The Outlook

magazine of Inverleith St Serf's Church

March 2024

Finance update p12

Inverleith St Serf's Contacts

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Next Issue

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Editorial for Lent

by The Rev Dorothy U Anderson

According to the internet, Lent is the forty day (sometimes called 6-week) period before Easter. From the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, to the day before Easter (ie this year from 14 February to 30 March) is not 40, but 46, days. And that is because the 6 Sundays that fall within that period don't count as Lenten days.
For traditions which, more so in former times than today, observed a strict period of fasting during Lent, Sundays were a day off from the time of penance and the rigours of eating a meagre diet. Each Sundays was a 'mini Resurrection', a time of thankfulness.

Forty days in the wilderness

The 40 days of Lent echo the time Jesus spent in the wilderness before he began his earthly ministry. The details about how Jesus is tempted by hunger, by idolatry or to put God to the test are found in the fourth chapters of the gospels of Matthew and Luke.
But Mark's gospel – which we are following this year - gives no such detail. Instead, we are told only that Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days, tempted by Satan, and with both wild beasts and ministering angels.

By stripping the story of the details, Mark invites us to ponder the significance of the 40 days. The first thing to say is that in ancient times, when people measured time differently, if at all, from the way we do, and for whom numerical or chronological precision was not important, numbers were more often used symbolically than precisely. So '40' generally meant not an exact number of days or years, but simply 'a long time'.

The significance of 40

In both scripture and Jewish tradition the period of forty days or years is significant:

- in the story of Noah, the rain fell for 40 days and nights, causing the flood which destroyed the earth;
- the Israelites spent 40 years wandering in the desert before entering Canaan;
- and Jonah prophesied that Nineveh would be destroyed in 40

days because of its wickedness – albeit that his prophecy brought about repentance and God relented.

In each of these cases, '40' is associated with hardship, punishment, testing and/or preparation for a new start. For the people of Bible times, any story that contained the number 40 would bring to mind these stories from their history and all that they represented.

Which brings us back to Jesus in the wilderness. There is no element of punishment, but a time of testing and preparation it most certainly was. A chance to be alone with God, to think about the journey ahead and establish that he had fortitude to endure the trials that were to come his way. A time to get ready for the new start.

What does Lent mean for us?

In a church that for generations more or less ignored Lent and did not see it as a time of preparation or testing, what does all this mean for us?

Whether we see Lent as a time of penitence, denial or testing, or not; whether we give something up or take something on;

surely none of us can deny the new start that comes at Easter?

All of us know of the importance of the Resurrection and the new beginning it heralds.

Presbytery Mission Plan—not quite 40!

Whilst the Presbytery Mission Planning process has gone on for a long time – though not quite 40 years! – perhaps we are beginning to see the way ahead and think about the new start that will bring. So maybe we can use *this* Lent as a time of preparation, a time to be alone with God and to equip ourselves and our church for the next steps in the journey.

Certainly this journey will involve the difficulty of change, the challenge of letting go, the need for obedience and discipline, and doubtless sundry temptations too. But it also gives us the hope and the promise of a new beginning, the possibility through him of life in greater fullness through Christ who died and rose again for us.

With blessings,

Dorothy

Church Family

New member

We welcome to the congregation by certificate of transference

Ms Gilian MacPherson

Deaths

'There is nothing in death or life, in the world as it is, or the world as it shall be, nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord'

Mrs Margaret Cameron

Mrs Pam Martin

Mr Ron Cutt

Our thoughts and prayers are with their families and friends.

Pastoral arrangements

Please contact Kate Walker or Helen Hannan regarding pastoral issues such as illness. The local undertakers are aware of arrangements if a member dies.

Worship in March

The Rev Dorothy U Anderson will conduct the services in the sanctuary at 10.30am.

Everyone is welcome.

3 March	10.30 worship in the sanctuary Fresh Start collection of household goods (see p21)
4 March	10.30 Pram Service in the small hall
10 March	10.30 worship in the sanctuary
17 March	10.30 worship in the sanctuary
20 March	14.00 Afternoon Communion—enter from Clark Road
24 March	10.30 Palm Sunday worship in the sanctuary

For Holy Week and Easter services—see p9

Granton Baptist food bank collection

We continue to collect food items for the food bank. Collection points are at the Church Centre and in the church vestibule. Money donations are welcome and should be put into the separate box alongside the baskets. Please ensure that the 'use by' date is well in advance.

Holy Week & Easter services

Monday 25 March

7pm Granton Parish Church

Tuesday 26 March

7pm Granton Parish Church

Wednesday 27 March

7pm Granton Parish Church

Maundy Thursday

28 March

7pm Maundy Thursday Communion at Wardie Parish Church

Good Friday

29 March

7pm Ecumenical service at Inverleith St Serf's Parish Church

Easter Day

31 March

10.30 Early Birds, Pram Service, Holy Communion and Easter celebration

Early Birds

Clocks, calendars and Jonah

On Easter Sunday 31 March the Early Birds and Pram Service families will be joining the wider congregation at the 10.30am service in the Church.

After the first part of the service, the Early Bird and Pram Service families will go out for an Easter Egg hunt – hopefully in the garden, but inside if the weather does not permit.

Therefore, there will be no Early Birds service on March 17 - the third Sunday in March.

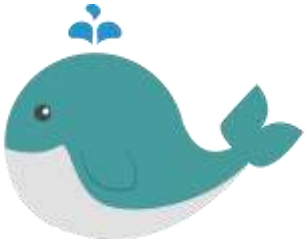
In January, at the first service of 2024, the Early Birds acted out the New Testament story of Jesus' visit to the home of Martha and Mary. There were lots of busy Marthas cooking and cleaning in the kitchen and two quieter Marys listening to Jesus.

After the story, the children made clocks to think about how they might make time each day for Jesus. They then made calendars to look at making time for Jesus in the weeks and months of the year ahead.

One of the cat clocks, made by Sophie, is pictured. In February the Early Birds will be looking at the Old Testament story of Jonah and the whale. There will be no re-enactment!

We look forward to seeing you on Easter Sunday.

Early Birds Team



Early Bird Sophie's cat clock

Finance update

Finances dependent on rent and lets

Without income of £15,858 from renting the manse and a one-off refund in respect of gas charges of £3,801, we would have run a deficit for the year to December 2023. Congregational giving covered only 64% of our costs.

Surplus in 2023

As it was, at the recent meeting of the Kirk Session, I was pleased to report a surplus for the year ended 31 December 2023 of £18,294.

However, the underlying figures highlighted this was entirely covered by the income from renting the manse and the one-off refund.

In addition, we enjoyed income of £24,503 from hall lets and £3,992 from letting the property in Royston Terrace.

On the other hand, income from the offering plate and freewill offerings, including gift aid, of £72,397 was down on the previous year by £1,142.

Our expenditure remained well under control, only rising by £1,370 on the previous year.

Fuel costs due to double to £22,500 in 2024

Substantially increased costs in 2024

In 2024 we face very substantial increases in our electricity and gas charges which are set to rise from £12,224 in the year to nearly double at £22,500. In addition, our ministry costs, which include the contribution to Giving to Grow, the locum services and the Presbytery dues, will rise by 12% to £64,000.

On the basis of congregational giving remaining the same as in 2023, it will be noted this will fall short of covering just these two costs by over £14,000, placing even greater reliance on our other sources of income. Assuming we can continue to let the manse, I am forecasting we may just breakeven in 2024.

Charitable giving

Members are most generous in supporting retiring and special

collections and contributing to charities such as the Granton Food bank. Last year these monetary donations all totalled nearly £6,000.

Need to increase congregational giving

I will be urging all members of the church to review their giving as we must seek to achieve a position each year that is much closer to covering our annual costs and placing less reliance on temporary sources of income such as the manse let.

Large hall upgrade funded by reserves and previous fund-raising

I should stress the 2024 budget relates purely to our regular running costs and does not include any costs relating to the hall refurbishment. That will be funded from our reserves, some of which resulted from specific fundraising efforts a few years ago.

In summary

To summarise, while we have enjoyed a comfortable surplus in 2023, I hope I have highlighted that

- there is no room for any sense of complacency; and
- there is a need for us to give serious consideration to our own giving in the coming year.

Charles Sharp
Finance Convener

Green Corner

Toilet Twinning

Heartfelt thanks to everyone who made the Shrove Tuesday Pancake afternoon such a success. It was good to see so many people in the hall, to hear the chatter and to enjoy the pancakes.

But most of all it was great to raise so much money. The Eco Group had hoped to raise enough to twin about half of the church toilets: in fact we raised over £900, enough to twin all of them and a bit more. That is a tremendous amount to raise in a couple of hours and we are very grateful.

It also means that at least 15 families will be provided with proper toilet facilities and the chance of a better, healthier, longer life.

Many, many thanks.

Recycling for Good Causes

As we did last year, we are collecting your unwanted 'stuff', to recycle and raise funds for the church.

The items we want are:

Jewellery & Watches – of any material and even if damaged or broken

Currency – any coins or banknotes, UK & foreign (even if out of circulation)

Cameras – digital, video and the sort that take film

Stamps - including albums, first day covers, presentation packs, collections

Mobile Phones & Gadgets - Sat Navs, ipods, MP3 players, games consoles, games & accessories.

Leaflets are available for you and your neighbours, friends, families…please take some.

Collection boxes will be available throughout March and April.

The Eco Group

Presbytery records inspection

The Presbytery will once again be using our small hall to inspect the records of Edinburgh congregations. This year the inspection will take place on 4 and 5 March.

Midweek afternoon communion

There will be a midweek afternoon communion on **Wednesday 20 March at 2pm**. This short act of worship is aimed at individuals who are looking for a quiet, reflective service with communion. All are welcome.

Please enter by way of the Church Centre. Refreshments will be served after the service.

Bible journalling retreat day

St James's, Goldenacre, are holding a 'Bible journalling' retreat day on Saturday 23 March from 10.30am-3pm.

The retreat will be led by Rev Jane MacLaren, priest-in-charge at St James's.

The event costs £10, payable in cash on the day. You are invited to bring your own bible and a packed lunch.

For further information and to enroll email: stjamesgoldenace@gmail.com.

Guild news

Look forward in faith
New Wine, New Wineskins

Unforeseen circumstances have necessitated a change to our Guild Programme for March.

Please note there will be NO MEETING on 5 March.

'BITE & BLETHER WITH THE GUILD' will be on TUESDAY 19 MARCH at 1pm. All are welcome to join us for a SOUP LUNCH. Entry by donation - please give generously!

This is a fundraiser for our Guild Project: KAZUNZU VILLAGE of HOPE - by LAKE VICTORIA in TANZANIA.

Our final meeting of this session will be on 9 APRIL when we will report on the year, disburse our funds, make plans for any summer gathering and look forward to next session.

Fiona Davies

Bite & Blether with the Guild

19 March 1pm

Mission

Charity partner - special focus for Inverleith St Serf's

We introduced you to Thistle, the charity our church will support for the next two years, last month. This month we want to give you a little more detail on the specific project we will be focussing on.

The project is the **Centre of Wellbeing** based at the Thistle Foundation in Craigmillar. The project is focused on providing wellbeing support to people living in Edinburgh delivering face to face and over the phone and online consultations.

The range of delivery methods has had a really positive impact on their ability to support people who might not previously have been able to access services due, for example, to transport and/or mobility issues.

Their Health and Wellbeing Practitioners are able to support people during 1:1 consultations and they also deliver, 10-week lifestyle management courses. They also deliver their Well Programme featuring three group-based courses which complement their lifestyle management course. These courses focus on: supporting people to

- feel more in control,
- cope better and

- build confidence by addressing psychosocial factors, health inequalities, trauma and social determinants: Well (mindfulness), eating well (nutrition/healthier eating) and moving well (physical activity).

In 2022-2023 The Centre supported over 140 people from Edinburgh through 1:1 sessions, offering over 800 appointments and running four Lifestyle Management Courses.

Nothing is more powerful than a statement from a service user. This is Malcolm's story:

"When I was 14, I felt like I'd been given a life-sentence. I didn't die of my brain haemorrhage, but life as I knew it stopped.

"Then I had a second one when I was 18. By 22, I felt alone, desperate, scared and in urgent need of help.

"With the support of a Thistle Health and Wellbeing Practitioner, I started to rebuild my life. I developed my confidence so I could start taking a few tentative steps without my crutch. Today, I only need it for longer distances. But it was an amazing feeling to know I could take those first steps on my own.

"I've seen first-hand how people benefit from Thistle's support. I now work for Thistle making films and using social media to tell people about the work we do to help stop someone's health crisis becoming a life crisis."

The support Thistle provide through their health and wellbeing team would not be possible without their fundraisers, donors, funders and amazing team of volunteers! We are delighted here at Inverleith St Serf's to be contributing to this wonderful cause.

Susan Brown for the Mission Committee

Pram Service

March 4 10.30am

No Pram Service in April

Coffee House

Friday 8 March
in the Church Centre
Anytime from 10.00 -11.45am

All welcome to come for a cup of coffee or tea, a treat and a chat with friends or arrange to meet friends for a social morning. We look forward to seeing everyone on 9 February.

Next Coffee House - 9 April.

Fresh Start

Fresh Start (the charity helping people who have been homeless get established in their new home) has put out an appeal for small electrical items, eg, kettles, toasters, lamps, etc.

This Photo by Unknown Author is li-

The next uplift from Inverleith St Serf's is Sunday 3 March.

Let us pray …

Our Father, we look to you, the Creator, the beginning and the end.

You are unfailing in your walk beside us but we look around, distracted by many things, too busy, too anxious, too fearful and feel forsaken; our strength fails us. Winter strikes; our soul, our lives, become cold, dreary and stark.

Help us to look to you again and find signs of Spring: buds of future growth, the beauty of early flowering in our hearts, the emergence of hope and colour.

Keep us, we pray, nurturing the new growth; weeding out what smothers our souls; pruning the dead wood; protecting new shoots so we might grow into our full glory in your light.

Lord of all creation, make us builders of Your kingdom. Where poverty and inequality tear down justice for all Your children – Lord of all creation, make us builders of Your kingdom.

Where greed and ignorance tear down the ecology of Your environment – Lord of all creation, make us builders of Your kingdom.

Where loneliness and illness tear down life in all its fullness – Lord of all creation, make us builders of Your kingdom.

Where fear and anxiety tear down daily lives – Lord of all creation, make us builders of Your kingdom.

God of goodness, as we journey through Lent towards the Winter of Good Friday and beyond to the resurgence of Spring on Easter Day, send us out to tell the truth, to do good, and to work for righteousness.

Empower us to live as children of light in Your world.

Amen

March Nostalgia Cafe

March Nostalgia Café is on

<u>Thursday 28 March</u>

at 2pm.

All welcome

new
EDINBURGH
ORCHESTRA
Vaughan Williams
Overture 'The Wasps' (1909)
Felix Mendelssohn
Violin concerto in E minor, op. 64
Andrea Gajic—violin
Alexander Campbell Mackenzie
Benedictus op. 37 no. 3
Martinů: Symphony no. 2 (1943)
Tim Paxton, Conductor
Joanna Duncan, Leader
7.30pm
Saturday 16th March 2024
Inverleith St. Serf's Parish Church
280 Ferry Road, Edinburgh, EH5 3NP
Tickets £12/£9/children free
From members of the orchestra, on the door or via our website
http://www.newedinburghorchestra.org.uk
Registered Scottish Charity no.SC023729