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Guaranteed Change, By Rev Fiona Bennett

It is said the only things guaranteed in life are death and taxes. I would like to suggest there is a third thing: change.

From the moment of conception throughout every moment of life our bodies are changing, as is the world around us.

I recently visited the home of a friend from school days. Some of the wallpaper had not changed since our teenage years; it was very familiar and yet as the people who lived in the home and I had changed over the years, nothing was quite the same.

Change is intrinsic to being alive. God invited Abraham and Sarah to journey and change. Jesus inspired change in the world in which he lived. Paul found completeness and fulfilment through radically changing and encouraging those around him to do the same.

Yet at times we humans

seem to spend much energy resisting and fighting change. As Christians we often we seek for the church to be the unchanging rock in the midst of the changing world, but does this resonate with the story of the Bible?

I would like to suggest that rather encouraging us to resist change, the Bible shows us how to embrace it well. Throughout the Bible, God invites individuals and communities to grow and change - to leave behind the familiar and step into the unknown in order to discover yet more of God's wonder and love.

We see in the stories of the Bible, that as we step into the unknown we take with us our formation of the past, sometimes as a strength and sometimes as a burden we need to let go of. As we step forward we also take with us the faith/trust that wherever we go and whatever happens, God can make good of it. We take with us the deep

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

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To get involved volunteering within AUC or the local community:

AUC Volunteering

Fiona Somerville

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Local Community

Volunteering

Della Morris

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assurance of God's love and companionship which are steadfast and unwavering.

Change is a creation and gift of God to enable us to grow and know more of the wonder that is life. God invites us to embrace it with confidence and without fear.

Continuing Care for Augustine

Gift Day Breakfast 2020

Sunday 1st March

Our annual gift days began in 2013 as we started to furiously fund-raise for our roof and communications Project. People have continued to support the day with generous donations throughout the project and in subsequent years as we gradually reduced the substantial remaining costs. In 2019 we celebrated finally becoming clear of the project's costs with your generosity in donating the largest amount ever, more than £20,000, through the Gift Day, fundraising events, donations and the ever-popular penny pots.

We thank you very much for your generosity and perseverance as this has been an essential initiative in growing our community and its work in this building. We now have a greatly improved and better equipped building for Augustine's missions but if we are to have a sustainable future on George IV Bridge we must rebuild our resources to maintain and further improve the building for our future use.

We will continue to fundraise for the Fabric Fund and will be holding the next Gift Day on 1st March. The Minister and Treasurer will be available from 10am to receive your gifts and, as always, coffee and the healthiest bacon and cheese rolls will be served for breakfast.

We look forward to seeing you again.

Tom Murray

Adventures in Reading the Bible

Inspired by the reading she shared with us all on 29th December, Jo Clifford wrote the following reflection, which it's our privilege to share with you here...

One of the things I love about reading the lesson are the places it takes me in my imagination. Places I would not normally go.

Yesterday I went up Mount Nebo where Moses was taken towards the end of his life.

It sounded so beautiful and it must have made Moses so happy imagining the Israelites in these lovely places. In Naphthali, in Ephraim and in Manasseh where after years of discontentment they would finally be happy.

But it wasn't to be. He was to die there.

And he did, and was buried, and nobody even knows where to honour and commemorate him. Which strikes me a pretty harsh.

But then the Old Testament is pretty often like that.

The next story, the end of the Gospel of John, isn't expansive at all. The Gospel says that when you're young you dressed yourself and went where you wanted to go. But when you're old you will stretch out your hands and be taken where you don't want to go.

My poor brother Tony died just before Christmas and this described his last days perfectly.

His poor arms and legs were waste after weeks on the ventilator and all he could do was stretch them out and be taken out of bed and be put into a chair on a hoist. And then he

stayed by his bed except when he was wheeled off to Xray.

He enjoyed these excursions and made the most of them. Just as he also enjoyed joking with the nurses who washed and fed him and talking to those of us who came to visit him.

And he enjoyed his little sips of yogurt or custard or ice cream. Until he lost his swallowing reflex and he wasn't allowed that any more. He was going to be fed through a tube going straight into his stomach and he wasn't going to be allowed to taste food again.

That's when he gave up. He refused to be got up to sit in his chair and after a couple of days he died.

So yesterday (29th December) the lesson took me to some pretty bleak places.

But then the Gospel opens up to somewhere miraculous because it says that Jesus did so many things in his lifetime that there isn't room to write them all down.

In fact there isn't room in the whole world for all the books that would need to be written.

Tony must be in one of those books. And one day we'll be in another...

Jo Clifford

World Day of Prayer , 6th March

Our local service is to be held in Craigmillar Park Parish Church at 2.30pm. This year the service has been designed by women in Zimbabwe.

There are also two Bible studies in the Church of Scotland offices on the day's theme "Rise, Take Up Your Mat and Walk". The first led by Rev Andrea Price on Friday 7th February and the second on Friday 21st February led by Rev John Bremner, URC. Both sessions start at 10.30am and are really worthwhile and open up the passage - John 5: 2-9a.

Doris Caldwell



Shaping a Healthy Future Away Day Sat 22nd Feb 10-3pm (lunch included), Colinton Kirk

Through the day we hope to enjoy each other's company, to give thanks for our life together and to draw on the significant work done with our consultant to discern how we can shape our work and organisation to be effective and sustainable in the Ministry & Mission we are called to.

Guided by Deborah Pike (our consultant) & Jan Adamson (of the URC), and with a children and young people's programme offered by Susan Henderson, we hope as many people as possible will share in the day so that we can draw on the broad energy and diverse life experience which our community reflects.

Lunch will be provided. When you register please let us know:

- Of any dietary requirements
- Ages of any children & young people
- Any other access requirements



Please register for the day
by emailing Kathleen
secretary@augustine.org.uk

Directions to Colinton Kirk
Can be found on their website:
Dell Rd Edinburgh EH13 0JR
www.colinton-parish.com

February is LGBT History Month

It is a time of celebrating and exploring the contribution of LGBT people in the world.

Here in Scotland we are looking at what we have learned since we challenged and prevented clause 28 being enforced as law in our society.

If you would like to know more come and join us at Our Tribe on Sunday 9th February @3pmm.



They Showed Us Unusual Kindness

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has been held between January 18th and 25th – the Octave of St Peter and St Paul – since 1908 and is celebrated around the world. The Christians in Malta wrote the worship material this year and chose the theme “They showed us unusual kindness”.

St Paul's words about the people of Malta who cared for him and his fellow prisoners when they were shipwrecked there. The service in Edinburgh was held in the Central Methodist Church, and Edinburgh Churches Together had prepared a most beautiful service around the theme.

We sang appropriate hymns of welcome, sharing and the seashore, a dinghy formed the centrepiece, and oars were carried forward during the prayers representing reconciliation, hope, hospitality etc. Bishop John Armes preached and we were reminded that even now the people of Malta are ‘showing unusual kindness’ to the hundreds of refugees who land there when they are trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea.

As we moved onto the foyer for refreshments there was an opportunity to make a contribution to a local charity called ‘The Welcoming’ which supports refugees and other newcomers here in Edinburgh. It was good to have shared this worship opportunity with Christians of many denominations from all over Edinburgh.

Anne MacKenzie



Two Month in Pictures



Throughout December we journeyed across the globe learning about the different ways people celebrate Christmas. As we journeyed, so too did our knitted Mary & Joseph, who sought out selfies here, there and everywhere, which were stitched together into a video which was shared on Christmas day.

In December we also welcomed the Rev David Coleman officially as a member of our congregation.

January brought celebrations of its own. We ordained Jayson as an Elder and inducted Jayson, Alex and Harriet onto our Church Council.

Last but certainly not least, we had a fantastic Burns lunch!



Carols and Fellowship

We were a small but happy band. Twelve of us sang heartily, enjoyed pipes and poets, and Molly's funny stories. Then there were some light refreshments—and more singing. We began to get a little hoarse but Stephen, at the piano, kept us in tune!

So thank you all for coming and maybe we can praise God in this way again this year! My experience is that December comes round pretty quickly!

Anne MacKenzie



Gatherings 2020

Wednesday 19 Feb, Dundee – The Steeple Church Halls, Nethergate, Dundee, DD1 4DG.

Thursday 20 Feb, Dunblane – Cathedral Halls, The Cross, Dunblane, FK15 0AQ.

Friday 21 Feb, Glasgow – Wheatley House Academy, 150 Ingram Street, Glasgow, G1 1DW.

10am – 1pm

Join Christian Aid at the Gatherings 2020 to explore how we respond to communities in crisis across the world.

We commit almost a third of our total income to our humanitarian work. Every year Christian Aid reaches millions of disaster-affected people. At the Gatherings 2020, find out how we provide urgent, practical help in times of crisis and beyond.

Faith Focus: Join us for a unique session of Just Scripture, Christian Aid's international bible study tool. We'll connect live with an overseas partner to explore a scripture passage together.

Together with staff and volunteers, discover how we can amplify our voices to speak truth to power and to create lasting change.

Keynote speaker: Nick Guttman, Christian Aid Head of Humanitarian

Division Highlights: Just Scripture, Christian Aid's humanitarian work, Climate Justice 2020

RSVP: Refreshments will be provided. Please RSVP to glasgow@christian-aid.org

Fairtrade Fortnight – 24th February to 8th March.



The Fairtrade Mark has been around for a quarter of a century and Traidcraft for 40 years. So we can celebrate but the need is as great as ever.

The focus this year is again on cocoa farmers, particularly in Cote d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone. They deserve a living income, that is, more than 75p per day, and the Fairtrade Foundation along with the governments of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire are hoping to achieve this through Fairtrade and a Living Income Differential.

The Scottish Fairtrade Forum is holding its annual celebration here at Augustine. This 'Fairtrade Festival' is on Saturday 29th February. It is an opportunity for us to support the event and to find out more about the cocoa growers – mainly women – in West Africa and how we can help.

More details will follow on the weekly notice sheets and on the noticeboards. Enjoy your Divine chocolate bar or your hot chocolate night cap! See you there!

Anne MacKenzie

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.



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

Guiding and hospitality – ambitions for 2020

We have been hosting open days at AUC for over three years now. The success of this venture has been due in large part to the enthusiasm, sensitivity and knowledge of those who have acted as guides and “welcomers” on these occasions.

This work is an important and always interesting element of our outreach as a congregation and we are truly grateful for all the time and energy invested by so many individuals. They would testify, I'm sure, to the fascinating conversations to be had with visitors, the opportunities to share our mission and values as a congregation, and the genuine appreciation expressed by so many of the people who enter our building on those days.

In 2020, we are pushing the boat out further and testing our own resources in the process. Recognising that our open days are good opportunities for making contact not only with visitors but with tenants and other users of our building, we are going to host two homegrown open days as well as participating in Edinburgh Doors Open (September) and Advent Doors (December). We will be working on our own publicity and different ways to raise the profile of these events ahead of time.

We also plan to offer a refresher day around guiding and hospitality. This is intended both for those who have volunteered to do this in the past and for anyone who feels they may like to get involved this year. No knowledge of AUC's heritage will be assumed, but at the same time we promise some new information and ideas for those who consider themselves “old-hands”!

The session is planned for Sunday 1st March, from around 12.30pm until 2.30pm (latest ending) in the church sanctuary.

Please consider coming along. If you have any questions, do get in touch with me at laurence.wareing@augustine.org.uk

Laurence Wareing



Greyfriars Kirk – Celebrate 400



Greyfriars Kirk was consecrated on Christmas Day 1620, making 2020 the 400th anniversary of the building. In one sense it's also the 400th anniversary of the congregation and we can claim credit as one of the oldest institutions in the country. But the Greyfriars gene pool has been augmented by another 16 congregations that have joined us over the years, most recently Kirk o'Field, now the Greyfriars Charteris Centre.

If Edinburgh was the cradle of the European enlightenment, Greyfriars can claim to be its tomb, with the graves of James Hutton, the father of modern geology; Mary Erskine and George Watson; and the mathematician Colin Maclaurin. The National Covenant was signed here in 1638, asserting the independence of the reformed Kirk from state control.

With such a rich history to draw on, the Greyfriars congregation has had no shortage of wacky ideas to mark the anniversary, from a lego building project to a human chain around the 17 sites of our predecessor churches. But we're now homing in on a series of events for Greyfriars and for our covenanted partners Augustine and St Columba's by the Castle.

Joint top billing must go to the Flower Festival which takes place on 26th and 27th September and the Festival of Science, Wisdom and Faith, on 6th and 7th June, the weekend of Huttons' birthday. The Festival is subtitled Great Questions

lead to Great Works and will reflect on that historic three way tension. Does the success of modern science make faith easier or harder as we understand more of the incredible intricacy of our planet and of the universe? Do scientific knowledge and faith make us wiser? Richard Holloway and Dame Sue Black will lead our line-up of star participants.

The Flower Festival is scheduled for September, to coincide with Doors Open Day across the city. These will be flower arrangements on a scale that none of us have ever seen before, one for each of our 17 former congregations and drawing on flower arranging talents from across the city.

We will not be short of great music. Early in the year we will be joined by the SCO Chorus under for a programme of unaccompanied renaissance music. In March, for the Lenten season, we have the Dunedin Consort and Scottish Ensemble with Sir James Macmillan's Seven Last Words from the Cross. In the autumn the Edinburgh Royal Choral Union will perform a piece specially commissioned for the anniversary.

To round it all off there will be a big party and the year will close with a bang as the BBC broadcasts its Christmas Eve service from Greyfriars, to be recorded on 28th November.

There will be something for everyone, do join us.

Jo Elliot, Session Clerk, Greyfriars Kirk

Flowers

We had a good discussion at the church business meeting on flowers and I am looking for folk to assist in taking part in the festival Jo writes of. St Columba's by the Castle are helping and I will have more details next month. It will be a chance to learn from each other, discover talents and maybe surprise ourselves. Please speak to me about it.

Doris Caldwell

Hello, Seedlings large and small!

It feels like February is the beginning of really waking up after the holiday season and after the darkest patch of Winter. The light is gradually returning, and the sap is stirring in the trees, even if we can't see it.

Our 'Journeys in Faith' continue. At the end of the month, we will finish our work on the Wedding at Cana with some games.

For the rest of the month we will work on a new module: The Good Samaritan. We will start with a cooking activity, followed by a Godly Play story and we will end the month with a joint service with our partner churches held at St Columba's.

keep an eye out for the modules coming up in the next few weeks: The Prodigal Son, Preparations for Easter (including bread making), video making, and holiday activities...



"There was once someone who went from Jerusalem down to Jericho. As he went along his way, he was attacked by robbers. They hurt him, took everything he had, and left him by the side of the road..."

Image from www.godlyplayresources.com.

Words from Volume 3 The Complete Guide to Godly Play by Jerome Berryman.



I WONDER

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

February		Season of Epiphany
Sunday 2 nd	11am	Morning Worship with Communion, led by Susan Henderson and Lorraine Millar
	12.20pm	Refreshments and Cake Sale for Scottish Churches Housing Action
	1-3pm	TLC Youth: 'Live your story' Part 2
Monday 3 rd	2pm	Women's Union at <u>Saughtonhall URC</u> - Springwell Golden Voices
Wednesday 5 th	4.30-6pm	First Wednesdays at St Mary's Cathedral
Friday 7 th	10.30am	Preparatory bible study for World Day of Prayer at 121 George St (see p.3)
Sunday 9 th	11am	Morning Worship, led by Fiona Bennett with preacher Laurence <u>Wareing</u>
	12.20pm	Church Meeting: Conflict Resolution
	3-5pm	Our Tribe: Queer Bible History for LGBT History Month (see p.5)
Monday 10 th	10-12.30pm	Kitchen hygiene training (see Kathleen for more info)
	2pm	Women's Union at <u>Saughtonhall URC</u>
Tuesday 11 th	7.30pm	Contextual Bible Study
Sunday 16 th	11am	Morning Worship with Communion, led by Lorraine Millar with preacher Mike Holroyd
	12.30pm	Church Lunch
	1-3pm	TLC Youth: Bowling at Fountain Park. See Matt for more details by Wednesday 12 th
Monday 17 th	2pm	Women's Union at <u>Saughtonhall URC</u>
Tuesday 18 th	7.30pm	Study Session: discussion about future material
Friday 21 st	10.30am	Preparatory bible study for World Day of Prayer at 121 George St
Saturday 22 nd	10am-3pm	AUC Congregational 'Shaping the Future' Away Day at <u>Colinton Parish Church</u> (Important! See p.4)
Sunday 23 rd	11am	Joint TLC Service at St Columba's by the Castle, with preacher Rev David Coleman
Monday 24 th	2pm	Women's Union at <u>Saughtonhall URC</u>
Tuesday 25 th		Shrove Tuesday
Wednesday 26 th		Ash Wednesday
Thursday 27 th	1.30-3pm	Coffee, Cake and Conversation
March		Season of Lent
Sunday 1 st	10am	AUC Gift Day (see p.2)
	11am	Morning Worship and Communion, led by Harriet Davidson with preacher Rev Fiona Bennett
	12.30-2.30pm	Guiding and Hospitality for Visitors and Heritage: Training (see p.9)
	1-3pm	TLC Youth

Please note the deadline for material for the March issue is Sunday 23rd February.

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