

COMMUNITY NOTES - 25 FEBRUARY 2024

GREYFRIARS KIRK



WELCOME
TO WORSHIP

MINISTRY TEAM

Sue MacGregor
Gillian Couper
Prof Bert Kerrigan KC



Sunday 25 February 2024 – Second Sunday in Lent

Today's morning worship is at St Columba's by the Castle in Johnston Terrace, and is a joint service with our ecumenical partner churches, St Columba's and Augustine United.

NOTES

Forthcoming Services and Events

Today	7.00 pm: Study Service (see NOTE below).
Thursday 29 February	1.10 pm: Midweek Prayers
Sunday 3 March	9.15 am: Holy Communion 10.30 am: Morning Worship 12 noon: Fellowship Lunch at St Cuthbert's 12.30 pm: Gaelic Service
Sunday 10 March	10.30 am: Morning Worship 12.30 pm: Gaelic Service

Study Service

The topic of the Study Service this evening will be **"How about Lent? Does the Gospel of John suggest a new angle on it?"** To set us all thinking, see further on for an exceptionally useful short outline of the whole church's historical attitude to Lent.

The Study Service meets by Zoom from 7.00 pm to 8.00 pm. For the Zoom link, email Bob Walker at bob@hebrides.u-net.com.

Concerts and Events at Greyfriars

Check out <https://greyfriarskirk.com/events/> for information on all our upcoming events and concerts. The regular lunchtime concerts continue this Thursday, 29 February, at 12 noon with an organ recital by Matthew Beetschen, the organist at Dunfermline Abbey.

Concerts and Events elsewhere

Augustine United Church – <https://www.augustine.org.uk/about-us/diary/>

St Columba's by the Castle – <https://www.stcolumbasbythecastle.org.uk/>

St Cuthbert's – <https://stcuthberts-edinburgh.uk/>

Grassmarket Community Project – <https://grassmarket.org/whats-on/>

Greyfriars Charteris Centre – <https://www.charteriscentre.com/> especially the regular Coffee Morning from 10.30 am to 12 noon on Thursday week, 7 March, and fortnightly thereafter.

Podcasts, Conversation and Cake

Some of us are gathering for informal, relaxed conversations about faith, belief and theology, inspired by podcasts. Think traditional book group, but podcasts instead. We're meeting at **5:30 – 7 pm** over the next three Mondays (**12, 19 and 26 Feb**), on the sofas downstairs in the enterprise hub at the **Charteris Centre**, 138-140 The Pleasance. There is no need to book a place, to have been before, or to have any previous knowledge. Just listen (to what you can), turn up, chat and/or drink tea! For the last week of the present series on Monday 26 February, the group will be looking at two sermons from different traditions on Gospel teachings, to think about the similarities and diversities that arise. If you'd like to join in, please email Gillian (parishassociate@greyfriarskirk.com) who will send you the links.

Youtube items from St Columba's

Two interesting items have recently been arranged. Two weeks ago, Dr Richard Jack offered a forum on end-of-life issues, and on 10 March, Eve Poule will offer a forum called: "Robot Souls: Programming in Humanity?" and she writes - "Suddenly AI is moving from the realm of Science Fiction to Science Fact. Brought up on these apocalyptic stories, many fear the worst. But what if the clue to this puzzle lies in our own design? Would it be better to design AI that is more human, not less."

Both of these items will be recorded and posted on the St Columba's Youtube channel, which can easily be found just by searching for St Columba's by the Castle Youtube.

Greyfriars & St Cuthbert's – Fellowship Lunch

Please come along to this joint social event at St. Cuthbert's from 12 noon to 2.00 pm next Sunday, 3 March. It is an event for members of the congregation, regular attenders, visitors, and any others involved in the congregational and community life at Greyfriars Kirk and St Cuthbert's Parish Church. After the services at Greyfriars and St Cuthbert's (both churches holding their usual services at 10:30am), we will congregate together at St Cuthbert's church to enjoy a buffet lunch of sandwiches, savoury snacks, fruit, and sweet treats. It will be a great chance to get to know each other, for Greyfriars folk to explore St Cuthbert's church and kirkyard, and to enjoy fellowship within our parish grouping. If you would like to come along, please add your name to the sign-up sheet circulating during coffee after a Sunday service in February, or contact the Kirk office by phone at 0131-225-1900 or by email to <communications@greyfriarskirk.com>. Please do sign up as soon as you're able, so that we will have a good idea of numbers.

Guerilla Peace

The University of Edinburgh Chaplaincy and their Associate Chaplain Dr Urzula Glienecke have set up a web site <https://guerillapeaceukraine.org> to answer the call to "Light up our hearts for Ukraine"; they invite you to visit it to share the solidarity, vigilance, and hope, wherever you are in the world at any time and from anywhere.

Greyfriars Kirkyard Conservation Plan

On behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council, Dr Susan Buckham informs us that an **online public survey on Greyfriars Kirkyard** has just been launched. She is very keen that members of Greyfriars Kirk should be fully aware of the survey and be encouraged to express their views; the survey is at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Greyfriars-CMP>

News from the Ministry team, and Pastoral Care

The Greyfriars ministry team are Sue MacGregor, Probationer Minister; Gillian Couper, Parish Associate; and Prof. Bert Kerrigan KC, Reader. Later this year, Sue MacGregor will begin a three-year appointment as our Associate Minister, taking us beyond the point of union with St Cuthbert's, when a minister will be recruited to the new united charge.

Sue, Gillian and Bert are pleased to hear from anyone in the congregation or community, if you would like to get in touch for any reason. Whether you'd like to hear about how things are going at Greyfriars, seek support or pastoral care, or simply share a cup of tea and a chat, you will be very welcome. If you know of anyone who you think might appreciate some contact or help from the ministry team too, please do let them know. You can reach them through the church office, 0131 225 1900, or by email: Gillian at parishassociate@greyfriarskirk.com; Sue at probationerminister@greyfriarskirk.com; and Bert at kerrigan@kerrigankc.com.

Study Service (ctd)

Many thanks for the following outline to Jennifer Floether, a Scottish Episcopal Reader who has gone into the history of Lent in some detail.

Lent

- *Lent* from Old English *lencten* - lengthening days of Spring
- Mid-4th century (Nicea): Lent fixed at 40 days, echoing/emulating Jesus' fast in the wilderness, Israel's 40 years in the wilderness desert, Moses fasting 40 days in the desert (Exod 34).
- Earliest observances focused on fasting, initially because new converts fasted before baptism at Easter.
- Since 1970 Lent officially starts on Ash Wednesday. Believers marked with ashes from burnt palm crosses from previous year. Reminder of mortality with the words, "Woman/man remember that thou art dust and to dust thou shalt return. Turn and believe in Christ."

Lent mostly thought of as a time of repentance and penance with fasting to plead forgiveness for sin.

In secular understanding – a time of giving up something like chocolate or strong drink.

Common underlying causes:

- Most common understanding: God's forgiveness is conditional on our confessing our sins and repenting of it.
- Christ's atonement not sufficiently sufficient. Man must add his own sacrifice to 'atone' for himself. This gave rise to doing 'penance' - self-punishment, mortification, devotion, to show sorrow for sin.
- Jesus atoned for our sins but did not remove original sin : Catholic, still widely prevalent. Already in early fathers, e.g. Polycarp; Jesus has redeemed us so that we can 'fulfil the command of righteousness'.
- Change of word meaning. Greek 'metanoia', fundamental change of mind, translated as 'repentance' which came to mean 'being sorry for one's sins' and doing 'penance' to atone for them.

- New sins not forgiven (Evangelical, Catholic, Anglican) Even though our sin has been forgiven on the cross, our relationship with God can still be damaged by new sins, so repentance and new forgiveness needed. Perhaps an echo of medieval belief that his atonement only covered sin up to the Cross. Any 'new' sins must therefore be confessed, atoned for and forgiven anew.

Reformed: if Christ's sacrifice is sufficient, why should we do penance and ask for forgiveness? No scriptural basis, 'human tradition', works-based vanity.

Calvin: Lent "therefore merely false zeal, replete with superstition, which set up a fast under the title and pretext of imitating Christ..." (IV.12.20., p. 760). John Owen: Lent called people more to "mortification" for its own sake, to count as righteousness, than to actual belief in the all-sufficient work of a Saviour....Such men know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God" (p. 290).

Eucharist as sacrifice

Early church - Didache uses *thusia*, or sacrifice, of the Eucharist. Mediaeval church: priest re-sacrificing Christ for the sins of a dead person or for someone who pays for a Mass. Therefore the bread and wine have to be real body and blood – therefore transubstantiation – and prevailing understanding of ordination but that's another topic. Still prevalent: understanding the Eucharist as our sacrifice

Catholic teaching today: Eucharist is a true sacrifice, grounded in the sacrificial character of Jesus' instruction, *Touto poieite tan eman anamnasin* - "Offer this as my memorial offering."

Christ's sacrifice is 're-presented' so as to make his sacrifice 'present':

CCC 1366 The Eucharist is thus a sacrifice because it re-presents (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross because it is a memorial and applies to its fruit: [Christ], our Lord and God, was once and for all to offer himself to God the Father by his death on the altar of the cross, to accomplish there an everlasting redemption. But because his priesthood was not to end with his death, at the Last Supper "on the night when he was betrayed," [he wanted] to leave to his beloved spouse the Church a visible sacrifice (as the nature of man demands) by which the bloody sacrifice which he was to accomplish once for all on the cross would be re-presented, its memory perpetuated until the end of the world, and its salutary power be applied to the forgiveness of the sins we daily commit.

Reformed, protestant: this denies and minimises once-for-all sufficient and perfect sacrifice of Jesus and essentially re-sacrifices him. Repeated sacrifice requires official priesthood like OT.