Diocese of Edinburgh

Scottish Episcopal Church



St Salvador's, Stenhouse

The Communicant

News & Notices for the Diocese of Edinburgh

17 September 2026

In this edition...

Bishop's Letter, p. 2
News & Notices: pp. 3–5
Mission & Ministry: p. 6
Events: p. 7

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

NEXT EDITION:
1 October 2026

Diocese of Edinburgh
34 Manor Place
Edinburgh EH3 7EB
office@edinburgh.anglican.org
0131 538 7033
SC001214

Bishop's Letter for September

Dear Friends

A Season of Firsts

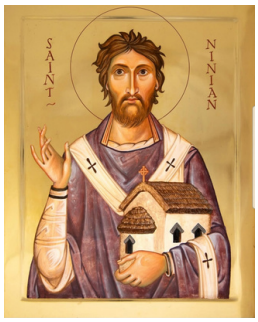


As we move into autumn, I am approaching a further season of firsts.

For me, the next couple of months will most notably bring my first Diocesan Synod as well as my first Lay Reader and Clergy Conferences, along with many other occasions when I will enjoy meeting more of you, the people and places in Edinburgh Diocese. Thank you for your warmth and also for your patience as I continue to learn about the Diocese.

St Ninian

The Feast of St Ninian falls this week, 16 September. Ninian, the Apostle to the Picts, is one of the earliest pioneers of the Christian faith in our part of the world: someone who travelled, crossed boundaries and planted the seeds of faith in a new place. While details of the historical figure of St Ninian are somewhat hazy, the enduring witness associated with his name is one of mission, taking the good news of Christ beyond familiar boundaries, teaching the faith and trusting God with what might grow.



This certainly touches important themes for us as we too are called to be a people who are willing to step beyond what is familiar, share the faith and discover where the Spirit of God is leading us. This will be at the heart of our concerns both at Synod and at the Conferences. They are wonderful opportunities for encounter, for mutual encouragement as well as honest wrestling with the challenges before us. And together in prayer and worship, we shall glimpse what God might be doing among us.

Creationtide

Just this week I noticed the first signs of autumn colours. Before long, the landscape will be transformed into a glorious mixture of gold, red and russet. The seasons change, and in a striking image, eventually the trees will let go of the leaves. As we "strive to safeguard the integrity of creation" (the fifth Mark of Mission), I wonder how you are experiencing the liturgical Season of Creation, whether you have found the various resources helpful, how congregations have responded?



I was rather charmed by the rainbow that appeared outside my house just after I returned from annual leave. In Genesis 9:13, God says to Noah, *I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.*

We stand on the shoulders of saints such as St Ninian and know that this is indeed the God we can trust in all seasons. Thank you for all that you are doing, in so many different places and ways, to make God's love visible, to make Christ known who is the embodiment of God's covenant with humanity.

I am looking forward very much to the coming firsts – and, above all, to sharing them with you.

Every blessing,

+ Jeremy

News and Notices

Reclaiming VAT: Pilot Scheme Opens on 1 October



Historic Environment Scotland have announced a pilot scheme to replace the previous UK-wide Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. This pilot will open for applications on 1 October and demand will be high. A total of £1million is available for this current financial year (April 2026-March 2027) which will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis – these limited funds will no doubt run out swiftly, so you will need to be quick off the mark!

As with the previous scheme, most internal and external repairs/works to listed churches will be eligible, provided they are ongoing or have been carried out since 1 April 2026. The application forms and guidance will only be released on the day the pilot opens for applications, i.e. 1 October, but you can prepare the following information in advance: listing reference, OSCR number, bank account details, copy invoices and a named contact willing to engage with Historic Environment Scotland should there be any questions.

See here for more information:
Historic Environment Scotland press release:
https://www.historicenvironment.scot/about-us/news/pilot-fund-launched-to-support-scotlands-historic-places-of-worship/

Provincial Net Zero team announcement:
https://www.scotland.anglican.org/vat-relief-fund-announced-for-listed-churches/

Clergy Support Trust: Changes to Eligibility Criteria

From January the Clergy Support Trust will be making some changes to the way it provides help to clergy and their families.

The Trust has recently emailed all affected parties, but if you have any questions please visit their website where you will find all the details and some FAQs.

Safeguarding Training for Clergy is Coming to the Borders!



On **8 October from 11.30am to 3pm at St Peter's, Galashiels** there will be a clergy-only safeguarding training session, run by the Province.

The session starts with tea and coffee, and you're asked to bring your own lunch.

If you're interested in attending, please email Hannah Harcus on hharcus@dioceseofedinburgh.org.

The next clergy safeguarding training will be held on 17 and 19 November at the GSO offices at Torphichen Street, Edinburgh, so please put one of these dates in your diary if you're based nearby. There will also be online training for clergy if you can't make an in-person session.

We'll publicise lay safeguarding training sessions in the New Year.

SEC produces guidance and resources for Martyn's Law

Guidance and resources relating to Martyn's Law (the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025) are now available on the Scottish Episcopal Church website.

The guidance has been developed to help dioceses and their charges understand the legislation and any practical steps that may be required. For many the requirements will be proportionate to the size and use of their premises and similar to what is already in place.

The resources can be accessed here:
Church Security and Martyn's Law: What You Need to Know - The Scottish Episcopal Church

Additional guidance and supporting materials will be added as further information becomes available.

News and Notices

Hope for Creation Conference



The Scottish Episcopal Church Net Zero Team are pleased to invite you to join us at our **Hope for Creation** conference, taking place **20–21 October in Stirling.**

Hope for Creation will bring together funders, experts, eco-theologians, decision-makers, clergy and congregations from the Scottish Episcopal Church, and other denominations, to discuss the efforts to combat climate change in the Scottish church context.

The conference will provide opportunities for networking, discussion and learning, with contributions from across the SEC, ecumenical guests, and partner organisations. Anchored by practical solutions, inspiring case-studies and new opportunities to take action – Hope for Creation will highlight that all throughout the church and heritage sector have a part to play in our journey to build a more sustainable future.

Highlights include keynote speeches by figures such as Adrian Fox of the Church of England and human-ecologist Alastair McIntosh, and breakout conversation sessions covering such topics as 'Solutions for Sustainable Heritage Buildings', 'Carbon Footprints and Contributions', 'Creation Care, Mission and Intercession', as well as funding, biodiversity, storytelling and community energy discussions.

All are welcome: whether you're a church leader, volunteer, environmental group member or simply interested in creating a more sustainable future, you'll leave with fresh ideas, new connections and renewed hope.

Further information and registration details here.

Diocesan Finance and Management Committee: Clerical Vacancy

There is a Vacancy on the Diocesan Finance and Management Committee (DFMC) for an elected clerical member following the imminent departure of Revd Diana Hall to Dumfries.

This is an important role. The DFMC meets roughly four times a year and its remit covers general administration, all aspects of finance and investment, including determining a recommendation for quota and advising the Standing Committee on the viability of charges.

We are looking for a good listener who can work constructively in a committee environment; who is not afraid to challenge but who doesn't feel the need to make a contribution for the sake of making a contribution. The ability to maintain confidentiality and exercise discretion is key. The group currently works very well in an open and collegiate fashion – while the business is serious, moments of fun are not unknown.

If you think this vacancy might have your name on it, please contact Simon (dioadmin@dioceseofedinburgh.org) or Caroline (administration@dioceseofedinburgh.org) who will provide you with the appropriate form so you may go forward for election by Synod in October. The nomination form requires an accompanying short biography and statement supporting your candidature.

The other current clerical members are Revd Matthew Rushton and Revd David Todd along with the Bishop and the Dean. The Treasurer and Diocesan Secretary are ex-officio members. Additionally, there are three elected lay members along with a member of the Provincial Administration Board. The Committee is currently convened by Robert O'Riordan from St Anne's, Dunbar. Along with its sister committee (Mission and Ministry) it reports to Standing Committee (the Synod's Executive).

Meetings are, by custom, held in Edinburgh and usually take place at 3pm; while there is no additional remuneration available, travel costs can, of course, be reimbursed.

You will also be expected to participate in occasional working parties or sub committees/groups outside of meetings as requested by the Convenor. This additional work can be time consuming, should involve a learning curve, and is invaluable for the smooth operation of the Diocese.

News and Notices

200 years of St Mark's, Portobello

On 6 September, St Mark's celebrated 200 years of serving the people of Portobello with a special service. Bishop Dagmar preached, using the theme of the mustard seed to encourage the congregation as it looks forward to the next 200 years. Lunch and some lovely cake followed!

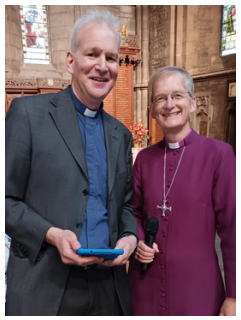





...and it's goodbye to Marion after 40 years!

There were tributes, tears, sunshine and smiles as the Revd Canon Dr Marion Chatterley led her last service as Vice-Provost at St Mary's Cathedral on 13 September. Marion began worshipping at the Cathedral 40 years ago. Get the full story on the SEC Facebook page or on our website.






Art at St Martin's

In the last week in August, St Martin's, Gorgie-Dalry held its annual Art Exhibition. The event showcased work from local artists and community groups and raised money for the work and mission of St Martin's. It was also a great opportunity to meet informally with the many visitors who came to enjoy the artwork and refreshments.

Each year the congregation of St Martin's creates an exhibit. In previous years this has included a Peace Pole, a Giraffe and a Faith Tree. This year, the congregation made an altar frontal for Creationtide based on Psalm 23 (bottom photo).




Practical Theology at St John's, Princes Street

On 5 October at 7pm, St John's Princes Street will start its next year of Education for Ministry (EfM). EfM is a programme in practical theology which helps us understand how we are called into relationship with God, neighbour, and creation. You can find out more about EfM here.



Mission & Ministry



The September edition of Adventures in Faith is out this week! It includes details about:



National Retreat Week: 19–26 September



Fairtrade Fortnight: 21 September to 4 October

Neurodiversity and Worship workshop led by Dr Léon Van Ommen, 17 October at the Walpole Hall





Christian Environmental Mobilisers online course from A Rocha, running from October

Click through to the full newsletter to continue your own Adventure in Faith!

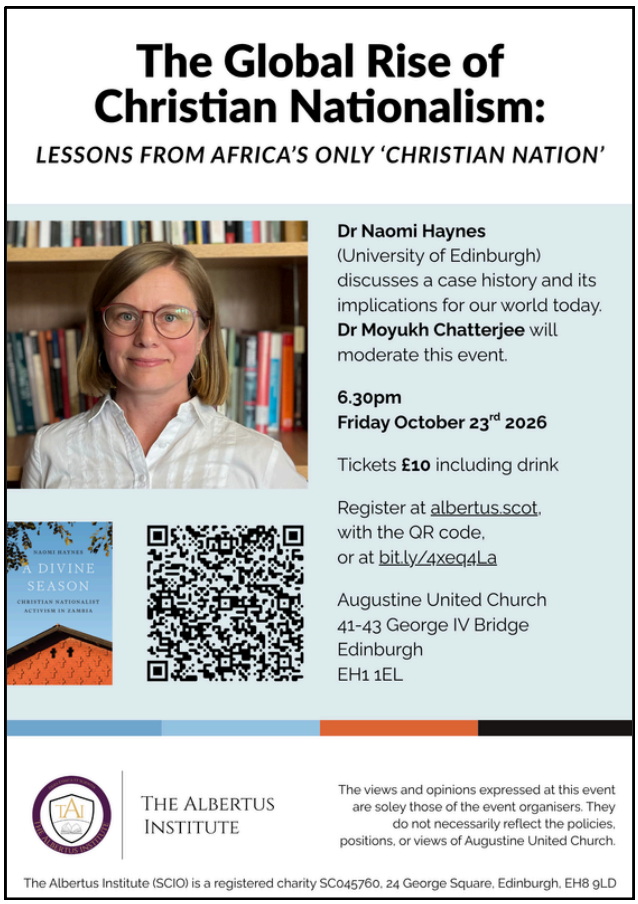
Lent Course 2027

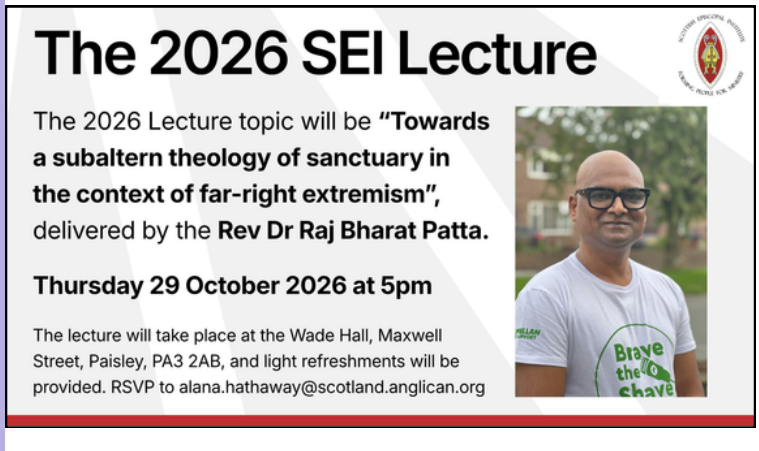


Called to Be ... is a new Lent Course for 2027 which will explore five images of how we are called by Jesus to Follow.

It will be an opportunity to explore who we are before God, how we relate to God and to others, and where we might want to deepen the journey during Lent.

Called to Be ... will be available from the beginning of January. Further details are available from Revd Sophia Marriage.





Events

Diocesan Diary

Monday 21 September: OFFICE CLOSED

Thursday 24 September: Standing Committee

Monday 5 October: Buildings Committee



Bishop's Diary

Sunday 20 September: Preaching and Presiding at Patronal Festival, St Ninian's, Comely Bank

Wednesday 23 September: Edinburgh East Area Council Meeting

Thursday 24 September: Installing the Revd Mae Christie as Vice-Provost of St Mary's Cathedral

Sunday 27 September: Preaching and Presiding at St Cuthbert's, Colinton

Tuesday 29 September: East Lothian Area Council Meeting

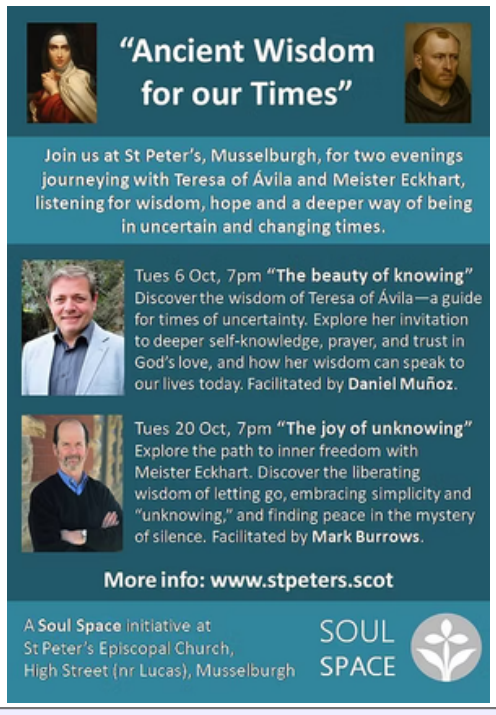
SAVE THE DATE: Thursday 22 October Diocesan Synod (evening)

Events

Submit your own event details here. It's easy to do!

- **Friday 11 September to Sunday 20 September:** Borders Music Festival, various locations in the Scottish Borders
- **Saturday 19 September:** Climate Café, St Ninian's, Comely Bank
- **Sunday 20 September:** Songs of Praise in the Town Square, Kelso Town Square
- **Saturday 26 September:** Fellowship of St Andrew Conference: 'Orthodoxy and Britain', St Andrew's, 33 Chapel Street and Craigmillar Park Church, Edinburgh
- **Saturday 26** and **Sunday 27 September**: Doors Open Days, Edinburgh
- **Monday 28 September:** Jed' Soul Sisters(1), JedEye Hub, Jedburgh
- **Monday 28 September:** Three Brothers in a Boat Book Launch, Ps & Gs, Edinburgh
- **Tuesday 29 September:** The Music of Heaven, St Michael and All Saints, Tollcross
- **Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 October:** Plants are Our Teachers: Honoring the Vegetables, St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh
- **Saturday 3 October:** Silent Reflective Morning, St Anne's, Dunbar

DOORS OPEN DAYS 2026



We love hearing your updates! Please email us at communications@dioceseofedinburgh.org