



SHINE!
Celebrate Advent
and Christmas

Celebrating the
Undercroft at 40

TOGETHER
News

St Andrew's and St George's West December 2015 – January 2016 Magazine

ST ANDREW'S &
ST GEORGE'S WEST
EDINBURGH



EDINBURGH City
Centre CHURCHES
TOGETHER

11-24 December

SHINE!

Edinburgh Christmas
Tree Festival



ST ANDREW'S &
ST GEORGE'S WEST
EDINBURGH



St Andrew's &
St George's West
13 George Street
Edinburgh EH2 2PA

Free Entry

Mon-Sat 10am until 4pm
Thursday 10am until 9pm

 EdinburghChristmasTreeFestival  @EdTreeFest

www.stagw.org.uk/work/edinburgh-christmas-tree-festival



All donations will go to **Circle** (family support), **Amnesty UK** and **Firsthand Lothian** (disadvantaged families and children with disabilities).

December 2015 – January 2016

Christmas again... Ian Gilmour	4-6
Worshipping God at Christmas-tide	7
December - January Diary including worship themes	8-10
Announcements	9
Advent & Christmas at St Andrew's & St George's West	
SHINE! Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival	11-13
Circle – FirstHand - Amnesty	
Music among the Trees	14
Christmas Music with the Choir	15-16
Come and Play carols – call for musicians	17
Making a difference in the world	
Images etched on the Mind Mary Davidson	18-20
Flying the Flag for Climate Action Alison Bruce and Amy Marcham	21-22
My Church Now Andrew Namakhoma, Malawi	23
The Undercroft - 40 years of warm hospitality	24-25
All Things Bright and Beautiful... Pat McKerrow	26-27
Dalry Primary Art Club – What the Donkey Saw	28
TOGETHER News	
A Messy Christmas Ian Gilmour	29
Chaplaincy update Tony Bryer and team, David Todd	30-32
Hopes for the New Year? – Ecumenical Friends	33
Refuge, rest and remembrance Margaret McGregor	34
CONTACTS	35
Christmas Services	36

Thanks to all contributors of news, articles, prayers and photos throughout the year. Have a truly blessed Christmas – and don't forget to reflect on it and send us your thoughts!

Copy deadline for the next – February 2016 – issue is Wednesday 20 January. Contact us at [magazine\[at\]stagw\[dot\]org\[dot\]uk](mailto:magazine@stagw.org.uk)

Christmas Again...

A letter from Ian

It all depends on how you say the title for this piece, whether in desperation or in delight. We actually need to hear the tone of voice of the speaker, their emphasis, to catch their chosen meaning.

For some this season will have rushed around all too quickly from last year and will be perceived as a painful set of demands - food, money, clothes, presents, parties and not a lot of joy. For these people it will be “Not Christmas Again!” While others may attend exactly the same events and find them delightful, bringing deep pleasure in the midst of winter.

So Christmas provides us with a choice - delight or despair!

Many children will enter our building, with some of them joining us for worship, bringing their energy, enthusiasm both to our worship and the ‘Shine’ Christmas Tree Festival 2015. Sadly Angela Grant our Children and Families Worker will not be with us this year. Angela left before the end of her contract after being told it was not going to be extended into 2016. The children miss her caring presence. We give thanks for the gifts she brought us and for her legacy, particularly in Messy Church, which continues to develop quietly under the radar of most members. We wish her well for the New Year in Fife.

Church really is one of the best places to experience the joy of Christmas. Our congregation has a splendid space, forty trees, wonderful music, carols, and of course the great story.

Of God becoming human – no longer distant nor detached, but dwelling among us, giving love and joy in equal measure to all who seek.

Christmas is a good time to sing and pray. I have an old song and a new prayer for you to use this Advent and Christmas.



The challenging song stemming from the lips of young Mary, mother of Jesus:

My heart praises the Lord;

***my soul is glad because of God my Saviour,
for he has remembered me, his lowly servant!***

From now on all people will call me happy,

because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me.

His name is holy;

***from one generation to another he shows mercy
to those who honour him.***

***He has stretched out his mighty arm and scattered the proud with
all their plans.***

***He has brought down mighty kings from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly.***

***He has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away with empty hands.***

(Luke 1 46-56)



While the prayer is more recent from Peter Thurston:

Will you help me through this Advent, dear Lord?

***Give me the grace to greet you
without suppressed sighs of weariness.***

***Give me the generosity to invite you home
without thought to the inconvenience.***

***Give me the will to rise to your
demands,***

to share your love and to receive it.

It's not so much to ask, I know,

when you have faced it all -

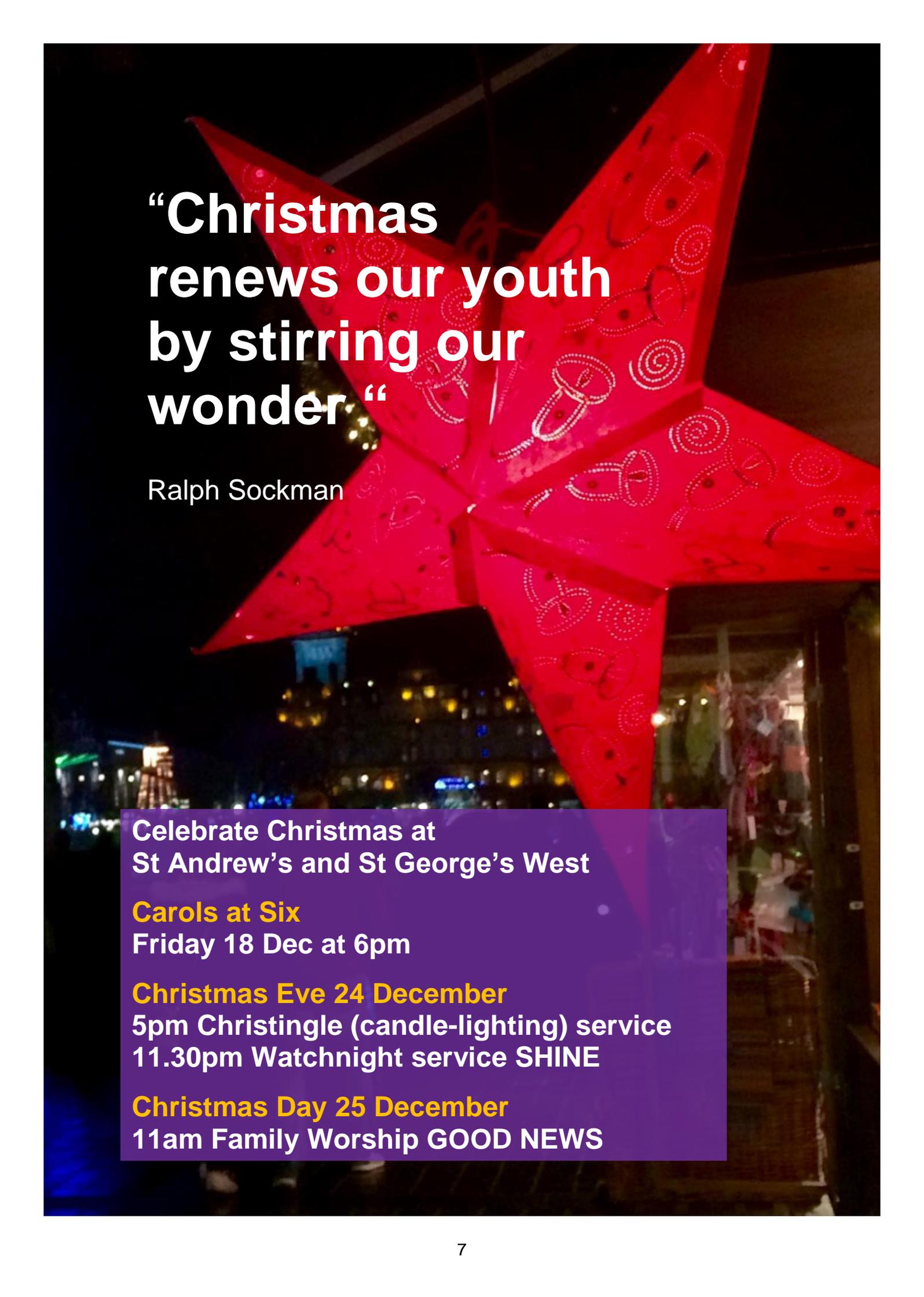
***the Advent task, the Christmas hope -
two thousand times before.***

Appreciate the gift of reconnecting with your Maker this year. Choose to have a great Christmas again; we can help your enjoyment with fine music, food, friendship and worship.

Rich blessings on you and yours, Ian

Worshipping God at Christmas-tide

Join us on a Sunday, during the week or at our special services for Christmas and New Year; strengthen your growth and faith. Sunday Worship is at 9am (Communion spoken liturgy) at 9.45am Learning Together for all ages, or at our 11am service with choir.



**“Christmas
renews our youth
by stirring our
wonder “**

Ralph Sockman

**Celebrate Christmas at
St Andrew’s and St George’s West**

Carols at Six

Friday 18 Dec at 6pm

Christmas Eve 24 December

5pm Christingle (candle-lighting) service

11.30pm Watchnight service SHINE

Christmas Day 25 December

11am Family Worship GOOD NEWS

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

Isaiah 9:6-7

December 2015 Diary

- Tue 1 Dec **2.30pm Undercroft 40 years Celebration**
- Thurs 3 Dec 12.30pm at St Cuthbert's: Ecumenical Friends
7pm CHSS Carols at Christmas
- Fri 4 Dec **7pm YMCA Scotland Fundraising Concert**
- Sat 5 Dec **7.30pm EMGO Concert**
- Sun 6 Dec 9am Communion (spoken liturgy)**
Advent 2 9.45am Learning Together - all age worship,
10.30am Sunday Discussion Group (adults)
11am Morning Worship
Born of Fire Luke 1. 68- 79
(Bright Sparks for children from 11.15)
12 noon bellringers
12 noon Fellowship Lunch Together Homeless
1.30pm Heart of Christmas Music and Reflection
- Mon 7 Dec **6pm Bells Group AGM and dinner**
7pm Tessa Ransford Poetry Memorial Evening
<http://www.stcolumbashospice.org.uk/tessa-ransford/>
- Tue 8 Dec **6.35pm Kirk Session**
- Thur 10 Dec **SHINE Decorating Day and Launch**
- Fri 11 Dec **6pm Faculty of Advocates Carol Concert**

Sat 12 Dec **10.30am-noon Members' Coffee morning**

Sun 13 Dec **9am Communion (spoken liturgy)**

Advent 3 **9.45am Learning Together - all age**

10.30am Adult Discussion Group

11am Morning Worship

Ignited by Fire Luke 3: 7-18

(Bright Sparks for children from 11.15)

12 noon bellringers

Wed 16 Dec **2.30pm Evergreens Carols and Stories.**

Thur 17 Dec **SHINE late opening until 9pm**

Fri 18 Dec **6pm Carols at Six**

Sat 19 Dec **10.30am-noon Members' Coffee morning**

6.30pm Church Christmas Supper

Sun 20 Dec **9am Communion (spoken liturgy)**

Advent 4 **no 9.45 service - Adult Discussion group**

11am Morning Worship

Extravagant Welcome Luke 1: 39-45

12 noon bellringers (peal)

Thur 24 **5pm Christingle (candle lighting) service**

Dec **11.30pm Watchnight Service**

Fri 25 Dec **11am Family Worship Good News**

Sun 27 Dec **9am Communion 9.45am Learning Together**

11am Morning Worship Joyful Hope

reflective memorial service Psalm 148

Announcements

Members leaving Ms Angela Grant on 12 October 2015

Regular events at St Andrew's & St George's West

Monday – Friday at 1pm: daily prayers – Tuesday Communion

Mon 7.30-9pm Bellringers practice

Tue 10am – noon Circle Scotland Kinship Carers Choir

Tue 7-9pm Edinburgh Choir meets, Sanctuary

Wed 7.30-9.30pm AA meets in the Davidson Room

Thurs 7.30-9pm STAGW Choir, Davidson Room

Thurs 7-9pm Edin Art & Sketching Club meets Undercroft, fortnightly

January 2016 Diary

Sun 3	9am Communion (spoken liturgy) 9.45am Learning Together - all age worship, 10.30am Sunday Discussion Group (adults) 11am Morning Worship Pilgrims to sacred places Matthew 2 1-12
Sun 10 Jan	9am Communion (spoken liturgy) 9.45am Learning Together - all age worship, 10.30am Sunday Discussion Group (adults) 11am Morning Worship Named and Claimed Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22 (Bright Sparks for children from 11.15) 12 noon bellringers
Wed 13 Jan	5.30pm Edinburgh Quartet Rush Hour Concert
Sat 16 Jan	7.30pm Georgian Concert Society
Sun 17 Jan	9am Communion, 9.45am, Learning Together 11am Morning Worship Overflowing Love John 2: 1-11
Tue 19 Jan	6pm St Mary's Music School Concert 7.30pm Kirk Session
Sun 24 Jan	9am Communion, 9.45am, Learning Together 11am Morning Worship Edinburgh City Centre Churches TOGETHER Luke 4:14-21
27 Jan	Holocaust Memorial Day
Sun 31 Jan	9am Communion, 9.45am, Learning Together 11am Morning Worship with Communion Ministry on the Edge Luke 4:21-30 2pm Albany Deaf Church

Information correct at TGP

Find our online diary under the WHAT's ON tab on the website

www.stagw.org.uk/whats-on/

Shine!

The Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival 2015

Sally Evans

"It's beautiful and looks amazing".

"It's fun, festive and celebratory".

"It brings out the real Christmas"

These comments were made last year by people involved in decorating trees that tell stories of the groups, organisations and businesses involved in transforming the church in Advent. We will soon have 40 more of Bethany's Caring Christmas trees shining out in our 6th Christmas Tree Festival and welcoming our visitors. This year donations from the festival will go to support the work of two local charities – Circle Scotland and Firsthand Lothian -and one working worldwide – Amnesty International. Now is a good opportunity to find out more from them about how they shine light into others' lives...

Circle

Circle is delighted at being chosen as one of three charities that this wonderful event is supporting this Christmas. Our families helped decorate our tree last year and are excited about participating again.

Circle is a Scottish Children and Families organisation working at the heart of deprived communities to support the most marginalised children and their families. By strengthening families Circle aims to improve the lives of children and to promote their healthy potential and development. Our approach is to work with the 'whole family' with a focus on building strengths in families and developing trusting and honest relationships. Circle adopts a solution focused approach, inclusive of children, young people, parents, grandparents and kinship carers with the aim of promoting their abilities to effect positive change in their lives. Inherent in the support we provide is exploring and identifying ways to promote their



understanding of their experiences and increase and maximise life



opportunities for the whole family. Being flexible, approachable, responsive, constant and transparent in our interactions supports and encourages families to manage complex situations and promote their potential to sustain meaningful and positive relationships.

Circle is truly honoured and

appreciative of the support from this year's 'SHINE' Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival. **Thank You!**

<http://www.circle.scot> and www.facebook.com/Circle.Scot/

Firsthand Lothian

We are delighted to have been selected as one of the charities for this year's Christmas Tree Festival. Firsthand Lothian has been supporting disadvantaged families and children with disabilities to achieve their full potential for over 23 years. Our skilled staff and volunteers are matched with families and visit them regularly, providing support, respite care, guidance and help to become more resilient. As well as engaging children in developmental and fun play activities, isolated parents find the support, guidance and reassurance of volunteers invaluable. Volunteers from all walks of life are key to our success. Their reliability and commitment encourages positive relationships, enabling the family to flourish.



"Volunteering has been a really positive experience. I was placed with a great family and hope I made some kind of positive impact, at the very least we had a lot of fun along the way. The training was very useful, and well organised. Above all, the great team at Firsthand are always approachable, supportive and helpful. If anyone is thinking of volunteering I would strongly urge them go and do it" **Mark – Volunteer**



Our tree decorations are very unique! They have been made by many of the children supported by Firsthand Lothian.

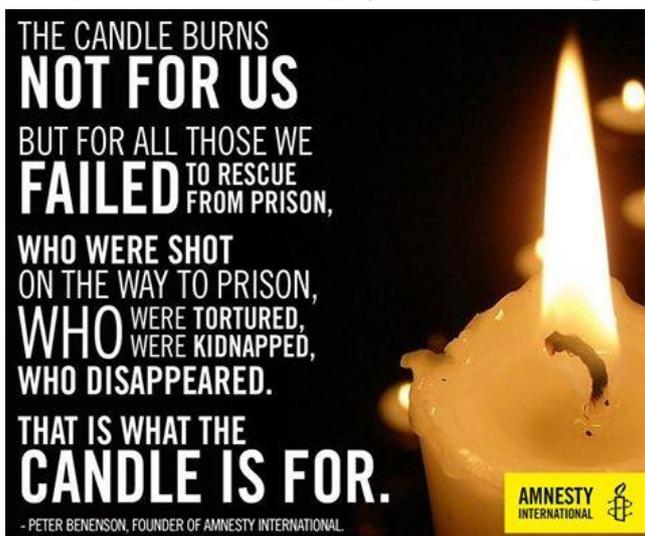
www.firsthand-edinburgh.org.uk

Amnesty International



Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who are campaigning for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all. In Scotland, there is a small Amnesty office, powered by over 20,000 supporters, local Amnesty Groups, Youth and University Groups.

Through detailed research and determined campaigning, Amnesty fights abuses of human rights worldwide – bringing torturers to justice, helping change oppressive laws and advocating for freedom for people imprisoned simply for voicing their opinions.



Underpinning Amnesty’s work is the petitions, letters and protests carried out by campaigners. In Scotland, Amnesty participates in an annual campaign called **Write for Rights** until the end of December. Across the globe people will write millions of letters for those whose basic human rights are being attacked. There’s a long tradition of people like you writing letters to right some of the world’s biggest wrongs.

Undercroft Amnesty Group

All are welcome at our local Amnesty group at lunchtime, the last Monday of each month, in the Undercroft. Please post a card at our tree to someone facing human rights abuse!

The crucial message is “write a letter; change a life”. And it’s not just letters – it could be petitions, emails, Tweets, Facebook posts, photos, postcards –: <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/issues/Write-for-Rights-2015>



We Are All Born Free

During SHINE we are honoured to show illustrations from *We Are All Born Free*, Amnesty’s award –winning children’s book on human rights, in the **Undercroft Café**.

Music among the Trees



Friday 11 December

11am Brigitte Harris plays seasonal organ music

2pm Royal High School Choir carol-singing on the portico

Saturday 12 December

12 noon Come and Play Carols

Tuesday 15 December

11am Circle's Kin Choir Christmas Concert

12 noon Brigitte Harris Recorder Group

2pm Dovecot Singers

Wednesday 16 December

12 noon Drew Crichton (piano/organ)

Thursday 17 December

12 noon Parkside School Gaelic Choir

Friday 18 December

6pm Carols at Six

Saturday 19 December

11am Susan McLarty Recorder group

2pm Triplicity

Monday 21 December

1pm James McNeill plays organ

2pm Come and Play Carols

Tuesday 22 December 1pm James McNeill plays organ

Wednesday 23 December Drew Crichton piano/organ

**Free entry – donations for Amnesty, Circle and Firsthand
Part of SHINE! Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival**

Christmas Music with the choir of St Andrew's and St George's West

Heart of Christmas Music and Reflection

Sunday 6 December at 1.30pm

An Advent Lullaby

Music by Benjamin Britten, Bárdos and Reger.

Sung by sopranos and altos of St Andrew's and St George's West Choir

Reflection by Ian Gilmour

Free entry



Friday 18 December at 6pm

Carols at Six

A highlight of **Edinburgh's Christmas**. Come and sing favourite carols among the Christmas trees, and listen to the **Choir and Orchestra** perform Christmas music highlights



St Andrew's & St George's West
13 George Street
Edinburgh EH2 2PA

Free Entry

Donations to
Circle, Amnesty UK
& Firsthand Lothian

Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival 2015

Carols at Six

with the Choir of St Andrew's & St George's West Church and the Cantilena Orchestra

Directed by **Brigitte Harris**

Programme includes:

Handel *For unto us a Child is born – Messiah*
John Rutter *Candlelight Carol*
Humperdinck *Evening Prayer – Hansel and Gretel*
Andrew Carvel *Balulalow*
David Willcocks *Quelle est cette odeur agréable*
Mack Wilberg *Ding dong merrily on high*

With favourite carols for all to sing!

Entry is free: donations will go to **Circle** (family support), **Amnesty UK** and **Firsthand Lothian** (disadvantaged families and children with disabilities).



St Andrew's & St George's West

13 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PA

Tel: 0131 225 3847

stagw.org.uk  stagw  stagw1

St Andrew's and St George's West Church of Scotland Edinburgh is a charity registered in Scotland No. SC008990

Chor.com – four days in Dortmund

Brigitte Harris

It has been dubbed the Mecca for choral music. Every two years this event takes place at the Congress Centre of the Westfalenhalle in Dortmund, Germany, close by the Borussia Dortmund football stadium.

The four days combine a wide variety of courses, workshops, presentations and concerts as well as exhibitions from publishers. We were 1800 delegates, many of them choir directors. The variety was amazing: from music making for early years to High Fossility, a RockPopChoir for the over 60s, Gregorian chant or contemporary music, Romantic choral music by Franz Liszt and spiritual and gospel arrangements we had a hard task to choose our programme. Up to four workshops and reading sessions a day were possible with up to two concerts a night to attend.

Practical music making was very much part of the timetable. I much enjoyed the many reading sessions on offer: The choir's Christmas music this year is already an audible outcome of this.

Many composers were also in Dortmund, and an evening concert of accessible choral music entirely composed for this event was a memorable experience. Another highlight was the Marian Vespers by Alessandro Scarlatti, stunningly performed by the Vokalakademie Berlin under Frank Markowitsch. The entire gamut of vocal performance styles was represented, with the British ensemble Voces 8 particular favourite of many.

Masterclasses for young and upcoming conductors are another feature of this event, and the concert consisting of music from the 20th century given by the Hochschulchor of the Musikhochschule Detmold had many highlights, among them a newly composed work, an eerie representation of refugees crossing the Mediterranean waters.

It was a privilege to take part. The whole event was well prepared and delivered by the German Chorverband, the umbrella organisation for all choirs in Germany.

COME AND PLAY CAROLS

A call for instrumentalists!

St Andrew's and St George's West
Christmas Tree Festival 2015



Saturday 12 December at noon
Monday 21 December at 2 pm
13 George Street Edinburgh



Programme

Angels, from the Realms of Glory
A Virgin Most Pure
Quem Pastores
O Little Town of Bethlehem
In the Bleak Mid-winter
A Child this Day
Coventry Carol
In Dulci Jubilo
Sans Day Carol
I Saw Three Ships
God Rest You Merry Gentlemen
Good King Wenceslas
Boar's Head Carol
Gloucestershire Wassail

Notes for participants

Any instrumentalist who would like to play simple carols will be welcome.

While any instrument from a symphony orchestra or wind band is suitable, music will only be provided for instruments in C and B flat. If you are playing an instrument in C, or are transposing, and you have a copy of the (original) Oxford Book of Carols, please bring it. All carols will be taken from that book.

Please assemble in the main church 10 minutes before the stated start time.

Please bring your own music stand.

Each session will last no more than one hour.

For further information, or to express an interest, contact David or Selda Dow via the church office

Images etched on the mind



Mary Davidson recalls the October Sale and Coffee Morning for Christian Aid.



The last week of October 2015 is now but a vivid memory. However some images remain etched on the mind. Suddenly, on the evening of 28th, there emerged from their cocoons of Berwickshire bubble-wrap, the pictures we had stored for the Sale and could at last unveil.

In moments the old Georgian pews were magically transformed from their weekday bareness into a semblance of art-gallery walls, and made vibrant with pictures arranged side by side round the whole periphery of the interior of the church.

Two of Edwin Alexander's exquisite early 20th-century paintings of wayside flowers and seeded grasses, both rare 'originals', were displayed there beside prints of works by Caravaggio and Canaletto, Raeburn and Russell Flint, McCosh and Matisse, an 1820 map of Linlithgow, and even a rare contemporary copy of

Reynolds 18th-century portrait of a girl. From a Christian Aid supporter in Melrose came an unforgettable picture, a coloured lithograph by William Leighton Leitch (1804 - 1883): *The Apprentice Pillar, Rosslyn Chapel*.

St Andrew's Church (1784) is noted for its oval shape and the focal point of this exhibition of mainly Scottish contemporary art was the raised dais at its apogee. Displayed here were James Morrison's Angus landscape; David Neilson's *Pittenweem Harbour*, the original of one of Iain McIntosh's illustrations for 44 Scotland Street; and Judy Urquhart's photo collages inspired by linear patterns made by sand and sea at low tide along the East Lothian coastline.

Anne Redpath stands out in the history of 20th century Scottish art, and it was a master-stroke on the part of our Art Team, and poignant, that a rare lithograph of one of her early works stood on the dais beside the oil painting *Princes Street Gardens* by her son, David Michie.

And great was the literary range at Scottish Books. Burns, Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson and Buchan were there as ever, but alongside them were autographed books by some of the most brilliant Scots writers of today: Kirsty Wark, A L Kennedy, and Gavin Francis, winner of the 2015 Saltire Non Fiction Book of the Year Prize, to name only a few of those who gave such generous personal donations to Christian Aid.

Where else, except at the Book Sale in our church, would you be able to acquire a 1992 first edition of '*Venus Peter Saves the Whale*' signed by both author, Christopher Rush, and illustrator, Mairi Hedderwick? A St. Cuthbert's elder joyfully clasped one of Elspeth Davie's long out-of-print Edinburgh novels. He had known her and her family.

One of the best moments was a meeting with two young women who delightedly showed us things got from Ephemera. One had a box of elegant Scrabble letter racks she had bought for her mother,

the other a clever device for cutting card in just the way she needed for the Christmas cards she was making.

Then, to crown all, there was the cheerful hubbub of the crowded Undercroft on Saturday morning, and the pleasure for those who, after coffee and scones, managed to reach the tables of the legendary gift stall with its stock this year of amber and silver, tiny handmade Christmas boxes, blue-glazed pottery by John Maguire, unique hand-knits and Christmas cards.

This has been written as a tribute to those who gave and did these lovely things for Christian Aid and to those who brought it all together in October 2015, whether it was Art, Literature, Ephemera, Gifts and Collectables, or Hospitality. As a result, the sum of £15,000 was given to the Christian Aid Christmas Appeal, and this will be matched by the UK Government.

Mary Davidson.

CLIMATE CHANGE



MOST RESPONSIBLE

LEAST VULNERABLE



LEAST RESPONSIBLE

MOST VULNERABLE



Flying the flag for Climate Action

Alison Bruce

Where in Edinburgh could you find thousands of eco-warriors, labour activists, political parties, NGOs, faith organisations (including the Church of Scotland) *and* 14 members of St Andrew's and St George's West? And a bee and a dragon?

On Saturday 28 November 7,000 people from all over Scotland united and marched from the Meadows to Princes Street Gardens in a peaceful demonstration of support ahead of the 2015 Climate Change talks in Paris.

The weather was wet and chilly, but Hardeep Singh Koli's wit and music from Colonel Mustard and Jo Mango kept us going as we listened to stories from communities on the edge where lives and livelihoods are threatened by climate change.

We heard from Voltaire from the Philippines, where Christian Aid is still working to rebuild lives after Typhoon Haiyan. And much closer to home, we heard from Lisa Seary, a crofter



from Borge in Lewis, where global warming is bringing high winds, high seas and torrential rains. Extreme weather cuts the harvests which feed the crofters' animals, and cuts the crofters' links with the world.

As Lisa said, "Many crofters will see their livelihoods and way of life compromised, and possibly fail. This crisis is unfolding quietly, without media attention and celebrity hype, and so it will be with many communities across the globe. Effects are cumulative, one straw at a time, until the changes are beyond repair"

It was amazing to stand shoulder to shoulder not just with those affected by climate change, and with other faith communities, but also with local initiatives like Changeworks, charities like the RSPB, World Wildlife Fund and Oxfam and movements like Unison, and the Greens and the Socialist Workers Parties. Kudos to Tom Ballantine of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland for managing to unite 60 different organisations in common cause.

And so we walked, sang, and danced together and even applauded Scotland's progress in setting renewable energy targets and curbing emissions.

Will it be enough?



Although it was a bit tricky trying to explain the concept of climate change and just why we were marching to Toby (age 4), I think it was important to take part and it was a good opportunity for Toby to see so many people come together for the event.

All part of developing his social and environmental awareness and conscience (I hope!). Amy Marcham

My Church Now

If you were at the Fellowship Lunch for prisoners at Mulanje Prison you will remember Andrew Namakhoma, of the Malawi-Scotland Partnership, who gave a short, but moving speech. He recently wrote to Jack Thompson, though the message is really for all of us. I hope you will agree it is both humbling and encouraging (Alison Campbell, Malawi Group).

Dear Jack,

This is Andrew Namakhoma. I hope you are doing well. This is to let you know, though after a long time, that I travelled well back to Malawi. Again, to say thank you very much for the good care shown to me when I was there in Edinburgh.

The church you and your wife took me to really revived my sense of responsibility and care for others. Since my arrival back home from Edinburgh I have been talking to some church friends, including my pastor, of the need to support the needy communities within our communities and cities. I am glad to report to you that this has received an overwhelming response so that as a church we have now revived the compassionate ministry which ceased functioning some time back. We intend to mobilise various items including cash and food to support various groups including prisons. Thank you all very much for the inspiration.

Please tell your church that I remain a member of the church and every time I am in Edinburgh I will be visiting the church. You are a caring and supporting church. May God continually keep on blessing and taking care of your church and its entire membership.

Once again, thank you very much for introducing me to your church. It's my church now.

Greetings to your wife, the Pastor and the entire church; not forgetting the team that prepared that wonderful meal.

Kind regards, Andrew.



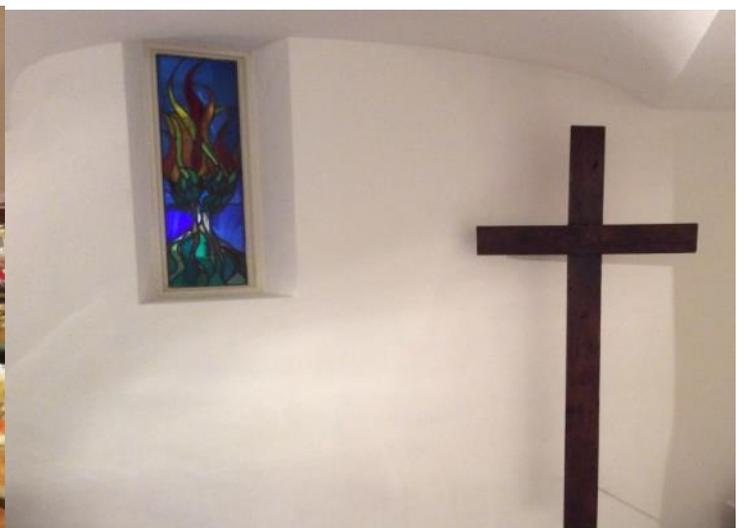


News from the Undercroft

On 1 December we celebrated 40 years of the Undercroft with good food, good company and a service of thanksgiving in the Sanctuary led by Rev Tony Bryer.

Recently we said goodbye to assistant chef Brandon Stewart, who moves onwards – and upwards – to the Hotel du Vin. Brandon spent a year with us and thrived under Pete’s caring tutelage and the welcoming atmosphere of volunteer crofters, gaining his catering qualifications in record time. Brandon moves on with our very warm wishes - and a copy of the Larousse Gastronomique.

You can see a small exhibition of ephemera and photos from the past 40 years on the walls of the Undercroft – but be quick as our next exhibition, Amnesty’s We Are All Born Free, needs to be up for International Human Rights Day on 10 December.





Celebrating 40 years of warm hospitality



In the Undercroft Café





All Things Bright and Beautiful, All Creatures Great and Small...

Pat McKerrow

...and so go the words of the famous hymn written by Cecil Frances Alexander. These opening lines speak to us of God's creation and certainly remind me of how blessed I feel to be part of a world so rich in its tapestry of wildlife. Likewise, I completely support John Rutter's lyrics in 'For the Beauty of the Earth' in saying that yes, we should indeed "raise our hymn of grateful praise". I also love the image portrayed by St Francis of Assisi's 'Canticle of the Creatures' which refers to all animals (amongst other things) as "sacred windows offering us glimpses of God". It goes without saying that I am a real advocate of each of us doing all we can to respect and protect creation.

As a passionate wildlife watcher and photographer, I can truly say that I have rarely felt such a mix of inner peace, joy, and excitement, as in moments of study and proximity to some of my favourite creatures. A real one-ness with nature, a tranquillity that transcends the 'day-to-day', and I am certain, meditative, therapeutic and healing powers which have helped me through some of the most challenging situations life has thrown my way. There is also that wonderful element of the unexpected, not knowing what might appear at any given time and sometimes in the most unlikely settings! I always go out in search of wildlife with a feeling of hope of what I might see, rather than with any sense of expectation. The anticipation of perhaps finding wild creatures in their natural habitats I find so exciting.

Born and raised a country girl, the amount and diversity of wildlife on my city centre doorstep never ceases to thrill and amaze me. It also means that I can 'feed' my passion on a regular daily basis! I could go on and talk about particular sightings and places – I consider myself fortunate in having had so many special wildlife moments. For now though, I hope this seasonal photo will offer a flavour of my passion. I 'snapped' this robin, voted earlier this year as the UK's national bird, during a recent trip to Islay. There's also a photo of me, complete with camera on the island of Jura, having just enjoyed a wonderful display from an otter literally feet from me!

Every blessing, Pat McKerrow



Huge Fun

Alison Campbell

Our relationship with Dalry Primary School – the most multi-cultural school in Scotland – continues with the weekly after-school art club, led by members of the congregation and the minister. This started when Angela Grant was in post as Children and Families Worker, to give her experience with P2 and 3, as well as helping out the school.

It has been huge fun if challenging – especially with Angela's departure when we couldn't let the kids down.

A regular group of 8-10 children has enthusiastically produced a range of craft and art work, individually and jointly, including a large picture of cut-out spiders in their webs, brightly painted clay fish in a cardboard box tank, and mini-monsters. Noor, Ibrahim, Lidia, Lena, Liyana, Rowan and others have been happy to help read a story, suggest creative options and criticise our efforts, in an energetic and egalitarian way!

We are looking at ways of continuing what the Head Teacher, Grant Gillies, says has been very popular, with a waiting list. Staff and students have been supportive and feedback from parents has made it feel worthwhile.

Thanks to Helen Cox for making it possible



What The Donkey Saw by U.A. Fanthorpe

No room in the inn, of course,
And not that much in the
stable

What with the shepherds,
Magi, Mary, Joseph, the
heavenly host -

Not to mention the baby
Using our manger as a cot.

You couldn't have squeezed
another cherub in for love or
money.

Still, in spite of the
overcrowding,
I did my best to make them
feel wanted.

I could see the baby and I
Would be going places
together

First of all, - what's happening for our children in Together over the coming months? Ian Gilmour reports:

A Messy Christmas

Ian Gilmour

A Messy Church group has been established at St Andrew's and St George's with the creative help of our children's worker, Angela Grant. Sadly Angela recently left her post, however we are keen to maintain the momentum which she established in this adventure.

This Messy fellowship takes place quarterly on Saturday mornings and is an intergenerational version of church. So parents gather with their children and enjoy large dollops of creativity and regular small portions of good food alongside some very strong coffee!

Messy Church was established by Lucy Moore for a local congregation in England, it had huge success and is now a global brand found to be of value in many diverse settings. In other words Messy Church is a way of being church, based around welcome, crafts and art, celebrating and eating together.

At our September gathering it was great to see Mary Reilly with children from St John's. Reuben Addis, who is now supporting the St John's families work is also the area coordinator for Messy Church. Reuben will help with our Messy event in November and then help us to plan the series for 2016. Rosie Addis (Reuben's wife) is the minister of Albany Church for the deaf in Edinburgh and she is hopeful we may find ways to facilitate deaf families joining our Messy gatherings. At our November meeting we plan to consider a Messy church Christmas theme, but can assure you we intend to have a very MESSY time indeed.

If you like making a mess then we are open to new children and their parents, more helpers and leaders.

Volunteer Workplace Chaplains



Tony Bryer reports on the latest recruits:

One of the great encouragements during the last 18 months has been the growth of a team of volunteer chaplains in the Edinburgh area. I am team leader for eight of them, and it's good to report that three of them are members of the Together congregations. Below they introduce themselves; if there are others who would like to find out more of what's involved, please contact me on tony.bryer@wpcscotland or 07834 748 129.



Margaret Ann Fraser

I have been visiting Ocean Terminal for over nine months now. This has been a great experience, giving me an opportunity to get to know people who say they really appreciate the opportunity to speak about their hopes, concerns and fears, and so help them to achieve a good balance between their home, work and recreation.

When I completed the initial training with WPCS last year, I was asked where I would like to work. Although I was a social worker with Scottish

Adoption Association based in Leith for many years, I had never visited Ocean Terminal! In my mind, it was 'just' a shopping centre....THINK again! I have met many inspiring and inspired people in this community hub, and it is a real privilege to be involved in this work.



Katie McNeill

I am one of the recent recruits to Workplace Chaplaincy Scotland, drawn in unexpectedly after attending a WPCS information day. When I joined St Andrew's and St George's in 1980, the congregation, as part of Andrew Wylie's vision, with other city centre churches, was already focussing on outreach to the working community in the City Centre. It is exciting to participate in the developing outcome of that outward-looking approach; my Chaplaincy within Princes Mall starts from November 2015.



Anne Gray

Having heard Tony preach at St John's about workplace chaplaincy, I started to wonder...was it for me? In Oxfordshire I had been a Reader for 20 years, and my ministry had included chaplaincy to hospitals and care homes. But was I too old? How much energy would be needed? How much time? It took me a while to follow up and commit; however, the training, fellowship and support in WPCS is excellent. Earlier this year I started as chaplain to a fire station in east Edinburgh. These are early days as I get to know the fire fighters and they get to know and trust me as someone there to support when needed.

Another female chaplain said she took cake in, so I now make a fresh cake each time I go to visit!

Arts and Theatre Chaplaincy

In the last Together News, David Todd described how he has taken up for us a chaplaincy to the arts industry in Edinburgh. He reports here on the first four months of this exciting work.



I have now been working for four months for Greenside Parish Church leading an outreach project to those involved in the arts, entertainment and leisure industry in the city centre in partnership with Edinburgh City Centre Churches Together. As part of this I am now Theatre Chaplain at Edinburgh Playhouse and am in conversation with another theatre and a leisure centre amongst others.

During my training to be a Lay Reader in the Scottish Episcopal Church I did two chaplaincy placements - at Polmont Young Offenders' Institute and in the Edinburgh hospitals. Theatre Chaplaincy and Workplace Chaplaincy turn out to be slightly different where the "audience" is not as "captive"

as it is in prison or hospital. There is less obvious need for pastoral care than there is for a prisoner or a hospital patient. However theatres like Edinburgh Playhouse have visiting companies staying in Edinburgh for two or three weeks whilst they perform there. These actors, singers, dancers, musicians and technical crew are away from home and may well have need for pastoral support. My work there at the moment is all to do with establishing a presence so that when there are folk with need for pastoral support they know that they can come to me.

I met a former Airport Chaplain recently who confirmed that establishing a presence was all important. When he left his post one of the staff, to whom he had never spoken, thanked him for his work and said that although they had never spoken to him they liked the fact that they knew he was there if they did need him. Workplace Chaplaincy Scotland offers a number of courses and one that I attended was on "resilience". This was most helpful for me as I work slowly towards establishing a presence in the theatre but it was also interesting to meet so many other Workplace Chaplains. There are now nearly 100 Workplace Chaplains in Scotland - many of them unsung heroes in times of difficulty.

In September I took a Sunday service in Greenside Parish Church when Revd Alistair Wynne, the Locum minister, was on holiday. This was a great privilege and pleasure and I made many connections but I remain committed to the challenge of doing "church outside church", of offering the unconditional love of God to people of any faith or none working in the arts and entertainment industry here in Edinburgh.



Great work!

Creative Together's
Crafts for Christmas Day at
the end of November at St
Andrew's and St George's
West raised over £2,200.
Thanks to everyone!

Funds raised this year are
supporting L'Arche
Edinburgh.

And finally at this time of year we ask some Together people what their hopes are for the New Year.



Maggie Romanis of St Cuthbert's:

More equality. In a world where we have enough resources for all, most of us have far more than we need whilst others have nothing. This gulf between rich and poor is increasing. My hope is that both ordinary individuals and those in positions of power and authority can all work together to help bring this equality about.

James McNeill of St Andrew's & St George's West, Secretary of Together:

My hope for 2016 is that a way is found to resolve the Syrian crisis, including working out how to engage with the substantial proportion of refugees in Europe who are young males and understanding the issues for the large number of women, children and older people still in Syria.

Following on from James's words, it's worth noting that a new website has been set up to help co-ordinate Scotland's response to the international refugee crisis. There is a lot that volunteers can do. Visit the website <http://www.scotlandwelcomesrefugees.scot/>

Ecumenical Friends Edinburgh at St Cuthbert's



Jan 07	Ian Stewart	<i>One World - Many Faiths</i>
14	Liz Law	<i>Landlord/Tenant Mediation</i>
21	John Francis	<i>Prosperity without Growth</i>
28	Robin Hill	<i>The Unlikely Journey of the Psalms</i>

Meetings are held in St. Cuthbert's Church Hall. We gather at 12.30pm and bring our own sandwich lunch with tea and coffee being provided for still only £1.50 (to cover expenses)

All our meetings are open to all so please do tell your friends, acquaintances and other church members to come along and join us. We will ensure that they will be given a warm welcome and soon feel at home among us - so spread the word!

s
o
u
l

p
a
c
e



Refuge, rest and remembrance

**Margaret McGregor reflects on Soul
Space at St Cuthbert's**



In last month's magazine I saw the notice about Soul Space at St Cuthbert's. It looked most interesting so on Wednesday 4 November I made my way to St Cuthbert's.

The worship part began at 1pm and the meditation was entitled **Refuge, Rest and Remembrance.**

Maggie Romanis talked about her holiday (rest), a visit to the Somme battlefields (remembrance) and the journey home through Calais, seeing "the jungle" (refuge) the temporary home of immigrants trying to get to Great Britain.



Throughout her talk there was a background power point presentation of some lovely slides of holidays, poppy fields and of those walking on the road to Calais.



At the end we had some minutes of recorded music, beautifully chosen, and a time of peace in a wonderful sanctuary. The psalm of the day was

*"God is our refuge and strength in straits a present aid,
Therefore although the earth remove, we will not be afraid."*

At the end there was a time to sit, to pray and to ponder. The next Soul Space is in my diary already!

Soul Space at St Cuthbert's takes a break in January, but is usually held on the first Wednesday of the month, 12.30-2pm with optional led worship at 1pm, and 5-7.30pm with optional led worship at 7pm.

**St Andrew's and St George's West, 13 George Street Edinburgh
EH2 2PA 0131 225 3847**

www.stagw.org.uk  stagw  @StAGW1

Office open Mon - Fri 10am-3pm
Church open Mon - Fri 10am - 3pm: Sat 11am-2pm
Undercroft Café Mon - Fri 10am - 2pm

Sunday worship 9am, 9.45am, 11am
Weekday worship 1pm Monday – Friday

Minister Rev Ian Y Gilmour
0131 225 3847 (church)

Session Clerk George Burgess
Joint Treasurers John Innes
Allan Sim

Director of Music Brigitte Harris
Assistant Director of Music Andrew Carvel

Church manager Jean Howard
0131 225 3847
churchmanager[at]stagw[dot]org[dot]uk
(Monday-Thursday 8am-5pm)

Church secretary Joyce Garland
0131 225 3847
info[at]stagw[dot]org[dot]uk
(Tue, Thurs, Fri 10am-3pm)

Church administrator Sophie Chalmers
0131 225 3847
admin[at]stagw[dot]org[dot]uk
(Mon and Wed 10am-3pm)

TOGETHER Chair Ian Gilmour

TOGETHER City Tony Bryer 0131 229 6542 / 07834 748129

Centre Chaplain tbryer[dot]wpcscotland[at]gmail[dot]com

TOGETHER Trustees from St Andrew's and St George's West
Christina Bowen, Frances Cooper and James McNeill

St Andrew's and St George's West Church of Scotland Edinburgh
is a registered charity. Scottish charity number SC 008990



Heart of Christmas

Music and reflection

Sunday 6 December
1.30pm

music for women's voices
directed by Brigitte Harris



Christingle Service

5pm on Christmas Eve
Thursday 24 Dec



Watchnight Service

Shine
11.30pm on Christmas Eve
Thursday 24 Dec

**Come and celebrate
Christmas at
St Andrew's and
St George's West**

www.stagw.org.uk
Facebook stagw
Twitter @StAGW1
Charity SC008990

Family Worship for Christmas Day

Good News
11am
Friday 25 December