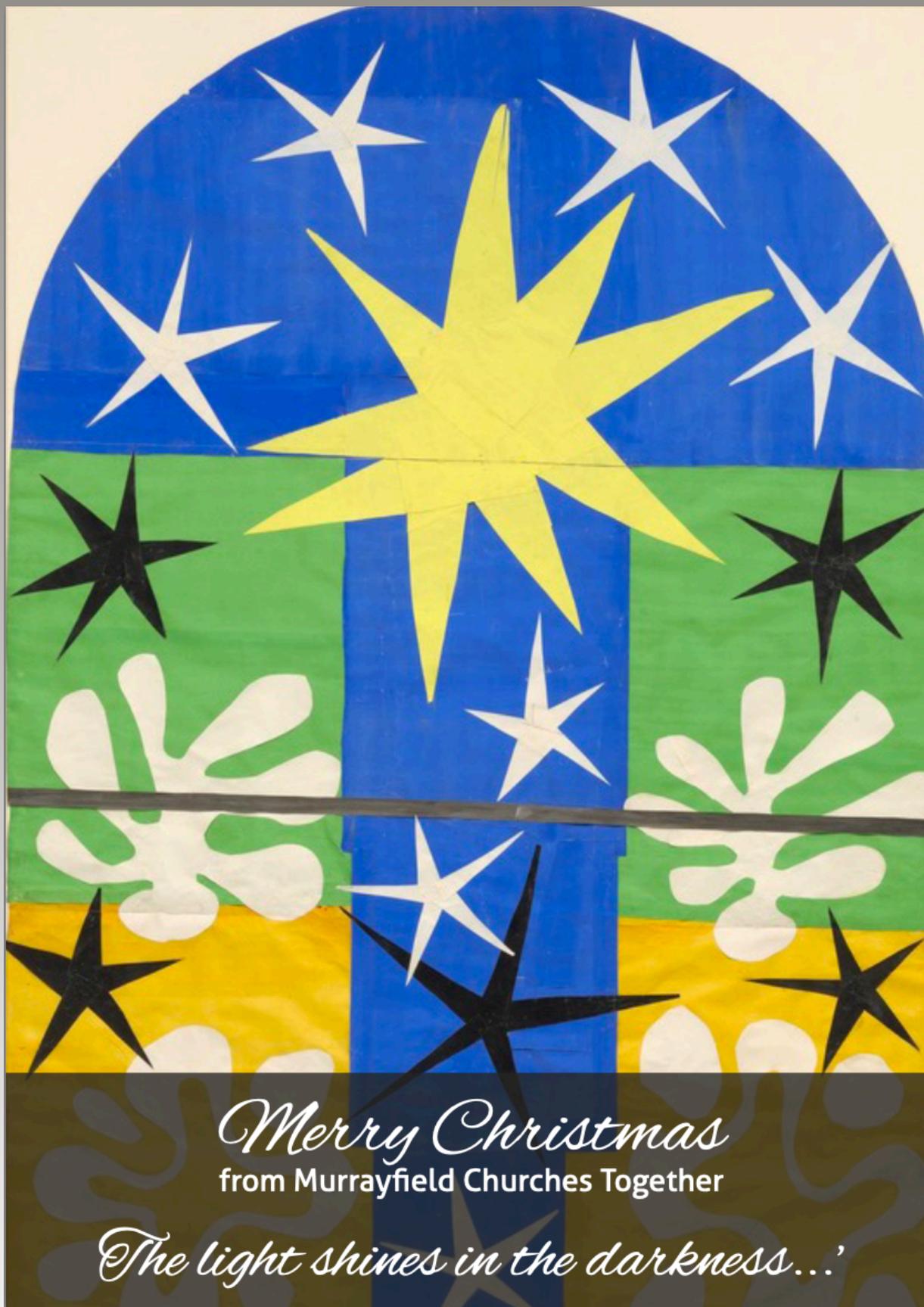
CHARITY CHRISTMAS CARDS



Cards for Good Causes is selling charity Christmas cards on behalf of many local and national charities. We are based at St John's church on Princes Street, and our opening hours are 10:00 to 16:00 Monday to Saturday, apart from service times. We will be open until 18 December.

Christmas cards are also available from the Cards for Good Causes website,

[Order Cards Here](#)



Merry Christmas
from Murrayfield Churches Together

'The light shines in the darkness...'

Matisse Nuit de Noel

FANCY A NIGHT AT THE MOVIES?

Saughtonhall
United Reformed Church
FILM CREW

presents

Nativity 2
DANGER IN THE MANGER!

Saturday 4th December

Refreshment tickets £5 from Liz or email
filmcrew@saughtonhall.com

Doors open 6pm for 6.30pm start

COMMUNITY ARTICLE



Hello, I'm a volunteer at 2 local rescues and a Hedgehog Champion with the British Hedgehog Preservation Society/ Peoples' Trust for Endangered Species.

How long is it since you last saw a hedgehog? The UK has lost a third of its population since 2000, and their numbers are declining as fast as tigers in the wild. They are now officially classed as vulnerable to extinction in the IUCN's Red List for British Mammals. Here are 10 simple tips to help them.

1. Link your garden with a Hedgehog Highway. Hedgehogs travel between 1-2 km a night searching for food and a mate. Leaving a small gap in your fence the size of a CD case will let hedgehogs through but be too small for pets.
2. Create a wild corner in your garden so they can snuffle around for insects.
3. Tidy up netting and litter which can trap hedgehogs due to their spines. Even rubber bands dropped by the postie can become embedded in their skin, causing a slow, painful death.
4. Put out food and water. You can supplement their diet with wet dog or cat food (preferably not fish based). No bread, milk or mealworms, which are all extremely bad for them.
5. Stop using chemicals especially slug pellets. Hedgehogs are a gardener's best friend as they eat slugs as well as many other beasties which would otherwise be devouring your prize flowers and vegetables
6. Check before mowing or strimming. Hedgehogs often sleep in long grass or hedges during daytime and won't run away if they hear a mower, resulting in horrific injuries or death. Use gloves to move a single hog to safety. If there's a family, call the BHPS for advice on 01584 890801, the SSPCA on 0300 999 999 or Google to find your local Hedgehog Rescue.
7. Be careful with bonfires or simply burning leaves. Piles of debris are irresistible to a hedgehog looking for somewhere to hibernate or nest
8. Make a home for hedgehogs. A log pile is one of the best features for encouraging all kinds of wildlife, and easy to make. It will encourage insects and provide nesting opportunities all year **around**. **Alternatively, you can make your own hedgehog house – download instructions from the BHPS website.**
Have a look at the **BIG** hedgehog map [HERE](#)

Please let others know about the Memory Lane Cafe

The Murrayfield Club

MEMORY LANE
CAFE



10am to 12pm
Every Friday from 12th November

Saughtonhall United Reformed Church
85/87 Saughtonhall Drive, EH12 5TR

Join us for conversation and home baking
A warm welcome awaits

Want to know more? - Call 07881 288909

Funded by | Edinburgh Health and
Social Care Partnership
 • EDINBURGH •
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Murrayfield
Churches
together


Scottish Charity Number SCO23210

LIFE AND WORK

Due to the current Coronavirus concerns, we are operating with most staff working from home in accordance with advice issued by the UK and Scottish Governments. We confirm that we will reply to your message as soon as we are able to do so. Our departmental email address for editorial matters is magazine@lifeandwork.org and all other enquiries should be sent to admin@lifeandwork.org both mailboxes are continually monitored during business hours.

December 2021

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

'A WONDERFUL GIFT'
Keeping Christmas fresh

OUR MAN ON MARS
Fictional book on first planetary
chaplaincy

MODERATOR-DESIGNATE
News of appointment for 2022/23

....and much more over 52 pages

A single issue of the current month's magazine, or back copies of previous issues, can now be purchased via the [Life and Work website](https://www.lifeandwork.org) in print or digital format.



DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS



We are deeply saddened to announce
the following death

Mrs Jean Inglis - 23 October 2021

Please keep Jean's family and friends in
your prayers



CONTACT DETAILS

Our church manager Maureen Gilleade can be
contacted
on 0131 337 1091
office@murrayfieldparishchurch.org.uk

STAFF ARRANGEMENTS



Maureen Gilleade has now
returned from furlough and is
working from home. Fay
Forsythe is continuing to run
communications. Justin Nash
(organist) has now returned from furlough. A
temporary cleaner is in place until the
permanent post is filled.

Our minister Keith Graham can be contacted on
0131 337 1364
kegraham@churchofscotland.org.uk

Our session clerk Jane Smart can be
contacted
on 0131 337 1581
jane@murrayfieldparishchurch.org.uk

CHURCH OFFICE

The church office is working virtually. You can
still get in touch!

Call 0131 337 1091

Or email

office@murrayfieldparishchurch.org.uk

Our session clerk Catherine Campbell can be
contacted
on 0131 445 2662
Catherine@murrayfieldparishchurch.org.uk