



Mark Calder (right) with Rev David McNeish in Egilsay, Orkney. Photo courtesy: THE ORCADIAN

EDINBURGH CHURCHES TOGETHER

Newsletter SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2019

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 - Personal Stories - Dr Nicola Robinson, Duncan Cuthill
 - Sharing a common ecumenical policy - CoS and SEC make history
- And much more....

WELCOME!

In the midst of the Edinburgh Festival, it is tempting to wish for space for reflection. This month's issue comes with ideas for taking some time away from the demands of daily life. Whether it's in the form of a pilgrimage, a workshop or an ultra-marathon, we hope to provide some food for thought. We also have news about strengthening ecumenical ties between the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church, a very personal story from the CEO of Edinburgh City Mission and the usual information on special events all around the city over the next couple of months.

RUNNING HOME 2019

Mark Calder is a regional manager for Embrace the Middle East, a charity that is helping displaced people, including Christians, to return to their home in Iraq. 'Running Home 2019' is a new project for the charity which he explains here:



In September 2019 I am aiming to become the first person to run the 'St Ninian Way', 340 miles from Carlisle to South Queensferry via Whithorn, Ayrshire and Glasgow. Running nearly two marathons per day, I will set off on the morning of Friday 13th September from Carlisle Cathedral, and aim to arrive in South Queensferry on the evening of Thursday 19th September. I'm then intending to take a relatively leisurely jog into Edinburgh on Friday 20th September, finishing at St Cuthbert's parish church, the oldest Christian site in Edinburgh and the church in which I married in 2005. My run coincides with the feast day of St Ninian, 16th September. The mysterious 'apostle to

the southern Picts' is thought to have founded one of Scotland's earliest monasteries in Whithorn in the 5th Century. This challenge is number 12 of 14 ultramarathon-length pilgrimage routes that I am undertaking this year, each connecting with an ancient saint important to the locality through which I'm running.

However, the principal goal of 'Running Home 2019' is to raise £65,000 for a new project, funded by Embrace the Middle East, helping people who were displaced from their homes in northern Iraq to return and put down new roots in their hometowns. My own association with the region began with my Arabic studies at Edinburgh University in 2001, during which time I enjoyed a very broad Christian formation, including both Anglo-Catholic Old Saint Paul's church and their evangelical neighbours at Carrubber's Christian Centre. Since leaving Edinburgh for Aberdeenshire, I have also lived and researched in the Middle East, including my PhD research with Syriac Orthodox Christians in Bethlehem. It is Syriac and Assyrian Christians in northern Iraq with whom Embrace the Middle East is primarily working on the projects supported by Running Home 2019. Connecting this new work in Iraq with the story of the church in Scotland has created some powerful resonances. Running through landscapes affected by the Highland Clearances has been a reminder that our national story involves quite recent episodes of forced displacement. Meanwhile, when Ninian was living, much of Scotland was a periphery oblivious or hostile to his 'gospel of peace', while Iraq was a centre of Christian thought. Indeed, later, when our shores were riven by conflict between Norsemen and local tribes, under some of the Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad, Christians, Jews and Muslims worked together peacefully and productively. It's a privilege to honour this great legacy by supporting today's Iraqi Christians in their inspiring and courageous work for

the good of all communities in their homeland, and hopefully to help secure this ancient pluralism for future generations.



The St Ninian Way is part of the emerging 'Way of St Andrews' which links pilgrimage routes across Scotland to the old centre of Christianity in Scotland, and comprises the new 'Whithorn Way' between Whithorn and Glasgow. There are several ways of supporting my challenge: Hotels and B&Bs are encouraged to donate board and lodging within a few miles of the following overnight stops: Dumfries, Creetown, Lendalfoot, Irvine, Kirkintilloch, South Queensferry. Individuals can donate and find out more via runninghome2019.co.uk

Churches and community groups wanting to cheer Mark on his way can contact Embrace the Middle East at info@embraceme.org to find out when he is likely to run through their area.

FROM PUPIL POTPOURRI TO PILGRIMS ALL



Hugh Lockhart is secretary to The Way of St Andrews.

<https://www.thewayofstandrews.com/>

All schools in Scotland are required to include lessons on Religious and Moral Education (RME). This presents quite a challenge to teachers. Student backgrounds vary from conventionally Christian, Islamic, Jewish through to the Atheist or more simply, "Not interested". How then to unite the young audience and help them develop a common ethical basis for facing the important decisions in life? Step forward Pilgrimage, "an expedition with the emphasis on

sharing a purpose, being open to new experiences and helping each other along the way." Pilgrimage has been central to many of the world's great faiths. Mecca for Muslims, Amritsar for Sikhs, Jerusalem for Jews. For Christians the most famous is Santiago de Compostela. The latest statistics from the Camino show that over 300,000 travelled for up to 6 weeks along long and dusty roads to the famous shrine in northern Spain. Over 50% professed no religion. How similar to a student class in contemporary Scotland! Pioneering pilgrimage into schools started in 2015. A Lesson Plan for P6 students was developed by Motherwell Diocese and is now available to all schools in Scotland. The Whithorn Trust successfully created a presentation and badge contest for younger children. But, of course, the next stage is to get the students out on the road, Pilgrims All, and visiting the many, sometimes neglected, places of historical or religious interest in Scotland. Enquiries about the Lesson Plans for Schools and the Whithorn Presentation to: contact@thewayofstandrews.com

SOUL CARE WORKSHOPS IN CENTRAL EDINBURGH



Four individual Saturday workshops 1.30 - 4pm offered by Reflective Spaces; for those who tend their own soul or who care for others' spiritual well-being. Bookings £25.

28 September 2019: The Masculine Soul

Can masculinity be both wild and sacred? In a post-Weinstein, 'me too' world, can poet Mary Oliver's soulful exhortation to "let the soft animal of your body love what it loves" truly apply to men? This interactive workshop seeks to go beyond the often-binary media narrative in search of the distinctive gifts and spiritual needs of men, and to explore how men and women might experience 'the

masculine soul'. All genders warmly welcome. With award-winning writer and coach Nick Thorpe.

23 November 2019: Right Use of Power

We all influence, and are influenced by, others whether we are aware of it or not. How can we relate to power with reflection, sensitivity and heart? We will use webinar material from Psychotherapist Dr Cedar Barstow to explore our personal and positional relationship to power; become aware of pitfalls and how we can develop power-positive skills which bring goodness, restoration and change. For all involved in soul care roles. With spiritual director and supervisor Elizabeth White.

1 February 2020: The Dynamic Ignatian Exercises

An introduction to the dynamic of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, with input, guided reflection and interactive 'stations' opening up an overview of the Exercises' themes. For those who are simply curious, those who would like to revisit their experience of making the Exercises, and those who offer them and would like to practice some visual and creative ways into the material. With Elizabeth White.

25 April 2020: Exploring Spiritual Abuse

What is spiritual abuse? What are the key characteristics? And what impact does the experience of spiritual abuse have on people's lives? Using current research, discussion and plenary, this workshop will help 'soul care practitioners' to consider the definitions and implications of these questions for their work. Brief pointers may be given for accompanying those who have experienced abuse, but the main emphasis will be on what we need to be aware of as we hold safe, sacred space for others in 1:1 settings. With Anne Solomon who works in spirituality and psychology.

www.reflectivespaces.org.uk/soul-care-workshops

Further details: elizabeth@reflectivespaces.org.uk

PERSONAL STORIES

Dr Nicola Robinson left the role of Communications and Administration Officer at ECT a year ago to train for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments at Northern College in Manchester.

This first year of training for Ministry of Word and Sacraments has really flown by! I have loved being part of the wonderfully diverse and friendly community of Northern College in Manchester. One of the things I value the most about studying there is the variety of theologies, contexts and experiences of the people we are studying alongside. From the other colleges which make up Luther King House, we study with Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals and other denominations. Not only do we study together, we also worship together, eat together and laugh together (a lot!) My three years working with Edinburgh Churches Together really instilled in me that when we are able to create relationships that enable

different churches to work and serve together, then we become a visible sign of diversity in unity, and, thus a powerful witness to the presence of Christ. Indeed, when churches support and encourage as well as share with one another, we are able to do far more together than we can do separately. As I reflect on the year as a whole, I realise that training and formation for ministry helps you to grow in so many new ways, which can sometimes be challenging and exciting, yet it is always supported, encouraged and nurtured by our fellow students and tutors. Each and every one of us is on a journey to be the person and minister, God has called us to be. Personally, I have learnt and grown a lot: from the modules I've studied, from my church placement with St James' Episcopal Church and my community placement with the L'Arche community, from relationships with new friends as well as from praying and reflecting with God.



PERSONAL STORIES - DUNCAN CUTHILL

Duncan Cuthill has been the CEO of Edinburgh City Mission since 2017.



Picture the scene: a teenager checks into a Saturday night mission meeting in the city-centre of Edinburgh and realises that he needs Jesus. He goes to the front at the end of the meeting to get advice on how to commit his life to God. After the counsellor carefully explains the gospel, to make sure that the teenager has understood it properly, he offers to pray with him. The teenager refuses because it doesn't feel right. But that evening, he goes home and quietly bows his head in his kitchen and makes the most important decision of his life: to follow Jesus.

Picture the scene: a young man in his mid-20s standing on Arthur's Seat looking over Edinburgh and dreaming of God doing something significant, something amazing, something powerful, something lasting in his home city, particularly in the poorer parts of the city. And so off he goes, into West Pilton to volunteer with Edinburgh City Mission, to befriend local people and help out at a little community centre that is run by

a City Missionary, Bill McGillivray, on the housing estate in North-West Edinburgh. Life moves on, it twists and

turns, and eventually he ends up working with London City Mission for 12 years before coming across an advert for a new CEO for Edinburgh City Mission...In July 2017 I returned to Edinburgh with the daunting but hugely exciting opportunity of being able to take what I'd learnt in London City Mission and apply it to Edinburgh City Mission, together with regularly praying that old favourite prayer that many of us often send heavenwards: "Help me, Lord!" The aim of Edinburgh City Mission is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ in words and action by engaging in poverty relief in Edinburgh, particularly amongst people who live in housing estates. We seek to "stimulate and strengthen the church's mission in Edinburgh's most deprived communities."

When I started, we had four part-time missionaries. We quickly grew our team and now have an extra full-time and four part-time "Mission Strengtheners" whose role is to fulfil our mission statement, expressing God's love by strengthening the church's mission rather than building our own projects. This is a crucial distinctive of Edinburgh City Mission: we are a team of Christians from different churches across Edinburgh who pray with, advise, encourage and get actively involved in the mission work of other churches across the city. The word "strengthen" means: to build up, make healthy, nourish, support, fortify, reinforce... we want to inspire the church to love our neighbours, to engage with those who live in our local communities and to reach out a helping hand, particularly to those who are most in need of help to overcome life's challenges.

In practice, this involves supporting eight church-based "Basics Banks" foodbanks and providing follow-up meetings for guests who need support to deal with the difficult situation that has created their need for the foodbank, or are interested in learning about Jesus. The referrals to our Basics Banks have sky-rocketed over the past five years: we did 693 in 2015 and over 800 already in 2019. We also provide debt support through Community Money Advice (two of our team are CMA-qualified debt advisors) in partnership with the Salvation Army, and partner with local churches to help with new initiatives like Soul Food, which we are launching in October. We love the church and we want to see God's kingdom come in the city of Edinburgh, as it is in heaven.

In early 2018 we held our first "Restless for Mission" conference. In 2019 we expanded this conference with a keynote talk on "Stepping into Mission" and seminars to help people think about how to engage with refugees, engage with their local community, reflect on God's heart for the poor and learn how to have confident conversations about Jesus. Later this year, on 21st September, we are going to hold our first "Encounter" conference which will be all about encountering Jesus. At the conference we will launch Edinburgh City Mission's latest project: a weekly Soul Food meal for people who are needing community; and we will launch City Vision, a new prayer initiative for the city.

Our vision is to help to create a mission movement across Edinburgh by growing our team of Mission Strengtheners to more than 30 so that we can have teams working on each housing estate across the city, "stimulating and strengthening the church's mission in Edinburgh's most deprived communities." In order to grow our team, we are enlisting the support of more financial supporters called "Mission Enablers" - people who commit to giving a small or a large sum every month to enable us to continue to grow our team of Mission Strengtheners. This will enable us to have a greater impact on local churches, keeping prayer and mission at the top of the agenda.

Picture the scene: a vibrant family of different kinds of churches serving their communities and sharing their hope in Jesus, a loving movement sweeping everyone up in joyful excitement about the good things of God. I believe that it is the Lord's vision to grow Edinburgh City Mission so that we can help to create such a mission movement across the city. If you would like to find out more about how you could support us visit our website: www.edinburghcitymission.org.uk or phone us on 0131-225-9445. We would love if you would consider praying for us, become a Mission Enabler or invite us to meet you and speak at a midweek meeting or Sunday service at your church.



The Rev Sandy Horsburgh Convener of the Church of Scotland's Ecumenical Relations Committee, and seen here on the right with Rt Rev John Armes, Bishop of Edinburgh, reports on a new ecumenical development:

Co-operation between the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Scotland took a significant step forward in June this year when the Scottish Episcopal Church General Synod adopted a new ecumenical policy. The policy is almost identical to the ecumenical policy adopted by the Church of Scotland in 2018 with only minor changes to reflect the fact that it is an SEC document. The Church of Scotland developed its new policy following a review and strengthening of its ecumenical work and the policy expresses the fact that ecumenical thinking and working are at the very heart of what the Church of Scotland is. So, it was with genuine delight that I was able to welcome the Scottish Episcopal Church's affirmation that it holds an identical understanding of itself as a denomination which is ecumenical to its core. Decisions like this can sometimes seem, at best, symbolic, but I believe that this one will be seen, in time, as truly historic. Already, the Church of Scotland and the

Scottish Episcopal Church have a very good relationship with one another. We support each other and work together in a wide range of matters, both in Scotland and internationally. Congregations up and down the country worship and witness together. Together, we are facing up to serious challenges. How do we most effectively reach the whole of Scotland with the good news of Jesus Christ? More and more, we see this can best be done together, removing barriers which have unnecessarily divided in the past and generously sharing the gifts and strengths of one another's traditions. The fact that we now share a common ecumenical policy can only take us forward. This is not about unifying structures or church government. It is about unity in mission to Scotland through deeper and more fruitful co-operation with one another and lays the foundation for future initiatives.

HEARTEDGE CONFERENCE



Over the last few years HeartEdge has held a day conference in Scotland. This year the Conference is expanding to cover two days, 2nd and 3rd October. The HeartEdge Conference is practical, intensive, full of ideas, theology and connecting. It includes workshops on enterprise and commerce, launching cultural projects, developing congregations and sustaining community response, plus time to make connections and find encouragements. HeartEdge is a growing network of churches and other organisations working across the UK and overseas, begun by St Martins-in the Fields under the inspirational leadership of Rev Dr Sam Wells. Dr Wells is giving the Chalmers lectures this year, a series entitled 'A Future that's Bigger than the Past.' These lectures are concerned with the theology and methods of HeartEdge as a movement for renewal in the Church. The conference includes the opportunity to hear the final three lectures in the series; the first three in the series being held in September. This October HeartEdge welcomes US theologian Winnie Varghese, asset-based


community worker Cormac Russell, and many other exciting contributors for its two-day conference 'On earth as it is in heaven' - a gathering of the HeartEdge community in Edinburgh. Rt Revd Colin A M Sinclair, Moderator, General Assembly of the Church of Scotland will be taking part in the programme in conversation with Sheena McDonald on the theme of Renewing the Church, along with The Most Reverend Mark Strange (The Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church) and Dr Sara Parvis (Senior Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh). Among others taking part over the two days are: Rosie Addis; David Bradwell; Derek Browning; ID Campbell; Jonathan Evens, Sally Hitchiner; Simon Jay; Jonny Kinross; Tania Kovats, Deborah Lewer; Suzanne Lofthus; Maxwell Reay; Scott Rennie; Fiona Smith; Peter Sutton; and Bev Thomas. The conference venues are the Parish Church of St Cuthbert and St John's Church, with the Chalmers Lectures held at Greyfriars Kirk. Further information is available from Revd Jonathan Evens, Associate Vicar HeartEdge, St Martin-in-the-Fields (020 7766 1127 / jonathan.evens@smitf.org) and you can register at <https://tickets.myknowchurch.co.uk/gb/ODYyLTEz/t>

PAUSE FOR HOPE

'Pause for Hope' Hosted by the Sacred Heart Church, 28 Lauriston Street - Join us on Sunday 15th September, 3.00pm for an ecumenical service for people affected by cancer. The aim of this service is to "ease, through prayer, the impact of cancer on individuals, their loved ones and the community and to pray that the day will quickly come when all cancers can be prevented or cured." This event is for all people of all faiths or none. There will be representatives from various different places of worship with refreshments in Lauriston Hall afterward. For more information please contact Andrew at pastoral@lauriston.org.uk. All welcome.


You are invited to

PAUSE



for

HOPE



A service for all affected by cancer

**Sunday 15th September
3.00pm**

**Sacred Heart Church
28 Lauriston Street
Edinburgh
EH3 9DJ**

Followed by refreshments in Lauriston Hall

www.pauseforehope.org.uk Information: pastoral@lauriston.org.uk

Events: Inclusive Church's annual Disability Conference

'Thinking Differently About God: Neurodiversity, Faith and Church'

Saturday 12 October 2019, St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, London

Neurodiversity is the idea that there are natural variations in the way people think and process information. These include autism, ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia, and Tourette's - each a particular combination of needs and gifts. We'll be exploring our understanding of God and sharing experience of discovery, discrimination and discernment.

Further details at <https://www.inclusive-church.org/disability-conference-2019>

Groups



1) Edinburgh and the Lothians Roofbreaker Network

- A grassroots group of church disability inclusion activists who are supported by UK charity Through the Roof <https://www.throughtheroof.org>
- Next meeting is on Saturday 9 November at 1pm at Barclay Viewforth Church, 1 Wright's Houses, Edinburgh EH10 4HN
- Contact Elaine Rumney elaine_rumney@blueyonder.co.uk
- <https://www.facebook.com/pg/ELDMnMNetwork>



2) Scottish Churches Disability Group

- A Scottish charity that promotes the full inclusion of people with any form of disability or impairment in the worship and community life of all Christian churches in Scotland
- AGM is at St John's Episcopal church on Lothian Rd. on Saturday 21 September 2019 at 2pm
- Guest speakers: members of Edinburgh and Lothians Roofbreakers Network; Ian White, Christian musician and founder of Inspiration Orchestra
- There is no charge for this event, but please book a place by contacting Scott Gillies, SCDG Secretary, at secretary@scdg.org.uk tel. 0131 669 3301 or 07584 139 587.
- <http://scdg.org.uk>

A more detailed update can be found on our website at

<http://edinburghchurchestogether.org.uk/resources/newsletter-resources/>

Visit <http://edinburghchurchestogether.org.uk/resources/newsletter-resources/> to download and print the following material.

St Marks Unitarian Church
7 Castle Terrace, Edinburgh, EH1 2DP
home for the open-minded and tender-hearted

Bereavement and support group

Grief may be caused by the death of a loved one, but it equally may be caused by the ending of a living relationship. Either way, our Bereavement and Support Group exists to support those of us who are in the process of grieving.

- We are a friendly, caring, positive and welcoming group which is peer-led.
- We meet once a month, usually on a Saturday, to support each other in our grieving process.
- Some of us take it in turn to facilitate the group.
- Our common denominator for the time we are together is to work through our grief by sharing and listening. The group operates within the community's safeguarding policy.
- In listening to what others in the group say, we can find solace in identifying with what others are feeling and it is of comfort to know we are not alone in our grief.
- We will meet in September, October and November.
- You may not feel ready to come to a meeting but it's important that you know we will be here when you feel ready to come along.
- Please feel free to find out more by emailing Jane ja@ednet.co.uk

St Mark's Unitarian Church Edinburgh, also known as Unitarians in Edinburgh, is a registered Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation Scottish Charity Number SC014167.

A SAFE LISTENING PLACE

ALL WELCOME

BREAKING THE SILENCE ON DOMESTIC ABUSE IN SCOTLAND

AWARENESS RAISING MORNING
GREENBANK PARISH CHURCH
7TH SEPTEMBER
9.30 AM - 12.30

If you wish more information please contact
greenbankchurch@btconnect.com

our tribe

Our Tribe meets on the second Sunday of each month at 3.30pm (Doors open at 3pm) at Augustine United Church 41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EL.

Explore the Christian faith, spirituality, sexuality and gender identity in a safe, inclusive environment. Our Tribe is a space for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex community, friends, family and allies.

Communion is celebrated each month. Events include worship, discussions, social activities and educational opportunities.

All Welcome.
Contact: Rev Maxwell Reay on 07957 543359
ourtribe.auc@gmail.com

Our Tribe is a joint ministry of Augustine United Church and Metropolitan Community Church.

inclusive and progressive Christianity for all

On the Button 2019

A 2-day sale of.. **2019**
Vintage and collectable buttons
Buttons for crafts and costumes
..plus vintage lace and trims

In aid of Marie Curie

Fri 6 and Sat 7 September
10.00am to 4.00pm

St Andrew's and St George's West
13 George Street
Edinburgh EH2 2PA

stagw.org.uk [stagw](https://www.facebook.com/stagw) [@stagw1](https://twitter.com/stagw1)

Marie Curie is a charity registered in Scotland No. SC238737

On the Button is provided by Creative Together part of Edinburgh City Centre Churches Together, a charity registered in Scotland No. SC288773

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Please email material for inclusion in the November/December newsletter by Friday 18th October 2019 to imogen.gibson.ect@gmail.com

