



Scottish Episcopal Church

The Diocese of Edinburgh

Growing together in following Christ and sharing God's love



entrance to Old St Paul's, Edinburgh



Published by the Diocesan Office fortnightly, and circulated to all Clergy, Lay Readers, Treasurers & Vestry Secretaries, and Diocesan Synod Lay & Alternate Lay Representatives.

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The Communicant

**News & Notices for the Diocese of
Edinburgh**

16 November 2023

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News



Peace Garden at St James', Goldenacre

On Sunday 12th November - Remembrance Sunday - Bishop John blessed the new Peace Garden and Peace Pole at St James's Goldenacre. A Peace Pole is an internationally-recognized symbol of the hopes and dreams of the entire human family, standing vigil in silent prayer for peace on earth. Each Peace Pole bears the message May Peace Prevail on Earth in different languages on each of its sides. The Peace Garden at St James' is open to anyone who wishes to sit in it in contemplation and peace.

Events

Please find details of upcoming events and how to submit your own [here](#). Some highlights over the coming few weeks are:

Saturday 25 November: Waiting with Hope: A Quiet Day for Advent, Christ Church, Morningside

Friday 1 December: Christmas Wreath Workshops, St Mary's, Dalmahoy

Friday 1 December: A Woman of Courage: Through Advent With Mary, Online

Sunday 3 December: Advent Carols and Blessing of the Nativity Crib, 3pm, Princes Street Gardens



We are still looking for contributors to our advent calendar! This year's digital Diocesan advent calendar will be focusing on names of Christ in the Bible. We'd love to feature a range of voices from across the Diocese in our videos, including congregation members of all ages, clergy and lay readers. If you're interested in taking part please [email Miranda](#) by Monday 20 November.



Office News & Notices



Signposts



Did you know we have a [resource page](#) on our website? This contains answers to many frequently asked questions.

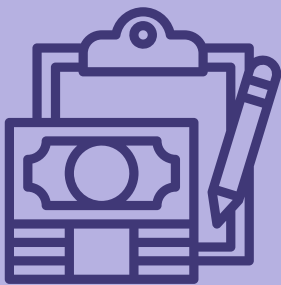


Our [Diocesan Environment Group](#) includes sections on Sharing Stories, Resources and Funding. The group is being led by Bethany Nelson, and you can contact her at bethany@psandgs.org.uk.



There are now 92 users signed up to the [Online Support Forum](#), Posts include:

- Health & Safety
- Secondary glazing installation completed
- CAF Bank changes
- Energy Savings Advice (CofE)
- Contactless donations



We have an [admin support forum](#) specifically for Church Administrators. Do encourage anyone you might have in your congregation who might have such a role in your administration – other than your Vestry Secretary.

Forms

Could all Incumbents and Priests in Charge note that the annual **Congregational Statistics** will soon be due for “the year ending on the eve of Advent Sunday” which is **Sunday 3rd December**. All the numbers can be prepared now, except for the attendance on “the Sunday next before Advent”.

In addition, we will soon send out the **Diocesan Schedules** for you to let us know any changes to your Vestry personnel etc., if you haven’t already done so. This is intended to align with many of your AGMs which take place mostly in the Autumn.

There will be no Provincial Safeguarding Annual Return for this year as GSO are re-evaluating the process in light of new legislation being implemented in 2024. The Diocese will be sending out a simple checklist to assist Vestries in maintaining safeguarding best practice.

Office News & Notices



Safeguarding

PVG Safeguarding Training Events in November and December

In conjunction with John Wylie (the Provincial Safeguarding Officer) we are delivering five training events in November and Early December. Evening events start at 4pm and Saturday events will start at 10am.

This training has already been delivered in the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway and has been subject to very positive feedback. Each session consists of facilitated discussion of key issues in Safeguarding, along with a series of practical scenarios, with each scenario building upon attendee's knowledge. The overall aim is to improve levels of confidence and to make it clear that help is always available.

It is very important that Coordinators attend this training. Feeling equipped and safe will help you to help and support others. In addition, significant changes to PVG legislation create criminal offences for both individuals and churches if processes are not adhered to. This training will help to support all vestries with these issues.

You can register using this link: [PVG Co-Ordinator Training - Google Forms](#)

Joanna Appleby
Diocesan Protection Officer

We are very sorry to announce the death of the **REVD ALEXANDER (SANDY) RYRIE** on 14th November. He was 93. Sandy's long ministry included time as a Church of Scotland minister in both India and Scotland, prior to his ordination in the Episcopal Church, serving at St Mary's Cathedral and St John's, Jedburgh. Many people will be grateful for his wisdom and insight as a spiritual guide and retreat leader, a ministry that continued well into retirement. Details of his funeral service will be shared when they are available. In the meantime, we pray for his family in their loss. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Mission and Ministry



Faith in Older People

The final Faith in Older People (FiOP) event for 2023 is “The Gift of Age Conference”. This will outline their recent research, undertaken in collaboration with Interfaith Scotland, on the role that older people play in their faith communities, all across Scotland. It will take place via Zoom, starting at 4:30pm. Further information and booking via FiOP’s [Eventbrite](#).

Christian Aid

A Christian Aid event, “In the Image of God: B’Tselem’s work for Human Rights in the midst of conflict”, will take place on Monday 27th November, 2-3:30pm at Augustine’s United Church, George IV Bridge, and online. Join to hear from Sarit Michaeli, International Advocacy Lead for B’Tselem (the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territory) speak about the vital work of B’Tselem as it strives for a future in which Human Rights, liberty and equality are guaranteed to all people in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. If attending in person, please email edinburgh@christian-aid.org; or [join online](#).

Clergy Conference



Last week, the Diocese’s clergy gathered in Pitlochry, alongside international partners from Espoo, for 4 days thinking, praying, and sharing together. Fr Gero McLaughlin SJ and Mr Steve Aisthorpe led us in considering “Faithfulness in the Day of Small Things”, which was inspired by Zechariah 4 and the rebuilding of the Temple. Having gathered for morning prayer in the Benedictine tradition, we then used the practice of *Lectio Divina* to discern what might be important for us as individuals and as a Diocese. We also had extended sessions considering Steve’s research and work on churches in Scotland, drawing on group discussion, plenary and prayerful practices. In this, we were encouraged to ‘Notice, Wonder, and Realise’ and to take that approach back to our own contexts. Some downtime each afternoon allowed us to see something of the area or just spend time in each other’s company. Each day concluded with us gathering for Holy Communion, using a range of liturgical traditions, before sharing in dinner and fellowship thereafter.

Diary

Thursday 23rd November Diocesan Standing Committee meets

Saturday 25th November Bishop John at Fettes College for Confirmations

Sunday 26th November Bishop John at Christ Church Morningside for the Patronal Festival & Confirmations

Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 November Bishop John attends College of Bishops

Sunday 3 December Advent Carols and Bishop John Blessing of the Nativity Crib, 3pm, Princes Street Gardens

Thursday 14th December The Installation of the Revd Andi Hofbauer at St Cuthbert's Hawick and St John's Jedburgh



Communications photos

We're in the process of updating our selection of images of churches in the diocese. If you've got some recent images of your church you'd be happy to share - or if you'd like us to come and take some pictures which you can use too - please email Miranda at mheggie@dioceseofedinburgh.org.uk



Have you got news or stories from your church you'd like to share? If so, our Communications Officer Miranda Heggie would love to hear from you! Please drop her a line at mheggie@dioceseofedinburgh.org.

Tag us on your socials!

and follow us at the links below.

