

# St Anne's Magazine



Rev. Jamie Griggs  
St Anne's Parish Church

Kaimes Road, Corstorphine,  
Edinburgh, EH12 6JR

(0131) 316 4740  
www.stannescorstorphine.org.uk  
office@stannescorstorphine.org.uk

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*A Community of sharing - sharing Christ with community in faith, love, hope and service.*

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## Letter from the Minister

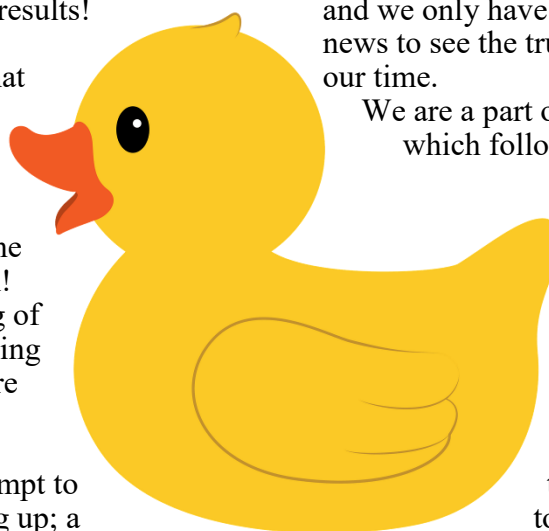
**M**y dear friends,  
As I begin to write this letter for our "refreshed" magazine, so the city begins to prepare/steel itself (I leave you to decide which is more appropriate) for the month of the Festival and Fringe: again! As I so often say, "tempus fugit"... The major "refreshment" of the magazine, as you know, is that we are reducing the number of editions each year, in part to improve our use of resources; in part to increase the content and impact of the magazine; and, in part to reduce the pressure on time in production. We are very grateful to our new Editor for his guidance, wisdom and experience in enabling us to use our time and resources more effectively, and we trust that you will enjoy the results!

A joke to demonstrate that not all things improve: Do you know when ducks wake up? At the quack of dawn!  
The passing of time is something of which we are all aware – a glance in the mirror; an attempt to pick something up; a

review of the bank balance; a note in the diary – so much in our daily "round" reminds us that nothing is constant; nothing still. As you read the pages with the reports from the General Assembly in May, you will perhaps recall previous reports: you may find yourself thinking about the Church of which we are a part today; and such thoughts, inevitably, make us recall the one which we remember from our youth – and then fret about the one which is yet to come.

It is a part of our human condition, as we grow older and time seems to pass ever more quickly, to feel a degree of anxiety: and that leads, inevitably, to fear. It was Yoda who said, "Fear is the path to the dark side. Fear leads to anger. Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to suffering" (*Star Wars*), and we only have to look at the news to see the truth of that in our time.

We are a part of a tradition which follows someone who had something to say about this: his detailed advice in Matthew 6 ends, "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will



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## Minister's letter (continued)

bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today." Yet, how difficult it can be to deal with new things without becoming nostalgic; or to embrace change without becoming grumpy; or to live today without worrying about tomorrow.

The Psalmist wrote: "But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, 'You are my God.' My times are in your hand;..." I recently read a chapter in a book which talked about time: our time; our use of time; and our need to rest in the presence of God – *to be in the present with God*. Speaking about the invention of the clock, Liz Shercliff writes that the "invention of the clock, and later the digital clock, has allowed us to divide time into smaller and smaller units, and because we have divided it, we have the impression that we are in control of it". Of course, we are not. Experience shows us that – however much we may try to duck the truth!

Time passes, things change, and any "control" we may have turns out all too often to be over the "little" things – when we get up; what we watch on television; the bus timetable etc. The really big things actually require us to have faith, and rest for a while in God, while things sort themselves out, while a resolution is discerned.

As you read this, there are big questions "out there", and it is easy to feel overwhelmed by them. But: if we have the courage to rest a while in God, with God, we will see that things do have a way of resolving themselves.

May God bless and keep you.

*Jamie*



Many happy returns to Isabel Whitelaw, who recently celebrated her 90th birthday. Isabel has been an active member of St Anne's for many years, helping at the Caring&Sharing club and the Fan club, serving tea and coffee with a cheeky smile. She cut her cake at the Friday Summer Café.



"It's not a new stained-glass window – the Youth Club put its skateboard ramp too close to the church's west wall!"

## Session on safe, driveway and union

A new safe, repairs to the Kirk driveway and the vexed question of the proposed union with neighbouring churches are among the items discussed by the Session at their recent meetings.

By the time this magazine is published the first two should be close to resolution. However, much work remains to be done on the future of churches in Corstorphine. The current model envisages a merger of St Anne's, St Ninian's and St Andrew's. Yet because the ministers of St Anne's and St Ninian's are both on unrestricted tenure, the understanding is that little will change until one of them demits office (though this could always change!). Nevertheless, the General Trustees require a plan.

Meanwhile, the treasurers reported a post-pandemic increase in income from lettings, although this naturally incurs more expenditure.

In other business, the Session approved the appointment of Marion Lees McPherson as new organist (see pages 14 and 15), agreed to the repair of several chairs in the Youth Chapel and heard requests for more volunteers to help with the Sound/Video desk and with the Sunday Club. Neither is restricted to Session members and anyone interested is encouraged to get in touch via the office.

Future dates for Kirk Session meetings are: Wednesday, October 4, and Wednesday, November 29, both at 7.30pm.

# Remembrance Sunday: November 12

Morning Worship on Sunday, November 12, will begin at the earlier time of 10.50am. This is to allow the congregation to take part in the national Act of Remembrance at 11am when a two-minute silence is kept.

Remembrance Sunday is a time for us all as a nation to acknowledge corporately the sacrifice of those who have gone before us this year into God's hands, including our loved ones, members of the St Anne's family and people who were important figures in our civic, military and private lives.

This time allows us to focus on those whom we will miss most, while at the same time saluting those who gave their lives serving our country in the cause of the freedom we enjoy.

The Rev Dr Scott Shackleton, head of the Church of Scotland Faith Action Programme, writes: Jesus was a young man, only 33 years old, when He died in a brutal killing. As far as we know, many of those who followed Him were young women and men. They were His friends and, just before His arrest and execution, He commanded them to love one

another as He loved them. I suspect that these words meant something very deep to Jesus and His friends. Over time they would find deeper meaning in this call to follow Jesus's commands on how to live – many of them too would be executed. Many tears will have been shed by those young women and men, despite their firm belief that "everything'll be alright".



Paul reminds us that we need to learn to rejoice and be content in all things – even on the bad days – but he does not forbid tears of healing. You may never have fought in a war, or lost a loved one in a military conflict, but you are likely to know someone who is bearing a loss or facing great pain

through sickness. The more you love that person, the more your pain will be felt.

Remembrance is a time when we give thanks to those who have gone before us and set an example to us all in how to live well. They inspire us to live well ourselves. Jesus is our ultimate example and friend in this journey of life which, as we sing in the hymn of that name, "...may be easy, may be hard, there will be danger on the way./ But with Christ at my side I'll do battle as I ride/ 'gainst the foe that will lead me astray."

On this day we remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in defending the freedoms under which we in Scotland and the UK are privileged to live.

We pray for those who carry loss in their hearts and those who still bear the scars of conflict in body, mind and spirit. We think of all those who have recently lost loved ones and those who walk a path of suffering with those in pain from illness. We pray for the healing touch of the risen Christ to fall upon all of them and ask that they may know the reassurance of faith, that in and through Christ Jesus all things will be made new.

## Holy Communion

Holy Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, October 29, at 11am, the day the clocks go back. Elders have been informed of their roles. There is usually a short Communion service after Morning Worship on the last Sunday of other months. This is held in the Youth Chapel. All are welcome.

## For all the Saints

All Saints Day – Wednesday, November 1 – will be marked by a service of Holy Communion, which will be celebrated in the Sanctuary at 7.30pm.

## Harvest Festival

We will celebrate Harvest Festival on Sunday, October 8. While we thank God every week for his blessings, this is a chance to give thanks for the crops in our fields and the food we eat.

In Matthew's Gospel (VI: 25-33) we read: "Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you, by worrying, add a single hour to your life?"



"Er... vicar – does the church have a position on the donation of GM vegetables for the Harvest Festival?"

*Note: for vicar read minister!*

# Guild's day at the races

Since our AGM at the end of March, there have been no Guild meetings over the summer months, but much forward planning has been taking place for events and the syllabus for the coming session, which starts on Tuesday September 12 with an afternoon meeting.

Over the past two years we have not been in a position to donate monies to charities because of the uncertainties relating to Covid. We are pleased to announce that we have now been able to give to two of our Project Partners, namely The Vine Trust and Beat. We have also been able to give a donation to St Anne's Church, details of which will be announced when we return in the autumn.

With the cost of our summer outings having risen so much in recent years, we decided this year to have a themed afternoon tea in the hall. This took place on June 20 and the theme was "A day at the races".

As you will see from the photograph, everyone turned up with their smart outfits and fancy hats. We enjoyed a splendid array of sandwiches, scones and cakes, accompanied by gallons of tea and coffee.

Because this magazine is now to be published on a quarterly basis, you will note several dates for your diary are mentioned as far ahead as December. We shall of course try to update everyone of "happenings" closer to their actual



dates, but would ask that you pay special note to the intimations in the Orders of Service and that you check Kath's monthly email with "Guild Doings".

One final point: as we approach the autumn/winter season, if you are not already a member of the Guild, why not come along and give us a try? Both men and women are most welcome (yes, we do have some male members). We have a varied programme of speakers and each meeting ends with time for a chat and a cup of tea. The meetings take place on a fortnightly basis, one in the afternoon, then two weeks later an evening meeting. We would love to see you there. (Ethel Thomson)

## Guild dates

### September 9

Guild Annual Gathering being held in the Assembly Hall

### September 10-17

Guild Week

### September 12

New Guild Session commences with an afternoon meeting at 2.30pm. At the time of writing, syllabi are not yet printed, but they will be available in September.

### December 5

Guild Christmas celebrations

## Become a fan of the Fan Club

The Fan Club meets on alternate Fridays in the Kaimes Hall at 10.30am.

The club was formed more than ten years ago, replacing the retired folk's home. The format was changed and we now enjoy tea, coffee and home-baking served at your table. At each

meeting a speaker talks for about 45 minutes and the meeting closes around 12 noon.

The committee have been busy during the summer finding speakers and now have a varied and interesting syllabus for September 8 when we restart.

Do join us. All are welcome.

## Magazine dates

Welcome to your new-look St Anne's Parish Magazine. Thank you to all who have contributed to this issue and apologies to those whose material has been held over. The next issue will cover Advent, Christmas and the start of Lent. The deadline for submissions is October 31.

## Mighty oaks grow

The Acorn is an inter-church group that meets on the last Monday of every month between September and June for a morning of fun and fellowship.

We get together with friends from many of the Corstorphine churches for coffee and entertainment, sometimes with a speaker, or sometimes finding interesting stories from among our own members.

To give you a little glimpse of our activities: for our last meeting in May, we had Margaret Grant, with a guest pianist and some of the Springwell Golden Voices choir who joined us for a session of pure nostalgia, singing hymns and choruses remembered from days gone by, some as far back as their childhoods. A great time was had by all.

Why not brighten your Monday morning once a month? We would love to see you.

The first meeting of the new season will be on Monday, September 25, at 10am in the Belgrave Room at St Anne's Church.

For further information please feel free to contact Muriel Gibson on: 317 1335



## THE ACORN

**You are invited to join us for inter-church Christian Fellowship over a cup of tea or coffee from 10am on the last Monday of every month except December when we meet on the 11th**

at

**ST ANNE'S CHURCH  
KAIMES ROAD ENTRANCE  
BELGRAVE ROOM**

**Meetings in 2023/24 are**

**2023**

**SEPTEMBER 25**

**OCTOBER 30**

**NOVEMBER 27**

**DECEMBER 11**

**2024**

**JANUARY 29**

**FEBRUARY 26**

**MARCH 25**

**APRIL 29**

**MAY 27**

**JUNE 24**

## Caring&Sharing with badgers

Members of the Caring&Sharing group are looking forward to the new session, which begins on Friday, September 15, at 10.30am.

Interspersed with our café-style meetings, where much conversation and laughter is enjoyed, there is a varied programme of speakers ranging from Care and Repair, an organisation offering independent advice and assistance to the elderly on home repairs and improvements, to Scottish Badgers, a charity working to protect badgers, their setts and natural habitats.

You don't have to be a "carer"

to attend. If you haven't been before, do come along and give us a try.

Because "sharing" bears equal importance with "caring", we welcome everyone to join us. We meet on alternate Friday mornings at 10.30am in the Belgrave Room.



## Easy fundraising

With the Christmas shopping period not too far off, now would be a good time to support St Anne's Church by signing up to [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk).

You raise donations whenever you shop online with more than 7,000 brands including John Lewis & Partners, eBay, Argos, M&S and more. Plus, once you have raised your first £5, easyfundraising will double it. Sign up today and then choose as your cause: [stanneschurchedinburgh.org.uk](http://stanneschurchedinburgh.org.uk).

To date we have raised more than £1,650 for the church.

## Taken as read

The St Anne's Book Group restarts for the Autumn term on Wednesday August 30. At that meeting we will be discussing Ian McEwan's 2014 novel *The Children Act*, a work that has been compared with Charles Dickens's *Bleak House*.

During that evening a list of the books that we will be reading during the forthcoming year will be given out. Please inquire via the office if you are unable to attend or have not received it.

The St Anne's Book Group meets approximately every six weeks and all meetings are held in the Belgrave Room at 7.30pm, with refreshments beforehand. New members are most welcome to come along and join us.

## St Anne's group restart dates: autumn 2023

<b>Jack &amp; Jill</b>	<b>Wednesday August 23</b>
<b>Lunch Club</b>	<b>Wednesday August 23</b>
<b>Book Group</b>	<b>Wednesday August 30</b>
<b>FAN Club</b>	<b>Friday September 8</b>
<b>Guild</b>	<b>Tuesday September 12</b>
<b>Caring &amp; Sharing</b>	<b>Friday September 15</b>
<b>Badminton</b>	<b>Monday September 18</b>

### St Anne's Book Group

#### Meetings in 2023/2024

##### 2023

August	30
October	11
November	15
December	20

##### 2024

January	10
February	21
April	3
May	15
June	26

All meetings are held in  
the Belgrave room  
at 7.30pm

## Saturday Whist

Whist is an enjoyable game of cards, which is easy to play from a beginner level.

All are welcome to come along on the 3rd Saturday of each month.  
2pm in the Belgrave room.



**2023**



September	16
October	21
November	18
December	16

***Scottish Evening at St Anne's***  
***Saturday, December 2, 2023***  
***6.30pm – 9.00pm***

***Featuring Bernie Hewitt***  
***Accomplished Accordionist***



***Music, dancing, songs and more from Scotland and beyond,  
live on the accordion. Come along and join in the family  
fun!***

***Light Supper Included***

***Tickets:     Adult £6***  
***Child £3***  
***Family £15***

***(Available from Lyn Chalmers, Anne Ritchie or the office)***

## Feeding the hungry

Many thanks to all those members of the congregation who have continued to contribute to the Foodbank.

During the current cost of living squeeze your support is needed more than ever.

The Foodbank collection is on the FOURTH Sunday of the month. Please bring packaged food, tinned food and toiletries. But please NO fresh or chilled food.

All your donations are taken to the Edinburgh Food Project, which not only provides emergency food supplies and support to people in crisis, but also works with people, communities and partner agencies to address the underlying causes of food poverty.

See: [edinburghfoodproject.org](http://edinburghfoodproject.org)



## Remembering Mary Patterson

Mary Patterson (nee McColl), an Elder at St Anne's since 1998, died on May 22, 2023 aged 76.

After studying at Murray House she taught at Drum Brae Primary School, where she had 44 children in her first class. She was creative in her teaching, bringing events in the world into her classes including, apparently, building a life-size replica of the Kontiki raft in the school library with one class. It was this approach that led to her being called the "best teacher ever".

She married Ronnie Patterson in 1972 and they had three children: Claire, Emma and John.

Mary loved working with children and spent the rest of her working life at



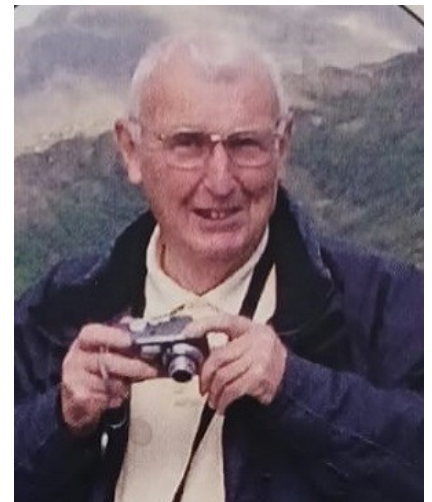
Edinburgh Zoo, on its education programme. She was also county commissioner for Edinburgh Guides.

Mary's faith was deep and strong: from her days as organist at Stenhouse Church, Saughton, to when she joined St Anne's in the mid-1980s, her faith was seen in how she treated people and how she lived her life. She was ordained an Elder in 1998 and served with great dedication, wisdom and love. She was also involved in many activities at St Anne's including the Fan Club, the Guild and the Book Club. At Mary's funeral her family summed her up in two words: "love" and "rock".

## Ian Scott

Ian Scott, who died on June 13 aged 90, was an Elder at St Anne's for more than 50 years having been ordained in 1972.

Ian was a founder member of the St Anne's Scouts and a keen photographer, always taking photos at Sunday School picnics and Scout events. He was a loyal member of the congregation, sitting in the back row – perhaps a legacy of his role as our original "sound operative".





# LIFE AND WORK

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY  
SUPPLEMENT

MAY 2023

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## General Assembly 2023

- **Pain of past year acknowledged, but Church urged to imagine an exciting future**
- **'No quota' for church closures**
- **Kirk to 'initiate a conversation' with other churches on joint working**
- **Slave trade apology**
- **Chief Rabbi praises Church as Jewish-Christian Glossary welcomed**
- **Assisted dying debate**

### "A NEW REFORMATION"

The convener of the Church of Scotland's Assembly Trustees has urged the Church to display a new spirit of Reformation in the face of falling membership and ministry shortages.

The Rev David Cameron told the General Assembly that it was a "critical time" for the church, but encouraged Commissioners to imagine an exciting future.

"Imagine Church where members are enthusiastic about doing things differently," he said.

"Imagine listening to one another and dreaming bold dreams and having the energy and encouragement to experiment and learn in the process. Imagine being able to move forward in positive ways, tackling serious issues of the day, responding to the real need in Scotland. Imagine finding a creative way of getting different people with different views together to create a different future. Imagine planting new church communities where they've always been needed, breaking out of our constrained systems to do so.

"Sharing ministry for the pastoral care of the elderly in the aging congregations whilst recognising the need to be intergenerational, fully

integrating our young people, shaping the life of the Church.

"The new alongside the old, energising and inspiring with the gospel imperative, 'go and make disciples'."

In his speech as outgoing Moderator, the Very Rev Dr Iain Greenshields urged all congregations to "take a long, careful look at who we are". He added: "Out of lament and grief comes new life and new identity."

And this year's Moderator, the Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, closed the week saying that that the church was "the body of Christ" with "hands that aren't afraid to get dirty", "feet that walk the extra mile", and "here to hold up a sister who's struggling or sit with a brother who's afraid".

And she added: "We are part of something so much bigger than any one of us and we are blessed to be. So, challenges – bring them on."

### PRESBYTERY MISSION PLANNING AND CHURCH CLOSURES

Mr Cameron acknowledged the hurt and pain that had been caused by the Presbytery Mission Planning process over the past year, which he admitted 'has felt harsh and rigid and people have

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2023 SUPPLEMENT



not been as kind and pastorally sensitive as they should have been'. But he said the time had come to "lay down burdens which have been exhausting us all."

The Trustees agreed to a proposal from the Rev Dr Doug Gay instructing them to explore alternative approaches to ministry planning which would ensure churches that can afford a minister (or be supported to afford one, in the case of deprived areas) would be permitted to call one.

However, the Assembly rejected an Overture from the Presbytery of Glasgow which would have appointed a Special Commission to review the Mission Planning process. Mr Cameron said that setting up a Commission at this stage would be premature and bring delay, but assured the Assembly that review was built into the process. He urged them to "embrace instead the task of rolling up our sleeves and getting involved in this good work going forward."

During the debate of the General Trustees, the Assembly was assured that there is no quota for the number of church buildings that should be closed.

As some Commissioners expressed concern about the number of churches that are earmarked for closure under Presbytery Mission Plans, the Rev Scott Rennie, vice-chair elect of the Trustees, said: "There is no quota. There has never been a quota, in any presbytery." Adding that buildings could either be an asset or a drain on mission, he added: "The point of the exercise, in partnership with presbyteries, has been to try and find that middle balance, alongside

affordability."

The Trustees accepted a new section from the Rev Dr Grant Barclay confirming that "the Church of Scotland seeks to have adequate spaces in as many places as are properly affordable." Dr Barclay said that he feared the Church wanted "a handful of Rolls Royces" for its buildings, "when what Scotland needs is a fleet of Fords."

The Assembly also approved a section welcoming progress on the Presbytery Mission Planning Act, despite Dr Gay saying he didn't think that reflected the feelings across the Church about the Mission Planning process: "I think we have gone about this in a way which has been disempowering to congregations and harmful to our mission."

### MINISTRY STRESS

A study is to be carried out into causes of stress among Church of Scotland ministers, after the Assembly was told there was a crisis in morale in the church.

The Faith Nurture Forum convener, the Rev Rosie Frew, agreed to the work proposed by the Rev Sandy Horsburgh. Mr Horsburgh said: "We are in crisis. Morale is low.

"Asking for a survey is not asking for much. But a church should be an institution which has care at its heart, and doing a survey and committing to learning from and acting on its results will be a real sign of a church caring for its ministers."

The Rev Roddy Hamilton said that the mission planning process had had a major

wellbeing consequence on him and colleagues in the ministry.

He said: "I know at least half a dozen of my colleagues who have demitted in the last year, not to another job but just to get away from the church, because staying would make them more ill. And I don't know how many more are just holding on."

Mrs Frew said that currently four per cent of ministers are off sick, 14% of those with work-related stress.

"We are living in incredibly stressful times, not just because of mission planning," she said. "Many of the causes of stress are relational breakdowns – people not being kind or considerate or respectful to one another. I'm not denying this is the hardest of situations, but we could all be careful with the language we use and how we treat other people as we all go through this together."

### WORKING WITH OTHER CHURCHES

The Church of Scotland is to 'initiate a conversation' across the church and with sister churches in Scotland about how they can work together in mission and service.

The instruction to the Ecumenical Relations Committee followed an opening day in which the church was urged to build on its interdenominational relationships by the Moderator, guests from other churches, the Lord High Commissioner and even King Charles III.

In his first letter to a General Assembly, King Charles said he had been "especially heartened" to hear of the ecumenical pilgrimage of peace to South Sudan, undertaken by Dr Greenshields with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Pope in February. He added: "Messages of justice, peace and reconciliation made all the more powerful by their visible presence which signified both the unity and the diversity of the church."

The King also said that he had been "greatly encouraged" by the signing of the Saint Margaret Declaration of friendship between the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church.

King Charles' representative at the Assembly, the Lord High Commissioner, Lord Hodge, also urged the church to continue its ecumenical work, saying that by working together, in a time of people being willing to promulgate fake news, the Christian denominations could ensure "that the Christian voice is heard in the market of

ideas in Scotland and more widely.”

Mrs Foster-Fulton echoed his call in her opening remarks, saying that by working with other churches “we amplify our voice calling for love, justice and equity, we embody values Christ called us to.”

At the presentation of ecumenical and overseas visitors, the Assembly was addressed by the Rev Fiona Bennett, Moderator Designate of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church. Minister of Augustine United Church in Edinburgh City Centre, she said that her own denomination was facing similar organisational challenges to the Kirk, and developing similar approaches to address them.

Recalling the Lund Principle, that states churches should work together at all times except where there are deep differences of conviction, she asked: “How much of the activity of our churches which we are running in parallel is really rooted in deep difference?”

The convener of the Ecumenical Relations Committee, the Rev Ross Blackman, admitted that some ecumenical aspects of presbytery and mission planning may have been overlooked “in our rush to meet the incredibly challenging obligations”, and the Rt Rev Dr John Armes, the Scottish Episcopal Church’s Bishop of Edinburgh, said that there had not always been consultation with ecumenical partners over church closures in remote areas.

Mr Blackman said: “We cannot hope to reach the whole of Scotland alone. But why should we go it alone, when we’re not alone?”

### JEWISH-CHRISTIAN GLOSSARY

The oratorical high point of the week came when the Chief Rabbi, Sir Ephraim Mirvis, thanked the Church of Scotland for the ‘openness, sincerity, honesty and humility’ shown in conversations with the Jewish community in Scotland.

He was speaking as the Assembly welcomed a new [Jewish-Christian Glossary](#), produced jointly by the two faith groups as an aid to interfaith discussions. The Glossary grew out of work to repair relationships between the Church and the Jewish community, which were damaged by the *Inheritance of Abraham?* report into the Holy Land in 2013.

Chief Rabbi Mirvis said: “The relationship



between the Church of Scotland and the Jewish community suffered a setback. There was a difficulty, a crisis, a challenge. But what did we do about it? We were determined to engage in a process of healing and we achieved that.

“We have been on a journey, and it’s been a wonderful journey. We thank almighty God for bringing us to this precious moment... and we offer a prayer of supplication: may almighty God continue to bless us with success in all of our joint endeavours.”

The Chief Rabbi was given a standing ovation following his speech, and the Moderator told him: “I have rarely if ever heard such powerful, inspiring words in this General Assembly.”

Introducing the Glossary, the Very Rev Dr Susan Brown said that the idea behind it was not to provide definitive answers on difficult questions, but to deepen understanding between the two faith groups. “The words with which we have begun our explorations are but a tiny drop in the ocean of all the words and ideas it would be good for us to explore together,” she said. “But it is a start. A significant start.”

### ASSISTED DYING

The Faith Impact Forum was instructed to work with the Theological Forum and other groups to explore the range of theological views and opinions around the issue of assisted dying.

The Forum had brought a section of its deliverance restating the Church’s long-held opposition to assisted dying, but this was defeated by a countermotion from the Rev Jonathan Fleming recognising “that there exists a range of theological views and ethical opinions” on the subject.

The Rev Tara Granados brought an initial motion moving the Church “to a pastoral position of liberty of opinion”, although she withdrew this in favour of Mr Fleming’s proposal. Mrs Granados said she had watched her mother die of cancer as a teenager, and was now seeing her father’s slow decline from Parkinson’s dementia. She added: “I personally do not believe that our God wishes us to suffer, and that with appropriate safeguards society should allow people to choose to end their own suffering through assisted dying.

“There exists a range of biblical interpretation and ethical opinion. I am not seeking to reverse the church’s position, neither am I seeking to move to a position of neutrality. I am simply seeking to acknowledge the diversity of views.”

### SLAVE TRADE APOLOGY

The Church of Scotland is to apologise for its role in the historic slave trade.

During the report of the Faith Impact Forum, the General Assembly commended a report which lists a number of Church ministers, elders and members who benefited from the slave trade or received compensation following the abolition of the slave trade.

The report also lists nine churches (some now closed) which were at least part financed by slave owners or are known to be the place of worship for merchants who benefited from the trade; and several more churches which contain memorials to people connected to slavery.

The Assembly accepted a Faith Impact Forum proposal that the Forum, “in partnership with the Theological Forum and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group, prepare a statement of acknowledgment and apology for the Church’s involvement with and connection to historic chattel slavery, to be considered for adoption at a future General Assembly.”

The Rev Karen Hendry, convener of the Faith Impact Forum, said: “We are part of a world-wide Church, our prayers, and our actions, are thus informed by the shared, lived experience of people in many places...”

“These wider partnerships, as well as bringing opportunities for mutual support and co-operation, also afford us the possibility of informed reflection, and the acknowledgement that there are aspects of our past, as a Church, that we look on now

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2023 SUPPLEMENT

with deep regret.

“The Legacies of Slavery report gives substance to such a part of our history. And we seek to humbly acknowledge this and think about how we apologise.”

## KEY MOMENTS AND SPEECHES

● The General Assembly approved the creation of a Book of Confessions forming the Church’s subordinate standard. The Book, to include the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Scots Confession, Nicene and Apostles Creeds, and the 1992 Statement of Faith, must now be approved by presbyteries under the Barrier Act.

● The Theological Forum agreed to review the Third Article Declaratory, which commits the church to providing the ‘ordinances of religion’ to every parish in Scotland. Bringing the motion, the Rev Robert Allan pointed out that Scotland was now mostly secular, and given the shrinking number of ministers asked whether it was possible for the Church to maintain the commitment of the Third Article. He said it was “a noble aim” but that the church should be “humble enough to reconsider”.

● The Assembly passed an amendment from the Rev Bryan Kerr noting “with alarm” research which suggests that black and ethnic minority ministers are being overlooked or asked not to officiate at funerals in favour of a ‘Scottish minister’. Mr Kerr said: “We ought to be standing up for our ministers and calling this out for what it is. It’s racist, it’s xenophobic and has no place in our church.”

The Assembly Trustees are to work with the church’s EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion) group to highlight the issue and liaise with public bodies and funeral directors. The Rev Dr Kwame Ahaligah said: “Racist ideas should not be tolerated or explained away. The Gospel should challenge us to confront such opinions with a strong prophetic voice.”

● The Assembly approved the merger of nine presbyteries into a new Highlands and Hebrides presbytery, Clèir Eilean Ì. The new group brings together the current presbyteries of Argyll, Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Inverness, Abernethy, Lochaber, Lochcarron-Skye and Uist. The Presbytery of Lewis has not agreed to join the new presbytery, but it is hoped that will happen at a later date. The Principal Clerk, the Rev Fiona Smith, said that discussions with Lewis

continue and that relationships were good.

● The Assembly agreed the formation of an advisory Ethical Oversight Committee to help the Church of Scotland Investor’s Trust navigate ethical and theological issues around the church’s investments. The committee was proposed by a special commission set up following the debate in recent years on whether the church should disinvest from fossil fuels.

● Laura Dunlop KC was given a lengthy ovation as she stepped down after 18 years as Procurator of the General Assembly. Jonathan Brodie KC was appointed as her successor.

● On the opening day, the Assembly was addressed by Joe Morrow, Lord Lyon King of Arms (the chief heraldic officer of Scotland) who defended the ceremonial elements of the General Assembly. He said that the pageantry represented the links between the church and state, celebrating the Church’s influence with the sovereign and governments.

● A proposal to review the provision of manses for ministers, and explore allowing ministers to buy their own house if they wish, was narrowly defeated. The Rev Robert Allan said that such a review would benefit ministers struggling in unsuitable and expensive manses, and that churches could benefit financially from renting out their manses. However, concern was expressed over the tax implications, and whether ministers would be able to afford suitable accommodation.

● There was a prolonged round of applause for the Rev Jean Montgomerie, the longest serving female minister in the Church of Scotland, who celebrated 50 years in the ministry recently. The Moderator told her: “We stand on the shoulders of giants, and we walk the path of pilgrims, and you are both.”

● The General Assembly endorsed calls from the Social Care Council (CrossReach) for improved pay in the care sector. Convener, the Rev Thom Riddell, told the Assembly that staff in the voluntary sector are now paid 19% behind “their counterparts in other agencies”. “That is not right. That needs to change,” he said. Mr Riddell drew the Assembly’s attention to the [Scottish Faith Leaders Declaration](#), signed by the former Moderator and the Catholic Archbishop of Glasgow, urging commissioners to sign it.

● The General Assembly offered its



customary warm welcome to the military chaplains. Convener of the Committee of Chaplains to HM Forces, the Rev Scott Brown, said: “The bond between the Chaplain and your flock, including the command at every level, is enduring, it is built upon decades of being seen as trustworthy, of being approachable, of being confidential, of being where your people are.”

The Assembly was also addressed by Admiral Sir Ben Key, First Sea Lord. He said that the moral component of a fighting force was the most important and that the chaplaincy “is fundamental to our ability to have it, to own it and be confident in it.” ■

Words by Thomas Baldwin

Pictures by Andrew O’Brien for the Church of Scotland

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# Three Sundays, three churches

Being away from St Anne's need not stop us finding fellowship with Christians in other parts of the country.

**Lisa Watson** reports on her recent travels and the services she visited with her husband Tom



**W**hen we are away on our sailing yacht, we like to go ashore to enjoy worship at a local church. We were in Campbeltown recently and attended a service at Campbeltown Parish Church. Built in 1872, this church was formerly known as the Lorne and Lowland Church because it was built to accommodate English speaking incomers to the town. You can see why the bell tower is a well known local landmark! Now renamed, this was our first experience of a merged congregation, due to the fact that a second church in the town had recently closed.

It was Father's Day and the locum minister, the Rev Linda Broadley, talked about fathers being heroes, and the heroes in our lives, concluding by asking the Sunday school to hand out Heroes chocolates to the congregation. It was also the end of Sunday school for the summer, and we greatly enjoyed observing four young children and also a baby being presented with books. During the service we were given a warm welcome and afterwards we enjoyed coffee, where we heard that the congregation are very excited to have a new minister joining them in August.

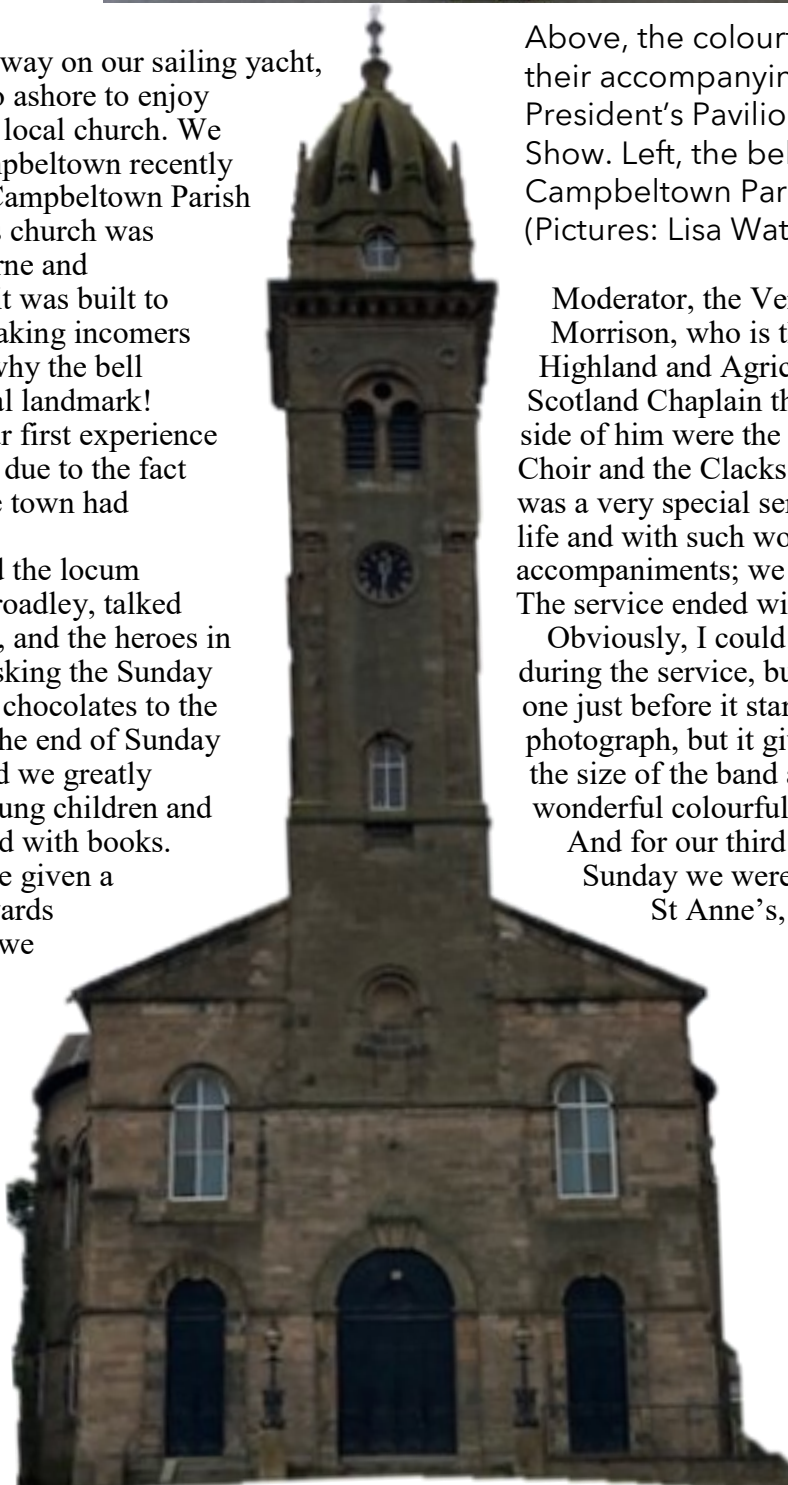
The second Sunday we were at the Royal Highland Show, where we attended the official service of worship held in the President's Pavilion. What a grand affair! The service was conducted by a former

Above, the colourfully attired choir and their accompanying band gather in the President's Pavilion at the Royal Highland Show. Left, the belltower of Campbeltown Parish Church (Pictures: Lisa Watson)

Moderator, the Very Rev Dr Angus Morrison, who is the appointed Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland Chaplain this year. Performing either side of him were the Edinburgh Pitchcraft Choir and the Clacks District Brass Band. It was a very special service aimed at agricultural life and with such wonderful musical and vocal accompaniments; we all sang our hearts out. The service ended with a blessing in Gaelic.

Obviously, I could not take a photograph during the service, but I surreptitiously took one just before it started. It's not the best photograph, but it gives you an indication of the size of the band and you can see the wonderful colourful outfits of the choir.

And for our third church? The following Sunday we were back among friends at St Anne's, Corstorphine.



Have you visited another church? Why not share your experiences with members of St Anne's? Please send about 400 words and a couple of pictures to the office.

# Meeting our new organist

**Marion Lees McPherson** has joined St Anne's as organist. In the 1970s she appeared with Bob Marley and played with a rock group from East London. More recently she has been at the forefront of a campaign for adjustable organ benches in churches, as **Tim Bullamore** reports



**R**etirement as organist of Stockbridge Parish Church in 2021 was meant to provide more free time for Marion Lees McPherson, better known in parts of the music world as Benni Lees. "I wasn't looking for a new post," she explains. "I was looking forward to deputising and had planned several weekends away."

However, a request from St Anne's to cover the organ for the Passion and Easter Sunday services gradually led to a rethink. "I knew of St Anne's, but I'd not previously seen the organ," she says. "It is a really nice church with a really great organ." She found that the St Anne's choir was not bad either. "They're extremely good," she says, voicing her admiration of their commitment and dedication.

Anyone fearing, or hoping for, a radical overhaul of the music at St Anne's can think again. "It will be a 'steady as she goes' approach to the music," Marion explains. "There will be no really radical changes. Maybe just the introduction of a little music new to St Anne's."

The music before and after the services will receive some gentle scrutiny from Marion's

experienced eye, but again nothing too extreme. "I like to connect it to the theme of the service if possible," she says. "It helps with the choice of music to have in mind the Church year."

Originally from Huntingdon, where her father gave her the nickname "Benni", Marion came to Scotland in 1987 after acquiring a husband who is a Church of Scotland minister followed by two children. Before that she had been the singer in a rock group. "At York University, I was in a band called Expensive," she told *The Scotsman* a couple of years ago. "There were three women singers while the men played the instruments."

In 1973 they were invited to be the support act for Bob Marley's band The Wailers at a gig in York. "They looked like fish out of water. Ultra-cool guys smoking these massive spliffs, dressed in this Rasta way which was a completely foreign world to us," Marion told *The Guardian*. The band impressed Marley so much

Marion with the Stepney Sisters. Right, with Fatima Catima

that he invited the women to be his backing singers, but they demurred. "We can't just up and leave, we've got three degrees to finish," she recalled them saying.

When they arrived in London in 1975 the men diversified into contemporary jazz, while the women wanted to continue singing together "so we decided to take up instruments ourselves," she said. In Marion's case it was the electric bass, an instrument she had started playing at the age of about 15, combining rock gigs on Saturday evenings with playing the organ at church the following morning. "Some Sunday mornings I went red-eyed to play for Matins having arrived back from a Saturday night gig only an hour or two earlier," she recalled in a Spotlight feature for the Society of Women Organists.

The London band expanded and became known as the Stepney Sisters. "We lived in a squat in Stepney with very little money," she said. Because of their shared belief in feminism, the Stepney Sisters (Marion on bass, with Ruthie Smith on sax, Nony Ardill

**'We lived in a squat in Stepney with little money'**

on guitar, Sharon Nassaur playing keyboards and Susy Hogarth their drummer) chose to write their own songs, taking on feminist issues and portraying women as positive and autonomous. “We printed the words and distributed them and appeared in feminist publications such as *Spare Rib*,” she added.

Along the way Marion held several jobs, including as a pianist for contemporary dancers. In 1981 she wrote the music for *Pigeon Street*, an animated children’s show on BBC television. “I was given the words of the songs which I put to music and arranged for the last band in which I played bass, Soulyard,” she recalled. She also wrote the music for ITV’s *Rub a Dub Dub*, a series of stories using nursery rhymes.

Once in Scotland she worked as a pianist for Scottish Ballet’s outreach team, often finding herself writing music to augment that of Tchaikovsky and other composers in contemporary renditions of the great ballet classics. She then found a full-time position at the Dance School of

Scotland in Glasgow. “The end of year performances at the King’s Theatre, Glasgow, were pretty special, and I wrote various pieces to order for the choreography as well as playing the piano and once again dusting off the bass in a piece with rock and bagpipes,” she added.

Marion became director of music at Stockbridge in 1995, which is where she first encountered Jamie. “He sang in a performance of Stainer’s *Crucifixion* with us,” she recalled. They have also worked together at Mortonhall Crematorium.

Home today is an old farmworker’s cottage in Liberton, in the south of Edinburgh, where Marion lives with her feline friend, Fatima Catima. Her son Matthew, a former police officer went on to study law and is becoming a procurator fiscal at the Crown Prosecution Service, while her daughter Madeleine is a yoga teacher in North Carolina in the United States.

In recent years Marion has attracted national attention for her

role in the Society Women Organists’ adjustable bench campaign (ABC), which has led to appearances in national newspapers and on Radio 4. The absence of adjustable organ benches is not a recent issue. As a teenage organist working on the tiny one-manual Hill organ in her local church, “playing the pedals was just about impossible for me as my legs didn’t reach the pedals from the non-adjustable bench, so I never really managed to play properly,” she said.

After returning to the organ in Scotland she again found that reaching the pedals was a challenge. Then one day she spotted a pair of chunky, high-heeled shoes in an organ loft. “Trying them on, in true Cinderella fashion, I found they fitted perfectly,” she said. The heels gave her the extra couple of inches she needed, although when she took her ARCO organist’s exam she was delighted to find that an adjustable bench was available. As indeed one will soon be at St Anne’s.



# Walking group's summer of great rambles

The St Anne's walking group had a good syllabus of walks this summer, with only one cancelled because of rain at the time of writing. Below is the group nearing the end of our walk through the grounds of Hopetoun House, where we spotted countless lambs and fawns running around.

By the time you read this the nights will be drawing in and the walks will be over, finishing at the end of August with a meal in the Torfin bar and restaurant.

We have also had a few daytime walks and there are at least two of these planned for September and October. Phone me

if you would like to know the details. You are welcome to join us. If anyone would like me to arrange short morning or afternoon walks, get in touch and I will see what I can do. Even if there are just two of us.

Muriel Gibson: 317 1335  
(Picture: Tim Bullamore)



## Summer Café

During the summer months, in the absence of Caring&Sharing@St Anne's and the FAN Club, the Summer Café has provided an opportunity for everyone to continue to meet for a time of company and conversation.

Along with our own St Anne's family, we have welcomed visitors from the wider Corstorphine community and even from as far afield as Australia.

The café has been well attended every week, but there is always room for more and while it has drawn to a close for this year, it would be lovely if we could welcome even more supporters next year.

## Exercise challenge

Are you fit enough for old age?

If you think we are joking, we are not. Getting older is a challenge, the kind of challenge that we in the Seniors Exercise Class enjoy facing up to.

Every Monday morning we work on our balance and strengthen hips, pelvic floors and abdominal muscles. With old age we lose muscle bulk and strength. This is addressed with resistance bands. All this is choreographed to music. We are sociable and have lots of laughs while doing ourselves good. FLEXercise Specially for Seniors is on Mondays from 10.35am to 11.45am in the Kaimes Hall.

## Cards for Ukraine



This painting of sunflowers by Yulia Koshova, a Ukrainian artist from Bakhmut, has been reproduced as a card by John Barrett. A pack of five costs £10 with all funds benefitting the people of Ukraine. Please contact John on 07801 057446 or by email: [barrett.john@btconnect.com](mailto:barrett.john@btconnect.com)



# Film Club

All welcome! Free entry, and refreshments provided.  
Doors open at 6.30pm. The show begins at 7.00pm.



**Tuesday, October 31**

## Chicken Run

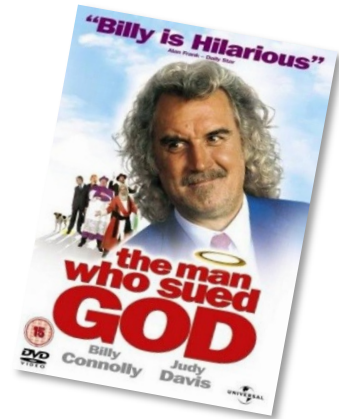
Basically, a re-make of The Great Escape – with chickens. Hilarious! (Second time lucky!)  
(84 minutes, Colour/animated, U)

**Tuesday, November 28**

## The Man who Sued God

“An hilarious, heart-warming tale of one man’s fight against the system...”

(96 minutes, Colour, 15,  
Contains strong language)



**Tuesday, December 19**

**NB: film begins at 6.45pm**

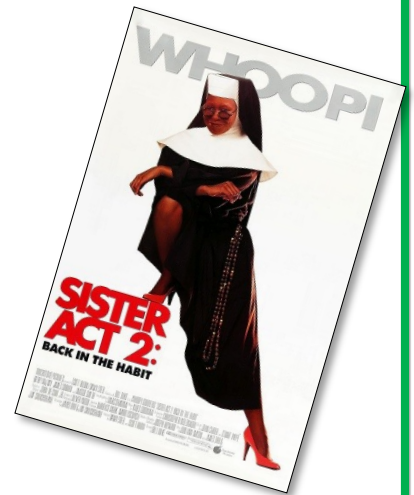
## It's a Wonderful Life

A 1946 American Christmas fantasy drama film based on the short story and booklet *The Greatest Gift* by Philip Van Doren Stern.  
(131 minutes, B&W, U)

**Tuesday, January 30**

## Sister Act 2 – Back in the Habit

Whoopie Goldberg as Sister Delores Van Cartier coming to the aid of her nun friends who need her help to save her old school. No mountain is too high! Foot-tapping fun!  
(107 minutes, Colour, PG)



**Tuesday, February 27**

## Roman Holiday

To get you in the mood for holiday planning.  
(113 minutes, B&W, U)

**Tuesday, March 12**

## Chocolat

A thought before Easter...  
(117 mins, Colour, 12)



# Behind the hymn: Now Thank We All Our God

Some famous hymns of praise and thanksgiving were written in astonishing circumstances of pain and distress. *Now Thank We All Our God* is no exception

The joy and serenity of this hymn are staggering, when you learn the circumstances in which it was written. Martin Rinkart was a pastor at Eilenberg, Saxony, during the terrible Thirty Years' War (1618-1648).

As a walled city, Eilenberg offered some protection to the inhabitants. No wonder that political and military refugees of all sorts poured into the city, making it dangerously overcrowded. Soon the water supply was fouled, the sanitation overwhelmed and the food ran out – leaving people famished and diseased.

In 1637 a terrible pestilence swept through the city, killing some 8,000 people including Rinkart's

Now thank we all our God  
With heart and hands and voices,  
Who wondrous things hath done,  
In whom His world rejoices;  
Who, from our mother's arms,  
Hath blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love,  
And still is ours today.

Oh may this bounteous God  
Through all our life be near us,  
With ever joyful hearts  
And blessed peace to cheer us;  
And keep us in His grace,  
And guide us when perplexed,  
And free us from all ills  
In this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God  
The Father now be given,  
The Son, and Him who reigns  
With them in highest heaven,  
The one eternal God,  
Whom earth and heaven adore;  
For thus it was, is now,  
And shall be evermore.

beloved wife. By that time Rinkart was the only minister left in Eilenberg, because the others had either died or fled for their lives.

Rinkart alone conducted the burial services for 4,480 people, sometimes taking as many as 50 funerals a day.

Eilenberg was besieged and overrun three times – once by the Austrian army and twice by the Swedes. When a Swedish general demanded the town pay him 30,000 thalers, Rinkart pleaded that the impoverished city could never meet such a levy, but the general scorned him. At that, Rinkart turned to his companions and said: "Come, my children, we can find no mercy with man; let us take refuge with God."

On his knees there and then, Rinkart led his friends in a fervent prayer and in the singing of a hymn. The Swedish commander was so moved that he decided that the levy would not be 30,000 thalers, but instead be the considerably reduced sum of 1,350 thalers.

Somehow, out of the hell of the Thirty Years War came this lovely hymn of peace and total trust in God. Martin Rinkart had to dig deep into his faith to survive. The result was utter and serene dependence on God – despite the chaos and destruction all around him.

## A prayer for September

Dear Father in heaven,

September is a time of change, a change of season, changes in many areas of our lives as a new term begins and new opportunities present themselves. It can be a time of challenge and uncertainty for many of us as well as excitement.

Thank you Lord, that You never change, Your promises never change, Your Holy-Spirit inspired Word never changes. You are constant and rock-solid, always.

Help us to remember that You make all things new when we put our trust in Jesus, You give us new life and new ways of understanding, but help us also to remember that You never contradict Your revealed self. Help us always to check out our thinking with what You say in Your Word. Help us to be faithful to You as we take each step forward, each new day.

In Jesus name, Amen

(By Daphne Kitching)

## Social media

You can follow St Anne's on social media with the following links. Plus, don't forget that for those unable to join us in person, Morning Worship is broadcast live on Sunday morning at 11am via the website, where the recording is also available for a week.



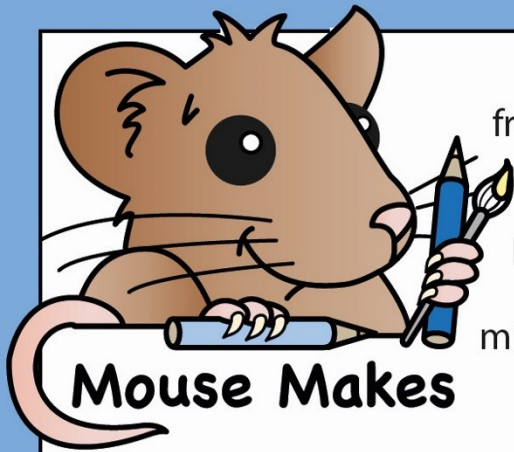
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# Mouse Makes

After Jesus miraculously fed 5,000+ people from two fish and five loaves, he sent his disciples off in a boat across the Sea of Galilee before going up a mountain by himself. Later in the night, as the boat was being blown and buffeted by the wind, Jesus came miraculously walking on the water towards them...

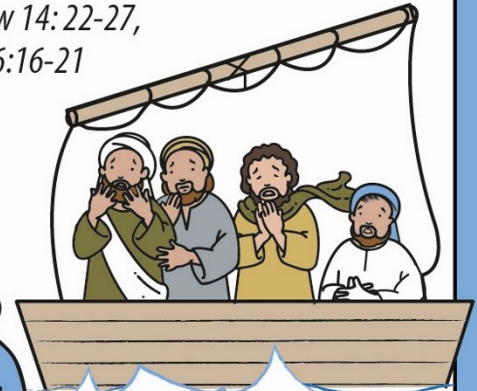
Read the story in: *Matthew 14: 22-27, Mark 6:45-56 or John 6:16-21*

**What did Jesus do when he went up on the mountain?**

\_\_\_\_\_ *Matthew 14:23*

**What was the boat struggling against?**

The \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ *Matthew 14:24*



**What did Jesus say to his disciples?**

Do not be \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ *Matthew 14:27*

**What did the disciples think Jesus was when they saw him walking on the sea?**

A \_\_\_\_\_ *Matthew 14:26*

**Who walked out on the water to Jesus?**

\_\_\_\_\_ *Matthew 14:29*

**What did Jesus say to Peter?**

Oh you of little \_\_\_\_\_ why do you \_\_\_\_\_ *Matthew 14:31*



W F W A F R A I D                      Y C K O C S  
 I N O T F E A R W A T E R M R B B O J  
 N N R L A L O N E K I N T O O O E M E  
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Answer the questions then find them in the word search

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# Diary dates: Sept-Nov 2023

## September

<b>Sunday 3</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship</b>
Wednesday 6	12 noon Lunch Club
Friday 8	10.30am FAN Club
<b>Sunday 10</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship</b>
Tuesday 12	2.30pm Guild
Wednesday 13	12 noon Lunch Club
Friday 15	10.30am Caring&Sharing
Saturday 16	2pm Whist
<b>Sunday 17</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship</b>
Wednesday 20	12 noon Lunch Club
Friday 22	10.30am FAN Club
<b>Sunday 24</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship (foodbank)</b>
Monday 25	10am The Acorn
Wednesday 27	12 noon Lunch Club
Friday 29	10.30am Caring&Sharing

## October

<b>Sunday 1</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship</b>
Wednesday 4	12 noon Lunch Club
	7.30pm Kirk Session
Friday 6	10.30am FAN Club
<b>Sunday 8</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship (Harvest Festival)</b>
Wednesday 11	12 noon Lunch Club
	7.30pm Book Club
Friday 13	10.30am Caring&Sharing
<b>Sunday 15</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship</b>
Wednesday 18	12 noon Lunch Club
Friday 20	10.30am FAN Club
Saturday 21	2pm Whist
<b>Sunday 22</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship (foodbank)</b>
Wednesday 25	12 noon Lunch Club
Friday 27	10.30am Caring&Sharing
<b>Sunday 29</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship with Holy Communion</b>
Monday 30	10am The Acorn
Tuesday 31	6.30pm/7pm Film Club: Chicken Run

## November

Wednesday 1	12 noon Lunch Club
	<b>7.30pm Holy Communion (All Saints)</b>
Friday 3	10.30am FAN Club
<b>Sunday 5</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship</b>
Wednesday 8	12 noon Lunch Club
Friday 10	10.30am Caring&Sharing
<b>Sunday 12</b>	<b>10.50am Morning Worship/Remembrance</b>
Wednesday 15	12 noon Lunch Club
	7.30pm Book Club
Friday 17	10.30am FAN Club
Saturday 18	2pm Whist
<b>Sunday 19</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship</b>
Wednesday 22	12 noon Lunch Club
Friday 24	10.30am Caring&Sharing
<b>Sunday 26</b>	<b>11am Morning Worship (foodbank)</b>
Monday 27	10am The Acorn
Tuesday 28	6.30pm/7pm Film Club: The Man Who Sued God
Wednesday 29	12 noon Lunch Club
	7.30pm Kirk Session



Children and young people are welcome at the Sunday Club. Join us in the Sanctuary at 11am for the first part of the Morning Worship, then go out for activities.



Tea and coffee are served in the Kaimes Hall each Sunday after the service. All welcome!