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Scottish Charity no. SC000385

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Waiting Together, *By Rev Fiona Bennett*

This advent we are "Journeying around the world to Bethlehem". Each week as we light the advent candles in worship we will learn about a Christmas tradition from a different continent and remember that we are making our advent journey with brothers, sisters, siblings in faith across the world.

From Mexico to Ethiopia, from India to Sweden, from Scotland to Bethlehem we are journeying through Advent searching and waiting to find peace and joy for our lives and for the whole world.

We wait with the people of Hong Kong, Lebanon and many other places where there is protest and unrest for just and healthy government.

We wait with LGBTQI+ people in Brazil and Zimbabwe for full inclusion and respect.

We wait with those who have little to eat in the food bank queues in Edinburgh and in

the refugee camps in Syria for earth's abundance to be shared out.

We wait with people who are ill in body and mind at home, in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in the USA for access to treatment.

We wait with people in the UK and Bangladesh, whose homes have been flooded and crops destroyed due to climate change.

We wait as we journey together in faith that love is stronger than fear, hope more powerful than despair, peace more eternal than violence.

We are journeying with brothers, sisters, siblings around the world as we light our candles and remember that across the world Christ's light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.

Peace and joy to you this Advent & Christmas time.

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

eilidh.carmichael@augustine.org.uk

Our Tribe (LGBTI Ministry)

Rev Maxwell Reay

associateminister@augustine.org.uk

Peace & Justice

Harriet Davidson

harriet.davidson@augustine.org.uk

Pastoral & Mental Health

Anne MacKenzie

anne.mackenzie@augustine.org.uk

Worship

Rev Fiona Bennett

minister@augustine.org.uk

Young People

Matt Baines

matt.baines@augustine.org.uk

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

Elders Elections

Elders are those Full Members of the AUC Congregation who other full members wish to nominate to join the group of leaders of the church.

They meet with the Ministers (Fiona and Maxwell) and Treasurer and Secretary (presently Tom and Kathleen) as the Church Council, 10 times a year. Currently we meet on one Tuesday evening in the month, often the first Tuesday of the month.

As well as looking to guide the affairs of AUC, for legal reasons Elders, as Trustees, should not be people who have been declared bankrupt at any time.

This year two of our Elders are standing down after completing their 3 year terms.

Elders can serve a second consecutive term if they wish to stand for nomination again, and if they receive nomination for such a second term. Ivy does not wish to stand for a second term presently, but Harriet is willing to be re-nominated, if anyone so wishes.

At AUC we should, and could, have nine serving Elders to allow an annual rotation of three per year, but currently we only have seven Elders (including the two who are retiring). The other serving Elders are Anne, Ben, Eilidh, Linda and Stephen H.

Nominations need to be made and signed by a full church member (with the nominee's permission) on a piece of paper, and seconded and signed by another full member - and be given to the Church Secretary before the Election on Sunday 8th December, please.

Thank You,

Kathleen Ziffo

Carol Singalong, Friday 27th Dec



This will be at Anne's house from 5.30pm. There will be singing, stories and Christmas snacks. Everybody is welcome, so bring your voices and instruments and share in the fun as we celebrate Christmas together.

"It means a great deal to those who are oppressed to know that they are not alone. Never let anyone tell you that what you are doing is insignificant."

Desmond Tutu, civil rights activist

Please take time if you can on Sunday 1st December to 'Write for Rights'. This year's Amnesty International campaign invites us to take action for young people across the world who are having their human rights denied. You can read their stories and sign a card to send a simple message of solidarity in this season of hope.

As our thoughts turn once again to sending seasonal greetings, please consider making a contribution to the work of Christian Aid and signing our communal AUC Christmas Card. Our communal card allows us to show that we will be thinking of our AUC friends and family as we celebrate, whilst contributing to the invaluable work of Christian Aid in helping people and communities to fight poverty.

This year's Christmas appeal is focusing on the plight of women around the world living in deeply challenging circumstances due to poverty and prejudice. For those who are also mothers, they face a constant fight to protect and feed their children. These women are strong, determined and resourceful. Given a chance, they could use these God-given gifts to build new lives for themselves and their families.

Your gift, of any amount, could help to give that life-changing opportunity and enable someone to break free from poverty and carve a future.

You can read more here

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/christmas-appeal>

With grateful thanks for all your support of our Justice activities at Augustine throughout the year.

Harriet Davidson



'Winter Blessing'

When the sleet blinds you
 hail drowns out voices
 and snow hides your path,
 may you discern in each flake
 a star, the image of the one
 that guides the Magi,
 and find that in the pain
 of birth, death or change
 there is a light
 to guide you.

By Mary Palmer

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.

Christmas Gift Services

At the Gift Service on 15th December, we are asking, please, for donations as follows:

- Warm winter clothes and educational materials for Syrian Refugees in Arsal, Lebanon (taken there by Edinburgh Direct Aid)
- Toiletries, socks and sweets for folk in the Royal Edinburgh Hospital (distributed by Chaplains)

FreshStart

helping people make a home for themselves

This past week Stephen and Kathleen took a car boot full of household gifts along to Fresh Start.

Thank you for these donations which the people at Fresh Start gratefully received!



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

Book about Older People

In the UK there are 5.4 million people aged 75 and over, 1.6 million aged 85 and over, and nearly 580,000 people aged 90 and over, according to Age UK. Figures from the Alzheimer Society indicate that 17% people over the age of 80 have dementia, which means that 83% do not.

Older people are often overlooked: people speak to younger companions, make decisions for them and can be very patronising. Our media is saturated with young faces and young bodies and advice on how to get or keep these.

There is a lot of research and fiction concerning dementia, some books about the things old people need, and some on what advice older people would give to younger people if they had known then what they know now.

There is very little about what older people themselves think and feel about their lives now: the things that are good, bad, and frustrating, and what they would like, and this is what I

would like to address in the book I am researching to write, to raise the profile & voices of older people be seen and heard.

The book will include the voices of older people from a range of geographic areas, socio-economic groups, race, gender and sexual orientation: aging concerns us all.

The main questions the book will seek to answer are these: What are the challenges and opportunities for older folk today? How do they feel, how are they treated, what's good, and what can be improved?

If you are interested in this project and would be willing to share your views please get in touch with me. You can email at clthornton38@gmail.com or phone me on 07546393336.

Thank you very much,

Carolyn Thornton

The Climate Crisis - Partners with God's damaged Earth

Last week there was a meeting in AUC of some folk from the Islamic community (Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society) and Christians (from our synod and Eco-congregations Scotland).

After sharing food and having a chat, there were short presentations from two of the leaders of our faiths: our Moderator, David Pickering, and the Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society's Strategic Director, Ameer Versace.

David spoke of our Biblical understanding of earth and all life as being part of God's creation and our responsibility for it and everything in the cosmos, as our home. He spoke of our being formed from the soil and breath of God, and being toilers in the soil, gardeners, and (like woodcarvers) fashioners for good of the natural environment. He also talked of our need to look after this one God-given home.

Ameer quoted from the Qur'an that the heavens and earth, once combined, were separated for the creation of life and water, and this means we need to reflect on our surroundings. He emphasised that to Islamic people it is a moral, religious and very personal obligation to care for our home. The problem of damage to the earth is a problem which comes from our actions and inactions. We are custodians and are accountable for what happens, he stressed. He explained the present and future difficulties for Islamic people fulfilling one of the pillars of their faith - the Hajj - which they must complete at least once in their lives due to intolerable heat, and which will in a few years' time become totally impossible, if things progress as they are now!

We talked in small groups about what we are all currently aware of and what we are

<5 trying to do towards better stewardship of the earth.

David Coleman (Eco-congregations Chaplain) chairing the meeting, reflecting on what we are doing to moderate problems and prevent future damage. The evening was rounded off by John Bremner (our Synod Interfaith and Ecumenical Officer) who gleaned some hope from our faith and the unsung actions of so many.

For me, this was an enlightening evening of friendly chat with people of another faith, who are also determined to work together for a better home and environment.

Kathleen Ziffo



Calendar

Continued from p.8

Sunday 12 th	11am	Morning Worship, led by Karl Macrae and Fiona Bennett
	12.15pm	Church Business Meeting
	3-5pm	Our Tribe
Monday 13 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – Currie Singers
Tuesday 14 th	7.30pm	Contextual Bible Study
Friday 17 th	TBC	TLC Youth Group - Movie Magic Night 2
Sunday 19 th	9.15-10.15am	Adult Education
	11am	Morning Worship and Communion, led by Fiona Bennett and Caro Penney, with ordination and induction of elders
	1-3pm	TLC Youth Group
	1.30pm	Door Stewards Training
Monday 20 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – Jane Walker on community nursing
Tuesday 21 st	7.30pm	Adult Education
Sunday 26 th	9.15-10.15am	Adult Education
	11am	Morning Worship, led by Fiona Bennett and Karl Macrae
	12.15-2pm	Burns Lunch
Monday 27 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – Keith Walker on Edinburgh Cinema Memories
Thursday 30 th	1.30-3pm	Coffee, Cake and Conversation
February		
Sunday 2 nd	9.15-10.15am	Adult Education
	11am	Morning Worship and Communion, led by Fiona Bennett and Susan Henderson
	12.15pm	Cake Sale for Scottish Churches Housing Action
	2pm	Building Community – Understanding Conflict

Welcome to Seedlings during the darkest, twinkliest days of the year. We are continuing our 'Journey in Faith' and our final module of 2019 is 'Christmas is Coming'.

- ★ We will be finishing our gift making, and getting the gifts wrapped and ready for Fiona, our minister, to deliver to people in our congregation.
- ★ Some music with Karl will be happening.
- ★ There will be an all age worship service in the middle of the month. We hope to see you there!
- ★ Our Godly Play story just prior to Christmas will be 'The Holy Family', followed by our Feast.

January will begin with a movie, so watch out for the action!

Up and coming themes for 2020 - the Good Samaritan/Prodigal Son/Wedding in Cana...



A couple of pictures from the last Godly Play time at Junior Church. If you aren't sure what they are do ask one of the children!



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

December		Season of Advent
Sunday 1 st	11am	Morning Worship and Communion, led by Fiona Bennett and David Coleman
	12.15-3pm	Advent Lunch, followed by decoration making, dressing the tree, Amnesty International card signing, and fun and games!
Monday 2 nd	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – 'cards'
Tuesday 3 rd	7.30pm	Church Council
Wednesday 4 th	4.30-6pm	'First Wednesdays' at St Mary's Cathedral – social time for LGBTQI folk to explore spirituality
Sunday 8 th	11am	Morning Worship, led by Laurence Wareing with Urzula Glienecke (Assistant Minister at Greyfriars Kirk)
	12pm	'A Wee Craft Stall', principally selling donated, hand-made jewellery to raise money for AUC before and after worship
	12.15pm	Church Meeting, with an Update from our Consultant, Deborah, on 'Shaping a Healthy Future for AUC' and the Election of Elders (see p.2)
	1-3pm	TLC Youth Group – Journey Through Life: Advent Edition
	3-5pm	Our Tribe – Carol Singing
Monday 9 th	10am-3pm	Edinburgh Advent Doors Open Day at AUC
	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – Christmas Lunch (pre-booked)
Tuesday 10 th	7.30pm	Contextual Bible Study – Habakkuk 1: 1-24 'Hope'
Sunday 15 th	11am	All Age Nativity Worship and Gift Service, with Communion, led by Fiona Bennett (see p. 4)
Wednesday 18 th	7.30pm	Living the Questions (not Tuesday!)
Saturday 21 st	10-12.30pm	Carol Singing at the Farmers' Market, Johnson Terrace, for Christian Aid
Sunday 22 nd	11am	Advent Journey Morning Worship led by Fiona Bennett
	2-2.45pm	Service of the Longest Night, led by Fiona Bennett and Lorraine Miller
		Season of Christmas
Wednesday 25 th	10.30am	Christmas Day Celebration for All Ages, led by Fiona Bennett and Susan Henderson
Friday 27 th	5.30pm	Christmas-sing-along at Anne MacKenzie's home (please ask for address and see p. 2 for more info)
Sunday 29 th	11am	Morning Worship, led by Gill Laurence and John Miller
January		Season of Epiphany
Sunday 5 th	11am	Morning Worship and Communion, led by Fiona Bennett and Mike Holroyd
Monday 6 th	2pm	Women's Union at Saughtonhall URC – Bring and Buy
Tuesday 7 th	7.30pm	Church Council

Turn to p.6 for the remaining January dates

Please note the deadline for material for the February issue is Sunday 26th January.

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, they are not necessarily those of AUC or the editor.