

# the LINK

February 2010

The magazine of Morningside United Church, Edinburgh



## **A prayer for Haiti**

Loving God of creation,  
at this time of devastation  
we hold before you the people of Haiti.  
When the damage is unimaginable,  
and the suffering seems overwhelming,  
remind us that every person affected  
is loved, honoured and precious in your sight.  
We remember all those who have been hurt;  
all who have lost their homes, livelihoods and loved ones.  
Work through us to bring healing  
to broken and distorted lives,  
peace to those who have been thrown into despair,  
light to those in darkness,  
and hope to those who fear.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus  
in whom all life and grace is found.  
Amen

## A letter from the minister...



Dear Friends

The year has started in challenging mood. Compared to the terrible disaster which struck Haiti on 12 January, our own local difficulties are as nothing! Please read the enclosed leaflet for an article from Christian Aid about how we can help their relief work there. And please pray continuously for all victims, families and relief workers.

Here along with the Dry Rot (as I write the work to remedy the situation is moving into its final phase) there has been the phenomenal weather with week after week of snow and ice changing our whole landscape. At least two of our members have been accident victims as a result, and we wish them well for speedy recoveries.

At the other end of the spectrum our children (and some of their parents) have been out sledging and enjoying the winter wonderland.

The cold snap seems to be past (at least for the present). February often seems to be a sort of in-between month. But it does bring Ash Wednesday and the beginning of the Lent period. Which means we are already looking forward to the Easter season. In the very pressured commercial world you were probably seeing, as I was, Easter eggs in the shops around the 27 December.

The world tilts on its axis then, and we move towards spring. In the northern hemisphere at least the church looking towards its time to celebrate new life coincides with what is happening in the gardens and countryside around.

The rhythm of life. The rhythm of faith! As part of the national UK committee that thinks about the sort of preparation and learning required to support all those who minister within the church, I found myself recently in a meeting where a particular paper was being considered. To what extent need ministers be required to keep working at their theology? Or to what extent is it more important to be “doing” - striving for relevant, “switched-on”, charismatic leadership? Not that the two are mutually exclusive.

My point is for us all. Sometimes our activity needs to be tempered with those rhythms! Church and world are not in some kind of competitive tension. Drawing closer to a sense of the Spirit in creation brings us closer to the Spirit acting within ourselves. That is one of the reasons why I think it is good that we are an eco-congregation – which means that we are sensitive to that kind of connection. And it is good that many of our members individually are involved in different ways with trying to bring about a better cared-for world.

This Lent think especially of what the Church has to be thinking about in these days. The people of Haiti; our world post-Copenhagen; in the midst of financial challenges; looking around and trying daily to understand better our calling.

Yours sincerely,

*John*

## Snowy Days...



It snowed on and off for about three weeks - the worst, they said, for 30+ years. This pretty scene is at Blackford Pond.

The view from the back window at Midmar Avenue. The tennis courts look a bit different from what Murray was enjoying in Melbourne!



One lady had an unfortunate encounter with the manse front wall one Sunday afternoon. Thankfully, she was unhurt. (The same cannot be said for her car!)

# News.....

Sad news from two of our colleagues. Associate Minister Revd Fran Ruthven's father died, and she travelled back to the States in January for the Memorial Service.

Former Associate Minister Revd Sue Kirkbride lost her mother who lived down in Wales.

We extend our love and sympathy to both those friends.

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PIANO RECITAL to celebrate ...

## **CHOPIN'S BIRTHDAY!**

Monday, 1 March at 7.30 pm in MUC (Tickets at door £10.00)

given by Andrew Johnston

Andrew Johnston is one of the newest talents on the Scottish classical music scene. He is an accomplished performer, both in the UK and abroad, both as a soloist and a chamber musician. He has performed concertos with the State Symphony Orchestra of Kiev, the Chernighev Sinfonia, the Helensburgh Orchestra, the University of Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Rose Street Ensemble and other orchestras. These have included Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto no.1, Grieg Piano Concerto, Prokofiev Piano Concerto no.3, Beethoven Concerto no.3, and Shostakovich Piano Concerto no.1. As a recitalist, Andrew has performed a variety of works such as the complete Chopin Ballades (Reid Hall, Edinburgh 2005), Mussorgsky's 'Pictures at an Exhibition' (Glasgow Art Club, 2006) and a number of recitals throughout Scotland, England and Kiev (Ukraine). He has participated in masterclasses with Berndt Goetzke, Hamish Milne, Radoslav Kvapil, Sergei Dukachev amongst others, and is currently studying with Norma Fisher. In addition to his performing activities, Andrew works at the University of Edinburgh as a tutor, and teaches privately and at Stewarts Melville School. He completed his Masters Degree in Musicology, and he has performed Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue with the University of Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra and visited Riga in Latvia to give a recital and a series of masterclasses.

## Green fingered appointment

A group of horticultural experts have been appointed to the team creating NHS Lothian's community gardens.

The charity, Cyrenians, will oversee the creation and development of the community gardens planned for the Royal Edinburgh Hospital.

Up to 30 gardens will be created on unused land within the hospital grounds over the coming years. Each garden will be created and kept by local people and community groups.

Charles Winstanley, Chair, NHS Lothian said: "NHS Lothian recognises the role gardens play in creating a pleasant environment for patients, their families, visitors and the staff in our hospitals. These community gardens are particularly special as they differ from allotments. They bring members of the local community and patients together as they work alongside each other to grow things."

Des Ryan, Chief Executive of Cyrenians said, "NHS Lothian has shown great vision in making this land available for the Community Gardens project. Turning the vision into reality is going to take a lot of hard graft and we're looking to bring together a wide range of people from the local community to make it happen.

Morningside United Church has been invited to be part of the consultative process by sending along a group of people to take a look and offer suggestions! If you would like to be part of that group please speak to John Smith or Mike Hall.

"This is a great opportunity for local gardeners, community groups and businesses to get involved at an early stage in something new and exciting that promotes a better 21st Century way of life. We would also love to hear from people offering their time to help make it happen."



Community gardens feature allocated plots for individuals or groups to grow vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers. They may also have common areas of grass and other cultivation for the use of all.

The charity Cyrenians was appointed to manage the project after a formal tender process. They will shortly begin to liaise with community groups and members of the public to outline how they can get involved in the project. It is intended that the first gardens will be created in 2010.

## PRESBYTERY REPORT (continued from January)

One of the Deliverances passed at the last meeting of Presbytery on 1<sup>st</sup>. December 2009 was agreed before we knew that early January would see us plunged into sub-zero temperatures with snow preventing the ease of getting around that we are used to. The Deliverance was, “approve that the Clerk and Alison Swindells travel to Chennai early in 2010, to negotiate the development of the proposed partnership”.

Now the Clerk is of course the Rev. Dr. George Whyte, and Alison is the Rev. Alison Swindells of Greenbank Church. The proposal is the development of a partnership between the Presbytery of Edinburgh and the Diocese of Chennai. It all seems like a very good idea and I wonder if the afore mentioned Revs. are there even as I write, forwarding the negotiations and missing out on all the fun back home.

Some of you will have become aware that as from the 7<sup>th</sup> January, Polworth Church has become vacant. Rev. Dr. Linda Dunbar has taken up a full time locum post at Muirhouse, St. Andrew's. A vacancy is never easy, and I'm sure you will agree that we should wish God's blessing on our neighbours at Polworth at this time. The Rev. Colin Sinclair is acting as Interim Moderator.

At the meeting we also received a final report from the Committee on Mission and Discipleship on “Children/Family Ministry within Edinburgh Presbytery”. The Committee was previously instructed by Presbytery to review how best to resource and support congregations in the work of ministry to families and young people, and Safeguarding, by consulting with all congregations in the Presbytery and other relevant bodies. It was further instructed to bring an interim report to the October meeting and then this final report.

There are two main thrusts to the report: firstly to offer recommendations on the position of Children's Ministry Co-ordinator and secondly (more importantly) to deliver a Presbytery wide strategy for effective Christian work amongst those aged 40 and below. To gain a fuller picture and to find out what was happening at ground level a survey of all congregations was carried out establishing the statistics, and requesting answers to dreams, challenges, and recommendations with the question of how to facilitate all of this. This report has been commended to Kirk Sessions for study, with the overall suggestion that we think about how we can share resources; how we can share with other congregations in the city facing similar issues; how our worship patterns connect with the parish; how can we enthuse/inspire the section of the population who work; and, what gospel are we presenting?

This is a very good and well thought through report. The question is, where do we go from here? When I was working, before getting too old to anymore, one of the initiatives I really appreciated was access to a list of “good practice” in my field of work. Set up by the University of Stirling, it was easy to use and we shared right across Scotland. One of the recommendations is that Presbytery should be encouraged to “match make” between congregations to maximise effort. I would whole-heartedly agree with that. Whether Presbytery needs a person to co-ordinate all of this remains to be seen.

*Judith Aitken.*

*January 2010*

## **EDINBURGH MUNICH TWINNING VISIT**

by Jenny Martin

SEPTEMBER 2010



We have an exciting programme taking shape for next September 4th to 11th, when we entertain a party of about 30 friends from the Bavarian Lutheran Dekanat (Presbytery)

This is part of the long twinning arrangement between Edinburgh and Munich, and the visits have been going on very successfully every other year for nearly 30 years. The Presbytery of Edinburgh oversees events at this end.

We will be staying for a few days at Kinnoull House, near Perth, a former monastery with a stunning garden and view, and will have a conference on the theme "For God's Sake". We hope the speakers will include Cameron MacKenzie, Andrew Dick, Eirig Scandrett and Kathy Galloway.

In our spare time, we plan visits to Perth, Scone Palace, and other local places of interest where we will show our German friends around. The emphasis will be on Christian sites in the area.

Back in Edinburgh, we have a number of events like a reception at the council chambers, a visit to Edinburgh Castle including we hope one of the "Margarets" who look after St Margaret's Chapel to tell us about their work, and the war memorial. We should be able to catch the Festival Fireworks on the first night of the visit.

If you would like to know more, get in touch with either Suzette Bell (Secretary) on 0131 334 5241 or Niall Martin (Treasurer) on 0131 467 8468. Suzette, and Niall have been involved since 2000 when they both went to Germany and haven't missed an exchange visit since. A number of friends from South Leith Church are also involved, and the exchange is open to anybody living in the area of the Edinburgh Presbytery

### **ACCOMMODATION REQUEST**

We are also looking for accommodation for our guests with hosts during the few days they stay in Edinburgh, that is the nights of Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th September, then Friday and Saturday 10th and 11th. If you are able to help with this, please get in touch with Niall or Suzette, above. You will find it a lot of fun and have the opportunity to come to our events in Edinburgh if you wish.

If you don't understand German, you are not alone. Most of our visitors are fluent in English, and there is always an ongoing translation at talks and discussions.



**WORSHIP** each Sunday at 11.00 am - with Holy Communion on 28<sup>th</sup>

Saturday 6	BURNS SUPPER	6.45 for 7.00
Wednesday 10	KIRK SESSION (with Holy Communion)	7.00
Thursday 11	BOOK GROUP	7.30
Wednesday 17	ASH WEDNESDAY Service in Christ Church	7.30
Tuesday 23	OUTREACH GROUP	10.30
Thursday 25	BOOK GROUP	7.30
Saturday 27	UNITED ARTISTS	from 10.00

**MARCH**

Monday 1                      PIANO RECITAL (see p.4)                      -

# ROTAS

**FLOWERS**

- 7 Mrs Marianne Clyde
- 14 Mrs Dorothea Nelson
- 21 Mr Bert Remijsen
- 28 Mrs M Gunn

**DOOR and OFFERING**

- 7 Mr & Mrs M. Hall (466 0161)
- 14 Mrs Y. Burnett (229 5901) Mr J. Lambert (07512857169)
- 21 Mrs J. Aitken (339 4774) Mr J. Lambert (07512857169)
- 28 Mrs E. MacGregor (229 4621) Mrs J. Jenkins (229 1025)

**CRECHE**

- 7 Carolyn Macpherson      Yvonne Burnett
- 14 Sarah Scott                      Jenny Hall
- 21 Alison Stephen              Anna Annen
- 28 Dorothea Nelson              Alice Remijsen-Turk

**SOUND**

- 7 Bill McLeish
- 14 Mike Hall
- 21 Max Allan
- 28 Jim Armstrong