



St Andrew's and St George's West December 2016 Magazine

(with January 2017)





Waiting is a period of learning. The longer we wait, the more we hear about him for whom we are waiting.

Henri Nouwen

December 2016 Magazine

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Advent: A Question?

Ian Y Gilmour

During Advent, while I was growing up the key question among children was **What would you like for Christmas?**

Parents and pals, aunts and all adults would ask the same question. It focussed us on Christmas as a time to receive – the hope for presents.

In Advent, this year I would like you to carefully listen for the questions people are asking of each other and of you.

I wonder if the questions you hear as we approach Christmas might be

What are you giving?

What will you be receiving?

What will you spend this time around?

God's word invites us to look deeper than the adverts in Advent and to consider some other questions.

What do we wait for?

Sally Foster Fulton puts it well in this extract from one of her poems in her fine little collection, *Hope Was Heard Singing*:

"I will wait... on you

Clear the dishes

Dry your tears

Sit beside you, and gently rub the back of your hand:

An invitation to take mine

And be held...

I will wait on you

I will wait ...with you

For the news you've been dreading

For the light to dawn

For forgiveness to find its way into your heart

I will wait with you."

What are we waiting for?

Does it all depend where we live and who we perceive are our neighbours? Are we still waiting to be fully born?

What do we long for?

To go back to an earlier period when 'less meant more'?

To be part of a family, with particular friends or alongside a certain partner?

What do we expect?

That God will intervene and the poor will be filled with good things?

That the oppressed will receive justice?

Lord, Guide our Advent waiting, longings and expectations and our Christmas wanting this time around.

May you and yours be enriched as we mark the birth of the Son of the Creator, however you may choose this year. I'll be delighted to welcome you to church.

Enjoy it to the full, Ian

Recipe for a simple Christmas

**a ladleful of simplicity
a cup of diversity
a tablespoon of justice
a measure of reality
a clove of co-operation
a handful of acceptance
a slice of equality
a teaspoon of respect
flavour with peace and
strain out world hunger**

find out more at www.alternativity.org.uk

Worship in Advent

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...upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on. Isaiah 9:6-7

Sun 4 Dec, 11am	Growing Together Isaiah 11:1-10
Sun 11 Dec 11am	Song of Joy and Justice
Fri 16 Dec 6pm	Carols at Six
Sun 18 Dec 11am	Faithful Response

Christmas Eve

Sat 24 Dec 5pm	Christingle (candle lighting) all-age
Sat 24 Dec 11.30pm	Watchnight Service

Christmas Day

Sun 25 Dec 11am **Joy to the World**

The greatest and most momentous fact which the history of the world records is the fact of Christ's birth.

Charles H. Spurgeon

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

2 Corinthians 9:15

Deaths

Miss Judith Pickles on 31st October

Mrs Cathie Carson on 12th November

Alison Baxter, daughter of Ray Baxter and the late Richard Baxter, died of cancer in York on 7 October. Although not a member of StAGW, Alison worshipped here when in Edinburgh

We hold of these families in our prayers

December 2016 Diary

Thur 1 Dec	7pm CHSS Carol Concert <i>Pilgrim Course at St Cuthbert's and Compline at St John's</i>
Fri 2 Dec	7pm YMCA Carol Concert Jingle All the Way
Sat 3 Dec	Georgian Concert Society Caroles of Nunnes + Roses
Sun 4 Dec	9am, 9.45am and 11am services
Mon 5 Dec	6.30pm AHSS Lecture Furnishing the Tower House http://www.ahss.org.uk/events/furnishing-tower-house/
Thur 8 Dec	<i>Pilgrim Course at St Cuthbert's and Compline at St John's</i>
Sat 10-Sat 24 Dec	Follow the Star The 7 th Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival at St Andrew's and St George's West celebrates Christmas in the city with music, storytelling and 40 sparkling trees each decorated by local folk. Generally open 10am-6pm Mon – Sat, though please see website for full details.
Sat 10 Dec	<i>God Music Discord + Sin Symposium (at St John's)</i>
Sun 11 Dec	9am, 9.45am and 11am services
Thur 15 Dec	<i>Pilgrim Course at St Cuthbert's +Compline at St John's</i>
Fri 16 Dec	6pm Carols at Six
Sat 17 Dec	10.45-noon Members Coffee Morning, Undercroft 6.30pm Congregational Christmas Supper 7.30pm Consort of Voices Concert
Sun 18 Dec	9am, 9.45am and 11am services
Wed 21 Dec	2.30 Evergreens 24 Doors of Advent (Edinburgh's Christmas)
Sat 24 Dec	5pm Christingle 11.30pm Watchnight
Sun 25 Dec	11am Family Worship

Follow the star

Sally Evans

Are you getting ready to “Follow the star” – the theme of our 7th Christmas Tree Festival?



We're looking forward to 40 wonderful Caring Christmas trees from Bethany telling the stories of the groups, organisations and businesses who have sponsoring and decorating them. We'll be extending a warm welcome to young and old, from near and far to enjoy “*a peaceful and ethereal experience.*” and “*a true Christmas message of love*” (as visitors commented last year).



Donations from this year's festival will be shared between three local charities whose excellent work lights up the lives of the people they support. We asked them to tell us how they do this and the messages in their *starry* decorations.

Richmond's Hope Donna Hastings



Richmond's Hope is a charity which supports children and young people from Edinburgh and the Lothians who have suffered a bereavement which for many has been traumatic for them. We offer one to one support to young people between the ages of four and eighteen, they are supported using therapeutic play and





specialised grief activities. These activities enable them to gain an understanding of how the death has impacted their lives and support them to look at their memories and feelings and to also learn coping strategies for the future. 

The theme for this year's Christmas Tree Festival "Follow the Star" provided the children and young people of Richmond's Hope an opportunity to remember the people in their lives who have died. Some thought about the theme as a "pathway" and wrote a message forming a path to the stars, others added photos and important messages that they would have like to have said to the person, particularly at this special time of year.

Children and young people often tell us that Christmas is one of the most difficult times of year as it's such a family time and they feel the absence of the person who died. Making something in memory of the person knowing that they have "brought the person into Christmas" in some way is comforting and will provide a special place to visit over the festive period with their families.

Donna Hastings,
Bereavement Co-ordinator
Find out more at

<http://www.richmondshope.org.uk>
www.facebook.com/RichmondsHope1/



Health in Mind

Lynne Stanford

Health in Mind are delighted to be one of the charities for this year's Christmas Tree Festival – thank you. 1 in 4 of us will experience mental ill health in our lifetime. At Health in Mind we promote positive mental health and wellbeing in Edinburgh and the Lothians, with a couple of national services as well. 

 We are here for people when they need us the most, whether it is through our Trauma Counselling Line for survivors of childhood abuse, or if someone is feeling isolated and alone and needs help to reconnect with their local community. We provide a unique mixture of services, from information, counselling and cognitive behavioural therapies, through to befriending, trauma support and services for older people. Over 250 volunteers help support our community based services like befriending.

Health in Mind helps the most excluded and vulnerable people in our society, including survivors of abuse, minority ethnic communities, older people, and those at risk of homelessness. We wanted to create a Tree of Stars - giving people the chance to celebrate and share ideas of how to keep well over the festive season.

**Lynne Stanford,
Community Fundraiser**

Find out more at

www.health-in-mind.org.uk

www.facebook.com/healthinmindscotland



Edinburgh Direct Aid



Jeanne Bell

Edinburgh Direct Aid is an all volunteer charity founded in 1992 to help people caught up in disasters worldwide: now working with the refugees in Lebanon who have fled from the war in Syria. Aرسال, 20 km



Syrian widows in Aرسال holding up the stars and tree decorations they made overnight in Aرسال in October.

from the Syrian border with Lebanon, is currently home to 70,000 refugees, existing in tents and other makeshift accommodation. In addition to delivering aid donated in Scotland – our 10th container has just left – EDA builds schools for refugee children in Aرسال and provides vocational training for the young unemployed, both Syrian and poor Lebanese.

The woollen decorations on the EDA tree represent Syrian stars and Lebanese cedars and have been made by Syrian refugee widows in

Aرسال. Laurel soap bars were made in Aleppo for centuries before the war started, treasured by a Syrian family resident here in Edinburgh, and lent for this occasion. These and the pictorial stars represent all that has been lost. EDA has sent many teddies like the one that crowns the tree, comfort for traumatised children. The first Christmas tells of homelessness followed by threat and flight. The EDA tree tells a similar stark story for our times, in an old and war weary world.

Jeanne Bell, Depute Chair EDA,
Jean Horsburgh, Ann Thanisch and Marwa Mauazen

Find out more at

<http://edinburghdirectaid.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Edinburgh-Direct-Aid-1408736506010028/>





Church/Café wins award

Pete Anderson (Undercroft café manager and chef) and Wendy Henderson (church manager) paid a visit to the City Chambers in November to receive an award for **Most Supportive Employer in Edinburgh** on behalf of St Andrew's and St George's West

The church, particularly the Undercroft Café, offers placements to young people as a stepping stone to employment under Port of Leith Housing Association's Training Opportunities in Lothian programme.

Two of our trainees have moved on to paid employment and are holding down jobs. Another trainee, who left school early with poor literacy, improved so much with support from one of our Crofters (café volunteers) that she has gone back to full time education to gain qualifications.

Pete said: "It's nice to have the work recognized – thanks to everyone in the Undercroft and in the congregation who has supported this work".



Come to... a Coffee Morning

Sat 17 Dec, 10.45 - noon in the Undercroft

Members, friends and hangers-on are warmly invited to come for coffee, cake and catch-up in the Undercroft on Saturday 17 December. Free, hosted by Rev Ian Y Gilmour and the Pastoral Care Group. And why not pop into the Christmas Tree Festival upstairs in the Sanctuary – lots to explore and live music at noon

Come to... Christmas Supper

Sat 17 Dec, 6.30pm in the Undercroft

Tickets £10/children £5. are available from the office during the week (0131 225 3847) or from Cathie Donaldson on Sundays.



Thanks!

Many thanks to all who supported the Creative Together CRAFTA sale in November. **£1891** was raised for Motor Neurone Disease Scotland.

Christmas with Luther



Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her/

From heaven above to earth I come

Memorable nativities

Bob Morley, James McNeill ... and chiefly yourselves

The big thing every year was who would play Mary and Joseph, a great validation and instant promotion to stardom!



Our daughter age 3 saw her first nativity play and was SO impressed by the angels with their tinsel halos it became her ambition to be one of them.

Alas, two years later she was cast as Mary; useless to tell her it was the starring role - she was the most sour-faced Mary you ever saw, dumping the 'baby' in the manger in a very unmotherly way and gazing enviously at Gabriel and the angelic choir.

When I was a King I had absolutely no idea what Frankincense and Myrrh were, thought they were Frank in Sense and Murr (like purr) but what on earth could the baby Jesus possibly want them for? I also couldn't understand the carol "We Three Kings of Orry and Tar", were Orry and Tar more strange gifts for baby Jesus?



It's an old chestnut but we had a boy in our Sunday School class called Jim Shepherd so of course we all sang:

*While Shepherd washed his
socks at night
All seated at the tub
A bar of Sunlight soap came
down
And he began to scrub*



I was an angel - but it was hard to be angelic because the wire-and-tinsel halo my mother had made bounced around so much.



My grandson Thomas is a king in the school nativity play and he says he's going to Bethlehem on a magic carpet...

About 20 years ago we had a grown up Nativity Play with teenagers Sam Evans as

Joseph and Philippa Cunliffe as Mary. It was all remarkably lifelike, but a particularly abiding memory was the part played by the late Evelyn Scott as a slightly snippy but warm-hearted Edinburgh matron who considered the position of the parents-to-be not at all what should be found in the better parts of Scotland's Capital

I was the Innkeeper's wife in our Primary School play. As I was to rush on to the stage with exciting news I had to be breathless so I stood offstage panting for all I was worth till it was time to go on!



I can't really remember Nativity Plays at all ... did we do them???

Jesus is missing!

Mary Godden

As a primary teacher I used to create a Christmas display outside my classroom. At the centre of this was a knitted nativity. The children loved it and when passing, would gaze in wonder at the shepherds with their sheep, the Wise Men bearing gifts to visit Mary, Joseph and a tiny baby Jesus in a knitted manger, while others could not resist touching and moving them around. The conversations that the children had were enlightening.



Knitted nativity

And then one day, I heard cries of anguish outside the door. 'Where's Jesus?' 'Jesus is missing!' 'Where can he be?' Yes, Jesus - and the manger - had gone! We searched everywhere, news spread round the school, appeals were made for his return. 'Christmas can't come without Jesus.' As I moved around the school, little voices would ask 'Is Jesus back yet?'

And then, two weeks later, cries of joy. 'He's here!' 'Jesus is back!' The children came to make sure and rejoice. The tiny figure of Jesus in the manger had been put back beside Mary and Joseph.

We never knew who had taken it. Had a child wanted it so much that she or he had slipped it in a pocket, looked after it carefully but became convinced that it should be returned?



Christmas storytelling

All were happy to see the reunion of the figures, which have remained together ever since. We still use them here at St Andrew's and St George's West to illustrate the Christmas story to nursery children visiting the Christmas Tree Festival.

Twins!?

Laura Shepherd

There were 3 of us, all teachers. We had been thrown together into a difficult situation. Our pupils had, until the recent Melville report, been unkindly and untruthfully classed as “ineducable”. Our task was to provide the education until now denied them.

Some of the time the three of us learned from each other, but most of the time we learned from the children. Like all groups of children, they were a disparate bunch. They were, in fact, the most disparate group of children I have ever encountered, and the most interesting, by far. We were pleased enough by our progress that we decided to show off to the parents and friends. We even decided to invite the “High Heid Yins” from the Big Office, our bosses no less.

And so our first nativity play took place. All went well. The children were wonderful. Everyone enjoyed the occasion. So pleased were we that we decided the Nativity Play should be an annual event, thereby unwittingly leaving the door open for disaster.

The following Christmas we set the wheels of Nativity Play 2 in motion. We planned a few changes, choosing different children or rather swapping the roles around a bit. The Wise Men became the Shepherds. So far, so good. Joseph was played by a different wee boy altogether. No complaints so far. Then we swapped Mary and the Angel Gabriel. Mary was now played by a very quiet, very sweet little girl. The Angel Gabriel, a little feistier, had been Mary last year.

The Big Day arrived. Mums, Dads, Grannies and Aunties were all seated, waiting with ill-concealed tissues at the ready. The High Heid-Yins looked on loftily.

The scene was set up as before. With one outstanding difference. Suddenly, the Angel Gabriel, remembering her former glory when she was centre stage, grabbed the baby from Mary’s tender grasp and began to belabour the poor girl’s head with it. We gazed on in horror for a few elongated minutes. We were surrounded by gasps. Then one of us, I forget which (modesty has clouded my memory) hastily produced a second baby doll from the cupboard. And order was restored. Two baby dolls were being closely hugged.

But it must be the only Nativity Play in which that heretofore unknown carol “Children in a Manger” was sung.

Why is there a conflict in the Holy Land?

Páraic Réamonn

Nothing enlivens our faith so much as walking in the footsteps of Jesus. Nothing awakes our compassion so much so seeing how Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the land of Jesus today suffer as a consequence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza; the 70th anniversary of when Britain finally recognized that it was impossible to square the circle of the incompatible promises it had made to Arabs and Jews, packed its bags, and left the land to war; and the centenary of the Balfour Declaration, in which Britain viewed with favour the establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine – without prejudice to the rights of the Arabs in Palestine or the rights of the Jews elsewhere.

Last and not least, 2017 marks the 120th anniversary of the first Zionist congress, convened in Basel, Switzerland, by the Austrian Jewish playwright and journalist Theodor Herzl, which launched the movement for a Jewish state in Palestine.

Herzl argued that Europe would always hate the Jews, and that Jews had no choice but to go somewhere else and create a state of their own. The trouble is, when you go somewhere else to do that, you run into the problem of people who are already living there: Arab Muslims and Christians.

The solution the Zionist movement found in the war of independence in 1948 was to take almost 80% of the land by force and to exile 80% of the Arab inhabitants of that part of the land. The solution the state of Israel found in the six day war in 1967 was to occupy the rest of the land and to rule the Arab inhabitants of that part under military law, as it still does today.

Arab-Israelis – Palestinians living in 1948 Israel – are discriminated against but have certain rights. Palestinians in the territories occupied in 1967 effectively have no rights. Those exiled in 1948 and since have never been allowed to return.

For the Arabs of Palestine, the war of 1947-48 was not a war of independence. It was a catastrophe – in Arabic, the *Nakba*. Today, people are more and more inclined to question not just what Israel did in 1967 and after, but also what the state of Israel did in creating itself. The *Nakba*, they say, wasn't something that just happened in passing. It was essential to the creation of a Jewish state. It was Israel's original sin.

It's easy for us to get on our high horse about this, but only if we don't look in the mirror. For the original sin of the state of Israel is rooted in a sin even more original: the sin of Christian Europe.

For centuries Christian Europe was unwilling to treat the Jews of Europe as human beings. Even after Jewish emancipation, many gentile Europeans were unwilling to accept their Jewish neighbours as equal citizens.

Emancipation in many places created a vicious backlash of modern, racist antisemitism – an antisemitism that culminated in the Holocaust, the death of six million Jews at the hands of Hitler's Germany.

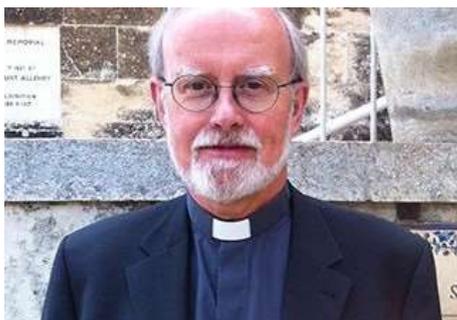
Theodor Herzl invented political Zionism because of his experience as a Jew in 19th-century Europe. They will always hate us, he said. He was wrong about that, in my view – antisemitism is not written in the DNA of Europe – but he certainly had his reasons.

Equally, the Balfour Declaration did not create the Zionist-Palestinian conflict; but once incorporated in the British Mandate, it guaranteed that it would all end in tears. And the Western contribution to ending the conflict over the decades has been less than helpful.

This is an asymmetric conflict, with most of the power on one side and most of the suffering on the other. But there is no one in Israel/Palestine who is not suffering from a conflict in which all are trapped and from which they are unable, and often plainly unwilling, to escape.

As I see it, we must be bold as a church in speaking up about what is wrong in the Holy Land, even if this sometimes gets us into trouble. But we must be strong as a church in standing alongside all who suffer in the Holy Land, Arab and Jew alike.

*Pray not for Arab or Jew,
for Palestinian or Israeli,
but pray rather for yourselves,
that you might not divide them in your prayers
but keep them both together in your hearts.*



Páraic Réamonn is minister of St Andrews Scots Memorial Church Jerusalem.

Follow his blog at

<http://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/blogs/witness-in-jerusalem/>

A myriad of memorable images

Mary Davidson looks back on the October Christian Aid Sale



It is with gladness and gratitude that the conveners of the October Christian Aid Sale look back on it now, and with pleasure that they announce that the sum of £15,000 is to go to Christian Aid as a result. The sum of £19,422 was raised and the details are as follows: **Art** £8,839 **Books** £2,883 **Catering** £536 **Donations** £6,504 **Jewellery** £660.

We were richly blessed from the start. Thanks to brilliant PR work by Esmé Allen of Christian Aid, photographs appeared in both *The Scotsman* and *Edinburgh Evening News*. An innovation this year was our appearance on Twitter and Facebook. We thank Lisa Rogers for bringing us most happily into the twenty-first century.

There was a myriad of memorable images to delight the eye and the heart in James Holloway's Exhibition of Art. On the dais were easels lent by Bonhams, our Queen Street neighbours, and by the Fine Art Society nearby in Dundas Street. The mightiest of these held Ann Oram's majestic *Section of an Altarpiece*, Robert Macaulay Stevenson's *Landscape* and a pastel by Patricia Douthwaite. On the others were works of art by outstanding Scottish artists past and present. Pews and chairs were attractively stacked with dozens of pictures of every kind.



On the tartan-covered tables Marion Ralls and the Scottish Books team had vintage Scottish books and hundreds of the classics of Scots literature. They say that there are more books about Glasgow than any other city,

and we had some notable ones, including Sir David Muirhead Bone's *Glasgow in 1901* with its famous etchings of Clyde shipyards. It seemed to this observer that the River Clyde was flowing through the church. The oldest item was a map from a gazetteer dated 1784, the very year of the foundation of St Andrew's Church, which featured maps of the ports and harbours of the Clyde. The fine oil painting on the dais by Robert Macaulay Stevenson (1854-1952) was a woodland and water scene with a meandering tributary of the River Clyde in the foreground. Also handed in for the Sale was a Victorian watercolour of Craignethan Castle near the Clyde Falls and believed to be the original of Tillietudlem in Scott's *Old Mortality*. Several friends came from Glasgow. It was an especial joy to see them.

There was a perfect opportunity to display the first editions graciously presented by modern Scots writers and autographed specially for us.



Opening Day happened to be the birthday of our patron and it went with a swing, with pictures and books both selling well. But, undoubtedly, the highlight was John Kitchen's Organ Recital in the afternoon. One hundred and thirty-two privileged people were present and they were unanimous in appreciation. The birthday party which followed, in the Undercroft, was a delight.

Our Catering Team presided over the annual Coffee Morning and reunion of friends in the Undercroft. There was the usual marvellous array of baking and preserves, with the tablet, scones, chocolate gingers and apple jelly which are the traditional hallmarks of this event.

As always, there were treasures to be found at Joan Dryburgh's jewellery stall, and alongside this, the little boxes and cards we all love.

So ended a particularly happy chapter in our annals, which we looked upon as an essential coda to the May Sale. It brings the total we have given to Christian Aid in 2016 to the sum of £141,000.





We believe in life before death

Lady M Davidson

10 November 2016

Re: Art Sale – Christian Aid at St Andrew's and St George's West Church

Dear Mary

On behalf of the Christian Aid Scotland team, our colleagues and partners overseas and the communities in the developing world with whom we work, congratulations on raising £19,422.00 through donations and the Sale of Pictures and Scottish Books, the coffee morning and the jewellery & gifts stall held at St Andrew's and St George's West Church from 27 to 29 October. It is wonderful to see this autumn initiative going from strength to strength.

Esme Allen and I were once again delighted to provide what support we could from the Christian Aid office, and enjoyed the time we spent with the sale team in the lead up to and during the event.

I'm delighted to confirm receipt of your cheque for **£15,000.00**, representing the funds now sent on to us, and to express our admiration for the efforts made by so many throughout the year which have enabled the Sale treasurers to pass on to us a total of £141,000.00 in 2016.

The scale of the contribution to Christian Aid Scotland's work from St Andrew's and St George's West and its many friends is unsurpassed, and greatly appreciated by our whole team. Your efforts make a vital difference to our ability to support the thousands of communities and hundreds of partner organisations with whom we presently work in almost 40 countries worldwide.

On three continents, we work to help people to live with dignity and respond successfully to the opportunities and risks that they face, to ensure that resources are shared more fairly, and to enable people to share in the vital decisions of life by taking a full part in society and the economy. Thank you for all you do to help this happen.

With best wishes to everyone involved in a most successful year

Phil Acott

Regional Support Officer – Edinburgh, Lothians, Borders, Falkirk & Fife

Ref: **OR288354/B267624-1**

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Christian Aid works with the world's poorest people in around 50 countries, regardless of race or faith. We tackle the causes and consequences of poverty and injustice. We are part of ACT International, the ecumenical relief network.

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Outward Bound

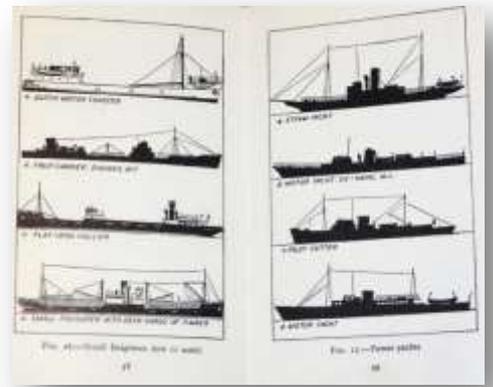
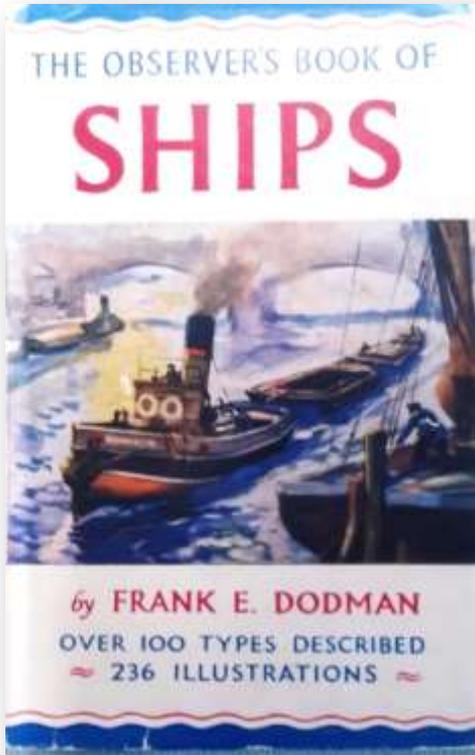
Nick Evans

Above is a detail of a picture we bought at the October Christian Aid Sale. It's a watercolour with pen and ink detail showing a tanker sailing downstream beneath the Forth Bridge. I think the original title was "Outward Bound" as that is written in pencil on the back, a nautical term for a ship leaving port and which, incidentally, was adopted by the Outward Bound Schools. At the sale the title was given as Under the Forth Bridge. The picture is signed "Frank E. Dodman 1978."

Of course, I couldn't resist doing a little research. The E stands for Ellerton. And I discovered some surprising connections. A sticker on the back of the picture gave the artist's address as 7 Walkershaugh, Peebles, and the archives of the Tweed Art Gallery in Peebles revealed:

"Frank Dodman (1908–1997) was a man of many talents; artist, musician, musicologist, photographer and natural historian. He trained as an artist at the Municipal School of Art, Manchester and after various teaching appointments joined Bournemouth and Poole College of Art as Head of the Department of Teacher Training where he remained until his retirement. After he and his wife retired to Peebles he took a keen interest in the local art scene and had a number of one-man exhibitions in Peebles. He was a member of Peebles and District Art Club and regularly exhibited at the annual Members' Exhibition."

Frank E Dodman wrote a number of books on education but is best remembered for The Observer Book of Ships which was published in 44 editions between 1952 and 1986. I had a copy in the 50's and 60's.



Frank E Dodman wrote the text, drew all the line drawings and silhouettes and provided many of the photographs.

In his preface to the 1961 edition he gave Poole, Dorset as his address. Sally, my wife, comes from Poole - and her father was a lecturer at the same College!

Finally, on Friday 4th November we walked with a group from church beside the River Forth. Here we are at the spot in South Queensferry between the road and rail bridges where he must have painted the picture!





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

Pat McKerrow's Wildlife Diary

For once I find myself almost at a loss for words! Yes, I had been looking forward to sharing precious wildlife memories with you by virtue of my recent photographic exhibition, but nothing had prepared me for the wonderful response that ensued. With all my heart I thank everyone who visited, supported, purchased, spread the word, and so on; the reaction to the event was overwhelming. You certainly helped make November 2016 a truly thrilling and precious time for me; and I hope that like me, you witnessed and experienced God's hand at work in fellowship and wonder as we shared and enjoyed his precious gifts in such a different way.



Despite spending much of November surrounded by my photos and lovely people in the Undercroft, I did manage occasional visits to my patch on the Water of Leith. How good to see healthy populations of mallards, moorhens, grey wagtails, and kingfishers being maintained. Also good to catch-up with three goosander 'girls' I have followed since their 'chick' days in summer. And of course my swans, I never cease to feel a sense of joy, peace and love when I see them, when they swim towards me, and when they rise from the water in greeting. How these wild creatures changed my life in 2016. So many hours spent with them, so many amazing experiences, so many cherished moments, and not forgetting thousands of photographs later, I know how blessed I am. I praise God for all I have witnessed to date and for all that still lies ahead.

Meanwhile, as the latter stages of 2016 dawn, I have reflected upon the first article I wrote for the church magazine back in November 2015. Included was a photograph of a robin I had spotted earlier that year outside our favourite holiday cottage on Islay. I am pleased to say that we have recently returned from another wonderful holiday in the very same cottage, having seen what I suspect was the very same robin, and even perched on the very same bush. What reassuring familiarity!

I find robins enchanting little birds, voted at least twice the UK's national bird, and yet cheeky, feisty creatures that can fight to the death in defence of their territories. So many stories, myths and folklore surround robins too, and after years of curiosity about their place in our festive cards and decorations, I decided the time was nigh to do some 'delving' to find the reason why. And what surprises lay in store!

Never before had I heard it claimed that as Christ died on the cross, a robin pricked itself on the crown of thorns and His blood then stained and formed the now instantly recognisable red breast – hence some believe it unlucky to harm a robin because as a result of this encounter, the bird is thought to have Christ's blood coursing through its veins.

Another intriguing story I found suggested the red breast was the result of its feathers being scorched by fire while protecting the infant Jesus in the manger. Yet despite these alleged links to bible stories, what I believe most likely from all I have read, is that the bird's association with the festive season stems from Victorian times when postmen wore

red waistcoats and were depicted on Christmas cards as robins carrying mail.

Anyway, I digress. In addition to my Islay robin friend, I have spotted many robins in recent months in various locations across the country, some foraging in undergrowth, others visiting bird-tables, and almost always all heard before being seen.

Undoubtedly, my favourite was a local chap I 'captured' on the Puddocky stretch of the Water of Leith this summer – his photograph is attached... he makes me smile whenever I look at him; I hope he will have the same effect on you. He was young when the photograph was taken, and I suspect, in transition from fledgling 'fluff-ball' to his proper juvenile feathers. Doubtless he will since have blossomed like the proverbial 'Ugly Duckling' into the most handsome robin imaginable. Much has been said about beauty coming from the heart rather than any outward appearance; I hope this applies equally across God's creation, not just to man!

Sir David Attenborough writes: *"It seems to me that the natural world is the greatest source of excitement; the greatest source of visual beauty; the greatest source of intellectual interest. It is the greatest source of so much in life that makes life worth living."*

I could not agree more.

Every blessing
Pat McKerrow

At Christmas

**Always
In the dark centre
of this season
the birth occurs
noiseless and marvellous
the seers
move on their journeys
there are gestures
of wonder, and at midnight
a resting star.**

**Always
it is amazing
that the mountains
do not relinquish
their momentary grandeur,
bend to the stable,
let the ermine tremble
there
where the oxen
and the angels are.**

Jean Kenward

Letter from Arizona

William Clinkenbeard, November 2016

The unexpected has come to pass, as so often it does. Donald J. Trump is the new President-Elect.

The telephone has been ringing all morning, with family and friends phoning to give us their condolences. While the result went against most of the polls it wasn't a complete surprise to me. During the last few days I felt that the "politically incorrect/strongman" persona was appealing to many, especially to white males.

I wouldn't dream of adding to the millions of words which will be spent in analysis over the next little while, but I would like to contribute one feature which I think is interesting.

Much support for Trump came from the evangelical Christians. This is the part of the Christian community who are very literally-minded and also very judgmental. They are morally critical of abortion and the gay community, to name only several live issues in American life.

When Trump encouraged violence ("beat the cr... of them"), and exhibited his sexual abuse of women, I thought that the evangelicals would be critical.

But no, they shrugged it off like water off a duck's back. They said that they believed in forgiveness. In other words, high-minded moral criticism is only applied when it suits you. If it goes against your political position then put it on the back burner.

In a rapidly changing world some things change little. Jesus condemned the Pharisees for neglecting the commandment to honour your father and mother by setting it aside to perform other rituals for God.

It suited them.

Let Every Day Be Christmas

**Christmas is forever,
not for just one day,
for loving, sharing, giving,
are not to put away
like bells and lights and tinsel,
in some box upon a shelf.
The good you do for others
is good you do yourself.**

Norman W. Brooks

Creating a New Vision for an Old City



James McNeill

On 28 September the Centre for Theology and Public Issues and Edinburgh City Centre Churches Together hosted a day conference at New College, led by Dr Eric Stoddart of St Andrews University, with Professor Paul Ballard and Rev Fiona Bennett. The following is taken from a reflection on the day's discussions prepared by Paul Ballard.

Edinburgh has a number of Central Business Districts, each with its own distinctive life, and each with clusters of churches. These churches will have their own opportunity for mission, very different from a normal parish context, which will shape the way the congregation develops its distinctive ministry.

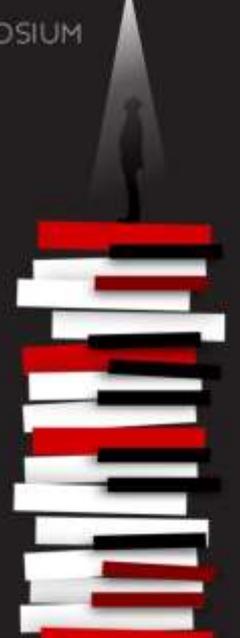
The city centre can be a place of loneliness but also of anonymity. On the one hand there is the need to offer the stranger 'instant hospitality'; while on the other there is need to respect a person's wish to be alone. This last, in part explains the growth of cathedral congregations in recent times, alongside a sense of stability and recognised, performed liturgy. Individual churches, too, are often a place of refuge for the broken and outcast; and this can put pressure on the community of faith.

The churches' support for the City is best done through responsible dialogue, ecumenically rather than piecemeal. This raises two issues: interfaith working and engagement with the more entrepreneurial of the newer congregations.

The welfare of the City requires that, in the midst of the ambiguous city, the worship of the People of God is a vital political statement. This is why the Church must not abandon the city centre. The priestly work of the Church looks both upward and outward, exercising the work of intercession. From here we are sent to serve. Worship, therefore, needs to be inclusive, setting the city in the world and praying for the city for the strong, the powerful and the responsible as well as for the needy and weak; the scattered Church as well as the institutional Church.

ST JOHN'S THEOLOGY SYMPOSIUM
10TH DECEMBER
10:00 - 16:00

**GOD,
 MUSIC,
 DISCORD
 & SIN**




PROFESSOR JEREMY BEGBIE
 DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL, USA

Jeremy Begbie is a concert pianist and theologian with an international reputation for exploring the frontier between God-talk and the arts. From the piano he will use music to investigate the mystery of sin in God's plan for the world.

AT ST JOHN'S CHURCH, PRINCES STREET

The Symposium is open to all and will include musical lectures by Professor Begbie, discussions, and lunch with refreshments. There is no charge but donations towards the cost may be given. To book a place or for more information, please contact the Revd Dr Stephen Holmes at stephen.holmes@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk.



Missing People Carol Service

To remember all those who are missing to us this Christmas

St John's Church, Edinburgh
 6.30pm Tuesday 6 December



Visit www.missingpeople.org.uk/carols
 for more information and to book your tickets.
 We request a £5 donation for tickets.



Missing People Ltd 284 Upper Richmond Road West London SW14 7LJ
 Registered company No. 2816282 Registered Charity No. 1050429

Come and sing carols on Christmas Eve

On behalf of the Director of Nursing, the Spiritual Care Team would like to invite you and your members to join us for carol singing round the wards at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh on Christmas Eve.

There will be refreshments available in the Board Room on the 2nd Floor from 7pm onwards with a view to commencing the carol singing with the Salvation Army brass band at around 7.30pm. Parking within the hospital grounds will be free on this occasion.

We would be grateful if you could indicate your numbers of attendance, by email (ann.aitchison@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk) or by telephone (0131 242 1990), no later than Friday 16th December to allow us to order the appropriate refreshments.

Thank you.

God's love with skin on

David Hart, Workplace Chaplain

Wherever you live in Edinburgh you are fast approaching the time of year when Christmas is in the air - in some form. It is a season of the heart, and the central theme of the messages we hear on the radio, TV and in our churches, orbits around the mystical topic of love.

Love is an elusive term that can mean many different things to many different people. But it remains true that experiencing love, being warmed by love and sharing love is an idea that connects deeply with people at their emotional centre. We may not know exactly what love is, but we know it when we experience it.

The word "Advent" literally means, "The coming" and Christmas is about Love coming to find us, (each of us), right where we are.

While people wander the stores searching for the perfect present and the staff, (for whom Christmas is often about selling their and hitting their targets), serve customers, the story of the Incarnation in the Bible reveals to us the perfect Gift that God chose for each one of us. There is no greater Gift on planet earth that could be given by God than this love that heals, forgives, saves, affirms and ultimately changes us - from the inside out.

Five months, into the role of chaplain I find that I'm being recognised, remembered and welcomed into conversations. I am pleased with the connections I've made and the few opportunities that have come my way because although the old song says, "It's the most wonderful time of the year...", there are old pressures like the heavier traffic Lothian Buses and Edinburgh trams experience and the potential dangers that ensue, but also the new pressures brought on by the final closure of the St James Centre and the falling footfall for Multrees Walk.

Among the staff in my chaplaincies there are those who are dreading the season because they face the threat of losing their job or they feel disoriented by the constant changes they are being asked to embrace, or because they are feeling lonely and isolated while serving in front of bright magical displays or indeed the stress that comes to visit when

approval is tied to the financial reward of personal success. Right now, for some, these months are proving to be the most difficult of the year. This is why I would value your prayers.

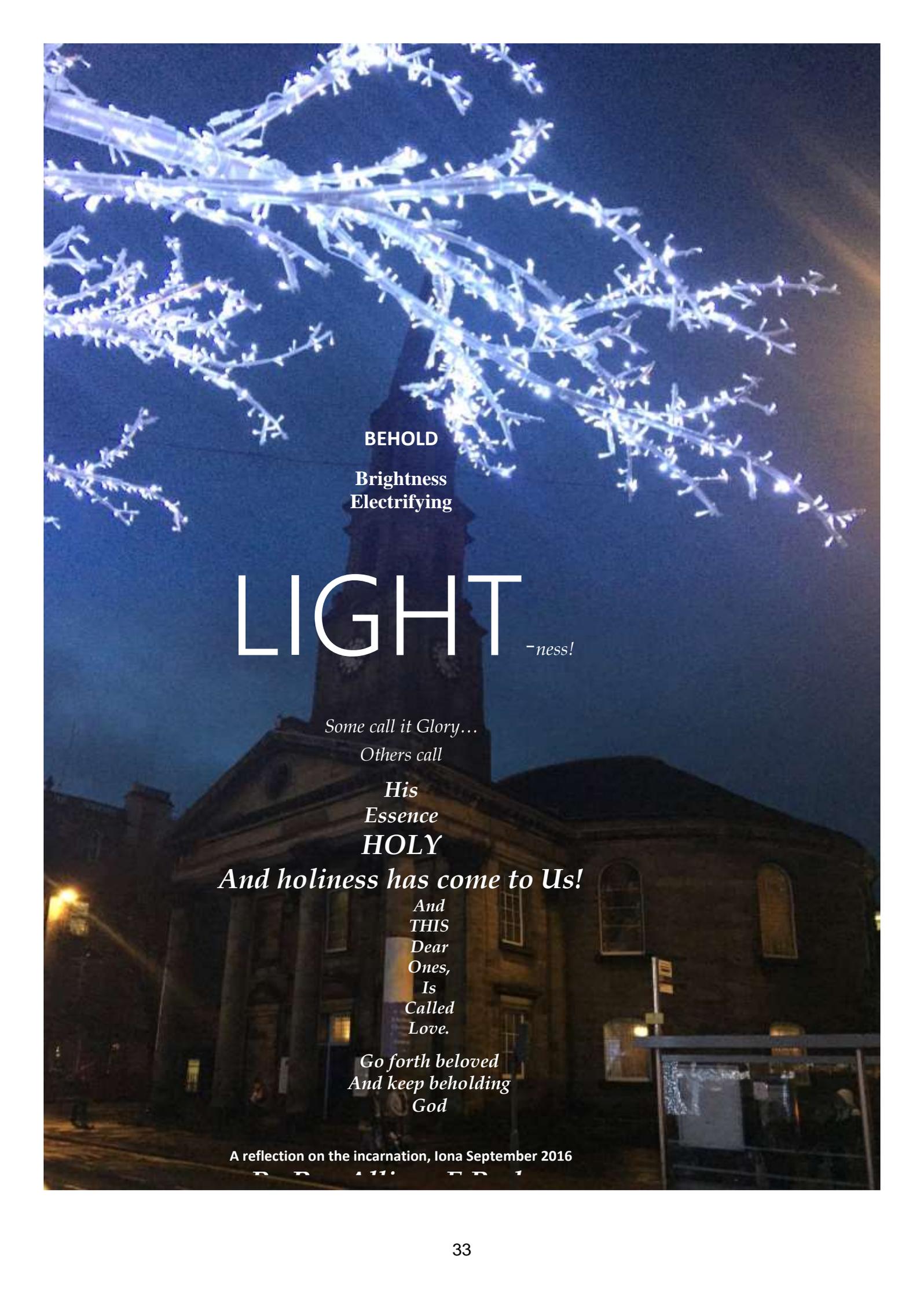
It could be said that a blessing is God's love with skin on. A real tangible expression of all the characteristics of love - commitment, consistency, selflessness, presence and unconditional acceptance. For you and me the Christmas story is the most powerful expression of blessing we have in human history and all I want to do is convey these qualities to the people I encounter in the coming weeks so I can offer a hope filled present and future.

Amid all the celebrations I wish you an amazing Christmas season with family and friends.

David Holt



Come to our magical Carols at Six service among the trees



BEHOLD
Brightness
Electrifying

LIGHT *-ness!*

Some call it Glory...

Others call

*His
Essence
HOLY*

And holiness has come to Us!

*And
THIS
Dear
Ones,
Is
Called
Love.*

*Go forth beloved
And keep beholding
God*

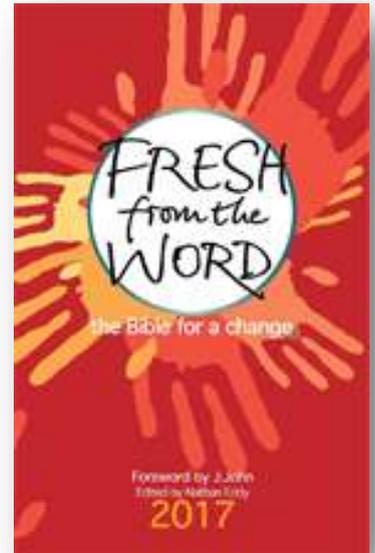
A reflection on the incarnation, Iona September 2016

January 2017

Fresh from the Word

Ian Gilmour

Why not get some encouragement to read more of God's word in 2017? **'Fresh From the Word'** helps - a group of us read **'Fresh'** which is the International Bible daily reading notes through each year. It is a terrific collection of writers, male and female from all five continents offering fresh insights on bible text from their personal and very different perspectives on life and faith.



Copies are now ordered, should you wish to have one please contact Ian Gilmour or Cathie Donaldson

January 2017 Worship

Sun 1 Jan 11am	Let Everything Praise God
Sun 8 Jan 11am	Epiphany How God Sees
Sun 15 Jan 11am	Big Call
Sun 22 Jan 11am	Christian Unity Sunday Together Churches Service at St Cuthbert's
Sun 29 Jan 11am	Re-Imagined Realm

February 2017 Worship

Sun 5 Feb 11am Letting the Light Through

Our regular pattern of Sunday worship is

9am Communion

9.45am All Age Interactive

11am Traditional service with super choir

January 2017 Events Diary

Sun 1 Jan	services tbc
Sun 9 Jan	9am; 9.45am;11am services
Wed 11 Jan	5.30pm Ed Quartet Rush Hour Concert EQ Revolution! how Beethoven's "Rasumovsky" Quartet No 3 can still shock listeners today. £10/£9/students FREE
Sun 15 Jan	9am; 9.45am;11am services
Mon 16 Jan	10.30 Book Group Chapel
Tue 17 Jan	6pm St Mary's Music School Concert 7.30pm Kirk Session
Sun 22 Jan	9am, 9.45am 11am TOGETHER Service at St Cuthbert's
Wed 25 Jan	2.30pm Evergreens
Sat 28 Jan	7.30pm Georgian Concert Society: Trio Goya plays Haydn and Beethoven
Sun 29 Jan	9am; 9.45am;11am services; noon Communion

February 2017

Fri 3 Feb	Walking Group meets 7pm TOGETHER Christian Aid Quiz (at St Cuthbert's)
Sun 5 Feb	9am; 9.45am;11am services
Mon 6 Feb	6.30pm AHSS Lecture: Rethinking Scotland's Theatre Architecture 1951-1995

COME
&
SING!



M O Z A R T

R E Q U I E M

John Kitchen (conductor)
Morley Whitehead (organ)

Jan 21 2017

2-9pm (2-5.30pm rehearsal; 6.30-9pm Concert)
St Cuthbert's Church, Lothian Road, EH1 2EP
Singer (suggested donation) - £15
Audience (suggested donation) - £5
Tickets available from Eventbrite

An opportunity for anyone who loves singing, loves Mozart, and believes in women's education, to rehearse and perform this marvelous work under the leadership of the City of Edinburgh's principal organist and his fine team of soloists.

MUSIC FOR MALAWI



The Soko fund supports women into Higher Education in Malawi
www.thesokofund.org
SC035554

A date for your diary

Margaret McGregor

2 years ago the TOGETHER Christian Aid Committee decided that we should give the Christian Aid Quiz a rest. We did have very regular support and appreciated it but we felt our supporters needed a change. However since then we have heard "*when is the next Christian Aid Quiz?*" so we have a date.

The next TOGETHER Christian Aid Quiz Friday 3rd February at 7 pm in the Lammermuir Hall of St Cuthbert's church. We know there is good parking at St Cuthbert's, and a variety of buses which stop at Lothian Road or Princes Street so we hope to see you there.

Walking Group

There are to be no congregational walks in December or January. The next will be Friday 3rd February, route still to be decided.

Evergreens

25 Jan Music for Burns Night with Andrew Smith and Friends.

Ecumenical Friends Spring Term 2017 12.30pm at St Cuthbert's

Jan 5	Norah Summers	Bochum Link (Westphalia)
Jan 12	Victoria Telford	The Mercy Corps
Jan 19	Dr Stuart Ritchie	The Ageing Brain
Jan 26	Prof Keith Cornwell	Are We More Than Stardust?



Follow the Star music programme

Sat 10 December

11-12 noon Susan McLarty recorder ensemble
12-1pm Brigitte Harris, organ

Mon 12 December

2-3pm Dovecot Singers

Wed 14 Dec:

12-1pm Drew Crichton piano

Thurs 15 Dec

12 -12.30pm Parkside School Gaelic Choir

Fri 16 Dec

6pm Carols at Six

Sat 17 Dec

12-1pm Honest Singers

3-4pm Russian Orthodox Chant Choir

Mon 19 Dec

11-12 Circle Kin Choir Concert

Tue 20 Dec

12-1 Triplicity

Wed 21 Dec

: 12-1 Drew Crichton piano

Thurs 22 Dec

12-1 Kleyne Klezmer

Fr1 23 Dec

1-2pm Leonard Harper Gow, piano

Celebrate Advent and Christmas at St Andrew's and St George's West



**Follow the Star
Christmas Tree Festival
10-24 December 10am-6pm**

Trees, lights, music, reflection



**Christingle Service
Sat 24 December 5pm**

Make a Christingle candle to celebrate the light of the world. For all ages.



**Carols at Six
Friday 16 December 6pm**

Enjoy festive Christmas music from Praetorius, Rutter, Handel and more and sing favourite carols with choir and orchestra



**Watchnight Service
Sat 24 December 11.30pm**

**Joy to the World
Family Worship
Sun 25 December 11am**

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 (not Jan-Mar)
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)
IGilmour[at]churchofscotland.org.uk

Associate Minister Rev Tony Bryer
Associate Minister Rev Allison E Becker
ABecker[at]churchofscotland.org.uk

Pastoral Assistant Rev Alistair McGregor
Session Clerk George Burgess
Joint Treasurers John Innes
Allan Sim

Director of Music Brigitte Harris
Assistant DoM Andrew Carvel
Church manager Wendy Henderson
0131 225 3847 churchmanager[at]stagw.org.uk

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