

EDINBURGH CHURCHES TOGETHER NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2020















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In this edition:

- Friends of Warriston Cemetery
- From South Africa to Scotland
- Greyfriars Kirkand much more

WELCOME!

Since moving into post-lockdown, the world of church services has, on the surface, changed enormously: we are now familiar with limited numbers, pre-booking for church services, social distancing, no hymn singing and face masks. But the church isn't all about buildings as the embracing of all things digital has shown over the past few months. 'Live' services, pre-recorded sermons, Zoom coffee mornings, You Tube and Facebook have all been taken up with enthusiasm. Fundraising and events have also been re-imagined to take place on line. It's been a huge learning curve but boundaries have indeed been smashed communal worship and fellowship are all the better for it.



THE DELIGHTS OF WARRISTON CEMETERY
By Caroline Gerard, Secretary of Friends of Warriston Cemetery



Warriston Cemetery is often described as one of Edinburgh's "hidden gems". Its main entrance is at the end of the cul-de-sac of Warriston Gardens, off Inverleith Row, and it is bounded by high walls and the Water of Leith. People forget it's there! Once they find their way in, however, they are charmed. The Cemetery began in 1843, when the overcrowded kirkyards were being closed, in stages. There were civic cemeteries already, i.e. Old Calton and New Calton, but Warriston was Edinburgh's trailblazer in the burgeoning Garden Cemetery Movement. David

Cousin, its architect, who later designed Dalry, Dean, Newington and Rosebank Cemeteries, understood that curving paths were more inviting to walk along and that shrubs and specimen trees were required to enhance the general vista. An additional feature was the Catacombs (now sealed), plus an Episcopal Chapel (demolished ca 1930). Many of Edinburgh's more noteworthy citizens, although presumably in no hurry to fill them, began to buy lairs for themselves and their families. This results in an intriguing slice of Edinburgh's Victorian society being interred within, with very many stories to be told. The original section of the Cemetery is on a slight slope down to the Water of Leith, this part now designated semi-woodland. Early in its history it was "bisected" by a railway line (now a walkway), with a Tudor-style bridge designed by John Dick Peddie – who also designed the grand memorial to his grandfather, the Rev. James Peddie (1759 – 1845). Later in the 19thC the cemetery was extended northwards, across a flat area with rectangular sections. The cemetery company began to run short of funds in the later



20thC, and so the ground (with some other cemeteries) was sold to a development firm. Following a public outcry that family burial grounds and this representation of our common heritage might disappear forever, in 1994 the City Council stepped in and effected Compulsory After a major clean-up (including Purchase Orders. clearing an outbreak of Giant Hogweed), due to constraints on the public purse, the older parts were left to become semi-woodland, while the newer parts are more carefully tended. But weeds and ivy will always find their way to colonise... Enter the Friends of Warriston Cemetery! The group was set up in 2013 (having received consent to do so from the City of Edinburgh Council), with the two-pronged aim of clearing weeds and ivy so that gravestones might again be readable and accessible and of enhancing the local biodiversity. Seven years in,

despite a hiatus this Spring due to the early stricter terms of the lockdown, we have some success to note. No longer are walls so covered in ivy that the wall-plaques on them cannot be found, let alone read. Himalayan Balsam and Rosebay Willowherb are no longer so rife. But we do still have lots of ivy, nettles, brambles, docken, thistles, etc. We battle them twice a week, weather permitting.



Other wildlife abounds: lots of birds and butterflies, plus a variety of pollinators. Mammals include foxes, squirrels and voles (but no rabbits, hedgehogs or badgers that we know of), not to mention some of our local canine chums who enjoy sniffing, catching or carrying sticks and squirrel-chasing – despite a singular lack of success. Then there are the gravestones themselves. Some of them are unique, including irreplaceable works of art as portraiture of the deceased, and many are fine examples of masons' handiwork and craftsmanship. As a measure of our success so far, we can report that there is no longer

(or very little) "anti-social behaviour", which had earned the Cemetery an unsavoury reputation. During the lockdown, local people suddenly "discovered" what a lovely place it is for a walk. Suddenly it seemed really busy - although in 20 acres, social distancing is easy to maintain. We'd been advising local amenity groups of our activities for some time, but now some of our neighbours have discovered for themselves what we mean. We do help a number of people with enquiries, whether familial or historical. That's fun! It's also the reason we commit our time and effort to the project. From time to time we conduct guided tours, which are popular and increase awareness of this facet of Edinburgh's Victoriana (as well as later years, of course). Our members around the world receive an electronic Newsletter, with news and articles about our residents. When we learned that there were no longer any Services of Remembrance at the Cross of Sacrifice - ironically the closest to the Lady Haig Poppy Factory – we instigated our own, earlier on the Sunday morning, led by the Rev. Joanne Foster of Inverleith St Serf's. This year may involve other arrangements, but we'll do it somehow. So, who is interred at Warriston? Well, there's Sir James Young Simpson, the pioneer of anaesthesia, whose widow declined an offer of his burial in Westminster Abbey; William Flockhart of Duncan, Flockhart & Co who manufactured the chloroform; John Hutton Balfour, Keeper of the Royal Botanic Garden of Edinburgh; Alison Hay Dunlop, local historian; Alexander Buchan, meteorologist; several Waterloo veterans; General William Crokat who witnessed the death of Napoleon; artists such as Horatio McCulloch, John Smart, Robert Scott Lauder and James Eckford Lauder, amongst others; Sir Robert Rowand Anderson, the eminent architect who founded RIAS; John Allan Lindsay, last Provost of Leith; Adam Black, of the statue in Princes Street, who was a Publisher, Lord Provost and MP; Lorne Maclaine Campbell, VC; sculptor

John Rhind; Sir William Peck, astronomer; Edith Burnet Hughes, the first professional woman architect in Scotland; Alexander Smith, poet; Mary Crudelius, campaigner for female education – and another 69,000 souls. Oh yes, and lots of minsters! The gates of Warriston Cemetery are never locked. Feel free to enjoy a summer evening's stroll – or in



a morning or an afternoon. If any volunteers are on-site, they should be able to supply a free leaflet. The Cemetery is at its prettiest early in the year, though, when the light streams obliquely through bare trees to highlight the spring flowers. We plant more and more bulbs each autumn: daffodils for cheeriness and crocuses for early pollen for bees. There are already lots of snowdrops and bluebells. We also welcome new members and volunteers, who bring many talents and experiences to the project. But to enjoy the Cemetery remotely, visit our website, or follow us on Facebook or Twitter.

www.friendsofwarristoncemetery.com

e-mail: friendsofwarristoncemetery@gmail.com

GREYFRIARS KIRK – MARKING 400 YEARS IN DIFFERENT WAYS By Gillian Couper, Celebrate 400 Co-ordinator

At the start of the year, a celebratory programme commenced to mark four centuries of worship and community at Greyfriars Kirk. This got underway, with lunchtime concerts, a spectacular Spem in Alium from the SCO Chorus, and six fruit trees planted with The Orchard Project and Church of Scotland. This was part of a Hungarian twinning, where church-yard orchards have a long tradition. Programme themes were "community", "history" and "enlightenment" – particularly how science and faith work best together to develop our understanding of the world and find a sustainable future for us all. In the programme introduction, Rev Richard Frazer noted that, compared to the immensity of "Deep Time" (coined by geologist James Hutton, buried in Greyfriars Kirkyard), 400 years is the "mere blinking of an eye". Even more fleeting the first few weeks of the year before



the pandemic arrived, with lockdown, incredibly challenging for so many, and the social and economic impacts that we will live with for some time to come. The celebratory programme "moth balled", the Kirk and community turned, like many, maintaining connections, continuing worship and finding meaningful community in new ways. Many volunteered with initiatives like the Grassmarket Community Project (GCP), a charity set up by the Kirk with partner Grassmarket Mission, which supports many of Edinburgh's vulnerable. Through lockdown GCP and volunteers have delivered meals, run online

classes, developed a "virtual walking buddies" scheme, and continued connections by every means possible to ensure its vulnerable members knew they had not been forgotten.

<u>www.grassmarket.org/planc</u> Friends of GCP also found innovative ways to help keep this much-needed community going, including Kevin Robinson, completing the Kiltwalk challenge this September for a fantastic fourth year, despite battling cancer. Truly inspiring. You can cheer him on here:

https://edinburghkiltwalk2020.everydayhero.com/uk/kevin-3

As social restrictions ease and we start to look ahead, we hope the 400-year programme has been well preserved from moths. The Kirk's 400th year commences on Christmas Day



2020, and so we plan to look forward to events and activities next year instead. These will include a Festival of Science, Wisdom and Faith, and an exhibition that pays respect to our experiences of 2020. We will share photos, stories and works of art inspired by the "Lockdown Bobby" project, developed to promote "art for all" and social equality, and help us get together to have a bit of fun during difficult times. Whether you have sculpted or you are a novice, it's not too late to join in! Learn to sculpt your own Greyfriars Bobby (or other animal) in three short web tutorials, with sculptor and

conservationist Mark Coreth. https://greyfriarskirk.com/lockdown-bobby-project/

EDINBURGH QUAKER MEETING HOUSE 'CURTAIN UP!' APPEAL By Sue Proudlove and Tony Wilkes, Managers, Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House

For the first time in 30 years, the Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House will not be opening during August as a Venue for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe because of the coronavirus



pandemic. Usually we would be a bustling building putting on four or five shows a day ably assisted by a fantastic team of enthusiastic volunteers from far and wide with a pop-up café, the Eating House, offering delicious meals, cakes and snacks. Despite the busyness of being part of the world's largest arts festival, we have a reputation for being 'an oasis of calm' in the centre of the Old Town and we think that, as a small, community-run venue. offer something different and distinctive. Our enviable location just off the

Royal Mile, and our not-for-profit ethos where any surplus we make goes to local and national charities, attracts a wide range of performers, and we're delighted that many companies return to us year after year. In particular, we offer a safe space for youth theatre. With the cancellation of this year's Fringe, it has not been possible to press ahead with our rolling refurbishment programme - this year, we had intended to replace the drapes in our theatre space. Instead, in association with the Fringe Office, we ran a Crowdfunder initiative to raise money for our drapes called the Quaker Meeting House 'Curtain Up!' appeal. Any additional monies received are going to be put towards improving the accessibility in the Venue. We are certainly looking forward to welcoming everyone back to the Quaker Meeting House Venue 40 in the Fringe next year and, in the meantime, as a venue for hosting events and meetings. If you would like to donate to our appeal, please contact the managers, Sue and Tony, on the email address below. Hopefully see you soon! office@equaker.org.uk

A NEW FACE AT CHRISTIAN AID



After 7 years in post, Mary Mulligan has retired from her role as Church Relations Officer for Christian Aid Scotland. The new Church Relations Officer, Charlie Meiklejohn, has been with the Christian Aid Scotland team for the past year as Community and Events Fundraising Officer. She is originally from California, but came to the UK to study Theology and Social Justice in 2015 and keeps finding reasons to stay – most notably her Glaswegian husband!

Here's some news about the campaigns and people Christian Aid Scotland is working for this month: All across the world, coronavirus is impacting people's health and livelihoods. Thanks to your donations to Christian Aid's Coronavirus

Emergency Appeal, we've been able to support people like Sani who have no furlough scheme or benefits safety net. Read Sani's story:

https://www.christianaid.org.uk/news/coronavirus-nepal

This autumn, we're reminded of the impact of climate crisis on our global neighbours who are living on the frontline. In Nicaragua, the farming community of Santa Rosa has grown coffee for generations. But now the crop is struggling to grow as the climate crisis rages on. Nicaragua is the second poorest country in Latin America and one of the countries most affected by climate change. Around 80% of the population depend on agriculture for survival. Now, their future looks more and more uncertain. But there is hope. Farming communities are coming together to share tools and knowledge through local cooperatives.



The cooperatives are supported by Christian Aid's local partner, Soppexcca. They help coffee farming communities with different initiatives and projects, from school vegetable gardens to gender workshops. One of the main ways they are helping farmers protect their livelihoods is by shifting from coffee production to climate-resistant cocoa, people to secure a better future. Find out how your church can learn more about the impacts of climate on vulnerable communities. We have great resources for your services and a fantastic quiz.

www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/global-neighbours-autumn-appeal

If your boots are made for walking and you've missed the Bridges or the Kelpies, why not take part in the Kiltwalk? It's happening virtually from 11-13 September all across Scotland. And they'll increase any sponsorship you raise for Christian Aid by 50%! https://www.thekiltwalk.co.uk/events/virtual-kiltwalk-

Our annual remembering moment for those we have loved and lost will look different this year. We'll walk separately – but in one spirit – before joining together in an online reflection on Saturday 12 September. Find out how you can take part in Another Way to Remember this year:

https://www.christianaid.org.uk/events/another-way-remember

THE CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA AND SCOTLAND By Rev Breda Ludik, Assistant Minister at Canongate Kirk

I was asked to compare the church scene in South Africa with that of Scotland. Having only arrived in Scotland in December 2019 after 39 years in ministry in South Africa, and moving into lockdown in March, I can say much more about the South African than the Scottish church! Add to that the fact that my first-hand knowledge of the church in Scotland is limited to Edinburgh. So, I will stick to a few of the most obvious difference between church life in the two countries. Many of the differences are the result of the huge contextual differences. Let us start with religious demographics. The last big Community Survey in South Africa was done in 2016. It indicated that 79.8% of the population belonged to Christian churches while 15.1% indicated that they practiced no religion. This contrasts sharply with the Scottish context where the previous census indicated that people of no religion now make up more than 50% of the population. It should be obvious that this has a huge impact on the experience of church membership. South African churches can play a much more visible role in society and have a much easier time of influencing public opinion. In South Africa most churches still see a large number of young people actively involved in church and young people still view entering ministry in the church as a viable path to follow. In fact, the Dutch Reformed Church, from which I come, has had a surplus of ministers for the past thirty years! Participation



in religious activities is still high in South Africa, though most of the mainline churches have seen some worrisome erosion in this respect over the last two decades. One of the positive pro-active trends in a broad swath of churches in South Africa is a growing missional emphasis, that includes seeking new forms of being church without losing their tradition. The South African churches have been influenced in this respect by the Gospel and Our Culture movement and also by the Fresh Expressions movement. Of course, the church in South Africa has always been known for its missional but the current development work, characterised by a more comprehensive understanding of our missional identity. There is a drive to be more than a church with missions; the church desires to be a missional church where our missional identity is at the core of our identity as a church and is shared

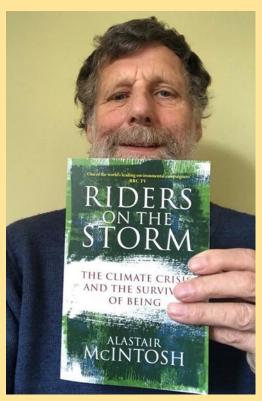
by all members of the congregation. Missionality is now also understood as kingdom work that encompasses both evangelism and social concern.

My very limited impressions of the church in Scotland presents me with a very different and more complex situation in which to be church. The dominant social mores and lifestyles are secular and create a difficult context in which to live a life according to the gospel and in which to raise our children. On the other hand, though, the situation offers opportunities for Christian witness by simply being the church, by presenting the world with a refreshingly different alternative society. Another obvious contextual difference is the economic contrast between South Africa and the UK. South Africa is blighted by unimaginable poverty. The official unemployment rate of above 30% (and that was before Covid19) is often called into question and is believed to be much higher than that -maybe nearer to 50%. Unfortunately, poverty seems to be growing. There are now young adults who have given up on ever being able to enter the job market. The past decade has seen industrial-scale corruption by our politicians that has almost brought the country to its knees economically. It seems to be very difficult for the present government to get rid of the rot. The final impact of Covid19 is not clear at this stage, but with South Africa currently the country with the fifth most infections in the world, one can be forgiven to

imagine the worst. This has influenced the agenda of churches. They have risen to the challenge in admirable ways. Short-term help like foodbanks, feeding schemes, shelters for homeless people, creches for working single mothers etc. have risen like toadstools. The most heartening development, though, has been the growth in programs that seek to address the problem at the level of causes, such as basic skills training, literacy programs, early childhood development programs etc. Added to that, churches are also active in addressing the political causes of poverty, by issuing public statements and participating in pressure groups and social protest. Though not on the same scale, the church in Scotland is also faced with problems caused by poverty. Homelessness is very visible in Edinburgh. It is also clear that the church in Scotland is addressing the problem at both the level of alleviating the results of poverty and addressing the causes. The smaller scale of these initiatives seems to match the scale of the problem in Scotland, but Covid 19 seems to be changing the picture and will certainly present new challenges for Scottish society where the church can play a big role. A very positive outcome of the new emphasis on the missional identity of the church and addressing poverty in South Africa has been the growth in ecumenical relations. None of the South African denominations can assume a dominant position due to numbers of adherents, none being more than 10% of the church in South Africa. In the past churches tended to divide along political lines with the churches opposed to apartheid joining hands in the South African Council of Churches and other churches preferring to keep to themselves. Since South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994 this divide was bridged, and ecumenical collaboration has become the norm. This has done the church a world of good and has provided the impetus for many joint efforts in addressing the social ills of the country. What I have witnessed thus far in Scotland in terms of ecumenical relations bodes well for the future. There are certainly many challenges ahead that we need to face together and the strengths inherent in different faith traditions, applied in joint ventures, will certainly lead to a much more effective witness and presence in Edinburgh and beyond.

RIDERS OF THE STORM BY ALISTAIR MCINTOSH Book Review by Rev David Coleman, Chaplain, Eco-Congregation Scotland

If Ian Bradley's **God is Green** is a primer for green theology, Professor Alastair McIntosh's Riders on the Storm is a handbook for well-informed and authoritative activism. Two hundred pages bursting with quotable and meme-able sayings to reflect- and act – on. As activists and pastors, actors and prophets in this spiritual, environmental, ecumenical movement, [Eco Congregation Scotland] we seldom have time or space to read every book that's going. To be practitioners, in an age of urgency, we seldom have the luxury only to be students. Reading matter on which we can hitch a ride, without being taken for one not even the pleasure cruise we think we've paid for - turns out particularly rewarding. With startlingly frequent permissions to 'skim over' this or that chapter, and an apology in the acknowledgments that this, actually quite short, book is twice its intended length, Alastair is clearly mindful of that. However, even if you think you know what you ought to know about the climate emergency (the more pedestrian 'climate change' is used throughout) this small library of interwoven books will repay attention, and perhaps nonsequential reading. "Be warned that I love few things better than moving from hard science to spiritual reflections by a Hebridean loch". And it's seriously up to date in late 2020. Great preparation for COP in Glasgow next year. As a public speaker, Alastair has the charming knack of speaking with authority: irritating, independent-minded, but the twenty-three pages of meticulous notes at the back of this volume should leave you in no doubt of his rigour; why he's hard to dismiss, and why he pulls off what others might see as the scandalous trick of combining the insightful power of science, academia, poetry We discover why the notoriously and eclectic spirituality. (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) is "an incredible organisation", and also how



to interpret its jargon of "highly likely" "unlikely", and so on. We unpack the crucial difference between emissions and concentration. We are forced to reflect on why "Climate change denial is a waste of time, but climate change alarmism is a theft of time". "My view is that if a case can't be made without it being over-egged, either the case is not valid or those to whom it is being pitched are being spun. "The unembellished science is quite bad enough to be good enough". For the reader, anxious for the tide to come in of radical actions and commitment, have patience: the ninth wave is on the way! ("Sustainable economic growth'. There's an oxymoron if ever there was one".)

This writer has the courage to be discerningly, compassionately critical of friends and movements like Extinction Rebellion, without falling prey to the idolatry of false equivalence: "There is no substitute for balance. That said, the balance says that only by cutting greenhouse gas emissions and thereby stabilising and preferably heavily reducing atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations, can very serious future risks be averted." "What if nations were to dig into their

treasuries of poetry, song, literature, mythology and spirituality, and draw out oftforgotten material." Precisely for those who approach climate change from a faith perspective, this is excellent advice. "If the journey of the head looks like solar panels, heat pumps and green new deals, what of the journey of the heart?" Alastair delights in myths, and values their capacity to point to truth, but is ruthlessly hard on any that are wantonly unfounded. Pseudoscience of every kind has a bloody nose from this radical moderate who, whilst walking the walk in personal commitment, refuses to deny his- and our complicity in a situation of threat to life and being even beyond that of warfare. "Climate will remain the most pressing global leadership issue of our time." Although facts, figures, and peer-reviewed science provide a playing field, with this book, we gain courage to assert that spiritual emptiness, the clearances of the soul, constitute the more determinative malaise to be addressed in building resilience of community and planet. As in Pope Francis' encyclical 'Laudato Si', justice for the planet is absolutely inseparable from 'integral human development'. Justice and ecology are near-identical siblings. As we each only can, Alastair brings out of his treasure of a lifetime's activism and study, treasures of experience which inescapably ground the crisis in our own homelands and coastlands, refuting with humour many of the denialist staples, for instance, about the small amount of CO2 in the atmosphere, comparing it to mine but dangerous blood alcohol levels: "Our whisky is guite the best, but at 414ppm you're banned."

If we might be tempted by the 'devil we know', Alastair makes a point of introducing us to all the devils we need to know. Face to face with Pacific islanders – fast becoming the go-to example of a comfortingly distant crisis – we're left in no doubt that, with sea-level rises in our lifetime on the beaches of Harris and Berneray, "it's happening before our eyes." This should be the end of any Scottish complacency, any delay in pulling out "all the stops of sustainable development". Or of reclaiming the wilder spiritual resources, so often born in times of trouble, that providence and love have made available to humanity. Hopelessness is no valid option, nor to take refuge in pernicious narratives of the pointlessness of individual action and commitment, indeed Alastair conveys a heartfelt case for doing whatever you can, without succumbing to burnout and toxic indispensability. "As with the making of the proverbial stone soup, if we can all add just one ingredient, we can end up with a rich broth round the hearth".

HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICE



Your Home is a housing support service based in Edinburgh. We provide support in the North West, North East and South East areas of the city. **Your Home** primarily supports adults and families who are currently experiencing homelessness or are at risk of becoming homeless. The service is a partnership between YPeople and Sacro, we provide 1:1 Visiting Support, Mediation and a new addition to the service,

Asset Coaching. Our experienced staff can support you to improve your housing situation by looking at various areas such as eviction or loss of accommodation, housing options, tackling energy bills or setting up a payment plan for rent and council tax arrears.

Your Home provides person centred support tailored to the individual's needs. We aim to empower individuals to live independently and make positive life changes. Your Home provides support to enable individuals to regain some control and provide the tools to grow from a situation. **Your Home** accept referrals from individuals, family members and professionals. We are currently accepting referrals, if you would like any more information or a referral form, please contact us on 0131 603 9815 or yourhome@ypeople.org.uk

BABY LOSS SUPPORT EVENT

EDINBURGH

SAYING GOODBYE SERVICE ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL EDINBURGH

September 12th 2020 at 2pm

SAYINGGOODBYE.ORG

The charity Saying Goodbye, part of the Mariposa Trust, is organising two special services for those who have lost babies in any stage of pregnancy, at birth or infancy. These will take place on Saturday 12th September in St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh. The services are back to back and run from 2pm - 2.30pm and 2.45pm - 3.15pm. Places are free but should be booked online via https://www.sayinggoodbye.org/sgscot20-booking-

page/ to guarantee a space, as services are strictly 40 maximum per service. For more information about the charities please visit www.mariposatrust.org and www.sayinggoodbye.org

ADITI - UPCOMING EVENTS



Aditi - a trauma informed service dedicated to the safety and wellbeing of Black, Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) women living in Edinburgh. We believe BAME women are resilient, resourceful, creative and much more. We also know that women can experience difficult or abusive relationships. Currently, you can contact us Monday-Friday from 9 am until 3:30 pm; or leave us a message and we will get back to you. You can access one-to-one support with our women's workers, counselling sessions and complementary therapies, for the time being adapted and delivered via

phone and video call. Find a referral form on our webpage https://www.sacro.org.uk/aditi or give us a call: 0131 603 4865;

