

# NORTH LEITH PARISH CHURCH MAGAZINE

March/April 2023

Dear Friends,

‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is..... Who do you say I am?’  
*Matthew 16:13*

Easter will soon be upon us, and the question Jesus asked of his disciple, Peter, lingers for us all to mull over. Who is Jesus and what difference does what I believe about him make to my life?

Imagine for a moment that Jesus came from your street and was known to us growing up; what would we say of him, and the claims that people made about him? Here are some thoughts from a person living in Nazareth, a neighbour who knew Jesus.

“Do you know what they are saying about him? You’re never going to believe it! There are all kinds of rumours going about – that he’s Moses, Elijah, or another of the prophets, but some are now actually claiming that he is the Messiah, the one we’ve all been waiting for all this time. Gods promised delivered.

I said you wouldn’t believe it, didn’t I? Yet plenty do, apparently; a great multitude is always around him, hanging on his every word, applauding his every action, following his every move with open admiration. And he has done nothing to discourage them, no attempt whatsoever to calm down their passion a little or prompt a moment’s reflection. I would say he is coming to believe what they are saying about him, allowing the hysteria to go to his head – at least that is how it seemed the other day when he strolled back into Nazareth, his followers in tow.

Not back five minutes and there he was in the synagogue interpreting the scriptures, telling us how we should all live our lives, as though he

were an expert, and has some special relationship with God, denied to the rest of us. Well, he may have fooled others, but he did not fool us – no chance of pulling the wool over our eyes. We have watched him grow up, followed his progress from when he was a wee bundle in his mother's arms, and we knew exactly who we were dealing with.

Oh, he has always been a nice enough lad, I'm not denying that, never any trouble like some I might mention, but he was just an ordinary young man, Jesus the carpenter's son, from the back streets of Nazareth, a local boy. We all knew about this man the crowds were flocking to, and, frankly, the idea of him being sent by God was laughable.

The proof is in the pudding, what did he actually do here when it came down to it? Precious few of those signs and wonders everyone was going about, and after all the hubbub we felt a little let down. It's strange though, for no one else has said that, not to my knowledge anyway.

I hear new reports about him day after day, and it's always the same story – healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, even raising the dead. Rather peculiar, he couldn't do it here. There must be an answer somewhere, mustn't there? Probably right under my nose if only I could see it. It's no good – we know the truth, don't we? We've seen it with our own eyes, so whatever else, the fault can't possibly lie with us."

**"Can it?"**

**Why not come along join us this Easter to ponder, along with others, who Jesus is for you?**

Simon Peter answered, *"You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."*

Your friend and Interim Moderator

*Karen*

Hello everyone,

I am writing in the Church Magazine to introduce myself as the new Locum Minister of North Leith Parish Church.

My name is John Tait and before I retired in October 2012, I had been a minister in Leith for 27 years; as Minister of Leith St Paul's and then Minister of Pilrig St Paul's Church.



I started as Locum on 13th February and I am settling in and getting to know what happens week by week at North Leith Church and the people involved.

I am intending to visit members over time. If you would like me to visit you soon, then please tell your elder and I will add your name to my list.

Being Locum Minister means I will be with you at North Leith, as we, along with our friends and fellow Church of Scotland members at South Leith and Newhaven Churches, work towards forming a new large parish together in the near future.

Not an easy journey, yet nevertheless an exciting journey, as we feel part of something special, with the potential of opening up new opportunities of mission together.

I look forward to getting to know you all better and sharing with you in the life of North Leith Church in the months ahead.

God bless you all.

*John*

## **Thankful Thoughts**

### **A Sonnet**

I'll be content with what I've got  
This shall be a thankful thought  
for I have everything I need  
to live in comfort, free of greed  
I've had my share of drama too  
yet carefully been carried through  
And when I see a world that's changing  
I count my blessings rearranging  
all these things that would upset  
and focus positive .... no regret  
Then I see a clearer way  
keeping well each day by day  
In helping others looking back  
I find that nothing do I lack!

*Written for Easter 2014 by Norma A. Macarthur  
and still relevant today*



## Upcoming Worship Services

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 11am: Palm Sunday service in North Leith

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm: Holy Week Service in South Leith with 10<sup>th</sup> BB Junior Section

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm: Maundy Thursday service with Sacrament of Holy Communion in North Leith

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April Noon - 3.00pm: Good Friday 'Tre Ore' in South Leith

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm: Good Friday service with Sacrament of Holy Communion in Newhaven

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm: 'The Way of the Cross at St Mary's Star of the Sea

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> April at 10.30am: Easter Sunday service in Starbank Park with Sacrament of Holy Communion

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April at 10.30am: Joint service in Newhaven church.



I attended the AGM at the beginning of December.

Fresh Start has moved on greatly with new innovative ventures.

The new Hub hosts cooking lessons and also does meals twice a week on Tuesdays and Fridays.

The Pantry gives out £20 of food for £4.50 with fruit and veg free.

They offer incentives such as, if people take porridge oats, they get jam and honey free. They also do pop-up shops where they could buy Christmas gifts for affordable amounts.

It is no longer a requirement that people have to be referred, they just need to be in need!

They also do counselling sessions for people who need help in accessing appropriate benefits and managing their budget.

*Ellen Lowe*

## **Finance brief updates**

- The total raised in the Christmas Appeal for the British Red Cross Afghanistan Crisis Appeal was £953.
- £258.75 was sent to the Turkey and Syria Earthquake emergency appeal.
- 2022 Annual Accounts – There was a surplus of income over expenditure for the year of £69,117. The surplus included three extraordinary items of income the largest (£75,000) of which was the final payment from the funds accrued from rental income from the previous BB property at 73 Ferry Road; we also drew down over £11,000 from our Consolidated Fabric Fund revenue account (held on our behalf by the Church of Scotland General Trustees) being investment income from the funds from the manse sale. Without the extraordinary income there would have been a deficit of nearly £18,000. Offerings were down by 16% from the previous year. Although the overall value of investments at the end of the year was down on 2021 the balance sheet total funds remain healthy.
- The Stated Annual Meeting of the congregation is to be held on Sunday 26 March. If anyone not able to be present would like a copy of the Annual Report & Accounts please ask.

## **New Parish Update**

The Presbytery Plan was agreed by Presbytery at its November 2022 meeting. It was then sent for approval to the national bodies concerned. They had some comments, none of which affect us, and the Plan is now due to go back to the Presbytery meeting on 25 April, 2023 when it is expected to 'go live'.



Our New Parish steering group continues to meet on a monthly basis, the same Sunday after we have our joint service.

A time line has been put together to enable us to keep focused on what requires to be completed to allow the union to take place.

There will be meetings of the three Kirk Sessions to discuss and vote on our Basis of Union.

The three congregations will also be meeting to discuss and vote on the Basis of Union. This will be on a Sunday after morning worship. This is where you all manage to have an input to our Basis of Union.

Please keep your eyes and ears open for the date that the meeting will take place.

*Karen McKay, Interim Moderator and Steering Group Chair*



**Kipawa reaches**  
**£500,000**



Many of you will remember Kipawa, the object of our Christmas appeal some years ago. It is a small Leith-based charity which supports food programmes in primary schools in Kenya. You may have seen an article in the Evening News recently.

Kipawa has been close to our hearts since its work began in 2010 and Margot and I were fortunate enough to visit Ruiru in Kenya in 2018

with our daughter Kirsty and to see the fruits of Kipawa's work first hand.

Thanks to the generosity of the people of North Leith and many others across Scotland and further afield Kipawa has just exceeded the wonderful total of half a million pounds. This enables them to provide 300,000 nutritious meals each year to the pupils of the three schools.

Unfortunately the cost of living crisis which we have become so aware of in recent months is a global phenomenon as countries like Kenya have to pay more for the food that they import. We have also realised the precariousness of supplies from Ukraine and Russia.

It is right that we respond to immediate disasters such as the Turkish earthquake but also that we maintain our support for the ongoing work of small charities like Kipawa.

You can find out more about Kipawa and how to make a donation at <https://www.kipawa.org.uk/home>

*Jimmy Hudson*

**And, in the End**      *From Stewart Lowe*

**“And, in the end, the love you take is equal to the love you make.”**

*Beatles*

The last, dying embers of “Abbey Road” were used by Ken Bruce to bring an end to his decades’ sojourn as a Radio 2 D.J. My mind turned to the ways in which the song argues that a mathematical certainty about love plays out in our lives.

I am no wise man and was never meant to be but it is clear to me that, on close examination, a mysterious pattern of coincidence and interconnectedness is revealed across the landscape of our existence. At the heart of this pattern is love.



My work at the Leith foodbank recently revealed a deep pattern of such connectedness, a pattern I could never foresee but would only be revealed as events unfolded.

On many occasions John would need the foodbank. John is a young man with an infectious smile, a relentless energy and an inexhaustible knack of landing himself in difficult situations. We have chatted over tea and cake on many occasions.

It turns out that he was a pupil at Wellington special school. This school was located on the outskirts of Penicuik. Coincidentally, I was teaching at Moore House special school in Bathgate. Our students came to us as a last resort, their lives blighted by insecurity and, on many occasions, violence. The two schools were members of a special football league with games taking place on Wednesday afternoons. John and I would have been on opposite sides. I try to close my eyes and catch sight of us both, he with his boundless energy and me fighting the passing of the years. As the member of staff I wasn't allowed to cross the half-way line but I was always one for getting carried away and, on one occasion, emotion got the better of me. I set off on a mazy, weaving here and there, or so I imagined, and on reaching the penalty box I let loose and the ball soared into the net. 10-1, our only goal and it was disallowed!

But what transforms this coincidence into something deep and strange is the fact that John's best friend, Ian, attended my school. He was there on those football adventures but, more importantly, he was at the centre of another magical episode in my life. Ian and I got on really well, to such an extent that we entered an Evening News poetry competition for secondary schools. We not only entered but we won and the school's joy and pride was remarkable. Ian glowed with happiness, his pals, his teachers sharing a moment of togetherness. We had played on a level playing field with all the other schools and won. Ian and I attended the City Chambers, him

looking smart in a new suit and haircut, the trophy and certificate in his hands. There were no family members, no relatives, nobody in his life to attend.

I have a photograph album from my years at Moore House. Ian stares out from a group photo, his eyes lost, his teenage frame hunched and uncertain.

John knew nothing about his pal's success: Ian didn't feel that his achievement mattered in the days and nights of his real life. Our joy, in the end, turned out to be not his joy.

Ian's life was cut short. Before he was 18, sniffing petrol fumes proved a deadly way to escape the anguish of his life.

John and I sit in the entrance hall, drinking tea and remember a lost friend. We can change nothing, clinging, as we do, to the love we made, as human beings for a pal, a pupil, who passed our way. How to measure the love Ian made, how to measure Ian's brief existence? We are all prisoners of our upbringing. Without love we are bereft of armour. Without love, we seek and escape, as Ian found out, to his cost.



## 142<sup>nd</sup> Guiding Units

A big THANK YOU to the Husband Bequest for supporting us in our successful sleepover at Jump In, Musselburgh on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2022. We had girls from the age of 4 to 14 and they all enjoyed it.

We took part in various activities available at the centre and watched a film, popcorn provided, before bedding down on the floor.



## **Church family**

**Deaths** – *we give thanks for the lives of the following members who died recently:*

Jessie Hepburn of Hawthornvale on 31 December 2022

Ian Low of Dudley Gardens on 29 January 2023

Sophia Robertson of Prince Regent Street on 7 February 2023

Margaret Borthwick of Laverockbank Road on 8 February 2023

William Greig of Downie Grove, Corstorphine on 8 March 2023

*Please remember to update us with any changes of contact details: postal address, phone number, email address; and any changes that may affect giving by Gift Aid.*



### **Easter**

When everything was dark  
and it seemed that the sun would never shine again,  
your love broke through.

We pray that the Easter light of life, hope and joy,  
will live in us each day;  
and that we will be bearers of that light  
into the lives of others.