

THE SIGN

OCTOBER 2016

ST CUTHBERT'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH COLINTON

St Cuthbert's endeavours to be a community in which all are encouraged to participate in worshipping God and serving the wider community. It welcomes those who are doubters and sceptics as well as those who are committed in faith, and has a particular concern for those who have been hurt by their experiences of life.

We have now said a final farewell to Maurice and Anne on their retirement. A wonderful meal was organised by Margaret Holmes and her team in August to mark the occasion. In a letter to the wardens Maurice wrote, "Thank you for the lovely send off to Anne and me. We enjoyed the meal, the chance to get round and talk with everyone there and for the generous cheque and wooden platter.. It was kind of you to organise such an event and we have lots to think about and be grateful for."

The Vestry is working on the way ahead. They have now met the Dean as well as the Bishop and a group from the congregation has been invited to comment on the church profile.

SARAH'S VIEW

Last week we moved house again – for the second time in two years. I hope we don't have to do it again for quite a long time! The most stressful thing for me has not been able to find things – even things that I thought I'd set aside and kept with me. Then to top it all, this week I lost my mobile phone – somewhere between sitting in a meeting room and being in my car. It's a mystery as to where it could have gone. But – these are just things. As we all know, loss takes on a different meaning altogether when it applies to people (or animals) who we love. Or when it is about the loss of mental or physical capacity. And last week, I heard a young woman describe her own feeling of being lost, as she struggled with poverty and debt. So the loss of my mobile phone seems suddenly very unimportant.

In a wonderful novel by George Eliot, the central character, Silas Marner, has spent many of his years embittered by rejection, and has earned for himself a pile of gold which he counts frequently. The attachment he has to the gold has replaced any love he previously felt for God or another person. One day the gold goes missing and he is distraught at his loss – almost goes mad with grief. But then, when he arrives home one night he sees what he thinks is his gold by the fire. It turns out to be the golden curls of a tiny child, who he adopts as his daughter, and through her, learns to love again.

Love changes everything. Last week we heard the parables of The Lost Sheep and The Lost Coin, which precede one of Jesus' most famous parables – The Lost (or Prodigal) Son. In the same way as a woman might search for a coin she's lost, or a shepherd would look for his one lost sheep, God in his infinite love searches out anyone who is lost, and is full of joy when they are found. God hopes for, longs for, and looks for, our coming to him, in any way that we are able. 'You have formed us for Yourself, and *our hearts are restless till they find rest in You.*' *St. Augustine*
Sarah Shaw

Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees (SFAR)

Meeting on Thursday 25th August

Twenty-six of us attended a presentation by the Refugees Co-ordinator, David Bradwell, followed by a discussion, in the Church Hall towards the end of August. David had been briefed to provide us with background information, and then practical ideas about how we (as a church community and as individuals) can best support refugees and asylum seekers.

Background

David started by giving us some good news (not often we get that!) in relation to the numbers of refugees on the move in the world today. He was able to show that the situation has actually been worse historically than it is now (but of course, we know much more about this problem now, and our knowledge creates an imperative to do something!) He then gave some theological and scriptural underpinning to the refugee issue, including some video clips from The Bible Society which can be accessed here:

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/articles-about-the-bible/what-does-the-bible-say-about-refugees/>

David then provided some information about SFAR, a key strength being the fact that it is a truly inter-denominational and inter-faith organisation (the Scottish Episcopal Church being one of many supporters). More information about SFAR can be obtained by clicking here: <http://www.sfar.org.uk/>

David followed this up with information about numbers of refugees and the numbers drowning in the Mediterranean. 60 million people are displaced from their homes due to conflicts and persecution. Two thirds remain internally displaced inside their countries, while one third has crossed borders to seek international protection. The majority of these international refugees are hosted in neighbouring countries to the conflict. In 2016, 2,500 people had drowned in the Mediterranean as of June.

What can we do?

The key support we in Scotland can give to global refugees is contributing financially to humanitarian aid to the poorer countries which are hosting many refugees, putting their own economies and social services under pressure. This can be done through the Anglican Alliance or Christian Aid.

Donating goods can be helpful if done through an organisation with a lot of experience. David recommended Edinburgh Direct Aid.

In terms of the refugees in the UK, unfortunately the UK is not currently taking its fair share. A fair share would be 20,000 per year whereas the government has pledged to take 20,000 over 5 years. Scotland will take 10 per cent of the UK total by 2020 so there will be 2,500 refugees here by then.

The settlement policy is a 'thin spread' so that no area is overburdened. We discussed whether this was in fact good for the refugees who come here, who may feel isolated if placed somewhere remote. In Edinburgh there are currently around 53 refugees who have settled here. In terms of asylum seekers, all of the 2,300 in Scotland are in Glasgow. David recommended a number of organisations in terms of the advocacy and practical support work they are doing, as organisations we may want to contact with offers of support. Link Housing, Edinburgh Churches for Sanctuary, Edinburgh Inter-Faith Council, South Edinburgh Cluster of Catholic Churches were named. I was particularly interested in hearing the work of two organisations whose projects could well utilise the skills, interests and competencies of this church family. The first is an organisation called 'The Welcoming Association, based in Edinburgh, who support migrants and refugees in Edinburgh, helping Scotland to benefit from the diversity, experiences and talents that they bring. Over 1000 people from 60 different nationalities join their classes and activities each year. These are all available on a free of charge, immediate start basis and include opportunities to learn English, access advice and

information, discover Scottish culture, make friends, and share ideas, skills and interests:

<http://www.thewelcoming.org/>

The second is SFAR's own project – already launched in Glasgow – called The Weekend Club. The plan is to launch something similar in Edinburgh - monthly events for asylum seekers, refugees, and new migrants. These events offer interactive activities designed to help newcomers better understand Scottish culture and feel more at home:

<http://www.sfar.org.uk/actions-with-my-neighbourhood/glasgow/>

There will be a follow up meeting on Tuesday 27 September in the Rectory at 7.30pm, so that we can talk through these possibilities and agree some next steps – as a Church family, and of course individually, as appropriate. Sarah

Edinburgh World Justice Festival

As part of the Edinburgh World Justice Festival there are two events relating to refugees:

Saturday 8 October 1.30 – 6.30pm

**Augustine United Church, George IV Bridge,
Edinburgh**

Join together with Migrants, asylum seekers, settled refugees and those who advocate for them for an afternoon to explore and learn what people in Edinburgh can do in the face of worsening conditions for migrants. Includes Community Meal at 5.00pm
All welcome please register

Wednesday 12 October 6.30-9.30pm

Quaker Meeting House, Edinburgh

Supported by Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees &
Quaker Social Responsibility Group

An opportunity for people of faith and of no faith to share perspectives and concerns about the causes of forced migration, the global response to those fleeing injustice and the local responses to date. Hear about the many faith based initiatives in Edinburgh and see how you might participate supporting and working with refugees arriving in the city as well as those already here.

VESTRY REPORT – AUGUST

At the August Vestry meeting the following issues were discussed: Arrangements were finalised for the production of a shorter version of The Sign for September while attempts to find volunteers to form an editorial group were ongoing.

It was agreed that since using the Big Switch scheme for future energy contracts would not benefit Christian Aid the church would offset its carbon footprint by donating money to a charity for trees to be planted instead.

The Scottish Civic Trust has voiced no objection to the proposed church doors.

Work on the Rectory garden's north wall is required and legal advice on responsibility for the work is being sought.

Consideration of a lone worker policy is ongoing. A copy of the full minutes may be found at the back of the church.

Hilary Pritchard, Vestry Secretary

KNIT FOR PEACE

A second parcel of children's clothing has been sent to the charity Knit for Peace it contained two toddler jumpers, two baby jumpers with hats to match, a cardigan and a crocheted shawl. The charity wrote a letter of thanks to say they had received the first parcel and commented that "the clothes have a great impact on the communities where they are sent, not only do they provide much needed warmth but the recipients are always touched by the time and effort which has been put into making the items."

The Secret Knitters of St Cuthbert's also continue to make knitted bunnets and scarves for the Mission to Seafarers. These are delivered to the Diocesan Office and are also much appreciated by the charity.

Thank you all for your support. If you would like to knit for either charity there are patterns in the box in the Baptistry. If you don't want to knit but have some wool which you would like to donate, please put it in the box.

Margaret Holmes

Harvest Lunch

There will be lunch in the church hall immediately after the service on 2 October.

I should be very grateful for donations of fruit which could be used to make into puddings. Or, if you would like to make a fruit pie, that would be wonderful.

Proceeds will go to the Food Bank

Margaret Holmes

Please join us for
A Brew and a Blether
on
Saturday 1 October
from
2pm – 4pm
in the church hall

Everyone is most welcome.

SHALOM – In the presence of God

Shalom meets in the Lady Chapel at 10am on the last Saturday of each month for quiet reflective prayer. This is followed by coffee and cake and everyone is welcome to join us.

Saturday 29 October will be led by Margaret Temple, followed by a “bring and share” lunch at the home of Morgan & Veronica Jones. Please contact Wendy Pearson or Jean Myers for more information.

THE OPEN FORUM

The October meeting of the Open Forum will be on
Sunday 2 October at 9.15am.

Please note that because of preparation for the
Harvest Lunch
the meeting will take place in the Rectory.

The subject will be “Salvation”

WESTGARTH WALKERS

Dates for your Diary:

Sunday 13 November: Our next venture is on Sunday 13 November. Details of this will be placed on the Church Notice Board, in the Pew Notes and the November issue of The Sign. I will also email everyone on my list. As ever non walkers are more than welcome to join us for lunch.

Sunday 11 December: This is the proposed date for our Christmas lunch. I will obtain venue, prices etc. and place details on the Church Notice Board etc. The lunch is open to all members of the congregation and their families.

June Bungay

PHOENIX GROUP

WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER

We are having a SOCIAL GATHERING with Light Refreshments at 7pm on Wednesday 28 September at Margaret Temple's house 371 Lanark Road. All women in the congregation will be very welcome. Please contact Margaret Temple , if you would like to come along. A Christmas lunch is being planned and we would welcome suggestions for future events.

Margaret Kieran

THE LEPROSY MISSION SCOTLAND TLMS NEWS

Thank you all TLMS supporters who have handed in Blue Tub's recently. I have already collected over £120. If you have a tub already full, or nearly full, please hand it in in the next 2/3 Sundays. I intend to send a cheque for all the money I've collected at the end of October. I see in ASK 2016 [the prayer diary of TLM] that the work of the Leprosy Mission in SCOTLAND is the country to be prayed for in the week 10 – 16 October. From its offices in Stirling TLMS works to raise awareness of leprosy and its effects and to act as a vehicle through which people churches, school, community groups and others from across Scotland can find their role in defeating leprosy and transforming lives. So please add TLMS to your prayers, particularly during that week. Thank you for your support.
Barbara Tatlock

Play & Pray

No space or time to pray?

How do I help my child discover prayer,
whilst also finding nurture myself?

**A 6-week interactive series
for toddlers, pre-schoolers and their carers**

Wednesday mornings 11.15 am - 12.15 pm
6-week series on consecutive Wednesdays:
14th Sept, 21st Sept, 28th Sept,
5th Oct, 12th Oct, 19th Oct

at St Cuthbert's Church
Westgarth Avenue, Colinton,

THE SIGN

There are still temporary arrangements in place for producing the SIGN and a special thanks goes to Elspeth Miller and John Peacock for giving extra time to ensure it is printed and distributed as usual.

Thank you also to everyone who is continuing to provide content about activities and events and of course the ongoing rotas.

Some interest has been shown in the possibility of an editorial team but we still need to find some who would like to gather and collate articles and information. If you think this is a task you would enjoy please speak to one of the wardens.

THE SIGN Subscriptions

The annual subscription for THE SIGN is £10, £16 if you want THE SIGN posted to you, and £10 for the new magazine “Inspires” – the successor to “The Scottish Episcopalian”. Cheques should be made payable to St Cuthbert’s Church and handed in or sent to The Rectory, 6 Westgarth Avenue, Edinburgh EH13 0BD. Thanks to all our regular subscribers. We value your support.