

Murrayfield

PARISH CHURCH

Issue no.557



DECEMBER MAGAZINE

Part 1



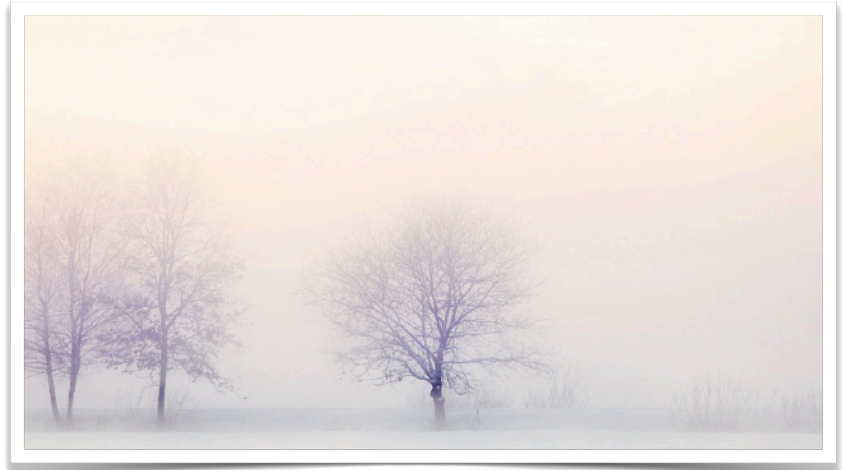
Murrayfield

PARISH CHURCH

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WINTER MAGAZINE



Image for Christmas card 2023 'Winterbild' by Paul Klee

Minister's letter

I have been dipping into a very interesting book by Fleming Rutledge who is an American Episcopal priest, theologian, and author. A significant part of her ministry was at Grace Church in Manhattan which is a landmark building, dating back to the mid 19th century, on Broadway at the corner of East 10th Street. She is a gripping preacher and arresting communicator, and also passionate about educating other clergy. In more recent years she has published a series of books which are partly based on sermons preached throughout her life.

The book which I have been reading is titled 'Advent: The Once and Future Coming of Jesus Christ'. I would recommend it as a fairly accessible read, and something from which you can easily read selections. The book could also make a good basis for a book group or study group. One thing which the book has crystallised for me



is how the church's traditional focus during Advent feels increasingly counter-cultural. Whilst the world around us goes into full festive celebratory mode (driven often by consumerism) the church invites its members to adopt a different posture.

Advent is a curious season, typically marked by purple colour tones, and with a sense of lament in the air. It is time characterised by waiting. On one level this waiting, captured by Advent Calendars, or Advent Candles, is waiting for Christmas Day when we celebrate the birth of the Christ child. On another level this waiting has a much further reaching focus for Advent also encourages us to look ahead to the coming again of Jesus in the fulfilment. This dual focus of Advent comes across clearly in many of the traditional advent hymns.

In our services throughout December we will be trying not to rush too quickly to Christmas. With so much turmoil in the world the season of Advent feels very timely this year. In advent our gaze is drawn to the injustices that abound, to the wars that rage, to the plight of those living in poverty, and to the sad reality that God's kingdom feels far away. Yet whilst we lament during Advent the season is also underscored by hope. That isn't only a hope for Christ's eternal kingdom but is also an attentiveness to the light of Christ breaking through the gloom in the present.

I am writing this after our annual Murrayfield Churches Together Advent Carol Service at The Church of the Good Shepherd. The liturgy of that service, with its distinctive Advent (not Christmas) Carols, and its use of the O Antiphons (best known from the hymn O Come, O Come, Emmanuel), is a good illustration of marking Advent. Instead of rushing straight to Christmas we pause and let God's promised future infuse the present. Whilst acknowledging the troubles around us we still live in prayerful hope.

I hope you enjoy the services over Advent and Christmas. See page 4 for more details. And don't worry from Sunday 17th there will be plenty of Christmas carols.....

The book referenced above is available [HERE](#) (and other retailers)

Your minister Keith



Advent & Christmas Services



Sunday 17th December - Nativity Service 10.30am

Sunday 24th December - Nine Lessons and Carols 10.30am

Sunday 24th December - Family Christmas Eve Service 6pm

Christmas Day - Family Christmas Service 10.30am

Murrayfield Churches Together

Advent and Christmas Services

Everyone is welcome to the Christmas Services at the three churches over Advent and Christmas. Please check websites for details of regular Sunday services.

Still to come

Saturday 16th December

3pm: Messy Christingle - Saughtonhall UR Church

Sunday 17th December

4pm: Christmas Carol Service - The Church of the Good Shepherd

Christmas Eve

10.30am: Nine Lessons and Carols - Murrayfield Parish Church

4pm: Crib Service - The Church of the Good Shepherd

6pm: Family Service - Murrayfield Parish Church

11.30: Watchnight Service (with carols from 11pm) Saughtonhall UR Church

Christmas Day

10am: Festal Sung Christmas Eucharist - The Church of the Good Shepherd

10.30: Christmas family Service - Murrayfield Parish Church



Pastoral Care

Let's keep in touch!

Pastoral care has always been a very important element of congregational life. In the past elders had districts and visited every church member before each communion service (three times a year). These days pastoral care looks very different and it may be that for some, depending on the stage in life that they're at, that home visits don't feel as important or necessary and that a telephone call or even an email is enough contact from the church.



As a church, keeping in touch and offering pastoral care to all our members is very important and is what we strive to do well. Over the past months our minister Keith and the session clerks have been considering how we can best offer pastoral care to all members of Murrayfield Parish Church. A plan of action was developed and discussed with the Kirk Session. This was unanimously agreed and is ready to launch in the New Year.

A mapping exercise was undertaken to see where members are located. This first striking result was that of the 410 members on the congregational roll 258 members live in the local area within walking distance of the church. This amounts to 63% of the congregation and therefore it was felt that this was the obvious starting point for restructuring pastoral care. In due course a plan will be developed for those members living further afield.

From the mapping exercise it was possible to divide the local area into 10 pastoral areas (some of the 10 areas that were more heavily populated were then subdivided). Each area (in most cases) was then matched with an elder who lives in their delegated area. This felt like a natural placement as it could be that the elder already knows some of the members to whom they will become the first point of contact for the church.

Your new church elder will be in touch to introduce themselves to you in the new year. Hopefully you will meet them face to face even if that is just speaking for a few minutes at the doorstep. Once you have met, you will then be able to let them know the best way of staying in touch. They will be happy to maintain contact by visiting you in person, meeting up in person with you , or alternatively communicate by phone, or email, or messages.



When the elder first introduces themselves they will provide their contact details and will be delighted for you to get in touch with them too! The intention is for this new approach to strike a balance between the responsibility of the Kirk Session to stay in touch with the members of the congregation, whilst recognising that members will have different preferences about how often they want contact and what type of contact they prefer.

It is also anticipated that a small Pastoral Care Team will be established to offer more dedicated support for people who might be housebound or unwell. The idea is that this would consist of some elders and some other church members. There will a further update once the set-up of this team is confirmed.

Any questions about any of the above please contact one of the sessions clerks (Catherine, Fay, or Scott).

Travel through Advent 2023 with The Church of Scotland

The theme for this year's Advent is inspired by Luke 2:10

"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people



Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton.

3rd December 2023

The Moderator of the General Assembly has officially launched the season of Advent.

Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton said the time of waiting has begun until we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. She said nothing is impossible with God and encouraged people to believe and live that truth.

This year we are not using an online Advent calendar but will instead be sharing Advent stories from across the Church on our website and social media channels throughout this period. Visit the Church of Scotland website advent page [HERE](#)

Showing for one day only ! 'Get Santa'

After crashing his sleigh, Santa Claus (Jim Broadbent) asks a father (Rafe Spall) and son (Kit Connor) for help to round up his reindeer and return home. **Get Santa** brilliantly captures the joys of the Christmas holiday.

Christmas Movie Fun

Saturday 9th December

2-4pm

Murrayfield Parish Church (upper room)

Suggested donation £1 per person

Wear
festive
gear !

Movie snacks and
drinks & for
children
Refreshments for
adults

All welcome to the Christmas Movie Event. Please tell your friends and neighbours . For more information contact the church office [HERE](#)

MCT ECUDARE

Update

Your generosity and commitment have played a significant role in our success, and we could not be more grateful

Esther sent a very grateful letter to us all for the £1000 we sent in July for the girls personal hygiene products. The letter is now on the website plus photos. You can view [HERE](#)

Esther wrote in a letter to us recently

'I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the MCT brothers and sisters for your unwavering support to the women , the school and the community at large. Your generosity and commitment have played a significant role in our success , and we could not be more grateful'

We have been selling the pots of Hyacinth bulbs at the 3 churches throughout November. We have now sold out and have made a very excellent £400 . Thank you to everyone who purchased a pot and I hope you enjoy them when they flower in January or February.

We have been able to send £800 to Esther on the 12th November for the pre Christmas Chapatti flour and food parcels for the elderly and vulnerable families in the village.

Like us the climate in Kenya is changing. In the summer last year they had a drought and then followed by huge amounts of winter rain with flooding in some parts. The need for support is greater than ever so I was delighted to let Esther know that Murrayfield Churches Together have all agreed to support our Ecludare project for another 5 years.



ECUDARE VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS GIFTS



Virtual Gifts for ECUDARE are now available!

You can help a family in Kenya this year by buying from a selection of gifts ranging from £2- £50. Stationary pack for children £2, Seeds for kitchen gardens £5, Blanket £10, Christmas food pack for a family £20, Gas cooker £30, Mattress £50. Leaflets are available in the main hall after the service: Sundays running up to Christmas.

1. **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 - medet@murrayfieldparishchurch.org.uk

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

Email information: Include Name, Address, Post Code, Choice of gift, Total amount donated. Gift Aid instructions including confirmation a UK taxpayer.

2. **Please make cheques payable to: Murrayfield Ecumenical Development & Education trust.**

Registered charity no SC034138

Popping up for Christmas!



Do you enjoy singing ? Then you may like to join in with the Christmas Choir. A fun Christmas activity! A rehearsal took place after the service on Sunday 3rd and there will be another rehearsal on the 10th December. The choir will participate at the services on Sundays 17th and 24th December. If you didn't make it on the 3rd December to the rehearsal , you can still come along on the 10th to join in. This is an opportunity to not only lead the congregation in singing carols but also to be part of singing a couple of choir only pieces. Those of all ages are welcome to join in!

A special way to prepare for Christmas. Step back from the busyness that the festive season brings! All welcome to join in at Saughtonhall United Reformed Church.



Scottish Charity 005918

Messy Christingle
3pm - 4pm
Saturday 16th December

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

Crafts, Games, Songs & Learning

For children and parents/carers of all ages.
If you would like to come along please let us know or if you would like to know more please contact us.
Call or message 07881 956315.

www.murrayfieldparishchurch.org.uk

CANS FOR CHRISTMAS

Supporting Edinburgh North Food Bank
and Edinburgh Women's Aid



**Please donate cans/non-perishable goods
for the Food Bank
or cash for Edinburgh Women's Aid
by bringing them to
Murrayfield Parish Church
on Sunday 3rd and 10th December
from 9.30-10.30am**

Registered charity number
SC005198

2b Ormidale Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 6EQ
www.murrayfieldparishchurch.org.uk

Prisoner Gift Scheme

'It is difficult to measure in words the difference these gifts make to families. The support for the gift collection over the years has helped thousands of families and children in the local area. Murrayfield Parish Church has supported the scheme since 1985

A special link

Dearest Friends,

For the past Thirty-Seven soon to be Thirty-Eight years, there has been a link between Murrayfield Parish Church and His Majesty's Prison Edinburgh.

The link between the two, is the Edinburgh Prison Christmas Gift Collection.

Murrayfield Parish Church and its congregation have supported the gift collection since the prison chaplain the Rev John Murie asked for your help in 1985.

Murrayfield is one of the few Edinburgh Parishes that have supported the gift collection for all thirty-eight of those years.

The kindness and generosity that the parishioners of Murrayfield Parish have shown over these years and the difference it has made is impossible to measure in words.

I have had the privilege and honour of arranging the gift collection for twenty-three of those thirty-eight years.

You have my personal thanks.

Colin O'Flaherty Prison Officer



Gifts for children aged between 2 and 18 will be welcomed. Please do not wrap the gift but rather bring it with some wrapping paper in a bag. This is so that the staff can see what the gift is and then allocate it appropriately. Gifts will be received on **Sunday 10th of December** at the church service time.

S Club Christmas - come and join in!



Come and join us after the families service on the 17th for coffee, quizzing, Christmas biscuit decorating and photo booth. All welcome to join in and enjoy festive mince pies and coffee. Test your talents and enjoy some Christmas chat.



Every Sunday @ 10.30 service

We welcome all primary aged children each Sunday morning where we enjoy listening to stories, craft, fun and friendship.

Creativity is also part of this as you see from our beautiful tree!

S Club Film Crew

S Club Film Crewe had its first get together in October has proved to be creative and productive. The crew have produced two animations and a video over their two sessions. Everyone is enjoying a mixture of creativity based on religious themes as well as fun and games. We are all learning as we go along!

The next session is on the 10th of December when we will be enjoying some Christmas activities and have a discussion about how to continue into 2024. All are welcome to come and join us and put your ideas forward whilst enjoying our Christmas festivities.

Everyone is enjoying a mixture of creativity based on religious themes as well as fun and games



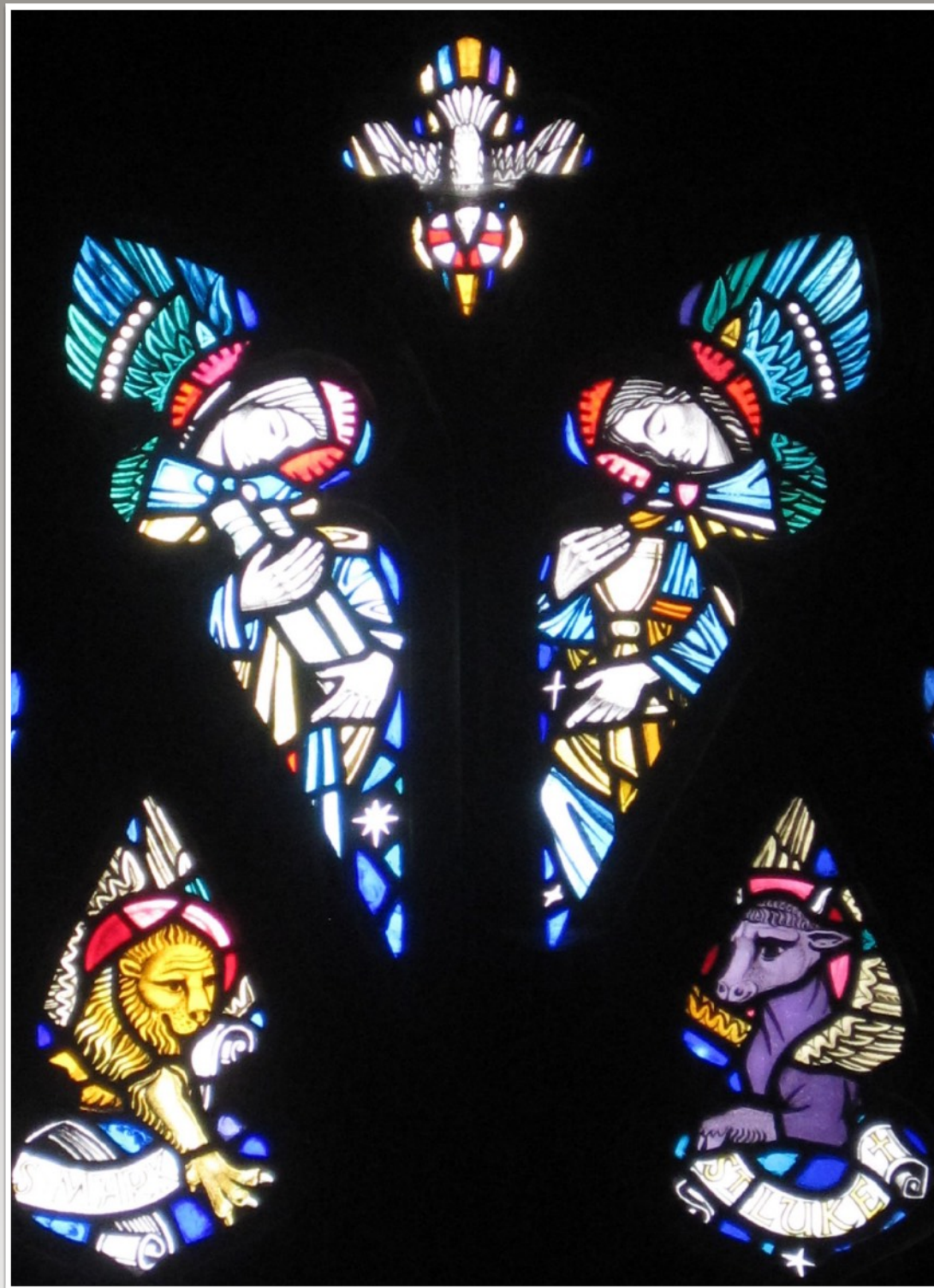
Exotic locations



Messy Film Crew

Shining a light on the nativity window

The stained-glass window in the north transept (next to the pulpit) was designed by William Wilson RSA. The window is dated 1964.



There is a plaque below it that gives details of whom it commemorates. It illustrates John 1: 14: 'And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us'.

The top section shows a dove symbolising the holy spirit (see Luke 3:22) and two angels. The angel on the right is holding a cup, a symbol of Jesus' suffering (see Luke 22:42).

The angel on the left is holding two scrolls which symbolise the prophecies of Jesus that the Old Testament prophets told. Under these are the four medieval symbols for the evangelists (St Matthew - an angel, St Mark - a winged lion, St Luke - a winged calf and St John - an eagle).

The middle section shows the nativity scene: the holy family in the stable with the star above, the shepherds and the wise men. The two monograms symbolise Jesus: IHS - the first three letters of 'Jesus' in Greek; and PX - the first two letters of 'Christ' in Greek.



The bottom section shows four scenes associated with Jesus' birth and infancy: the angel appearing to the shepherds (Luke 2: 8-20); Gabriel appearing to Mary (Luke 1: 26-38); Mary and Joseph, with Simeon holding Jesus, in the temple (Luke 2: 21-35); and Mary and Joseph taking Jesus to Egypt (Matthew 2: 13-15).



Ordination of new elders

On 8th October we were delighted to welcome to celebrate the ordination of Catriona and David Parkin and Alison Mackenzie, and the admission (having already been ordained before he became a member at Murrayfield) of Lindsay Foulis, as elders and members of the Kirk Session.

During the service they were asked to affirm they believed in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith; and to promise to seek the unity and peace of the church; uphold its doctrine, worship, government and discipline; and to take due part in the administration of its affairs. As part of that role they will become members of the Kirk Session which oversees the spiritual, pastoral care and administration of our congregation - and



whose members are its registered trustees. But not all elders are members of the Session and in Murrayfield we are blessed with many "retired" elders who continue to fulfil the promises they made at their own ordinations in many different ways using their own talents. And of course there are many members of the congregation who do likewise, putting their Christian faith into action. As elders it doesn't mean that any of us is better than others in the congregation - but that we have accepted the call and commitment to undertake, along with the minister, responsibility for the life of the

congregation in all its aspects, including worship, mission and service to the wider community. We know in the Kirk Session there are others who may also have the talents, commitment and faith to take that next step and we pray that they may know when it is right for them to accept that call.

For our new elders we wish them well in their new role and ask that you pray for them (and the existing elders in the congregation). A prayer for elders is set out in the Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland:

Grant them the gift of your Holy Spirit, that their hearts may be set on fire with love for you and those committed to their care. Make them pure in heart as those who have the mind of Christ. Give them vision to discern your purposes for the church and the world you love. Keep them faithful to the end in all their service, that when the chief shepherd appears, they may receive glory, a crown that never fades.

And as a PS also give them patience and fortitude when the Session Meeting goes on too long!

Scott Kerr (Joint Session Clerk)