

Seeds

Feb/Mar 2022

encourage – inspire – challenge

Augustine
United Church

Lent treasure

Revd Fiona
Bennett



This year, Lent begins on Wednesday 22 February. It is the season when we are invited to strip back to what is truly important.

Matthew 6: 19-21: Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The giving up, or taking up, of activities for Lent are disciplines to help us focus in on that which is of eternal worth.

I have been reflecting this year that the strikes across the UK, the wars in Ukraine and elsewhere, the conflict over the Gender Recognition Bill*, and the climate crisis all cast particularly pertinent perspectives on Lent. They have drawn me to the passage in Matthew 6 (the lectionary reading for Ash Wednesday).

As I listen to the strike messages: yes, it is for better pay, but it is also for classroom budgets so teachers are not paying for food for their pupils; it is for minimum levels of staffing to be achieved in hospital wards; it is for safety on trains. As a society, what does this say about where our

collective treasure and heart lies? I have followed the creation of the GRB* as it seeks to offer a measure of dignity to people who often experience stigma and hatred – and I wonder, where are our treasure and heart as a culture when the protection of vulnerable groups becomes a battlefield rather than a meeting point for collective strength to develop non-violence and dignity for all?

And using the same lens, as I look at my own life (or the life of the church locally and as a denomination) and how I (we) use time, money and energy, what does it say about where my (our) treasure and heart truly are? Lent is a season of stripping back to ask hard questions, but sometimes what it can reveal is surprising.

Several years ago, the city centre churches in Edinburgh did an audit of the hours they donated room space to support groups and gatherings (such as Alcoholics Anonymous, mental health drop-ins, food banks etc.) and the numbers were astoundingly high, revealing a significant and strong layer of care in Edinburgh city centre. Where our treasure is, there our heart is also.

As we think about what could be useful disciplines to give up or take up this Lent, I hope we can find ways to reveal to ourselves where our treasure and heart are, so that we may choose to continue or change our lives and habits to invest ourselves in God's Dream or Realm, which is of eternal worth.

This Month

LIGHT IN KARACHI

Jo Clifford meets a brave pastor in Pakistan



ARE YOU 'WISHCYCLING'?

Looking at the rules of recycling this Food Waste Action Week



IONA CALLS

Caro Penney responds to the joy of community



LOVE IN UTALE

Memories of Nigel Harper and his connections with AUC





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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 email the contact person.

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We are always looking for volunteers to undertake various tasks each week to keep church happening. Perhaps you could consider learning how to make coffee or welcome people. To find out more, contact:

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LOCAL COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERING

Kathleen Ziffo
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Local and Global

News from the United Reformed Church



REAL LIVING WAGE CONFIRMED

Augustine's transition to becoming a Real Living Wage employer has now been confirmed. We are now accredited so can use the Living Wage logo as we wish. Look out for a plaque and window stickers in the next few weeks. Read more at www.livingwage.org.uk/what-real-living-wage.

FINDING OUR ROOTS?

Roots: Globalscope Edinburgh is welcoming us to get to know them better. AUC members Kate, Andrew, Hanna and Emma have all served with Roots, a grace-driven community which aims to be a place where university students can have fun, make friends, and explore life and faith together. We are invited to visit Roots' home at 9 South College St. to meet some of its members, to hear their stories and consider ways we can continue to share in ministry and mission.

Sunday 5 February, 1-2pm, (with sandwiches at the post-service coffee time!).

SUNDAY LUNCHES ARE BACK!

Monthly lunches in AUC make a welcome return on the 2nd Sunday of the month, 12noon to 1 pm, beginning Sunday 12 March.

These are soup and roll lunches (feel free to bring your own sandwiches and/or fruit as well if you wish), and offer folk time to chat round a table and get to know each other – particularly useful for new people. This is one of the ways AUC provides pastoral support to individuals in our congregation.

If specific pastoral support is needed, contact can be made, at any time, via one of the ministers, or the Pastoral Elder, Sheila Storrier. (Contact details on p.2)



TRAIDCRAFT CLOSES

The pioneering ethical trade company Traidcraft PLC has gone into administration. An already weak financial position was unable to withstand the impact of the pandemic and the combined effects of the war in Ukraine, rising energy prices, increased transport costs, and the uncertainty created by postal strikes.

The company's charitable arm, Transform Trade, will continue to support producers and campaign for ethical trading within an unjust system. Transform Trade said: 'The good work that Traidcraft pioneered cannot and will not be undone.'

INSIDE OUT AT OUR TRIBE

'Behind the Lens' is the theme for this February's LGBT+ History Month. Events will celebrate LGBT+ peoples' contribution to cinema and film from behind the lens, from directors, cinematographers and screen writers to costume designers and choreographers and beyond.

Our Tribe (2 February) will take a 'look behind the lens' of the Revd Peter Fairbrother, a OneSpirit Interfaith Minister and Chaplain at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh. Peter will share the history of his faith journey and sexuality. (See www.revdpeterfairbrother.uk.)

There will also be a chance to reflect on our own individual history stories and our personal contribution to the LGBTQI community.



Warm spaces volunteers needed

In cooperation with other city centre organisations, TLC partner St Columba's is offering warm 'welcome spaces' to the public during the cold months.

If you would like to get involved and volunteer to help provide these warm spaces, please get in touch with our Administrator, Rachel Fitzgerald

(rachel.fitzgerald@augustine.org.uk) and she will be able to connect you to the organisers.

St Columba's is open on Wednesdays, 2-4pm. Other warm space providers are Dance Base, The Quaker Meeting House and St Columba's Free Church.

Gender Recognition in Scotland

By an overwhelming majority, the Scottish Parliament agreed to pass the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill.

It will reduce the previously demanding conditions to get a Gender Recognition Certificate which allows for a legal change in a persons' birth certificate. These changes have been the result of years of campaigning, consultation and negotiation on the

part of trans activists and the Scottish Government.

However, it was announced that the UK Parliament is seeking to block these changes using a Section 35 Order of the Scotland Act. This would be unprecedented and has caused consternation and considerable distress among the trans community.

Please pray for all our trans siblings both within and outwith our community.

Retreat into Daily Life

St. Columba's by the Castle is offering a weekly retreat, 'From Loss to Love', led by Timothy J. Ray, a former Jesuit, and author of many books on prayer.

This will be a scripture-based retreat in daily life for those who want to engage with the themes of Lent and Easter through imaginative forms of prayer developed by Saint Ignatius of Loyola. The retreat will incorporate nine weekly prayer services connecting stories from the

life of Saint Columba with thematic devotions woven from the prayers of the Celtic saints. These themes will be extended through private guided prayer and personal consultation with a spiritual director (in-person or online). However, the prayer services themselves will be open to anyone interested in this journey, regardless of their participation in the retreat.

Each Sunday evening at 7pm, February 26 – April 2 & April 16 – April 30 (on-site and online). For more information, contact Timothy Ray at 4timothy.ray@gmail.com.

Thank you from REH

Before Christmas, we collected gifts for the chaplains to give to people who find themselves in the Royal Edinburgh Hospital over Christmas.

On behalf of the chaplains and gift recipients, Lindsay Anderson, one of the chaplains, has written to thank AUC.

'The chocolate was happily received, and no doubt enjoyed, and the gift card will prove incredibly useful throughout the year for things such as fresh flowers for our Quiet Room, a small birthday gift for someone without a family – endless possibilities. Your generosity and compassion are very much appreciated by all of us within the Spiritual Care Team at REH. We wish you all a gentle and peace-filled New Year. Warmly, Lindsay.'

Iona calls

Caro Penney responds to the joy of community



Some, perhaps many, of you will have visited the inner Hebridean island of Iona. Especially if you were blessed with ‘good’ weather, you would doubtless have marvelled at the beauty of the shores, picked up a pebble or two, and perhaps have been lucky enough to hear the call of a corncrake.

Some of you may even have stayed in the Abbey as guests of the Iona Community, just as I did for the first time in summer 1984. After annual visits since – including one with a group from AUC in 1989 and another with Fiona a few years later – then becoming a Community Member 25 years ago. . . look where it’s taking me. . . back to the island! This time, for a four-year stint as Abbey Warden. Never did I imagine this, not even as I returned home last July after six weeks as a volunteer. What’s that about ‘God’s mysterious ways’?

Being warden is a real mix. It includes: responsibility for supporting staff and volunteers to maintain a vibrant and healthy community for all who live, work and visit the Abbey; ensuring the Abbey is a place of welcome, hospitality and challenge through the daily rhythm of worship, and creative, meaningful programmes; ensuring the work and concerns of the Iona Community are embedded within all the activities of the Abbey; leading by example, through the common life approach to work and worship, action and reflection; being part of the wider island community. Yes, it is a ‘demanding common task’ but, today, there’s a fantastic team of staff, most of whom I’ve worked and lived with, so we know each other well. That makes a huge difference as I start this new role,

knowing too that there are challenges ahead, known and unknown.

Some of those challenges come from living on ‘an island off an island’: ferries delayed for 24 hours; power cuts which can last from a minute to several hours; dodgy WIFI; no doctor on the island. . . But what a privilege. Following in the footsteps of my predecessors, many of whom I know well.

Although I’m sorry not to be part of this year’s AUC group visiting Iona in the summer, I’m so looking forward to welcoming them! And over the next four years, I’d love to see more of you, whether you’re day visitors or staying elsewhere on the island, or Abbey guests.

For now, though, I give my huge thanks to you all – being part of the AUC community is another privilege in my life, not least this past year leading worship and covering for Fiona in the university’s multi-faith chaplaincy team. But, mostly, being with you. Thank you. The Iona Community’s ‘strap-line’ is ‘inspired by our faith we pursue justice and peace in community’. It could just as honestly be AUC’s!

Gathered and scattered, we go forward together:

*Jesus calls us to leave the past – Jesus calls us to hope
Jesus calls us to travel lightly – Jesus calls us to faith
Jesus calls us to live fairly – Jesus calls us to justice
Jesus calls us to risky living – Jesus calls us to life*

(anonymous: used in Iona Abbey service, Feb 2021)
iona.org.uk

Cleaning up our mess

What are the rules of recycling? With Food Waste Action Week heading our way, Laurence Wareing is trying to work them out.

Recycling isn't easy. It used to confuse my mum completely – though she was determined to 'do it right'.

And my mother-in-law was so meticulous about the task, she put us to shame – but it took her a very long time to get everything precisely how she felt the bin men wanted it.

I guess I've been quite inconsistent about the whole thing. But then I saw some photos on the BBC website of a recycling plant – the kind that sorts around 25 tonnes of recycling per hour. It wasn't the size of the place, and of the undertaking, that stopped me in my tracks. It was Phil Coombs' photo of workers sorting rubbish on the conveyer belts.

It looks like an especially unpleasant job they are doing – but, clearly, it's made worse because so much rubbish comes through that is unclean, might contaminate, or is sharp and dangerous. The protective gloves

and sleeves being worn by the men and women speak volumes. So, I was grateful that Phil has given permission for us to share his photos in *Seeds*. Pictures, they say, are worth a thousand words!

Alongside Phil's photos, the BBC's Environment Correspondent, Helen Briggs, used a word that was new to me: 'wishcycler'.

“Wishcycling . . . describes the well-intentioned, but often unfounded belief, that something is recyclable, even though it's not.”

'Ever paused with your hand over the recycling bin, wondering whether to drop in that cheese-splattered pizza box?' she asks. Oh yes, I'm thinking! And don't get me started on those

barely visible numbered triangles that are meant to help my decision-making but don't. 'You could be a wishcycler', suggests Helen, '– keen to recycle more stuff and do your bit for the planet, but confused about the best way to go about it.' In all honesty, that describes me to a tee.

Helen says: 'Wishcycling . . . describes the well-intentioned, but often unfounded belief, that something is recyclable, even though it's not.' Moreover, while the packaging might say something is recyclable, that doesn't mean my council will accept it. 'One council's recycling is another council's general waste, so it's important to always check your local rules.' (Where? How? Help!)

Helen Briggs turned for help to waste reduction charity, Wrap. She wasn't sure whether her plastic conditioner bottle could be recycled. She's not alone. Many of us get it wrong with things like shampoo and conditioner bottles, cleaning and bleach bottles, foil and aerosols. But Wrap comes to





our rescue: 'If it's plastic and bottle-shaped it can go in the recycling.' Brilliant. Job done.

Ready meal packaging is trickier. Some recycling plants accept the plastic tubs, others don't. Plastic film can't be recycled, though. It must be peeled off and put in with the general rubbish. And any food (like that stringy cheese left in the pizza box) should be scraped off and removed.

It turns out that 88% of UK households regularly recycle. That's good news. The not-so-good news is that 87% of UK households recycle one or more items that are not accepted in the kerbside recycling and 57% miss one or more items that could be recycled at the kerbside.

Food Waste Action Week is 6-12 March

this year. Excitingly, there's loads of background information on the Wrap website (wrap.org.uk). For more local information, www.mygov.scot/bins will point you to the right page on your council website – where you should find the do's and don'ts of your local recycling. For more detailed information, try: wasteless.zerowastescotland.org.uk/

For the moment, I'm going to learn this graphic (*right*) by heart. I won't get everything right, but I'm going to work at it, and in 2023 try to become a realistic recycler, not just a wishcycler.

Five items we often get wrong - and how to get it right

Can you recycle it?	How to get it right
 Pizza box ✓	Remove any food or sauce
 Coffee cup ✗	Return to a coffee shop that takes them back
 Ready meal ?	Check your local rules, then clean plastic container and recycle, put plastic film in general waste
 Receipt ✓	Put in paper recycling
 Conditioner bottle ✓	Put in plastic recycling

Note: You are advised to check local recycling guidelines on your council's website

Source: Veolia UK

BBC

Light in Karachi

Jo Clifford has been in Karachi, Pakistan, for a production in Urdu of her play *Light in the Village*. While there, she met Pastor Rafique.

There's a garden at the entrance to Holy Trinity Cathedral, Karachi: one of the few peaceful and pleasant green places in this troubled and squalid city.

Armed guards stand at the compound entrance. Every building has its armed guard. But they're particularly needed here because not so long ago someone threw a bomb over the cathedral gate.

Pastor Ghazala Rafique and her family live in a modest house just inside the compound; and just by her front door transgender women and men gather to worship on Fridays. They meet there because the pastor's clerical superiors do not allow us to worship in the cathedral itself.

They are also planning to sell the patch of land on which her house, and our sanctuary, stands. Trying to

stop the sale of the land is one of the many battles the pastor is fighting; along with rescuing young Christian girls when they are kidnapped by Muslim fundamentalists and forced into marriage and conversion to Islam. She also very publicly speaks out for women's rights.



All this, and above all her very public support for transgender people, lays her open to accusations of blasphemy and puts her life at risk.

When I meet her, I am struck both by the extraordinary pressure and danger that surrounds her; but more by her serenity and grace. There's an extraordinary calm to her; no trace of hatred; the powerful energy of love.

We meet and we talk, and then she rushes inside to put on her vestments. She wants to be photographed wearing them: because they represent the sacredness of the work she is doing. 'This is the work I am called to do,' she says, very simply, 'and God protects me.'

Slaveowner fights apartheid

Kathleen Ziffo continues our series of biographies of Black individuals from Scotland's past

Born on Trinidad in 1796, Jean-Baptiste Phillipe was a complex figure.

He was a medical doctor who fought against the racist attitudes of white colonial authorities who did not distinguish between free and enslaved people of colour. Jean-Baptiste belonged to a wealthy, black, slave-owning family, his father having come in the late 1780s as a free black man from Grenada, to take up an offer of land at the invitation of Trinidadian authorities.

Jean-Baptiste and his younger brother, St Luce, were sent to Scotland, each for over ten years' education, and

both graduated as medical doctors from the highly regarded Edinburgh University. While St Luce is known to have treated patients back in Trinidad 'mostly among his friends', Jean-Baptiste also soon became a leader of the Civil Rights movement in southern Trinidad.

He continued his fight for the rights of free black people by returning to England. His petition, *Free Mulatto*, became a famous work. (Mulatto is now considered by some to be a derogatory term for free coloured people.) Once his father died, Jean-Baptiste gave up his land, estates and enslaved people.

In our next edition, we meet two doctors in Aberdeen.

Building the kin-dom of God in Utale

Kathleen Ziffo remembers Nigel Harper, founder and CEO of LUV+, and the connections he made with AUC.

Prior to studying for ordained ministry in the URC, the Revd William Young was worshipping and doing some pastoral work with AUC during our 2008 vacancy.

William (currently ministering in Washington DC) became friendly with Nigel Harper while getting printing work done at Nigel's business, and discovered that Nigel had travelled extensively in Africa, where he had become very conscious of Leprosy still blighting people's lives in Malawi.

Nigel had become friendly with Father Francis Kachere, whose mission worked with leprosy sufferers in Utale village. He wished to bring Fr. Kachere to Scotland to seek support, a visit which AUC eventually hosted.

Fr. Kachere spoke to our AUC members, and was taken to our Synod meeting where the young folk were so enthused that sufficient funds were raised to build a new Maize Mill back in Utale. This gave employment to people who were stigmatized and deprived of making their own living.

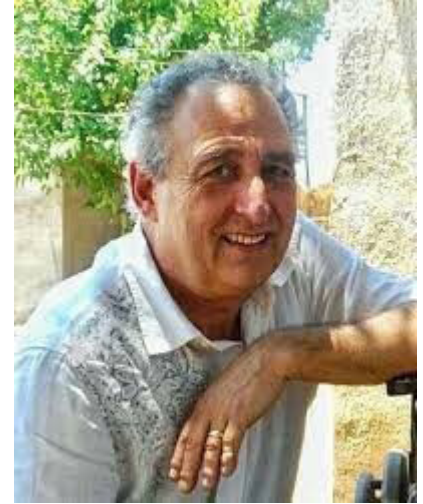
“From what was supposed to be a simple business transaction, Nigel and I built bridges”

‘Our’ Doris was initially involved in supporting the work of the charity.

Nigel also contacted various civic organisations within Scotland, around the time the Scotland/ Malawi Partnership was being founded, acquiring more funding to eventually expand the work in that area of Malawi and into neighbouring countries of Tanzania and Zambia.

Thus, the LUV+ Charity was formed. It stands for Love in Utale Village.

In 2009, Nigel persuaded William to run the London Marathon on behalf of LUV+. William says: ‘Nigel was like my manager/ coach, calling me frequently, making sure I was training and eating right. He made me feel like I was in training for the Olympics!’



‘Again, the people of God came through as we raised money for the charity—the United Reformed Church, Edinburgh Festival Chorus, and folks connected to LUV+ were all a source of inspiration and we surpassed our fundraising goal before running day.’

‘The day of the marathon, Elihud Kipchoge beat me by four hours! But Nigel met me at the finish line.’

Very sadly, Nigel, a man in middle-age but asthmatic from childhood, died last July following Covid hospitalisation and then a further chest illness.

William says: ‘From what was supposed to be a simple business transaction, Nigel and I built bridges. He was not devoutly religious, yet I always recall the encounters of Jesus with people of different culture but with whom he shared a mindset: “You are not far from the kin-dom of God.”’

‘Nigel was never far from the kin-dom. Rest in Power, good brother.’

Food for thought

UK RETAILERS COMMIT TO FAIRTRADE

Fairtrade Fortnight runs from 27 February to 12 March this year.

The United Reformed Church's Commitment for Life project supports The Fairtrade Foundation, which works in partnership with 1.9 million farmers and workers globally to address the root causes of poverty.

The good news is that more UK retailers are committing to Fairtrade.

'It is inspiring to see that public trust in, and preference for, Fairtrade is at its highest ever,' says Michael Gidney, chief Executive of Fairtrade Foundation.

Shop cannily!

Lidl is the biggest buyer of Fairtrade cocoa. It rolled out its 'Way 2 Go' chocolate across 400 stores. Aldi launched the Choco Changer, a new chocolate bar that commits to Fairtrade's Living Income Reference Price for cocoa. Aldi also provides opportunities for flower farm workers in Ethiopia to meet objectives on gender equity.

Other Fairtrade cocoa conversions were made by SPAR. It introduced three new products on trial. Proper, building on their brand commitment as the 'only Fairtrade sweet popcorn', introduced two new Proper Chocolate

Popcorn bars, while Asda launched a new FSI cocoa chocolate bar. 100 percent Fairtrade brand Tony's Chocolonely also launched in major retailers in 2021.

Since 2005, Greggs has sourced Fairtrade coffee beans for all its coffee products. It has since added bananas, apple juice, orange juice, sugar sticks, sugar syrup, hot chocolate, black tea, mint tea, and green tea as part of its Fairtrade commitments. In August 2021, Greggs announced a switch to using only Fairtrade chocolate in its own products, which include Milk Chocolate Cookies, Caramel Shortbread and Chocolate Brownies.

EAT PLANTS, SAYS EDINBURGH

Edinburgh has become the first European capital to endorse the Plant Based Treaty, acknowledging that meat and dairy consumption must be reduced to achieve climate targets. The treaty promotes a transition away from animal-based food production and towards plant-based diets.

Not everyone is happy. The Scottish Countryside Alliance said it was disappointed 'to see a city council complicit in pandering to misinformation about livestock farming in Britain, which is among the most sustainable in the world'. More information at www.plantbasedtreaty.org.

Ideas include:

'Take a hot water bottle with you to bed'

'Turn off oven 10 minutes before food finished cooking and let heat in the oven finish the meal'

'Keep a thermos flask beside the kettle for excess boiled water. It'll be ready for the next cuppa!'

'Don't get up too early!' (!!)

What ideas do you want to share?

Be clever, be power-less!

According to a study by utility switching site Utility Bidder, Edinburgh is ranked one of the least eco-conscious cities in the UK.

The conclusion is based on Google questions asked by individual residents about pollution and energy efficiency. (Just 27 searches per 100,000 population in 2022.)

Clearly, the researchers didn't come into AUC! Have you seen all the electricity-saving tips on the notice board in our church foyer? Take a look – there's sure to be something you've not thought of.

Standing up for nature

How do we respond to the news that Edinburgh is one of the ten worst cities in the UK for carbon dioxide emissions? Author and activist Dr Mya-Rose 'Birdgirl' Craig has come up with 'Five ways to stand up for nature' in 2023.

1. TELL THE GOVERNMENT THAT YOU DEMAND CHANGE

Lend your support to the Zero Hour petition (www.zerohour.uk/u4n)

2. BE A CONSCIOUS SHOPPER

It's not always easy to know what's a sustainable choice, and what's not. Whenever you're making a purchase, it helps to think about the impact on nature and the climate. It may be that you cannot avoid a product altogether, but you might be able to buy less or support a more nature-focused brand. One product best avoided is peat. (That's one for whisky drinkers!) Another is palm oil.

3. BE MINDFUL OF HOW YOU INVEST YOUR MONEY

For example, consider Bristol-based bank Triodos, which invests in projects such as nature-based flood control initiatives. And Naturesave is a green insurance company. With every home and travel policy purchased through

Naturesave, a tree will be planted on your behalf and 10% donated to The Naturesave Trust.

4. BE A CITIZEN FOR SCIENCE

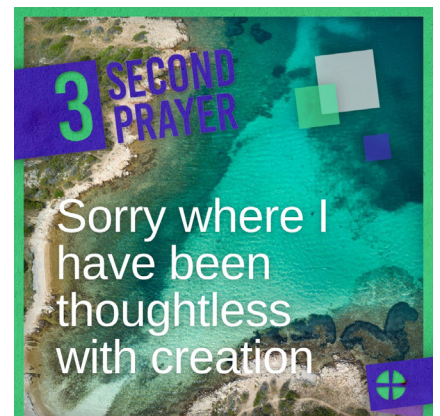
Monitoring biodiversity loss is important, and fun too. If you didn't take part in this year's RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch, you might still spare 20 minutes a week and join the British Trust for Ornithology's garden birdwatch community. Or other nature-monitoring groups.

5. REDUCE THE IMPACT OF ANIMAL FARMING

The meat and dairy sector is responsible for around 10% of the UK's total emissions. And crops produced to feed animals tend to be mono-cropped and are devoid of wildlife. By swapping to plant-based food, you can make a significant difference both to climate change and biodiversity loss.

Three-second 'planet prayers'

Sometimes we just don't feel we've got time to pray, or simply don't know how to. These four brief prayers have been offered by the Methodist Church to help us keep our concerns about creation before God.



What's On?

Most of our gatherings and resources are currently online. You can find out details on our website www.augustine.org.uk.

STAYING IN TOUCH

If you wish to receive weekly updates of AUC events please register to receive the Friday email by contacting our Centre Manager (centre.manager@augustine.org.uk).

Find us on 

Check our posts on the AUC Facebook page.

Feb / Mar 2023

Every Sunday at 11am: Blended Sunday worship and after-service Zoom social.

Contextual Bible Study is currently running **online** each Wednesday at 7.30pm and Thursday at 12 noon.

You can find more details on the church website at www.augustine.org.uk/about-us/diary/.

February		
Thu 2	7:30pm - 9pm	Our Tribe LGBTQI+ Gathering
Sun 5	12:45pm - 2:15pm	AUC visit to ROOTS
Mon 6	7:30pm - 9pm	The Divine Dance book group
Tue 7	10:30am - 1pm	NHS Mental Health Drop-In
	7:30pm - 9pm	AUC Church Council: Trustee Training
	12pm - 1pm	Eco Activities for all
Sun 19	12:30pm - 1:30pm	Church Meeting in-building
Mon 20	7:30pm - 9pm	The Divine Dance Book Group
Sun 26	1:30pm - 3pm	Coffee Social: Come OUT with Our Tribe (LGBTQI+)
	7pm - 8:30pm	'From Loss to Love' Retreat starts (see p.4 for details)
Mon 27		Fairtrade Fortnight (to 12 March)
March		
Thu 2	7:30pm - 9pm	Our Tribe LGBTQI+ Gathering
Fri 3		World Day of Prayer
Mon 6	7:30pm - 9pm	The Divine Dance book group
Tue 7	10:30am - 1pm	NHS Mental Health Drop-In
	7:30pm - 9pm	AUC Church Council
Sun 12	12pm - 1pm	Simple Church Lunch
Tue 14	7:30pm - 9pm	AUC Church Meeting ONLINE
Mon 20	7:30pm - 9pm	The Divine Dance Book Group
Sun 26	1:30pm - 3pm	Coffee Social: Come OUT with Our Tribe (LGBTQI+)
Mon 19	7:30pm - 9pm	The Divine Dance Book Group

Looking ahead

Until 19 February - **Respect! Caribbean life in Edinburgh**. Exhibition at the Museum of Edinburgh.

9 April (Easter Day) - **'Brunch' egg rolls**, 10-10.45am.

15 April 2023 - **New Jubilee date**. The re-scheduled celebration of the URC's 50th anniversary.

10 June - **Dignity for all: come together to end UK poverty** - an Action on Poverty and the APLE collective joint conference (in Leeds).

Seeds deadline

The next issue of **Seeds** will be a double issue for April and May. **Seeds** is usually published on the Sunday prior to the beginning of each month. The copy deadline for the April/May edition is **Wednesday 16 March**.