

the **EDGE**

People, Places, Theology
Winter issue 2015

The quarterly magazine of the Diocese of Edinburgh in the Scottish Episcopal Church



BORDERS RAIL LINKS DIOCESE

SUPERHEROES ASSEMBLE!
Glen2015 reunite for All Saints

PLANS, PAINTINGS & POSSIBILITIES

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We Welcome Refugees



The Edge

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Editor: Gillian McKinnon

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Train carrying HRH the Queen on 9 September for the official opening of the Borders railway line. Photo © Andrew Barr;

p.4 Borders train at Brunstane Station. Photo © M J Richardson;

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p.12 Glenalmond superheroes at Murrayfield. Photo © Angela Daye

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Advent Prayer

Open our eyes, Lord,
especially if they are half shut
because we are tired of looking,
or half open
because we fear we see too much,
or bleared with tears
because yesterday and today and tomorrow
are filled with the same pain,
or contracted,
because we only look at what we want to see.

Open our eyes, Lord,
to gently scan the life we lead,
the home we have,
the world we inhabit,
and so to find,
among the gremlins and the greyness,
signs of hope we can fasten on and encourage.

Give us, whose eyes are dimmed by familiarity,
a bigger vision of what you can do
even with hopeless cases and lost causes
and people of limited ability.

Show us the world as in your sight,
riddled by debt, deceit and disbelief
yet also
shot through with possibility
for recovery, renewal, redemption,

And lest we fail to distinguish vision from fantasy,
today, tomorrow, this week,
open our eyes to one person or one place,
where we - being even for a moment prophetic -
might identify and wean a potential in the waiting.

And with all this,
open our eyes, in yearning, for Jesus.

On the mountains,
in the cities,
through the corridors of power
and streets of despair
to help, to heal,
to confront, to convert,
O come, O come, Immanuel.

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WE WELCOME REFUGEES

Rt Rev John Armes, Bishop of Edinburgh

Someone sent me a cartoon entitled, 'The Moderates are Protesting'. It shows people waving placards and their leader, addressing them through a megaphone, asks, "What do we want?" "Gradual change!" comes the reply. "And when do we want it?"; "In due course!"

There are radicals and activists aplenty in our diocese but I suspect that many of our members would think of themselves as fairly moderate in their political views. It takes a lot to get us roused and, politically speaking, we prefer a quiet life. This is why the reaction to the refugee crisis in Europe has been so significant. It has not been the 'usual suspects' (welcome though they are) leading the charge; all sorts of people have responded from the heart. They have not needed pictures of dead children to stir their compassion. 'What are we going to do about this?', they ask.

If this is true of our diocese, I dare say it is more generally true of the population at large. I hope the UK government is listening because their response to this major humanitarian crisis seems paltry. Twenty thousand refugees by 2020 translates into 4000 a year and 400 a year in Scotland. These people will come from refugee camps in the Middle East. Whilst one can see the logic in this, yet it does nothing to address the huge issue of migration.



Save the Children tells us that this year alone half a million people have embarked on the journey across the Mediterranean (many of whom are unaccompanied children). Surely, in the face of this, Britain can do better.

The task of welcoming refugees falls to local authorities, and they have to be hard headed about the practicalities. Offers of spare rooms (and even spare homes) are laudable, but local councils have a duty of care that requires rigorous scrutiny of the situations already traumatised people are being offered and careful preparation and training of those whose offers of hospitality may be accepted.

On the other hand, whilst most of us will not find ourselves with Syrian lodgers, all of us must reflect on what it means for our community to welcome refugees. We have not always been good at reaching out to strangers, those who do not share our faith or our language. Horror stories abound, moreover, of the indignities suffered by asylum seekers in state custody. In other words, the challenge we face is to translate our concern for the well-being of migrant people into actions that make a difference. And this means more than emoting in front of a TV screen or sending a donation to a worthy charity.

But do it we must, for our faith tells us much about hospitality and finding God in the stranger. It reminds us that we too are people on the move to a 'better country', wanderers on our way to God, to whom we look for acceptance and grace. Advent speaks of preparing ourselves for the One who is to come, of setting our houses in order, of expecting to be judged on the basis of how we have cared for the hungry and the destitute. And Christmas celebrates the One who sought refuge with humanity and was rejected.

There are lessons here for all of us, not just for government; and it is time that the moderates amongst us realized that this is a situation in which 'gradual change in due course' will not do. Indeed, the irony is that in a climate of increasing hysteria about the European Union, and ugly rhetoric about defending our borders against desperately needy people, a message of restraint, compassion, generosity, welcome and openness sounds curiously radical! It reminds us why Jesus in describing God in exactly these terms was seen as a revolutionary, and paid the price.

+John

REACHING ALONG THE LINE

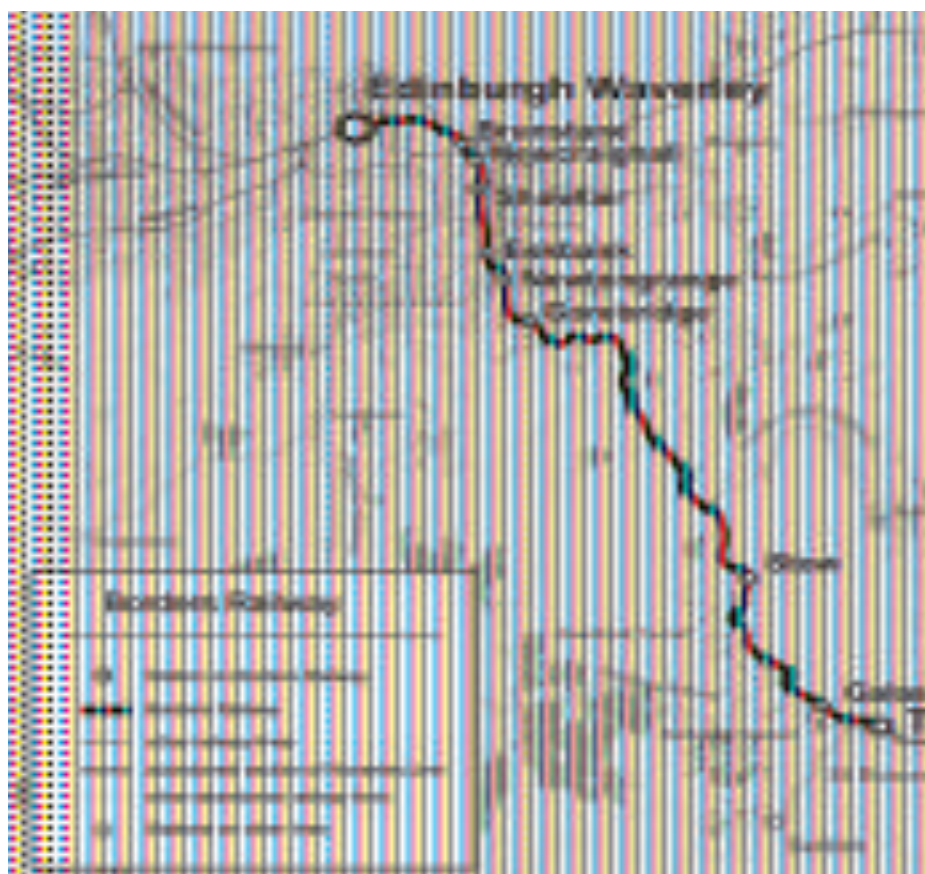
by Andrew Barr

On the 1st of March 1849 a new sound echoed across the Moorfoot Hills. Steam had arrived by the Gala Water and the rhythmic sound of North British Railway engines continued for 120 years to break a silence which had begun when the gentle singing of the monks of Melrose had ceased in 1560.

In the 1960's, for one Bishop at least, this landscape around Falahill became a holiday destination – not to look for fish or singing monks – but armed with a camera to capture the sight of trains charging up Borthwick bank and down to Galashiels. Eric Treacy, Bishop of Wakefield, came back for six summers running, accompanied by his wife, May, to where the background of hills was just right for his photographs of massive, noisy beasts surmounting one in seventy gradients.

In 1970, the silence returned: the Waverley line linking Edinburgh and Carlisle was closed. In spite of angry protests, no more would it be possible to travel by sleeper from Hawick, Melrose or Galashiels to London. The countryside slumbered.

But one sound still could be heard in Wedale, the ancient 'place of Woe', pilgrimage to the 'Lady's Well' near the village of Stow: here every September, Christians singing



as they cross the fields to hold a Service near the site of the Well and the fragments of the True Cross.

This autumn, there has been a new celebration and the return of an old sound as Stow's railway station re-opened, the Waverley Line has returned, Scotland's longest new track runs from Edinburgh to Galashiels.

It is a start. Like the original line, it has yet to reach Hawick; already, plans are being made to extend the line, but there may be a long wait on the platform at Melrose or beyond. Rails all the way to Carlisle are still a pipedream, although at least two attempts have been made to link up the route through the hills.

There has been a long tradition of Christians loving trains. Further on from Hawick, at Riccarton Junction, one Christian's enthusiasm beat all doubters when a platform emerged from the undergrowth and wagons arrived in the remotest place that can be imagined.

Riccarton people once relied on the railway and a Sunday train took churchgoers into Hawick: no road was ever built to this hamlet.

Visiting Riccarton a decade ago, the only entry was to drive up the rough old track bed. At the end, visitors found Geoffrey Evison in a little room, where he encouraged donations. Geoffrey was also an enthusiast for the 1929 Scottish Prayer Book, and before he died, he funded the reprint of this icon for traditionalists.

This September, railways enthusiasts clambered up to a new bridge above Newtongrange to capture the sight and sound of the Royal Train as HM the Queen travelled through the landscape once so beloved of the Church of England 'Railway' Bishop to open the new line. Once again at least two trains an hour link Galashiels and Edinburgh. Once again, the Diocese of Edinburgh reaches out along its own railway line.



PLANS AND PAINTINGS

by Ruth Innes

I had a plan. For years I'd looked for a Lent book with pictures but I'd never found one. I had a plan to put together forty paintings with Lenten meditations and use them with my little flock. But being a busy parish priest I never had time to do it.

I knew some of the paintings I wanted to use but I really couldn't find time to search for more until the idea of a sabbatical came up.

I'm not sure what the exact rules are for clergy taking a sabbatical, but I seem to have heard that you can take one every ten years. I spoke to the Bishop and got permission from the Vestry and the plans were put in place. The Alistair Haggart Bursary Fund was a great help in giving funds, as well as funding from the Diocese and the Sons of the Clergy. It took some time to get cover arranged and make plans for being off work for three months and it seemed that taking time out from Low Sunday until July would be the best time to be away.

Twelve weeks to travel round some art galleries to find suitable images and then write short meditations to go with them seemed like my idea of heaven. I dreamt of Florence, Paris and Amsterdam wandering the corridors of the Uffizi, the Louvre and the Rijksmuseum.

But on the advice of Rev Anne Dyer (our resident Diocesan art expert) I found myself wandering the streets of New York, Philadelphia and Washington instead, and delving into more art galleries than I ever knew existed.

And Anne was right. I didn't even scratch the surface of what they had to offer and found more Dutch and Renaissance art than I ever knew existed. It was glorious to see some old favourites in the flesh and I also discovered some American artists previously unknown to me which I have come to love. While in the USA I also visited some churches and was inspired with ideas to bring home.

Then, armed with almost 100 wonderful paintings, I had to choose which ones fitted best and write the meditations. That was done mostly in Gladstone's Library in north Wales in a quiet book-lined cubby hole surrounded by other bookish types and wonderful conversations with strangers who offered their own favourite paintings for my theme. I learned that mornings were the best time for me to write and that, at most, I could only manage about two meditations per day and then I started to repeat myself or ran out of inspiration.



Google was my friend and I went nowhere without my little purple notebook full of scribbles and ideas. During my stay in the library I even bumped into Bishop John and Claire who were there to do some reading and enjoy a holiday. Another joy about staying there was the morning eucharist where I could sit and be fed spiritually, and the time to read curled up on a comfy sofa with a whole library at my side.

It all began as a project for myself and my congregation, but by the end of my sabbatical, so many people had said that they'd be interested in reading it that I, embarrassingly, sent it off to a few publishers. However, it looks like the cost of getting permission to use the art may be a barrier so I shall either have to make changes or blog it instead. The text and idea was much praised though which was a humbling surprise.

It has been the trip of a lifetime and it was great to spend so much time doing something I loved. Of course, I missed the lovely people of Christ Church and lit copious candles for them in churches and cathedrals. I think they missed me too. My thanks go to those who made it possible: my little flock; clergy who covered for me; and the Alistair Haggart Bursary with which I was able to travel and bring back some prints. Now where to hang them..?



WINDOW OF PEACE

by Faith Elliot

A new stained glass window - 'Window of Peace' - was installed in St Cuthbert's, Colinton, in September 2015 by its designer, Emma Butler-Cole Aiken. The window celebrates the peacefulness and serenity that our Christian faith promises us. It is the first stained glass window to be installed in St Cuthbert's in over seventy years and was funded by a legacy left to St Cuthbert's by Robert (Bob) Elliot as a mark of his respect for its caring ethos.

The decision to use some of Bob Elliot's donation to create a new stained glass window grew out of the desire to fund something tangible and enduring that would enhance the beauty of the church and be an aid to worship. A new stained glass window met this goal.

Once vestry approval for the window was given, a small informal committee consisting of Maurice Houston (our rector), Anne Houston, Jan Shepherd and myself, was formed. A design brief was drawn up and the task of choosing an artist began. To this end the Scottish Stained Glass Trust was consulted, the website galleries of stained glass artists were evaluated and modern windows in churches in and around Edinburgh were viewed.

Three artists were invited to submit design sketches, and the committee met with the artists, together with

James Holloway, the retired director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, who had kindly agreed to advise us in evaluating designs. Members of the congregation as well as Vestry were also asked to voice their preferences. The design submitted by Emma Butler-Cole Aiken was most generally loved and therefore our choice.

Emma's design has as its starting point the notion that, in her words, "True peace is not the absence of trouble but is the gift of peacefulness" that comes from the belief that God is by our side "even when life is frightening and chaotic". Her design draws on Psalm 121 and the story in Mark's Gospel (chapter 4) of Christ calming the stormy waters of Galilee.

In Psalm 121, the writer says, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help" and finds that "help cometh from the Lord" who will not suffer "the sun to smite thee by day nor the moon by night". This beautiful psalm declares that God is "there for us" - always.

Mark's gospel story illustrates this. In this story, Christ and his disciples are on Lake Galilee when a furious storm blows up. Roused from sleep by his terrified disciples, Christ says to the raging winds and billowing waves "Peace, be still", and immediately they were.

The window depicts this moment of transition from storm to calm. Hills rise out of swirling waves and above the hills are the sun and moon. In the left light, a faint Celtic cross emerges from the waves, symbolising our trust in the Lord, but faintly as our faith is often vague and weak because our life is so troubled. In the right light, clasped hands signify God reaching out to someone in the stormy waters. A dove representing both peace and the Holy Spirit flutters serenely over the calm waters.

Echoes from Mark's Gospel story are found in the hymn 'Be Still, my Soul' and lines from it "Be still my soul: the tempests still obey his voice" were chosen as the text for the window.

ARTIST Emma Butler-Cole Aiken grew up in Carlops. She trained at the Edinburgh College of Art and now lives and works in Edinburgh. She is an associate of the British Society of Master Glass Painters and is stained glass consultant to the Church of Scotland Art and Architecture Committee. Her ecclesiastical windows include windows in Church of Scotland churches in Carlops, Whitburn and Broxburn. She was awarded a Saltire Society Art and Craft in Architecture commendation for the Broxburn window.

DONOR Robert Chesters Elliot LLB (1940 - 2013) was born in London and grew up in the Home Counties. He studied law at the London School of Economics and in due course became an academic lawyer. He moved to Scotland in the 1970s and for nearly twenty years lectured in English Law at the University of Dundee where he was course leader for the only Qualifying English Law Degree in Scotland. On retirement in 1998, he and his wife moved to Colinton, Edinburgh, and became members of the St Cuthbert's congregation.





MEET THE...

by David Warnes

This is the first of a series of articles highlighting the work, paid and unpaid, and the skills, talents and creativity of people across our diocese. This quarter we are looking at the work of volunteers.

Fifteen year-old **Jamie McDonald** (St Mark's, Portobello) and 84 year-old **Alan Hall** (St Andrew's, Kelso) are both bucking a national trend, as are the many members of the Scottish Episcopal Church who do voluntary work. Jamie helps out with the Lego Club at Musselburgh Library, and Alan, in addition to his long-standing commitment to Scouting, has devoted his professional skills as a chartered accountant to a wide range of organisations, including the University of the Third Age, the Christian Motor Cycle Club and the Scottish Church History Society.

In November 2014, *Volunteer Scotland* noted that for the first time in many years there are signs of a decline in volunteering. The evidence comes from the Scottish Household Survey 2013, which found that 28% of Scots do voluntary work. The figure for 2010 was 31%. Most volunteers help a community group or a charity (81%), but some give their time to a public sector organisation such as a library, school or hospital and a few do unpaid work in the private sector.

Sheena McDonald (St Mark's, Portobello – and Jamie's mum!) is a good example of a public sector volunteer. For the past fourteen years she has been delivering bags of books, selected by the staff at Musselburgh Library, to housebound people in the area. She has also done voluntary work in schools, teaching children their times tables.

Tom Ogilvie (Christ Church, Falkirk), a retired civil engineer, has been a member of the Children's Panel in Falkirk since 2007, and is one of 70 lay Panel members in that area. He was trained by a team from St Andrew's University, and is involved in regular half-day sessions in which



he and fellow Panel members make important decisions about vulnerable children and young people who are at risk or in need of care. "It's a very good system" he says, "well supported by the Scottish Government, and a model for the world."

Most of the people interviewed for this article began voluntary work at an early age. Alan Hall's service to Scouting began when he was seventeen and led to him becoming a District Commissioner and National Treasurer and Commissioner for Finance of the Baden Powell Scout Association. Jamie McDonald began by helping his mother with library book deliveries, and Sheena herself, as a young graduate, helped with the Meals on Legs service.

Geoffrey Lord (The Good Shepherd, Murrayfield) was involved in running youth clubs in his native Rochdale and, while serving in the Royal Air Force in post-war Hamburg, set up a hostel for refugees. From 1977 he was Secretary and Treasurer of the Carnegie Trust, which he describes as "the best job in Britain", because it enabled him to promote voluntary work through organisations such as the Voluntary Arts Network, which advises and supports voluntary work in arts and crafts. In retirement

he has served as a trustee of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland and also, until recently, with the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Trust.

The Scottish Household Survey noted that many of Scotland's volunteers are retired people who place their professional skills and experience at the disposal of charities, voluntary groups and the public sector.

In retirement Alan Hall has served as treasurer and president of the Kelso Probus Club, has been a member of two community councils and chair of one of them, and his involvement in the Rotary Community Service Committee has included organising competitions for local schools, running a Schools' Day for primary pupils at the Borders Union Show, and providing armbands bearing a parent's phone number for children who attend the show in case they get lost.

Tom Ogilvie's expertise in construction and project management has been placed at the service of Strathcarron Hospice, as a member of the Council of Management, which he chaired until recently. He also chairs the Finance and Resources Committee at the Seamab School near Kinross,



a residential primary school for severely traumatised children. The school provides year-round care and education for up to fifteen vulnerable children with complex needs, and the hope is that this provision can also be extended to the first two years of secondary school education.

Tom has also been involved in the Aberlour Childcare Trust, Scotland's largest children's charity, which was founded in the 19th century by an Episcopalian priest, Canon Charles Jupp. He serves as a Deputy Lieutenant for Stirling and Falkirk, representing the Sovereign on public occasions, including Citizenship Ceremonies, and somehow finds time for hillwalking and for involvement in the life of Christ Church, Falkirk.

The volunteers who feature in this article also serve their charges and the Scottish Episcopal Church in a variety of ways, a reminder of the extent to which the church depends on people's willingness to give of their time and talents.

St Cuthbert's church in Hawick suggested that, rather than featuring one volunteer in this article, it would be more appropriate to celebrate the breadth of community outreach

that this congregation sustains.

Two of them, **Sheila Metcalfe** and **Jackie Grey**, are involved in Wycliffe Bible Translators UK, a charitable foundation whose aim is to ensure that the Bible will be available in all of the 6,901 languages currently spoken in the world. **Olive Whiteford** gives her time and energy to the British Heart Foundation. **Ena Dickson** is involved in knitting for Deep Sea Fishermen, while **Hazel Jeffrey** plies her needles for the benefit of the Borders Premature Baby Unit.

Margaret McNairn works for the Royal Voluntary Society, which seeks to help older people to lead independent and fulfilled lives. **Peter Paterson-Brown** is a reader who helps to create talking books and newspapers for blind and visually impaired people in the Borders. **Cheryl Storie**, **Angela Cumming** and **Tamsin Growden** are involved in Guiding and Scouting. Tamsin also, together with **Sue Crozier**, volunteers with Oxfam, and **Elke Hanman** gives her time to Hospital Spiritual Care and to Cruse Bereavement Care.

The people interviewed for this article find great satisfaction in volunteering. They have discovered

that it is a context in which, as one of them put it, "You give, but also you are given." "Putting something back" and "the satisfaction that you're contributing to something worthwhile" were among the responses to the question 'why do you volunteer?'

One of the most striking statistics on the *Volunteer Scotland* website shows that a core group of people (6%) contributes two thirds of the volunteer hours put in by Scots. Volunteers contribute £2.6 billion to the Scottish economy.

Volunteer Scotland nevertheless concludes that there is a mismatch between supply and demand when it comes to volunteering. Relatively few people are accessing the services which seek to match up opportunities and volunteers.

If any reader is interested in volunteering, the *Volunteer Scotland* website at www.volunteerscotland.net is an excellent way of discovering opportunities. So is the Leith-based *Volunteer Centre Edinburgh* whose search engine covers a 20-mile radius around the capital, and therefore also includes opportunities outwith the city in parts of Fife and the Lothians.

COULD YOU JUST *LISTEN*?

by Maureen Wilson



Could....You....Just...Listen?

Whether out loud or tucked inside the human heart, these words give expression to the frustration, anger, hurt and utter hopelessness that many people feel, often because no-one has been willing, able or interested enough to listen to their story.

Most of us have felt both physically and mentally unwell because of stresses and strains in our lives. Someone who will listen is often more appropriate and helpful than pills and potions. The power of generous listening should not be underestimated. "There is much more to listening than first thought" as a retired consultant and course participant put it.

Rachel Naomi Remen, Professor of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Carolina, speaks with authority after years of experience in caring for cancer patients and their families. Concluding that good listening and its healing power is a potent force, she speaks of generous listening: "The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention especially if it's given from the heart... A loving silence often has far more power to

heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words."

The potential beneficiaries of generous listening range across people from refugees to cosy middle class families; from small children to those made vulnerable by old age; through differences in religion, orientation, culture and social status. A need to be listened to can arise from discrimination, peer pressure, stress at work, homelessness, loss and change, teenagers struggling with identity.

Jesus Christ was someone who met people at the point of their need. He listened well to others with a heart of infinite compassion.

Listen Well Scotland passionately believes there is a strong connection between good listening and health and wellbeing in its fullest sense, which is wholeness.

Our vision is to facilitate the provision of 'Listening Time for You' in differing community settings across Scotland. This service offers a safe space where people have the opportunity and time to explore their concerns or worries in confidence with a trained listener.

'Listening Time for You' does not encourage dependency but instead contributes to empowerment

of individuals in finding inner resilience. There is a great need for the project and this requires people to be trained as listeners to meet that need.

Listen Well Scotland is looking for people who have 'A Heart to Listen' to join us in realising our vision of making listening freely accessible to those who are looking for someone whom they feel they can trust with their story. If you think you could be that person, we will provide you with quality listening training which goes much further than just teaching active listening skills. We want to encourage individuals to become listening people. A greater listening culture begins with individuals and ripples out across families, organisations, communities and beyond.

To find out more about our work or to explore the possibility of training, please go to our website at www.listenwellscotland.org.uk or contact me, Rev Maureen Wilson, by email at maureen@listenwellscotland.org.uk.

The final word should go to someone who has experienced 'Listening Time for You' directly:

"I deeply appreciate your compassion and skill as you've walked with me and helped me endure the difficult journey to this point. What you do is special, more special than perhaps you know. Thank you".



GRAVE TALK

by Ruth Green



It is a passion of mine to encourage people to talk about death and dying, normalising discussion, and not postponing those important conversations. As a nurse and then as a priest, it surprises me how unprepared many people are, either for their own death, or that of their nearest and dearest. People of faith such as Christians should be the most able to help others. Making peace with death helps to bring peace in life.

Various movements attempt to open up the subject, such as 'Dying Matters', and 'Death Cafe', which has had 2400 pop-up cafes around the world. There have even been 'Joy of Death' festivals.

GraveTalk has been developed by the Church of England to help people face the big questions. Churches are well-equipped as their specialist subjects are death, bereavement and funerals. GraveTalk is designed to be a café space, with tea, coffee and cake, where people can discuss all aspects of death. There is a booklet with suggestions for the organisers, and conversation is helped along by conversation cards - 52 questions covering five key areas, which can be bought through the GraveTalk website. They take place in church halls, community centres or cafés. After being welcomed, people are invited to sit with three or four others. It doesn't matter how many question cards are used as the

purpose is to talk and listen in a safe environment.

Research shows that although a third of British adults think about dying and death at least once a week, 72% are uncomfortable discussing the subject. Only about a quarter of people have talked to someone about their funeral wishes, yet nearly three quarters of them agree that if people felt more comfortable discussing dying and death, it would make meeting end of life wishes easier. Talking about dying and planning ahead is not easy, but it will spare others from making difficult decisions on our behalf.

When people know that they are dying, it is important to focus on what really matters. They may want to patch up a relationship; tell someone that they love them, discuss fears or regrets, write a will, and maybe ask someone to pray with them. When we think about our own funeral service and make decisions, this is comforting to us and our family. Organising a funeral for someone we loved is hard, making the right choices and celebrating who they were and what they meant is much easier if it has been discussed.

Many people believe it is respectful to see death as tragic, and wrong to view it any other way, despite being a normal, natural part of life. Our lives begin and end, and our death is important, no matter how

it happens. How we die cannot be changed; and any death is part of the story of a person. It may be possible to see great beauty and meaning in death.

People often cling to the idea that we and everyone we love are guaranteed a long life, despite the fact that every day people die prematurely by illness or accident.

Everyone leaves a legacy, and part of that is the impact that their death has on the people they love. When a family is only able to think about their loss as painful, that becomes part of their legacy. We need to be able to find good in a death for our sake and for the sake of the person's memories. A death of someone close can teach us valuable things about our own life. It may bring us closer to others, changing family dynamics, or releasing us from anxiety and a caring role. It may inspire us to a new calling or purpose in life, giving us strength, compassion and wisdom. Helping people to talk about death should be able to enable them to cope better with one of the most difficult times of life.

The ideal death is at the end of a good life, feeling that all has been achieved, and feeling ready to welcome death as a friend. We live better by having a good attitude to death, and being able to speak about the subject is healthy and life-affirming, can provide healing, and be liberating.

DIOCESAN NEWS

Superheroes Assemble!

By Claire Benton-Evans



Superheroes of all shapes and sizes celebrated All Saints' Eve at The Church of the Good Shepherd, Murrayfield. Thirty teenagers and fifteen youth leaders from all over the Scottish Episcopal Church gathered for the Superhero Sleepover, an event planned as a follow-up to the Glenalmond Youth Week. The Rev Dean Fostekew invited us and also entrusted delegates with Sunday's Service of the Word, which they devised and led themselves, drawing on their experience of creating worship together at Glen.

Saturday evening's activities included pumpkin carving, riddles and Party Ring limbo, followed by a hot meal and worship planning. Bishop John and Clare joined us for supper surrounded by Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman and friends. We said Night Prayer together in the church, before settling down to enjoy hot chocolate and a late night film. Forty five of us slept in the hall and woke to the smell of hot pastries and frying bacon. Then we prepared for worship and joined the congregation of the Good Shepherd, who welcomed us warmly and appreciated the young people's contribution so much that they have invited us all back!

There is lots to celebrate here: the fact that our host church welcomed us with open arms and trusted our delegates to lead worship; the commitment of fifteen leaders from across the SEC who volunteered to make this event possible, and the support of parents who enabled their teenagers to attend. Most importantly, the Superhero Sleepover gave the delegates something they have evidently been longing for between one Glen and the next. The sign-up sheet at camp filled up within hours. Delegates posted excitedly on Facebook about how much they were looking forward to the event, and many told me they loved this 'mini Glen'. Over half of this year's delegates came, and potential delegates sampled the wonderful spirit of Glen: now they're saying they can't wait to join us next summer.

This is just the beginning. With my colleagues on the Provincial Youth Committee, we are actively looking at more ways of keeping the momentum of Glenalmond going throughout the year. We need to ask, as a Diocese and as a Province, "What more can we do?"

Rectors and congregations are hearing more about Glen's extraordinary extended family of young people and leaders, and are saying, "Come and visit our church!"

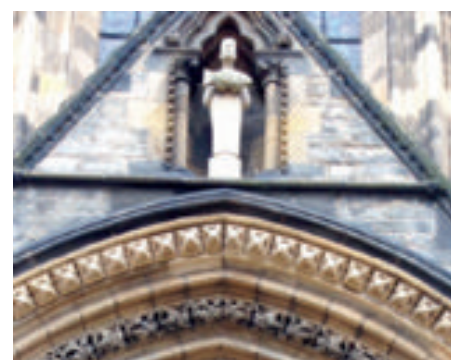
As for the delegates themselves, they're asking, "When can we do this again?"

Autumn Synod

This year's Autumn Synod was held at Holy Trinity, Haddington. Bishop John's thoughtful address set the tone for the meeting, putting mission in the context of a call to faithfulness. "Mission", he said, "isn't something we do, but who we are."

The Synod went on to approve funding for a Diocesan Mission Officer (the exact job title to be determined) whose role is to help Vestries and church members to think through mission in their own locality and to support development. The post is planned to start before the summer in 2016.

Inspirational Prize



Congratulations to Sarah Grotrian, Appeal Secretary of St Mary's Cathedral Workshop who has won one of the "Balfour of Burleigh Tercentenary Prizes for Exceptional Achievements in Crafts". These prizes are given to individuals who stand out as having led and inspired practitioners. Graham Forbes, Provost of the Cathedral says, "I can think of no one who has done more to put 'old skills in young hands' - the motto of the Cathedral Workshop. It is simply wonderful that her contribution has been recognised in this way, and all who have been involved in the Workshop over its almost three decades can bask in her reflective glory." Sarah was due to attend a ceremony on London on Tuesday 24 November (just before this edition went to print) to receive the award.



Lights up on the Lady Chapel

New lighting has been installed in the Lady Chapel, the most ornately carved part of Rosslyn Chapel, to help visitors gain a better appreciation of the intricate stonework. The Lady Chapel is fifteen feet high, seven and a half feet deep and extends the whole thirty-five foot width of the Chapel. It is divided into vaulted compartments and contains some of the richest carvings including angels, green men and the 'dance of death'.

Three lights were designed specifically for Rosslyn Chapel by Gavin Fraser, of Foto-Ma Lighting Architects and Designers, and manufactured by local company Mike Stoane Lighting. The cost of the new lights has been supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Phase Two at St Martin's

Further building work has started at St Martin's Community Resource Centre in Gorgie/Dalry, Edinburgh. Grants, amongst many, from the Asda Foundation, Awards for All, and the Lord Provost's Rapid Action Fund, alongside local enthusiastic fundraising, have enabled St Martin's to embark on £80,000 worth of further improvements. The latest work will provide a new street level access into the building, a lift that connects the three floors, and a refurbished basement hall. By Christmas the congregation and the many community users of the building will be celebrating a properly accessible and welcoming building.

Technical Impact Award

Dr Jean Carletta received a prestigious Ten-Year Technical Impact Award in November at the ACM International Conference on Multimodal Interaction (ICMI). The award was one of two given 'in recognition of scientific work in the ICMI community that has stood the test of time.' Jean is a Senior Research Fellow in the Institute for Language, Cognition and Computation at the University of Edinburgh.

Multimodal interaction is a new scientific field that underpins advances in how technology uses audio, video and other streams of information to understand human behaviour.

As some of you will know, Jean is currently involved in the *HeatHack* initiative, a community-led collaboration with two Edinburgh churches, Christ Church Morningside and the City of Edinburgh Methodist Church, as part of *Scientists in Congregations Scotland*. HeatHack aims to help third-sector organisations reduce their energy costs and improve thermal comfort in their premises by collecting the heating system performance data needed to understand their older buildings.

REVIEWS

'But That I Can't Believe' John A. T. Robinson

Fontana. 1967 ISBN: 0006215939

by Hilary Pritchard



"But that I can't believe!" Metaphorically speaking.

Many will remember the controversy in 1963 engendered by the publication of 'Honest to God' by the then Bishop of Woolwich, John Robinson. His later book, 'But that I can't Believe', published in 1967, was less controversial but still has a lot to say to us today in 2015 as we consider the question of mission.

The aim of Robinson's later book was to look at the problem of how to explain to non-believers exactly what we believe to be historical fact and what we accept as not being historically correct but still embodying a truth.

As Christmas is approaching it might seem appropriate to take as an example the question of angels, of whom we'll be seeing a lot on our Christmas cards, as well as robins and skating nuns. Do we 'believe' in them? Robinson argues that there's not a 'yes' or 'no' answer to that question. In the Middle Ages people believed in literal beings called angels, and famously debated how many could dance on the point of a pin. We see them today depicted on Christmas cards as everything from putti to pre-Raphaelite visions with golden wings. To the non-believer they are objects of fantasy, literally incredible. Yet, the original meaning of angels is *angelos*, messengers, and they can be understood as a metaphor for means of communication with God, not literal beings. The shepherds (if they existed, and that's another subject for discussion) did not literally see a heavenly host; they felt an urge to go and investigate something that was happening, something of importance, something that would change their world.

This may seem obvious to us but not to many non church goers who assume that anyone who literally believes in angels; a six day creation of the universe; and that five loaves and two fishes can feed 5000 people, must be crazy.

So what in Heaven's name has this to do with mission? Recent congregational discussions about mission concentrated mainly on practical ways in which we could reach out into the community and do God's work in the world. Much of what we suggested is already undertaken by Christians, members of other faiths and those of no faith at all. But surely there's another side to mission: explaining to others the faith which we profess and which motivates us to such actions. Yet, in an increasingly sceptical and secular world there are ever more people who, on picking up a Bible, are likely to say 'But that I can't believe'. Surely our first step is to explain exactly what we do believe, especially the difference between the literal and the metaphorical, so that our motivation for mission is clear.

'The Miniaturist' Jessie Burton

Picador. 2015

ISBN-10: 1447250931

by John A. Fleming

The Autumn book choice of the Link Book Group (Dalkeith and Lasswade) was a novel entitled *The Miniaturist* and is a debut work by Jessie Burton. It is a weird and wonderful tale set in the Netherlands in the late Seventeenth Century. Eighteen year old Nella Oortman arrives at a grand house in Amsterdam to begin her new life as the wife of a wealthy merchant Johannes Brandt.

Although curiously distant, Johannes presents Nella with an extraordinary wedding present; a cabinet-sized replica of their home. It is to be furnished by an elusive miniaturist (hence the title of the book) whose tiny creations seem to bear a sinister aspect on Nella's new life. As she uncovers the secrets of her new household she becomes aware of the escalating danger she now faces.

On the whole the group enjoyed the atmospheric tone of the book but were in for a few nasty surprises with Johannes being caught *in-flagrante delectio* not once but quite a few times. This caused scandal amongst his colleagues and neighbours as well as much heartbreak to his wife. Along with this his sister is also found 'to be of child' by the manservant of the household.

The novel ends rather jarringly with the death of Johannes, executed by drowning for his misdemeanours and his sister dying in childbirth while thankfully the baby survives. This tragically leaves us feeling sorry for poor Nella as the story closes. An unfortunate ending which in my view spoils the story.



VACANCY: CHURCH CHILDREN'S LEADER

St Margaret's, Easter Road, Edinburgh



8 hours per week, £10 an hour
(1-year contract, may be extended.)

We are a small, warm and friendly traditional Episcopal Church in a multi-cultural area of Edinburgh. We run a successful, vibrant Baby & Toddler group which has expanded into two mornings per week. We are looking to start a new Sunday School and to develop our relationship with families in the community.

You are an enthusiastic Christian who would like to play a key role in this exciting development. We are looking for an experienced children's leader to establish our new Sunday School. You must be a good communicator and confident leader of volunteers. You will also be part of the toddler group team, and will be a vital link between the toddler group and the church children's programme.

For further information, job description and application form please contact alisoncuddeford@hotmail.co.uk

The deadline for applications has been extended. All enquiries are welcome.

VACANCY: RECTOR

St Mary's, Grangemouth and St Catharine's, Bo'ness

Come and join the 'Twins on the River Forth'

We are a linked charge seeking a priest, eligible to be licensed for ordained ministry within the Scottish Episcopal Church, who will continue to build and inspire both congregations.

The successful applicant will be someone who is prayerful and stimulating, in touch with contemporary church debates and of central church tradition.

For a copy of the profile and application pack please contact the vestry secretary of St Mary's: Robina Clark: robinam@blueyonder.co.uk

Initial informal enquiries may be made to the Dean of the Diocese: Tel 0131 538 7033

Closing date: To be advised

FREE NEWSLETTERS!



You have always been able to receive Youth and Children News by email, but now you can have up to five printed colour copies of for your church free of charge. More copies can be arranged for a very reasonable price, thanks to the new printer in the diocesan office. Just arrange to pick up your copies from the office (contact details on p.2).

GAZETTE

Appointments

Rev Sarah Shaw - ordained as Priest at St Cuthbert's, Colinton on 19 September 2015

Rev Dr Jenny Wright, Revd Dr Kenneth Fleming and Revd Grace Redpath – ordained as Deacon at St Mary's Cathedral on 27 September 2015

Jennifer Floether, licensed as Lay Reader at St Mark's, Portobello on 25 October 2015

Rev Andy Reid will be instituted as Rector of St Peter's, Musselburgh on 29 November 2015.

Rev John Evans as Interim Pastor, St John's Jedburgh, October 2015

Deaths

Rev John Pelham, a retired priest and assistant at St Mary's, Dalmahoy and previously associated with ministry in Lanark and Penicuik, West Linton and Balerno, died on 5 November 2015. Service of Thanksgiving at St Mary's Dalmahoy at 12.30 pm on Monday 16 November.

Spring Synod

This will be held at St Paul's and St George's in Edinburgh on Saturday 12 March 2016.

MAKE ROOM AT THE INN



HOST UK, an organisation which promotes international friendship and understanding, is looking for Christmas volunteers. Hundreds of adult international students studying in the UK could be facing the prospect of a lonely Christmas far from home and family. Volunteer hosts invite students to visit for a few days over the festive period, and the host then can meet new people and learn about diverse cultures from around the world.

You can choose how many people you invite – individuals, couples or families – and if you would like to meet someone from a specific country students and hosts will be matched on interests and availability. There are no specific requirements to hosting, other than the student should be made to feel part of your family or group for that short time.

If you'd like to make the most of this unusual and rewarding activity, just contact HOST UK and we will put you in touch with a local organiser. Visit hostuk.org or telephone 0207 739 6292.



ARE YOU SPORTY? Kay and Peter Bates (above) are members of the congregation at St Fillan's, Buckstone, and one of the main voluntary activities they engage in is judging international freestyle skiing competitions. The next article in our 'MEET THE ...' series will feature Kay and Peter and other people in the diocese who are involved in sport, whether as participants, umpires, referees or coaches. Please contact David Warnes on warnesdavid@googlemail.com if you are a sports person yourself or if you know anyone in your congregation who is.



CALLING ALL ANGELS!

Have you been knitting angels for Advent? If so, take lots of pictures of your 'yarn bombing' project, post them on Facebook, Twitter, send them to the local paper, and ... send them here to The Edge for the Diocesan News pages! Use the heraldangelsblog.wordpress.com website as well to share your angelic stories and all your events.

THE GENEROUSITY OF ELDERS Saturday 9 January, 10am - 4pm

In the autumn years of our lives, how do we live more intentionally out of a place of generosity and grace; of clarity and wholeness? How do we then use these gifts to nourish the lives of others? Using poetry, image and gentle conversation, this day is aimed at 'second-half' or retired people and those who accompany them in life.

With Nancy Adams, member of the Coracle Trust, Emmaus House & Place for Hope communities.

£25 including soup lunch; bursary help available.

For further information and booking, email sixdaysedinburgh@yahoo.co.uk or telephone 07952 198379

www.epiphanygroup.org.uk

Many thanks to all who have contributed words or pictures to this edition of The Edge.

If you have an item of news for our Diocesan News pages or for this agenda page, please send it to editor@edinburghdiocese.org.uk

The deadline for the next issue is 20 Jan 2016.