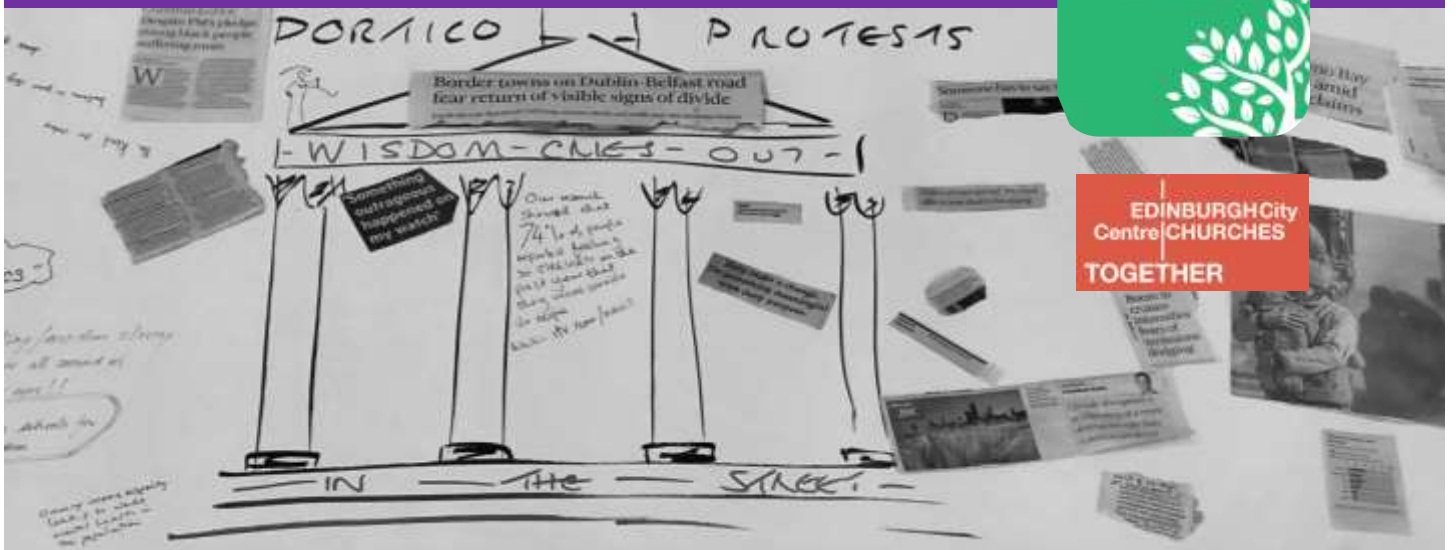




# St Andrew's and St George's West April - May 2019 Magazine



EDINBURGH City  
Centre CHURCHES  
TOGETHER



# Messy Church

A joint project together with our friends in Albany Deaf Church and St John's Episcopal Church.

A light lunch will also be available. Everyone welcome!

Contact [admin@stagw.org.uk](mailto:admin@stagw.org.uk) to register interest, or drop in on the day.

**All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.**

## Event Diary for 2019

**2 February** 10–12.30pm

**9 March** 10–12.30pm

**6 April** cancelled

**11 May** 10–12.30pm \*

**1 June** 10–12.30pm

**31 August** 10–12.30pm

**28 September** 10–12.30pm

**26 October** 10–12.30pm

**30 November** 10–12.30pm

\*@ St John's Episcopal Church



Messy Church enables people of all ages to belong to Christ together through their local church. It is a way of being church which is particularly suited to families, but welcoming to all. It meets at a time and on a day that suits local families and is particularly aimed at people who have never belonged to a church before.



St Andrew's & St George's West

13 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PA

Tel: 0131 225 3847

[stagw.org.uk](http://stagw.org.uk)



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Cover: above: heading to school with new shoes and backpacks, Mulanje Mission Hospital below: portico protests, 9.45 service.  
 Thanks to all contributors. [magazine\[at\]stagw.org.uk](mailto:magazine[at]stagw.org.uk)





## **The hands and face of Christ**

**Very Rev Dr John Chalmers**

This month's thought comes from the teeming, throbbing, vibrant city of Chennai in South India. Partner churches were meeting here to explore the challenges of sustaining the witness of the Christian Church against the backcloth of a culture which is deeply discriminatory and often hostile to the idea of tolerance between different faiths.

It's hard to come to terms with the extraordinary diversity of India in a short visit, so, it is a great privilege to be a guest of those who can take you behind the scenes.

All of life is here and there is no mistaking that the sub-continent is a place of contrasting extremes. India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world; it has cutting edge institutions in medicine and education, its digital platforms and its aerospace technology are as good as any in the world and yet 40% of its population live life below the poverty line. Millions of children never take up a place

in school and still the influence of the caste system means that millions of adults are not only kept in poverty, but their place at the bottom of society is structurally accepted and exploited.

One minister here, working in the slums of Chennai, described the living conditions as hellish and described the lives of the people as utterly hopeless. Compared with any sense of hopelessness that I have known in a lifetime of ministry he was not exaggerating. The measure of hopelessness for so many is “off the scale”.

But in the midst of all of this I saw the face of Christ. In one church programme we met around a hundred women of the Dalit Caste (sometimes referred to as Untouchables) who, in the deeply superstitious religious culture of some of the more remote villages, had been given to the temple in order to appease certain gods or meet certain demands. Being handed over as children and raised in this way they had been condemned to lives of misery, abuse and sexual slavery.

The women we met had, with the help of the Church and at great risk to themselves, found a way out or been discarded as being beyond their sell by date. The church programme was trying to help them recover their identity. They were being given access to food, training, microfinance and, above all, hope. But still, etched into their faces were the lines of a lifetime of exclusion. Theirs were the haunted looks and the hollow eyes of deep despair, but this is where I saw the face of Christ, in the rejected and despised of a generation.

I also saw the hands of Christ in the church workers who were trying to do some little good in the face of such awful circumstances. It was a great reminder always to be on the lookout for where Christ is already present in the world and to find some way of joining in.





## Holy Week and Easter at StAGW

Journey through Holy Week with a variety of services at Edinburgh City Centre Churches TOGETHER - St Cuthbert's, St John's and St Andrew's and St George's West.

### Palm Sunday 14 April

9 am Communion

9.45 am All age worship

11 am Morning worship led by  
Rev Dr Rosie Magee

At 12 noon, immediately after 11am Morning Worship, there will be a Congregational Meeting to vote on Rev Dr Rosie Magee's appointment as the next Minister of St Andrew's and St George's West.



All of the services at TOGETHER Churches are in this leaflet – take a copy and share with friends!

## Tuesday 16 April

**7.30pm Taizé Eucharist at St John's**

## Wednesday 17 April

**12.30- 8pm Soul Space at St Cuthbert's** take time to reflect in this contemplative space, with led reflections at 1pm and 7 pm

## Maundy Thursday 18 April

**7 pm at StAGW Seder in the Sanctuary** at this special supper we share food, as Jesus did with his disciples, and also experience stories in the tradition of the Jewish Passover. With music by Chilcott and Stanford.

## Good Friday 19 April

**Noon- 3pm The Three Hours at St John's** Come and go, or stay for the full three hours, journeying with Jesus on the cross. Very Rev Gilleasbuig Macmillan gives the sermon.

**7 pm at StAGW Tenebrae Service** with music by Chilcott, Carvel and Kuhnau

## Holy Saturday 20 April

**10 am-12 pm Messy Café at St John's** for all ages, deaf and hearing.

## Easter Day, Sunday 21 April

**7 am Dawn Communion in St. Cuthbert's Garden**


**9 am Communion at StAGW**

**9.45 am StAGW Easter Breakfast** - eggs and hot cross buns



**11 am at StAGW Joint Easter Service with Albany Deaf**

**Church.** With signing choir and music by de Jongh and Carvel

## April 2019

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
|                            |   |
| Mon 1 April                | BBC Morning Service from StAGW with John Chalmers   |
| Sun 7 April                | <b>9am, 9.45am, 11am services; 12 noon Communion<br/>12 noon Fellowship Lunch<br/>1pm Deaf - Hearing Easter Choir Rehearsal<br/>2pm Albany Deaf Church</b>  |
| Sun 14 Apr                 | <b>PALM SUNDAY 9am, 9.45am, 11am services<br/>12 noon Congregational Meeting and Election</b><br>7.30pm Operetta Duo: Tumbling Lassie/Fergus of Galloway<br><a href="http://www.tumblinglassie.com/">http://www.tumblinglassie.com/</a> |
| Thur 18 Apr                | <b>MAUNDY THURSDAY 7pm Seder Meal</b>   |
| Fri 19 Apr                 | <b>GOOD FRIDAY 7pm Tenebrae Reflection</b>  |
| Sat 20 Apr                 | <i>10am-noon Messy Church Café at St John's</i>   |
| Sun 21 Apr                 | <b>EASTER DAY 9am Communion; 9.45am Easter<br/>Breakfast; 11am Joint Service with Albany Deaf Church</b>  |
| Mon 22 Apr                 | <b>EASTER MONDAY</b> Café and church closed   |
| Sun 28 April               | <b>9am, 9.45am, 11am services : Push n Shove Sunday</b>   |
| Mon 29 Apr<br>– Fri 10 May |  Sorting and pricing for Christian Aid  |

## May 2019

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
|                       |  |
| Sun 5 May             | 9am, 9.45am and 11am services in the Undercroft  |
| Sat 11 May            |  10am Christian Aid Sale opens<br>10-12.30 Messy Church (at St John's due to the CA Sale) |
| Sun 12 May            | 9am, 9.45am and 11am services in the Undercroft  |
| Mon 13-<br>Fri 17 May |  Christian Aid Sale   |
| Sun 19 May            | 9am, 9.45am and 11am Services in the Sanctuary - BB<br>Silver Band and Guard of Honour at 11am Service<br>1-6pm Heart and Soul in Princes Street Gardens                     |
| Mon 27 May            | 7.30pm Kirk Session  |
|                       |  |

## June 2019

|            |  |
|------------|--|
|            |  |
| Tue 11 Jun | Amnesty Jazz with St Mary's Music School |



# Congratulations

to **Wendy Henderson**, our church manager, on her first grandchild **Fergus Tonis** who arrived on 25<sup>th</sup> February and is now growing fast!



sometimes the smallest things  
take up the most room  
in your heart.



## First Sundays - Transport to Church

There is a scheme to provide lifts by car to and from the church on the first Sunday of each month for members who have difficulty in making the journey by their own, or public, transport. Arrival is in time for the 11am service, with departure after the Fellowship Lunch which usually follows the service on the first Sunday of the month. It may also be possible to arrange transport at other times if required.

Transport is organised by the Pastoral Care Group and is provided by volunteer members on a rota, using their own cars.

If you would like to take advantage of this service, or to offer to be a driver, please contact Michael Cunliffe who convenes the Pastoral Care Group.

# Cafe Secrets Cheese Scones

Pete Anderson

## Ingredients

Self raising flour

Salt

Baking powder

Butter or margarine

Grain mustard

Milk

Egg

Grated cheese

## Method

1. Rub together roughly **8x Self Raising flour** to **soft butter or margarine** with a pinch of **salt** and 1 tsp of **baking powder**.
2. Add **grain mustard** then **milk** – enough to mix to a dry dough – the dough should not be wet.
3. Press flat lightly on floured surface, cover in a layer of **grated cheese**, then roll or fold it up. It should be slightly higher than your cutter.
4. Cut out your scones then turn over on to baking tray.
5. Brush with **egg wash** then cover in **cheese** and top with bit of **salt** or **smoked paprika**.
6. Oven 200c 15 to 20 mins.

## THE UNDERCROFT BREAKFAST

COMING 2<sup>ND</sup> APRIL

10-11.30AM

CHOOSE FROM A DAILY CHANGING MENU OF BACON ROLLS, SCRAMBLED EGGS ON TOAST, POACHED EGG, LORNE SAUSAGE ROLL OR PORRIDGE.

ALL FROM £2.30



ALSO THE NEW EARLY BIRD SCONE & ANY COFFEE DEAL

10-11.30am

ONLY £3.50



Alexander McCall Smith and Tom Cunningham  
Operetta Double Bill, in aid of the Tumbling Lassie Appeal 2019

### THE TUMBLING LASSIE

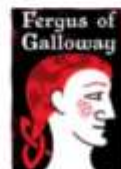
and  
*Fergus of Galloway*

An evening of splendid music and drama  
raising funds  
for a very good cause

Artistic Director - Alan Borthwick  
Musical Director - David Lyle

Sunday 14th April 2019, 7.30pm  
St Andrew's and St George's Church, George Street, Edinburgh  
EH2 2PA

Tickets (£10 each) available on eventbrite (small booking fee payable)  
via [www.tumblinglassie.com/Events2019](http://www.tumblinglassie.com/Events2019)  
or pay cash on the door on the night, space permitting







## **From a mustard seed**

### **Mary Davidson looks forward to the 2019 Christian Aid sale**

At morning worship on Sunday 24 February the preacher was our Locum Minister, The Very Rev Dr John Chalmers. He took his text from the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of St Matthew: The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. Mustard is smaller than any other seed, but when it is grown it is taller than other plants; it becomes a tree, big enough for the birds to come and roost among its branches. Dr Chalmers illustrated this parable by likening it to our Christian Aid story.

We like the analogy because it has always seemed to us that the first impulsive gift of a very small collection of books from a single member of the congregation was indeed a mustard seed. It was sown here nearly half a century ago on the paving stones of our courtyard where we hastily put out one table when that car load arrived unheralded. But it was not stony ground: it was the most fertile imaginable. There are now tens of thousands of books, a multitude of helpers and over a hundred tables. And the mustard tree has many branches. We now have friends all over the land and far beyond the United Kingdom too.

For over 70 years Christian Aid has been standing alongside the poorest people in the world, those forced to flee from their homes because of hardship and persecution, people stricken by sudden disaster or needing help to subsist. In 1973 a mustard seed was sown here which grew into a tree which flourished enabling us to make a significant contribution to their work: £130,000 in 2018.

ROB ROY.

BY THE  
AUTHOR OF "WAVERLEY," "GUY MANNERING," AND  
"THE ANTIQUARY."

---

*For why? Because the good old rule  
Softens them; the simple plan,  
That they should like, who have the power,  
And they should keep who can.  
Rob Roy's Grace.—WARRSWORTH.*

---

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION.

EDINBURGH:

*Printed by James Ballantyne and Co.*

FOR ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND CO. EDINBURGH; AND  
LONGMAN, BROT, DEES, ORME, AND BROWN,  
LONDON.

1818.



In November the new Christian Aid Chief Executive, Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, came from London to visit us. She answered our questions and questioned us. Determined to know more she then sent a cameraman to film everything we are doing to prepare for the 2019 Sale. She herself and the photographer will be with us again in May.

Already we have thousands of books, from all over Scotland, in store. And we know that, thanks to the marvellous gift of her entire library from the family of long-standing and much-loved church member, Margaret Street, this will be a vintage year for Scottish books. Margaret's passion for and dedication to conservation and Scots history and culture is reflected in her collection of books, as is the affection of the friends she made as she campaigned.

One of the works Margaret has bequeathed to us a very early printing of *Rob Roy*, one of Sir Walter Scott's most famous and successful novels. Thus we can mark the bicentenary of his most prodigious achievements in the 3 years which culminated in 1819 with the publication of *The Bride of Lammermuir*.

We are grateful to Margaret now, just as we were forty years ago when she always brought feather-light scones and her famous tablet on the first morning of the Sale.



## It starts with education

### Alison Campbell

**Dr Arie Glas**, who takes over as Medical Director at Mulanje Mission Hospital on 30 March, stayed in Edinburgh for 10 days and took part in our services on Sunday 10 March. He and his wife Lianne have been working in Mulanje as doctors for 2 years. StAGW's relationship with Mulanje dates from 2012 when Dr Ruth Shakespeare, the retiring Medical Director, was commissioned in our church. Arie said how grateful everyone in Mulanje is for the continuing support which has paid for further training for members of nursing and finance staff, has supported clinics in the prison, has helped to build toilets in the schools and has supported general funds, staffed wards, drugs, helped towards solar power, and bought schoolbags and shoes for orphaned school children. The Hospital is now self-sufficient in solar power and has a new digital x-ray machine and a high-dependency ward.

Over lunch after the service, Arie spoke in more detail about some of the team's achievements at Mulanje. Apart from Lianne and Arie, Mulanje's key medical and management staff are now all





Malawian and highly educated. Of course there are challenges, notably corruption and population growth of 3% pa. But it's still possible to achieve a lot with very little in Malawian healthcare and, as Arie says, it starts with education – in schools and in clinics, and investing time and resources in educating staff.

The recent cyclone and floods have been very destructive, and the £2,000 raised on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March has been hugely appreciated and will be used to replace latrines and boreholes in the surrounding villages. Arie says

“Thank you very much for your efforts towards fundraising. We are of course very concerned about the possibility of diarrhoeal disease and cholera outbreaks, so the earlier water and sanitation facilities are back in place, the better. Your generous contribution will help us so much.”

Our very best wishes go to Arie, Lisanne, their daughters Salome and Eva and the baby who is on the way!



# Thank you!

Sally Evans

Thank you to everyone who supported, visited, volunteered, sang or played music, helped with nursery visits and children's activities and donated to New Life, the 2018 Christmas Tree Festival.

Once again the festival proved very popular with visitors and the people, organisations and businesses who sponsored and decorated the 40 trees. The visitors' book was full of lots of very complimentary messages. *"Beautiful and moving- poignant and thought provoking about the true meaning of Christmas- Thank you"*

The Festival raised £3,900, shared equally between three local charities. During the 11 am service on Sunday 3rd February, John Chalmers presented cheques to representatives from Birthlink, Blood Bikes Scotland and The Welcoming. Helen Cox introduced Ian, John and David, who each gave a picture of the work of their charity, explained how the donations will be used and expressed their thanks to the congregation.

**Birthlink** plan to set up a special St Andrew's and St George's West Fund, to assist people affected by adoption issues on very low incomes with some of the costs involved in their search to establish contact with lost family. **Blood Bikes Scotland** transport emergency items for NHS Lothian and the funds raised will go towards extending their service in the Forth Valley area. **The Welcoming** assist people from overseas settle into Edinburgh through a wide range of cultural, social, welfare and educational activities. The donation will help to support their popular language classes and teachers with new resources.

Above left to right Ian Todd (Birthlink), Helen Cox, The Very Reverend Dr John Chalmers, John Baxter (Blood Bikes Scotland), David Carpenter (The Welcoming)



# Tower Captain's 2018 Report

Simon Aves

After the excitement of hosting the Central Council of Church Bellringers meeting in 2017, 2018 has been a quieter year at our tower. The highlight was the centenary of the end of WW1. With thousands of ringers in the UK, we marked the occasion, ringing half-muffled prior to the Sunday service and then fully open at 12.30 – when the government had asked as many bells as possible to be rung across the country at the same time.

In Edinburgh all thirty-six full-circle bells were rung at that time, including the six at Fettes College where Mike Clay and I have been teaching pupils to ring for a couple of years now. Edinburgh ringers also visited the three bells at St Cuthbert's Colinton – probably the only occasion on which all of the bells of Edinburgh have been rung over the course of a weekend.

Another Armistice event in which the bells and ringers took part was the première of Andrew Carvel's *Everyone Sang*. I know of no other piece for choir and orchestra that uses full size church bells as an integral part of the music. We were pleased to be asked to take part, and the experience seems to have gone down well with those who were there to witness it. Unfortunately, having the trap door to the bell chamber open, to allow the sound to pass into church, meant we couldn't hear the music!

We have been able to ring at least six of the eight bells for the 11am service on most Sundays, even during holidays and on Christmas morning. On the few occasions there have been insufficient ringers we have used the automatic chiming system so that the congregation are used to hearing the bells sounding. Practices continue every Monday evening (except in August) and we continue to develop the abilities of the existing band, and more recently have been giving useful experience to members of the St Mary's Cathedral band who are welcomed to our practice. I would like to thank members of the choir for their patience and understanding while waiting to emerge from the gallery – we do select a short piece of ringing as the first 'touch' until they are ready. The warning light system seems to work well.

Repeating the experience of last year I was pleased so many people – especially from our choir – took the opportunity to visit the belfry last month to see the bells up close and to hear an explanation of how change-ringing works and a little of the history of the bells of our church.



The visit was well received I believe, and the message seems to have been passed on at the TOGETHER joint service as I received a request from the St John's choir to hold another tour. One of this second tour was sufficiently enthused to come along and join as a new recruit.

Whitechapel Bell Foundry, which cast our bells in 1788 and restored them in 2006, is sadly no more but we have engaged Matthew Higby & Co to maintain our bells. We have also agreed a protocol for contractors working in and around the tower to facilitate safe working practice. We welcome Barbara Ross to the role of Fabric Convenor – but are sorry to have lost her from our band. Barbara gave ten years' service to actually ringing the bells after playing a significant role in the restoration project that brought them back into action. She has a lot on her plate at the moment and in thanking her for all she has done over the years, I would just add that ringing is like riding a bike – you never forget how to do it!

Sadly, we lost another from those that joined the band in 2006 when Roy Dyckhoff died. Like me, Roy was a lapsed ringer who returned to the exercise when the bells were restored. He will be remembered fondly as a kindly gentleman, and as the principal mover behind the decision to install bells in St Salvator's Chapel in St Andrews as part of the University's 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. Roy was a Lecturer there for many years.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish Ian Gilmour well for the future, and to express the gratitude of the ringers for his considerable help and support of the period of his tenure – in particular the visit of the Central Council in 2017 could not have gone as well as it did without his efforts. In his honour we rang a full peal on the afternoon of his last service to mark his departure. We look forward to meeting his successor in due course.

Two other peals have been rung on our bells since last March. There have also been two quarter peals – or strictly one quarter peal and a one-third peal as an unfortunate slip on a very warm and sticky evening in June brought a premature end to a peal attempt.

Finally, I have indicated to the ringers that after three years, (and ten deputising to Mike Clay) I am intending to stand down from the role of Tower Captain at the end of November. My wife Lesley is retiring and we plan to spend more time with our granddaughter in Kent. Clearly this will curtail my availability to run Monday evening practices on a regular basis.

My thanks go to the bells committee for all that they do and to all the members of the band who come along to ring our magnificent bells.



## Eye to Eye

### Pat McKerrow's Wildlife Diary

Communication, communication, communication. We are told it holds the key to success and is vital in almost everything. I would certainly include my faith in that, in terms of prayerful communication offering me an ongoing connection with God. Also, how uplifting and comforting the right word at just the right time can be. As we read in the bible:

*“A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver”  
(Proverbs 25:11).*

Of course, it is not just about words, nor do we humans have the monopoly on communication. Across our natural world, plants and trees communicate; likewise the creatures that populate our oceans, rivers and seas. And, it almost goes without saying, the communication we recognise between our birds and animals (wild and domestic); melodic songs, alarm calls, croaks, quacks, squeaks, grunts, to name but a few; plus the often flamboyant posturing and gesturing. Who can fail to be dazzled by those spectacles of nature that must rely on communication, eg starling murmuration, geese in v-shaped flight

formation, and even the simple act of fledging. How apt the sentiment in the film 'Dr Doolittle', "If I could talk with the animals, learn their languages, think of all the things we could discuss" (Bricusse). And, not forgetting, possibly the best non-vocal communicators of all, the eyes, often described as 'windows of the soul'.

For me, wildlife photography is about getting as close as possible to my subject to see those eyes; their colour, their intensity, and their message.

It is so incredibly special when my Mute Swans swim towards me, raise themselves from the water, and then 'hunker down' on the riverbank by my side. The cob in particular will often stand within touching distance, spread his wings so that they brush against my body, 'speak' those deep throaty "heerr" sounds, then tilt his head side-on to me to allow eye-to-eye contact. Yes, they both know me well, having 'journeyed' together for 3 years and 'spoken' almost daily throughout that period; it would be easy to let anthropomorphism pervade my views.

Call me romantic, emotional, whatever comes to mind, but when I am side by side and eye to eye with this wild creature, I truly feel our connection and communication. The eyes definitely have it for me. A friend recently put it quite perfectly and beautifully, "...it's like a meeting of your spirits".

With the onset of spring, a whole spectrum of communication is rife in the world of nature. Different species displaying their own behaviours and vying for partners, long-standing couples performing their mating rituals, and many searching for preferred nesting sites. Bird song fills the air with spectacular resonance and authority. It is a truly fabulous and exciting time to be out there watching, listening and ultimately hoping to share in the wonder of new life.

Thinking again about my swan couple, they too have been spending more resting time upstream and scanning for a potential nesting site. Last year, after a few practice nesting attempts, the site they finally selected flooded within hours of completion and ended their plans for family life in 2018. I await the next chapter in their story with interest and given all that has gone before, a tiny sprinkling of apprehension.



For now, let us gain refreshment from springtime and all its lively communication. In doing so, salute its soloists, welcome its arrivals, await its newcomers, and applaud its survivors.

This month's photograph shows one of those soloists – a rain speckled blackbird. I spotted him just opposite my home in appalling weather, yet there he sat looking from side to side, singing his rich repertoire of song. Damp yet dapper, his determination and fine sound filled me with joy...as did the moment I realised that a female somewhere nearby was duetting with him. It reminded me of some lines from 'The Language of Birds' (Samuel Taylor Coleridge):

*Do you ask what the birds say?...  
...The green fields below him, the blue sky above,  
That he sings, and he sings; and for ever sings he –  
'I love my Love, and my Love loves me!'*

I leave you with the famous words from Psalm 19:14:

*"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be  
pleasing in your sight,  
O Lord, My Rock, and My Redeemer"*

Every blessing, **Pat McKerrow**

## **Moments In Nature Photo Exhibition**

### **Water of Leith Café Bistro 30 April – 29 June**

A selection of Pat's photographs showing Edinburgh's wildlife will be on display in the Water of Leith Café Bistro, 1 Howard Street, Edinburgh, EH3 5JP, from 30 April – 9 June 2019. Café opening hours are 9.30am-5pm (Tues-Sat), 10am-4pm (Sun); closed Mondays.



Pat also has two new style packs of blank greetings cards available, 'Birds' and 'Flowers'.

£10 for 8 cards.

# Taking a moment of calm amidst our global confusions

Peter Millar

Now that there are tender signs of spring here in the northern hemisphere, the monthly Reflection returns with a spirit-filled poem from Mary Oliver the popular American poet who died recently at the age of 83. I am sure many of you are familiar with her work.

The winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1984, Mary Oliver was loved for good reason. The UK Guardian in her obituary said this, “Her poems are simple and straightforward, crystalline, reflecting a deep love of nature, and connecting the spirit world with the physical world in subtle ways. She wrote with a natural, even naive, enthusiasm for life itself, as in her majestic “When Death Comes” (1991) in which she cries:

***When it's over, I want to say: all my life  
I was a bride married to amazement.  
I was the bridegroom,  
taking the world in my arms.***

A poet with a strong transcendental streak and a superb affinity for the natural world she was in the tradition of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. Mary and her life-long partner Molly Malone Cook lived in Provincetown on Cape Cod, where the beaches, ponds, fields and forests became the landscape of her poetry. Like Emerson she would cast her eye upon an object, allow it to deepen, even darken as in this line - “what blazes the trail is not necessarily pretty.” Although often seeking the holy and nurturing silence of the natural world, Mary also wrote about the dark sides of human behaviour as in these lines where she examines the horrors of Auschwitz...”the dead rise from the earth/and are piled in front of us/ the starved stare across 40 years.”

One admirer wrote of her: “Mary Oliver’s poetry is fine and deep; it reads like a blessing. Her special gift is to connect us with our sources in the natural world, its beauties and terrors and mysteries and consolations.” For me, like many others

around the world, trying to grasp a little of what the current global uncertainty signifies for us all and for the generations ahead, her poems distil what it is to be human and what is worthwhile and of lasting value in human life.

In one poem she asks us what we are going to do with “our one wild and precious life” and the spiritual energies of the natural world are embedded in her vision. Owls, hermit crabs, trumpet vines, turtles, roses, dogfish and humming birds, populate her poems. This was a wilderness of flora and fauna both symbolic and literal. In her simple and yet wisdom-filled poem about the tiny wren from far off Carolina who was in her garden hedge on Cape Cod, Mary opens various vistas for the mind and soul. Read the poem a few times. Let it sink in. I am sure it will give you fresh strength for the day. And maybe take a moment to send it to a politician or a person in power who has lost the way!

### **The Wren from Carolina**

***Just now the wren from Carolina buzzed  
through the neighbour's hedge  
a line of grace notes I couldn't even write down  
much less sing.***

***Now he lifts his chestnut coloured throat  
and delivers such a cantering praise  
for what?  
for the early morning, the taste of the spider,***

***for his small cup of life  
that he drinks from every day, knowing it will refill.  
All things are inventions of holiness.  
Some more rascally than others.***

***I'm on that list too,  
though I don't exactly know where,  
but, every morning, there's my own cup of gladness,  
and there's that wren in the hedge, above me, with his  
blazing song.***



Taken from: Mary Oliver's Wild Geese: Selected Poems published by Bloodaxe Books in their series of worlds poets. ISBN number: 978-1-85224-628-0

## **21 Lessons for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:**

This is the title of Yuval Noah Harari's latest best-selling book and I recommend it to those who are seeking to make even minimal sense of the current global chaos. How can we protect ourselves from nuclear war, ecological cataclysms and technological disruptions? What can we do about the epidemic of fake news or the threat of terrorism? What should we teach our children? The author takes us on a journey through today's most urgent issues. The golden thread running through the book is the challenge of maintaining our collective and individual focus in the face of constant and disorientating change. Are we still capable of understanding the world we have created? (The book is published by Jonathan Cape and the ISBN number is: is 978-1-787-33067-2)

Also recommended:

In Your Loving Is Your Knowing Elizabeth Templeton – Prophet of Our Times - Edited by Peter Matheson and Alastair Hulbert, Published by Birlinn 2019. ISBN number: 978-1-78027-563-5



And for Lent:

**Lord, teach me the art of patience whilst I am well, and give me the use of it when I am sick.**

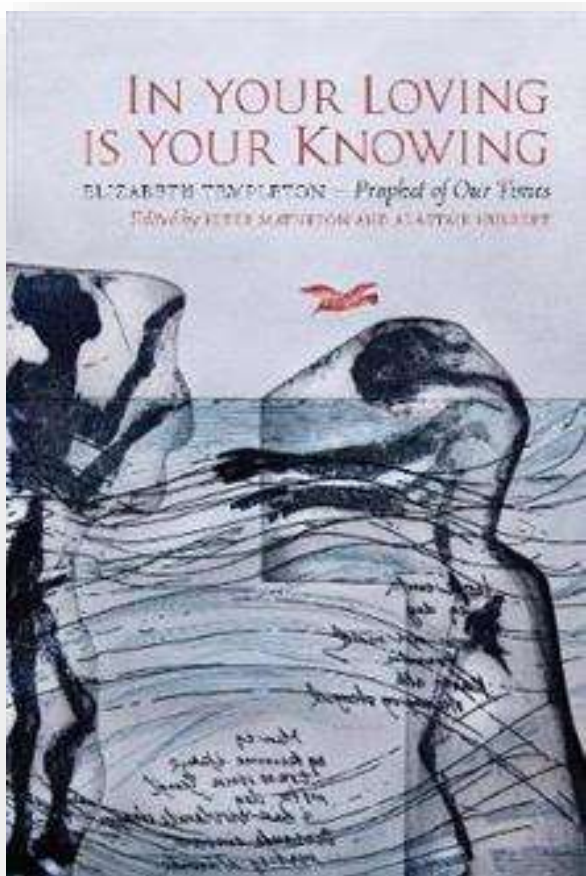
Words written by Thomas Fuller many years ago.

Peter Millar is a minister, writer and former warden of Iona Abbey.

# Cornerstone Bookshop Reviews

Amanda Bruce

**In Your Loving is Your Knowing** - Elizabeth Templeton – Prophet of our Times edited by Peter Matheson & Alastair Hulbert £14.99



Many of you reading this will have known Elizabeth Templeton or will at the very least be aware of the immense impact she had on those who were fortunate enough to have been taught by her at New College, to have been in her presence when she led worship or to have heard her honest, open preaching. One of the most exceptional theologians of her time, this compendium of her talks, articles, lectures and sermons demonstrates the broad and extensive reach of her thinking on the big issues which concern us all; bringing ideas to the table to challenge and deepen our own approach to these matters with her

own brand of warmth and humility.

Her writings are divided into six chapters – Christ and Culture, Making Sense of Theology, The Common Life, Ecumenism (of which she was such a champion), Living, Loving and Dying, and On Being the Church – each one of which is introduced by those who knew her and her work, “providing context and commentary”. It is a rich resource, promoting ‘freedom, community and inclusiveness’ – timely for our day – and which, in the words of Rowan Williams, “is worth ten times more than most conventional theological publications.”

## Eavesdropping by Henry Martin £12.99

### EAVESDROPPING

LEARNING TO PRAY FROM THOSE WHO TALKED TO JESUS

DAILY READINGS SUITABLE FOR LENT OR ANY TIME OF THE YEAR



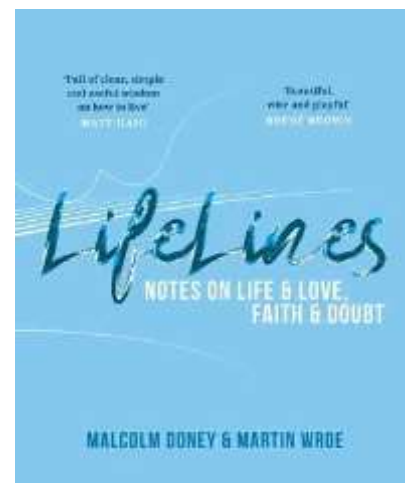
HENRY MARTIN

This book of daily readings – published ahead of Lent but suitable for any time of the year – takes an interesting approach to presenting the words and teaching of Jesus’ by ‘listening in’ on the conversations he had with people as presented throughout the Gospels; what people said to him and what he said (or did not say) to them. For each day there is a reflection, intended to help the reader engage with the question of who God is for them and to bring them closer to the Presence of God through prayer; through ‘eavesdropping’ Martin’s book is

essentially designed to help us to speak to God. This invitation to prayer is reiterated throughout and occasional exercises are suggested to aid our approach to prayer making this a thought-provoking companion.

## Lifelines – notes of life and love, faith and doubt by Malcolm Doney & Martin Wroe £16.99

Described as providing “Sacred text for the more earthy reader,” this is an arresting and original collection of wisdom for living our lives today. Drawn from poets and thinkers through the ages, skeptics and people of faith, and illustrated throughout with contemporary photographs, the book presents 99 ways to approach each day and as we encounter others. The book is primarily aimed at people for whom organised religion perhaps does not offer what they are seeking (indeed, its introduction provides an articulate commentary on what the people behind the book feel is missing in churches today) however, there is a great deal here which will speak to those who are part of a more traditional faith community, with many big questions being explored.







**The Lord's Prayer** and **Hail Mary** each £12.99  
Illustrated by Julianna Swaney

These classic and familiar prayers are introduced to a new young audience in two beautifully illustrated volumes. The words of each are in a large, flowing, graceful font, spread over many pages, every one of which is filled with images from the natural world which seem to brilliantly capture the sentiment of what is being expressed.



These books would make excellent gifts – especially for Christenings, Baptisms, Dedications or First Communions – and will be a welcome addition to any child's library.



## **Messy Café at St John's** **Cornerstone Centre Sat 20 Apr 10am - 12**

We love Messy Church but don't want to wait so long between events so we're trialling Messy Café, a relaxed drop-in café style event with hot/cold drinks and snacks, crafts and books. Stay for the whole time or just for half an hour, whatever works for you.



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

[www.stagw.org.uk](http://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 + Albany Deaf Church 2pm  
**Weekday worship** 1pm Monday – Friday

**Interim Moderator** **Rev Moira McDonald**  
MMcDonald[at]churchofscotland.org.uk

**Locum Minister** **Very Rev Dr John Chalmers**  
JChalmers[at]churchofscotland.org.uk

**Locum Minister** **Rev Colin Douglas (pastoral support)**  
colin.r.douglas[at]gmail.com

**Session Clerk** **Crispin Longden**

**Joint Treasurers** **John Innes**  
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**Safeguarding** **Barbara Finlayson**

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**St Andrew's and St George's West Church of Scotland Edinburgh  
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