

the **EDGE**

People, Places, Theology
Summer issue 2018

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

THE BIG DAY IN THE DIOCESE



The Edge

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In this issue ...

p.4 Every Life Matters

"We live in a world where being born female is a health risk."

p.6 40 Years of Support

"Rape and sexual abuse changes lives - and so do we."

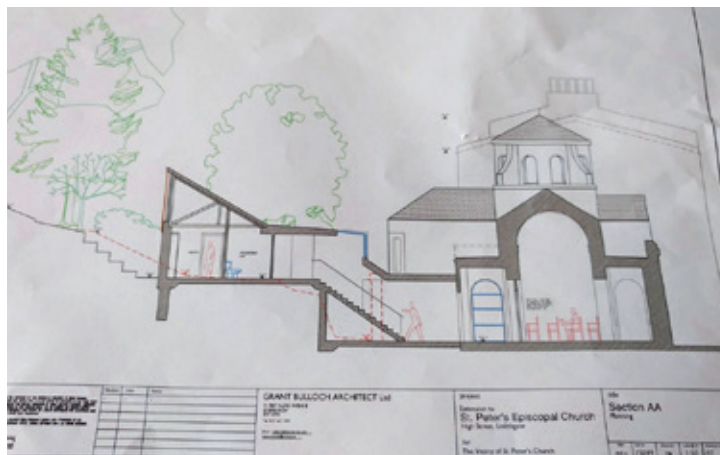
p.6 The Big Day: A Martian Sends a Postcard

"The amount of people here shows we're not a sinking ship"

p.12 It's Not Just About a Ramp

"accessibility should be part of our planning rather than a response to unforeseen needs."

p.10 Diocesan News



p.14 Learning to Be

"After ten years, I seemed to be getting mysterious nudges about the Priesthood"

p.15 Review & Gazette

p.16 The Edge Agenda

CHURCH WITH A VIEW

Rt Rev John Armes, Bishop of Edinburgh

I was at our Priory Church in South Queensferry last week. Standing in its garden I was exhilarated by the view across the Forth. Those three great bridges, examples of human ingenuity, also speak of more profound truths. The bridge that God builds in Christ; the bridges we are all called to build between ourselves and others; the bridges that seem to lie shattered within and between so many communities in our world.

As I stood I began to wonder, as perhaps bishops do in their idle moments, which of our churches in the Edinburgh Diocese offers the most spectacular view. South Queensferry is certainly one, but what of St Ebba's, Eyemouth? There at the door you are confronted by the immensity of the North Sea, sometimes calm and quiet, sometimes crashing and foaming against the land. This vivid scene invites us to reflect on the story of Creation, the waters of chaos tamed by God's Word. It evokes thoughts of another sea where storms were calmed at a word from Jesus and miraculous catches of fish were hauled ashore. Or what about St John's, Edinburgh, standing tall at the end of Princes Street, yet overshadowed by the majestic castle rock? Psalmists and hymn writers have always been stirred to see in such solidity a picture of the Divine. 'O God, you are my rock, my stronghold, my fortress to defend me.'

But you will have your own ideas and your own favourites. For, indeed, when you think about it, all our church buildings offer views that can speak of a life lived in companionship with God. Railway stations and cross roads, rivers and valleys, schools and health centres, high streets and back streets all offer contexts for that extraordinary phenomenon we call 'church'; a threefold synergy between place and buildings and, most important of all, the people who use them.

Which brings me to my favourite view of the month of April. This was when I stood in the middle of our Cathedral and looked around at over 400 people, from babes in arms upwards, gathered from every corner of our diocese. Our Big Day at the end of April turned out to be just that, as we told our story to one another, as we talked and played, learned and worshipped together. For me, as the person who represents and symbolises our unity as a diocese, it was deeply rewarding and wonderfully uplifting.

The chairs in the Cathedral had been rearranged in the nave so that, rather than facing forward in lines they were shaped in an ellipse which allowed us to see each other. For some it felt like we were in a seed, ready to be sown, for others it reminded them of a womb, secure and nurturing. I liked the idea that we were together in a boat, and the banner above us (made by Cathedral members to represent every congregation in the diocese) was the sail, ready to catch the wind of God's Holy Spirit, inspiring, renewing, directing, sending us on an adventure together.

The Big Day at the Cathedral was exactly what we needed to encourage us. It reaffirmed our calling to be God's people, it helped us to understand what it means to be part of something much, much bigger than our own local congregation, and it sent us away challenged and (I hope) reinvigorated. We need these experiences, for in them we find new reasons to talk about the hope that is in us and grow in confidence to live not for ourselves but for others.

Whatever view confronts us when we peer out of our church door, whether it is spectacular or mundane, the important thing is that we are a church looking outwards and finding God in what we see.



+John

EVERY LIFE MATTERS

by Louise MacLeod



EMMS International was delighted to be chosen as one of the official charities for the Bishop of Edinburgh's Lent Appeal this year.

Founded in 1841 in Edinburgh, and known later as The Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society, EMMS International is Scotland's oldest international healthcare charity with historic links to over 50 different countries from China to Congo and India to Iran. Today we work with local partners in Malawi, Nepal, India and Zambia, following the example of Jesus Christ by serving some of the poorest communities of the world. We seek to transform lives through compassionate, effective and sustainable healthcare.

Thank you for showing that Brenda's life matters.

We live in an unjust world that tells those who are sick and poor that their lives don't matter. Brenda didn't matter. Paralysed by spinal tuberculosis, she spent her days on the concrete floor of her two-room home in Mulanje, Malawi. Unable to move, her body was covered in sores. She was in agony while her children looked on, helpless. Brenda remembers the day she first met nurse Annie. "She lit up my life. Her care, her smile told me that I matter. That someone cares about my life."

Nurse Annie visits to clean and dress Brenda's wounds, to give her medicine to ease her pain. With this

basic help her life is transformed, from lying in pain alone to sitting up as a happy mother able to watch her children play.

Nobody should be left sick and alone. Home visits by Christian healthcare workers are a lifeline to people in rural Malawi. Your support means we can train more specialist nurses like Annie to give the care that Brenda and others like her need. From basic pain relief and nutrition advice to morphine for people who are very sick, a gift of £32 can help people stay comfortable during their illness.

Thank you for showing that every girl matters in Bihar.

We live in a world where being born female is a health risk. Day after day in Bihar state, India's poorest state, girls are told their lives don't matter: denied an education, denied basic healthcare, burdened by household chores, providing food and care for sick relatives, denied a youth and married off in their early teens their future is bleak.

EMMS International is committed to redressing the balance by making the healthcare of women and girls a priority. Working with local partners we are providing healthcare, life-transforming training in tailoring, computing or beauty therapy and essential rural health services to help break the cycle of sickness and poverty for girls.

Thank you for showing that those with life-limiting illnesses in Nepal matter.

We live in a world where people must walk for hours to reach their nearest health centre. In Nepal Nurse Manju, Nepal's first palliative care nurse specialist trained by EMMS International, provides comfort and care for her patients and their families. The need is great for people living in remote and inaccessible areas of Nepal with life limiting illnesses. We are preparing to build a new ten-bed palliative care unit at Green Pastures Hospital, Pokhara, one of the first of its kind.

For more information visit www.emms.org

40 YEARS OF SUPPORT

by Caroline Burrell



Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre was established in 1978, and this year marks our 40th anniversary. We provide specialist support, advocacy and information for women, non-binary people and members of the trans community, and young people aged 12 and over, who have experienced sexual violence both recently or in the past, including rape, sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation. Our services are offered across Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian.

Sexual violence is traumatising and life-changing for individuals affected. Its impacts can often be complex and, without effective support, lifelong-impacting on the health, well-being, safety, relationships, education and employment of individuals affected. Many survivors experience significant post-traumatic stress symptoms, and mental health problems, including depression. As a result many experience disruption to their education and/or employment, and loss of confidence, and may resort to substance misuse, self-harm and suicidal thoughts.

Justice outcomes for survivors of sexual violence are also difficult to attain. Many people feel acutely ashamed of what has happened to them, and, as witnessed by the #metoo movement, may sometimes for years feel unable to disclose and seek help. We seek to reduce the distress and suffering of people affected by sexual violence through providing support and information, and raising awareness of its impacts.

We provide a holistic range of trauma-informed support services, including:

- Individual support and counselling
- Group support
- Advocacy support through the justice system for survivors who wish to report to the police
- Support, counselling and creative therapies for young people aged 12-18
- A service for partners, family members and friends of those affected by sexual violence
- A wide range of information resources about sexual violence, including our 'Little Green Book', available from our website.

We deliver awareness-raising training for a range of organisations, including local authorities, the police, NHS, voluntary sector services and community organisations; in schools and with young people, and strategically with multi-agency partners, towards preventing sexual violence.

Over the past year we have supported over 600 survivors of sexual violence across Edinburgh, East and Midlothian. Survivors consistently report that they feel safer and more in control of their options and choices; feel more able to cope with the impacts of sexual violation and trauma; develop improved well-being and resilience; or feel empowered and supported to engage with the criminal justice system, when they chose to do so.

As witnessed through the recent #MeToo campaign, sexual violence continues to be a pressing social problem. Recorded sexual crime in Scotland has increased by 65% since 2007-8. However, it is well-documented that many crimes

of sexual violence and abuse go unreported. Research into the prevalence of sexual violence indicates that one in ten women in Scotland has experienced rape and one in five women in Scotland has had someone try to make them have sex against their will; 20-25% of women have experienced sexual abuse in childhood; a third of young women in the UK experienced an unwanted sexual act in an intimate teenage relationship. Specific populations are at increased risk of sexual violence and abuse because of additional vulnerabilities, including people with disabilities, those who use psychiatric services, have substance misuse problems, or are involved in the criminal justice system or were looked after as children.

Unfortunately, then, the need for our service is greater than ever. Many more survivors of sexual violence, abuse and harassment are courageously disclosing and seeking help, and in turn we are experiencing an unprecedented increase in demand for our specialist support. Over the past year our waiting list for individual support and counselling has doubled.

Rape and sexual abuse changes lives - and so do we. As a small charity we are very grateful for the support of the Bishop's Lent Appeal this year. All donations received via the Appeal will help us continue to deliver our life-changing support for people affected by sexual violence.

If you have been affected by sexual violence, you can contact the Rape Crisis Scotland National Helpline on 08088 01 03 02 or email us at support@ercc.scot for confidential support and information.



A Martian sends a postcard ...

by David Warnes

"What," I found myself thinking as I noticed tourists picking their way through a very crowded St Mary's Cathedral on Saturday 28 April, "are they making of this?" The presence of at least five hundred people, the variety of stalls and displays, folk from The Priory, South Queensferry levitating a football with the help of a garden blower, the creative use of Lego by St Peter's, Linlithgow - none of this is what they could have been expecting. "What understanding of Christianity would an extra-terrestrial observer garner?" was the next question that sprang to mind.

A school of poets in the 1980s played creatively with the idea of writing about the familiar from the perspective of a visiting Martian. Their work was characterized by varied and surprising metaphors, and so was The Big Day. A Martian observer would have concluded that Christianity is a strongly visual and tactile religion.

The cross, crafted from single-use plastic milk bottles, which formed part of the display by St Anne's, Dunbar, spoke of that congregation's commitment to caring for God's creation. St John's, Selkirk, offered a colourful flowerpot as a symbol of

their approach to being a church. St David's, Pilton, invited visitors to dig for a mystery object in a pot of sand.

Our extra-terrestrial observer would also have been struck by the variety of Christian worship. A glance at the display by Holy Trinity, Melrose, alone would have given that impression. St Vincent's, Stockbridge, and St Adrian's, Gullane, included vestments in their displays. Messy Church featured in several stalls, including that of St John's, Jedburgh. The worship services which opened and closed The Big Day, by turns calmly reflective and, under the leadership of Fischy Music, exuberantly active, would have reinforced the point.



Even before the Eucharist it would have become apparent that food and drink are important to Christians. The seemingly limitless supply of teas and coffees provided by willing volunteers, the pancakes being cooked by a team from St Catherine's, Bo'ness, the traditional afternoon tea displayed by Christ Church, Falkirk, the homebakes from St Ninian's, Comely Bank, and the Community Food Initiative presented by St Salvador's, Stenhouse, all spoke of a commitment to sharing nourishment, both literally and metaphorically.

If the worship services showed the importance of music's measure, the craftsman's and craftswoman's art was also prominently displayed. St Mary's, Grangemouth, offered knitted poppies, the knitters of St Martin's, Edinburgh, were preparing for their Advent yarnbombing and showing a reredos panel crafted from recycled fabrics. People at the Cathedral's stall were creating bunting and our Martian observer would have learned about Quilling by talking to the experts from St Columba's, Bathgate. St Philip and St James, Goldenacre & Logie Green, had a splendid prayer quilt, rich in symbolism.

So what understanding of Christianity would an extra-terrestrial observer garner? Certainly an impression of abundant liveliness; also of concern for the welfare of all humanity. The displays in the Walpole Hall by organisations including Edinburgh Street Pastors, Workplace Chaplaincy and the Mission to Seafarers helped to make that point.

When Bishop John invited feedback during the Eucharist, one person said: "The amount of people here shows we're not a sinking ship". On the contrary, our Martian would have seen a vessel with an active and committed crew whose diverse gifts and approaches to mission are inspirational. As Annie Naish, the Bishop's Enabler of Mission, who, along with a team including Provost John Conway, the Cathedral staff and many volunteers did so much to make The Big Day possible, put it on the day: "Isn't God amazing?"



“
So good to be in our
Cathedral as one family.
”

“
I really enjoyed the
interactive stalls,
the very friendly churches
and the delicious lunch!
”



“
It's great to see the
Cathedral welcome all
the churches in the Diocese.
Mother church
at its best.
”



“
Great to meet new people
and old friends. Lovely
creative art work and
inspiring work
”

“
Thanks Churches for all
your hard work and
displays.
”





St John's - reaching beyond

by Markus Dünzkofer

On 6 May 2018, we were able finally to open our new building, designed by LDN architects and built by John Dennis (Scotland) Ltd. We also celebrated the 200th anniversary of the building at the same time. Our forefathers and foremothers have blessed the community of St John's, and indeed the city, with a building that is renowned beyond Edinburgh. Scottish baronial architect William Burn created a work of immense beauty. We are also located on one of the busiest street corners in our capital city. All this is an invitation to stay, pray, contemplate, or simply to enjoy. We, just like our ancestors, have been charged to preserve this jewel on Princes Street as much as to reinvent for every generation its creative and effective use in ministry and mission.

For 200 years we have made our home in a building that is beautiful and a statement of God's steadfastness and welcome. At Matins on 6 May we read parts of the first sermon ever preached at St John's. In the afternoon we gathered to worship through prayer and music. We renewed our baptismal promises, gave thanks for the past, blessed the new building, broke bread and shared the cup, cut a cake, and ate and drank in thankful celebration.

Thank you to our Bishop, who presided at the Eucharist and to all those many volunteers who made the celebration possible. Thank you to our Edinburgh City Centre Churches Together partners who assisted not just on the day, but who supported us in this long building project. And thank you to everybody in the diocese who prayed for us, donated time or money, and encouraged us to keep going. After 17 months of building, we are still here, and we are still determined to continue working for God's kingdom - and this includes reaching beyond ourselves into the community around us. We are very much looking forward to welcoming you here. Come, visit!



Livingston's Decision Day



Your Voice, Your Choice!

Livingston United Parish Church and St. Andrew's Parish Church, Deans helped co-ordinate a community event that saw £4,500 given away to community groups in the north of Livingston. Groups applied for funding of £200-£500 for new or existing projects, and the community voted where the money went at a special Decision Day in April. Awards were made to many local charities and groups including Cancer Support Scotland, Livingston & District Childminding Group, and West Lothian Foodbank.

Testing project gets go-ahead

Edinburgh-based HIV charity, Waverley Care, will be able to help 500 people to know their HIV status this year, after funding was agreed to provide point of care testing kits. The kits will be made available through their African Health Project teams in Greater Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Forth Valley, and can give a result in 15 minutes. The funding has come from the NHS boards in these areas and follows a successful pilot project last year, using HIV self-testing kits. The pilot showed that the kits helped break down barriers that prevent some Africans from accessing testing. The hope is that more people can know their status earlier, which helps reduce new HIV infections and allows those living with HIV to access treatment that can control the virus.

St Peter's at 90 hails the new

With a last lick of paint, and some final deliberation over the music, there was a special re-dedication service and celebration at St Peter's, Linlithgow on Wednesday 30 May as the church celebrated its 90th anniversary. After the Eucharist, Bishop John also dedicated their recently-completed new 'upper room', an extension to the building at the rear of the church. Bishop John said it was, "A wonderful, warm and happy occasion. A church serving its community."



Year of Young People

Our under-18 Diocesan rep on the Provincial Youth Committee, Olivia Smith, joined with her fellow rep from St Andrew's Diocese, and the Primus, to meet the First Minister at the Scottish Parliament. They represented the SEC and made their voices heard in a meeting with church leaders and youth representatives, discussing the well-being of children in Scotland and other issues relating to the Year of Young People. Thanks to the Scottish Parliament for this great photograph!

CCTV in churches Diocesan Office

The Churches' Legislation Advisory Service (CLAS) highlighted a recent decision of the Commissary Court of Canterbury concerning a faulty application to install two CCTV cameras to enable the church to be left open during the day. The Commissary General, Morag Ellis QC, granted the faculty with two conditions:

(1) that the installation should ensure that any parts of the church set aside for private prayer and so forth are avoided from the scope of the lens and that the cameras should be switched off during services; and
(2) that there should be a suitable person responsible for the machinery and data held in it, for notice to be given of the use of the cameras and of the person to contact in the event of complaints or questions. CLAS has drawn attention to the issue arising from the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice which tries to reconcile the need for security monitoring with the right to privacy but it is something that churches that are thinking about installing CCTV systems need to bear in mind.



We are very pleased to announce that Nathalie Mares has been appointed as part-time Administrative Assistant (Mission & Ministry) / P.A. to the Dean. Whilst the main role is to support the work of the Mission & Ministry Committee and its officers, this will be the first time that our Dean has had dedicated admin support, which became a key issue in recent years. Nathalie will complement the work of Ann Rae, our other Administrative Assistant (Finance & Management). This now enables us to cover the work of the two main diocesan committees and allow good coordination of the Bishop's and the Dean's diary commitments.

IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT A RAMP

by David Warnes

Making churches accessible to people who use wheelchairs is more complex than it might seem. Note the careful wording – not people in wheelchairs but people who use wheelchairs. A wheelchair user is an agent rather than a patient and should be responded to accordingly. When my wife Susan acquired her first manual chair, we wondered how my role should be described. Pusher was ruled out partly because it might give Police Scotland the wrong idea, but mainly because that seemed to put me in charge. Carer was rejected because the care in our marriage is mutual. Accompanist seemed about right, so I am Gerald Moore to her Janet Baker and mutuality and harmony are sustained.

Responding to a wheelchair user requires careful discernment of that person's capabilities and needs, and those can vary greatly. Some manual wheelchair users have considerable upper body strength, can self-propel and transfer from their wheelchairs to a chair or a pew. Others are not able to transfer without specialist equipment. For them accessible space in church needs to be available. The same is true of power chair users, whose capabilities vary from having the ability to steer with a joystick to controlling their speed and direction using 'sip and puff' technology.

In terms of the building, the minimum for which a church should aim is level access to the worship space, social spaces and meeting rooms and to an accessible toilet.

Accessible toilets need plenty of circulating space, doors which can be closed and locked by an unaccompanied wheelchair user, moveable grab rails on both sides of the loo, and an alarm system with a cord which stretches to ground level. Don't park the loo roll on top of the cistern, where a wheelchair user might not be able to reach it. A reachable washbasin and hand dryer or paper towel dispenser are



essential. Some wheelchair users can side transfer onto a loo, so having sufficient empty space to back a wheelchair alongside the loo is important.

Doors can be a major obstacle. Automatic doors with a large and sensibly-placed push button are ideal, but attentive stewarding can make progress into a building much easier. The position of buttons and door handles is critical – wheelchair users are separated from them by roughly a metre of seat and footrests, and few of them have arms of simian length.

Accessibility is about participation, about enabling wheelchair users to be involved in as many aspects of church life as possible. If they are on the rota to read the Epistle, then the lectern won't be appropriate. Are the choirstalls accessible for someone with a fine singing voice? Is the room where Vestry meets accessible? Can a wheelchair user come to the altar to make his communion alongside other worshippers?

Church architecture and furnishings may mean that there are no easy or cheap answers to these questions, but accessibility should be part of our planning rather than a response to unforeseen needs.

Who is Missing?

by Rosie Addis

The table was laid. Food for all. A warm welcome. A place of hospitality. Not only our own little workshop at the Big Day event in April, but the whole of St Mary's Cathedral. The place was buzzing with life; young and old, clergy and lay. Folks gathered from all parts of the Diocese. But who was still missing from this gathering?

That was the question posed by our workshop. And what would it look like to put those who are missing today at the centre of church life? How would it change our congregations? Scary? Exciting? Off-putting? Let's face it, we like to be in control. Opening our communities to 'the other' means letting go a little.

But we are people created in the image of God. And that means that we are meaning-seeking and meaning-creating people. When we come together to worship, to learn, or to chat over a cup of tea, we create meaning. What does it look like to create meaning together?

It starts with showing up and welcoming each other. Creating meaning together takes time. It cannot be forced (I've learned). Being with each other is often more difficult than doing things for the other.

Lynsey told a story of how the Inuit make decisions. Sitting in a circle, each person takes the responsibility for thinking of the impact a decision will have on a different part of the community – the older people, the building(s), the economy, etc.

A child is in the middle of the circle, and all listen to each person as they talk about the impact of the decision on their area of responsibility. In the end, the child is invited to represent the future of the community, and to make their decision.

I wonder how we could use some of that thinking in our church planning and decision-making?

What would it look like to put those who are missing today at the centre of church life?

Tips on accessing the Bible for anyone who finds reading difficult

By Aurora Betony

I'm dyslexic. So I need to approach the Bible in ways that take my dyslexia into account. These ways may be useful for anyone who finds reading difficult and everyone else too.

Although I can read (decode words), my dyslexia makes it difficult for me to take in what I read. So to engage with the Bible, I need to use alternative formats - such as pictures or audio - as well as print. There are resources in alternative formats which help me engage with the Bible. Two I find particularly helpful are:

- The UK Bible Society's audio dramatisation, *You've got the Time*. Visit their SoundCloud page at www.soundcloud.com/biblesociety/sets/youve-got-the-time
- A website that offers free sets of Bible story images at www.freebibleimages.org

I also use a translation or paraphrase in contemporary language. I recommend The Contemporary English Version of the Bible (CEV).

There are many other things that help me engage with the Bible, including:

- Gaining the gist of a passage before reading it in print;
- Acting out a story; and
- Discussing the Bible with others.

I make my reading and listening active. Active reading or listening is when you read or listen with the aim of answering certain questions. I find the following questions really helpful:

- What does this chapter say about God?
- What does this chapter say about people?
- How should we respond to this chapter?

You'll find more information in a free guide called 'Tips on taking in and remembering Bible content'. You can download it in Word or pdf at: <https://www.inclusive-church.org/news/top-tips-engaging-bible>

Further information on dyslexia: Dyslexia Scotland offers a range of services including dyslexia awareness training for organisations, information leaflets and a confidential helpline www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk



Sight Loss Friendly Churches

The Torch Trust is a charity that offers support for churches who want to become 'sight loss friendly', with advice on their website to help churches to be safe and welcoming to all with visual impairments.

Their advice includes:

- When using any images or videos remember to describe them as well as show them.
- If you are using a screen or projector make the text as large as possible, in a clear font and on a plain contrasting background. Yellow or white print on a dark blue or black background is often best.
- Consider people with sight loss when making changes to room layout. Let them know in advance where things have moved to using language like, 'to your left' (rather than 'over there' and pointing).
- Give space for guide dogs, you might want to remove a chair and if it is a hot day having water available is particularly kind and considerate.

Generally:

- Think ahead about people with sight loss
- Ask them what they might need
- Act with kindness and consideration.

www.with.torchtrust.org.uk

LEARNING TO BE

An interview with Sarah Kilbey by Bob Gould

Sarah Kilbey is a non-stipendiary priest in the Scottish Episcopal Church, and for over 20 years has had a ministry to deafened and hard of hearing people in the Diocese of Edinburgh.



Sarah, you have had a severe hearing problem since your teens, and this has had a profound effect on your life. Could you say a little about how your difficulty morphed into your ministry?

I was between jobs, and knew I wasn't managing very well, so I joined a small lip-reading group. They all seemed rather dull, passive and old, but, after a few weeks, as they got their confidence back, I realised what lively people they were, from all different backgrounds, and how important it was for them to be acquiring some lip-reading skills. I was asked to take that group over, but refused at first. Then I met two people who asked me quite pointedly why I wasn't involved with the deaf world, where so much needed to be done. After much thought, I decided to do the training and see what I could do to build up

a Lip-reading Service for Lothian Region. (At that time, there was only one qualified teacher in Scotland – in the Highland Region!)

At much the same time, you started Training for Ministry. Can you say how this developed into a sense of a vocation to ordained ministry?

I saw the Training for Ministry Course as linking beautifully with the lip-reading training; it would help me be a better teacher and so develop a real Monday to Saturday Christian Ministry. I had no intention at all of being ordained.

After ten years, though, I seemed to be getting mysterious nudges about the Priesthood – I can't put it better than that! Eventually, I was accepted and ordained. About 100 deaf people from the 15 lip-reading classes in Lothian came to the service. Many said how much they had enjoyed it, but that they hadn't been in church for ages. They felt left out; there was no loop system, and people didn't seem to understand. It seemed right to start a special once-a-month service for them, and that ran for more than 20 years.

Bishop Richard Holloway asked me to be his chaplain for the hard of hearing, which I greatly appreciated. That gave me a platform to begin teaching deaf awareness to professional groups, including doctors, care workers, housing associations, medical receptionists and social workers, to help them comply with the new Disability Discrimination Act. I really enjoyed those meetings and the occasional invitation to speak in other churches. We also started a course to train more lip-reading teachers for Scotland, and that course continues.

People often ask whether more emphasis should be placed on signing, rather than on lip-reading.

It is important to distinguish between two groups of deaf people. One in a hundred babies are born deaf, and therefore do not speak easily. They grow up to be members of the deaf/signing community. The

other group is much larger: nearly one in five people develop a hearing loss – that's 100,000 people in Lothian! This occurs usually, but not always, later in life; the average age for getting a hearing aid in Scotland is 73. Because of the sheer numbers involved, they get very little help and so often become withdrawn. Learning some lip reading helps them not to lose touch with the people to whom they are already close.

What are some of the tips that you give to churches, other organisations and people in general to make communication with and by the hard of hearing easier?

The vital thing to remember is that communication is a two-way process, so it is important to face the person and speak clearly, slightly more slowly than usual, but don't shout, exaggerate your mouth movements or lose your natural rhythm! Switch off background noise if possible, and rephrase if necessary, because much of normal speech is not lip-readable, sadly.

There are many relatively cheap items that can make a real difference in the home, like special telephones, domestic loop systems for the TV, and lights for the doorbell. These can be obtained from Deaf Action in Albany Street. In church, of course, a team is needed to understand and service the loop, but we shouldn't think that solves all the problems! Voice projection and keeping the head still while preaching – and not walking about – will all help.

And what do you see for the future?

I've always had the notion that what we do in this life is a sort of seed sowing; some may germinate and others not, but it doesn't matter because we can safely leave the outcome to God. At this late stage in my life it's probably important that I start to give serious attention to what my then Priest, Alex Black, said to me at least 45 years ago; "Sarah, you have to learn to be and not just to do!"

REVIEW

Waiting for the Last Bus: Reflections on Life and Death

by Richard Holloway

Canongate Press

Reviewed by Ruth Green

Richard Holloway says about death, 'The safest course is to be ready at all times, with your bags packed and your soul scrubbed clean.' When he wrote his book 'Leaving Alexandria: a memoir of faith and doubt' in 2012, he called it 'an extended act of self-examination' and this new book is a continuation of that memoir. Now into his 80s, he describes himself as 'old and facing death' but he is preparing to do this with composure and equanimity.

The foreword has a plea for us all to acquaint ourselves with death, saying that 'a death well faced can be redemptive of a life that may not have been well-lived'. Holloway says that he reads 'obituaries religiously', this 'regular discipline helps to reconcile me to my own death'. He writes of human beings' obsession with appearance and the necessity of humour to cope with the vicissitudes of old age.

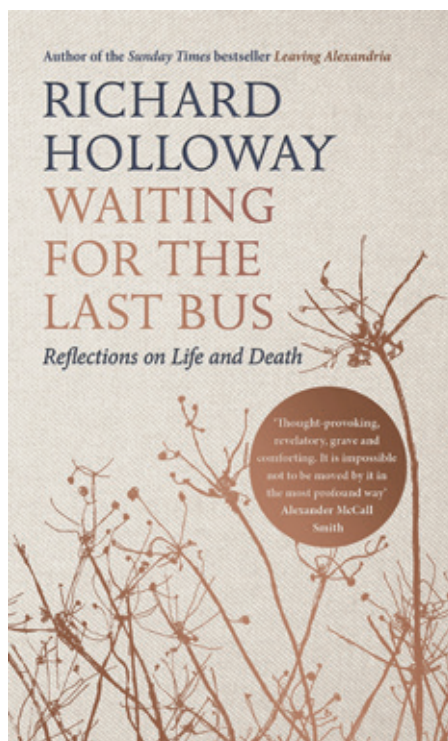
It is a personal account, with much about his own journey, but also about places, people and history. He describes practicalities about preparation for death and speaks to suffering with strength and conviction. Diverse topics such as Rwanda, spiritualism, cryogenics and anamnesis are covered. He has the most beautiful, poetic way of expressing his ideas and the work is full of literary allusions: it has 101 carefully-chosen quotations from poets, writers and scripture in its 156 pages.

Richard Holloway makes a book written around the subject of death remarkably engaging, and his voice can be clearly heard in his writing - he is a great story teller, weaving a spell that draws the reader in.

Of course he talks about religion, writing: 'I now practice religion in a way that passionate protagonists on both sides of the God debate dislike intensely' and 'Religion is at its most compelling when it restrains the urge to explain death away and contents itself with voicing our sorrow and defiance...it feels most authentic when it stops preaching...'

This rare combination of wisdom and uncertainty finishes on a poignant note about the loss of his dog Daisy. The book is questioning, challenging, very honest, self-deprecating and as he looks back, he admits to regrets about the way he lived his life.

Despite being such a gentle meander through life, death and preparedness, it is very thought-provoking. The book is well worth a careful read - Richard Holloway speaks thoughtfully about something essential to us all.



GAZETTE

Appointment

The Rev Yousouf Gooljary will be installed as Rector of St Martin of Tours, Dalry Road, Edinburgh on Thursday 19 July 2018

Resignation

The Rev Lynsay Downs moves to Banchory, Diocese of Aberdeen w.e.f. 29th July

The Rev Jim Benton-Evans moves to Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway in June (12 June 2018.)

The Rev Canon Fred Tomlinson is retiring at the end of July

Death

Rev Douglas Yeoman on 23 May. Douglas had been non-stipendary priest at St Cuthbert's Colinton and St Martin Dalry, and a NHS Chaplain

Looking ahead

Diocesan clergy conference
27 - 29 November

A change in the air

Dear Edge readers

This is the Summer edition of The Edge. By the time you are reading this many churches will be in their 'summer lull', where many take pause as we enjoy the sunshine both here and abroad, where grandparents exhaust themselves looking after grandchildren, where families go on adventures, where the white flesh of a Scot in winter makes way for the lobster red sunburn of unexpected days without lotion... Change is always in the air. And there are two significant changes which have happened to the Information and Communications Committee in the diocese, which ought to be noted here.

The first is that our Communications Officer, Siân Harris, is moving on, partly due to the expansion of that role conflicting with her other work commitments, partly because she is about to become a mother for the second time. Siân has been a breath of fresh air in the Diocesan Office, a reassuring technical presence, and a competent and visionary leader of our communications strategy. After a suitable period of rest we hope to keep her involved in the communications life of the diocese, and I am sure we all wish her very well in the joys and challenges ahead.

The second change is that Gillian McKinnon, our erstwhile editor of The Edge, is moving on after being with us for four years. Gillian has produced, edited, researched and generally done everything to make The Edge a publication worthy of any coffee table for the last few years, and it is due to her diligence and hard work that we have had such a stylish and varied number of editions.

With such change comes both farewell and opportunity. We are currently advertising for a Communications Officer for the diocese, but in the meantime our work on websites, social media etc will still go on, but this seems a good time to reassess our priorities. And to do that we would like your help. We would like to know how well read The Edge is, and whether, like the provincial production of Inspires, The Edge needs to be presented in a digital format rather than a printed one. The cost of production is high, as is delivery to the various hubs, and it is important that we know whether, how well, and by how many the magazine is received.

In the diocesan notices shortly we will send a short survey and ask you to fill this in, but in the meantime, I find that prose is more instructive than ticked boxes - so if you have any thoughts about the future of The Edge, please email them to me at philipblackledge@gmail.com.

In the meantime, enjoy this edition, and when you have a little prayer time, give thanks for Gillian and Siân, and wish them well in their new ventures.

Rev Philip Blackledge
Convenor, Information & Communication Committee

SEI Lecture 2018

The annual SEI Lecture will be held on Thursday 11 October at 5.30 pm in Parliament Hall, South Street, St Andrews. Professor Elaine Graham, Grosvenor Research Professor of Practical Theology, University of Chester and Canon Theologian of Chester Cathedral, will deliver a paper entitled 'Liberating the Laity: a Theology for a Learning Church'. Open to all, free of charge and will be followed by a reception.



More GDPR information

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) took effect in the UK on 25 May 2018. Congregations must comply with its requirements, just like any other charity or organisation. The General Synod Office has sent out guidelines to all vestries, directly. The Diocesan Office will also be putting information on the 'Vestries' page of the diocesan website. If you need further help or advice about data protection, get in touch with the Diocesan Office.

FROM THE EDITOR:

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed words or pictures to this edition of The Edge, and to all the editions of The Edge over the last four years! Thank you for your support and help. Please read Pip's letter (left) and let us know what you think about The Edge!