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What is Jesus Calling Me to Do? By Tom Murray

This is one of the most challenging questions a believer can ask. That is certainly how I have seen it since I first asked that question of myself in my mid-teens. I certainly never thought that after 40 years conducting fraud investigations, dispute management and litigation I would spend my retirement on church accounts, staff management, lease negotiations and - crowning glory - URC committees. It took a while for my 16-year-old self to become reconciled to the idea that the call might not be to something I was gagging to do.

But leaving me to one side, how do we collectively respond to that question? You may recall that about 11 years ago this church sat down to consider its future. What did this dwindling group of mainly older people feel called to do? Despite their Treasurer warning of the risks of declining income, the demands of working in a

listed Victorian building and our lack of inherited wealth, the response was immediate and vigorous:

- The community wanted to continue to witness in the city centre
- The community wanted to reach out to people and causes which might not be well received in some other churches
- The community wanted to serve the city with a ministry of this building by providing space at reasonable cost and within a welcoming environment well situated in the city centre.

And many of those ambitions have progressed:

- The congregation is transformed
- We have reached out with a welcome to many people not warmly welcomed elsewhere
- The building is more intensely used than since late Victorian times BUT at enormous cost, as the wear and tear of 160 years is dealt with.
- Our income holds,

Getting Involved

Within AUC there are 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.

Centre, Property & Finance

Tom Murray

treasurer@augustine.org.uk

Children

Kirsty Murray

juniorchurch@augustine.org.uk

Communication

Eilidh Carmichael

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Our Tribe (LGBTI Ministry)

Rev Maxwell Reay

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Peace & Justice

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Pastoral & Mental Health

Anne MacKenzie

anne.mackenzie@augustine.org.uk

Worship

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Young People

Matt Baines

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To get involved volunteering within AUC or the local community:

AUC Volunteering

Fiona Somerville

rota@augustine.org.uk

Local Community Volunteering

Della Morris

della.morris@augustine.org.uk

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but we are desperately short of people to be part of the team running the Centre and building. If you harbour dreams of a professionally run building leaving the believers to sit back and live off the proceeds, forget it! Our centre cannot deliver that.

After spending nearly a third of a million pounds on reroofing and improvements in 2016/17 we looked to rebuild our resources for the future but in 2018 our "Old Lady" hit us with £40,000+ of repairs which drove us deeply into the red. So much so that another year like the last might prove terminal.

The truth of the matter is that Augustine will only continue in the long term with more hard work and financial support from its people.

I invite you to consider whether you are called to challenge yourselves with tasks you have never imagined doing. There is much to be done but it is always easier in a team.

The financial call can be answered in two ways:

- By ongoing review of regular giving; and
- By contributing to the Fabric Fund to keep the building going.

You have successfully raised funds before and there are a multiplicity of possible fundraising activities - from the relaunch of the little penny pots to more ambitious socials and fund raisers.

Finally, and very important in raising significant amounts quickly, there is our annual Gift Day on 3rd March. You have responded magnificently in the past. Come early, have some breakfast with us and bring your cheque books!

Do you hear a call?

Adapted from a contribution to the sermon on Sunday 17 February with grateful thanks to Linda Harrison for preparing the way with her words and graciously welcoming the Treasurer.

Happy birthday
Max who turns
one this month!

Where does the
time go?!



Justice & Peace Update

Many thanks to all those who supported the bake sale in aid of Scottish Churches Housing Action in February. Thank you to those who baked and bought, and to all who donated so generously for their refreshments. Your combined efforts raised over £170 for the invaluable work which SCHA does in addressing the challenge of homelessness in Scotland.

Fairtrade Fortnight continues until 10 March... feeling fired up? If you

are inspired to take action, look out for these user-friendly postcards in church this month, calling on the Government to ensure our trade with developing

countries puts poverty first, delivering living incomes for all, especially women. You can read more about the campaign

here: www.fairtrade.org.uk/en/get-involved/current-campaigns/Fairtrade-Fortnight.

With Lent upon us, Christian Aid are once again offering a journey, inviting us to "Count our Blessings" and encouraging us to put our faith into action through daily reflections and challenges. Exploring Lenten themes of awareness, repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, transformation and blessing we can discover more about the lives of those who are pushed to the brink of survival by climate change. Each daily action is designed to help us give, act and pray so our neighbours around the world can rise up and overcome. We will be sharing some of the stories on our AUC Facebook page, but you can download the resource from www.christianaid.org.uk/lent-easter/lent-calendar#download or speak to me if you would like a paper version.

Harriet Davidson



Safeguarding Training 2019

Sun 2nd June, 1.30-3.30pm

Thurs 6th June, 7.30-9.30pm

Attendants: all Junior Church leaders, creche helpers, TLC Youth Group leaders and helpers, Home and Hospital Team members, Elders and volunteers who obtained PVG membership through AUC.

Refreshments to be provided before the training.

Any parents who would like to know more about the Safeguarding practice of AUC are also welcome to attend.

Please contact Ivy for further information and note the date you prefer to attend.

Pastoral Care

"...bearing with one another in love..."

(Ephesians 4:2)

At AUC, we aim to provide a web of care which promotes growth in relationships and good spiritual/mental health, through both informal and formal contacts. If you are looking for individual support please contact a minister: **Rev Fiona Bennett** (minister@augustine.org.uk) or **Rev Maxwell Reay** (associateminister@augustine.org.uk). As well as offering 1:1 support in the setting which is most appropriate for you, they can link you with the pastoral visiting team which offers regular support to the housebound.

Prayer requests are welcomed. They can be shared with the ministers directly 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-12pm in the Sanctuary. This is hosted by AUC and run by the NHS Lothian Spiritual Care team. Further details available through Maxwell.

New website goes live!



Home About Us ▾ What's On ▾ Ceremonies & Life Events Room Hire ▾ News ▾ Resources ▾ Contact Us

As some of you will know a small band of members, including your Seeds editor, Thomas McPolin, Lucy Parker and Elizabeth Bay, have been plugging away to create a new website for the church. I think it's safe to say the process took longer than any could have predicted when the idea was first discussed!

If you've never delved into the depths of the old website you might be wondering why on earth anyone would want to change it. While it unarguably looked welcoming and professional, its beauty masked some difficult problems. There were layers and layers of information set out in a difficult to navigate way. What's more, because the site had been build by an external company, we did not have as much control as we needed over the site.

The brief for the new site was simple. It needed to be:

- updated to match our new branding;
- easy to find information;
- simple to maintain.

As I alluded to, we hit a few technical hitches along the way, but we hope we've at least begun to fulfil that brief.

The new site is accessed exactly as you would the old one: **www.augustine.org.uk**.

However, the new site is by no means complete and what is missing is your feedback. Please let us know what you think. We are not professionals and there are undoubtedly parts which will continue to need polishing. We already have a list of updates we would like to make once we've had a break and gathered feedback so do email any thoughts or suggestions to **eilidh.carmichael@augustine.org.uk**.

A lot of people within our church community have contributed to this project. There's not room enough to mention them all, but as well as the members who designed the site, we are eternally grateful to: Graham Rule for his invaluable technical assistance; Church Council for their feedback and support; past and present administrators Nicola and Rachel for being fonts of knowledge; and all those who sent us photos to help brighten up the pages of the new site. Thank you all!

If you are interested in how we communicate as a church - whether through Seeds, the website, our social media or more generally with one and other - please have a think about whether you might like to join the Communications Ministry Team. We've more exciting projects up our sleeves as the work of communicating well is never complete!

Eilidh Carmichael

Lenten Pilgrimage

Throughout the season of Lent this year we are exploring the theme of Pilgrimage. In our Sunday worship we will hear stories about pilgrimage experiences: journeys through which people were changed as the Spirit touched them through encounters with others, with nature, with history, with God.

Writing in the early 1900s the English mystical writer Evelyn Underhill wrote of pilgrimage: *“Three deep cravings of the self, three great expressions of human's restlessness, which only mystic truth can fully satisfy. The first is the craving which makes one a pilgrim and a wanderer. It is the longing to go out from our normal world in search of a lost home, a 'better country'; an Eldorado, a Sarras, a Heavenly Syon. The next is the craving of heart for heart, of the Soul for its perfect mate, which makes us a lover. The third is the craving for inward purity and perfection, which makes us an ascetic, and in the last resort a saint.”*

100 years later, I find the idea of a craving for inward purity and perfection potentially destructive, but I wonder if the current craving for fulfilment, balance and wholeness are not expressions of the same desire? Underhill is suggesting that pilgrimage is rooted in a human desire to search for something more or other.

The season of Lent begins in a pilgrimage story, the journey Jesus made into the wilderness, where his thinking and identity were crystallised. Was he going to be a Messiah who was driven



Photo by Di Williams

by ego, fame and force?

Or was he going to be a Messiah who was driven by wholeness, humanity and love? His Spirit lead journey, his encounter with the devil and with the wilderness place, focused Jesus' thinking and identity. It was a pilgrimage which marked a change in the direction of his life.

Pilgrimage is also the theme which AUC's Visitor Ministry Team has been thinking about. The Ministry Team is in the process of creating local pilgrimages, based on social justice themes, to offer to visitors. We hope these short pilgrimages will be opportunities for church members to meet and guide visitors around our locality introducing them to stories of women, the planet, LGBTQI and Empire, all rooted in Edinburgh's heritage, with space to reflect on how these stories inspire us to build and live God's Realm in our world today. We hope these pilgrimages will offer encounters for both for visitors and locals to grow and be changed by the touch of God's Spirit.

Fiona Bennett



Helplines:

Stand Alone: www.standalone.org.uk (for those experiencing family estrangement)

LGBT Support: 0300 123 2523

Samaritans: 116 123

Childline: 0800 1111

Rape Crisis: 08088 010 302

Breathing Space: 0800 838587

Edinburgh Crisis Centre: 0808 8010414



Earth Hour



Earth Hour is once again being held on Saturday 30th March. From 8-9pm, we are asked to switch off electrical appliances and focus on the earth – its goodness and how we are damaging it. There is no particular event this year at AUC, but this might be something you can take onboard yourself, or with your own family or friends.

Lent starts on 6th March and lasts for 40 days; what about making it a routine to switch off electrical appliances for a half hour or hour each day in Lent? It could become a good habit...Perhaps it could be a quiet time of prayer or meditation, or time to just chat with family or friends (without the mobile!) or to have a simple meal by candle-light.

Remember that Saturday 30th March is also the night that our clocks change – they 'spring forward' for British Summer time to begin...We'll have one hour less sleep - so slowing down without phones, TVs, computers and electronic games before bedtime might help getting to sleep straight away a lot easier!

Our TLC 'Science in an Age of Change' event at St Columba's By The Castle is on Saturday 30th March too, in the afternoon. *[Full details overleaf! ~ Ed.]* Or come instead to Dundee for the Annual Gathering of Eco-Congregation Scotland, titled 'Transforming Energy; Transforming Lives'. There will be scientific speakers and workshops relating to the topic.

Kathleen Ziffo

'Pass the Planet' - 24th and 25th January 2019

This was a small conference about a very big matter: the church's role in saving the planet.

The address given in our church bulletin left us bemused at Queen Street station in Glasgow. Persistent enquiries, and answers by extremely helpful passers-by, finally got us to the URC office in West Regent Street (so inconspicuously labelled that we had already passed it once in our search!). But once there, expecting quite a crowd, we found only half a dozen people gathered in a second-floor office - and two of these were the speakers, Trevor Jamieson and David Coleman, both well-known to us at Augustine! David has succeeded Trevor as chaplain to Eco-Congregation Scotland, so both had plenty to say on the subject.

To summarise, the planet has already passed from 'Chaos' to 'Crisis' in the path towards climate change. The next stage is 'Catastrophe'.

Do we, as a church, have anything to contribute to this urgent situation NOW? The Bible, the basis of all our decisions, grants us as humans 'dominion' over nature. Together we explored what that might mean. The term partnership appears the best definition, compelling our acceptance of the fact that we are ourselves part of the problem. Why are the churches (and the politicians) so backward in recognising the problem, and so slow to take action? The Church needs to take a fresh look at biblical texts like the account of Creation in Genesis from a green point of view. Trevor outlined an approach via Philipians 2, with St Paul's insistence on humble sharing as we work out our own salvation with diligence.

No longer ashamed to ask passers-by for directions, we worked out our way back to Queen Street station.

John and Joan Miller

Science in an Age of Change



Saturday 30th March
from 1.30-5.30pm

At St Columba's by the Castle
14 Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh

An afternoon exploring cutting-edge issues
in science in our fast-changing world.

Leading academics will provide input on climate change and our response to it, and on the opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence. The afternoon will conclude with a chance to consider the implications of these for all of us – no matter what faith or philosophy we may live by.

Book Stall & Refreshments available

The Speakers

Mike Berners-Lee writes, researches and consults on sustainability and responses to 21st century challenges. He is a professor at Lancaster University's Institute for Social Futures, where he develops practical tools for thinking about the future and researches the global food system.

Ron Petrick researches into artificial intelligence, including issues of human-robot interaction and social robotics. He also speaks on the social and ethical implications of artificial intelligence. He is Assistant Professor in the School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences at Heriot-Watt University.

Ticketed event, book on Eventbrite to avoid disappointment.

Tickets are free but a donation of between £5 to £10 is invited towards the cost of the event.

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/science-in-an-age-of-change-tickets-56052299938

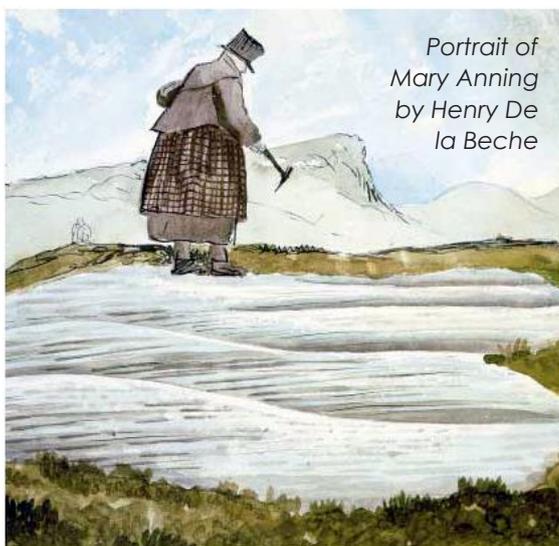
In association with the local ecumenical partnership:



TLC Youth Update, Women's History Month Special

March is Women's History Month. At TLC Youth we have discussed how much the lives and contribution of women have been overlooked historically. Unfortunately, there are a lot more famous men in the history books. Even the name itself sounds very male-centric: **His-story!** So, we asked: *What about 'Her-story'?* And we thought about how whether we are boys or girls, men or women, we all need strong female role models. Each person shared an example of a woman who has made a difference in either big ways or small ways to our lives and the world we live in.

Talie's hero was **Mary Anning**, a pioneering palaeontologist who found her first fossil when she was 7 years old. She found an Ichthyosaur inside a cliff near where she stayed and rallied the townsfolk to help her excavate it. She also made the first Pterosaur discovery. She became more knowledgeable than most contemporary experts in palaeontology. Talie thought this was all the more impressive because she was not allowed a place at University. It is worth pointing out that while the education she received was limited, her family belonged to a Congregationalist church where she was able to learn to read and write.



Portrait of
Mary Anning
by Henry De
la Beche

Ian spoke of his respect for Ivy, his mum, who helps him in many ways. Ian especially appreciates that she helps him to stay warm and cosy by crocheting blankets for him and that she makes good food. Ivy works as a

translator in Cantonese and Mandarin, an invaluable role in ensuring people can understand the matters that affect their everyday lives and wellbeing. As a group, we talked about how we admire Ivy for her calm, effective and efficient yet warm manner.

Jude spoke of a foster carer whom she had worked with who, while not an outgoing person, had an amazing legacy due to the incredibly positive influence on the lives of generations of young people whom she cared for and raised when their own families were unable to do so.

Matt spoke about comics creators, Willow G. Wilson, Sana Amanat and Noelle Stevenson. These creators challenge the status quo by creating female characters with diverse backstories, personalities and body types in an industry traditionally shaped by men. They face a lot of negative backlash in the form of bigotry and ignorance but persevere because they are convinced that girls deserve heroes they can identify with every bit as much as boys do.



Sana Amanat introduces Barack Obama to her creation 'Ms Marvel', the first comic about a Muslim Superhero.

The world is full of stories of women and men that are worth sharing, but traditionally women's stories have been overlooked and silenced. This Women's History Month, why not take the time to celebrate the stories of women around the world and through the ages? You could use the stories that the young people have shared to start a conversation about the female role models who have inspired and shaped you. Make sure to let us know how you get on!

Matt Baines

Dinosaur Sunday



On 24th February, the TLC churches gathered for Dinosaur Sunday where we considered, among many things, extinction and climate change. Here, Talie talks us through the dinosaurs which formed the image around which the challenging morning was framed.

Every dinosaur you see here inhabited some part of what we now call Britain and Europe.

On the far left you have **BARYONYX** (a spinosaurid known for its croc-like jaws and "heavy claw". It would have mainly eaten fish, including fresh-water sharks.)

Sitting on its back is the **VECTIDRACO** (a genus of azhdarchoid pterosaur discovered in November 2008 by Daisy Morris, a four-year-old from the Isle of Wight).

The especially bird-like dinosaur on the left of Greyfriar's Bobby is called **NUTHETES**, a species of very small dromaeosaurid (and a very distant relative of the famous velociraptor).

The dinosaur just above Bobby, with the odd "fin" on its back is called **CONCAVENATOR**, a species of early Cretaceous theropod, closely related to the famous neovenator. Nobody is entirely sure what its "fin's" purpose is exactly...some say it's a hump, some say it's a small sail meant for display (not unlike spinosaurus, but smaller). But

due to the quill-nobs found on its arms, it seems very likely to have had some form of feathers.

The slightly larger bird-like dinosaur to the right of Bobby is called **PYRORAPTOR**, a genus of dromaeosaurid dinosaur from the late Cretaceous that reached a maximum height of 3-5 feet tall.

The enormous armoured dinosaur is called **POLOCANTHUS**, a type of Nodosaurid and distant relatives of the famous ankylosaurus but without the club on the end of their tails and instead having huge spikes on their shoulders.

The small spiky dinosaur sitting on top of the polocanthus is a **SCELIDOSAURUS**, the distant basal ancestor of both stegosaurus and the Thyreophora. It is known from very complete skeletons that were likely caused by a flash-flooding incident million of years ago.

The rather horse-like dinosaur on the top-right is the famous **IGUANODON**, a large ornithomimid from the Cretaceous period

 and probably one of the first things to be classified as a dinosaur. At the time it was mainly characterised by its iguana-like teeth (hence the name).

This dinosaur has gone through a lot of changes since its initial discovery, originally being portrayed as an ENORMOUS oversight lizard with a horn on its nose. But much later, not only did the reconstructions eventually become more like what you see but the “horn” was found to instead belong on the place where its thumb would be. Now we call it a thumb-spike! (It’s likely this was used primarily for defence as well as fighting for mates and possibly gorging trees in order for the animal to rub against the sweet-smelling sap).

The bird-like dinosaur just underneath the iguanodon is called a **PELECANIMIMUS**, a genus of basal ornithomimosaurian (a group often called “ostrich dinosaurs” which includes the famous gallimimus from Jurassic Park) from the early Cretaceous.

Unlike most of its group, which are mostly plant-eaters (though they did, on occasion, eat small mammals and bugs) the Pelecanimimus—as its name implies—mostly ate a diet of fish. As well as

having small “teeth”, it also had a pelican-like throat pouch.

The small theropod just underneath the Pelecanimimus is called **PROCERATOSAURUS**, a genus of carnivorous theropod from the Middle Jurassic. It’s found all over Britain (from England with skeletons, to the Isle of Skye with footprints).

It was originally thought to be an ancestor of Ceratosaurus, due to the similar small crest on its snout, but as later evidence began to arise, it turns out to be more along the lines of a very distant ancestor to the infamous king of the dinosaurs, t-rex.

And finally, on the bottom right of the image is the **HYPSELOPHODON**, a very small (and kinda cute) ornithopod from the Early Cretaceous. These little dinosaur were extreme common and very adaptable, partially due to their varied teeth allowing for an omnivorous diet. The current idea is the you would have seen these cuties living in swift flocks living side-by-side with the massive iguanodon.

Talie Coleman

Calendar

Worship Services at 11am on Sundays at AUC, George IV Bridge. All events at AUC, unless otherwise stated. Later updates on website/notice sheet

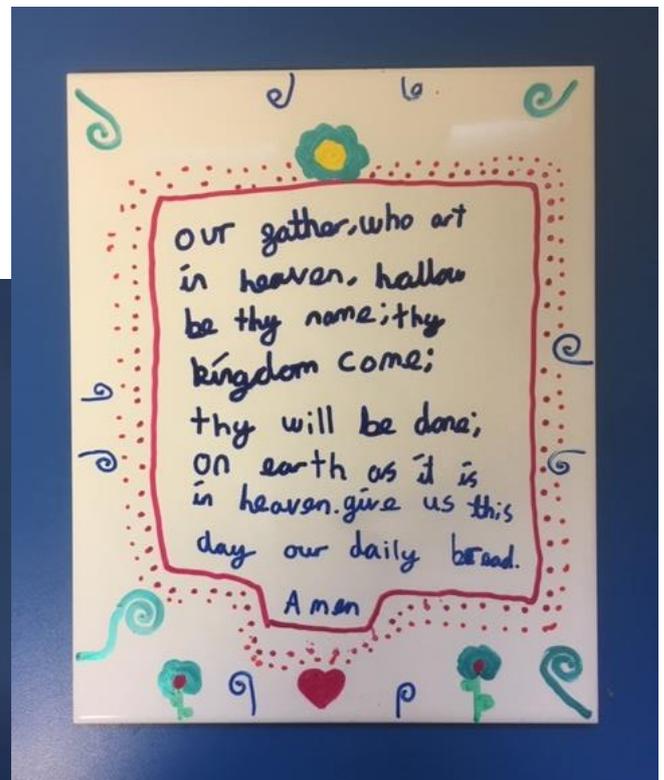
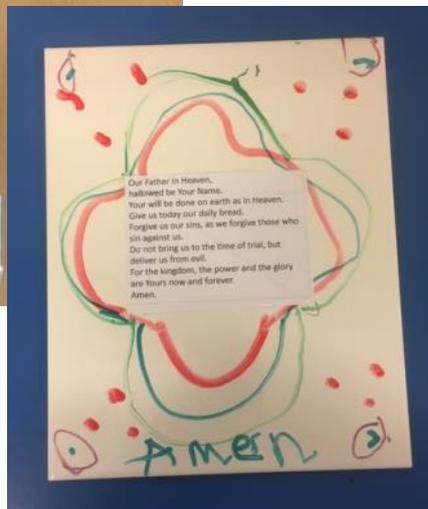
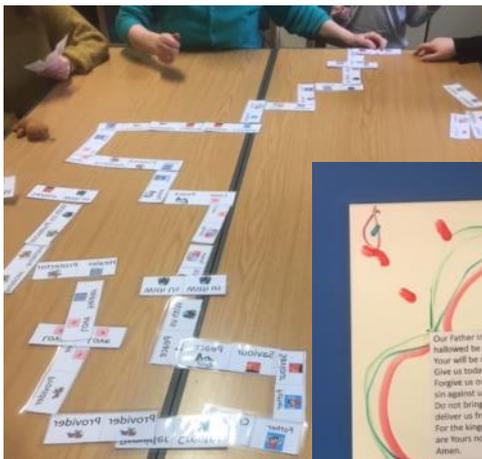
Saturday 30 th	1.30-5pm	'Science in an Age of Change' Faith and Science – a joint TLC event for Lent at St Columba's by the Castle (see p.7)
	10am-4pm	Eco-Congregation Scotland 2019 Annual Gathering and AGM at Gate Church International, Perth Road, Dundee
	8-9pm	Earth Hour (see p.6)
Sunday 31 st	9.15-10.15am	Living the Questions Study Group – 'Into the World'
	11am	Morning Worship led by Rev Fiona Bennett and Stephen Hoare
April		
Wednesday 3 rd	4.30-6pm	First Wednesdays – Exploration of LGBT Spirituality & Faith at City of Edinburgh Methodist Church
Sunday 7 th	11am	Morning Worship and Communion, led by Leslie Morrison
	12.15-1.15pm	Church Discussion Meeting – 'Pilgrimage' (see p.5)

See back page for the rest of the calendar!

February: The Lord's Prayer

All through February Junior Church have been thinking about the Lord's Prayer. Here's a 'flavour' of some of some of the activities we've been using to explore the topic:

- We made pretzels when we were thinking about the 'bread' in the Lord's Prayer. Did you know pretzels are traditionally made by some other churches to think about the folding of arms in prayer?
- We wrote and decorated tiles with different versions of the Lord's Prayer on them.
- We played a game of dominoes using different words that refer to the name of God. As you can see it snaked a long way across the table!



Junior Church welcomes families in all their wonderful diversity. We do our best to offer a safe and nurturing space for families and their friends. We have varied activities each week, from storytelling, to crafts, games and video making. We have a crèche for little ones and baby changing facilities are available. We use materials to appeal to children's different learning styles using the PowerXpress curriculum, and also use Godly Play (www.godlyplay.org.uk).

Children at Augustine are welcome to receive communion and to fully participate in the life of the church. Children regularly help during services, and sometimes serve communion to the wider church community.

Please feel free to contact us using the details on p.2 of Seeds if you have any questions.

Calendar

Worship Services at 11am on Sundays at AUC, George IV Bridge. All events at AUC, unless otherwise stated. Later updates on website/notice sheet



The clocks 'spring forward' on Sunday 31st March.



March		Season of Lent
Friday 1 st	12.30pm	World Day of Prayer Service, followed by lunch
Sunday 3 rd	9.15-10.15am	Contextual Bible Study – Luke 11:1-13 'Prayer'
	10-10.30am	AUC Gift Day, with breakfast roll available (see p.1)
	11am	Morning Worship and Communion, led by Harriet Davidson with preacher Rev Fiona Bennett
	1-3pm	TLC Youth – 'Food, Fun and Big Questions'
Monday 4 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – 'Live Music Now'
Wednesday 6 th	4.30-6pm	First Wednesdays – Exploration of LGBT Spirituality & Faith at City of Edinburgh Methodist Church
	7.30pm	Ash Wednesday Service at St Columba's by the Castle
Friday 8 th	10am-12pm	Walk & Talk, followed by tea/coffee and a chat
Sunday 10 th	9.15-10.15am	Sunday Morning Study – Encountering Julian of Norwich
	11am	Morning Worship, led by Harriet Davidson with preacher Caro Penney and interview with Ishbell Smyth about pilgrimage
	12.15-1.15pm	Church Business Meeting
	3-5pm	Our Tribe
Monday 11 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – with George Banks
Tuesday 12 th	7.30pm	Contextual Bible Study – Luke 11:1-13 'Prayer'
Friday 15 th - Sunday 17 th		Synod of Scotland Meeting at Tulliallan
Sunday 17 th	11am	Morning Worship and Communion, led by Harriet Davidson with preacher Mike Holroyd
	12.30-2.30pm	Church Lunch – a time to chat, with board game and crafts
Monday 18 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – 'Samaritans'
Tuesday 19 th	7.30pm	Living the Questions Study Group – 'A Kingdom without Walls'
Sunday 24 th	11am	Morning Worship, led by Rev Fiona Bennett with preacher Gill Laurence
	12.15-1.15pm	Guiding Session – meeting of those who might like to be guides for AUC church and locality pilgrimages (see p. 5)
Monday 25 th	2pm	Women's Union Meeting at Saughtonhall URC – AGM
Tuesday 26 th	7.30-9pm	Coffee, Cake & Conversation
Thursday 28 th	1.30-3pm	Coffee, Cake & Conversation

See p.10 for the final few lines of the calendar!

Please note the deadline for material for the April issue is Sunday 31st March.

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