

Church of Scotland



East Mainland Church News

www.eastmainlandchurch.co.uk

July 2023

Issue 57

Manse Letter July 2023

I had an amazing trip down to Edinburgh recently. Although I didn't go for the Beyoncé concert, the clubs and pubs were buzzing that weekend! I was there for the more sedate General Assembly, where I had the opportunity to reconnect with many old friends and colleagues. It was good to see how we have all grown a little wiser (that means more grey hairs!) and more seasoned (i.e., more rounded) over the years.

As I sat and listened to the engaging debates during the General Assembly, it reminded me of the significance of our presence in the world today. With fewer ministers to go around, it becomes crucial for each one of us to share the good news in a neighbourly way. Acts of kindness have the power to touch hearts and make a significant impact, especially considering the challenges we have faced due to the isolation caused by the pandemic. During a recent sermon, I shared a quote from the renowned theologian Karl Barth that deeply resonated with me. He summed up his faith with the words of an old children's hymn: "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so." This simple yet profound affirmation reminds us of the power and certainty of God's love, which we can always rely on.

In New York City, there is a minister named Bill Wilson who tirelessly serves his inner-city church in a violent neighbourhood. Despite facing immense challenges, Bill's dedication to his community is unwavering. A Puerto Rican woman, with limited English but a deep love for children, approached Bill and expressed her desire to contribute to the church's ministry. Although she felt uncertain about her talents, Bill recognized her love for children and assigned her to one of the church's buses that transported children to church from different neighbourhoods. Every week, she faithfully carried out her duties. On each journey, she would seek out the child who seemed to be struggling the most, cradling them in her arms and whispering the only English words she knew, "I love you. Jesus loves you." Months passed, and the woman grew particularly fond of one little boy who never spoke.

2.

Despite his silence, he faithfully came to Sunday school with his sister, sitting on the woman's lap. She would continue to affirm his worth and share the message of love all the way to Sunday School and back, week after week. Then, to her amazement, the little boy turned around one day and stammered, "I—I—I love you too!" He wrapped his arms around her, giving her a heartfelt hug. However, tragically, that very afternoon, the little boy was found lifeless. His own mother had taken his life and discarded his body callously in the communal bin. "I love you and Jesus loves you." These were some of the last words this precious child heard in his short life, spoken by a Puerto Rican woman who could barely communicate in English. This remarkable woman devoted her one talent to God, and through her simple act of love, a little boy who never experienced love at home was touched by the love of Christ.

While we may feel geographically distant from the streets of inner-city New York, we can still make a difference in our own community by sharing the boundless love of God. The most powerful way to accomplish this is by being good neighbours, as the well-known song asks, "When I needed a neighbour, were you there? Were you there?" I am confident that as a parish, we can resoundingly answer, "Yes, we are here!"

May we continue to spread love, kindness, and the message of God's unwavering love to all we encounter. Together, let's be a beacon of hope and a source of comfort in our community.

Kind regards, Chris

Ministry in East Mainland

I've now been here for over a year, and it has flown by! Now that I am settled in and as this year progresses, I am moving more to the pattern of ministry that was in my original calling.

Orkney's response to the crisis in ministry numbers is to transition to an Orkney-wide team ministry, and we are working towards achieving that as soon as possible.

When I arrived here, the general pattern was to spend roughly three days in East Mainland, one day on the Islands, and one day attending presbytery-wide matters and two days off. I have set up my office in the Kirk at East Mainland and am usually there most days from Sunday to Thursday. There I am readily available to respond to calls and emails. If you happen to pass by the church and see my car, feel free to drop in for a coffee! However, if you don't see the car or bike, it means I am not there at that moment. Obviously, these days can't be set in stone – weddings usually happen on Fridays or Saturdays and funerals any day so there is a bit of flexibility built in, but in general if the car or bike is at the Church - pop in and have a coffee. 😊.

3.

Church Open

After the holidays we are planning to have the Church open on Mondays – 10.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. where you will be welcome to spend some private time in contemplation and prayer, or to meet the minister and chat. Check the website to confirm when this starts.

Service and Live Streaming

Part of my call to East Mainland involved setting up the multimedia and streaming service for our Kirk. We now stream the service every Sunday at 11 a.m. – Hopefully, we have ironed out any little technical difficulties – but if the tech goes wrong during the service, it is all down to the minister on a Sunday so it can't be rectified there and then. If anyone would like to volunteer to find out how to work the equipment the minister would greatly appreciate it!

Live Stream Sundays from 10.45 a.m. at <https://eastmainland.online.church/>

Usually repeated Monday – Wednesday at 7 p.m.



The **Guild** meets on the First Wednesday of each month at the regular time of 2:30pm in the Session Room in the East Mainland Church.

On Wednesday 1st March, Carol Mainland opened the meeting, welcomed six members and the speaker for the afternoon, Richard Francis, who was to speak about his work as a Flood Prevention Officer. Dennis, his assistant, was also present with a DVD.

Ruth was the organist for the afternoon. Hymns, readings and prayer were taken from theme pack, “Wee seeds, Big trees.”

In his talk, Richard intimated that he is working with a group in St Margaret's Hope, where flooding can be a concern. Even communities in Orkney are prone to flooding, although we have no rivers.

Isobel provided a vote of thanks to Richard, explaining how she'd be much more aware of the teams of folk who try to avert disaster due to flooding. Ruth, Dennis, Carol and Morag were also thanked.

Morag Shearer

4.

On Wednesday 5th April Morag opened the meeting, welcoming six members and Isobel Clouston, the speaker for the afternoon. Morag intimated that Guild Week will be 9th -17th September 2023. The Orkney Guild Rally is on 1st June in the St Magnus Centre. Morag then introduced Isobel who gave a most interesting talk on the history of the Deerness kirks, highlighting her memories of church life from childhood to present day. Rev. Harald Mooney was the minister there for 55 years for the whole of his ministry. Isobel recalled the fashions when she was a child, men in suits, white shirts and tie, women in skirts or dresses and always wearing a hat. Flower Services, Communion and Harvest Thanksgiving celebrated on a week day, the kirk would be packed on all occasions. She also shared tales of Soirées, which were held each year after the AGM. Supper was served in a paper poke. The contents were quickly eaten then the poke was blown up, burst, scrunched up then thrown in the direction of the visiting ministers!! This always brought laughter. Ruth provided a vote of thanks to all who had contributed to the fun and fellowship of the afternoon.

Morag Shearer

At their meeting in May, Guild members welcomed guest speaker, Rev Julia Meason, who gave a most interesting account of a trip to Japan she and her husband, Kenny, made earlier this year. Through photos we travelled to an Immersive Art Gallery, wandering through rooms full of mirrors and LED lights, huge balls and flowers, which created impressive effects for all to enjoy.

Throughout their trip they tried to immerse themselves fully in the culture, trying lots of Japanese foods – challenging for an Orcadian farmer at times!! While chopsticks were commonly used, Julia was grateful she had learned some Japanese phrases – in particular “Can we have forks please!!”

She recounted visiting the Samurai Museum and attending a Kimono-wearing tea ceremony, informed us of the religions in Japan and showed many photos of the huge buildings, the dumpy cars and of their trip to the Hamarikyū Gardens where, although it was too late in the year for Cherry Blossoms, they were treated to seeing many, many other beautiful flowers and LOTS of butterflies.

They saw Mount Fuji, and stayed in a Japanese Inn, where they bathed in hot springs and experienced a ‘million course’ dinner with lots of small dishes, including raw tuna and raw squid. In Hiroshima they visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, where they saw the monument to the children who died after their effort to clear rubble after the nuclear explosion and they saw the Peace Bell, where you can pray for peace as you ring the bell. Julia found everyone very polite, and was tickled by the obsession for Kit Kats with over 300, some almost unimaginable, flavours. She is certainly looking for an excuse to make a 2nd trip in the near future.

Ruth Harvey

5.

Messy Kirk

On Friday 21st April, on a glorious spring day, we were delighted to be holding a “Messy Kirk” in the East Mainland Church. In case anyone is wondering what this is, it is exactly as it says! Time to let the bairns get messy in the Kirk on a Friday afternoon, after school. What fun! Paints, crafts, computer fun, races, sports activities, outside games, and much more were all on offer, and my goodness did the children (and the adults!) enjoy it.

Invitations had been issued to churches across the East Mainland, preparation and planning had been undertaken by a group from our own congregation as well as supporters from other Churches and we were all really looking forward to the event. We could not have been more pleased with how it went. The children and families that joined us were brilliant, joining in everything with great enthusiasm. It was fabulous to hear so much noise in the Kirk, with laughter, lots of blethering and running around both inside and outside – having the sunshine was a real bonus. After the fun and games, there was a short time for worship led by our Minister, Chris. This was followed by a hearty tea of baked tatties, beans, and cheese, followed by ice-cream and fruit.

Grateful thanks must go to all the bairns and adults who joined us – we thoroughly enjoyed having you with us. Thanks too, to all the people who made “Messy Kirk” the success it was.

Marlyn Firth

The Orkney Labyrinth – Welcome to our labyrinth, a place of prayer, meditation and contemplation where we invite you to pause for a few moments and reflect. A labyrinth has been cut into the church grass. Please visit.

Fund Raising

Savoury Teas Many thanks to all who helped in any way to make this a very successful afternoon when £976.31 was raised for church funds.

East Mainland Church Calendars are now on sale priced £5.00

A Big Sing - A community sing. Date to be announced.

Small Change – Big Change. Tubs are available at the church to gather loose change.

Blythswood Shoebox Appeal – Pamphlets available in September.

St Andrews School

Time has flown by and we are fast approaching the end of another school year. At St Andrews Primary School we have really packed in lots of fun with our learning this term.

We always enjoy our music here at St Andrews and we were lucky enough to welcome the Paddy Callahan Trio into the school during the **Folk Festival** week. We all had so much fun dancing and clapping along to the traditional music!



We are also extremely proud of all our **artwork**, exploring line, tone and texture.



Not only have we excelled in the Arts, but our sporting talents have not gone unnoticed! St Andrews participated in the **Primary Athletics Day** where we came away with a staggering total of 13 medals, 6 gold, 5 silver and 2 bronze. There were many outstanding performances and we are so proud of all the children who took part. In the 9 – 10 age group, Grace Scott came 3rd, Tyler Chapman came 2nd and Jamie Baillie came 1st. In the 11 – 12 age group, Christopher Barnby came 3rd overall. Congratulations to them all.

7.

Sports day was a huge success. All the children had so much fun and they would all like to say a BIG thank you to **Orkney Ice-Cream** for kindly donating enough ice-cream for every child in the school! Yummy! Congratulations to the overall house Champions – The Seals!!



Inside the classroom we have been working hard too!



The best thing about St Andrews school is the team spirit. The children are always willing each other on to be the best they can be, supporting one another and congratulating each other on their successes.

From the whole St Andrews School community, we wish you all a very happy summer.



We Remember – Jean Wylie 28/2/23
Colin Wylie 10/3/23

8.

Each **Sunday at 11:00am Worship** takes place in **East Mainland Church** All welcome!

19th July - Friendship Club – a get together on the third Wednesday of the month. East Mainland Church Halls 2:00pm-3:15pm

16th August - Friendship Club – a get together. East Mainland Church Halls 2:00pm-3:15pm

27th August – Sacrament of Holy Communion in the East Mainland Church. All Welcome

27th August - Sponsored Walk 2pm from Holm Hall, down Back Road to Loch, up Ferryhouse Road, along past Cleat to Dave Gray's house, across road to Biggings Loan, turn right to Braesdean, then to West Breckan Road, down to West Greaves Road, left towards village, and back to either Hall or Ferry Inn for well-earned refreshments! Sponsor forms available soon.

20th Sept - Friendship Club – a get together. East Mainland Church Halls 2:00pm-3:15pm

18th Oct - Friendship Club – a get together. East Mainland Church Halls 2:00pm-3:15pm

The minister can be contacted by e-mail. christopher.wallace@churchofscotland.org.uk or by telephone 01856 525 017

Church Website: either go to <https://eastmainlandchurch.weebly.com/> or scan this QR code with your 'phone



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Please email articles, using Times New Roman size 12, for the next newsletter to joy.tait1@outlook.com

Church of Scotland Congregation no.452360, Scottish Charity No. SCO019770 Article for East Mainland – September 2021