

MEADOWBANK

Church of Scotland

UPDATE
December
2019



www.meadowbank.church

Dear friends

The Advent Season is a time for prayer with a longing that we might all be ready to receive Jesus into our lives and into our world. Psalm 63 says it well:

*O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you.
My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you
in this parched and weary land where there is no water.*

This year we are looking to have a Christmas Tree outside the front of the Church this year which will help welcome folk to the various services and to our outdoor café and the Christmas Labyrinth. Lynda, a friend in St Margaret's Episcopal Church, will be involved in the setting up of the Labyrinth using a trails of bright fabrics. We look to welcome all the Primary School classes to the Labyrinth in the week before Christmas.

*Blessings to you all
may you be filled
with 'living water'*

new members?

In October we had 3 folk as new 'members' of the Meadowbank congregation by Profession of Faith. A few others have enquired about membership and **I am looking to have another 'enquiry group' in January/February. Please let me know if you want to be part of this.**

A good number of our Sunday congregation are members of other congregations or not wanting to make commitment at this time and we want to stress that all are welcome—we appreciate the wonderful mix of folk at Meadowbank!. Church!

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dates for your diary

Sunday 1st December 11am

Richard Cornfield of Mustard Seed —leads our service and tells us about his ministry.

Friday 6th December 11am

Abbeyhill Primary Nativity – Primary 1 pupils lead the Nativity in the church

Saturday 7th December - overnight

The Big Sleepout – Russell is involved with Edinburgh City FC as part of its 'team' supporting the homeless work

Sunday 8th December 11am

Andrew Gregg City Centre Workplace Chaplain—sharing this service with Jackie

Wednesday 18th December 6-7.30pm

Scottish Parliament Carol Service —as a local congregation we are invited to be part of this annual service where Russell will share a blessing. Please 'sign up' or tell Russell if you world like to go

Saturday 21st December 11am till 3pm

Christmas Labyrinth & mulled apple-juice served in our Outdoor Cafe

This is an opportunity to meet passers by and invite them to share coffee, tea or mulled apple juice & mince pies ... ALSO to visit our Labyrinth in the church

Sunday 22nd December 2-3.30pm

Joint Church Carol Singing – starting at 2pm at Sainsbury's then going to Montgomery Steet Park—all welcome!

Christmas Eve 11.15 till after midnight

Watchnight service - with carols , prayers and stories for this night of all nights

Christmas Day 11am

A short service - we celebrate Jesus's birth

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A change to our Meadowbank Weekly Worship?

At 'Open to Question' over tea & sandwiches after the service on Sunday 17th November we took the opportunity to think about the type of Sunday Service we offer at Meadowbank where:

- At present the 4 Church of Scotland churches in our area each offer a traditional-type service at 10.30am or 11am on Sunday morning with relatively low numbers attending and where many people will pass another church on the way to their own church.
- **Research shows that 80% of people are not likely to relate to the traditional format of worship where they are not attracted to our traditional church 'culture'.**
- 'Fresh Expressions' of church over the past 10 years in England has shown that new people and younger people have, however, come to different forms of worship such as Café-Style Worship, Messy Church & Dinner Church. These have been supported by The Church of England and Methodist Church and 1 in 7 churches are now attending 'Fresh Expressions'.
- Our future in 3 years' time is likely to be in a 'parish grouping' with our neighbours with fewer Ministers or Mission Discipleship Workers in the larger area. This might give us opportunity to have a trial with a 'Fresh Expression' over the next 3 years.



In the discussion the various thoughts were shared:

- a. Sunday morning is not the best time for many people and younger people in particular would not choose this time.
- b. An alternative-style service could be at lunchtime, afternoon or early evening on a Sunday or an evening through the week
- c. The worship and teaching element of any alternative service would be really important and there are many examples of this being well done.
- d. We have a large student population in the area and students - always looking for a good meal - might welcome the ideas of Dinner-Church or something like it.
- e. If Meadowbank met at a different time, then our people could attend one of the neighbouring Sunday morning services as well as the Meadowbank Service at another time in the week while people in neighbouring churches might well be attracted to a Café-Style or Dinner-Church as well as the Sunday Morning Service
- f. Meadowbank 'regulars' have valued the close friendships which is a mark of our smaller 'start-up' congregation and wouldn't want to lose this. One idea would be to agree which neighbouring Sunday Morning Service we might attend.
- g. Meadowbank folk have really appreciated Alpha & Bible Study Groups with the opportunity to grow deeper in faith and friendship in a more informal setting and a 'Fresh Expression' would build on this.



We would only look to make any such changes if most of our regular attending worshippers and Kirk Session agreed with any ideas as they were worked out. I welcome any further one-to-one or group discussion with any who have ideas or points of view

Russell



fresh
expressions

