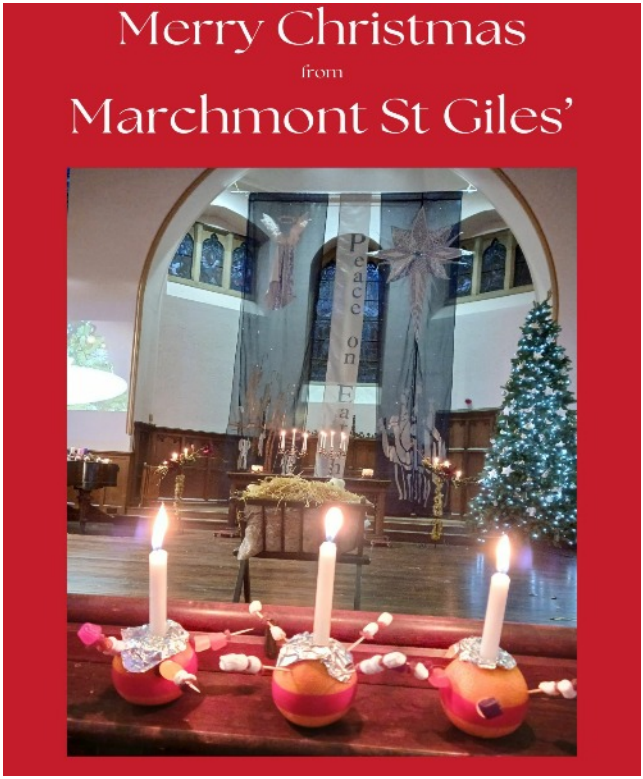
THE SHUTTLE

Marchmont St Giles'
Parish Church
At the Heart of the Community
December 2024 January 2025



1a Kilgraston Road, Edinburgh, EH9 2DW

Meeting Matters

December

8	10.30	Morning Worship - Nativity
12	10.00	Butterflies Baby & Toddler Group
15	10.30	Morning Worship
	17.00	Winter Concert - Piano Works
17	12.30	Butterflies Plus Christmas Lunch
19	10.00	Butterflies Baby & Toddler Group
20	16.00	Butterflies Cafe closes today for Festive Break
21	14.00	Longest Night service
22	10.30	Morning Worship - Nine Lessons and Carols
24	16.00	Christingle Service
	23.00	Community Carols
	23.30	Watchnight Service
25	10.00	Christmas Day Service
29	10.30	Morning Worship

January

5	10.30	Morning Worship - Epiphany
7	10.00	Butterflies Cafe reopens
9	10.00	Butterflies Baby & Toddler Group
12	10.30	Morning Worship
16	10.00	Butterflies Baby & Toddler Group
19	10.30	Morning Worship
23	10.00	Butterflies Baby & Toddler Group
26	10.30	Morning Worship - Holy Communion
30	10.00	Butterflies Baby & Toddler Group

February

2	10.30	Morning Worship
		Closing date for material for the next issue of The Shuttle
6	10.00	Butterflies Baby & Toddler Group
9	10.30	Morning Worship

Front Page
Christmas Greetings

Reflections

The task of the Christian is to go on a journey through life where you don't know where you might go, or what you might see, or who you might engage with, but even so, to apply the lessons of the Gospel and the actions and words of Christ and make it real in your life. In a world where people are searching for meaning, are we the light bearers in a world of darkness? Are we the hands of care and hope in a world where people often walk by on the other side? Are we the voices which speak up for the most vulnerable and provide the possibility of hope?

The Christian journey calls us to follow The One who guides us through an unknown and sometimes unknown country and live each day in the trust that all shall be well. In the Season of Advent and Christmas we travel like the shepherds and magi, sometimes across fields at night, where there are no tracks, only the light of the moon and stars to guide our souls.

It is this place of darkness to which Jesus was born and faced dominant powers both from his own religion and the foreign Romans, who each used their power to control and maintain their domination. It was against this background that Christ abandoned what was regarded as polite and quiet, and taught that God was with his people, rather than others controlling access to God. He came, he taught and healed. He abandoned all that we regard as safe to live an itinerant life and then to go to Jerusalem and surrender his very life to show the reckless and radical love which knew no bounds, which was God.

Passers by were not asked for directions, no map was consulted except for the certain knowledge that he was Emmanuel, God with us, and that God's people needed to hear that they were loved without limit, and there was no lengths to which he would go, to protect their souls or their lives.

When those who travel with him, expressed concern or worry about His direction of travel, he like Gabriel before him assured them by saying "do not be afraid". His ministry was to provide a new way with a different way of looking at the world and of expressing faith in the One, who is and was and will be – who created everything and declared it good.

On this journey which began not far from the fields of Bethlehem, we are called to take our own journey and not to be afraid, to continually live according to a Gospel, which in its simplicity is often challenging to the choices we want to make, as opposed to the ones which would be better for us.

This Christmas Season, we once again look at the stars and moon and wonder, what does God require of me, and we are led back to the words of Micah, to practice justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly in the sight of God.

So, let us commit ourselves to take that first step, to be free of fear and to go where we are meant to be, that we might live with meaning and a little bit of joy; and even to live with the people who by our actions and words, might also be released from bondage and find a life awaiting them which they didn't know was possible.

Karen K Campbell

Christingle Assembly!

Volunteers are sought to assist in the production of Christingles for the service at 4pm on Christmas Eve.

No experience necessary

Training will be available

Good craik!

Please contact the office for more details.

Lectionary

December
09: Psalm 126;
10: Isaiah 19:18-25;
11: Isaiah 35:3-7;
12: Isaiah 12:2-6;
13: Amos 8:4-12;
14: Amos 9:8-15;
15: Philippians 4:4-7
16: Isaiah 11:1-9;
17: Numbers 16:20-35;
18: Micah 4:8-13;
19: Jeremiah 31:31-34;
20: Isaiah 42:10-18;
21: Psalm 80:1-7;
22: Micah 5:2-5a
23: Psalm 113;
Christmas
24: Isaiah 9:2-7
25: Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20
26: Psalm 148;
27: Proverbs 8:32-36;
28: Isaiah 54:1-13;
29: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
30: Psalm 147:12-20;
31: 1 Kings 3:5-14;
January
01: Ecclesiastes 3:1-13
02: Proverbs 1:1-7;
03: Psalm 72;
04: Isaiah 6:1-5;
05: Jeremiah 31:7-14
Epiphany
06: Isaiah 60:1-6
07: Daniel 2:1-19;
08: Daniel 2:24-49;
09: Psalm 29;
10: Ecclesiastes 2:1-11;
11: Ecclesiastes 3:1-15;
12: Isaiah 43:1-7
13: Psalm 106:1-12;
14: Judges 5:12-21;
15: Numbers 27:1-11;
16: Psalm 36:5-10;
17: Jeremiah 3:19-25;
18: Jeremiah 4:1-4;
19: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11
20: Psalm 145;
21: Song of Solomon 4:1-8;
22: Song of Solomon 4:9-5:1;
23: Psalm 19;
24: Nehemiah 2:1-10;
25: Nehemiah 5:1-13;
26: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
27: Psalm 119:89-96;
28: Jeremiah 36:11-26;
29: Jeremiah 36:27-32;
30: Psalm 71:1-6;
31: 2 Chronicles 35:20-27;
February
01: 2 Chronicles 36:11-21;
02: Jeremiah 1:4-10
03: Psalm 56;
04: 2 Kings 5:1-14;
05: Jeremiah 1:11-19;
06: Psalm 138;
07: Numbers 27:12-23;
08: Judges 3:7-11;

Christmas Services
8TH DECEMBER
Nativity
15TH DECEMBER
Morning Service
21ST DECEMBER
2pm - Longest Night
a reflective space
in dark times
22ND DECEMBER
9 Lessons and Carols
24TH DECEMBER
4pm - Christingle
11pm - Carol Singing
11.30pm - Watchnight
CHRISTMAS DAY
10am Family Service
29TH DECEMBER
Christmas Service
5th January
Epiphany Service
Marchmont St Giles
For More Information
marchmontstgiles.org.uk
ALL SERVICES AT 10.30AM
UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

AROUND THE AISLES

NEW!
ORGAN RECITAL SERIES AT THE REID
From Sat 14th Dec: a new monthly series of informal promenade recitals, usually on the middle weekend of the month. 10:30am for tea and coffee, then performance 11:00 - 11:45.
Listen at the front, or stay at the back and have the music in the background: it's as much a social occasion as a musical one. Let your friends and family know!

Butterflies Cafe all prepped and ready for Afternoon Tea on 30th November, on a busy Saturday afternoon with several events on in the local area.

After a slow start the Cafe and Hall were soon buzzing with customers for the fancy delights with Afternoon Tea or the goods on sale in the Hall from a variety of stalls. A bouncy castle in the garden completed the attraction which was much appreciated by the younger folks present.

What is Woke?

Like many pre-millennials, I have struggled to understand the term "woke". I know that in the eyes of the anti-woke, I am a member of the "the tofu eating wokerati" because a) I like tofu and b) I believe in human rights. However, I'm not sure that some self-identifying woke folk would consider me eligible for the title. I don't include my pronouns in my email signature and I think that schools should have separate toilets girls. So am I woke? I found the BBC Sounds series "Woke: the journey of a word" very enlightening. It traced the origins of the word to the 1930's America civil rights movement. Back then it was about self-preservation, a term used by people of colour to warn each other of the need to "stay awake" to the ever-present risks of racially motivated violence and abuse. On listening to this I concluded that it was difficult for any white person to be considered "woke" in the way that the term was originally coined. How can someone who has never been at risk of racial abuse understand what it is to be "woke" to it?

Nowadays the term can be extended to a much wider range of vulnerable groups, and on that basis, anyone who routinely needs to take defensive action to protect themselves from violence because of their race, gender, religion or sexuality could be considered to be "woke" in the original sense of the word. For many women, clutching your keys in your fist when walking alone at night, just in case you need to fend off an attacker, might be an example of woke behaviour.

But the meaning has also changed from being aware of the risk of abusive behaviour to oneself, to being aware, or "awake" to the risks of abuse faced by those around us, be that on the basis of ethnicity, biological sex, gender identity or any other characteristic that puts someone at risk of abuse. So being "woke" can be interpreted as acting vigilantly to reduce the risks of abuse experienced by the vulnerable. This has similarities with another term that has (relatively) recently come into common usage: safeguarding.

November 17 was Safeguarding Sunday. Karen preached on the widow's mite and explained how Jesus, in praising the widow's offering, was calling out the abuse of widows being committed by the religious institution of the day. She told us that recognising bullying, harm and abuse is all of our jobs. To quote: " If we see it, we are called by God to name it and shame it."

In standing up for social outcasts, speaking out against abuse, and protecting the most vulnerable, Jesus was the epitome of woke. So am I woke? I don't know, but I do know that it is something that I aspire to be.

Ruth Naylor

Community News

Bin Hubs: Victory to the voice of the people

A group of residents of Marchmont (SMAG)and other residents groups in the City have scored a great success in their battle with the City Council who have acknowledged the importance of amenity and more flexibility regarding the siting of bin hubs - an issue that has caused much distress since the project was rolled out earlier this year. A more sensible and suitable approach will now be taken with a number of bins being repositioned (eventually).
Congratulations to all these persevering residents.

Community Council elections take place in March 2025. Grange Prestonfield Community Council (GPCC) needs re-charged. You have a part to play here, maybe.

GPCC is your neighbourhood calling card to all Elected Councillors. GPCC is your 'right of access' to the City Council. The city is changing quickly around you. GPCC is your active neighbourhood network through which you can keep check on how all this change impacts your 'place', your 'space' and your amenity and well-being as a local resident.

There's room on GPCC for local amenity, voluntary, interest and residents groups to seek a place as nominated members. There's certainly room for energetic, committed individual elected members, there to ensure that local resident voices are listened to, not just heard, on issues such as planning, transport, roadways, education and community care.

To find out more, visit the Facebook page on facebook.com/gpccedinburgh, or www.grangeprestonfieldcc.org.uk the GPCC website or go to www.edinburgh.gov.uk/community-planning/community-councils .

See also marchmontandsciennes@googlegroups.com

Nominations for election take place in February. You can put your shoulder to this local wheel, maybe. Think it over, please.

Presbytery Plan Update from the Session Clerk

The Kirk Session is very aware that since the vote for the union with St Catherine's Argyle in June, updates have been oral and in the weekly email sent to members on a Saturday. We therefore wanted to provide a round-up of what has been happening since June.

The Presbytery continues to have conversations with the Kirk Session and Congregation of St Catherine's about their votes in June as well as their hopes. We await the outcome of those conversations, but have invited St Catherine's to join with us and Reid Memorial for the Nine Lessons and Carols service on 22 December. We hope that those who sing may wish to join with the choir and that there might be some readers from that congregation.

At the request of the Presbytery, our transition group met with the Kirk Session of Reid Memorial in June, with a view to conversations proceeding towards a possible union at some point in the future. The initial conversation was very warm and everyone left that night with the feeling that this path would be a good one to take, but recognising that the immediate priority was the planned union with St Catherine's. After reporting back to the Presbytery Committee, we were encouraged to continue dialogue in a gentle way through the summer, which resulted in the Minister attending a meeting of Reid Memorial's Kirk Session, followed by a pulpit swap in July.

Since then, we have again reported back to the Presbytery and the Deployment Committee asked us to engage again. As a result of that request, it was considered to get the congregations together and so on 17 November we held a joint service at Reid Memorial. The feedback would suggest that we proceed with further conversations and a joint service, this time in Marchmont on 22 December.

We hope to have a social gathering in the New Year. If anyone would like to be part of the organising of that, please speak to the Minister or the Session Clerk.

We are assuming that conversations will follow with Reid Memorial as to the possibility of a union at some point in the New Year, with the building used for the united congregation being Marchmont. Conversations about the building at Reid Memorial will continue.

The role that St Catherine's wish to have in the future lies with them and the Presbytery, and our prayers are with them as they together discern what that should be.

Until then, we move forward with intention and with the support of the Presbytery.

Message from the treasurer

I would like to thank everyone who gives regularly to the church, it is much appreciated. Our aim is to have our income equal our expenditure the course of a year. However despite everyone's generosity our expenditure currently exceeds our income. As you know we have carried out upgrades to the lighting and sound systems in the church this year which has enhanced the sanctuary. This extraordinary expenditure was partially supported by some generous donations but we will still have a deficit at the end of the year. Costs, especially of electricity, have increased during 2024 and our monthly expenditure is around £20,000.

There are several ways in which you can give to the church:

- Standing order - set up easily if you do online banking, or ask for a standing order mandate which you can take or send to your bank. Ask the treasurer for a form or the bank details.
- Using the 'donate' button on the website. Donations can be one-off or set up on a regular basis.
- Using the contactless machine which is in St Giles on a Sunday morning.
- Putting cash into the collection plate on a Sunday.
- Freewill offering envelopes are also available from the treasurer. (We benefit form tax recovered from HMRC)
- QR codes that will be printed on flyers (e.g. for the concerts or special services like the Christingle) can be scanned and you will then be directed to a donation site.
- You may want to consider leaving a gift in your Will.

If you have not already signed a gift aid form or indicated in online giving that you are a UK tax payer please consider doing this as we can claim an extra 25% on your donations.

In addition please consider using easyfundraising when you are making purchases online. Over 7,000 retailers support this initiative. Go to the easyfundraising website, (easyfundraising.org.uk) sign up, choose the charity you wish to support (the church) and then click onto the store you wish to buy something from.

If you are employed there are various ways your employer can support payroll giving by matching what an employee donates. Currently we are receiving donations from Benevity (benevity.com)

Remember Butterflies Cafe is part of the church so please support it if you can - every coffee helps!.

An Inverclyde church minister has urged members of the Scottish Parliament to lead with a vision of hope that "inspires people to come together".

Rev Teri Peterson said they must encourage their constituents to put their hearts, minds and hands to the task of "creating the better future that we all say we want".

"Not wishful thinking, not empty promises made just to get or keep power," said the minister of St John's Parish Church in Gourock. "Not negativity or blame about how those people — across the aisle or across the street or across the border or across the world — are keeping us from utopia.

"Hope grounded in the belief that things can change for the better, we're not stuck in the way things have 'aye been'. Hope that transcends the obstacles we always think are in our way - party lines, accents, school backgrounds, whatever the barrier-du-jour is. Hope that leads us forward, not backward to some imagined perfect past."

Ms Peterson led Time for Reflection in the Scottish Parliament debating chamber last week.

She told MSPs that Advent starts on Sunday - the time of waiting until the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

It is a season of expectation and hope and Christians believe nothing is impossible with God.

Advent is a season of expectation, a season of hope and that's what I think our worldview needs these days more than ever – hope.

Hope grounded in the belief that things can change for the better, we're not stuck in the way things have 'aye been'.

Hope that transcends the obstacles we always think are in our way - party lines, accents, school backgrounds, whatever the barrier-du-jour is.

It's only impossible if we give up on it.

So please, in this season and beyond, let's lead with hope.

An East Dunbartonshire church is having a 'fizzy good time' using Scotland's other national drink to celebrate the season of Advent.

Members of New Kilpatrick Parish Church in Bearsden have used cans of Irn Bru to create a special festive calendar in a window.

A new word is hidden within the array of cans every day and so far people have discovered 'hope', 'light', 'glory', 'bless' and 'believe'

Advent is the season of waiting until Jesus Christ comes to be with humankind - "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it". John 1:5

Parish minister Rev Roddy Hamilton said the idea had captured people's imaginations and small crowds have formed at the window as they try and work out the meaning behind the display.

"We're doing a quirky Advent calendar this year for the community using Irn Bru cans - being a west coast church, we are using none of that Tizer stuff," he explained.

"A new word is created every day, chosen by our mid-week worship group, and you need to look hard to see it. But then sometimes the good news is hard to see and once you see it, you can't un-see it.

"It is a bit of a laugh and members of the congregation have drunk cans and cans of the stuff and are slowly turning in Oompa Loompas."

It is a time when we look outwards to the needs of others, spreading joy with friends, families, local communities and further afield.

Mr Hamilton said the idea is to get people in the wider community talking and thinking about the true meaning of Advent. The idea is to find creative crossroads between faith and culture that enable us to have some sort of common ground where we can offer a good news word for the day," he added.

Donations are being accepted for the daily window display which will go to support the work of Woman's Aid, which provides life-line ser vi

What do you look forward to the most about Christmas?

Perhaps you enjoy looking at the beautifully decorated trees in windows and the lights that seem to increase every year? Is it the carols, or the food, that we only get to enjoy at this time of year? Or do you look forward to sharing presents with people you love and spending time together with your family?

The joy of a family Christmas is an image we can all appreciate and would be our wish for every family to enjoy.

For children like Harry, all there is to look forward to at Christmas, and every day, is fear and violence.

Harry is just 8 years old and for most of his life has experienced violence and abuse within his own family, the people who are supposed to protect him.

But you can help children like Harry to feel joy instead of fear this Christmas. Read Harry's story

https://www.crossreach.org.uk/harrys-story

Your Christmas Gift to CrossReach will help provide a safe place for children like Harry to process the trauma they have experienced and to start to build a new life of hope, joy and possibility.

Please give what you can this Christmas to provide a safe place for children in Scotland today.

Give A Christmas Gift Now
https://donate.justgiving.com/charity/crossreachchurch/

Your gift will help more children like Harry to find their safe place this Christmas.

Thank you for your love and compassion for children like Harry.

God bless you this Christmas.

CROSSREACH

Care you can put your faith in

And finally …….

A lovely message

Once upon a time! When Window was just a square hole in a room and Application was something written on a paper. When Keyboard was a Piano and Mouse just an animal. When File was an important office material and Hard Drive just an uncomfortable road trip. When Cut was done with knife and Paste with glue. When Web was a spider's home and Virus was flu. When Apple and Blackberry were just fruits - that's when we had a lot of time for family and friends.

The Shuttle will be back in February!

MARCHMONT ST GILES' PARISH CHURCH

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