



St Andrew's and St George's West February 2018 Magazine

ST ANDREW'S &
ST GEORGE'S WEST
EDINBURGH



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TOGETHER



February 2018 Magazine

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Contributions, comments, news, photos, ideas for features are welcome – email us at [magazine\[at\]stagw.org.uk](mailto:magazine[at]stagw.org.uk) **Editor:** Alison Bruce

Next (March) copy deadline is Monday 26 February

Thanks to all contributors!

That was the year that was...

Ian Gilmour

Friday 3 November 2017 was one of the highpoints in choir's and congregation's year as we marked the Reformation of 1517 by creating a **Luther 500 celebration**. It was a partnership and celebration with the German Speaking Congregation, generously supported by the German Consulate General. This special evening of conversation, food and music brought together musicians from Germany and Scotland, members from both congregations and guests from many walks of life. The concert of music linked to Luther included the first performance of the commissioned Cantata *Ein feste Burg* by our Assistant Director of Music Andrew Carvel. This revealed much about our congregation in 2017: music and partnership are important; we have unique skills and we are willing to think big and work hard to deliver high quality events.

The most important partnerships are with other churches: with Albany church, we had a joint covenant service and lead Messy Church together; with St Cuthbert's and St John's, we share a lively committed and unique partnership in Together (Edinburgh City Centre Churches Together). Together had a particularly good year in workplace chaplaincy through the expansion of work led by team leader Andrew Gregg, continuing the work at Princes Mall and starting a new initiative at the Law Courts through Katie McNeill and Margaret Ann Fraser respectively. The theatre outreach and chaplaincy led by David Todd has also enjoyed success with David being appointed to the Kings, Lyceum and Festival Theatres. He showed a series of films in our church including ***Billy Elliot*** and ***The Sound of Music*** followed by discussion as to where God was to be found in these apparently secular stories. David invited refugees to children's shows and church members and others to performances. Everyone enjoyed a new play concerning the relationship between John Knox and Mary Queen of Scots. The regular joint service in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was helpfully held at St Cuthbert's in January, who were without a minister at the time.

Other big dates in the congregation calendar offer further evidence of thinking big and working hard, e.g. the colossal Christian Aid Book

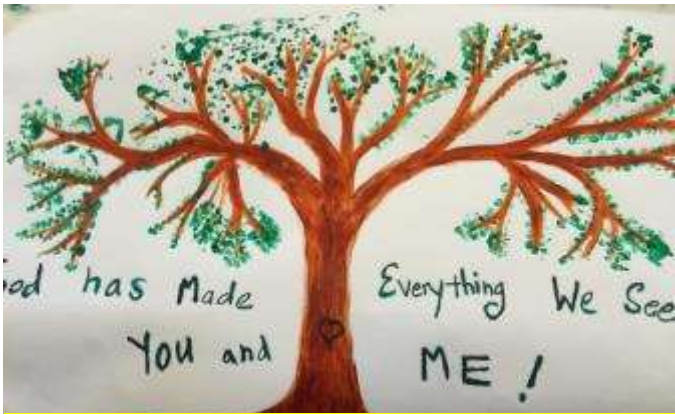


A year in the life of St Andrew's and St George's West



January – March 2017





April – June: Easter...



Christian Aid, Heart and Soul, General Assembly...



Buttons... and Pentecost!



and Art Sales in May and October were again successful. The Christmas Tree Festival (CTF) is flourishing in all kinds of ways, and a record 400 people attended Carols at Six. We will give over £3,000 to the three chosen charities. Much more quietly CTF allowed children to hear the Christmas story, adults to pray and remember family births and deaths. Our new Prayer Space also in the sanctuary encouraged reflection and prayer. The Creative Together **On the Button** event in June was a fine example of hard work, creativity and collaboration all raising a super total (over £4000 for Marie Curie hospice care. In May, BBC Radio 4 recorded Sunday Worship celebrating bells in general yet also part of a delightful national Bells Conference, resourced by our café and staff teams. This service was broadcast in August during the Edinburgh Festival, as the Manchester bombing disrupted the original schedule. The choir, our bells team and speakers all received praise from people around the UK. Our staff team received a marvellous compliment following the Change Ringers conference as the organisers said they wish to take our staff, venue and carry it to the next host town for their next conference. We have come to host an increasing number of events for the national church and the Scottish Government.

The staff team, crofters and volunteers produce a warm welcome and high quality food five days each week. This is a considerable commitment and new volunteers are always necessary, our kirk session commend the way people from different cultures and abilities are involved in this major programme, with Pete as Chef/Café Manager being particularly commended. Regular pastoral visits by a diverse team, are undertaken to housebound members as well as those in hospital. Disability was featured as the topic for the Donald Gorrie Lecture, with former Moderator, John Chalmers giving a helpful lecture on the theme. It was good to develop our Book Festival Fringe programme as part of our busy and very successful music programme on the Fringe in August. Jane Fowler, formerly BBC, interviewed authors Alastair McIntosh, Kirsty Wark and James Runcie.

In the liturgical context of weekly worship we produced three services each Sunday and 5 services per week at 1pm. Special services

celebrated 200 Years of Edinburgh's New Town and a memorable Children's Communion. Our young vocal ensemble sang for the Blessing of the Nativity in St Andrew Square on Advent Sunday, with the leaders of the Catholic, Episcopal and Church of Scotland. Despite the minister's sick leave in October we involved even more people in leading worship. A team of elders led the Christmas Eve Watchnight service. Our excellent 9.45 worship leaders continued to develop, with Allison Becker, Jonny Clipston, and Elina Koehler, all receiving some formal training. A team visited Dalry School and worked with a class to create a wonderful nativity using our handcrafted costumes, strengthening the relationship with staff and pupils. Sadly, the much loved Revd Tony Bryer retired from our team at the end of the year, but we are delighted that he will be still be involved on Tuesdays leading our weekly communion services.

We continued our support for homeless people with various pieces of work including a catering team offering support to the Bethany Night shelter programme.

I don't have the figures just yet but I imagine our membership and offerings have declined against last year so we cannot afford to become complacent.

We have future plans:

The choir is travelling to Kassel, Germany, and preparing the Missa Brasileira by Jean Kleebe, a Brazilian composer. A concert together with mezzo soprano Andrea Baker featuring '**Songs of Slavery**' with material from Ian Gilmour's study leave is planned for Tuesday March 13 at 7.30pm. The plan is to use our courtyards and our potential in terms of photography and film more fully this year.

So while **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and forever**, the church on earth has to adapt on a regular basis and congregations like our have to lead the way.

Let us enjoy adapting and working together throughout 2018.

Every blessing, Ian



July – Sept: hands on communion, celebration, learning



...and some serious culture and campaigning





Oct – Dec – conversation, food and music at Lutherabend



Christmas trees, nativities ... and a different Watchnight



Worship for February - March

Give light, and the darkness will disappear of itself. **Erasmus**

Faith is like an empty, open hand stretched out towards God, with nothing to offer and everything to receive **John Calvin**

May the nations be glad and sing for joy,
because you judge the peoples with justice
and guide every nation on earth.
May the peoples praise you, O God;
may all the peoples praise you!

Psalms 67

We enter the Season of Lent with a blessing – a rainbow set in the clouds to remind us of God's promise to every living creature.

4 February (Epiphany 5) Mark 1:29-39: **Called to Healing**

11 February (Last in Epiphany) Mark 9:2-9: **Call to Rising**

18 Feb (Lent 1) Genesis 9:8-17: **God Loves Us**

25 Feb (Lent 2) Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16: **The Blessing of Generations**

4 March (Lent 3) Psalm 19: **Contemplate God's Glory**

11 March (Lent 4) Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22: **God's Love Is Steadfast**

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!

Lent and Easter Diary

Sat 3 Feb	2.30pm A Winter Serenade - Choir afternoon tea 6.30pm Before the Flood (at Saughtonhall) Eco Film
Sun 4 Feb	9am, 9.45am, 11am, 2pm Albany No fellowship lunch – see 11 Feb <i>7.30pm EDGAS Pirates of Penzance Singalong</i>
Mon 5 Feb	<i>6.30pm AHSS Lecture – Heroines of the Canongate</i>
Sat 10 Feb	<i>7.30pm Georgian Concert Society- Fieri Consort</i>
Sun 11 Feb	9am, 9.45am, 11am, 2pm Albany 1pm Fellowship Lunch for Mulanje Mission Hospital with Pearson Soka
Sun 18 Feb	9am, 9.45am, 11am, 2pm Albany <i>2pm Ludus Baroque Bach Cantata Project</i>
Mon 19 Feb	10.30 Book Group Chapel
Sat 24 Feb	10am-12.30pm Messy Church 7pm Stockbridge Church Ceilidh for Pearson Soka
Sun 25 Feb	9am, 9.45am, 11am, 2pm Albany
Mon 26 Feb	12.15pm Amnesty Undercroft Group

March 2018

Thurs 1 March	12.30pm Ecumenical Friends, Davidson Room
Sun 4 Mar	9am, 9.45am, 11am, 2pm Albany 1pm Fellowship Lunch for the choir
Thurs 8 Mar	12.30pm Ecumenical Friends, Davidson Room
Sun 11 Mar	9am, 9.45am, 11am, 2pm Albany
Mon 12 Mar	2pm Sound – a Book Event with Bella Bathurst <i>6.30pm AHSS Lecture – William Adam</i>
Tue 13 Mar	7.30pm Songs of Slavery with Andrea Baker, Ian Gilmour and the choir
Wed 14 Mar	7.30pm Kirk Session
Sun 18 Mar	9am, 9.45am, 11am, 2pm Albany <i>2pm Ludus Baroque Bach Cantata Project</i>
Mon 19 Mar	10.30 Book Group Chapel
Sun 25 Mar	Palm Sunday
Mon 26 – Fri 30 Mar	7pm Holy Week Services with music
Sat 31 Mar	10am-12.30pm Messy Church
Sun 1 Apr	EASTER DAY

Dates for your 2018 Diary

Christian Aid at St Andrew's and St George's West

Sun 29 Apr	Push n Shove
Mon 30 Apr – Fri 11 May	CA Sorting and pricing (not Sunday)
Sat 12 May – Fri 18 May	CA Sale (not Sunday)
Thurs 25 - Sat 27 Oct	CA Art Sale and Coffee Morning

St Andrew's and St George's West Choir

Sat 3 Feb	2.30pm A Winter Serenade
Tue 13 Mar	7.30pm Songs of Slavery
26-30 Mar	7pm Music and Reflection for Holy Week
Wed 18 April	Evening Concert
18- 22 May	Choir tour to Germany
Sat 18 Aug	12.30pm Choir Festival Fringe Concert



Join the choir and vocal ensemble for an elegant afternoon of Palm Court music and delicious afternoon tea.

£8 entry (for adults) includes full afternoon tea. Everyone and their friends are welcome – funds raised will support the choir tour to Germany in May

Children free!

**Sat 3 February at 2.30pm
In the church**

Monday 12 March at 2pm

Sound

A Book Event at St Andrew's and St George's West



At the age of 27, acclaimed writer and photojournalist, **Bella Bathurst** began to go deaf. She denied that anything was seriously wrong but inwardly she was struggling to cope.

“I can’t hear London breathing any more. Perhaps it’s dead.”

For the next 12 years, deafness shaped her life until everything changed again. Here Bella explores her personal experience and our fascinating relationship with sound.

Chaired by **Jane Fowler**

Photograph: Ben Gilbert-Wilkinson



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

stagw.org.uk [stagw](https://www.facebook.com/stagw) [@stagw1](https://twitter.com/stagw1)

Tickets
£6 (£4 concessions)

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

Songs of Slavery

Andrea Baker, Ian Gilmour and the Choir of St Andrew's and St George's West explore

Singing from Africa to the African American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's

A rich 60 minutes of words and music inspired by Ian Gilmour's study leave in Georgia, Alabama and Louisiana.

**Tuesday 13 March 2018 at 7.30pm
St Andrew's and St George's West**

Tickets £7 and £5 (concessions) online from Eventbrite and from St Andrew's and St George's West church office

In Retrospect

Tony Bryer

I was deeply touched by the generosity of the congregation at my 'farewell' on Christmas Eve. I had said that 'I don't want any fuss made when I step down', after 15 months as Associate Minister but there you are; some things are out of my control.



As I said that morning, St Andrew's & St George's West is the congregation with which I have had the longest association in over 42 years of ordained ministry, 14 years in total. That means it has a very special place in my memories of ministerial life, not least because as an Anglican priest, I have found myself welcomed over those years into every aspect of a Presbyterian congregation's life.

As a committed ecumenist, I have rejoiced that such an experience has been possible, and I hope (and believe) that there has been mutual enrichment.

Of course, the greater part of my work in all those years has been beyond the congregation in the varied work of city centre outreach and chaplaincy. But I have always known that this was a ministry that the congregation was deeply committed to, and therefore I felt supported and upheld in that work.

Reflecting briefly on the 15 months working with you all, what stands out is how rich and varied it has been; when I arrived back in October 2016, Allison Becker was working with the congregation, and in the last few months Elina Koehler has been working as intern with us; then there is Rosie Addis and the Albany church; between Ash Wednesday and Pentecost there were the seven Scottish Episcopal Church ordinands on placement; the establishment of the Prayer Space in the Sanctuary, involvement with the Together Churches Homelessness group, and Christian Aid – to name just a few of the experiences and highlights! I have seen at close quarters a city centre congregation working hard to understand its role and ministry in a fast changing society and city centre. Through imaginative activities like the Christmas Tree Festival, Messy Church, the work of the Undercroft Café, and a wide variety of worship and the excellent music of the choir, this church is seeking to commend Christian faith and draw people into a community of welcome and service.

There are many challenges still to face, and we haven't always got things right, but it has been a privilege to be part of it all, and to work with and alongside Ian over these months.

I will still be on the Tuesday lunchtime Communion rota, and be available to cover a Sunday here and there during holidays, so you'll see me from time to time.

Thank you for everything!

Thank you!

Elina Koehler

I cannot believe that the three months are already over. It has been an extraordinary time in St. Andrew's and St. George's West!

From the very first day you welcomed me with so much warmth and

love that I felt at home immediately. I know a lot of you think that it is not special and that all congregations are like this, but I tell you it is very special.

I want to thank you for every single conversation, for the lovely Mondays together in the Undercroft (I can't believe that I enjoyed working in a Café so much), for all the meetings and groups I could be present. I want to thank you for fabulous singing and interesting and fun nights out afterwards.

Thank you for the chance to see how people live and worship in another country. Thank you for all the cuppas and pastries (especially the mince pies!) when I visited you with Ian. Thank you Ian for not being annoyed to have a shadow following you all the time, you are a wonderful mentor!

I want to thank you all for my opportunities to try out things, the overwhelming response if it was good and the certainty that you will encourage me to try again, if it was not. That is an environment where everyone likes to learn and improve.

Thank you again for everything you did for me the last three months. It was great being part of the church family. I will definitely miss you! Every blessing, Elina





Ruth, Pearson James and Mary Margaret in Malawi

Pearson's on his way!

Alison Campbell

Pearson Soka, Administrator at Mulanje Mission Hospital, where we continue to have a strong link, will be with us from Friday 9 February to Monday 26 February, on a work placement with the NHS for part of that time. Our congregation supported Pearson through his post-graduate degree and some of us met him in 2013 in Malawi, but this will be his first time in Scotland. He will be in church on Sunday 11th and Sunday 25th February. On 18 February he will attend Stockbridge Church, also supporters of MMH.

Please support these events organised for Pearson:

- **Ceilidh** in Stockbridge Church, **Saturday 24 February**, 7-10pm, with pot luck supper, music and entertainment. Please let the minister, Mary Margaret Scott or Alison Campbell know if you can come and what food you can bring. This is a joint event with Stockbridge.
- **Fellowship lunch** at St Andrew's and St George's West to raise funds for Mulanje on **Sunday 11 February** (instead of 4 Feb).

Stockbridge have a coffee morning on Fridays and Pearson will attend on **Friday 23 February**.

For more information or if you can give some hospitality to Pearson in the week beginning 19 February, please contact Ian, Mary Margaret or Alison C, or the Church Office.

News from the office

Wendy Henderson

Robert Livingstone AKA Rab

We would like to introduce and welcome Rab, our new Church Officer.

Rab comes to us after a being a Minibus Driver / Handyman in a care home. He has a background of Electrical Engineering and Building Maintenance, so will fit in well here. He has various interests which include being a support driver for European cycling trips, Lothian Transport Community Service, Oxfangs Neighbourhood Centre, Gardening. He does not like to be idle!! He is ex-army, RAMC, air ambulance. He is looking forward to his new challenge, and so far is liking his new role.



Defibrillator

We have, with the help of a small grant from the British Heart Foundation, now received and fitted our new Defibrillator. It is in place at the bottom of the main stairs next to the lift. The one we have is usable by anyone, as it actually talks to you and gives you instruction from start to finish.

Part of the agreement with the BHF is that it is accessible to the public during our opening hours; this is why you will notice on the outside doors a small sign showing the public where it is. **If you have the need to use it, please make sure that an ambulance is called first.** During the early part of the year, we will be conducting user training (not necessary for you to use it, but informative), if you would be interested in attending, please let someone in the office know.





Jack Thompson memorial in Malawi

Vera Kamtakule, CEO Malawi Scotland Partnership

The remains of Jack Jabulani Thompson Jere were laid to rest on 16th January 2018 at a moving ceremony that took place at Njuyu CCAP mission in Ekwendeni Mzimba in northern Malawi.

The late Jack Thompson was a firm admirer of the Ngoni culture and this was demonstrated by the fact that he had requested that when he dies, he must be placed into his coffin wearing the full Ngoni warrior regalia. And secondly, he also requested that his remains must be brought back to Malawi, a country he loved dearly, and buried specifically at Njuyu mission cemetery.

The ceremony was led by Livingstonia Synod General Secretary the Rev. Levi Nyondo and co-chaired by the moderator of the synod. About 40 reverends from around Mzuzu Presbytery and Mzuzu city travelled to Njuyu to witness the occasion.

The University of Livingstonia, a representative of Chief Mbelwa the 5th, members of the Ngoni Heritage and Malawi Scotland Partnership also attended the ceremony. The guest of honour for the event was Jack's second born son Dr Mark Thompson who was also christened with the Jere clan name during the ceremony. The service was conducted following all normal CCAP procedures for such events.

The remains of Jack Thompson were brought to Malawi by Rev Prof. Kenneth Ross SMP's board member. The funeral service was well attended by community members from Njuyu as well members of the women's guild from Mzuzu. There were two choirs and two Ngoni warrior dance groups who sang songs at the service. In his remarks, Dr. Mark Thompson said that his father had told him that people should not mourn at his funeral but be in a celebratory mood as he had no regrets whatsoever for the life he had led. To support this wish, all choirs who performed at this service sang and danced to Ngoni tunes and at one point Dr Thompson joined the dance.



Prof Kenneth Ross articulated the history of Jack Thompson in Malawi, the work he did both at Livingstonia and Grace Bandawe as well as the passion he had for the Ngoni culture and the people of Malawi. This was demonstrated by his wish to be buried at Njuyu and the community there really felt honoured that such a man would want to make Njuyu his final resting place. Jack was an extra ordinary person who also believed in rain making. What was more interesting was that whether out of sheer luck or by design, immediately after Jack's remains were laid to rest, the rains started!

The Livingstonia Synod out did themselves by ensuring that Jack's final resting place was well done. The grave was immediately sealed after his remains were laid to rest. He lies in a place together with other missionaries who trod on the same place he did. He will forever be a significant figure not only in Njuyu but Malawi as a whole; may his gentle soul continue to rest in eternal peace.

Jack Thompson was an elder of St Andrew's and St George's West. Thanks to the Scotland Malawi Partnership for this article.



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

Pat McKerrow's Wildlife Diary

In the early stages of any New Year, our thoughts often turn to holiday planning. For me, that usually involves reading about Scottish islands on the 'still to be visited' list, as well as reflecting on those I feel a genuine need to revisit often. What is it that makes some islands so captivating, to the extent that they simply get under the skin? The landscapes maybe, or the remoteness, the history/traditions, the tranquillity, the close-knit communities, the nature?

Perhaps all of these things, and more. Yet of course, island life can be harsh too, but as a regular island visitor, I always find a unique and wonderful sense of peace alongside spiritual connection on those islands I count as special; plus I relish the slower-pace, and it almost goes without saying, the wildlife opportunities. Words from 'The Dark Island', David Silver's well-known, hauntingly beautiful song about Benbecula in the Outer Hebrides, capture my feelings perfectly:

*"Away to the westward I'm longing to be,
where the beauties of heaven unfold by the sea..."*

So where might my plans take me this year? Time will tell, but I hope to be able to spend at least some time on favourites Islay and Jura; they hold so many happy memories of previous visits including treasured wildlife experiences. Almost as soon as the ferry from Kennacraig enters the Sound of Jura, I can hardly contain my excitement, it's a real feeling of coming home. Hugh S Robertson's famous song 'Westering Home' sums it up "*...eh, but it's grand to be walkin' ilk day, to find yourself nearer to Isla...*"! From Jura's otters and red and roe deer, to Islay's seals, geese migration, and brown hares, plus the potential for golden eagle, corncrake and chough sightings, I could never tire of these islands.

My most recent trip to Islay and Jura was probably my happiest and most successful to date, certainly in terms of wildlife moments and photographs. The hours spent, the uncomfortable conditions, the challenging terrain, the mixed weather, matter not one bit when a 'prize' comes into close proximity; something I had hoped to find. A photographer friend once told me that no-one is interested in hearing about the difficulties encountered in achieving a particular photograph – the result is all! I understand that, but I believe that each photograph tells a story too.

By way of example, those who visited my recent exhibition, '**Moments In Nature**', might recall seeing three otter photographs. Those photos were achieved after I had spent over 5 hours patrolling a coastline, sitting on a rocky shore, watching (through binoculars) an otter fishing in the distance, and simply waiting, hoping it would eventually catch something too large to eat at sea, and head ashore.

I remember the weather was grey and cold, and just occasionally my mind had drifted to the additional layers of clothing I could have added to my outfit, also to the padded mat I could have brought from the car to sit on! It was nevertheless still a joy, witnessing this far off activity, but the moment when the otter turned and started swimming at speed towards 'home'... indescribable.

My heart always begins pounding when I see that; I know there will be photo opportunities and desperately want to maximise them. I know too that the moments will pass quickly and I want to capture as much of the action as possible. So much excitement and no small amount of pressure. That particular day luck stayed with me and it turned out to

be my most successful yet, both in terms of otter watching and photographs.

Other islands I would revisit in a flash include Harris in the Outer Hebrides, where it was possible to watch an otter fishing in the loch from the kitchen window; Shetland, where thanks to expert local help, otters were seen in a number of locations; Orkney, where the sheer magic of the islands proved alluring, and the waters were awash with the sights and ‘a-oooh-e’ sounds of eider ducks; the Isle of May, where puffins provide constant fly-pasts and wonderful throaty ‘arr-uh’ sounds; and the Bass Rock, where gannets unquestionably reign.

This extract from prayer at one of our church services comes to mind (with thanks to Ian): “We celebrate and give thanks beyond what our words can express, for the...animals...and birds with which we share our existence. We are delighted by their beauty: we are serenaded by their songs; ...and we are humbled by our need for the gifts they have given us over and over again...”.

I leave you with Kathy Galloway’s ‘Camas Lullaby’. I first heard this poem read at a friend’s funeral last year and loved it instantly; a friend who adored the precious island of Iona, and whose ashes have since graced those shores – a poem so apt for my friend, and so reminiscent of the ambience on many of the islands I’ve visited:

*“Bracken and rock and rose-pink heather
will carpet the land for you.
Oystercatchers will dip
and a heron skim over the bay for you.
Bog-myrtle and wild mountain thyme
will scent the air sweetly for you.
Daisies and celandines and tormentil will
dance in white and gold dresses for you.
And the sea and the seals and the gulls
will sing an island lullaby for you.”*

Every blessing
Pat McKerrow

'Moments In Nature'

Pat McKerrow's
Photography Exhibition -
heartfelt thanks to
everyone who supported
this recent exhibition in
any way.

Sales of photographs,
cards, and calendars
generated profits of
£600, which Pat has now
donated to Macmillan
Cancer Support
(Scotland).

Note also that Pat will
have stocks of blank
greetings cards available
on an ongoing basis;
please contact Pat if
interested.

Facing the Reality of Climate Change

Jean Mackinlay

A few people from our congregation went to the King's Hall on 19 November to hear a discussion between Canadian scientist, Christian and climate change activist **Katharine Hayhoe**, and Scottish author, Quaker and Professor of Human Ecology, **Alastair McIntosh**. It was a really interesting evening and fortunately very well attended by members of other eco-congregations. It was heartening to see so many young people there.

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there**

Both speakers were challenging and gave us a lot to think about. It's not easy to sum up a discussion, but I did take a few notes, mostly from what Katharine Hayhoe said.

She spoke about what she called "the real problem" about climate change: Nobody wants to talk about it – because of fear, anxiety, depression, paralysis. Or they say:

"You have to be a certain type of person to care about this, and I'm not."

"Scientists are making it all up."

"But it's just a natural cycle."

"We haven't studied this long enough."

"Will it affect me personally? Or only future generations and far-off places?"

(Do these comments sound familiar?)

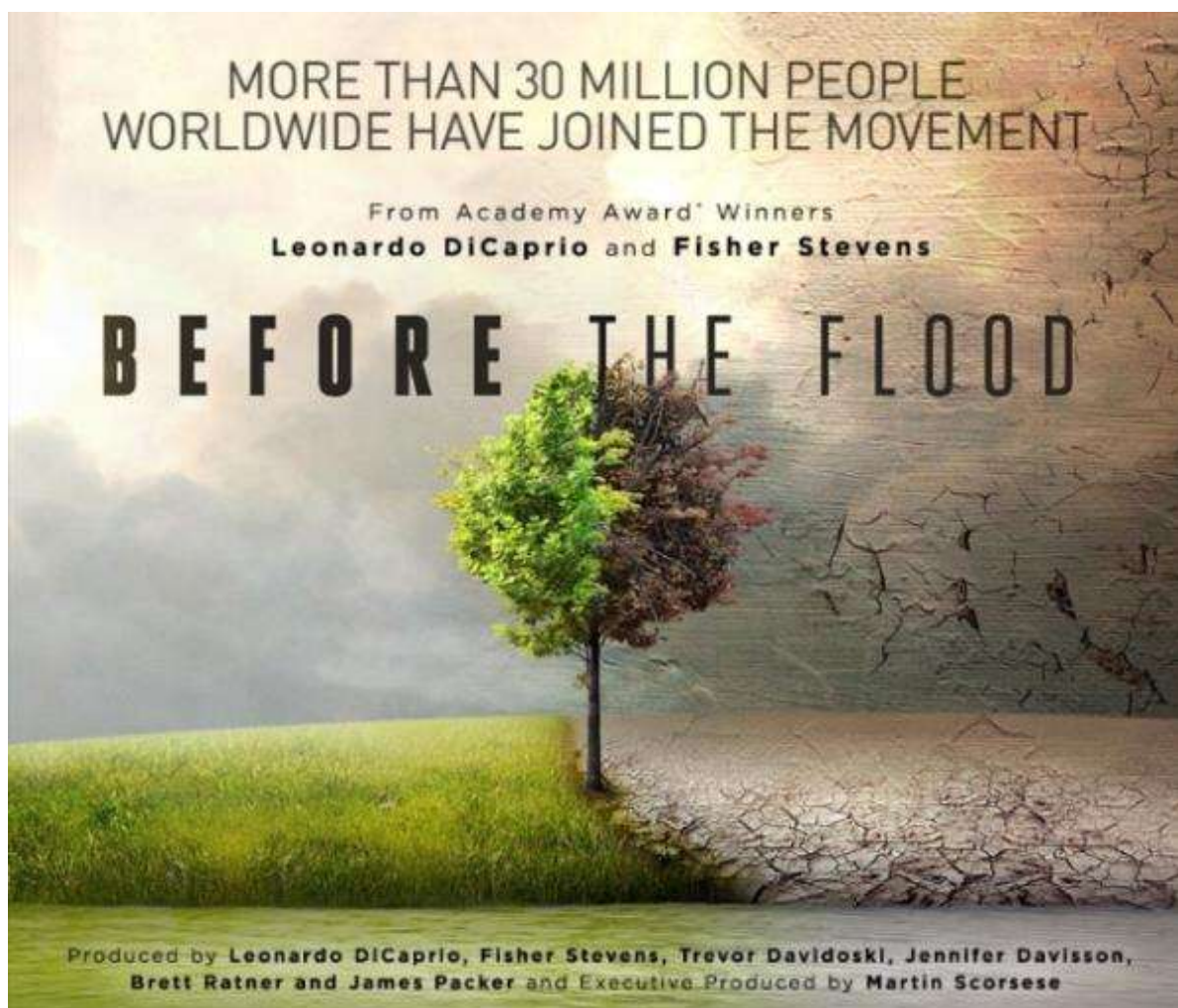
Climate change disproportionately affects the poorest and most vulnerable. Someone whose values depend on what they have, not on community – why should they care about the world community? And yet nearly everyone has the values to care, so how can we work together? We need to be bonding and appreciating, connecting, explaining, inspiring. We need to take small, sensible steps. What is the hope that sustains us? It's interesting that people's reaction to Trump's election, - the realisation that 'no one

will do it for us' – was that they flocked to join organisations which work against climate change.

Alastair McIntosh, who spoke at our own Book Festival Fringe in the summer, reminded us that “*Science on its own stays in the head; we have to open it up to the heart.*”

Now there is a follow-up to this event. On Saturday, 3 February, Eco-congregations Scotland is showing a film called “**Before the Flood**”. It stars Leonardo DiCaprio, who as a U N representative travels the world and sees the effects of climate change. The film is introduced by former President Barak Obama and climate change activist Katharine Hayhoe (named by Time magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world).

The film will be shown at **Saughtonhall United Reformed Church**. 85 – 87 Saughtonhall Drive, EH12 5TR. It is free, but you should book at [filmcrew\[at\]saughtonhall.com](mailto:filmcrew@saughtonhall.com) Doors are open at 6pm for 6.30 showing.



Dethroning Mammon

Veronica Crerar

The Book Group recently read “**Dethroning Mammon**” by Justin Welby, the current Archbishop of Canterbury.

Justin Welby’s experience as Group Treasurer of an oil company, work as a parish priest in the Midlands where he chaired an NHS Trust, and now as Archbishop of Canterbury, where he recently sat on the Parliamentary Commission on Banking Standards, investigating the 2008 financial crash, has qualified him outstandingly to write this book.

It is not an easy read. It was written originally as a series for a Lent Study group, which at times makes it slightly unwieldy, although it does ensure that every step of his argument is biblically based.

The early part of the book contains a lot of analysis of what he considers has gone wrong with our financial systems, particularly banking. At times the issues he discusses become somewhat technical for the reader, but his basic argument is rock- solid, persuasive and challenging, and something for all of us to consider.

His argument is that our world has become wholly trapped in servitude to Mammon. The titles of the early chapters-“*What we see we value*”, “*What we measure controls us*”, “*What we have we hold*” and “*What we receive we treat as ours*” indicate the direction he is taking. He argues that we must stop looking with the eyes of the world and look with the eyes of God to see what is really valuable in our life.

For example, work only seems to be valued according to how much one is paid for it. Voluntary work is ignored or undervalued. How often have you heard “I am only a volunteer” And yet it is estimated that all the voluntary work done by churches and other faith groups in the UK in schools, food banks, care shelters etc. every year is worth about £3.3billion to the UK economy and yet it is nowhere acknowledged as such. Similarly, the voluntary work of those caring for family members or friends is also disregarded or undervalued, and yet saves the country billions of pounds.

Welby argues that money and the power it gives are misleading and deceptive guides to what is truly important. He argues that striving for wealth and hoarding what we have distract us from true fullness of life. The money we have, we hold in trust and should use it to *create relationships of abundance and grace*, a phrase he uses several times. These arguments apply to us as individuals, but also to our churches, our communities and our governments.

As Biblical examples, he points to the generosity of Mary, anointing Christ's feet with her wonderful perfume, and the sacrificial generosity of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus in caring for the burial of Jesus after the Crucifixion and the wonderful outcomes from these events.

Encouragingly, he finds some positive examples from our times. Between 2011 and 2015, over 43 million children were immunised worldwide against preventable diseases with funding and support from the UK's Department For International Development (DFID). Almost 30 million infants and their mothers were supported through its nutrition programmes and 11 million children supported in education. The sophistication of DFID is exceptional; a world leader which has found an effective way to give that is both generous and strategic.

Even more striking is the relationship recently built between Britain and Sierra Leone. In the late 1990's, Britain, almost alone in the international community committed forces to assist Sierra Leone to defeat a large rebel force of unbelievable cruelty threatening the country. Britain had no strategic interest in Sierra Leone, and acted largely out of compassion. Later, in 2014, Britain again came to the aid of Sierra Leone at the time of the Ebola crisis. Justin Welby visited Sierra Leone briefly in December 2014, and was amazed at the warmth and depth of the gratitude to Britain which he found there.

He also highlights Bill Gates, who has donated a very large part of the fortune he has gained from Microsoft to eliminating a number of critical diseases which cause premature death in many parts of the world. Gates has set up a foundation staffed by experts to do this

work. But over and above that, Bill Gates and his wife and children travel the world, often in great discomfort, to see this work in action. They are not overseeing the work; they are *creating relationships of abundance and grace* with the people involved, showing how they value them.

How do we as individuals use our money to create relationships of abundance and grace? Justin Welby argues that in order to change the way we do things, we need to look first at our budgeting. He suggests that we start with our giving to the church and other causes close to our hearts. These donations should be deducted from our income before we work out our spending.

How do we as individuals use our money to create relationships of abundance and grace?

He suggests that the church should work out its budget in the same way. *“The way the church sets budgets is as important as how it writes theology, as a budget is applied theology expressed in numbers.”*

Welby recalls a friend of his who became priest of a church in an area of extreme poverty. In response to the suggestion that the church should use some of its income to help relieve the poverty around it, an outraged Church warden asked, “What do you think we are, vicar: a charity?” Of course, we laugh...but...

In his final chapter, Justin Welby urges us to be always on our guard. Mammon will try to catch up with us again, and so we must listen for the word of God.

We must seek in each situation to see how we can best use all our resources, and we must be prepared to repent, to change the way we act ourselves, but also to ensure that the voice of our churches is heard in society, not because we are always right or have all the answers, but *“we dance to a different tune, because we have a different ruler on the throne.”*

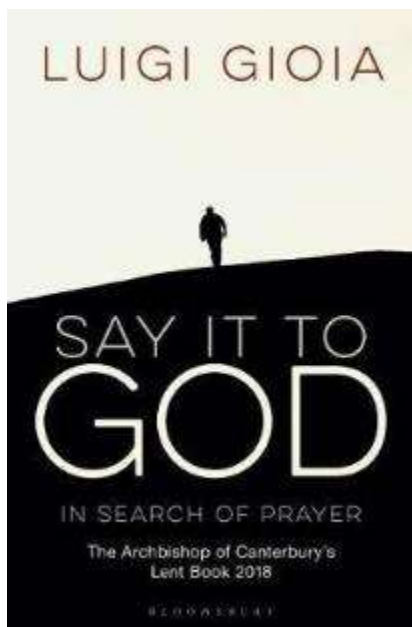
Cornerstone Book Reviews

Amanda Bruce



Say it to God – in search of prayer

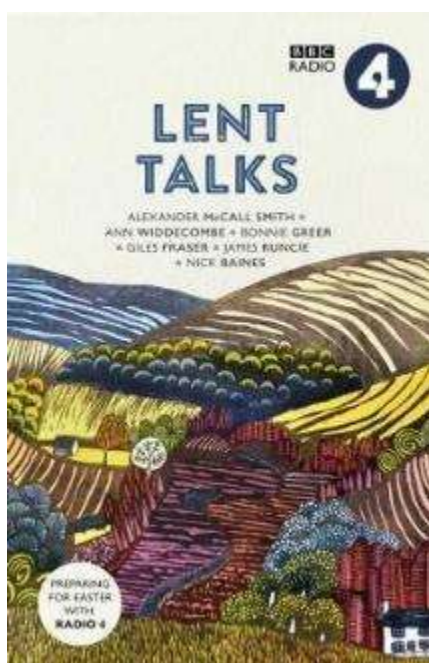
by Luigi Gioia £9.99



‘Say it to God’ is the Lent book recommended this year by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In it, Luigi Gioia – a Benedictine monk and Professor of Systematic Theology – says that, whoever we are, whatever path our lives have taken, our personal history is never an obstacle to our access to God. A book written to help people to pray, though sometimes giving pointers, suggests that methods and techniques of prayer are ultimately not what’s important when speaking to God – rather, when we trust that God is interested in the whole of our lives, it is then in the most mundane everyday

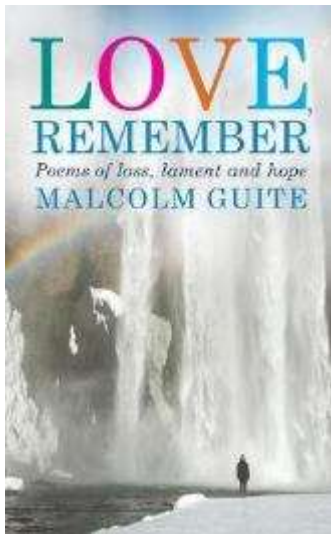
tasks and situations that our sighs, cries and exclamations of wonder and thanksgiving are heard. Set out in very short chapters, this makes an ideal book for daily reading offering encouragement throughout Lent and beyond to all who feel the need to refresh their practice of prayer.

Lent Talks £7.99



This slim volume is published by the BBC and offers a collection of monologues first broadcast on Radio 4 in their annual series of the same name. The aim of the series is for individuals to respond to the familiar stories told in the run-up to Easter in an attempt to make them fresh, once again, for the listener. As Radio 4 has a remit to appeal to a ‘general audience’, so the book is aimed at those of all faiths and none with a range of contributors from different walks of life, each offering insightful, personal perspective on Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. Arranged in six sections with questions at the end of each one,

this would make an ideal starting point for group discussion as well as offering individuals scope for personal reflection.



Love, Remember – Poems of loss, lament and hope by Malcolm Guite £12.99

The poems collected here have been chosen by poet and priest, Malcolm Guite, to give voice both to love and to lamentation. He introduces each with an honest but gentle wisdom, all the time underlining the fact that death is *not* ‘nothing at all’ as one popular funeral reading suggests. Instead, he says, “It is a searing and inexplicable rupture of all that we have known.” From the threshold of death to the shock of

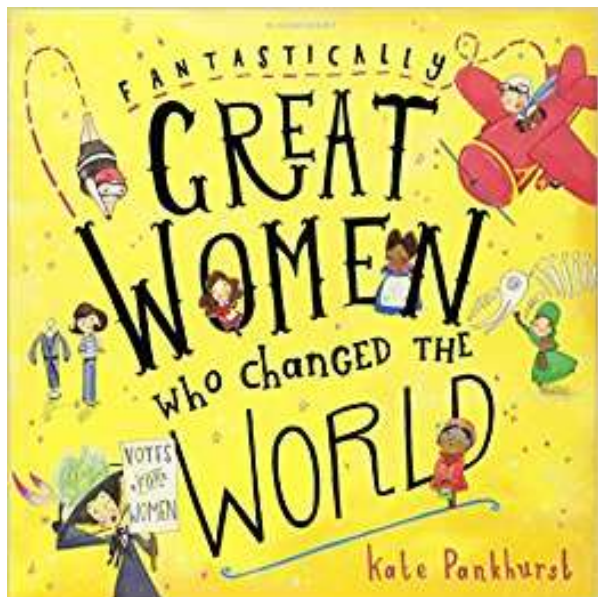
loss, to remembering with love and looking forward in hope, Guite is a compassionate guide on the journey of grief offering moments of grace, glimpses of hope and intimations of immortality through his own words and those of others. Although in 40 parts suitable for Lent, it could be read at any time –as a daily reading (more aligned with the period of time various religions have set aside for mourning) – or as an anthology to be dipped into by those who grieve or those who journey with them.

I Want you to Be – on the God of Love Tomáš Halík £24.99

This book was recommended to us by a customer – *we love recommendations* - and it has proved a popular addition to our shelves. Tomáš Halík worked as a psychotherapist during the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia while, at the same time, working in the underground church as a secretly ordained Catholic Priest. Here he explores the relationship between faith and love, meditating on a statement attributed to St. Augustine, ‘I love you: I want you to be,’ and its importance for contemporary Christian practice. Profound, challenging and unsettling, Halík says that, given that God is not an object, love for him must be expressed through love of human beings and calls for those who follow Christ, to avoid isolating themselves from secular modernity recommending instead that they embrace an active and loving engagement with nonbelievers through acts of servitude. Though his writing is scholarly – quoting Eckhart, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Levinas, among others – his style is accessible making this an ideal book for anyone interested in the existential issues of faith.

Fantastically Great Women Who Changed the World

by Kate Pankhurst £6.99 (accompanying Activity Book £5.99)



Jane Austen, Marie Curie, Frida Kahlo, Anne Frank... There are lots of women who have achieved extraordinary things by following their hearts, talents and dreams. These are just some of the incredible women who changed the world we live in whose lives are covered in this book, written by a descendent of another incredible woman, Emmeline Pankhurst. Full of facts and lively illustrations we learn about the ways in which their lives shaped ours today. The

activity book that goes alongside it is also great fun, with over 200 stickers and plenty of opportunities for writing, drawing and solving puzzles designed to educate and inspire.

These and other books newly published for Lent and Easter 2018 in stock – please pop in or get in touch and we will be pleased to guide you through them! Cornerstone Books at St Johns. Mon – Sat 10am - 5.30pm 0131 229 3776 [edinburgh\[at\]cornerstonebooks.org.uk](mailto:edinburgh@cornerstonebooks.org.uk)

Ecumenical Friends 2018 Programme

Thursdays 12.30-1.45pm. usually at St Cuthbert's. Everyone welcome - bring a packed lunch.

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|--------|---|
| 1 Feb | Cleodie McKinnon <i>The Poetry of George Herbert</i> |
| 8 Feb | Ian Gilmour <i>Protest with Praise</i> |
| 15 Feb | Iain Paton <i>Palestine Tours</i> |
| 22 Feb | Jane Dawson <i>Luther – Reformation - Knox</i> |
| | |
| 1 Mar | Sandra Holt <i>The Good, the Not So Good, and the Downright Ugly</i> (at St Andrew's and St George's West) |
| 8 Mar | Rev Peter Sutton <i>Lenten Meditation</i> (at St AGW) |

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

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