



February 2024

Issue 275

Scottish Charity SC000785

GRAPEVINE

Mayfield Salisbury Parish (Edinburgh) Church of Scotland



INVITATION TO THE CHURCH'S FUTURE

MAYFIELD MILERS - WALKING GROUP

SERMON AT EPIPHANY

www.mayfieldsalisbury.org

FROM THE MANSE

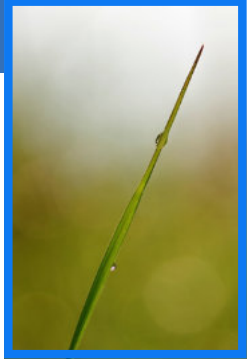
Dear Friends,

In mid-February, I'll be away for few days on a short study trip to Rome, as a staff member with ministry candidates in the Church of Scotland from New College, Edinburgh and Trinity College, Glasgow. A highlight of previous trips has been an evening at the Scots College with those training for the Roman Catholic priesthood – sharing worship together and then some great food and laughter in their company. Last time I got chatting to a priest who was one of the teachers at the College, who originally hailed from Cork in Ireland. When I asked what folk from Cork were like, he told me the story of a young Luciano Pavarotti making his debut at Cork Opera House. When Pavarotti sang the lead aria in the opera, the house rose in a standing ovation demanding an encore, on no less than three occasions. Pavarotti repeated the aria, again and again. When this happened for a fourth time, Pavarotti asked the audience sheepishly, 'Are you sure?' And a wag in the back row of the stalls shouted back, 'Keep going, son, and you'll get it right eventually!'

Sometimes with the long nights of a very dark and windy January, each day can seem like a never-ending encore – as if stuck on repeat with the needle returning again and again to the start of the song, as it used to do on an old Dansette record player. We might feel as if we're Bill Murray in the comedy film 'Groundhog Day': condemned to wake up to exactly the same experiences as the day before – on, and on,and on. To stop ourselves trudging about too much, we might dream of bright, sunny summer days; or maybe think of booking a holiday to keep our spirits up.

Then the snowdrops begin to appear in the ground and we slowly emerge from our emotional hibernation. We start to draw on

a well of optimism - to see new life and new possibilities opening up. We're re-assured again that we can look forward, in the phrase Shakespeare coined, to the coming of the 'darling buds of May'; with the promise of the flowering beauty of the natural world that returns to us each year, in the glory of God's creation.



And so too in our lives of faith. The hymn *'Tell Me the Old, Old, Story'* might speak volumes for some of a Christian faith that will forever repeat itself in endless encores of the birth, the life, the death and resurrection of Jesus – 'same old story', nothing new to say, heard it all before. But each Spring as we journey through Lent to Easter, I am struck not only by a narrative that is so deep and rich in its power and significance; and one which always brings new meaning and fresh angles no matter how many times you've heard it; but also by a story which never fails to bring fresh optimism and hope to my life and also to the lives of millions of Christians around the world.

So no matter how dark recent days have seemed to you, remember that the snowdrops are coming and that the shoots of new life and hope will, once again, be growing for us all. As in the final two lines of a favourite Easter hymn which speaks of Christ's resurrection, *'Now the Green Blade Riseth'*, in this and every year to *'Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been: Love is come again, like wheat that springeth green'*.

Now that's something that we might never wish to tire of...

God bless, *Sandy*

NEWS FROM CHRISTIAN AID

Mayfield Salisbury's Christian Aid team was very grateful to receive a half share of the offerings at both the Watch Night and Christmas morning services, raising a total of £655. A huge Thank You to everyone who contributed so generously.

Christian Aid reminds us:

Everyone is equal in the sight of God. Yet we live in a world where poverty still persists. Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of their dignity and lets injustice thrive. But together we have the power to transform lives. For over 70 years, we've been standing with the poorest of our neighbours.

We work in 37 countries, with people of all faiths and none, to stand up for dignity, equality and justice. Together we can create a world where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty. Our voices and actions are stronger together. And with your help, we can make an even bigger difference. Together with our supporters and partners, we aim:

- to expose poverty throughout the world
- to help in practical ways to end it
- to highlight, challenge and change the structures and systems that favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised.

Val Brown, Head of Christian Aid Scotland, writes:

'As we move into another year, Christian Aid partners around the world continue to work in very challenging circumstances to bring justice, empowerment and hope. Work enabled by you - our churches and supporters in Scotland.

We invite you to join us again as we stand in solidarity with some of our poorest and most vulnerable global neighbours, raising our voices to call for everyone to be afforded the opportunity to live with dignity, freedom and justice.'



Prayer

*God of reconciliation and grace,
you promise us a world where all is new,
where love is born when hope is gone,
where broken relationships are restored
to wholeness.*

*May we live as people who know your
story of love,
and may we have the vision to imagine
what could be possible
if we dared to live this story.*

*God of abundant life,
may we be witnesses of love,
hope and peace,
and co-creators of your life in the world.
Amen*

Marmalade Sale

Plans are now in progress for our popular Christian Aid marmalade sale. The oranges have arrived in the shops, so if you're getting out the preserving pans please consider making a little extra for our stall – we'd really appreciate it!

Details of the date of the sale, and when to hand in your contributions, will follow. In the meantime, if you need extra jars please do contact Kate O'Brien on either email or phone: kate.obrien@hotmail.co.uk 07593 768 087, or 667 4362. We have plenty to spare!

Thank you for your support
The Christian Aid Team

MAYFIELD MILERS



Special Offer!! - Join now for free!! - hurry don't miss this chance - save £1 - offer ends soon!

Offer includes:

- A full programme of walks from February to June 2024.
- Early bird booking for our popular Summer Lunch
- Free transport to and from walks provided by Lothian Bus Services.

No previous experience required - on-site training available. Bring your own poles. (Ice axes and crampons available from Tisos.)

Special features:

- Mindfulness i.e. 'Mind seeing Ronnie on that flying fox? And him over 90 - ye wouldn't believe it had ye not seen it with yer own eyes!'
- Dietary Advice – "Be sure and not forget your picnic this time Jeannie!"
- Health & Safety - First Aid Kit carried at all times (defibrillator not included!)
- Fitness - Not so much how many steps, more "Watch your step there and no fall back on yer bahookie!"
- Youth no barrier to membership, children welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult.



Be Aware!

All our walks come with a Health Warning - Cake and coffee an essential component - you have been warned! Apply in triplicate to Jean MacGilchrist jebleitch@gmail.com or 0771 021 3754.

And now what you've all been waiting for ... the Walks! Something for everyone in the coming months. From Snowdrops at Newhailes to The Whangie in the Kilpatrick Hills, a snug hideout in Bawsinch Nature Reserve to the peaks of the Pentlands, our team will be out researching the walks to make sure you have a very special experience when you join us.

For your Diary

Tue 20 Feb - Snowdrop Walk Newhailes
Tue 27 Feb - Longniddry to Haddington
Sat 2 Mar - Pentland 2 peaks, 2 reservoirs.

Check out your next copy of *Grapevine* for more exciting walks!

Jean MacGilchrist

SESSION MATTERS

As I write this we are about to have another Kirk Session meeting which is to be preceded by a gathering of the elders from Craigmillar Park, Priestfield and Mayfield Salisbury. The aim of the Newington Trinity Plenary is to come together to consider issues which will impact on the new congregation once the union is settled.

Until the union we have to continue to take decisions in our respective Kirk Sessions but the purpose of the joint approach is to ensure that our thinking is aligned as far as possible over the coming months and that, where there may be issues, we have a forum in which to speak about them. In the meantime the monthly updates '*Towards our Union*' will keep you up to speed on current thinking.

Our previous Kirk Session meeting was on 12 December. As ever, the agenda was busy and, as it was the end of the year, there were various round up reports and confirmation of arrangements for worship over the Christmas period and into 2024. Session agreed to continue with the 10.30 Third Sunday shared Newington Trinity services until Easter.

The Fellowship and CrossReach Committees reported on the various activities undertaken throughout the year and, in CrossReach's case, the funds raised. There was also some discussion around the plans for the ceilidh on 3 February.

Bettina Hather provided a summary from the Youth Committee detailing the activities with children and families. She noted there was an emerging group of young adults across all three congregations in their late teens/early-mid 20s which was an encouraging development. In addition, Bettina had been building up contacts with the Newington Nursery and the Prestonfield Primary School whose links with Priestfield were increasing.

Developments on the union were slow but moving forward. Priestfield had informed us of works to the exterior of their building to maintain it which were now to proceed following Presbytery approval. We reviewed the work on the heating proposals for Mayfield Salisbury where advice from consultants was being sought. This was needed to help us present as robust a

business case as possible to our colleagues over what might be taken forward, over what timescale, at what cost and what it might mean for the use of the buildings.

I reported on the initial positive results from a **survey of all our elders** as to their intentions and interests post-union. The intention is for a much reduced Kirk Session in Newington Trinity with elders rotating every three or four years in phases. Elders remain elders for life so, even if not formally on the Kirk Session, they will continue to play a role in the life of the congregation and the survey will help identify where people's talents might best be deployed alongside those of the congregation.

The report from our **Presbytery Elder**, Anne Steele, informed us that across the Presbytery some progress was being made on implementing the Presbytery Mission Plan but that, while there were some remaining challenges, none was likely to affect our proposed union. Presbytery approved in principle the sale of Craigmillar Park church: the next stage was to secure the approval of the General Trustees possibly at their next meeting in February. Presbytery also agreed that hybrid meetings (i.e. in person and digitally e.g. Zoom) would now be recognised for voting purposes. Until now only votes cast by those present at the meeting would count.

We noted with sadness the **recent deaths** of Colin Macnab, Anne (Annebeth) Mackie, Aileen McAlpine and Cathy Duncan. Session were invited to remember their families in their prayers. We also heard from Rosemary Currie thanking all those for the love, support and prayers following Douglas's death.

The Business Committee recorded that an anonymous donor had guaranteed resources to fund the Chamber Group up until June: support which was very much appreciated. The removal of the front three rows of pews on a trial basis had been progressed and would be reviewed after Easter. Various additional reports on fabric and maintenance were received and thanks were expressed to all those who helped keep the buildings safe and sound.

The budget for 2024 was approved along with agreed staff salary increase. Session

noted that the outcome for 2023 estimated a deficit a bit lower than originally envisaged. Session approved the 2024 budget, aware that a planned deficit of around £50,000 was not a comfortable position to be in. However, there were some exceptional, planned payments in 2024 linked with the heating and increased energy bills. In addition, the proposed union should release resources in due course for the new congregation, where a review of funding and budgeting would be required.

Sandy Forsyth updated Session on a **proposed pulpit swap** in June and early July. His swap would be with the minister of the first Presbyterian Church in Statesboro, Georgia and the Reverend Taylor Hartman who would preach at Mayfield Salisbury on 23 June, 30 June and 7 July.

The Revd Hartman and her family will be resident in the manse between those dates. He also obtained the support of Session to his appointment as Vice Principal of New College from 1 January 2024. Session also approved a proposal from Newington Churches Together to invite Stephen Smart

to bring his *I am Mark* one-man storytelling of the gospel of Mark to Edinburgh during Holy Week. Session agreed to support and promote this event and consider some limited financial assistance of Newington Churches Together considered this appropriate.

Finally, Session were informed that the lease of the **Earl Grange café** was likely to end shortly and were invited to consider the suggestion that the church might operate the café. The challenges associated with operating a café/catering establishment, particularly one of the limited size of the Earl Grange kitchen, were noted as was the high cost associated with acquiring the lease and the annual rental. All of this suggested the prospect was not an attractive one and would require a team of dedicated and skilled volunteers to run such an enterprise on a daily basis and over time.

If anyone wishes further information on these discussions please do not hesitate to contact me: clerkmspc@gmail.com

Boyd McAdam

INVITATION TO THE CHURCH'S FUTURE

LAUNCH EVENT FOR SECOND MINISTRY POST AND 'PIONEERING'

We are blessed with a second ministry post as part of the new congregation of Newington Trinity. This has been designated as a 'pioneer post', and the present Priestfield building is retained potentially to play a significant role in such 'pioneering'. The aim is for a 'fresh expression of church', or 'new worshipping community', to arise with God's help and guidance. A launch event with outside speakers will be held at Priestfield Church on Saturday 16 March from 10am to 1pm, to which everyone from all three present congregation is most welcome. We are looking to develop understanding, enthusiasm and momentum amongst us all in the following ways:

- Explore what 'pioneer ministry' is, and could be
- Share real life examples from around Scotland and beyond
- Consider possibilities for our area, and for the Priestfield Church building

- Bring together a group from our three congregations who will take it forward.

Please save the date further details to come. If you would like to help in the planning or longer term, that would be much appreciated - please do speak to the minister.

RETREAT DAY TOGETHER Central to all that we may do as the united congregation of Newington Trinity is our relationship with God; our faith and our journey as 'people of the way', followers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We will join together before our union for a half-day or full day of 'retreat'; all in the three congregations being invited to a time together of prayer and contemplation: a day of spiritual relaxation, re-connection to God and re-charging as we look to the future together.

Possible dates are Saturdays 1 or 8 June
More details to follow. Volunteers to plan are again sought please speak to the minister if you would be interested in doing so.

Revd Dr Sandy Forsyth

SCOUTS UPDATE

The Troop has been busy working on the World Challenge Award. Part of this involved making a video to send to a Scout Troop in Brunei, telling them about the Troop and our activities. We are looking forward to seeing the video that they will send in return

We had another enjoyable night at the Ryze Trampoline Centre in Dalkeith and the year was ended with our traditional Movie Night when we watched the latest Spider-Man film.

The new year was started with a hike starting at Peebles and following the path on the north side of the Tweed up the river to Kirkton Manor. We then continued back on the south side of the river for our return to Peebles. Much of the route involved following the old Peebles to Broughton rail line and featured a magnificent bridge over the Tweed and a spooky dark tunnel that took the final stretch of the railway through a hillside and into Peebles.

Recent meetings have include a viewing of last year's Summer Camp video, as we start looking forward to this year's camps, more of the World Challenge Award and

the annual Inter-Patrol Quiz.

Our big project for the term will be a repeat of our previously successful

Sponsored Sleep Out in aid of Bethany Christian Trust who do so much valuable work for the unfortunate people who are homeless. At the end of March, the Scouts will be making shelters from cardboard boxes and sleeping overnight in the Church garden. We have raised over £7,500 from our last two Sleep Outs and hope to raise a further £4,000 this time. If anyone wishes to donate, you can do so here:

www.justgiving.com/page/28th-scouts-1704887270022

Alan Dickson
Scout Leader

Headquarters

Mayfield Salisbury Parish Church
18 West Mayfield, Edinburgh, EH9 1TQ
Scottish Charity No SC006141



Scouts

28th Braid Scout Troop

SHORT AFTERNOON SERVICES

Here are the dates for 2024. You may wish to note them in your diaries. They all begin at 2.30pm and are held in the Bill McDonald Hall (level access).

March Tuesday 12 - Holy Communion

May Tuesday 21 - Christian Aid

July Tuesday 9 - Celebrating Summer

September Tuesday 10 - Communion/Harvest

November Tuesday 12 - Remembrance

PASTORAL CARE

Please contact Pauline Robertson in relation to any pastoral issues or concerns and/or if you wish anyone to be remembered in the confidential prayer chain or wish to be added to the email circulation list. The contact details for Pauline are - pastoralassistantms@gmail.com phone 0758 704 3191.

Note: Pauline is on annual leave until 4 February inclusive so please contact the Minister during this time.

MORNINGSIDE JUSTICE AND PEACE

Every Wednesday morning, a talk and discussion on an issue of social justice. Why not come along? October - March. 10.30am to 11.30am.

From January 10, Morningside Justice and Peace will meet every Wednesday morning in the Eltham Suite, at The Eric Liddell Community, Holy Corner, Edinburgh. All welcome.

We have topics local, national and international, such as energy and climate change, homelessness in Edinburgh, also USA and Taiwan. Discussion too.

www.morningsidejandp.org

Pay £20 for the session or £2 when you attend.

Spring 2024

Feb 7 - Mike Wedderspoon, Director of Strategic Engagement and Delivery, The Scottish National Investment Bank.
'The Scottish National Investment Bank - Investing with impact for social change.'

Feb 14 - Dr. Ben Coulson, Lecturer in International Relations, School of Social & Political Science, University of Edinburgh
'Are Russia, China, Iran, North Korea the new Anti-Western Axis?'

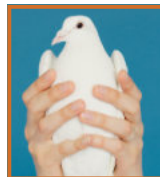
Feb 21 - Ruth Evans, Advisor, Community Ownership Support Service, Community Ownership Development Trust Association.
'Community Ownership - how does that work?'

Feb 28 - Eurig Scandrett, Senior Lecturer in Public Sociology at Queen Margaret University and Chair, Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign.
'What next for the Palestinians?'

March 6 - Lindsay Beevers, Professor of Environmental Engineering, Uni of Edinburgh.
'Flooding - causes, problems and solutions.'

Barbara Darcy

b.darcy20@gmail.com



The Scottish Poppy Appeal 2023

Awarded to

Mayfield Salisbury Church

in recognition of your donation to Poppyscotland and
for making a real difference to
our Armed Forces community living in Scotland

£362.80

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Gordon Michie
Head of Fundraising

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SERMON AT EPIPHANY ISAIAH 60:1-6 & MATTHEW 2:1-12



The remains of the lovely smoked salmon have eventually run out; and the leftover turkey in the fridge has now gone off and is heading for the food bin. The tree is down and the lights and decorations are packed away for another year. And we hear the word January and it induces a collective sigh... On this first Sunday after the feast of Epiphany, the story of the dedication, the wonder, the praise and the joy of the Magi, the wise men as we translate them, might bring some post-Christmas inspiration to our hearts. It might give us something of a springboard into the year with a little hope and faith; rather than just, as my old Gran used to say in that 'glass half empty' Scots way, going 'back tae auld claes and cauld porridge'.

Now at the last day of this holy season, we find ourselves, somehow, at the beginning of the new year of 2024, and heading forwards into the unknown. What might happen is just beyond the horizon of our sight, as we are each about to embark on the journeys of life that we will travel during

the next 51 weeks. Travelling on a journey, whether it is a route of deliberate pilgrimage like the Magi, seeking deeper understandings of life or faith, or simply putting one step in front of the other along the pavement, or sitting on a bus going into town, often give us the space and time to think, to re-consider, re-connect with ourselves, and perhaps find moments of enlightenment when our thoughts come together and crystallise. Of the light bulb going on suddenly above your head. Maybe you've had those sudden moments, or will do during the course of this year: about the direction of your life; your home; your job; even your faith.

This is at the heart too of the idea in Greek and Christian thought of an 'epiphany', which we reflect on today in the journey of the wise men to kneel at the cradle of Christ in the manger; the first Gentiles, or non-Jews, to see Jesus for who he was, the son of God, the promised Messiah. From the Greek 'epiphania', with a literal meaning of 'manifestation' or 'revelation', Yes, the

Epiphany, the revelation, is in the arrival, the realisation then of being in the close presence of a living God, but it is also in the slower revelation of the journey.

Recently the 60th anniversary was marked of one of the most momentous, and horrendous, events of the 20th century – the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. None other than JFK said, 'If you look throughout human history ... the central epiphany of every religious tradition always occurs in the wilderness.' In our everyday journey, maybe in our times in the wilderness like the wise men, there too might the epiphanies be made known to us. In our journey of faith throughout the coming year of 2024, echoes of their perseverance, the triumph and the joy of their journey of faith and the epiphany that they encountered might guide the way.



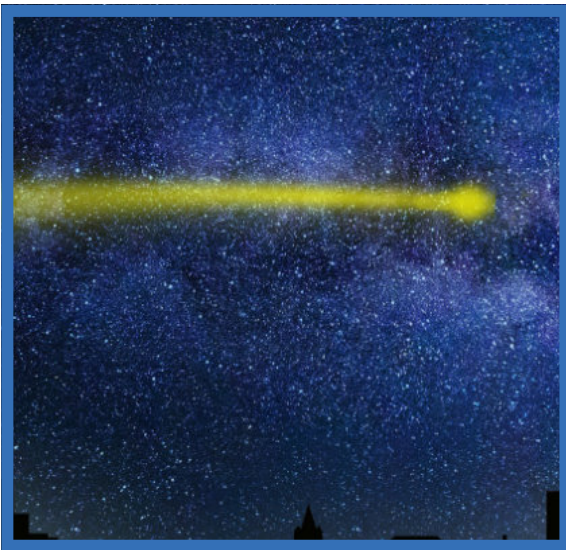
Adoration of the Magi by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo c. 1655 - 1660)

We might find inspiration from their epiphany, their moment of revelation that this Christ-child, this Messiah, is for the Gentiles too, the light from the darkness is for the whole world and all its people, no matter their origin, their background or their past, their credentials or their religious persuasion –God's universal love in Christ. Everyone is invited, then and now, to take this journey when moments of revelation might be ours too. But not everyone will even consider such a journey...the Magi, after all, were in a minority too.

In our passage from Matthew's Gospel, there were three reactions to the news of Jesus birth amongst those who were invited then to take the journey to worship at the newborn saviour, Jesus Christ, to seek that spiritual epiphany. There was, firstly, the disturbance of the ruling elite, of those in political power, jealous of anything which might weaken their grip and determined to stamp it out – the local collaborating King Herod seeking to dupe

the wise men so he can pin the target on Jesus and make sure that this light can be snuffed out. Jesus was an inconvenience at least, a threat at most. Do we see a little of this reaction in us or the world around us? Do we struggle with suspicion or jealousy? Do we enjoy the chains of power that we hold, on whatever small a scale, a little too much and don't want to let them loose? Are the challenges of faith in Jesus Christ, which turn so many expectations upside down, an inconvenience to be ignored for many people, or even a threat in some places to the expected of life?

Then there's the complacency of the biblical scholars and religious leaders in Jerusalem. They who can correctly share with Herod the prediction of the prophet Micah that the saviour of the world will be born in Bethlehem just six miles down the road, but don't feel the motivation to go and look for themselves - too distracted by the everyday business of leading their people



were somehow better informed by God of His will than most of Jerusalem. The spiritual seekers of their time, unlikely people chosen by God as witnesses over and above the religious scholars and those in political power, travelling to a very unlikely location, a smelly stable in a nowhere place, to see a lonely young couple and a newborn baby lying in a cattle trough. An unlikely place of spiritual epiphany certainly, but perhaps it is in the ordinary and the mundane that such things happen.

How close are we to their reaction, and what can their journey of commitment, dedication, revelation and epiphany say to us now? Some key parts of what they did might

perhaps, or too comfortable in their seats by the throne. Do we see a little of their reaction in us or in our church? How keen is our awareness of God being at work in our lives and in our communities and our country, within say a six mile radius of here, or are we too distracted by keeping going what we have? Does our historical role in the Church of Scotland as a national church, and the power we have had, make us feel a little too comfortable to move?

And then there is the reaction of the Magi. The ones whose story seems to be foretold in Isaiah 60 verses 1 to 2 of the people arising and shining out of the darkness of the world; in verse 3 of nations coming to the light, and kings to the brightness of God's dawn; and in verse 6, with its mention of a multitude of camels coming from the east, with the wealth of the nations, gold and frankincense to pay homage and praise a living God; and myrrh, the fragrant resin that will embalm Jesus in the Easter tomb.

They were astrologers cum astronomers, most likely from Babylon, or perhaps Zoroastrian priests from Persia. Either way, they were Gentiles, exotic foreigners who by no stretch of the imagination would have been experts in the Hebrew Scriptures, but

speak to us now in seeking our epiphanies in the year ahead.

- They were wise people and they had been studying – they knew their sacred texts, they knew their own past, they were ready and willing and able to see a sign of God when it appeared. What do our Scriptures mean to us? Worship, prayer, personal devotion? How aware are we of God, and ready for his Word leading us?

- But they did not keep their noses in their books all the time – they observed and looked to understand the world around them, otherwise they might have been clueless about God's plans. What's going on round about us – in our lives, in our city, in our world? How are we reading that through the lenses of scripture and worship?

- They were willing to seek confirmation of what they had learned, and thought they had seen, by embarking on their journey and persevering in following the light of the star no matter what– how does what we know of God and Jesus Christ cause us to think and to act? How do we keep going in the faith, despite all the noises to the contrary?



confirmed, they stayed vigilant and attentive, waiting for God's guidance and direction, which led to the warnings to return by another route – how do we continue to listen and be obedient? A strange unfamiliar path might be ahead, but the road is going somewhere, and God is leading us.

This time of Epiphany, and the story of the Magi's journey, reveals to us that, even in his infancy, Jesus Christ invites and inspires a

journey to seek and find for all humanity. The vast cosmic scope of God's love, in the Word become flesh, means that all are invited and all are included, Christ calls those from every compass point to kneel at the cradle, in a love that knows no boundaries. In Christ, at last, Isaiah's prophecy of a light to all people is fulfilled.

May God bless each one of us, and all of our friends and families, as we step forward in the trust that epiphanies may be ours this year; that the light of Christ will be around us and within us in all of these days to come, as a beacon of hope where the darkness in our lives and our world has settled too long. Christmas has passed, the trees are down and the gifts have been given. But the story does not stop at a manger in Bethlehem. For we will always be seeking...by the light of the star. Amen.

- They were willing to ask for directions from others on the way, even though Herod might not have been such a great choice – they were open minded in their convictions. How can we support each other as a group of fellow travellers, in our lives, in our faith, and seek direction from God?

- Their convictions having been confirmed as they arrived in Bethlehem in the stable, they were, in verse 10, overwhelmed with joy, paying homage and sharing gifts – like them, where does excitement and happiness and joy come in our lives, and our spiritual awakenings, and how do we share these gifts we have been given with other people?

- And even when their faith was

PARISH REGISTER

Deaths

Catherine Duncan
Annabeth Mackie
Gilleasbuig MacMillan
Alison Keir
Robin Cavaghan
Ralph Smith

Departures

Morven and Jack Cadell



Mayfield Salisbury
Parish Church

THE BILL MCDONALD MEMORIAL

3 December, 2023

A dark, wintry December evening tempts few to leave the house, but the hundred and more who came to Mayfield Salisbury on December 3 last year were treated to a fascinating and challenging Bill McDonald Memorial Lecture from the Very Reverend David Fergusson OBE, currently Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge, following an illustrious career as a parish minister and academic in Scotland and beyond.

In 1979-80 David was attached to Mayfield (as it was then called) under the supervision of my father as a final year BD student at New College. He remembers finding Mayfield intimidating 'with so many high-powered elders and retired ministers' but in practice received 'much encouragement' from the congregation - and dad.

A decade later, he served as a chaplain to my father during his year as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. So, the event was a kind of homecoming for David. Of course, Mayfield Salisbury is now home to many people who never knew Bill McDonald or his work; he had retired before my husband met him, but Allan (Little) was able to say something introductory about the man in whose name this lecture series was established by quoting from a letter he received from a radio-listener who had heard him referring to my father. This stranger, as a blind and non-believing young student, struggling with the reading-list, had received such help from dad that he went on to a highly successful career despite his disability - practical Christianity indeed.

Professor Fergusson's lecture-title was *THE COLOURS OF GOD: CELEBRATING*



Bill McDonald

David Fergusson

CREATION, and it outlined his thinking on the need to update the theology of creation.

He counselled against succumbing to weariness, helplessness and cynicism in the light of contemporary ecological data.

The Kirk, along with other churches and religions, should promote a stronger ecological sensibility, he argued, which better respects the breadth and diversity of the natural world, and harmonises the prominence of Jesus Christ with the richness of God's creation.

He posited two main themes: that this world is our home and habitat, and that creation represents community. Our home, then, demands sensitivity and intelligent nurture. Our ways of life must change if our home is to remain secure. He quoted Samantha Harvey, from her book *ORBITAL*: "The earth is a mother, waiting for her children to return." And the community that God's creation represents is just that: not an entity that man dominates. We are all in this together. As Wendell Berry suggests, "The creation provides a place for humans but is greater than humanity...so the 'great' are in fact a small part of the whole." Indeed, humans are not so different from other species.

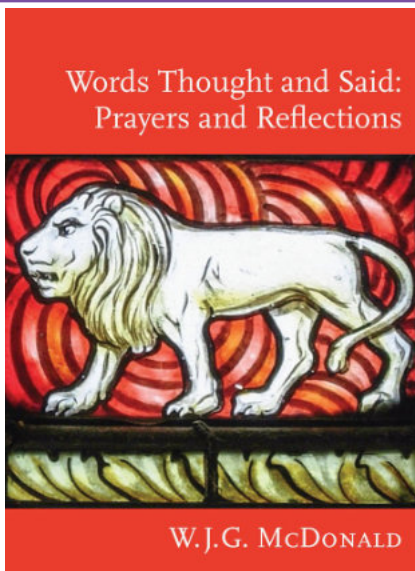
These are challenging ideas, to say the least - and some would see them as counter to traditional theology. But David rooted his lecture in Old Testament celebration of the natural world - in Proverbs,

Job, Ecclesiastes and the Psalms, and questioned the wisdom of moving too fast to humano-centrism. As Amy Plantinga Pauw warns, 'totalising' Jesus risks ignoring the commonality of other creatures.

And 'the colours of creation', David suggested, are just that: plural - not just green.

From Thomas Aquinas to Calvin, theologians have recognised the complexity of the whole universe.

Of course, David Fergusson is no recent convert to this line of thinking: in 2014, the Scientists in Congregations Scotland project was launched, which initiated all manner of conversations, debates and activities aimed at reintegrating science into the daily life and worship of congregations. Mayfield Salisbury collaborated with 25 other congregations from different denominations to tackle not just climatic urgency but DNA modification, GM crops and aggressive atheism. The resulting booklet *AMAZED BY SCIENCE, ILLUMINED BY RELIGION* was launched at Mayfield Salisbury in March 2016. The



preacher at the service was David Fergusson.

A lively Q&A session concluded formalities at the Memorial Lecture, and attendees left with the goal of the pastoral stewardship of our one planet an abiding aim. It will not be easy, any more than loving your neighbour is easy, but David recalled that what he learned as a student at Mayfield, under my father's care, was a way of preaching that provoked sustained and unwearied thought and commitment.

It was our privilege to be offered that, with grace, on a winter's night.

If you missed the lecture or would like to 'listen again', a recording is available on the church website; and free copies of *AMAZED BY SCIENCE, ILLUMINED BY RELIGION* are still available from the Church Manager.

WORDS THOUGHT AND SAID by WJG McDonald is available from Handsel Press.

Sheena McDonald

THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

February

4	Exodus	21,22	/	Psalms	17
5	Exodus	23,24	/	Matthew	26
6	Exodus	25,26	/	Matthew	27
7	Exodus	27,28	/	Matthew	28
8	Exodus	29, 30	/	Psalms	18
9	Exodus	31,32	/	Acts	1
10	Exodus	33,34	/	Acts	2
11	Exodus	35,36	/	Psalms	19
12	Exodus	37,38	/	Acts	3
13	Exodus	39,40	/	Acts	4
14	Leviticus	1-3	/	Acts	5
15	Leviticus	4,5	/	Psalms	20,21
16	Leviticus	6,7	/	Acts	6
17	Leviticus	8,9	/	Acts	7
18	Leviticus	10-12	/	Psalms	22
19	Leviticus	13,14	/	Acts	8
20	Leviticus	15,16	/	Acts	9
21	Leviticus	17,18	/	Acts	10

22	Leviticus	19,20	/	Psalms	23,24
23	Leviticus	21,22	/	Acts	11
24	Leviticus	23,24	/	Acts	12
25	Leviticus	25,26	/	Psalms	25
26	Leviticus	27	/	Numbers 1	/ Acts 13
27	Numbers	2,3	/	Acts	14
28	Numbers	4,5	/	Acts	15

March

1	Numbers	6,7	/	Psalms	26,27
2	Numbers	8,9	/	Acts	16
3	Numbers	10,11	/	Acts	17
4	Numbers	12-14	/	Psalms	28,29
5	Numbers	15,16	/	Acts	18
6	Numbers	17-19	/	Acts	19
7	Numbers	20,21	/	Acts	20
8	Numbers	22,23	/	Psalms	30
9	Numbers	24,25	/	Acts	21
10	Numbers	26,27	/	Acts	22

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Note: Youth Club on Sunday evenings - dates TBC. Please check weekly news

February

- Sat 3 10.00am Café Time at Priestfield Church – to support Mary's Meals
7.00pm Ceilidh (ticket required) at Mayfield Salisbury Church
- Sun 4 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany**
9.30am All-Age Worship (Revd Dr Sandy Forsyth)
10.45am Traditional Worship (Revd Dr Sandy Forsyth)
7.00pm Evening Service
- Tue 6 10.00am Morning Prayers
- Thu 8 2.00pm Thursday Club: DONALD MILLAR *USA Road Trip* @ McDonald Hall
- Sun 11 Transfiguration**
9.30am All-Age Worship (Revd Dr Sandy Forsyth)
10.45am Traditional Worship (Revd Dr Sandy Forsyth)
- Tue 13 10.00am Morning Prayers
- Thu 15 2.00pm Thursday Club: JACKIE SANGSTER *Occupations of Old* @ McDonald Hall
- Sun 18 First Sunday in Lent**
10.30am Service with Craigmillar Park and Priestfield Church at Mayfield Salisbury
- Tue 20 10.00am Morning Prayers
- Thu 22 2.00pm Thursday Club: GEORGE AND SUSAN *Singalong* @ McDonald Hall
- Sat 24 4.00pm Messy Church Priestfield Church
- Sun 25 Second Sunday in Lent**
9.30am All-Age Worship (Revd Dr Sandy Forsyth)
10.45am Traditional Worship (Revd Dr Sandy Forsyth)
- Tue 27 10.00am Morning Prayers
- Thu 29 2.00pm Thursday Club: JOHN GRAHAM *Scottish Islands* @ McDonald Hall
- ## March
- Sun 3 Third Sunday in Lent**
9.30am All-Age Worship (Revd Dr Sandy Forsyth)
10.45am Traditional Worship (Revd Dr Sandy Forsyth)
7.00pm Evening Service
- Tue 5 10.00am Morning Prayers
- Thu 7 2.00pm Thursday Club: NEIL MACFARLAND *New Zealand trip* @ McDonald Hall
- Sun 10 Fourth Sunday in Lent**
9.30am All-Age Worship (Revd Dr Sandy Forsyth)
10.45am Traditional Worship (Revd Dr Sandy Forsyth)
- Tue 12 10.00am Morning Prayers
2.30pm Afternoon Service of Holy Communion
- Wed 13 7.30pm Kirk Session
- Thu 14 2.00pm Thursday Club: SIMON FAIRNIE *Fisherrow Fishwives* @ McDonald Hall
- Sat 16 2.00pm Launch event for second ministry post at Priestfield Church (see page 6)**

WHO'S WHO IN MAYFIELD SALISBURY

Mayfield Salisbury Parish (Edinburgh) Church of Scotland. Scottish Charity Number SC000785

Minister

Revd Dr Alexander Forsyth AForsyth@churchofscotland.org.uk 0131 667 1286

Student Minister

Simon Hessett SHessett@churchofscotland.org.uk 0134 667 1522

Pastoral Assistant

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Children and Young Adult Worker

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Church Manager

William Mearns churchmanager@googlemail.com 0780 801 1234

Organist

Kate Pearson kate.q.kate@gmail.com 0744 238 2296

Session Clerk

Boyd McAdam clerkmspc@gmail.com 0777 358 7579

Treasurer

John Graham culkein@btinternet.com 0131 667 6331

Safeguarding Co-ordinators

Aileen Nimmo and Dougie Robertson mayfieldsafeguarding@gmail.com 0131 667 1522

Gift Aid Donations & Roll Keeper

Hugh Somerville hs.somerville2@gmail.com 0131 466 2446

Mayfield Radio Unit

The Studio mayfieldradiounit@gmail.com 0131 667 7742

Church Address and Office

18 West Mayfield, Edinburgh, EH9 1TQ
0131 667 1522 or churchmanager@googlemail.com

Pastoral Care

For Home or Hospital visits, please contact the Minister

Staff Days Off

Minister: Mondays
Children and Young Families Worker: Mondays
Manager: Monday-PM & Fridays

Social Media Accounts

-  www.facebook.com/MayfieldSalisbury
-  www.youtube.com/@ChurchEdinburgh
-  www.flickr.com/photos/98063709@N06
-  www.x.com/churchscotland (formally Twitter)
-  www.mayfieldsalisbury.org



The Church of Scotland

SCAN TO GIVE



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Copy date for next Issue:

**6.00pm on Friday 1 March
For March / April Issue**

ONLINE