



*Serving Christ,
each other and
the community*

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST**

- ♦ **God is
always with
you**
- ♦ **Kirk Session
report**
- ♦ **Youth
Updates**
- ♦ **Tearfund**
- ♦ **Shoeboxes**
- ♦ **Café News**



**PRAYER
FOCUS**

**God is
everywhere and
in everything and
without Him we
cannot exist.**

- Mother Teresa

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105

Harbour Lights

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEWHAVEN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

AUTUMN 2024

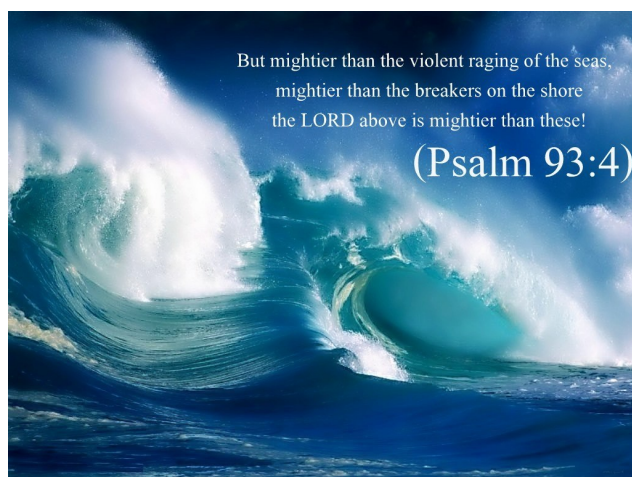
Dear Friends,

A little while ago now I watched a dramatised version of an adventure that a young Australian girl named Jessica Watson undertook to circumnavigate the globe on her own. Officially announced in May 2009, her journey was expected to take around eight months with a sailing distance of twenty three thousand nautical miles. As part of the deal to sail around the globe, no one was allowed to provide her with assistance of any sort. She was not allowed to moor alongside anything in a port or even another vessel, although she was permitted

to receive advice over a radio. The plan for her route was to start and end in Sydney and she would pass near New Zealand, Fiji, Kiribati, Cape Horn, the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Leeuwen as well as the South East Cape in Tasmania. She also had to cross the Equator at some point to fulfil the criteria for circumnavigation.

When asked by The Los Angeles Times why she wanted to undertake the trip, especially considering the fact that she was only sixteen years old, she said, "I want to challenge myself and achieve something to be proud of. And yes, I wanted to inspire people. I hated being judged by my appearance and other people's expectations of what a "little girl" was capable. It's no longer just my dream or voyage. Every milestone out here isn't just my achievement, but an achievement for everyone who has put so much time and effort into helping me get here."

On 18 October 2009, Jessica Watson sailed out of Sydney Harbour in her pink-hulled yacht, Ella's Pink Lady. Eighteen days later she passed Tonga, sailing clear of New Zealand and Fiji. Two weeks later she crossed the Equator for the first time and later crossed it again as she headed for Cape



Horn at the tip of South America, which she passed on 13 January 2010. Her parents flew over her in a small plane at this point in order to check on her and witness part of her passage, and a week later, after passing the Falkland Islands, she suffered four knock downs in a severe storm, where the waves rose to over 40 feet in height and the wind blew at speeds of almost 100 miles per hour. Fortunately, Jessica survived the storm and on 25 January 2010 she passed the half way point of her journey, after being at sea for 100 days.

On 24 February she passed the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa and then sailed more than 5000 miles towards home, Western Australia. She arrived in the Australian economic zone on 10 April and was clobbered, once again, by particularly bad weather, experiencing three knockdowns and swells that rose to over 40 feet.

On 3 May 2010, she rounded the South East Cape of Tasmania and began the final leg to Sydney. After 210 days at sea Jessica Watson arrived in Sydney Harbour, and three days later she turned 17. Needless to say, she

continued over

received a hero's welcome from thousands of her fellow Australians and a relieved mum and dad.

Now many, if not most people, would probably say she was far too young to do such a thing and her parents must have been mad to let her go. A number of yachts-people criticised her for setting out on such a bold adventure without having, what they deemed, enough experience, and they may have had a point, but what her journey reminded me of as I watch the dramatised version of it, was the journey of life. To me, it was a metaphor for all the things that we as human beings experience as we make our way in the world. Jessica had days of smooth sailing when the wind and the waves moved her along at a pleasant pace and all felt right in her small world. Then there were days in the Doldrums where nothing seemed to move and everything just stood still, and she wondered when the next breeze would blow. Then there were days of sheer terror, where the wind and the waves roared, and her home, the Ella Pink Lady, felt like it was going to sink and take her with it. And in those moments of terror, I can only imagine she must have felt, not only frightened but completely alone. However, she persevered, and despite actually sinking after being hit by a massive wave very close to home, Jessica endured and lived to tell her tales of adventure with the rest of the world.

Now, I do not know if Jessica had any kind of faith in God, but I believe that, even if she didn't as an individual, God was present with her; that even if she had suffered the worst fate and gone to the bottom of the ocean, God would still have been present with her, just as God is present with each one of us as we live our lives from day to day, as we face the different challenges of life.

"Where can I go from your Spirit?" The Psalmist wrote in verses 7-10 of Psalm 139, "Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths; you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast."

Rather ironically, when I was younger, I was always a little wary of the Psalmist's words, because my mind conjured up images of God like a Big Brother figure, watching over my shoulder, watching my every move, but I've come to appreciate the power of the Psalmist's words, of the realisation that God is ever present, and the comfort such words and such thoughts bring.

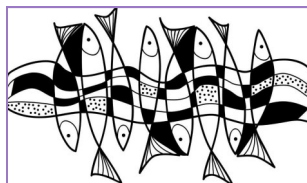
Jessica Watson may have felt horribly alone at times, in the middle of a massive ocean with no one to share what she was experiencing, but she wasn't alone. We might feel horribly alone at times, perhaps feeling like we've been cast adrift, but we haven't, because God is with us and God never leaves us nor forsakes us, no matter what.

May you realise God's presence, and may God's peace dwell in your hearts.

Much love,

Peter

My points of reference for the details of Jessica's voyage were drawn from Wikipedia.



Weekly Update

We send out an email update, virtually every week of the year. This is an opportunity to keep in touch if you cannot be at church and saves paper in not having written intimations. It also includes a written abridged version of Peter's Sunday message and the links to the Zoom Bible studies and Prayer Meetings. If you have access to email and are not receiving it and would like to, please let me know and I can add you to the circulation list. If you are on the circulation list and do not want to continue to receive these emails, also let me know and I will take you off the list.

If you are organising a group or event or you have seen something which you think may be of interest to the congregation, do let me know and I will see if we can

include it. It should be connected to the church in some way as there can be a danger that it become too full of general items. For instance, I have included the intimation about the Searchlight Theatre productions in the Fringe on the Screwtape Letters and Eric Liddell.

I am also happy to receive items for the humorous "And Finally..." section. I had also wondered if we might have an occasional slot where members share where they have seen God at work in their lives, the church, the community, nation or in the world. If you have something to share, let me know.

John Hodge

newhavensessionclerk@btinternet.com

Kirk Session Report

Since my last report for Harbour Lights, there have been three meetings of the Session. However the meetings have been very different from the usual ones as in two of the cases we have spent a considerable time looking at "vision". What this really means is that we are trying to see what God is doing and to work out our place in it. As you are aware, we don't at present know what the Presbytery Plan will involve for Newhaven. At the time of writing a meeting with the Presbytery representatives is being planned. However, we recognise that with North and South Leith having to work through their Union and then having the added challenge of a vacancy, we will not be able to progress matters for some time. We felt that we did not want to be left in a state of limbo so we thought that we should take a look at our priorities and try and see what God was saying to us. We felt that clarity on our role would be useful in future discussions with neighbouring churches.

At the moment this is at an early stage but there are many signs of encouragement. We have been considering what we learnt from the discussions about union. Various points were made, the importance of love, the reality of love and kindness in the congregation, the need to be patient, to have confidence in God working in our community, the need for honesty in difficult times. We also thought about the essence of our walk with God, the need to open ourselves to more of Him, to have eyes to see how He is working in our community, to stoke up the love of God in our lives and to share it and to be excited about how God was working in our community. We intend to have further meetings exclusively devoted to vision. It is far too easy to be so caught up in the business of "church" that we forget our calling as the people of God.

However, we also still have responsibility for practical issues. Sandy Edwards contract comes to an end in October and we are actively discussing with her the way

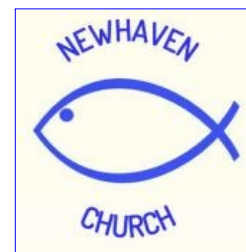
forward. The Youth Worker's position is financed from specific donations for that purpose and, at the moment, we do not have sufficient commitment to offer more than a year's extension.

We have also had other challenges. We are glad to report that Kitty Murray who attends our worship is now covering the caretaker's job on Mondays to Wednesdays. This leaves us with the challenge of finding cover for the other days but various avenues are currently being explored. Rosanne Lau has also started as Café assistant. We are grateful to them both for stepping up. We also appreciate the help given by other Hong Kong folk working as volunteers in the café. It is sad that they have had to leave Hong Kong but they are a blessing to us.

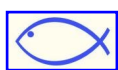
We maintain cordial relations with the flat owners above the church. We have still not managed to resolve the insurance issues with the factors and we have been very disappointed at their lack of response.

The Session were also sorry to hear that Jeanette Meek felt that the time had come for her to step down from the Session. Jeanette was ordained as an elder in May 2004 and had served on the Session for 20 years. We acknowledged that she had given us much being the person she is as well as her spiritual insight and wisdom. She still remains very active in congregation.

From time to time Peter is unable to be at the Session (for instance, he has to attend some Kirk Session meetings at Stockbridge where he is Interim Moderator) and we are very fortunate in that Colin MacNeill has undergone the necessary training to enable him to moderate Kirk Session meetings when Peter is unable to attend.



John Hodge
Session Clerk



Youth Updates

Summer really took its time to arrive this year, however the last few weeks of sunshine have been a true blessing. I pray that your children had time to recharge during the holidays and that they feel energised and ready for the new academic year.

At the start of the summer holiday we partnered up with Leith Baptist and City on the Hill churches and held our annual holiday club from the 1 July to the 5 July. This year we had a fantastic response of 58 children registering.



The focus of the holiday club was on Jesus the Restorer. We explored, through drama and video clips, Bible stories looking at how Jesus restores us emotionally, spiritually and physically. During group time the children discussed the stories, and there was time for questions and reflective prayer. Every day, a guest speaker explained to the children how they restore things/people in everyday situations.



On Tuesday the children were shown some basic first aid steps by Alister. The children then had fun seeing how many bandages they could use to bandage their group leader, resulting in some interesting looking 'mummies'.

The children's creativity was really shown during craft time. A firm favourite activity during the holiday club was archery. The children also enjoyed the various games and messy challenges.



At the end of every day the families with their children and the team enjoyed a picnic-style lunch.

An enormous thank you to James and Joan at Masons Bakery for their kindness in supplying us free with freshly baked rolls everyday for holiday club.

We are truly grateful to all the group leaders, teenagers and kitchen volunteers who made this event possible.



Look out for information about our Messy Church events in September, October and November.

Other dates to diarise:

1 September - Back to school with God

6 October - Harvest service

3 November - Shoebox Service

Sandra Edwards
Youth worker

Tearfund

Tearfund is a Christian charity that partners with churches in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries, tackling poverty through sustainable development, responding to disasters, and challenging injustice. Tearfund believes an end to extreme poverty is possible.

Tearfund's Harvest 2024 Appeal is in aid of South Sudan, a land-locked country in central Africa. It gained its independence from Sudan in 2011 but only two years later violent conflict erupted, causing severe disruption to livelihoods, trade and access to humanitarian assistance. Many people have fled to neighbouring countries. Those who remain are in danger of malnutrition and disease. Tearfund is working with local partners to support some of the most vulnerable.

Our **All Age Service on 6 October** will focus on some of the people helped by Tearfund and there will be an opportunity to contribute to the charity's work.

We will also be collecting cans and dry goods for Edinburgh North East Foodbank, remembering that poverty affects our near neighbours as well as those farther away in South Sudan -

whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. Matthew 29:40



www.tearfund.org



<https://edinburghnefoodbank.com>

Blythswood Shoebox Appeal 2024

Blythswood Shoebox Appeal is one of the highlights of my year - I just love making up shoeboxes with all sorts of things for children and adults in Eastern Europe who have so very little.



Since losing his house in a fire, Mitru lives in the stable with his animals. Mihai visited his village in northwest Romania to give him a Blythswood shoebox last Christmas. "He said that the animals keep him warm and that he was thankful to God that he has somewhere to sleep,

especially during the winter," Mihai says. "He was so happy to receive some gloves. He thanked us again and again and asked us to tell you that you made his Christmas better."

God uses **us** to share His love with these families, men and women who have largely been forgotten by society but not

by God. I love Christmas, and especially the fact that the shoeboxes bring happiness to those who have so little.

Bring your boxes to our Shoebox Service on Sunday 3rd November, 10:30 am followed by Brunch.

Boxes can also be brought on **Tuesday 29th, Wednesday 30th or Thursday 31st October to the church during café hours (10am – 3pm), but no later than Sunday 5th November as they will be picked up later that day or Monday morning.**

Please pick up a leaflet and give to your friends or hand out in the office.

Boxes can be filled for men, and women as well as children and teenagers.

Shoeboxes are delivered to Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine.

Christine Hodge



Sunday 10 November, Service of Remembrance, 10.30am
Retiring Offering in aid of Erskine



Imagine....

Imagine if everyone who'd ever lived was assembled before God's throne. They're a sullen lot. They all have complaints, and they all begin to murmur among themselves, "Who does God think he is, anyway?" One of the groups is composed of Jews who'd suffered persecution. Some died in gas chambers and concentration camps. They grumble, "How could God know of the suffering we've been through?" Another group consists of slaves - black men and women with brands on their brows, who'd suffered indignities at the hands of those who called themselves 'God's people'. What could God know about their plight? There are also long lines of refugees driven from their lands, homeless people who'd never been able to make ends meet, sick people and sufferers of all kinds. Each group has a complaint against God. What could he know of what human beings were forced to endure?

From each group a leader is chosen and a commission appointed to draw up the case against the Almighty. Instead of God judging them, they begin judging him. The verdict is that God should be sentenced to live on earth as a human being with no safeguards to protect his divinity. Here's a bill of particulars: let him be born a Jew; let him be born poor;

let even the legitimacy of his birth be suspect; give him hard work to do; let him be rejected by his people; give him for friends only those who are held in contempt; let him be betrayed by one of his friends; let him be indicted on false charges, tried before a prejudiced jury, convicted by a cowardly judge; let him be abandoned by his friends and see what it is to be terribly alone; let him be tortured, and then let him die at the hands of his enemies.

As each group announces its sentence on God, roars of approval rise up from the throng, until the raucous noise becomes almost deafening. And then everyone turns towards the throne. Suddenly, heaven is filled with shocked, penitent silence, for where there had been a throne, now there is just a Cross....



from Bible Alive

Café News

Newhaven Connections Café... Connecting with the Community

After a very quiet summer break, things are beginning to get busy in the café again as autumn nears and the weather cools. During August we had sixteen-year-old Kian join us for four weeks in the kitchen, and now Kitty is working a four-week stint in the kitchen until Roseanne comes back from Hong Kong at the middle of September.

Kian is a mature young man, got on wonderfully well with the volunteers working at the café, and I'm sure he'll be very successful in the future with everything he does.

Kitty, meanwhile, is astounding me with her unbounded energy, as she goes and plays three-hour long badminton stints at David Lloyd after a busy day working at the café!

The summer weeks have been quieter than expected, but it has also allowed for interesting chats with the volunteers and customers, which I think are incredibly valuable. I find conversations at the café are always enriching in one way or another. I leave after a day at the café, slightly wiser and more knowledgeable than I was before.

Every individual's life is full of fascinating facts and the café customers and volunteers are no exception in this respect. To name a few interesting conversations, I've learnt and am still learning lots about the Hong Kong culture, learnt something new about bee-keeping from a professor who keeps bees, I've spoken about the glamorous photos of one of our Haven members when she was younger and working as a hairdresser, I've learnt things I never knew about the sport of running from Shona (which made the Olympics far more interesting!), I've learnt about managing sleep when doing night shifts from a nurse, discussed bereavement, house renovation, teenage children and holiday destinations with both café volunteers and customers, and gone home with many recommendations for books and films from different people as a result of conversations with them.

All these conversations build connections and these connections expand beyond the café as well. At the gym I now regularly see and speak to two café customers. In a sense, this is what community is all about. I love it when customers come in and are still seated at a table, talking away, three hours later, building closer relationships, having conversations which are no doubt enjoyable and meaningful to them. Newhaven Connections Café provides more than food and drink and long may that continue.



Bea Green
Café Manager



**Committed to Serving Christ,
each other,
and the Community**

Newhaven Church of Scotland
7 Craighall Road
Edinburgh EH6 4ND
Phone: 0131 476 5212 (Minister)
Email: enquiries@n-c.org.uk
Website: www.n-c.org.uk
Charity No. SC019117

Newhaven Church Roll

Added by Certificate of Transference

Christine Alexander
Moragh Gibson
Alison Miller
James Watt
Anna Watt

If you would like more
information on what
'membership' means and
involves, please speak to the
Minister or John Hodge.

Please notify the Roll-Keeper,
or your Elder,
of any changes/updates
relating to yourself
or other members.

Copy Deadline

Please send any items for
inclusion in the next issue of
Harbour Lights to the Editor,
Elaine Greig, or email her at:-
editor@n-c.org.uk

TGBTG

Printed by Crawford Print and Design
info@crawfordprint.co.uk

www.n-c.org.uk

