

St John's

June & July 2016



St John's, by the grace of the Spirit, seeks to be an open community, walking in the way of Jesus, engaging with an ever-changing world and living a faith that is timeless yet contemporary, thoughtful and compassionate.

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In this issue

From the Rector

Diocesan Synod News: *Jill Duffield*

God, Creation and Providence: symposium report: *Eden Anderson*

Review: A Diary of Private Prayer by John Baillie: *Kenneth Boyd*

Scottish Parliament Nature Café: *Eleanor Harris*

Green Ginger Group: *George Harris*

Heartbeat: News of our Members

- Maundy Thursday at Windsor Castle. *Peter and Sheelagh Brand*
- Tributes to Freda Alexander. *Iain Alexander; Jenny Cheesbrough*
- Tribute to Mary MacDonald. *Sarah Morton*
- Anne Booth-Clibborn, award from Christian Aid. *Life and Work*

Forthcoming Events

Together News:

- David Denniston
- New Workplace Chaplain
- Amnesty

One World Shop

Coffee Rota

Readings

The next copy date is July 10th for the Festival Issue.

Cover image: Christ in Glory, from the Book of Kells

From the Rector



Markus Dünzkofer

Dear friends,

While Edinburgh was struggling with the last grips of winter, I stepped off a plane on 26 April into 29 degrees Celsius (83F) of Hong Kong humidity. Last year, I was invited to join a group of deans and rectors from around the Anglican **Communion: of St John's Cathedral, Hong Kong; St George's Cathedral, Cape Town; the American Cathedral, Paris; St James' Cathedral, Toronto; Holy Trinity, Wall Street, New York City; St Matthew's, Auckland; St James', Sydney; and St Mary-le-Bow, London.** The group meets annually in **one of its members' cities to learn about** the particular ministry context, to provide a source of support (including sharing

ideas and insights!), and to network in an environment that is nurturing, encouraging, and discerning. This year the Very Revd **Matthias Der, Dean of St John's Cathedral,** hosted us in Hong Kong. The conference is graciously underwritten by a rather generous grant from Trinity Episcopal Church, New York and this year members of the Hong Kong Cathedral also contributed quite substantially.

I am deeply grateful for the privilege of being invited to be part of this group of amazing colleagues and to be able to fly to Hong Kong this year. What unites the nine of us is the congregations we serve: they are all iconic churches within international financial centres and we were all touched by some or all of these: the *Occupy Movement*, the global financial crisis, or terrorism.

This trip was my first encounter with Asia proper. I am glad I was able to engage with Hong Kong culture, life, and especially Hong Kong people in a short, but rather intense way. It will yet again push me and challenge my own assumptions, preconceptions, and indeed prejudices.

And this is a good thing...!

I was also quite taken aback by the ministry of the church in Hong Kong. Even though Christianity and the Hong Kong Anglican Church (Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui 香港聖公會) represent a small minority, the ministry projects and outreach programmes were extensive and impressive in their scope and their faithfulness to the movement of the Spirit. It provided a wonderful challenge to

consider how our own resources can be **best utilised to help bring about God's** reign of reconciliation, peace, and justice. And this very much included thinking about the resource of our buildings, current and future. It is easy to lose heart right now, as the development seems to drag on. But in Hong Kong I was reminded that we are doing this for the right reasons. And we are doing this as a community blessed with especially wonderful human resources!

In Hong Kong, I was moved by one congregation that rebuilt their ministry centre to not only include a new worship space and parish offices, but also a school, a vocational training centre for disenfranchised youth and people with cognitive disabilities, and a community centre for seniors with dementia. The Cathedral is also busy with reaching beyond its walls. And yet, at the same time it functions as a spiritual oasis in the middle of this vibrant, busy, and at times overwhelming city. It is very much a **“House of Prayer for All People” (cf. Isaiah 56:7) welcoming weary souls “from every tribe and language and people and nation” (cf. Revelation 5:9).** The changing multicultural make-up of Hong Kong is reflected in worship offered at the Cathedral in Cantonese, Mandarin, English, and Tagalog. There is much to ponder as we seek to embrace the demographic changes in our own city.

One of the many scrumptious meals (which were real feasts: my waistline did **suffer...**) was **hosted by the Archbishop of Hong Kong**, who recently was elected

chair of the Anglican Consultative Council. Sometimes we forget in our little corner that we are not alone, and that there is within global Anglicanism an interconnectedness, which can at times be challenging, but which in return challenges a world that seems to foster isolation. Of course, this works in both directions. While we definitely should learn from the movement of the Spirit in other parts of our communion, we can also be a prophetic witness on aspects of Christian life others dare not engage.

One of the scholarly highlights of the trip was the presentation by the Revd Dr Philip Wickeri on the rapid growth of Christianity in Mainland China. Not long ago it was estimated that about 700 new churches spring up in China daily! While there might be a number of spiritual, societal, and theological reasons for this, **China's Christians come to faith without** much input from abroad, but through internal missionaries, mostly friends and relatives, who bring them. It is a post-denominational church in the making, void of links to the confessional expressions of Western Christianity. It could even be **described as somewhat “indigenous.”** And, yet, it is recognisably part of the same **Jesus-Movement as we at St John's in Edinburgh.** This is something we do need to watch and study as the Spirit might say something to us as well.

Finally, I also want to share a few words about the interaction with my wonderful colleagues. Much was discussed, there was much laughter and bonding, and we did also engage each other on deep

personal and professional levels. And they have become partners in mission and, indeed, friends.

We discovered that we all face the question of a decreasing relevance of the church in an ever-more secular society. Our Anglican Church, so much at the centre of decision-making processes in the past, is drifting to the margins. Considering **Jesus' witness, this might be the proper** place for the church anyhow. However, it brings the danger of pulling up the drawbridge of our ecclesiastical ivory-tower: Church pronouncements can seem to only speak about things relevant to us and with a specialised internal jargon. Are Anglican leaders retreating from society? Do they fear it will corrupt orthodoxy, or the accomplishments of past academic progress?

We are obviously lacking proper language: a language understood by the people (cf. Article XXIV of the 39 Articles); a language that can make sense of a confusing and confused world; a language that is daring to insiders and relevant to those beyond our walls; a language that can challenge the powers-that-be; a language that gives voice to the voiceless; a language that speaks of life

holistically; a language that empowers **people to join in building God's reign and** in working for the common good; and a language that is deeply faithful to the uniqueness of the Incarnation and yet incorporates the prophetic insights of the **Spirit's movement outside the church.** And this goes for our worship, our preaching, our expressions of ministry, our theological debate, our outreach, our communication – this letter from me to you included!

These are some far-reaching questions, and as much as I look forward to making sense of these with such a well-suited community like ours, I am also quite honoured to explore them in a group of engaged and engaging, thoughtful and thought-provoking priests in the Anglican Communion. And I hope we will shake up **things a wee bit... I am very much looking** forward to our next meeting in New York in the second week of May 2017.

Please feel free to talk to me more about my time in Hong Kong and, indeed, about anything else you would like to explore.

Yours in Christ,

Markus

Diocesan Synod Report

The main theme of the March Synod was Mission and Ministry, emphasising that the task of the Diocese is to support all churches in their efforts to live out the **'Five Marks of Mission':**

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- To teach, baptise and nurture Christians, and renew the life of the Church

- To respond to human need by loving service
- To transform unjust structures of society, challenge violence of every kind, and pursue peace and reconciliation
- To safeguard the integrity of creation, sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Although the appointment of a **'Mission Enabler' was still to be achieved**, work was in progress building on last **year's Mission Audit, to look at the** conditions leading to the closure of three small congregations and assist churches to draw up their own analysis of current challenges, and identify action to prevent a downward spiral. The Synod rejected any **idea of 'retreating into prosperous heartlands'. It is for congregations to** identify creative plans for the future, **including 'What could we let go of?' The** Diocese must be ready to offer support, **and move on from a 'sink or swim' model.** Ordained clergy are not solely for the benefit of the congregation but are public representatives of the church, tasked with engaging beyond the boundaries of a particular congregation. Linked charges or **'clustering' of congregations are amongst** the possibilities for financial or emotional support.

Small building grants of £5000 have **been awarded to St David's, Pilton, St Margaret's, Easter Road, and St Anne's,** Dunbar for innovative projects enabling reaching out to local communities; rather like our own Development but on a very

different scale. St David's has refurbished a meeting room for the Sunday School and a **local midwives' group. Plans for a history** group are in hand, and a triptych in the church has been cleaned and re-sited. A **Children's Leader has been appointed at St Margaret's, where a baby and toddler** group is drawing in many families from the **local community. St Anne's has gathered a** collection of letters home from soldiers of WW1. There is a window dedicated to Mothers of the Fallen in the chapel, as well as a project to make a film of the history revealed in the letters.

The Diocese has re-launched its website, (www.edinburgh.anglican.org) after work by a communications co-ordinator who undertook many discussions with diocesan officeholders and committees. Have a look! There is very good information as well as resources on Safeguarding to assist those having particular responsibilities in this area.

Part of the day was devoted to approving changes to the Cathedral Statutes to incorporate inclusive language. The changes skilfully avoid assumptions that the Bishop, Provost, Director of Music, Canons or Honorary Canons are male.

Finally, David Bradwell from Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees addressed Synod. Bishop John reinforced his message, **calling for 'solidarity on a world basis' as a** call to Christians towards the coming of **God's Kingdom.**

Jill Duffield, Lay Representative

Symposium: God, Creation and Providence

The Lindisfarne Room at St.

Cuthbert's was the setting for the fourth St John's Theology Symposium, led by the Revd Professor David Fergusson, Principal of New College and Professor of Divinity, Edinburgh University. Entitled 'God, Creation and Providence', the symposium was indeed a lively day of good food and wine, conversation and Q & A. It was galvanised by Prof Fergusson, a brilliant, clear thinking theologian, as he elucidated **the subjects 'God and the New Atheism' and 'Creation and Providence'.**

Participants learned something of the history of atheism beginning in the ancient world and emerging in the religious splintering after the Reformation in Europe; through scepticism in the Enlightenment to Hume, Nietzsche, Bertrand Russell, the National Secular **Society; and finally today's 'Four Horsemen'**- Hitchens, Dennett, Dawkins, and Harris - currently leading public discourse. Prof Fergusson characterised the New Atheism as angry, post 9/11, Islamophobic, male-dominated, popular and opposed to religion in the public sphere. He outlined the arguments for **New Atheism: proofs of God's existence,** vastness of the cosmos, the problem of evil, the harmful effects of religion and the view that we can live better without faith. In response, Prof Fergusson asserted that the question of God remains open; science explains downwards but morality, art and religion lift us upwards; religion and religious practice create social capital; it is

questionable whether a society can function indefinitely without the cohesive effects and rituals of religion: faith is practical, emotional and enriching. And, there is the question of Jesus.

The afternoon looked at Creation: God as the source and origin of the world. Prof Fergusson asked us to consider creation as a continuous phenomenon, the richness of God declaring the world to be good. He noted that the material world is **not hostile to God's purpose, and that humans, created in the image of God, have a unique place as stewards and as God's counterpart on earth.** [Note: *Creation* by David Fergusson is available in the Cornerstone Bookshop.]

As you might expect from an Edinburgh crowd, the conversation around the symposium tables was informed and erudite. Questions to the speaker treated such subjects as death and the New Atheists, humanism and atheism, how hope, wonder and love relate to atheism, evangelism in post-Christian society, how Big Bang Theory and Creation are **reconciled ['they are not inconsistent with one another'].** Prof Fergusson's breadth of knowledge allowed him to touch on dark matter and cosmology, the genome project and ethical issues in genetic engineering, our role as stewards of the environment **by God's providence, and the prediction by Stephen Pinker that the next great global issue will be meat.**

And meat we had, in a beautiful lunch

prepared by the indefatigable and superb **St John's 'caterers', Isobel Watkins,** Sheelagh Brand and Anne Usher. Stephen Holmes is to be congratulated for putting

together another highly engaging event in this symposium series exploring Christian theology.

Eden Anderson

Review: A Diary of Private Prayer

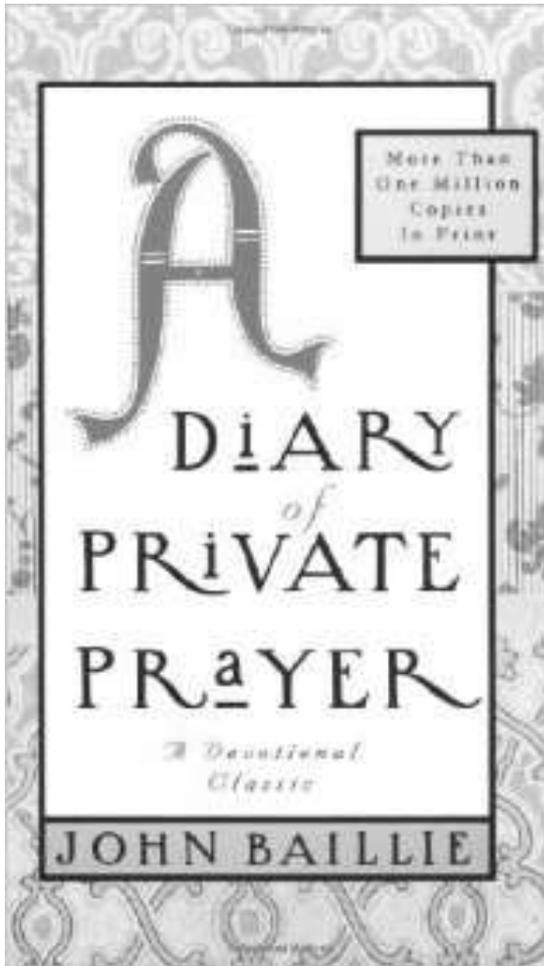
by John Baillie, updated and revised by Susanna Wright; New York: Scribner 2014

Almost two years ago, Robin Boyd asked me if I would write a review of this revised cycle of morning and evening prayers. Why has it taken me so long to do this? Partly because I wanted time to live and pray with it but also because a reluctance to write too readily seemed right when discussing something as personal as private prayer. There was something else too. On one of my less accessible bookshelves there was a 1960 reprint of the original 1936 edition. Inside I **had written 'again: Edin Mar 1962'. I had bought this copy as a student, but the 'again' indicated I had owned (but then lost) an earlier copy when still at school; and it was this book, I'm fairly sure, that made me want to study at Edinburgh University, where its author was Professor of Divinity. In the event, John Baillie retired before I began my divinity degree, so I was never taught by him, except through his theological writings and *Diaries* which introduced me to a rich variety of spiritual, theological and literary resources.**

A Diary of Private Prayer contains prayers for each morning and evening of the month: the left-hand page opposite is left blank for the reader to write prayers

of their own. In his introductory note to the first edition, John Baillie emphasised **that the prayers he had written were 'not intended to form the whole of the morning's or evening's devotions or to take the place of more individual prayers for oneself and others'. His prayers 'are to be regarded as aids'. Coming back to them again I found that to be both helpful and true. Prayer can take many forms, from a brief and spontaneous inner shout of thanksgiving or cry of petition, to the deep and disciplined contemplation of individuals and communities; prayer can be made through traditional liturgies, or more innovatively through headphones by downloading, for example, the Jesuits' 'pray as you go'.**

But for many of us, not only our attention-span but also our sympathies are **limited, and one of the most helpful 'aids' provided by Baillie's Diary is how its words can bring our straying thoughts and faltering prayers back to important things we were in danger of forgetting – to be thankful for, to be forgiven for, to pray for, all in the 'sense of the presence' (Baillie's phrase) of an all-knowing, but also all-loving, forgiving and restoring God. Baillie's**



prayers, for example to be forgiven for ‘My apathy towards wrongs that do not impact me, and my over-sensitiveness to those that do’, help to articulate the liberating experience of true repentance, while his prayers, for example for ‘those who are suffering the consequences of actions which they repented of long ago’ provoke me to expand my imagination to try to be a little less far away from the God to whom I pray.

Coming back to *A Diary of Private Prayer* after many years I realised that some aspects of it had remained alive and helpful in my memory ever since I first read them. There seemed to me no theologically or spiritually significant changes from the original version. And that, Robin Boyd told me, had been the

intention of Susanna Wright. Robin, who had been taught by John Baillie, was consultant to the revision project and **describes their collaboration as a ‘very rewarding dialogue’ between a ‘young theologian-mother looking after her family and deeply involved in the life of a non-affluent multicultural London parish’ and himself, ‘an elderly male cleric brought up on the King James version of the Bible and the Elizabethan prayer language of the diary’: they were ‘determined to be faithful to God, to the Bible, to contemporary English idiom, and to John Baillie’.**

In this, I believe, they have been highly successful: they have restored *A Diary of Private Prayer* to a more accessible place in my life, where I believe it will remain. For me, it holds together much that is best in the spirit of both Catholic and Reformed spirituality, in a sense of our deep need to be honest but unafraid in the presence of God. The novelist Marilynne Robinson has written of listening to sermons in terms of **‘the hope I, and so many others, bring into the extraordinary moment when someone attempts to speak in good faith, about something that matters, to people who attempt to listen in good faith’**. *The Diary*, it seems to me, helps to bring into private prayer, the seriousness but also the loving **expectation of that ‘extraordinary moment’**.

Kenneth Boyd

Scottish Parliament Nature Café Hustings

This was an event where I brought three of my networks - Wild Reekie, Edinburgh Central Eco-Congregations, and Scottish Environment LINK - together in one event, to do something I consider hugely important: to talk to our future political representatives about nature.

The candidates each had two minutes to give an initial introduction to their policies on nature and biodiversity. They then circulated around the five café tables to discuss the issues with voters in more depth.

This café format was promoted in 2011 by Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, when we ran one at St John's. It is a far better way to get real in-depth conversations going than a traditional platform-format hustings, which is why we adopted it as our chosen method to promote the Wildlife Proclamation.

The five candidates, Ben MacPherson (SNP), Charles Kennedy (Scottish Conservative), Hannah Bettsworth (Liberal Democrat), Lorna Slater (Scottish Green) and Richard Corral (Scottish Labour), were given in-depth grillings by each table.



I was very pleased that they agreed it was a much better format: both more probing and less adversarial.

Topics discussed included rewilding, land reform, forestry, development, brownfield sites and greenbelt, food production, marine conservation, climate change and natural capital.

While the candidates had all clearly done their homework on their parties' own biodiversity policies, there was a great deal of specialist knowledge in the room and numerous left-field questions. It was very encouraging to see the candidates listening as well as speaking, and making notes and exchanging contact details to go and find out about the various issues.

This demonstrates, to me, why it is essential for ecologists to engage in politics. We know our society is 'disengaged from nature', and politicians are no more likely than the rest of society to understand the importance of biodiversity. But they are always on the look-out for good policy, and will pay attention to a well-made case for what they should make the next big issue. If they do not act to stop biodiversity decline because no-one has shown them its importance, we have no-one to blame but ourselves.

My secondary aim for the evening was to ask all the candidates to sign the Scottish Environment LINK Wildlife Proclamation, which reads:
'Scotland's wildlife, habitats and landscapes

are of great importance. Investment in nature, in all its colour, variety and vitality, **underpins Scotland's cultural and economic future and resilience to climate change.** If elected I undertake to work to **restore Scotland's nature.'**

One might say this is the kind of catch-all statement it is easy for a candidate to sign up to, while pledging little. I would disagree for two reasons.

Firstly, explaining to a candidate why they should sign is to begin that process of showing why biodiversity is so important and so worthy of protection.

Secondly, even if the politician signs and forgets the Wildlife Proclamation, the organisations which make up Scottish Environment LINK will not. All signatories are listed publicly on the Wildlife Proclamation website, and those who are elected will be held to their pledge in the new parliament, for example by becoming a LINK Species Champion and engaging in an ongoing process of learning about and working for Scottish biodiversity.

Follow the Wildlife Proclamation on Facebook and Twitter, explore wildlifeproclamation.org.uk to order copies of the proclamation, hunt out your candidates at street stalls or hustings and invite them to sign up, and spread the word.

Finally, huge thanks to the congregation of St Andrews and St Georges West for letting us use their beautiful church and making it so hospitable, to their minister Ian Gilmour for chairing it and setting a perfect tone of thoughtful discussion, to the St John's Church Green Team for initiating the event and organising the publicity, and to all of you who came, bringing your knowledge of and passion for biodiversity, which made the whole thing possible.

To be kept in touch with future Wild Reekie events, please join our Meetup group. Follow me on twitter [@eleanormharris](https://twitter.com/eleanormharris).

Eleanor Harris

Notes from a Wild Garden

Spring hits the wild garden as though a crop-sprayer had passed over loaded with fairy dust. The celandines and the primroses were first to flower. They already look as though they are nearly over. Dandelions are sparkling and bright on the meadow, orangey-yellow against the green. I fail to understand why they are not a more welcome flower in gardens. They are certainly welcome to several

pollinators. My intention is to pick off most of their flower-heads before they set seed; though the structure of dandelion clocks is one of the wonders of nature. Bluebells are just coming out, a spreading carpet. I admit ours are the Spanish variety – established before we bought the house – but they still look nice. This very day (May 3rd) the first kingcup of the year flowered by the pond. And there is a

cowslip appearing in the long grass of the meadow.

‘Meadow’, by the way, is a posh word for the small area where I do not cut the grass, except once a year. I hope to be able to tell you of lots of goings on there in the next edition. One benefit of it is as a place for frogs to shelter. I nearly trod on one this morning. The tadpoles this year seem to be doing well. Whether it is the noisome cats or the building work next door I do not know; but we have had only one visit from mallards and no heron, so all eight blobs of spawn in the main pond seem to have hatched. I did see a newt **again in the “baby-bath” pond, so the small amount of spawn I put there may have come to a sad end.**

I think the newts with us are palmate newts. I went out with a torch one night and saw one in the main pond. Also I saw several great grey slugs on the compost heap. These magnificent nocturnal beasts, up to four inches long, only eat decaying vegetable matter, so are good friends. I only discovered their existence when I went out with a torch. Do try it.

The torch expedition was during those very hot days we had in early April. Sitting one peaceful lunch-time, I saw two bumble bees, three peacock butterflies, a queen wasp and a large hover fly. These

will all have just wakened from hibernation. **Don’t keep a garden so neat and tidy that** there is nowhere for insects to sleep.

I am sure the ivy thickets have some **birds’ nests in them, but I never know how** to find them without poking about and creating a disturbance. I saw a sparrow collecting feathers the other day. Also in the thicket there is a small gap at ground level, where I saw a very large fox disappear last week. If she keeps out of my **way I’ll keep out of hers.**

One of the very best things about spring is the new leaves unfolding. One of the best things about the hedge which I **planted (it isn’t really a hedge; there is a good boundary wall behind it)** is the variety of wild shrubs to watch through the seasons. Just now there are hazel leaves coming, hawthorn well-established, rowan reaching up to the sun, and a silver birch dusted with a most perfect greeny-yellow. The oak and the ash still look like winter. As for the beech, it still has autumn leaves on it.

My wild flower seeds from Mothers’ Day have germinated. I hope yours have too. Once the flowers have bloomed (August probably), do please take photos for a display at church.

George Harris





HEARTBEAT

St John's community
at the heart of the city
at the heart of the nation

Maundy Thursday at Windsor Castle

In December 2015 we received a letter out of the blue with a Buckingham Palace postmark saying that Sheelagh had been recommended to receive the Royal **Maundy at a ceremony at St George's Chapel, Windsor.** We responded positively, but it was some time before further details emerged, leading to our presence at **St George's on Thursday 24th March.**

So what is the Royal Maundy? The word Maundy goes back to the Latin **'mandatum' or commandment, referring to the lesson in St John's gospel where Jesus is recorded washing his disciples' feet: 'You are to do as I have done to you.' It can be traced back in England to the 13th Century when alms-giving and feet-washing on the Thursday of Holy Week were done by royalty.** The first such recorded event took place at Knaresborough in 1210. Since the 15th century the number of recipients has been **related to the years of the Sovereign's life so this year's ceremony involved 90** women and 90 men. In about 1730 the practice of feet washing was discontinued although the Lord High Almoner and his assistants still wear linen towels in remembrance of the practice. The

recipients each receive two purses, a white one containing in Maundy coins as many pence as the sovereign has years of age, and a red one with a nominal amount for provisions and clothing and a sum for the redemption of the royal gown.

The service itself took place within **St George's Chapel Windsor with a** congregation of well over 360 people drawn from all over the country and began with a briefing at 10.25 by the Lord High Almoner who advised that all that was **necessary was to say, 'Thank you, your Majesty', and not, as apparently happened once, to hand over a jar of marmalade!**

The organist took over, with a variety **of music from 'Ubi Caritas' to 'Zadok the Priest'. Gradually, the pageantry unfolded** as, firstly, a squad of Yeomen of the Guard marched in with their halberds to take position around the chapel and then the College of St George and the Chapel Royal processed in and took their places, to be followed at one minute to eleven by **the Queen's procession and The Royal Almonry procession.** Hymns, psalm and prayers followed, a striking note being the sheer volume of sound in the hymns and the quality of the music. After a reading

from **St John's gospel (13, 1-15)** the first half of the distribution took place.

A feature of the distribution was the **Queen's warm, personal smile as she** handed the purses over. A second reading, from St Matthew 25, followed, and the remainder of the distribution then took place. The service closed with prayers, the General Thanksgiving and a blessing from the Dean of Windsor. An equally colourful procession took the participants to the

West door for photographs while recipients waited for their transport in the chapel.

A reception in Windsor Castle concluded the proceedings, giving an opportunity to see inside one of the Royal Palaces and for recipients to chat with each other, in our case, with a party from Ely and London. By 2.30 we were on our way on the return journey.

Peter and Sheelagh Brand

Tribute to Freda Alexander



You all knew Freda in many different ways, such as - **St Andrews, St. John's, the Franciscans, academia, golf, hill walking, the theatre or through me.** Freda was my mum **and I'd like to share my memories of her** with you.

Firstly, she was more than a mum. My father Connor died 9th August, 1972 in a climbing accident in Austria – I was 11 months old. So from then on Mum was also my dad!

Mum was born in Northumberland. She was an only child. Her childhood home was Felton, a small village 20 miles

north of Newcastle. She never talked much about her father who was 60 when she was born. She was, however, immensely fond of her mother, for whom **the description 'extremely eccentric' does not do justice!** Following school, Mum went to Girton College, Cambridge. She was awarded a 1st class Maths degree. It was there she met my father, and her second husband Ron. At Cambridge, apart from studying, Mum played sport – tennis and golf for which she won a BLUE.

Except for two years teaching, she spent her entire career as an academic. She worked in universities across the UK— Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds and Southampton—before finishing as a Professor in Cancer Epidemiology at Edinburgh. She once said: teaching she tolerated – research she loved! This was never just work to her. She felt privileged to be an academic and made many life— long close friends.

I would characterise Mum as scatty

and absent minded. She certainly struggled with the more mundane aspects of daily life. She was always, always losing things: passports, glasses, keys. On several occasions she even managed to forget **where she'd parked her car that morning. Unashamedly, she'd dial 999, report her car missing and ask the police to keep a lookout for her.**

Car headlights were another lifelong recurring problem! She was always leaving the lights on and running the battery down. So frequent was this, that once the AA wrote to her, advising that they would cancel her membership if this happened again. Her final journey as a car driver was in October and representative: she broke down, she called the AA and she received a parking ticket!

Mum was a very determined lady. Whatever she was doing, she would not let a minor mishap stop her. She last attended mass on Christmas Day and stood at this lectern saying the bidding prayers. She loved doing this, and spent many hours writing the prayers. Unfortunately, she had misplaced her glasses that Christmas morning. So what did she do? Simple, she brought a very large torch to church, and asked me to stand next to her, shining the torch onto her papers.

Throughout her life Mum loved sport and speed. Rollercoasters and dodgem cars were a favourite – she adored these and kept finding new reasons to take the grand kids on the dodgems at Blair Drummond Safari Park.

Like her mum, she loved dogs. She had two bearded collies, Bushven and Blaven. She was quite particular about the type of dog she wanted. Brains, then good pedigree! So, after much reading and research, she subjected numerous puppies to a doggie IQ test she had created.

Mum loved spending time with my three children – Cammie, Amber and Beth. She enjoyed picking them up from school and would volunteer as a parent helper on school trips. She also taught **them 'Fun maths' and prepared individual tailored worksheets for each child.**

Even after being diagnosed with cancer, her adventures carried on. Her last big trip was to Spitzbergen, north of Norwegian mainland to see Polar Bears and ride upon fast rigid inflatable speed boats. Her only regret was being unable to swim in the sea with the others **because she'd forgotten her costume:** being several hundred miles inside the Arctic Circle and in her seventies was irrelevant.

Mum was diagnosed with cancer in 2011. Surgery was not an option; chemo might delay but would not cure. Mum never complained or moaned about this **or that she'd been a type 1 diabetic for many years.** She simply continued to want to help others, remained positive and carried on doing the activities she loved for as long as possible.

The final time I visited Mum, she was smiling but kept nodding off. **She'd had a good day and was drinking whisky, friends had visited and she'd given**

spiritual direction.

I'll leave you with six-year-old Beth's description of her granny. I asked Beth to describe Granny in three words. She closed her eyes and had a think, then with **a smile said, 'Crazy, funny and**

mathematical'!

Mum, you were all of these and many more.

Thank you.

Iain Alexander

Obituary for Freda Alexander : address at her

Memorial Service on 30 April 2016

One of Freda's characteristics was her open-mindedness. She was open to **the healing power of God's love, she was** open in her dealings with others and open and honest in the way she trusted people.

She enquired about the Third Order of St Francis when she was a busy Professor of Epidemiology and a single parent doing her best to be mother and father to her young son Iain after the death of her first husband. It was only after she retired that she was able to explore her vocation and be professed as a member of the Order.

At this time she also trained as a Deacon in the Scottish Episcopal Church **and served faithfully at St John's in** Edinburgh where many people were touched by her ministry and blessed by it. She was a member of the Epiphany Group and completed the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. She became actively involved with running Retreats in Daily Life and gave individual spiritual direction. She has been described by another member of the Group as being passionate and positive in all she undertook.

She was involved with Hadeel, the Palestine shop in Edinburgh and went to Israel/Palestine to help with the harvest and stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people when they were being intimidated by Israeli soldiers. In this, she was following a Franciscan aim to fight all injustice in the name of Christ.

After retirement Freda enjoyed visits to her cottage in Kingussie, skiing, and taking pleasure in the company of Iain, Gillian and her three grandchildren, Amber, Cameron and Beth. She experienced sadness too, when Ron, her second husband, became ill and needed extra care and attention. She seemed to cope with all that and still remain tremendously active in all sorts of ways.

Freda made contributions to the Third Order at Provincial (UK) level and **was what one tertiary has described as 'an inspirational' Area Minister for Scotland.** We shared interesting discussions and laughter too. Her sense of humour was an **aspect of Freda's character, together with her ability to be slightly 'chaotic', that** people at her Memorial Service spoke of

with affection.

But Freda was not only an activist. She enjoyed times of silence and quiet reflection and tertiaries shared many happy hours of worship and prayer with her in the chapel at Alnmouth.

As her illness began to sap her strength, Freda continued to bring her lively and analytical mind to bear on her illness so that she could have informed

discussions with her doctors and retain some sort of dignified control. The time came when she decided to have no further medical intervention and she described **herself at this time as being 'full of joy'**. She **wrote to friends: 'I hope to show by my own example that the end of life can be good and holy.'** **Christians know that this joy is a divine gift, coming from union with God in Christ.**

Jenny Cheesbrough

Tribute to Mary MacDonald

'Truly, A Life Well Lived'

Mary MacDonald (nee Warrack), longtime parishioner and sometime **guardian of St John's, died this year after a** typically stoic battle with the onset and insidious progression of Huntington's Disease. It was for many years just a tiresome inconvenience and simply **something that 'got in the way'**. **Indeed,** less than a year before her death, my mother and father went to Brazil to visit my sister Caroline and her family. Their favourite part of the trip was not the inexorable climb to the top of Mount Corcovado to touch the feet of Jesus Christ the Redeemer (which played havoc with Mum's vertigo) or the views of Rio Bay from the top of said mount...no, it was sitting in the twilight of an Amazon evening, listening to a huge choir singing Elgar loud enough to bring the non-existent roof down. The music of Elgar and the noises of the Amazon jungle combined

to give my mother one of her favourite travel memories.

Travel was the theme: the taking off and the journey.

We are all apparently on various 'journeys' now. We overcome a rare illness and are **said to have been on a brave 'journey'** or we learn a valuable life lesson and it's referred to as a tough but worthwhile **'journey'**. **However my mother really did** go on about 175 journeys in her lifetime. At the end of every one of these voyages, she would come home and come to St John's. My grandparents and my mother, Aunt Liz and Uncle Bill, occupied the very



rear pew on the left hand side of the church as you come in. As children we were hustled in here too...sometimes we had to spread out to two pews if our cousins were at church as well. From here you get the most wonderful views of our church. In our childhood many a long and, ahem, impenetrable sermon was delightfully interrupted when sunlight streamed in through the stained glass windows and turned parishioners and clergy blue or purple or yellow...

My mother loved the light through the windows and when later she and my father returned from their final overseas posting and settled just outside Edinburgh, my mother became a Guardian of these light-filled windows and took great delight in the reactions of visitors when the sun shone and the church glowed. This church was the centre of my mother's faith. She was a Christian by birth, by upbringing but most importantly by choice. In the course of her travels she was fascinated by Hinduism and Buddhism when we lived in India and she loved the Middle East for its ancient Islam and Judaism when we lived in Turkey. She was always curious - about everything - but particularly about religion. But when she and my father came back from the East it was to St John's and her deep-rooted Christian faith that she returned. Her last years were spent living just outside Edinburgh so when she was fit and able she would come to St John's every Wednesday afternoon as a Guardian and welcome visitors from home and abroad into her church. She considered it very

much her church, as we all do, those of us who have been lucky enough to grow up with St John's at our spiritual centre. When illness finally prevented her from continuing as a Guardian she still came to services here until finally the effort of fighting her increasingly obstinate body became too much of a battle to wage weekly, and she and my father came only occasionally. However, when she knew she was dying it was once again to St John's that she turned and the gentle pastoral care of Stephen Holmes who saw my mother through her final days and heard her speak her final words just as her mother had with John Armes twenty years previously. Their final words as good **Christians? Why 'Amen', of course.**

When we welcomed our friends and family to this Church on 22nd March this year, we were still in Lent.....but by gracious permission we were able to adorn her favourite place with beautiful flowers. With 18 members of the choir giving up their time to sing for Mum, and Dad, Caroline, Neil and myself, surrounded by our families and friends and members of the congregation, there was no better place to be. Thank you, St John's, for being here for her - you held her in your arms when she was christened; you watched her come down the aisle on her father's arm as she married my father and you comforted her family as we said our goodbye and sent her off on her final journey.

Sarah Morton

Congregational Achievement

Almut Boehme, Music Curator at the National Library and member of our choir, has received a personal achievement award from the UK and Ireland branch of the International Association of Music

Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML) at its Excellence Awards. The nominations for the awards were judged by a panel of experts from both the music and library worlds. Congratulations!

Christian Aid Thanks Dedicated Supporter

We are most grateful to Life and Work magazine for kind permission to reprint the following article:

Christian Aid Scotland has thanked a lifelong supporter for seventy years of dedicated voluntary work for the charity.

The story of how Anne Booth-Clibborn - who recently turned 90 - became involved in the charity was used last year in a UK-wide legacy campaign leaflet. Head of Christian Aid Scotland, Kathy Galloway, visited Anne earlier this year to present her with a framed memento of the leaflet recognising her contribution.

Anne's dedication to the organisation was inspired by her experiences as a driver by the British army when, aged just 19, was sent to post-war Germany and witnessed the desperate situation in the country.

Anne, who now lives in Edinburgh, **tells of one moment that inspired her: 'As I walked along the barbed wire fence that separated me from the Germans, I heard a woman's voice. She reached through the wire and handed me a copy of the New**

Testament in German. The next day, I gave her a copy of my own English Bible. It was a vision of the worldwide church that has inspired me ever since.'

In 1956, Anne travelled to Kenya as a Church of Scotland missionary. There she met her husband, Stanley Booth-Clibborn (later the Bishop of Manchester) and they stayed for 11 years working for the Christian Council of Kenya. On their return to the UK, Anne became secretary of the Christian Aid group in Cambridge and later in the 1970s she joined the **charity's board and the Africa Committee.**

Anne said: 'I am proud that I have been with Christian Aid since its birth and it has been a strong thread throughout my life. Many of the people who I have met through Christian Aid have been extraordinary.'

Head of Christian Aid Scotland, Kathy Galloway, said: **'Anne is an absolute inspiration to all of us working for Christian Aid in Scotland. Her commitment to the cause of refugees and displaced people is as strong as ever.'**



The Green Ginger Group

We failed to have a meeting in April. The combination of holiday time, great festivals of the church and trips to Hong Kong made it impossible to gather together a quorum. However, e-mail allows business to be done even if there is no meeting, and no coffee served.

- The Hustings on April 6th was by all accounts a great success. (I was away on holiday.) Many thanks to all who attended, and joined the candidates in discussion. Of course the real success will be seen if our new MSPs, whoever they are, (as I write the election is tomorrow) put environmental concerns high on their agenda. It is hard to think of many things more important than climate change, biodiversity, the pollution of the seas and the pollution of the air.
- Creationtide planning has suddenly tipped over from the dreams and visions stage to the practical organisation stage. This is in some ways alarming. Expect to be kept informed as vague plans become concrete and there are things for you to join in, and dates to put in your

diary. Edinburgh Living Landscape is the theme.

- Charlotte Bray is no longer, as you **know, regularly at St John's. Her** membership of the GGG was invaluable. One of the last things she did was get us talking about Trees for Life. Eleanor Harris knew a bit about this charity too. One thing led to another. Anna Watt negotiated with them that we could have a Family Grove, rather than a Corporate Grove - a considerable financial saving. George Harris was keen to reduce the number of his paintings jostling for space. Several of you were prepared to bid for them. I am writing this after the successful raising of **£240 but before the St John's Grove** has been set up. If I have understood correctly we shall be able to start off with 46 trees, and will have a page on the Trees for Life website. Do look at their website and you will see what exciting work they are doing to re-wild the Highlands. We look forward to telling you all about it in the next issue.

Forthcoming Events

The Psalms – The Prayer Book of Israel

Saturday 28th May, 2 – 4pm at the Trinity Centre, Haddington, East Lothian.

With Dr Anja Klein, Chancellor's Fellow in Biblical Studies (Hebrew Bible), School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh. The Psalms constitute the core part of the Hebrew Bible. Psalms are frequently used in everyday worship, and most Christians are familiar at least with the classics such as **Ps23, or Ps139 ('If I take the wings of the morning ...')**. **This talk will shed light** on the importance of the Psalms, show how Israel participated in the worship and culture of its Ancient Near Eastern surroundings, and how the identity of the people of the God of Israel was formed.

No booking required: £5 on the door.
adventures@dioceseofedinburgh.org

Social Committee Summer Talk
Tuesday 14th June, 7.30pm (doors open 7pm for wine and nibbles)

St John's Church Hall

Christian Aid describes itself as **'a Christian organisation that insists the world can and must be swiftly changed to one where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty. Working globally for profound change that eradicates the causes of poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all, regardless of faith or nationality'**. Anne Booth-Clibborn has been involved in Christian Aid since its foundation in 1941. Come and hear her tell us the history of the origins of and the motivation behind one **of society's best known relief and development charities.**

Tickets (£5) available from members of the Social Committee during coffee during Sunday coffee hour.



David Denniston

Our team in Together suffered a major change at the end of March when **David Denniston, Minister of St Cuthbert's**, left Edinburgh to become one of the team of Interim Ministers in the Church of Scotland. His wife, Jane, has lately been inducted to the Parish of Campsie (Lennoxton).

David's inspirational contribution to Together is something we need to treasure in retrospect. David was part of Together from its start in September 2008, and has been the longest-serving of the Together ministers.

What does he feel now about his 7½ years with Together? I asked him what he felt as he looked back.

What has been Together's major achievement in your time?

David: The setting up and maintenance of the Workplace Chaplaincy. This built on initiatives that had been around in our churches earlier on, such as Oasis (outreach to businesses at **St Cuthbert's**) and the appointment at **St Andrew's and St George's of an Outreach Minister**. When the decision was taken to launch a Workplace chaplaincy on behalf of all the Together churches, we were extraordinarily fortunate in finding that

Tony Bryer, who had earlier been the **St Andrew's and St George's Outreach Minister**, was available to come back to Edinburgh. Tony already knew the terrain, so was off to a flying start, and this Ministry has in a sense never looked back, and this has led on to a team of volunteer chaplains. Because the WPC was set up by all our three churches in partnership, it was a genuinely ecumenical initiative. Our joint action in this, therefore, is the key to future ventures.



What are your key hopes for the future?

David: For churches to find new ways of sharing the good news, ways that are fresh, new and engaging.

His other hope is for a sharing of the wonderful resource of buildings, space and staff that our three churches have in the vibrant centre of our city. He hopes that in the future we shall manage our resources in the best way to the glory of God.

What is Together's biggest challenge?

David: To achieve ownership of Together by our three congregations.

One thing David will greatly miss is

the fellowship of the three ministers, and the companionship of Ian Gilmour and Markus Duenzkofer on the journey.

David has often played a visionary role, ever concerned to find the best way

the churches can fulfil their role in the city centre. All in Together wish him well in what he does next, and recognise with gratitude his prophetic and warm-hearted presence in all we have done over the last 7 1/2 years.

New Workplace Chaplain

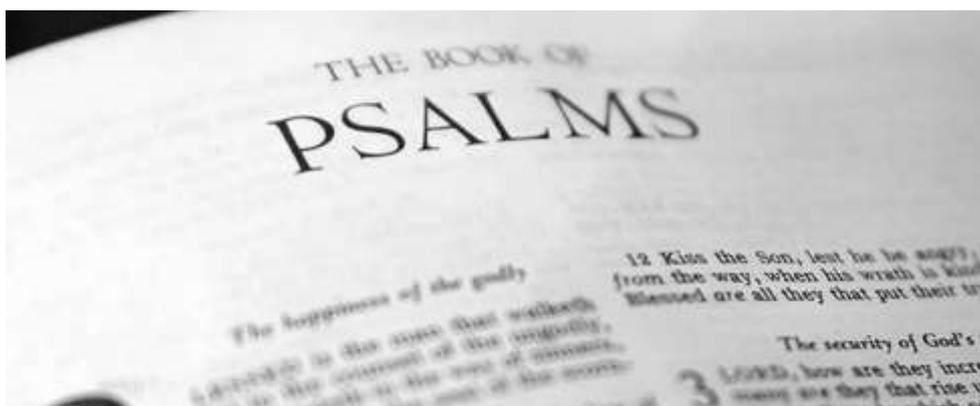
With the impending retirement of Tony Bryer, David Hart has been appointed to succeed him. Here David introduces himself.

Although I was born in Lurgan, Northern Ireland, my formative years were spent here in Edinburgh as a result of my **father's employment. I gained my theology degree** in my early twenties at the London School of Theology where I prepared for pastoral ministry. I worked with a Baptist church and an independent church for six years until the summer of 1992 when God (denominationally and geographically) uprooted my family and me to London where I joined the pastoral staff of South West London Vineyard. My wife and I happily worked there until God called us to return to Edinburgh to church plant in 2000 and from then until August 2014 we led the Edinburgh City Vineyard and planted another Vineyard church in Falkirk. I am passionate about seeing the Church,

God's bride, be all it can be for his glory, having an impact and changing our world. As well as this I am passionate about rugby, and my family!

To the best of my ability I want to grow in my pursuit of Jesus and live the life he has called me to live so I am excited about this next chapter as I take up the role of chaplain to Edinburgh City Centre.

Alongside the call to be a relevant witness, I believe the church and workplace chaplaincy, through partnership, have been given an amazing opportunity to reflect the love of Jesus to the world around us. My hope is that together, we can encourage one another to continue to look for ways to connect the grace that is on us with the people who are around us. Why? Because the dream God has in his heart for the city is so much greater than the Church.



Amnesty

Are you interested in helping **Prisoners of Conscience? There's a** growing, lively, active Amnesty group which meets in the Undercroft café at **St Andrew's and St George's West on the last** Monday of each month at 12.15 pm for approximately an hour.

Good conversation and excellent food is enjoyed but combined with a more

serious task to write letters campaigning for the release of prisoners of conscience. We usually finish about 1pm and have had some success within the last 12 months.

The group has also engaged in on-street campaigning, fundraising and fun jazz evenings and film nights – everyone is welcome to come along.

News from the One World Shop

25, Nicolson Square, Edinburgh EH8 9BX

It's been seven months since we moved our shop from St John's over to the Methodist Church at Nicolson Square. How time flies! Almost every day we have **customers coming in saying they didn't** know we had moved and had finally found us. In spite of all our efforts, we still have much to do to spread the news of our **new location, so we're very grateful for the** help in passing on our new address by **St John's members.**

It's taken us time to settle in but most things are in place now and we are starting some interesting new initiatives. We are holding regular talks and presentations on our products and the people who made them. For example, in April we held a wonderful talk by Sophi Tranchell, Managing Director of the delicious Divine Chocolate. Sophi spoke

movingly of the work they do with the Ghanaian cocoa farmers who have a 45% share of the company and the extraordinary difference they have made.

The chocolate tasting also went down very well. 15 varieties are now available including Dark Chocolate with Mango and Coconut, Dark Chocolate with Toffee and Seasalt and many others.

More details of this and other talks coming up are available on our website: www.oneworldshop.co.uk

Rachel Farey

0131 667 8323



St John's Coffee Rota

The Coffee Rota is as follows:

May

1st S Brand; E Law; S Goode

8th M Warrack; S Jameson; P Walliker

15th H Tait; S Brand; J McLeod

22nd A Usher; E Anderson; C Legge

29th M Currie; V Lobban; J Taleyarkhan

June

5th G Edgar; L Darke; W Wyse

12th S Brand; S Kilbey; E Law

19th E Yeo; S Goode; C Legge

26th H Tait; S Jameson; E Anderson



Sunday Readings

Sunday Readings June to July 2016

Readings for all services each week are available in the *St John's Calendar and Lectionary 2015-2016* available at Cornerstone or the shop in the North Aisle for £5.

Year C	9.30am Matins	10.30am Eucharist	6.00pm Evensong
5 June Pentecost 3	Psalms 12, 13 1 Kings 17.17-24 Luke 7.8-16	1 Kings 17.8-16 Psalm 146 Galatians 1.11-24 Luke 7.11-17	Psalms 10, 11 Genesis 12.1-9 Matthew 9.9-13, 18-26
12 June Pentecost 4	Psalms 14, 15 2 Samuel 11.26-12.15 Luke 7.36-8.3	1 Kings 21.1-21 Psalm 5.1-8 Galatians 2.15-21 Luke 7.36-8.3	Psalm 18 Genesis 18.1-14 Matthew 9.35-10.8
19 June Pentecost 5	Psalms 16, 17 Isaac 65.1-9 Luke 8.26-39	1 Kings 19.1-4, 8-15a Psalm 42 Galatians 3.23-29 Luke 8.26-39	Psalms 23, 25 Genesis 21.8-21 Matthew 10.24-39
26 June Pentecost 6	Psalm 19, 20 1 Kings 19.15-16, 19-21 Luke 9.51-62	2 Kings 2.1-2, 6-14 Psalm 77.1-2, 11-20 Galatians 5.1, 13-25 Luke 9.51-62	Psalms 33, 36 Genesis 22.1-14 Matthew 10.34-42
3 July Pentecost 7	Psalms 23, 121 Job 42.1-6 1 Peter 1.3-9	Habakkuk 2.1-4 Psalm 126 Hebrew 10.35-11.1 Gospel of John 20.24-29	Psalm 27 Isaac 43.8-13 Gospel of John 14.1-7
10 July Pentecost 8	Psalms 26, 27 Deuteronomy 30.9-14 Luke 10.25-37	Amos 7.7-17 Psalm 82 Colossians 1.1-14 Luke 10.25-37	Psalms 41, 42 Romans 8.1-11 Matthew 13.1-9, 18-23
17 July Pentecost 9	Psalms 28, 29 Genesis 18.1-10 Luke 10.38-42	Amos 8.1-12 Psalm 52 Colossians 1.15-28 Luke 10.38-42	Psalm 44 Romans 8.12-25 Matthew 13.24-43
24 July Pentecost 10	Psalms 32, 34 Genesis 18.20-32 Luke 11.1-13	Hosea 1.2-10 Psalm 85 Colossians 2.6-15 Luke 11.1-13	Psalm 144 Deuteronomy 30.11-20 Mark 5.21-43

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St John's Terrace	Cornerstone Bookshop Anna Pitt	229 3776
Vergers	Matt Newman, Craig Senior, Ryan Dimarco	

For weddings and baptisms please make contact initially with the Church Office

St John's

St John's is an active city-centre church within the Diocese of Edinburgh of the Scottish Episcopal Church, which is part of the world-wide Anglican Communion.

We welcome people of all denominations or none, firmly committed in faith or doubting and enquiring.

SERVICES AT ST JOHN'S

Sunday

- 8.00am Holy Communion
- 9.30am Choral Matins (not on 1st Sunday)
- 10.30am Sung Eucharist with activities for children
- 6.00pm Choral Evensong

Monday

- 10.30am Service for the deaf (1st Monday only)
- 12.30pm Eucharist

Tuesday

- 12.30pm Eucharist
- 3.30pm Silent Prayer

Wednesday

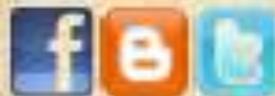
- 11.00am Eucharist
- 12.30pm Midday Prayer

Thursday

- 12:30pm Eucharist

Friday

- 12.30pm Eucharist



@churchofstjohn



EDINBURGH City
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TOGETHER

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