

Saint Barnabas' Scottish Episcopal Church

75 years

at 4 Moredun Park View, Edinburgh EH17 7NE



Magazine Summer 2025

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The Autumn 2025 edition of the St Barnabas' magazine will be issued in September.

Contributions should be given or sent by the end of August 2025 to the editor, Philip Sawyer (philipsawyer@cantab.net).

Rector's letter

Elaine Houlison R.I.P.

As many of you know, Elaine Houlison died in April at the age of 65 after a year of suffering bravely borne. The attendance at her funeral on 1st May showed both the depth of love and sympathy for her family at their great loss and just how many people her life had touched with friendship, kindness, courtesy and love. It was the largest attendance at any funeral that I have taken in my 45 years of ministry; many had to stand at the back of the large chapel at Mortonhall.

Elaine had been part of the St. Barnabas' congregation since childhood, worshipping with her family who lived in the area. She took on the important role of treasurer nearly 20 years ago, and kept the accounts impeccably, declaring everything to the nearest pound and giving the Vestry accurate updates at every meeting. It was wonderful to have someone who took things in her stride; as reporting and accountability became more onerous, Elaine got to grips with things quickly, and carried on in her calm, efficient way. She was a joy to work with.

We offer our deepest condolences to her beloved husband Graham, (who has done so much over the years to keep the church fabric in good order), to her sons Grant and Murray who grew up in the church and to their families, and to her five siblings, especially her youngest sister Yvonne who is the minutes secretary for the Vestry.

Many churches now find it difficult to attract volunteer Treasurers; we have been so fortunate to have Elaine willing to do this work for us for so long. I count it a great privilege to have known her and worked with her.

Your friend and Priest,
David



**We should be glad to hear of anyone who
would be willing to take on the rôle of
Treasurer at St. Barnabas’.**

Special dates and times for your diary

(in St. Barnabas' unless **indicated otherwise**)

See the back page of this magazine for normal service times

June	
Wednesday 4 th	12.30 pm – Sung Eucharist followed by a visit to Rosslyn Chapel.
Saturday 7 th	3.00 pm – SEECAT healing service at Balmwell (Toby Carvery) .
Sunday 8 th Pentecost	10.30 am – Sung Eucharist.
Wednesday 11 th Feast day of St. Barnabas	12.30 pm – Sung Eucharist. The preacher will be Rev'd Frances Burberry, Dean of the Diocese.
Friday 27 th	3.00 pm – meeting at Newton Church Hall, Danderhall , to plan the Summer Holiday Club (4 th -8 th August) at Millerhill.
July	
Saturday 5 th	Barbecue at Deryck's and Christine's house from 12.30 pm.
Monday 7 th	Bethany Fun Day for children, probably at the Tron Kirk .
Tuesday 8 th - Thursday 10 th	Moredun Kid's Holiday Club at the Tron Kirk . (details from Lily)
August	
Wednesday 6 th Transfiguration	12.30 pm – Sung Eucharist followed by Christine's talk "Adventures in Australia."

September	
Wednesday 3 rd	12.30 pm – Sung Eucharist followed by a talk about music by Philip.
Sunday 7 th Harvest Festival	2.30 pm – Sung Eucharist

For dates and times of services in the care homes please ask the Rector.

It is planned to celebrate with 75th anniversary of the dedication of the church during the last week of September. There will be a special Sung Eucharist on Sunday 28th at 10.30 am, and an ecumenical service at some point in the following two weeks. Full details will appear in the September magazine.

Rev'd Deryck Collingwood's Lent 2 sermon

Readings: Genesis 15: 1-12, 17-18;
Philippians 3:17 - 4:1; Luke 13: 31-end

The recent alignment of planets followed by the blood moon has given astronomers and astrologists alike a good shot of joy; no wonder the ancients were in awe at the mystery of the heavens.

One of the joys of living outside the city is being able to see the stars, something I've enjoyed in various places, including out at Loanhead. One of my bugbears about urban life is that not only is there a necessary concern for safety at night and hence good street-lighting, but there are ever more star-blocking floodlights beaming up into the night sky in the name of making the environment more beautiful for tourists.

The lights of the heavens have inspired people throughout the ages and very few of those visible are worn out yet.

"Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them" says the Lord to Abram. "So shall your descendants be..."

Of the many floodlit edifices these days, one of the most majestic must be the medieval wall around the old city of Jerusalem. If you stand on the Mount of Olives and look over Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley, the old city is a magnificent sight even by day, with its focal point of the golden 'Dome of the Rock', but it takes on an even more mysterious quality when floodlit at night – though even in good times, fewer tourists probably ventured up there at night because the element of fear tends to creep in more strongly when it's dark.

As a result, the way there needs to be floodlit, as well as what you're going to see – predominantly a wall, in this case, built to keep people out and protect those who were on the inside; a wall now transformed into a tourist attraction.

Those who know Jerusalem will know that, as you look across at the old city from that vantage point, divided as it is into quarters or sections - Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Armenian - you look across a vast graveyard in the Kidron Valley: Jewish graves, Muslim graves and a number of Christian graves. All descendants of Abram, many lying there because that way into Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives is by tradition the way that the Messiah was expected to come and reclaim the city for God's people, as we hear in the reading from Philippians today. It is the route of Jesus' triumphal entry on Palm Sunday, the Royal road.

Just down the Mount of Olives from that view-point is the little chapel of Dominus Flevit - 'the Lord wept' - shaped like a tear-drop and with its own unique view of the old city through its famous arch-shaped window.





In the churchyard there are caves containing small ossuaries, stone coffins, of early Christians awaiting a *second* coming. Their skeletons were compacted into the smallest possible space, the length of the longest bone, in order to pack more of them into the caves.

You look out from there and hear those words of Jesus: “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings. And you were not willing!”

And you may weep with Jesus, given the horrendous situation that exists there still today.

Whether you have been there or not, there is, I believe, a little bit of Jerusalem invested in every Christian, Jew and Muslim. But there is also something, in every one of us that wishes to build walls and keep people out, separate God’s children into quarters where

each can feel secure; somewhere we can pack our bones into a little corner and hope that someday, someone will come to make everything better.

“How often have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings” says Jesus.

As you hear those words, the chances are there will be military vehicles manoeuvring along the Kidron valley below and you know that soldiers are searching people at barriers; and you know too, if you have eyes to see, that Palestinian people are intimidated at those barriers and refused permission to get through, even if they have made a mammoth effort to get through other checkpoints at that newer, bigger wall, to get to their places of work in the city.

For now, there is that other wall; 8 meters of ugly concrete high, extending around East Jerusalem and Bethlehem and the West Bank, performing that original purpose of those medieval walls - keeping people out. And the soldiers, carrying out their orders, may have forgotten, like most Israelis it seems, that Palestinians are descendants of Abram just as they themselves claim to be, part of that same vast constellation of shining stars, but now boxed in and their lights extinguished.

What happens if we divide the stars of heaven into separate cubicles? Even when we classify stars into constellations, the images that we conjure up of Orion and Taurus and so on, can share the same space. I live in the hope that our energies and resources will be burned out long before we are able to build barriers in space, but one can already see the desire for that arising.

People who build walls usually have something to hide. People who build great walls have a lot to hide. Herod the Great was a mega-builder of walls and his son Antipas, whom Jesus called “that fox”, hid behind them, inheriting his father’s cunning if not his power. But God, who sees beyond our imagining, speaks to us through Christ of that *holy* desire to gather us all under his-or-her hen-like wings, to keep us all safe together, trusting in *Christ’s* power to save. And when Jesus sees the walls that we build to divide and intimidate, he is reduced to tears.

God, who spread the heavens like a tent, beckons us to wonder at the true majesty of the creation that is for all to share. While we seem content to admire human dominion and domination, if we do not share Christ’s tears at human folly, we lie in the death of that vast graveyard in the Kidron Valley, without hope.

Let us rather be Palm Sunday people and welcome the Messiah who comes in peace; children of the mother hen, not of that devious fox Herod. We are beckoned as followers of Christ, on that royal road, to arise and proclaim, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”



Giotto (1267-1337). The Entry into Jerusalem
c.1305. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua, Italy.

A Message from Medical Aid for Palestinians

15th March 2025

The Israeli military's ongoing assault on the occupied West Bank is creating a dangerous humanitarian situation for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

Since the temporary ceasefire began in Gaza on January 19th, the Israeli military has displaced at least 40,000 people in the West Bank from their homes. They also killed dozens of Palestinians, including children, and injured hundreds more. This is the largest forced displacement Palestinians have faced since Israel's military occupation began in 1967.

Together with you, we have reacted by scaling up our emergency response in the West Bank, including providing emergency medical supplies to hospitals and distributing food vouchers to displaced people. Israeli authorities have depopulated three refugee camps through violence and coercion and now say that displaced Palestinians will not be allowed to return to their homes for at least a year.

Many displaced people are now living in dire situations in community centres, with basic needs of food, medication and shelter unmet. MAP responded immediately by providing vouchers to displaced families which they could exchange for food in a local supermarket.

Priority was given to families who are being housed in public spaces and who have no source of income. In total, we were able to support 2,250 people, almost half of whom were children.

Thanks to support, MAP has been able to respond when hospitals and urgent carer centres experience a surge in casualties and injuries or face a critical shortage of key items, by providing essential medical items.

We are also empowering communities by training healthcare workers in primary trauma care and equipping volunteers with first aid and first responder skills.

The situation in the West Bank grows more tense every day as the Israeli military encroaches further and more Palestinians are killed, injured and displaced.

[MAP is a UK based charity whose vision is a future where all Palestinians can access an effective, sustainable and locally-led system of healthcare, and the full realisation of their rights to health and dignity.]

Charities supported by St. Barnabas' Church

Bethany Christian Trust

Ending homelessness in Scotland...one person at a time. That's what we're all about. Every year, thanks to people like you, we are supporting nearly 7,000 people in Scotland.

We work with individuals and local communities across Scotland to prevent and end homelessness. We support families, young people, rough sleepers and people recovering from addiction. The need for our services is growing and your support is vital.

Web-site: <https://www.bethanychristiantrust.com>

South-east Edinburgh Foodbank

At St. Barnabas', donations in kind can be left in the box that is beneath the table just inside the church door.

The following are always needed: cereal, soup, pasta, rice, tinned tomatoes/pasta sauce, lentils, beans and pulses, tinned meat, tinned vegetables, tea/coffee, tinned fruit, biscuits, UHT milk, fruit juice.

When possible, the foodbank will also provide essential non-food items such as toiletries and hygiene products.

It is possible to support the foodbank financially; details are on the web-site:

<https://www.edinburghse.foodbank.org.uk>

Please note that if you donate on line to the foodbank, you will receive an e-mail acknowledgement from Blythswood Care. If you wish your donation to go to the south-east Edinburgh foodbank rather than to the wider work of Blythswood Care, you should make that clear in an e-mail reply.

Mercy Ships

Worldwide, 5 billion people lack access to safe, affordable, timely surgery. Many of them live in developing countries where healthcare infrastructure is limited or non-existent, or where there's a shortage of trained healthcare providers.

Mercy Ships uses modern hospital ships to bring world-class volunteer medical professionals directly to the places they're needed most. Our ships are the most efficient way to bring a state-of-the-art hospital to regions where clean water, electricity, and medical facilities and personnel are limited or non-existent. Instead of trying to build the facilities, we need to bring life-changing surgeries to ports around the world.

We train local healthcare providers and improve medical infrastructure; we stock our ships with a supply of vehicles so we can reach remote areas!

Web-site: <https://www.mercyships.org.uk>

Médecins sans Frontières

MSF is an international humanitarian organisation providing medical care in more than 70 countries. Since 1971, we have been treating people caught in complex crises and chronic healthcare emergencies around the world.

From our paediatric nurses to our off-road drivers, we are experts at working in fast-moving and highly-insecure environments. So, whether it's launching a rapid response or delivering community care, we go wherever we are needed most.

In 2023, we admitted more than 1.3 million people to our hospitals and held more than 16.4 million

consultations, including at mobile clinics and in refugee camps.

Our vital work often hits the headlines when there's an emergency such as an earthquake, war or disease outbreak.

However, our teams are also running long-term medical programmes for vulnerable groups cut off from care, or speaking out about unseen suffering and the policies that cause it.

Around the world, 365 days a year, we are there even when the cameras are not.

Web-site: <https://msf.org.uk/>

UNHCR

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for people forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution.

We lead international action to protect refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people.

Our vision is a world where every person forced to flee can build a better future.

Formally known as the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR was established by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1950 in the aftermath of the Second World War to help the millions of people who had lost their homes.

Today, UNHCR works in 136 countries. We provide life-saving assistance, including shelter, food, water and medical care for people forced to flee conflict and persecution, many of whom have nobody left to turn to. We defend their right to reach safety and help them find a place to call home so they can rebuild their lives. Long

term, we work with countries to improve and monitor refugee and asylum laws and policies, ensuring human rights are upheld.

In everything we do, UNHCR considers refugees and those forced to flee as partners, putting those most affected at the centre of planning and decision-making.

Web-site

<https://www.unhcr.org/uk/>



The Rector's Easter Day sermon

Sometimes people may ask which is the most important day in the year for Christians: Christmas or Easter? For some reason they seem to forget the significance of Good Friday. There was another huge turn-out at both SEECAT services two days ago; at least 200 in the afternoon at Gracemount School, and probably nearly as many at Morrison's earlier.

Christmas is when God sent his Son into the world to show us how to live. On Good Friday that Son, Jesus Christ, died so that even though we fail to live as he did, we can be forgiven and try again – and hopefully get closer to his way of life. This is repeated many times over as we are all sinful beings. Today we remember with joyful celebration that two days after his crucifixion Jesus was raised from the dead to show us that death is not the end of living, and that when we die we can, through faith, share the life of heaven with Jesus for ever.

Those who believe in the Christian faith have an important and helpful message for those whom they know or meet who are in a dark place. If they are sick, we can pray for them, visit them, comfort them and believe that their health can improve.

If they are bereaved, we can assure them that because Jesus died and rose again, their loved ones can also be raised to eternal life in a kingdom beyond our understanding, but where we may meet them again. Remember our Lord's words to the penitent criminal dying on the cross next to his: "Today you will be with me in paradise."

If they feel that they have really messed up their life and have given up hope of things improving, we can point them to the cross of Jesus and tell them that he did that for them, that they could give him their burdens and sorrows, and start again to build a better life with his help.

If they are being persecuted in any way for their faith, for standing up for what is right, or for calling out injustices, we can try to stand beside them and not desert them like the disciples (except St. John) did. We can re-assure them that Jesus, through the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit, will never desert them but, if things were to get really bad, may unknowingly carry them to a safe place. That is the moral of "Footprints," a poem that some of you may know.

On Good Friday, one of the hymns that we sang was "The Power of the Cross"; it begins with the words "O to see the dawn of the darkest day". No unbeliever or rational person would ever think that such a cruel death could have any power for good. It was a form of physical and mental torture that was degrading, humiliating and agonizingly painful; where could any power come from? Yet from the wounded body and the shed blood of this man Jesus - whom we believe, and as the Centurian standing there realized, to be the Son of the one true God - came unconditional loving forgiveness if we would accept it. On Easter morning he proved to his followers that he had not only overcome death but also redeemed human beings if only they would repent and turn to him. We see this powerfully played out in how Jesus dealt with St. Peter, whom he meets again beside the Sea of Galilee. Peter, in spite of his bold assertions that he would go to prison or die with Jesus, denied three times

that he even knew Jesus and then went into hiding with the others, leaving only St. John and the women-folk to witness Jesus' death. Now Jesus asks Peter three times if he loves him and then commissions him to be the leader of the early church. What a turn-around!

Unmerited forgiveness and unconditional love for an impetuous friend who often opened his mouth before engaging his brain; this fallible human being was to become the leader of the church - the leaders whose later successors were held to be infallible!

We are all fallible, we are all sinners, we have all made mistakes, but - and this is the message of today - we are also children of God, created in his image, beloved by him, so precious to him that he does not want any of us to lose out on the opportunity to share the eternal life of the kingdom of heaven with him. The power of the Cross is the power to change and redeem the world, to move people from sinful ways to loving ways, to stop people losing hope and give them a hopeful way forward.

We are called, sinful and hopeless though we may feel at times, by his grace alone and by the faith given to us to be his helpers in this process of redemption, of caring, sharing and loving people into a state of believing in the God that is within them - the God that they may not recognize - to empower them to overcome and move on to a better way of life and, ultimately, to eternal life in that glorious Kingdom of Heaven, that Paradise where even thieves and criminals are welcome even though repentance and acknowledgement of Jesus as their Saviour may come only with their last breath.

Our mission is not about buildings, or rules and regulations, but about telling people of the sacrifice of God's son Jesus, and that he overcame death so that we could all find a new way of life with him for ever.



A Resurrection window, formerly in All Saints' Church, Swanscombe, Kent.

Books

*Invasion. Russia's bloody war
and Ukraine's fight for survival*

by Luke Harding

First published by Guardian Faber in 2022

Paperback published in 2023, 310 pages

INVASION

'Compelling, important and heartbreaking . . . outstanding war reportage.'

SIMON SEBAG MONTEFIORE

RUSSIA'S
BLOODY
WAR AND
UKRAINE'S
FIGHT
FOR
SURVIVAL

'A superb first draft of history . . . Excellent and moving.'

ANNE APPLEBAUM

LUKE HARDING

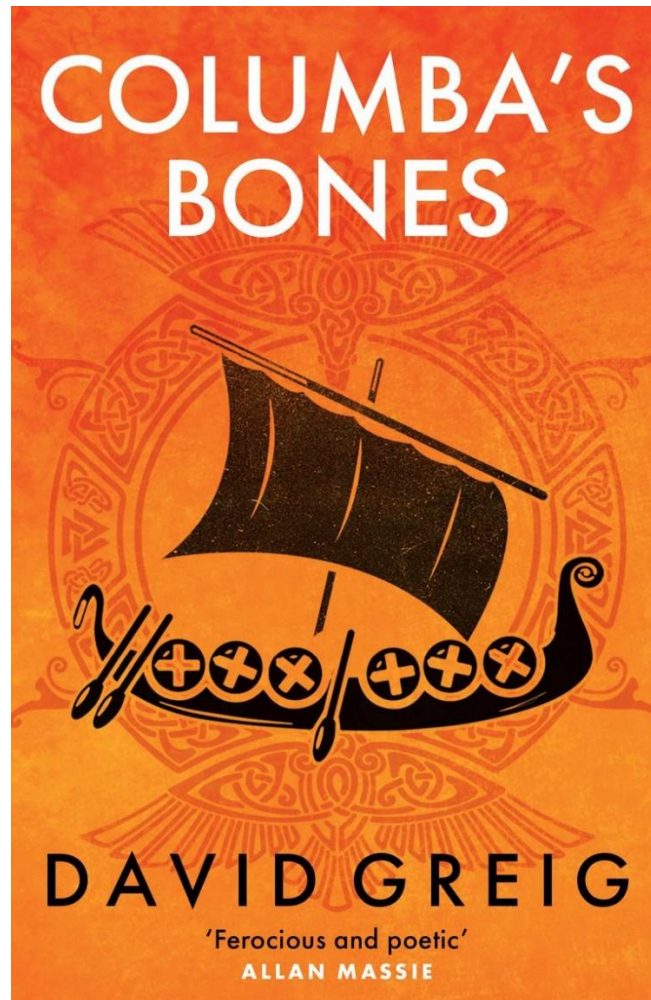
The first book of reportage from the front line of the Ukraine war. This is a powerful, moving first draft of history written by the award-winning *Guardian* journalist and *New York Times* best-selling author of *Collusion* and *Shadow State*.

Columba's Bones

by David Greig

First published by Polygon Books in 2023

Paperback published in 2024, 183 pages



The Isle of Iona, 825.

In a bloody, brutal raid, Abbot Blathmac is slain on the steps of his monastery for refusing to give away the location of the sacred relics of St Columba, the missionary who first brought Christianity to Scotland.

Following a night of rampage and mayhem, one Viking wakes up the next morning to find himself alone, hungover, and abandoned by his crew mates. He can't swim, there are no boats, and the only surviving monk on the island has taken his sword. With only his wits, he must survive long enough not only to rejoin his Viking comrades, but also to find the location of the elusive relics that brought him here in the first place.

Rooted in the real history of Iona and its early monks, *Columba's Bones* is an utterly unique and thrilling read, exploring the clash of early Christianity and paganism, and expanding into a sharp, witty meditation on philosophy, redemption, shame, violence, love, transcendence and reality.

David Greig is a Scottish playwright who studied Drama and English at Bristol University. Since setting up the Suspect Culture theatre company in the 1990s, his plays have been performed widely in Scotland and around the world, including *Midsummer*, *The Events*, *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory*, *Local Hero* and *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart*. He is currently the Artistic Director at Edinburgh's Lyceum Theatre. *Columba's Bones* is his first book.

A visit to Vienna

Philip Sawyer

On Monday 24th March 2025 Anne and I flew to Vienna for our first visit to that famous city on the River Danube. For me, a professional musician, the city has a special significance because of the composers who lived and/or worked there, including Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Bruckner, Mahler, Johann Strauss (father and son), Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Hans Gál and many others.

The visual arts and architecture are also vital aspects of the city. We were very keen to see work by Gustav Klimt (1862-1918) and Friedensreich Hundertwasser (1928-2000).

Perhaps Klimt's most famous painting is "The Kiss." This, along with some of his other paintings and paintings by many other well-known artists, is hung in the Upper Belvedere. We visited the Klimt Villa, in the Hietzing district of Vienna; this is a house that was built in the early 1920s incorporating Klimt's last Viennese studio.

Klimt was a member of the Viennese Secession, which was an art movement – closely related to Art Nouveau and partly inspired by the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928) in Scotland – that was formed in 1897 by a group of Austrian painters, graphic artists, sculptors and architects, including Josef Hoffman, Koloman Moser and Otto Wagner. They resigned from the Association of Austrian Artists in protest against its support for more traditional artistic styles.



Gustav Klimt - "The Kiss"

Their most influential architectural work was the Secession exhibitions hall designed by Joseph Maria Olbrich as a venue for exhibitions of work by members of the group.



The Secession exhibitions hall (the one with the golden dome!)

Friedensreich Hundertwasser was an Austrian visual artist and architect who also worked in the field of environmental protection. He emigrated to the far north of New Zealand in the 1970s and lived and worked there for most of the rest of his life. Hundertwasser stood out as an opponent of "a straight line" and any standardization, expressing this concept in the field of building design. His best known work is the Hundertwasser House in Vienna, which has become a notable place of interest, characterised by imaginative vitality and uniqueness.



The Hundertwasser House



The Hundertwasser House

We visited the KunstHaus Wien, a building designed by Hundertwasser that both exhibits many of his works and celebrates his care for the environment. He disliked straight lines so much that his floors are uneven; we had to watch our step very carefully!



The entrance to the KunstHaus Wien



A public washroom designed by Hundertwasser

The KunstHaus includes a restaurant that serves food inspired by Hundertwasser's own tastes and his environmental concerns – concerns that date back to the 1970s!

In the Klimt Villa I bought a copy of *Good Living Street. The fortunes of my Viennese family* by Tim Bonyhady. Recently a friend lent me a copy of *The Hare with Amber Eyes* by Edmund de Waal. If you want to read about what late 19th- and 20th-century life in Vienna was like, especially for Jewish people, these are perceptive and informative books.

We obtained tickets for the main opera house to see and hear a production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. One of the attractions was the fact that the part of Fiordiligi was sung by the British soprano Louise Alder, to whom I taught keyboard skills when she was a BMus student at the University of Edinburgh.

In 10 days we saw only a small part of what Vienna has to offer; I hope that we shall have an opportunity to return.

It is easy to overlook the influence of Vienna on Edinburgh. Two Viennese, who had managed to escape Hitler's annexation of Austria, founded the Edinburgh International Festival in 1947: impresario Rudolph Bing (1902-97) and composer Hans Gál (1890-1987). Gál lived and worked in Edinburgh from 1939 until his death; he taught many generations of music students at the University of Edinburgh.

The 2025 Edinburgh International Festival runs from the 1st to the 24th of August.



The sermon by Bishop John Armes at the Collation of Diana Hall as Priest-in-Charge of St Margaret's, Easter Road and Mustard Seed, Edinburgh, on Tuesday 13th May 2025

Readings: Acts 11.19-26; John 10.22-30

Jesus says, 'The Father and I are one.' What does it mean for two so very different congregations to share the appointment of a new Priest-in-Charge?

St Margaret's history goes back well before 1880, when its pastoral territory was carved out of that belonging to St Paul's, York Place. St Margaret's is a congregation that enjoys what might be called 'traditional' patterns of liturgical worship and remains deeply committed to this place and to serving the people of this place – rooted in a Victorian railway mission and ministry alongside those who lived and worked in one of Edinburgh's less prosperous neighbourhoods.

Mustard Seed is a more recent gift to the Scottish Episcopal Church from the modern-day version of St Paul's, York Place – Ps&Gs, St Paul's and St George's. It is a new expression of Christian community, 8 years old, worshipping generally in a non-liturgical style, and inspired by a call to be a church of and with the poor and hungry, and discovering how this may be done with grace and generosity, in this place.

What does it mean for such different communities, with such different histories, to share a priest, a building and a purpose, whilst remaining distinctive? The simple answer is that we don't yet know. For this is what we're about to discover as we celebrate the start of Diana's

ministry here, as she commits herself to accompany both congregations on a new journey.

On the other hand, both our readings do offer us some insights – both have something to tell us about church and ministry. (They are the readings, I should emphasize, set for today by the wider church, in the lectionary, so it's rather comforting to discover that they are so apt for this occasion, and this gives me the feeling that God might have something to say to us through them.)

The first reading, from Acts, tells of the time, a few years after the death and resurrection of Jesus, when the disciples were first called 'Christians'. It was a time (has there ever not been a time) when those first believers were struggling with difference. Initially, they'd all been Jews, but as the story of Jesus spread beyond Israel to the Greek and Roman world the question was, could Greeks and Romans be Christians too, could they too be worshippers of Christ? And this gave rise to a further and even more controversial question: to be a true believer would a non-Jew be required to adopt the cultural norms and practices of Judaism? Our reading hasn't quite reached that point in the narrative, rather it picks up the story where the church leaders in Jerusalem, clearly a little unsure, send Barnabas ('a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith') to find out what's going on in Antioch. Once he gets there, Barnabas immediately realizes that this movement of new, non-Jewish Christians is of God and should be encouraged. And he finds that there is so much work of teaching and pastoral care required that he calls in Saul to help.

Now Saul, or Paul as we now know him, wasn't everyone's cup of tea. Not surprisingly, for he had been one of the chief tormentors of the church. And although he had been utterly changed by an encounter with the risen Jesus – or at least, that's what he claimed – it was hard for those he had persecuted to believe that this leopard could change his spots. So, they pack him off to Tarsus, his home town; which is where Barnabas found him. Barnabas, the name means 'son of consolation' – a peacemaker and an encourager – as I say, a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith – takes a big risk in reaching out to Paul. Yet, because he does so, because he understands that through God's grace wonderful things can happen, St Paul is drawn deep into the work of the Holy Spirit and so comes to play his crucial part in transforming the church and its teachings and, therefore, shaping the impact of the Christian gospel on the world, then and now.

What has this to say to us this evening? I'm not likening Diana to either Barnabas or Saul, she is Diana. And although she is certainly a good person, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, she has been called here, sent here, to serve in this time and this place. On the other hand, it won't surprise her to discover that there's a certain struggle with difference here, and a wondering where the grace of God is at work. And it shouldn't surprise us to see her asking for help from unusual people, or that these unusual people, like Paul, end up being those who shape both the present and the future. This, after all, is what Christian ministry offers: an opportunity to enable others to be the best that they can be for God.

Which brings us to our second reading – the final section of Jesus’ teaching about the Good Shepherd in John’s gospel. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who is ready to lay down his life for the sheep. He is our Good Shepherd who knows us and calls us to follow him, to learn what his voice sounds like and so be kept safe from those who would lead us astray, who would snatch us out of Jesus’ hand, out of the Father’s hand. As Jesus says, ‘the Father and I are one.’

In this context, Jesus isn’t asserting that he and the Father are one person, but that they’re one in purpose and intention, one in realizing that intention – that they are united. Of course, we also believe that there is something very special, distinctive, unrepeatable about the relationship between the Father and the Son. Yet, at the same time, this oneness within God is, as David Ford puts it, ‘capaciously hospitable’ – by which he means, always open, always welcoming others in ‘so that,’ as Jesus says, ‘the love with which [the Father has loved the Son] is in them, and I in them.’ That’s why we speak about being in Christ, that we are all baptized into one Body, the Body of Christ.

How about that for a strapline for St Margaret’s/Mustard Seed: Capaciously Hospitable? How about that for a vision of unity which isn’t about loss of identity, and blending of two into one grey sameness, but about being united in purpose and intention and so exemplifying the union that lies at the heart of God – demonstrating what it means to be sheep of the one Good Shepherd, sheep who listen to his voice? In other words, the linkage of your two congregations isn’t merely a marriage of convenience (even if it is convenient, much more it’s about participating in,

partnering in the very life of Christ which is 'greater than all else.' Partners who enjoy your differences and are confident in being who you are, but who also are learning not just to respect but to delight in the beautiful colours of your diversity. For you're not in competition or rivalry – you're travelling in the same direction, occasionally assisting each other, occasionally gathered around the same campfire, stopping to smell different flowers along the way, perhaps, and then inviting one another to share the experience.

St Margaret's may have been around for the best part of 150 years, Mustard Seed only for 8, but all of us, always, are just starting out, facing into a future we know nothing about except that God is there too. There's no rush, no need to plan the journey too carefully, but with Diana alongside you, I pray that you will enjoy the journey and find plenty of opportunities to wait awhile and listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd... for, as Jesus says, 'The Father and I are one.'



Revd Val Cameron, Rev'd Diana Hall, the Bishop, the Dean

Church administration

Vestry Secretary: Christine Collingwood.
0131 448 0240

Church Treasurer:

Lay Representative: Philip Sawyer.

Alternate Lay Representative: Lily Johnston.

People's Warden: Lily Johnston.

Rector's Warden: Lynda Hay.

Ordinary members of the Vestry: Lib Anderson;
Yvonne Fenwick; Catriona Ferry; Sandra Fyfe;
Kirsty Hamilton; Martin Veart.

Other regular responsibilities

South-East Edinburgh Churches Acting Together (SEECAT): Alice Anderson.

Sunday circle (Junior church): Lily Johnston.

Magazine editor: Philip Sawyer.
philipsawyer@cantab.net

Useful numbers

We all have those times when we just need someone to talk to and confide in.

Here is a list of numbers that you may find useful.

- The Silver Line: Tel: 0800 470 8090 Information, friendship & advice for older people.
www.thesilverline.org.uk
- Anxiety UK: Tel: 03444 775 774
www.anxietyuk.org.uk
- Arthritis Helpline: Tel: 0800 5200 520
www.versusarthritis.org
- Mind: Tel: 0300 123 3393 www.mind.org.uk (Mental Health).
- Age UK: Tel: 0800 678 1602 www.ageuk.org.uk
- Samaritans: Tel: 116 123 www.samaritans.org
- Childline: Tel: 0800 1111 Calls are free and confidential
- National Domestic Abuse: Tel: 0808 2000 247
- Cruse Bereavement Care: Tel: 0808 080 1677
www.cruse.org.uk



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Services in St. Barnabas' Church

(see the "Dates for your diary" section inside this magazine for a note of any additions and/or changes)

Sunday

1st Sunday of each month at 2.30 pm
Sung Eucharist

All other Sundays at 10.30 am
Sung Eucharist

Wednesday

1st Wednesday of each month at 12.30 pm
Sung Eucharist

All other Wednesdays at 12.30 pm
Prayer Service

**During Advent and Lent each Wednesday 12.30 pm
service is a celebration of Holy Communion**



St. Barnabas' church in the 1950s