



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



October 2016

STAGW Matters		
Edinburgh, the Future? Ian Y Gilmour		3-5
Births, marriages, baptisms and deaths		5
Autumn Worship Ian Y Gilmour		6
Autumn Diary October-November 2016		7-8
News and Notices		
Creative Together– BBC – Amos - Evergreens		9
News from Albany Deaf Church		10
Sally Magnusson - Everyman Remembered		11
Follow the Star Sally Evans		12
Christian Aid Autumn Sale		13
Music News		
Autumn Music and Reflection		14
Meet our music scholars		16-17
Postcard from Vancouver- Good Wishes from Germany		18-19
Sharing stories		
Celebrating Creationtide and Harvest		20-22
Pat McKerrow's Wildlife Diary – Swan Watch		23-25
Iona Anthology		26-31
No Tears for the Crocodile Bob Morley		32
Ecumenical/TOGETHER news		
Ecumenical Friends		33
A letter from Finland Susanna Laitinen		34-35
An Evening with Nadia Bolz-Weber Anne Wyllie		36-37
A Goldmine and a Girl in the Moon Colin MacDonald		37
Cornerstone Book Reviews Amanda Bruce		38-39
<i>Being Disciples - Book of the Howlat- Children of Stone</i>		
Pilgrim Course and Compline at St John's		39
CONTACTS		40

Photo credits: Jane Brown, Alison Bruce, Andrena and Arthur Crawford, Ian Y Gilmour, Pat McKerrow, Dorothy Mackenzie, James MacPherson. Thanks to everyone who contributes to the magazine!

Copy deadline for the next (November) issue is Monday 24 October
Contact email magazine[at]stagw.org.uk Editor Alison Bruce

Edinburgh, the Future?

A letter from Ian

"I will pour my Spirit on everyone. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions.

Joel 2.28

A Vision – not a dream or a plan

I attended the launch event for a new Vision for Edinburgh 2050. The City Council wishes to market Edinburgh afresh. Here is some background given on the day

“Throughout its history, Edinburgh has been a city of innovation and change. In the early 1980s Edinburgh was a city with its population in decline, facing a changing economy and significant social health challenges. In 2016, we are a successful city where population is growing, and whose strong economy and quality of life is recognised across the world. With this vibrancy and growth come many challenges. Whether it is in increased inequality and pockets of severe deprivation, or in increased pressure on our city infrastructure and environment, we know the city needs to adapt and change again”.

A vision for a city is different from a plan and can/should include the beliefs and values of the citizens. To own any vision the people who will be affected by it should be involved in its creation. God has given us the intelligence to allow us to engage with these important issues. Therefore young and old, male and female should speak out; respond to this invitation and make their vision for this city widely known.

The launch was a very professional event. However, I think it lacked some of the values which the Christian and other faith

communities would like our city to promote. It did use some helpful key words like 'hope', 'home' and 'flourishing', but seemed to be mainly concerned with pushing the city higher on the top 100 cities world league table. It all seemed overly focussed on money and prestige. The counter balance came from two pupils from Portobello High School who spoke thoughtfully about being an inclusive city.

We were told that in a league of 100 world class cities Edinburgh is currently number 13 and number 6 in terms of economic indicators. The clear goal behind the rhetoric is to become the number one city. Currently that city is Zurich, which does not inspire me. Zurich is famous for being a bankers' city, "*The Swiss banks in Geneva and Zurich have served as safe havens for the wealth of dictators and despots, mobsters and arms dealers, corrupt officials, and tax cheats of all kinds.*" (Wikipedia).

I wonder how many of us would wish the bankers to have more influence in Scotland's capital? It is a pattern I wouldn't wish to follow. Let us take the opportunity and make a response regarding the kind of city we would like Edinburgh to become.

The good thing about this process is that it does invite engagement.

Andrew Kerr, City of Edinburgh Chief Executive says the door is open:

"We're starting with a blank canvas. This will not be a Council vision, rather our role will be to facilitate and support citywide collaboration. I want to ensure we take new approaches and make new partnerships now to ensure Edinburgh addresses the challenges of the future, remains the envy of the world and offers a great quality of life in decades to come. Anyone who lives, works or studies in the city can join the conversation by answering three questions at the Edinburgh 2050 webpage and on social media (@edinburgh) using #Edinburgh2050."

We might be stimulated by New York, their city plan sets out a vision for 'a strong and just city'. We can choose to respond personally or collectively for Edinburgh does needs an ambitious vision. I suggest we do some thinking during and after worship on Sunday the 6 November recalling some the strengths of this city, what we like about the city today and what sort of city we would aspire Edinburgh to be. This will give us an opportunity to think about the long-term future of our city and how the church and faith communities can help shape it.

Ultimately if our vision is too focused on profit we will lose a crucial strand in the history and reshaping of this city. One new strap line given was **Edinburgh – A Proud Capital**, for me it contrasts with the motto of this city which comes from Psalm 127, **Nisi Dominus Frustra** ("without the Lord, [all is] in vain").

As a congregation our God given task is to help shape this important city

valuing the past,
enjoying the present
and preparing the future,

so Edinburgh can lead the way towards
a fairer world for all.

Let us take every opportunity to have our
voices heard.

Enjoy autumn as you consider what kind of
Edinburgh you wish to create for 2050?

Blessings, Ian

*The Lord is my
shepherd, I shall not
want*

Psalm 23

Deaths

Mrs Anne Rait

New member

Mrs Fiona Berrie

Autumn Worship

Worship Strengthens and Transforms

Worship is helpful for our growth as followers of Christ, so consider joining us Sunday by Sunday. You can attend **Communion at 9.00am**, the **All Age service at 9.45am** or enjoy our progressive pattern at **11.00am** or come to all three!

October 2016

Sun 2 Oct at 11am Harvest Sunday
We celebrate and give thanks for the successful harvests in 2016 while sharing and praying for those whose harvest has failed

Sun 9 Oct at 11am Reoriented toward Gratitude
Luke 17:11–19

Sun 16 Oct at 11am Vocations
Dr Russell Barr, Moderator of the General Assembly

Sun 23 Oct at 11am Dance of Pride and Humility
Luke 18:9–14

Sun 30 Oct at 11am Salvation for All
Luke 19:1–10

November 2016

Sun 6 Nov at 11am God Is Near to All
Psalm 145:1–5, 17–21

*Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving, let your petitions be made known to God; and the **peace of God** that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus.*

Paul

I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.

CS Lewis

Autumn Diary October 2016

Sun 2 Oct	9am Communion; 9.45am Learning Together 10.30am Adult Discussion Group 11am Morning Worship 12 noon Fellowship Lunch for Mary's Meals 2pm Albany Deaf Church
Mon 3 Oct	6.30 pm AHSS Lecture Colin McLean:
Sat 8 Oct	10.30am-3pm The Treasure Trove/ Undercroft open 10-1 Kirk Session Away Day
Sun 9 Oct	9am Communion ; 9.45am Learning Together 10.30am Adult Discussion Group 11am Morning Worship 2pm Albany Deaf Church
Sat 15 Oct	7.30pm Georgian Concert Society Canzona - Venetian Passions: Instrumental music from 17thC Venice
Sun 16 Oct	9am Communion; 9.45am Learning Together 10.30am Adult Discussion Group 11am Morning Worship 2pm Albany Deaf Church
Mon 17 Oct	Book Group meets
Tue 18 Oct	Sally Magnusson Remember Who I Am <i>From Where Memories Go to Playlist for Life</i> (Donald Gorrie Lecture)
Wed 19 Oct	10.30am Creative Together meets (at Maggie's flat))
Sun 23 Oct	9am Communion ; 9.45am Learning Together 10.30am Adult Discussion Group 11am Morning Worship 2pm Albany Deaf Church
Mon 24 Oct	7.30pm AMOS AGM (St Cuthberts)
Tue 25 Oct	5.30 pm Edinburgh Quartet Rush Hour Concert FOLK with Mhairi Campbell and Alasdair Nicholson
Wed 26 Oct	Evergreens cinema/gallery/theatre outing
Thur 27 Oct	10 - 3 Christian Aid Art Sale with Scottish Books 3pm Organ Recital by Dr John Kitchen
Fri 28 Oct	10 - 3 Christian Aid Art Sale with Scottish Books
Sat 29 Oct	10-12 Christian Aid Coffee Morning jewellery & gifts 10 - 3 Christian Aid Art Sale with Scottish Books
Sun 30 Oct	9am Communion ; 9.45am Learning Together

10.30am Adult Discussion Group
11am Morning Worship
Full Communion

Mon 31 Oct **Amnesty group meets**

November 2016

Tue 1 Nov **Deaf Action Conference/ Annual Lecture**

Wed 2 Nov **1pm Music and Reflection: Schubert**
7-9pm Bells 10th Anniversary Celebration

Thurs 3 Nov **9.30am – 2pm Make Your Money Count** (C of S and partners: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/make-your-money-count-2016-tickets-25346731757>)

Fri 4 Nov **Walking Group**

Sat 5 Nov **10am-12.30pm Messy Church**

7.30pm Georgian Concert Society Ensemble *Odyssee*
– *Concerti for Small Flute: Virtuoso Recorder Music*

Sun 6 Nov 9am Communion ; 9.45am Learning Together

10.30am Adult Discussion Group

11am Morning Worship

12 noon Fellowship Lunch Peace & Justice Centre

Mon 7 Nov 6.30pm AHSS Lecture Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown,

Tue 8 Nov 7pm Leonheart Concert for Health in Mind

<http://www.leonardharpergow.co.uk/>

Wed 9 Nov **1pm Music and Reflection: Duke Ellington**

Sun 13 Nov **9am Communion; 9.45am Learning Together**

Remembrance **10.30am Adult Discussion Group**

Sunday **10.50am service with the German congregation**

Wed 16 Nov **10.30am Creative Together meets**

1pm Music and Reflection: Mendelssohn

Sat 19 Nov **Creative Together CRAFTEA for MND**

Wed 23 Nov **1pm Music and Reflection: Christine de Pisan**

2.30pm Evergreens Alastair and Margaret McGregor

Thur 24 Nov **11-3pm On The Road Church of Scotland Roadshow**
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/on-the-road-edinburgh-tickets-26819960223>

Sun 26 Nov 7.30pm Bruce Davies in Concert

Tue 29 Nov **Kirk Session**

News and notices

Creative TOGETHER Craft group

Meet at Maggie's flat.

Wed 19 October at 10.30am

Wed 16 November at 10.30am

Mary Godden



The Making of the New Town BBC Documentary

View this programme featuring St Andrew's and

St George's West and the choir until 20 October on BBC iPlayer.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b07x0qw4/new-town>



Amos Scripture Care Trust

The Annual General Meeting of the Amos Scripture Care Trust will be held on **Monday 24th October, 2016, at 7.30pm** in St Cuthbert's Parish Church (Lindisfarne Room, top floor), 5 Lothian Road, Edinburgh. Coffee will be served at this short

informal meeting. It would be helpful to know how many are likely to attend, so if you intend to come, please advise Alan Mackinlay

Evergreens

Social group

Wed 26 Oct join a cinema, gallery or theatre outing, details tbc

Wed 23 Nov 2.30pm Rev Alistair and Margaret McGregor Hadeel/Palestine



News from Albany Deaf Church



Thanks to all those who came to the recent annual Deaf Choir Festival, run in memory of the Rev. Stewart Lochrie.

This picture shows the **Edinburgh Signing Choir** in full flow!

Some basic phrases in BSL



Thank



you



Welcome

Nice to meet you!



Sally Magnusson

Remember Who I Am

From *Where Memories Go*
to *Playlist for Life*

The Donald Gorrie Lecture 2016
Tuesday 18th October at 7.30 pm

An illustrated talk by Sally Magnusson followed
by book signing and refreshments.



The broadcaster Sally Magnusson wrote about her Mother's dementia in ***Where Memories Go: Why dementia changes everything***. She also founded a charity called Playlist for Life after being impressed by the effect of personally meaningful music on her late mother's dementia. Her book calls for the restoration of human rights and dignity to the most fragile of our citizens and for music to be used in their care. Dementia affects all of us in one way or another and this is an event not to be missed.

The talk will be free but with an opportunity to make a donation.

1914-18: Share your family story on Everyman Remembered

Jane Brown

Everyman Remembered is an online memorial to the 1.1m Service men and women from the Commonwealth who lost their lives in WW1. You can add stories and memories to each individual record, and commemorate each person with a poppy.

With our Bright Sparks children's group we will be looking at our WW1 church war memorials.

Do **you** have any church or family stories or memories you would like to contribute to this project? If so please get in touch!

Jane Brown

Follow the star...

to The Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival 2016

Sally Evans

When? 10th – 24th December

Where? Here in the church.

What? Sparkling Christmas trees sponsored and decorated by local businesses, organisations, church groups, families and individuals, and a delightful and varied music programme.



Visitors are encouraged to donate to our selected charities – Richmond's Hope, Edinburgh Direct Aid and Health in Mind.

Why? Celebrating Advent, connecting the congregation and people working in or visiting the City centre, offering hospitality and space for wonder and reflection amidst the busy city centre. Local businesses, charities and church groups telling their stories.

How? We provide trees from Bethany's Caring Christmas Trees, stands and lights and encourage imaginative and creative decorations, reflecting a theme or message of significance to the people sponsoring the tree. The suggested minimum donation is £35 per tree or £45 (businesses).

Could you sponsor and/or decorate a tree, as an individual or part of a group or suggest others who might like to?

Please contact the church office for more information 0131 225 3847 [info\[at\]stagw.org.uk](mailto:info@stagw.org.uk) or speak to Katie McNeill or Sally Evans

Follow us on Facebook [EdinburghChristmasTreeFestival](https://www.facebook.com/EdinburghChristmasTreeFestival)
twitter @edtreefest

<http://www.stagw.org.uk/work/edinburgh-christmas-tree-festival/>



CHRISTIAN AID

AT ST ANDREW'S AND ST GEORGE'S WEST CHURCH
13 GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH

SALE OF PICTURES

SCOTTISH BOOKS

THURSDAY 27 to SATURDAY 29 OCTOBER

10am - 3pm

Organ recital by John Kitchen, 2016 Patron

Thursday 27th October 3pm

COFFEE MORNING

JEWELLERY GIFTS

SATURDAY 29 OCTOBER

10am - 12 noon

Les LeMaître 1985

St Andrew's and St George's West Church of Scotland Edinburgh is a Registered Scottish Charity No. SC 008990

Leaflet designed and printed by Prontaprint Edinburgh



St Andrew's & St George's West • Edinburgh

2016 Music and Reflection

Autumn Series | 1pm Wednesdays

Composers in their Lives and Music

Lunchtime performances by young Scottish musicians - with biographical reflections from **Ian Gilmour, Brigitte Harris, Barbara Ramsay** and **Joanna Stark**

2 November, 1pm | **Franz Schubert**

Drew Crichton, piano

Speaker: **Joanna Stark**

9 November, 1pm | **Duke Ellington and Friends**

Caitlin McGillivray, soprano
Jamie Lang, piano

Speaker: **Ian Y. Gilmour**

16 November, 1pm | **Felix Mendelssohn and the Romantic spirit**

Jamie Lang, piano

Speaker: **Brigitte Harris**

23 November, 1pm | **'Christine de Pisan and others –
Medieval French Feminists'**

Dr Alison Ramsay, author, with a madrigal group, directed by **Andrew Carvel**

Speaker: **Barbara Ramsay**

Photo credit: © Peter Stubbs peter.stubbs@edinphoto.org.uk

Free Entry

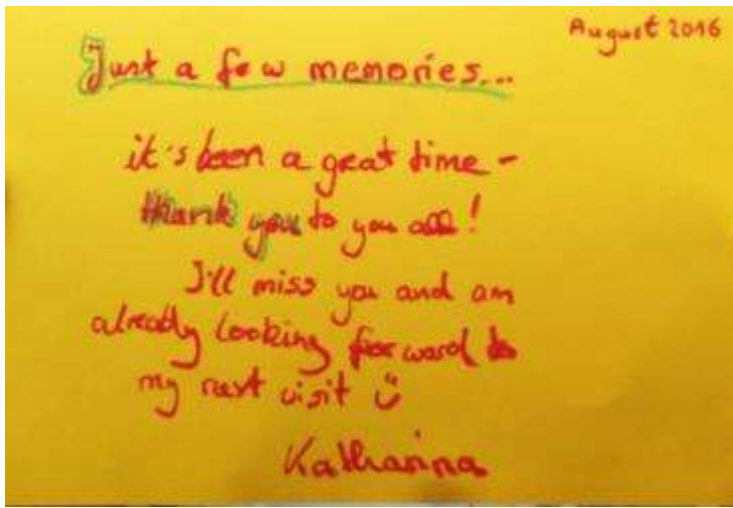


St Andrew's & St George's West
13 George Street Edinburgh EH2 2PA

Find out about more events at www.stagw.org.uk

Scottish Charity No. SC008990





Music News

Recently we said goodbye to **Katharina Hartelt**, (above, left) who has returned to Germany for further study. **Anna Wright**, saxophonist and a former choral scholar, is now studying for a masters in Vancouver – you can read about her adventures a few pages further on

Andrew Carvel, our Assistant Director of Music, has started a Masters in Composition at Edinburgh Uni. **Drew Crichton** is organ scholar this year and **Jamie Lang** is accompanist. Our choral scholars are **Clara Galea** and **Joanna Stark**.

You can find out a bit more about them below (and in the BBC documentary about the making of the New Town <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b07x0qw4/new-town>)

Lunchtime music and reflections start again in November showcasing the talent of our music scholars, musicians and choristers.

Please share the word about these events – the music is fabulous, it's a great way to take a break in the middle of a busy day, and it's free!

Take a flyer, invite a friend or share on facebook and twitter.

Date	Time	Topic	Performer(s)	Speaker
2 November	1pm	Franz Schubert	Drew Crichton, piano	Joanna Stark
9 November	1pm	Duke Ellington and Friends	Caitlin McGillivray, soprano Jamie Lang, piano	Ian Y. Gilmour
15 November	1pm	Felix Mendelssohn and the Romantic spirit	Jamie Lang, piano	Brigitte Harris
23 November	1pm	'Christine de Pisan and others - Medieval French Feminists'	Dr Alison Ramsay, author with a vocal group directed by Andrew Carvel	Barbara Ramsay



Andrew Carvel, Assistant Director of Music

Andrew studied composition with Ken Dempster and saxophone with Sue McKenzie at Edinburgh Napier University. He is in demand as a composer/arranger and has written music for various ensembles across Edinburgh. He is the Assistant Director of Music at St Andrew's & St George's West and music specialist at Early Days Nursery. He sings with the choir of The Robin Chapel and the SCO Chorus. This autumn he has started studying for a masters' degree in composition at Edinburgh University.

Drew Crichton, Organ Scholar

Drew started learning piano at an early age, taking lessons from his grandmother, Mary Hood, who started his passion for music. In 2012 he began his studies at Edinburgh Napier University receiving tuition from Simon Coverdale and gained a first class honours degree and the Makin Piano prize. Drew has performed in a number of concerts and joined several ensemble groups such as the Edinburgh Napier Chamber Choir and Orchestra. Drew is the current organ scholar at St Andrews and St Georges West church receiving lessons from Brigitte Harris and also sings in the choir. This year Drew will be continuing his teaching and performing work with plans of further study in music.



Jamie Lang, Accompanist

Jamie graduated from Edinburgh Napier University in 2015 with a Bachelor's degree in Music with Honours. Throughout his time at Napier he enjoyed developing his playing in solo classical performance under the tuition of Simon Coverdale and also in other areas such as chamber music and jazz.

Since graduating he has focused on teaching and gaining experience in accompaniment with a view to go on to further study in this area.

Clara Galea, Choral Scholar

Clara started taking flute lessons at the age of eight with Ramona Zammit Formosa and Silvio Zammit at the Johann Strauss School of Music in Malta. In 2012 she was awarded the Ian Tomlin Napier/Malta Scholarship to further her studies at Edinburgh Napier University, where she studied with flautist Andrea Kuypers and graduated in 2016 with a First Class Honours degree. She is currently reading for an MMus in Musicology at the University of Edinburgh.



Clara has performed in concerts and events in Malta and abroad with the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland on their 2015 tour to China, the orchestra of Scottish Opera Connect in Glasgow, the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra and the Edinburgh University Symphony Orchestra. She has also performed with smaller ensembles such as a flute and guitar duo with Euan Corstorphine, the Napier Flute Ensemble and Duo Aulos, a Maltese UK-based flute duo with Laura Cioffi. Clara also enjoys choral singing and has sung on various occasions with the Edinburgh Napier Chamber Choir led by Michael Harris and the St Andrew's and St George's West Church Choir led by Brigitte Harris, where she has just been awarded a choral scholarship for the second consecutive year.

Joanna Stark, Choral Scholar

Joanna is in her second year of study on the Bachelor of Music Programme at Edinburgh Napier University, studying cello under the tutelage of Robin Mason. She enjoys her academic studies as well as her involvement with the University's orchestra, choir and contemporary music ensemble.



Her musical background stems from classical to folk training on cello, violin and piano. Recent engagements have included performing with the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland and singing with the Choir of St Andrew's and St George's West, with which she is currently undertaking a choral scholarship.



A postcard from Vancouver

Anna Wright



Hello everyone! Thought I'd send you all a message to let you know I'm ok and what I've been up to! Doesn't feel like there's much to report, but I think there probably is!! :D

My halls are really lovely, they kinda look like a treehouse, and the people here are really sweet. I've attached a photo of my halls building and of the beach that I've been walking to that is 5 mins behind it.

There are loads of welcome events for the people I live with, so we can all get to know each other - on Tuesday we all went down to the beach at sunset and roasted marshmallows on a fire. There are a few mountain hikes coming up on weekends, and general competitive games.

My roommate is so lovely and kind, she is doing her PhD in physics and is called Brie (like the cheese). There seems to be loads of cheese over here actually - and maple syrup. I even found maple syrup crisps! The tea over here isn't the same, and the peanut butter is disgusting, but not missing anything else as of yet! I've just finished up a bit of a busy week and a bit, had a piano exam (which by some miracle I managed to pass),



a job interview, job induction/woodwind and brass division inductions and orchestral auditions most of this week. The competition here is a bit intense, there are 16 saxophonists and only 4 orchestral positions throughout the year, plus 4 in the symphonic wind ensemble. Quite excited to set up quartets/trios with a few of the other students and hopefully get to do some more challenging rep with the other two masters students.

The other saxes are competitive but it's not in a nasty way, they are all really good friends and have been really welcoming. They make fun of me a lot for my accent/words I use but it's funny - already learning to say pants instead of trousers and to look the other way when I cross the road. None of them can pronounce Glenfiddich!

And I watched my first baseball game - still don't really understand it. Apparently hockey is more exciting anyway, and I think the season starts soon so should be interesting.

Also went my first run this week, and no bears! There have been loads of signs warning of coyotes though, so keeping my eyes open. There are a group of quite pesky raccoons that live near my halls and they really aren't scared! We are told to stay well clear. And the squirrels here are black!!

I start singing at my new choir this Sunday - kinda excited but really nervous! The last few Sundays have felt really weird.

Missing you all!!
Lots of love, Anna



Good Wishes from Germany

Hello, my name is Marie Luise, an 18-year old girl from Germany, who had the great chance to spend 3 weeks in your beautiful city of Edinburgh. I stayed with three very kind ladies - Mary, Susanne and Mary Margaret-who made me feel at home.

I was able to help at St. Andrew's and St. George's West in selling tickets, folding and selling programmes and also in the Undercroft Cafe when there was a bigger concert on.

Brigitte Harris invited me to sing in her choir and once I even played piece of music on the organ before worship, which I really enjoyed!

In general it was an awesome and enriching experience for me. Thank you all very much!
Marie Luise

Celebrating Creationtide

at St Andrew's and St George's West

Dorothy Mackenzie explains:

"We used holiday in Derbyshire when the kids were little. It's limestone country and wells and water are really important, so every village celebrates its Gala Week by "dressing" its well with natural materials. The whole community gets involved - gathering materials and designing and decorating. So when we were thinking about a project for Creationtide, this was the inspiration"

A local business donated wood, and Arthur, Jamie and Gianluca made wooden trays to hold clay panels.

Members of the congregation brought flowers, leaves, berries and herbs and everyone had a chance to decorate the panels.





Flora and Fauna Sunday



Ocean Sunday



Storm Sunday



Cosmos Sunday



Harvest Sunday

at St Andrew's & St George's West

At 9.45am we reflected on how we should harvest our gifts and talents to plant seeds to transform the world. Guests from Jamaica, Zambia and India spoke movingly:

"The world is about relationships and we need to foster better relationships between people who share the planet and then better relationships between people and the creation. If we do this things will improve for everyone."

At 11am Bright Sparks led prayers, everyone took part in "7 Days of Creation" and Deaconess Mable Sichali of the United Church of Zambia sang *There is not enough love to go round*.

A fellowship lunch raised over £600 for Mary's Meals, enough to keep 50 children in school for a year.

Blessed are the lunch-makers...



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

Pat McKerrow's Wildlife Diary



The recent television series, 'Highlands – Scotland's Wild Heart', showed stunning footage of our natural Highland landscape and its wildlife. Seeing afresh many of the places and creatures I've encountered over the years had whetted my appetite for another Highland 'fix'. And so, my thoughtful husband whisked me away for a short stay at a favourite spot within the Cairngorm National Park, near Beaully, just west of Inverness.

On the journey north, Autumn's arrival was evident; the changing colours in the trees, the early signs of activity amongst our summer and winter migrant birds, and of course the ever shortening days. I couldn't wait to arrive at our destination and explore the area once again, almost a year to the day since our last visit.

An important element of any visit there for me is to spend time in the little cabin that serves as a bird/mammal hide. During previous visits, I have enjoyed many happy hours in this hide, not just seeing and hearing wildlife at close proximity, but also, and just as importantly, feeling the total calmness, the total oneness with the entire natural world, the total contentment of the moment – and I believe, God's hand palpable everywhere in it.

This time, once again, it did not disappoint. Tucked away in the heart of woodland, a tree canopy above, and a carpet of foliage, pinecones and needles below. The main sounds coming from wind blowing across the adjacent loch, plus the myriad of bird songs joining together to create a beautiful chorus – how I wish I could have identified more of the soloists!

Here, late night hide visits differ from visits in the early morning both in terms of sounds as well as the creatures. Daytime brings the garden-type birds to the feeding stations, things like chaffinches, blue tits, great

tits, treecreepers, and great spotted woodpeckers; also the occasional shrew and weasel. At night-time, it's the turn of barn and tawny owls, bats, pine martens, wood mice and badgers; plus I'm afraid the creepy crawlies, eerie creaking sounds from the trees, and shadows in the darkness that trick the eyes, all of which I'm less keen on.



This time it was lovely to see again an old badger I recognised from before, Fraser, whose battle scars make him readily identifiable. Initially, his behaviour was tentative, although he soon settled when he found the food cache; also when the badger who'd been following him finally emerged. I loved the almost teasing interaction between the two when they met and as they left. I was also fascinated to watch a young pine marten attempt a standoff with one badger, but sensibly, he opted to exit the stage and return when the badgers had headed off into the night suitably replete.

Other precious moments during this trip included watching a little chaffinch make several visits to the feeding station, each time calling for his mate without success. He flew in, he called, then he waited...and again...and again; but nothing. It wasn't an alarm call, he

was definitely trying to reach 'someone', and I couldn't help but feel sorry that 'no-one' responded. Then there was the tiny wood mouse, sporting his long tail and over-sized ears, scuttling around the undergrowth at speeds Usain Bolt would be proud of, speeds undeniably exercised to preserve his existence, and speeds that belie his position in the natural hierarchy.

Finally, I was so aware of the trees, standing tall, strong and proud, some hundreds of years old. It made me reflect on the magnitude of God's creation, the cycle of life, and the relative brevity of *our* earthy lives. I love the conservationist John Muir's quote "For nature....is the very smile of God." I certainly feel truly blessed and refreshed by each moment I spend in it. I leave you with the opening line of the popular hymn, "Lord of creation, to thee be all praise!"

Every blessing
Pat McKerrow



An exhibition of wildlife photography
by Pat McKerrow.
The Undercroft,
St Andrew's and St George's West Church,
13 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2PA.
Thursday 10th - Wednesday 30th November
2016, 10.00am-2.00pm Monday-Friday.

Iona Anthology

10 folk from STAGW spent a week on Iona in September – here are some things we'd like to share with you



Flying with wild geese

Sally Evans

As we gathered for the weekly Iona Pilgrimage, Ian captured this flock of geese flying by in formation. A wonderful sight, especially as The Wild Goose is a symbol for the Iona Community. I remembered too the inspiring "Lessons from Geese":

As each goose flaps its wings, it creates an "uplift" for the bird following. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% more flying range than if each bird flew alone.

Lesson: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are travelling on the thrust of one another

Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the "lifting power" of the bird immediately in front.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we will join in formations with those who are headed where we want to go.

When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies at the point position.

Lesson: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership – with people, as with geese, interdependent with one other.

The geese in formation honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed!

Lesson: We need to make sure our honking from behind is encouraging - not something less helpful.

When a goose gets sick or wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow their fellow member down to help provide protection. They stay with this member of the flock until he or she is either able to fly again or dies. Then they launch out on their own, with another formation, or catch up with their own flock.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as the geese, we'll stand by each other like that.

Attributable to Dr. Robert McNeish of Baltimore (1972), a science teacher before becoming involved in school administration. He had been intrigued with observing geese for years and first wrote the piece for a sermon he delivered in his church.

Honk Honk !
Sally Evans



On Tuesdays on Iona there is the option of a pilgrimage across the island to St Columba's Bay.

At several points along the journey, we paused for reflection and prayer.

At the bay itself we were invited to reflect on Columba's journey from Ireland: turning his back on the past to embrace the new following the Holy Spirit.

We took stones and cast them into the sea and then were invited to pick up a wee pebble to take with us into the new.

There was a seal in the bay that day off in the distance.

I thought what this moment might look like from its point of view.

Rev Allison E Becker

*It's good to be a seal in St Columba's bay
I thought
Breathing in the salt air just above the waves
Oh och!
It's Tuesday!
They're here again
The different-same-ones
Clamouring on the rocks*

*Sitting
And
Eating sandwiches*

*My great great great gran
Told of one who came over the seas
How she had swum beside the tottering boat
Till it moored safe to shore*

*These ones came again over land
through muddy squishy Bogs
Not over the dancing wind swept current*

*These land travellers toss stones
Releasing cares
Into the deep well of blue*

*Turning their backs as Columba on the past
And turn to face the new*

*Moving forward to the fresh rhythm
Of lighter pebbles
In pockets*

*To let the Wind carry them
Where it will
Over the ebbing and flowing hills*

*To build lasting abbeys
Of witness
Renewed
Living-stone
Together*



The start of the pilgrimage



St Columba's Bay



Sharing food and celebration in the Abbey Refectory



drumming in the village hall



Mick MC's the ceilidh



everybody joins in Allison Becker's 7 days of Creation



God, help us to listen for your voice ...

**in the words of the Bible,
in the cries of the poor,
in the testimony of saints,
in the warnings of prophets,
in the questions of children and
young people,
in everyday conversations with
our neighbours,
in words unsaid,
in the movement of breath ...**

**God, sometimes your voice
may not be a voice at all.**

God, help us to hear you

**in the sound of the sea,
in the crash of the wind when the
ferry's cancelled,
in the rustle of leaves and the
sweep of a cleaning brush,
in the laughter and debate of birds
in the cloisters.**

Help us to sense you

**in the smell of grass after rain.
in the colours of the sea.
in the tang of salt spray.
in the touch of a stranger.**

Amen

**Written for the service of commitment
in Iona Abbey**

No tears for the crocodile

Bob Morley

A long, long time ago, when I was a wee lad, my grandfather used to tell me stories of his time as an LMS missionary in Madagascar in the early 1900s. He was based in an up country village called Vangaina. The countryside there was very hilly, intersected by crocodile infested rivers, there were no roads and travel was only on foot – though he was sometimes able to ride on horseback. In his charge were over 40 churches in a district of about 18 miles by 12 miles and communications were often difficult.

One Sunday a local pastor was returning from a service at an outlying village, bringing with him (as was the custom) the offertory. His path forded a river and as he waded across a crocodile got him.

Now it transpired that this particular crocodile had become seriously unpopular doing this kind of thing and the villagers petitioned my grandfather to do something about it. An old French army rifle was found and a party set out to hunt the crocodile. They duly found it on the banks of the river looking smug and well fed.

My grandfather, who had never fired a shot in anger (if at all!), got as close as he dared, took careful aim, fired – and promptly went over backwards from the recoil. However his aim had been good and the crocodile, after thrashing about a bit, collapsed in the mud and died. The villagers then cut open the crocodile and yes, they could tell from the clothes, it was indeed the culprit, and my grandfather used to relate with glee that they were able to retrieve the offertory (which was in coin) and take it on to the main church.



The story goes on. Much later I visited Madagascar to go to see the places where my grandfather had worked and in preparation carried out research in the old LMS archives.

Imagine how I felt when I found this old photograph in the files!

Ecumenical Friends



Meetings are on Thursdays, in St Cuthbert's, Lothian Road, We gather over our packed lunches from 12.30 pm or so. Tea and Coffee are provided at a charge of £1.50, which includes a contribution towards expenses.

The meeting proper starts at 1pm. Our speaker has half an hour, and then we have a further quarter of an hour for questions and discussion. We finish at 1.45 pm prompt.

Our meetings are open to everyone. If you know people who might like to come, please invite them. They will be warmly welcome.

Autumn Term 2016

Sep 22	Remembering Anne Hepburn	
Sep 29	Martin Ritchie	Singing the Reformation
Oct 6	Fiona Stimpson	Edinburgh Clothing Store
Oct 13	Ian Farquharson	The Cameronians
Oct 20	Catherine Booth	Scottish Women of Science
Oct 27	Michael Frew	The Nazareth Trust
Nov 3	Bill Brown	Children 1st
Nov 10	Lorna Bowry	Fresh Start
Nov 17	Roy Johnstone	Spitfire Women Pilots in WW II
Nov 24	Eleanor Harris	Ecology
Dec 1	Elsbeth Strachan	An Advent Meditation

Conveners Norah Summers and Murray Chalmers

Thank you everyone for the smiles



A letter from Finland

Dear everyone in St Andrew's and St George's West

Greetings from Finland! Thank you for the time we spent in Edinburgh and in your congregation over the summer. It was really valuable time for me and for our whole family. Every one of you was very welcoming for us, it felt really good. And it made me to think again how little things matter.

A smile or a good word can save someone's day especially when someone is somehow in vulnerable situation. My own situation in Edinburgh was very safe. But English language and a slightly different culture gave me a hint of the feeling what it is to be outsider without fully understanding what is going on. It was a good experience to me especially now, when I will work with refugees here in Finland. Thank you everyone for the smiles and for the short or longer chats, I will pass them further!

We came back to Finland at the end of July. Very soon I went to work and our daughters Amelia and Julia went back to school. Our days are quite busy; after school girls have their hobbies dancing, riding and playing piano.

There are so many possibilities to work as a volunteer in your congregation. That way many different people can find their way to be part of the congregation. The Undercroft Cafe is a great place for many reasons. It is a place where people can meet each other inside the church. It is also a great testimony to volunteering. It offers for many kinds of people a possibility to work together and feel their work is needed. The Undercroft Cafe wouldn't exist without the people who work there. The welcoming atmosphere for both new volunteers and the customers was great to experience.

At the same time I found that working in the Cafe can sometimes be challenging. There is a different team on every day at work.

I was glad to hear you have meetings where you can talk about the work and make rules together. Thank you for taking me as a part of the Cafe team. Now I can make a cup of capuccino anytime!

We have many common issues in Finland's and Scotland's churches, one of them is this; how the younger people would find their way to our congregations. In Finland we have good experiences of services which have band music, taize-type songs and a big choir. There is also time for praying and for pastoral care during the service.

I am impressed by the fact you have services every day in your church. Praying is so important, much more than we can understand. And daily services are an important opportunity for everyone in the city centre to come and take a moment for silence and praying. I'm sure those many services are a big blessing for the whole congregation.

In your church I really felt the experience of Christian unity. Every Christian congregation in the whole world comes together on every Sunday, and there we are, all together in front of our Lord asking for mercy and praising our God.

It was a pleasure to get to know you all. Special thanks to Ian and Donna Gilmour and Mary Margaret Scott for making this visit possible.

All the Best, God bless you everyone!

Susanna and the whole family; Pekka, Amelia and Julia

Susanna Laitinen spent 7 weeks with us here at STAGW in summer 2



**SCOTTISH FAITHS
ACTION FOR REFUGEES**

**Volunteering Opportunity
Edinburgh Weekend Club**

We are looking for 8 enthusiastic and dedicated individuals from different faith, religion and belief backgrounds who would like to shape and develop an integration project for refugees, asylum seekers and new migrants in Edinburgh.

The Edinburgh Weekend Club is a new initiative that seeks to respond to the social isolation experienced by many refugees, asylum seekers and new migrants arriving in Scotland. Providing a relaxed and fun environment the Edinburgh Weekend Club enables its participants to meet new people, build friendships, improve their English and learn more about Scottish culture and history. YOU will have the opportunity to make a lasting difference in people's lives.

To find out more or to download the role description and application form visit our website [here](http://www.sfar.org.uk) or contact Sabine Chalmers schalmers@churchofscotland.org.uk. We would love to hear from you!

www.sfar.org.uk
[@withrefugees](https://twitter.com/withrefugees)

Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees is administered by the Church of Scotland, Scottish Charity Number SC011353

An Evening with Nadia Bolz-Weber

Anne Wyllie

I was thrilled when I read in the STAGW magazine that Nadia Bolz-Weber would be speaking in Edinburgh at St John's Church on 31 August. I was keen to hear her in person, as I'm a fan of her books, which I'd recommend reading in reverse order, i.e: *Accidental Saints: finding God in all the wrong people* (2015); *Cranky, Beautiful Faith* (2013); *Salvation on the small screen? 24 hours of Christian television* (2008).

Nadia Bolz-Weber often attracts attention because of her appearance: a tall, heavily tattooed woman who can combine her traditional clerical collar with trendy jeans and a slightly edgy hipster air unusual in a middle-aged woman. She holds people's attention because of her honesty, the depth of her living theology and her flair for communication (she used to be a stand-up comic).

Nadia is a Lutheran Pastor and in 2008 she co-founded an inclusive church called *House for all Sinners and Saints* in her home town of Denver, Colorado, USA. She had grown up in, then away from, a very conservative congregation of another denomination. Nadia went through troubled times in her teens and young adulthood, and as a recovering alcoholic she found a sense of community with other broken people on the underside of life: "God among the cynics and alcoholics and queers"¹.

Much of what Nadia spoke about in Edinburgh echoed her most recent book: *Accidental Saints: finding God in all the wrong people* (2015). This includes a chapter called *Frances* which is the name she gave to her depression, which she experienced as "a terrible roommate. She kept the place filthy and always told me devastating things about myself"². Nadia's experience of depression as a character who moved in and took over her life, and needed to be evicted, helps her to make

¹ *Cranky, Beautiful Faith* p.9

² *Accidental Saints: finding God in all the wrong people* p 86

sense of Bible stories about demon possession: “like myself, many of my parishioners suffer from addictions and compulsions and depression...so maybe if, in part, that is what having a demon is, maybe if it’s being taken over by something destructive, then possession is less of an anachronism and more of an epidemic”³.

Vulnerabilities often communicate the Gospel more powerfully than strengths

I think that what makes Nadia such an engaging speaker and writer is her authenticity: she is honest and funny about her ongoing struggles in life and her less attractive personality traits, and she finds that her vulnerabilities often communicate the Gospel more powerfully than her strengths.

Passionately believing that God loves us all as we are, she models this unconditional acceptance in

her church, and encourages others to take the risk of being honest about ourselves. I asked Nadia what advice she would give to anyone who had tried being honest in a church community and it had backfired and resulted in people being judgemental or gossiping. She said that she feels we need to maintain our own integrity and cannot be responsible for other people’s reactions to us, but she also acknowledged the depth of hurt that can be inflicted. I find myself still pondering how each of us might offer what we can in healing such situations, and supporting one another.

A Goldmine and a Girl in the Moon

Colin MacDonald — former radio producer and journalist, turned screenwriter and writer — takes us on a personal journey through the Library's map collection. MacDonald travels by map from Dornoch to the Aveyron and on to the moon, telling stories along the way. With Maps Curator Paula Williams as tour guide to help him, MacDonald highlights the richness and diversity of maps, and their power to inspire.

National Library of Scotland, Wed 2 November, 18.00 Free.

You can book tickets through the NLS site on the events page <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-goldmine-and-the-girl-in-the-moon-tickets-27437568506> or phone the NLS on 0131 623 3734

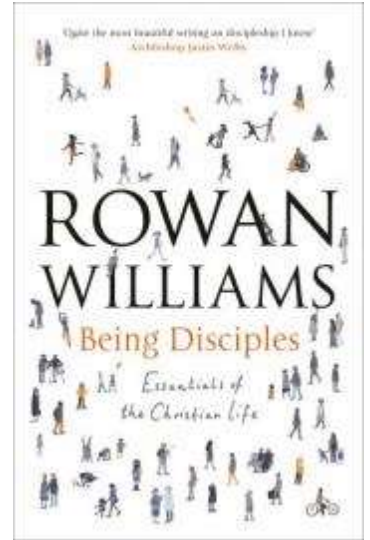


Cornerstone Book Reviews

Amanda Bruce

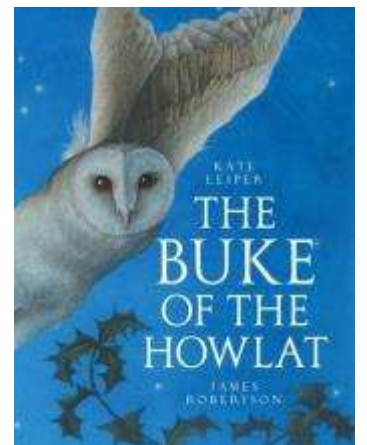
***Being Disciples* by Rowan Williams £8.99**

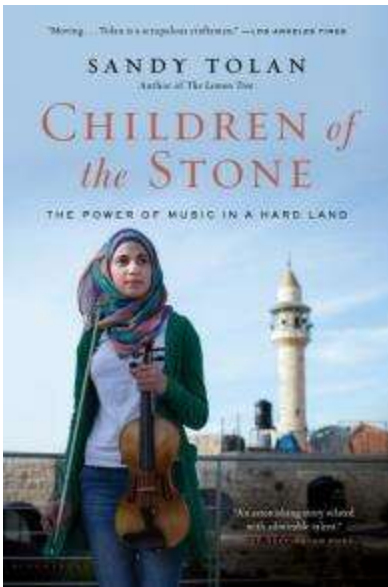
This may be a slim volume but as is to be expected from Williams, who is not just one of the greatest theologians of our time but also an inspiring teacher, it is one filled with profound insights for everyday followers of Jesus, wherever they are on that journey. Peppered with questions for reflection and discussion, it provides many opportunities for guided, personal engagement while its format means the book could also be an excellent focus for group study. “A work of enormous substance boiled down to 80 pages of ‘gold-dust’,” the Church Times has stated, “No review can do it justice, so you must buy it and read it. And read it again.” Who are we to argue?!



***The Book of the Howlat /The Buke of the Howlat* by James Robertson £12.99**

Originally written in the 1440s by Richard Holland, ‘The Book of the Howlat’ is one of the great poetic gems of fifteenth-century Scots. Believing himself to be ugly, a young owl decides to speak to the most handsome bird of all, the peacock, and ask his help so that Nature can change him. But the peacock isn’t sure this should be done – after all, Nature doesn’t usually make mistakes – and summons a council of birds to make a decision. A huge feast takes place, and Nature herself appears and orders all the birds present to give the owl one of their feathers. But the result is not what they expect. The howlat’s initial joy turns to unbearable arrogance at his new-found beauty, and drastic action must be taken... This re-telling by the acclaimed Robertson is illustrated by Edinburgh based artist, Kate Leiper and is available in both English and Scots Language editions.





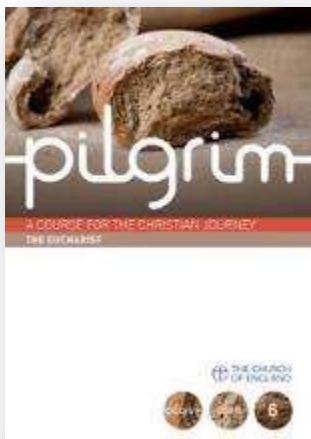
***Children of Stone – the power of music in a hard land* by Sandy Tolan £12.99**

‘Children of Stone’ chronicles the inspirational story of Ramzi Hussein Aburedwan, a child from a Palestinian refugee camp, who, having confronted an occupying army, got an education, mastered an instrument and, by determined hard work, realised his almost impossible dream – to form a school which would transform the lives of thousands more children, as his life had been transformed, through music. Sandy Tolan’s narrative of events, written in the style of investigative journalism is a riveting symphony of international locations, big ideas and human drama which explores peace-seeking and reconciliation and the vital part which music (and the arts more generally) has to play. With the many timely issues and questions, it raises, this would make an ideal book for reading groups

Compline at St John’s

We will be singing Compline at St John’s on Thursday evenings at 9.30pm from Thursday 18 November until Thursday 15 December. All are welcome. We hope to form a Compline Choir of singers (of all abilities!) from St John’s and beyond to maintain this popular service.

For further information contact Stephen Holmes.
[stephen.holmes\[at\]stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk](mailto:stephen.holmes[at]stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk)



Pilgrim Course

The next Together Pilgrim course will explore one of the central experiences of Christian life, the Holy Eucharist. It will be held at St Cuthbert’s Church in the Melrose Room from 7.30pm to 9pm on four Thursdays: 17 November & 1, 8, 15 December.

To register contact Stephen Holmes.
[stephen.holmes\[at\]stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk](mailto:stephen.holmes[at]stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk)

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)
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

Church secretary Joyce Garland
0131 225 3847 info[at]stagw.org.uk

Church administrator Sophie Chalmers
0131 225 3847 admin[at]stagw.org.uk

Edinburgh City Centre Churches TOGETHER

TOGETHER Chair Markus Duenzkofer, St John's
TOGETHER City Centre Chaplain David Hart 0131 229 6542 / 07834 748129
david.hart[at]wpcscotland.co.uk
TOGETHER Trustees from St Andrew's and St George's West
Frances Cooper, James McNeill and Alastair MacKenzie

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