



Augustine United Church,  
George IV Bridge, Edinburgh  
EH1 1EL 0131 220 1677  
www.augustine.org.uk  
Scottish Charity no. SC000385

**Church Secretary:** Kathleen Ziffo  
secretary@augustine.org.uk  
or via the church office

**Minister:** Rev Fiona Bennett  
minister.auc@gmail.com  
07552 162 717

**Assoc. Minister:** Rev Maxwell Reay  
revmaxwell.auc@gmail.com  
07957 543 359

**Church Administrator:**  
Rachel Fitzgerald  
administrator@augustine.org.uk  
0131 220 1677

**Seeds Editor:** Tamsin Kilgour  
newsletter.auc@gmail.com

**Website Editor:** Lorna Bowry  
lorna.bowry@yahoo.co.uk



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## *Small Steps of Love*

*By Nicola Robinson*

In one of his sermons, Martin Luther King revealed:  
"Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that; Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that."  
There is an acknowledgement that darkness does occur, but that hatred should not be met with hatred, only love can 'drive out' or relentlessly overcome hate.

At our Contextual Bible Study in June we explored God's presence in darkness and love and considered what Psalm 23 might offer us to reflect on our lives, communities and the world today. Within the Book of Psalms, Psalms like Psalm 23 were composed and spoken in the midst of challenging experiences and dark times. Specifically, the Psalm says: "The Lord is my shepherd...[and] even though I walk through the valley of deep darkness."  
In recent weeks, the

experience of darkness feels very real in our lives and world today.

When I read this Psalm in light of the events that happened in the early hours of Sunday 12th June, I feel these words resonate just as strongly with the original listeners as the words do to for us reading or listening to them today. The shooting in Orlando - the violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender folk - is thought to have been motivated by hatred, and perhaps fear, of the LGBTIQI community. In the aftermath, I know I felt deeply frightened, with urgent questions about why and how such an event could take place?

The Message Bible often provides a directness and freshness to translation. Whilst the NRSV translation of Psalm 23 verse 6 reads: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my

< 1 life." The Hebrew word for 'follow' is 'radaph' and it means to "to pursue, to run after, to chase" or, quite literally, "to hunt you down." All the days of our lives, God is not simply following us, but relentlessly pursuing us with opportunities to provide and experience love.

So, how can such a perspective of believing we are relentlessly pursued by love transform the way we live our lives? Henri Nouwen stresses: "Each small step of love is like a candle burning in the night. It does not take the darkness away, but it guides us through the darkness." As such, by actively taking 'small steps of love' in our own lives, we can navigate through the darkness.

In the days following the tragedy in Orlando, I was fortunate to witness three such 'small steps of love.' The first was when LGBTQI folk and allies came together at vigils, in cities and towns across the UK and around the world, to show respect to the victims of the shooting and to send a message of solidarity to LGBTQI folk everywhere. I attended the one in St Andrew's Square, here in Edinburgh. Through the pouring rain, rainbow umbrellas and placards with "Love is Love" were witnessed everywhere. I experienced a palpable sense of God being present in our pain and being with us in 'each small step of love.'

And a few days later, another 'small step of love' was evident at 'Faith at the Foot of the Rainbow' - a day workshop for LGBTQI folk and faith communities and organisations who work with and support LGBTQI folk. Indeed, this workshop brought together folk to explore and embrace practical ways of living out God's unconditional love for all.

Then, on Saturday 9th July, the United Reformed Church General Assembly passed a resolution allowing our Ministers of Word and Sacrament to celebrate same-sex marriages. Our minister, Rev Fiona Bennett says, "I am overwhelmed with joy that in our local church we can now honour before God the loving relationships of people of the same gender in the covenant of marriage. It is another step in a journey of justice and joy."

As such, when we experience 'the valley of deep darkness' in our own lives and in our world today, we can recognise that the God of Love is relentlessly pursuing us and providing us with opportunities to take and witness 'small steps of love.'

I end with a wonderful prayer from Rachel Mann about God's relentless love:

Passionate God, Fierce Indwelling Love,  
whose hunger for peace and justice  
extends through the heights and depths of Creation.

We cry out for peace and respect in a violent world,  
we commit ourselves to unconditional love.  
We stand in furious solidarity with queer people  
in Orlando and around the world,  
and ask, 'How Long, O Lord?'

O Fierce Indwelling Love,  
may your passion for justice, mercy and love  
make us unafraid of the other within,  
and joyous in our celebration of your Rainbow People.

Through the One whose Love  
Knows no limit, whose mercy is unbound, Jesus Christ. Amen.

*('A Prayer for Orlando' available from: [www.therachelmannblogspot.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.therachelmannblogspot.blogspot.co.uk))*

**PARADISE  
GREEN**

## *Paradise Green Productions @ The Edinburgh Fringe*

We are excited to welcome back Paradise Green Productions for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe again this year. As you will see, the church building has already been taken over by scaffolding for our building works, and now it will be transformed further by PGP for the month of August!

Why not come along to Augustine during the Fringe to see a show? Aladdin, Brundibar (a children's opera), Cinderella, Into The Woods Jn., Mercy and The Wild Sea, Shakespeare Tonight, Spring Awakening, The Diary of Anne Frank, any many many more!

More information and tickets online are available from [www.edfringe.com](http://www.edfringe.com), or from the Paradise Green box office at AUC (in person, or 0131 510 0022)



As in previous years, Saughtonhall Drama Group are also taking part in the Fringe. This year's production, 'Ne'er the Twain' runs from 8-13th August (7.30pm daily, 2.30pm Saturday) at Saughtonhall URC. It is a comedy set when the town of Leith was about to reluctantly join Edinburgh.

### *Pastoral Care*

If you have prayer requests or would like to contact a minister, please contact:

Rev Fiona Bennett ([minister.auc@gmail.com](mailto:minister.auc@gmail.com))  
Rev Maxwell Reay ([revmaxwell.auc@gmail.com](mailto:revmaxwell.auc@gmail.com))

Requests can also be made via the Prayer Requests box in the porch (kept locked, accessed by the ministers) or via the Church Office.

If you would like support due to a mental health issue, you would be welcome at the Mental Health Drop-in, held weekly on Tuesdays 10.30am-Noon followed by a Time for Reflection). During the Fringe (calendar month of August) this is held at Sacred Heart Church, Lauriston Street rather than at AUC. Speak to Maxwell for further info.

(Full contact details for Fiona/Maxwell are on the cover of Seeds)

### *Getting involved*

Within AUC there are 7 Ministry Teams which are responsible for different areas of Church Life. If you would like to know more or get involved with one of these please e-mail the contact person

#### **Children & Young People**

**Kirsty Murray**

[kirsty.murray@ed.ac.uk](mailto:kirsty.murray@ed.ac.uk)

#### **Membership**

**Alex Peden**

[a.peden@ed.ac.uk](mailto:a.peden@ed.ac.uk)

#### **Our Tribe (LGBTI Ministry)**

**Nicola Robinson**

[nicola.a.robinson1@gmail.com](mailto:nicola.a.robinson1@gmail.com)

#### **Commitment For Life (Social Justice Ministry)**

**Kathleen Ziffo**

[secretary@augustine.org.uk](mailto:secretary@augustine.org.uk)

#### **Pastoral & Mental Health**

**Doris Caldwell**

[hhfcaldwell@gmail.com](mailto:hhfcaldwell@gmail.com)

#### **Worship & Christian Education**

**Rev Fiona Bennett**

[minister.auc@gmail.com](mailto:minister.auc@gmail.com)

#### **Centre, Property & Finance**

**Tom Murray**

[murray.tom@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:murray.tom@blueyonder.co.uk)

If you would like to get involved volunteering within AUC or the local community:

#### **AUC Volunteering**

**Anne and Nicola Robinson**

[rota.auc@gmail.com](mailto:rota.auc@gmail.com)

#### **Local Community Volunteering**

**Della Morris**

[dellagreenlanes@gmail.com](mailto:dellagreenlanes@gmail.com)



## *United Reformed Church General Assembly*

### *8-11th July 2016, Southport*



Having had a terrific 3 months of Sabbatical, I started back at work by attending the URC General Assembly in Southport (along with Ben Forsyth, AUC elder).

It was my utter joy to be part of the vote which overwhelmingly agreed to permit local churches to celebrate weddings of people of the same gender, if the local church so wishes to do. This is the conclusion of a formal 2 years' process of consultation throughout the URC, which has followed on from several previous years of discussion within the Synod of Scotland.

As the forest of (appropriately) green cards was raised in support of this motion, I sat in awed silence with tears rolling down my face, my heart bursting with gratitude, as I thought of members and friends of our own congregation who could finally have their love and personhood fully honoured and celebrated before God within our tradition. It was a moment in which the direction of our church shifted just a few degrees, and the Good News of Jesus became more real.

A much harder story to hear was the address from the Rev Dr Majid Abel, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Pakistan, who shared with us the struggles and the creative ministry which Christians in Pakistan are being forced to discover as they experience violent persecution. During all of their worship services they require an armed guard surrounding the church building; and in daily life Christians regularly experience exclusion & stigma, and are denied opportunities to work and live as they choose. Yet in the midst of this, Rev Abel's church have been doing tremendous work to build relationships with the other faith groups in their local community, which, with much time and effort, has now led to Christmas and Eid being celebrated together.

We heard at General Assembly about how the URC is trying to address the shortage of money and number of candidates which we have as a

denomination for stipendiary Ministers of Word and Sacrament. We discussed how they are looking to distribute these resources wisely across the UK while also responding openly and creatively to the Spirit in this situation. We also noted that, while the number of Ministers of Word and Sacrament is declining, the number of those serving in the ministry as Church-related Community Workers is slowly increasing. Throughout General Assembly we heard many stories of Good News – Gospel reality being built on and developed in URC local churches throughout the UK, as the vulnerable (in many forms) are loved & supported, and lives both inside and outside the church are transformed by putting love in action.

All of this has led the URC to introduce an initiative called 'Walking the Way', which is a fresh emphasis on making and releasing disciples within the URC. From what I could tell it looks to be a broad common identity and purpose for local URC churches, which will embrace and adapt many of the established streams of education such as TLS, along with other areas. Over the coming months more information will come to us, but in the meantime the URC website is a mine of resources (i.e. you have to dig for it through the site, but it is there!)

Four days of General Assembly making decisions on the life of the church for the next 2 years is always going to be quite an intense experience. However, working round tables (as we do at our residential Synod meeting), using a mixture of voting and consensus decision-making, with a number of parallel sessions to cope with the volume of material, it was a very well-orchestrated business meeting, through which we got to meet, spend time, and worship with URC folk from the 12 other Synods. Amidst the work it was a good experience which I can recommend.

**Rev Fiona Bennett**

## *Commitment for Life CLMT Update— TTIP Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership*

**A**round a month ago I offered to write an article on the Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership (TTIP). AUC had been contacted by campaign group Global Justice Now (which AUC has engaged with in the past when it was known as the World Development Movement) to ask us to play a role in holding to account those working on the much-loathed trade agreement being drawn up between the EU and the US. I was pretty up-to-speed on where the negotiations over this were; I had an understanding of the key issues at hand, such as the impact on the NHS and the potential for private companies to sue governments in closed-door court proceedings; in short, I had a picture of what I would write.

However, June was no ordinary month. As we stand (and I'm sure this will have changed by the time you're reading this!), we have voted to leave the EU, some of Scotland's most prominent politicians are in the process of investigating whether Scotland could remain, we are faced with a resigning Prime Minister and a number of potential replacements, and there is to be a leadership challenge in the Labour party. All this makes this article a little tricky! As a result, I'm going to jump straight to what Global Justice Now would like us to do.

In addition to TTIP, the original focus of Global Justice Now's campaign, the EU is also negotiating CETA. CETA is a very similar deal to TTIP but between the EU and Canada. This deal is much further on, and there are big concerns this could mean the UK and Scotland could be held to all or parts of it despite Brexit. As TTIP negotiations are not as far on, it is less likely to happen and subsequently Global Justice Now has chosen to switch its focus from TTIP and is asking people to contact their European representatives (MEPs) and express their concern with CETA.

They would like us to call for the implementation of CETA to be subject to the

approval of each individual EU country as well as the approval of the European Parliament. They would also like us to ask our MEPs not to vote for CETA, should the decision come to a vote while Scotland still has MEPs.

You can email our MEPs at the following addresses:

ian.hudghton@ep.europa.eu;  
david.martin@ep.europa.eu;  
ian.duncan@ep.europa.eu;  
alyn.smith@ep.europa.eu;  
cstihlermep@btconnect.com; and  
david.coburn@davidcoburnmep.com.

You don't need any in-depth knowledge to contact them – just let them know you share Global Justice Now's concerns, or set out your own thoughts if you prefer.

But what about TTIP? The UK Government is broadly in favour of the deal, although it hasn't yet been finalised, and is likely to be happy to sign up to it. However, because of the controversy it has generated and the fact it will *definitely* be subject to the approval of each member state (in contrast to CETA), the process for agreeing TTIP may take much longer and mean the UK would not be a party to it.

Global Justice Now and other campaign groups are clear they would like to see both CETA and TTIP scrapped and, even if they go ahead without the involvement of the UK, they will support European partners to work to this aim. For our part, the AUC Commitment for Life team will be keeping an eye on the ways we might wish to engage with this issue going forward. If that's something you might like to get involved with do let us know!

**Eilidh Carmichael**

More information:  
[www.globaljusticenow.org.uk](http://www.globaljusticenow.org.uk)





## *Dandelion Greens—Your Gifts*

*(Things to chew on from the Membership Ministry Team)*



There are pieces of dandelion art around our church, celebrating and commemorating various things. Two of them turned out to come to a stunning contrast when I tried to investigate them.



The first is the banner above the door to the foyer (above). This is a wonderful banner proudly stating our inclusivity and love for the world. The wall banner was made for a Scottish Synod meeting where AUC had to make a banner representing which of the Synod aspirations we felt were important for our congregation. We of course chose them all (!) and a small group of us came up with the dandelion design where the rainbow colours represented our diversity. Lewis did the sewing. It is in the same style as the Our Tribe banner which we use at Pride.

“There was something good about coming together with a shared idea; I remember we did cut out the pieces together, so there was that shared activity. As to what I think about it now - I think that it is important that our aspirations are right there in the entrance way. It tells people who we are (if they look up!) and it tells us who we are aspiring to be which is important. We need to remind ourselves about where we are going and what we think is important. I hope people like it. I think it is beautiful and am proud of the work that people put in to make it, and of the work I put in.” – Lewis

The second is a signed dandelion painting downstairs in the Junior Room (below). This is a mysterious dandelion that appears forged in contradiction. There are signatures from people who were a part of this church at different times, and some think it must have been a part of an all-age worship service, while others can't imagine it being the focus, instead being some sort of card or separate pledge.



The Rathjens were able to narrow it down: “Signatures of John & Mary Brockington and also Pat Tweedie. The date must have been at least 4 years ago because the Brockingtons moved away about then”. Was it when MCC joined? Probably not, as Lewis would have remembered and the ‘quilt’ on display in the Sanctuary was created for that occasion. The Brockingtons were also confounded: “What really puzzled us is that Bungie's signature is prominent on it, but so are a lot of the former MCC people who did not join AUC until sometime after Fiona became minister.” They only met Bungie at a funeral and he was not at the service that this was potentially a part of. In my enquiries the best theory I

<6 got was that it must have something to do with the 150th anniversary of the church building (2011) early in the time Fiona joined us as pastor. Perhaps someone took the painting to be signed by others and then had the congregation sign it on the anniversary? Do any of the children recognise when their writing was like that? If you know more do let us know, and if you don't...it is fun to have a mystery!

These works show a clear message of love and acceptance above the door and an artwork of vague understanding downstairs. You have to love community and what intrigue and beauty it brings.

As always feel free to find me on Sunday and tell me about church memories and AUC opportunities close to your heart.

Elizabeth Bay



## ABC Update



### The Work Has Started

All the planning has at last been turned into reality. The roofing work has really started under the watchful supervision of our architects. Tom Murray has also been heavily involved in keeping a careful eye on the contracts and the finances. You may have seen the relatively unobtrusive scaffolding in the Sanctuary. This will enable the contractor to remove the false ceiling to replace the insulation with a thicker layer. Hopefully this will make us warmer in the Winter and save fuel costs. The scaffolding in Merchant Street from ground to roof will provide access for the team stripping the roof and replacing the slates. There is separate scaffolding being erected for access to the Vestry roof which is also being re-slatted. The



completion of the dry rot eradication in this area will be done at the same time. The roof work will not be completed before the building is handed over to Paradise Green Productions for the Fringe Festival during the whole of August. It will be put on hold at the end of July until it can restart in September.

### The Audio-Visual Installation

Much of the planning has already been done on the proposed improvements and additions to the sound system and the display boards and screen in the foyer. You may have seen the film crew at work recently at the Church Picnic and also in the Church. They have filmed a number of members of the congregation for inclusion in the visual displays. Early in September the new equipment will be installed and old wiring removed. The benefits should then be enjoyed by all our churchgoers, as well as the visitors who will be entering in greater numbers. An accompanying booklet and leaflet are in preparation for visitors to have a brief record of Augustine United Church to take away with them.

### Paying for it

The generous grants from The Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Environment Scotland are now appearing in our bank account. The generosity of friends and members in supporting the Augustine Building Challenge Appeal has

<6 continued to grow. This year alone in the first six months, the amount raised has risen to a splendid £14,490. We are extremely grateful for the boost to the fund provided by donations from the National Health Service Retirement Fellowship of £500 and Karl Macrae's lovely concert from which he gave us £300, half of the amount raised from a very enjoyable event. The "penny pots" still keep coming and the total from these has risen to £280. The fundraising has not stopped just because work has started and I would urge everyone to redouble their efforts in the coming months. Please support our own Church Concert in the Autumn which is sure to be fun and enjoyable.

Ian Rathjen



## Upcoming Our Tribe Gatherings

There will be no regular Our Tribe gathering at AUC at the end of August as the building will be busy with Paradise Green Fringe productions.

We are hoping to organise a group outing to a Fringe show, but the details are not finalised (if anyone has any recommendations, do let us know). Keep an eye on the Our Tribe Facebook/Twitter sites, and Augustine notices/website—we'll publicise details as soon as they're available.

The Our Tribe gathering on Saturday 24th September will incorporate the LGBTQI-friendly church fair. Full details in next Seeds, but save the date, and do come and help welcome/welcome back our students.



## Our Tribe at Pride

Our Tribe again joined with members of Broughton St Mary's to march at Pride Edinburgh. We had a brilliant day and loved meeting and talking to everyone. It is so important to have our banner and Christian presence at Pride, and so a huge thank you to everyone who joined us. Let's see if we can get even more people to join us in 2017



The fruit of our June Our Tribe meeting



(Have you seen the Our Tribe/ AUC pop-up banners yet?)



## *Augustine Away Day— Saturday 27th August 10.30-4pm in Cramond Kirk Halls*

### *Thinking about where we've been and planning for the years ahead*

The AUC Away Day is being time to review what we have achieved as a congregation in recent years and to plan for the years ahead.

We would like to encourage as many people involved with AUC to come along and participate in the day, so that we can draw on our collective experience and insight to discern who and what God is calling us to be and do as a body. A sandwich lunch along with tea / coffee etc will be provided.

The day will be fun as well as thoughtful and welcomes people of all ages, abilities, etc. Whether you have been connected with AUC for a short or long time, if it is important to you to be involved with our community, please come along and share in the day.

To help with planning it is essential that you register for the day by emailing/phoning Rachel in the Church Office:  
[administrator@augustine.org.uk](mailto:administrator@augustine.org.uk)  
 0131 220 1677

We would especially like to know of Away Day participants who:

- Are younger than 16 years old
- Have any special dietary requirements



## *AUGUSTINE ASSIGNMENTS*

Augustine Assignments is an ecumenical youth group for youth ages 11-18 to explore community building through various fun and engaging assignments. All are welcome to join us!

We will be challenging ourselves to tasks that are not about our individual performance, but instead about building up community and discovering where assignments that use everyone's strengths can take us.

Email us:  
[aucassignments@gmail.com](mailto:aucassignments@gmail.com)

Follow us on:  
[aucassignments.tumblr.com](https://www.tumblr.com/aucassignments)  
[facebook.com/aucassignments](https://www.facebook.com/aucassignments)



The next Augustine Assignments will be held on:

September 17th

October 1st

October 15th

November 5th

November 19th

December 3rd

December 17th

between 2-4 pm

(doors are open 1.30-4.30pm).

## Naming God – the Missional Task

*On Trinity Sunday, our service was led by Martin Ritchie, then Artistic Associate at Greyfriars Kirk. In the sermon, he explored how names used can impact on our relationship with/image of someone/something. The article below is based on that sermon.*

On Trinity Sunday it's easy to get sucked into a rather empirical exploration of the nature of God that is conveyed in the Doctrine of the Trinity. It's not really about Threeness, but the traditional three persons of the Trinity that we've inherited, Father Son and Holy Spirit, or Creator Redeemer and Sustainer, is certainly something that we can get on board with as these three encounters with God are faithfully drawn out of Scripture. **So, if it's not about the number, what is it about?** It's about the way we talk of God – and that's a big responsibility because that has a huge impact upon others and has implications for the way people encounter God. The 20th century Orcadian poet, Edwin Muir, expressed his experience of a harsh and condemnatory form of Calvinism in the Orkney of his childhood in his wonderful poem 'The Incarnate One'. His image of "Calvin's Kirk crowning the brae" and God expressed as "Three angry letters in a book" shows the importance of our God talk – it can scar lives, or it can offer an image of God that invites exploration and spiritual journeying.

**Some of our naming of God, has its problems.** So although we have inherited the gendered "Father Son and Holy Spirit" it's quite right that we should question whether that's adequate; it's not so much that there is a gender issue – although "Father" seems to me an inadequate description of the parental reality of God – it's that the naming and characterisation of God by definition has to be a fluid and ongoing process.

Our Scripture readings today help us to explore the nature of God further. The reading from Proverbs describing the figure of Wisdom – a figure that is described as being around and involved as part of the Creative actions of God – thematically links us to the Gospel of John,

where in the great prologue: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God", we find a very similar understanding – Word/Wisdom seem to be the same, and of course John identifies wisdom/ logos (λόγος) with Jesus.

This is where our short reading from John 16:12-15 kicks in as part of the Gospel writer's attempts to convey the mutuality of the different experiences and understandings of God. It might seem a bit opaque, but maybe that's the point? This experiential dimension of God as God the Father, the incarnate Jesus and the comforter, as John has it, needs to be flexible and opaque in order to avoid it shattering; it's like a suspension bridge – there needs to be flexibility or else it will break.

So what am I saying that we should be doing today? How does this play out in practice? Just stating or repeating doctrine doesn't make it true, and so anyone just saying it to us is not necessarily going to convince us. As the great Albert Schweitzer concluded at the end of that great exploratory tome, 'The Quest of the Historical Jesus', we will know in our own experience who Jesus is. *OUR* experience of God is important and should be fundamental to our approach to our naming of God.

I'd like to thank you and this congregation for what it has done and is doing to bring different perspectives on God to liturgical fruition. What you say here, with your own circumstances, is a witness to the world, and being a witness to the world, is in the end what we are about as Christians.

Our definitions and our naming can have a big impact beyond our walls – our descriptions of God can scare or attract depending upon what they are like. That gives us a

<10 mandate to both challenge and be creative, but also to use our own experience to shape our naming of God.

Keep exploring, keep experimenting, keep seeking God in Scripture, prayer and your own experience, and what emerges from that will be a faithful reflection of the reality of God today. Keep experimenting in the journey of Faith!

### Martin Ritchie

*Martin has now moved on from Greyfriars. He begins the next part of his ministerial training at St Mary's, Haddington, in October. We pray for Martin as he begins this exciting new chapter in his life.*



## Thank You!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supported the community of AUC whilst Fiona was on sabbatical over the past months. For those who led worship services and preached, a particular thank you to you for all that you did to ensure our services ran without (too many!) hiccups. We look forward to welcoming you back again!

Keep an eye on future editions of Seeds to hear from Fiona about her Sabbatical.

## Getting To Know You



**My name is...**Josef. My wife Ivy and I have lived in Edinburgh and attended AUC since 2000. My son Ian was born two years later.

**I spend my time...**conducting research into data science for

medicine and editing an academic journal. Through my work, I wish to help my students and fellow researchers to avoid common errors and biases in medical research. In my spare time, I love reading about sciences and buying affordable technology gadgets.

**My favourite places are...**home, and [any] where I can relax to think freely or enjoy being with my family and friends. I do not fancy visiting natural landscapes but I was most impressed with Skye.

**My favourite hymn is...**'Be Thou My Vision', which always help remind and re-align my purposes and goals in life.

## Congratulations...

To **Barbara Baker**, who celebrates her 90th birthday on 4th August.



## *The Local Churches Pilgrimage to Dunkeld 21st August 2016*

A chance to join worship at Dunkeld Cathedral, picnic by the River Tay, enjoy walks at Birnam Wood and Dunsinnan Hill afternoon tea at Collace Church.

After tea (4pm) we'll share communion together in Collace Church.

Departing at 9.15am departure from Greyfriars by coach, returning by 5.45pm.

Please contact Cat Mowatt for attendance: administrator@greyfriarskirk.com or 0131 225 1900

(Adults £10, Family £20,  
Concessions—discretionary  
donation)



## *A Message from Edinburgh University Chaplaincy*

We have released this Multi-faith and Belief statement in support of EU migrant workers and their families since the Referendum:

“As members of multiple faith and belief communities, we highly value the multicultural life of the UK, which has grown over many years into a rich, diverse and cultured neighbourliness. We all feel the better off for that, benefit from one another's wisdom and enjoy one another's culture. We would not wish to see our diverse and inclusive society unravel, or be undermined by uncertainties brought about by the Referendum vote for Britain to leave the EU.

We applaud the Commons vote of 6th July 2016 in support of EU migrants' right to remain in the UK. We are acutely aware of the anxiety affecting not only EU migrant workers but also their dependents in the UK. We urge that the rights and security of EU citizens currently living in the UK be assured so that these citizens are relieved of the prospect of displacement, family separation and loss of rights. We would expect the UK, as a principled nation, to give such assurance as a matter of moral and political principle.”



## *Spare Cotton Fabric?*

I recently became a Wrap Pyjama Fairy (wrappyjamafairies.co.uk). This is a volunteer charity that aims to bring comfort and support to young patients and their families in hospitals in the UK. There are now over a thousand volunteer sewers across the UK making pyjamas and surgical gowns in beautiful, bright and fun fabrics that are specially designed to allow ease of access for the medical professionals and give an emotional boost to children in hospital. Two of the contestants in this year's Great British Sewing Bee are Wrap Pyjama Fairies!

If anyone has any spare fabric (must be new, 100% cotton in child-friendly designs) I would be happy to have it to sew items for this charity.

Many thanks.

**Fiona Somerville**



## *Helplines:*

LGBT Support: 0300 123 2523

Samaritans: 116 123

Childline: 0800 1111

Silver Line: 0800 4 70 80 90

Rape Crisis: 8088 010 302

Breathing Space: 0800 838587

Edinburgh Crisis Centre: 0808 8010414



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suicide alertness for everyone

**SafeTALK©—**

**Sunday 2nd October,  
1-4pm at AUC  
Cost: £10**

The Mental Health Ministry team at AUC is aware that suicide and suicidal feelings can be very difficult/anxiety-provoking topics to talk about.

To offer us some support in this area, we have organised a SafeTALK training session. SafeTALK is a certificated training course, supported by Choose Life in Scotland, which teaches us to identify persons with thoughts of suicide, talk to them, and connect them with intervention resources. It is a highly useful tool for anyone involved with pastoral care, listening or support of others.

Places are strictly limited, so please contact Rachel Fitzgerald in the AUC office to book places (contact details on cover).



\* Walk a Mile: 'Challenging stigma. One conversation at a time' is one of a series of events supported by See Me Scotland. To join in, gather near the flagpole at MacKinnon House at 12 for 12.15pm.

([letswalkamile.org/events/lets-walk-a-mile-at-the-royal-edinburgh-hospital](http://letswalkamile.org/events/lets-walk-a-mile-at-the-royal-edinburgh-hospital))

## A Time of Reflection for those touched by Suicide



This event is organised by Choose Life Edinburgh, NHS Community Mental Health Chaplains and Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (Edinburgh).

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2016  
at 3pm

Venue: Augustine United Church  
41 George IV Bridge  
Edinburgh EH1 1EL

A guided time of reflective words and music and an act of remembrance for all lives lost to suicide (30 minutes)

Refreshments served afterwards

**ALL WELCOME**

For further information: 0131 537 6516

**See Me**  
End mental health  
discrimination

## August—Festival Season

During August, Junior Church will have some fun short outings in the city centre, as Augustine becomes a Fringe Festival venue once again. We will be exploring the Fringe shows on the Royal Mile, kite-flying etc. on the Meadow, and visiting the Museum in Chambers Street. The outings will start at the usual service time and be back for the end of the service. On 21st August we'll join the Local Churches trip to Dunkeld (see p.12).

Crèche facilities (and a wet weather venue) will continue to be available within Augustine.

*So...whilst Junior Church go exploring, it seemed a good time to let everyone else explore what Junior Church has been learning this year. The overall theme for the year was 'The Quest for Identity'.*

We began in the autumn thinking about families.

We learnt about the twins Esau and Jacob, then Jacob's sons (including Joseph's time in Egypt). We explored competition as well as co-operation in families.

We created Joseph's family tree in gingerbread.

Joseph's family tree forms part of the 'Tree of Jesse' we learnt about during Advent.



"We made friendship bracelets to show how interconnected we are."

We enjoy cooking and crafting, so in the run up to Christmas we did lots of both—making boxed cakes as presents for members of the church, and as 'Bethlehem Builders' creating the nativity scene.



# The Quest for Identity

## The best person for the job



Through the Spring and Summer we've learnt about exclusion/inclusion. God chooses **'the best person for the job'**, even though they might not be someone society values highly: a Samaritan woman by the well, a dishonest tax-collector who was so short he had to climb a tree to see Jesus, or the Roman/Jew Saul (→Paul) who was persecuting Jesus' followers.

How they were included by Jesus' and his followers changed their lives, how they treated others and led them to spread the Good News.

During March, we learnt about the 'Journey to Jerusalem. "Rome wasn't built in a day", but Junior Church built a map of Jerusalem and Jesus' journey during one service 😊



**AUGUSTINE ASSIGNMENTS:** After Easter our new ecumenical group for older children (51 onwards) started. It's obviously been a success with those who've come along, as they've asked for it to increase to twice monthly from the autumn (see p.9)

When Fiona explained to the children about her sabbatical and that several people would be helping lead services, Junior Church suggested they could help too...so they did!



Some of our Pentecost activities—Holy Spirit as wind and flame

# Calendar

AUC Worship Services at 11am on Sundays at AUC,  
George IV Bridge.

(All events at AUC, unless otherwise stated. Later  
updates on website/notice sheet)

August 2016		Season of Festival
Sunday 7th	11am	Morning Worship with Communion
	5-8pm	Festival Nitekirk at Greyfriars Kirk: "Celebration"
Sunday 14th	11am	Morning Worship
Friday 19th	11am-2pm	Royal Edinburgh Hospital Fair. Come and have some fun, a cup of tea or a burger, search the stalls and listen to bands! See p.13
Sunday 21st		NO MORNING WORSHIP AT AUC
	9.15am-5.45pm	TLC (The Local Church) Pilgrimage to Dunkeld. Departing from Greyfriars Kirk. See p.12
	11am	Worship at Greyfriars Kirk (for anyone not attending Pilgrimage)
Saturday 27th	10.30am-4pm	AUC Away Day at Cramond Kirk Halls. Lunch provided. Coffee from 10am. See p.9
Sunday 28th	11am	Morning Worship, led by Rev Fiona Bennett. Preacher Rev Sarah Agnew
	5-8pm	Festival Nitekirk at Greyfriars Kirk: "Story"
Tuesday 30th	7.30pm	Church Council Meeting (venue tbc)
September 2016		Season of Creationtide
Saturday 3rd	2pm-4pm	Augustine Assignments.
Sunday 4th	11am	Morning Worship with Communion
	12.45pm	Church Business Meeting
Monday 5th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC
Tuesday 6th	7.30pm	Contextual Bible Study: Jeremiah 1 – "Known"
Wednesday 7th	2-4pm	Craft Group in the Library
Thursday 8th	7pm	Edinburgh International Centre for Spirituality and Peace event at AUC: An Evening with Matthew Fox (Tickets and more information on their website: eicsp.org)
	7.30pm	TLS Lite Module – "Getting to Grips with the Bible" (Session 1/6). Led by Rev Trevor Jamison and Dr Nicola Robinson
Saturday 10th	10.30am-4pm	Synod of Scotland Meeting at Coatbridge URC. (Coffee from 10am)
Sunday 11th	10am	Church Search Student Breakfast
	11am	Morning Worship
	3pm-5pm	Service for Those Touched by Suicide (being held during Suicide Prevention Week). See p.13

Please note that the deadline for material for the next issue is Friday 26th August.

You can send your material to [newsletter.auc@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.auc@gmail.com) or via the church office.

DISCLAIMER: Although we check all information in the newsletter, as ever with these things we can give no warranties as to accuracy or relevance and encourage active checking before you make any decisions. The views expressed in our newsletter are those of the individual contributor, they are not necessarily those of AUC or the editor.