



St Martin of Tours

Diocese of Edinburgh Scottish Charity No: 011137

Living our faith in our community
through prayer, reflection and action



October November 2021

St Martin of Tours Episcopal Church

is part of the Worldwide Anglican Communion

www.stmartinsedinburgh.org.uk

Who are we?

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Message from John Vincent

One of my favourite places in the UK is Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, a spur on the Northumbrian Coast, reached along a causeway until the tide cuts it off twice a day and it becomes an island. When the causeway is passable, Lindisfarne is a busy tourist attraction, full of cars and people; Yet once the tide comes in and Lindisfarne becomes an island again, it becomes, quiet, peaceful, reflective and the island, its people and spectacular wildlife has time to breathe, regenerate and prepare for the next wave of visitors.

Nature knows the value of resting through the rhythm of times and seasons and there is much we can learn from this. The cycle of the tides on Lindisfarne has lent itself as a place of pilgrimage and retreat since 635 when the first monastery was established.

Within the religious tradition, Retreats have always been integral to growth; to take time away from our usual comforts and routines and to let go of life's distractions for a while. This rhythm helps us to re-evaluate ourselves and our relationships with others and then return to the 'real' world with a sense of clarity, fresh insight and renewed vigour.

In many ways, the rhythm of retreat has been imposed on all of us during the last eighteen months. It has been a really tough time for so many with the loss of routine, education, livelihood, health and life itself: it has challenged our assumptions about ourselves, the way we live as community and our obligations to the rest of the world in fighting a global pandemic

Yet despite these personal costs, there has also developed a new awareness; our lack of social contact has encouraged us to think about what really matters in life. We have learnt to connect with one another in different ways, recognising that there is no substitute for human social contact, we have learnt the importance of keeping a watchful eye over others who are struggling and have seen communities coming together in the face of a common adversity.

I am looking forward to journeying with you as we move out of lockdown and restriction and begin to reconnect fully as a church community and engage fully with our local community. It would be such a shame if we lose momentum as post-pandemic distractions and the business of life get in the way. As we all begin to reconnect, we are presented with new opportunities to grow as a church, to support individuals and local initiatives and discover new ways in which we can use our gifts and talents in the service of God and others. As the Author of Hebrews reminds us,

“And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another.” (Hebrews 10:24-25)

John Vincent.

Ecumenical Advent Service of Reflection

An Ecumenical Advent Service of Reflection will be run each Wednesday in Advent beginning at 19.30. More details to follow.

The Supper at Emmaus – the Kitchen Maid (a painting by Velázquez c 1600, National Gallery, Dublin.)

The young artist started with kitchen scenes, the one in the National Gallery in Edinburgh depicts a woman frying eggs. This one tells the story of the Emmaus Road through the reactions of the kitchen maid, the light across her face shows that she has understood the Easter message.)

Dusk dims the brass utensils – and I abed, bone weary
feel the skelfs, the broken boards,
then: ‘Travellers need fed!’ Bully boy kicks and goads.
He scares me sick, him and his stupid AGAM hat.
His cousin in the holy Brotherhood hunts witches,
heretics, Moriscos – me.

‘What, so late?’

I bring them bread,

all three.

His hands, large, working hands, are scarred.

I see – and guess

he knows the lash of rods across his back –

a servitor, like me.

Voices rise and die, his like rainfall when the grass is parched.

Intent on every word, I forget

to bring the wine.

Is it weariness – or something else – that makes

the jug tremble in my grasp, spillage of wine like blood?

The men with burning hearts have gone.

He sits alone.

His garment glimmers royal red. I smell

spices women use to anoint the dead.

‘Blessed, so truly blessed.’

No words, only my unspoken yes:

Yes and Yes.

Eighteen years young, the artist
places me in the middle of the frame:

la mulata.

He mixes burnt umber, ochre, lucent amber,
Browns in many hues, adds white
for that forgotten head of garlic, white
for my pleated cap, for the light
that caresses and transforms my careworn face.

Glory graces the kitchen drudge
as dead of night rolls back a sealed stone.

Jenny Robertson

PS if you're puzzled by the AGAM hat, try it the other way round

A reflection on Psalm 124

A friend asked me to contribute to an anthology she's putting together of thoughts on all the psalms. Since we read Psalm 124 recently in church, I thought you might like to read my brief reflection on this psalm.

On their steep and hilly way to Jerusalem the pilgrims sing praises to God. The words of Psalm 124 pulse with thankfulness that the disasters they fear didn't actually happen! The pilgrims rejoice that the Lord is keeping them safe from desperate dangers, floods and torrents and wicked predators. They know how vulnerable they are, like a hunted bird, flapping its wings frantically in a trapper's net. It's been suggested that this bird might be as small as a sparrow. Jesus saw sparrows for sale in the market place and assured his followers that they are more valuable than hundreds of sparrows (Matthew 10: 29-31). The pilgrims rejoice that, because the Lord is with them, the cage doors have opened and they fly away free.

During the Second World War the Gestapo arrested Mr Enholz, the secretary of the Bible Society in Warsaw. In the interview room a whip lay on the desk where a radio blared to drown out the cries of those being tortured in the cells below. The chief stared at the prisoner whose life was in his hands. All of a sudden he said, 'Your eyes are blue! Go free!' Mr Enholz trembled in disbelief. What trick was this? He turned away, expecting to feel a pistol shot in his neck. Safely outside he fell to his knees. 'The Lord has saved me! I escaped from their prison,' he repeated over and over again. Like the bird in this psalm, the Lord had snatched him from his captor's pitiless grasp.

Sadly, we don't always escape the knocks and blows of illness or accident. This a great psalm to turn to when despair overwhelms us, when we feel submerged in raging waters, or trapped in a snare of pain and grief.

Psalm 124 reminds me of eighteen year old Margaret Wilson, who in 1685 was sentenced to death by drowning. Another Margaret aged sixty seven shared her fate; they confessed Christ and not the monarch as Head of the Church. It was the end of the tragic 'Killing Times' in Scotland.

The older woman drowned first and, as the tide rose ever higher, young Margaret sang psalms, and held true to her faith. Her heart and soul were free.

The two women are commemorated by single stone on the saltmarsh where the wind sings its own psalms, geese wander and cattle graze.

Like the pilgrims on their uphill way, we too can rejoice that amidst flood tides of sorrow or danger we are safe in the loving care of the Lord.

My footnote for St Martin's Newsletter:

Charles II imposed Episcopacy on his northern realm and the price of non-conformity was high. Ministers were forbidden by a new Act of Parliament from approaching within twenty miles of their former parishes. And to make sure that no one in the parish harboured or helped them, soldiers were quartered in villages and towns. People were fined if they absented themselves from Sunday services led by the hated curates. Peasant farmers who subsisted on the verge of destitution at best of times were forced to feed soldiers who literally ate whole families out of house and home - and then, out of spite, took away their Bibles, their greatcoats and plaids.

Jenny Robertson

Art Show 2021_closing note

The Art Show was a great success for both our exhibitors and visitors. Everyone seemed delighted to meet people again and enjoy some social time and a chat over coffee and a cake. Our exhibitors were delighted to be able to show their work and with how we set up the display.

Below are some figures detailing the financial side:

Visitors: 246 (some people came more than once)

Art & Craft sales: £1673.00

Café: 360.80

Home-Baking: £56.00

Donations: £84.97

Commission: £507.80 [Several of our exhibitors gave all their sales to St. Martin's]

Paid out to Exhibitors: £1165.20

Expenses: £92.43

Income-Expenditure: 2174.77-1257.63= £917.14 [This goes into church funds]

As usual I offer huge thanks to everyone who helped in any way. I really appreciate all efforts to support this show.

The proposed dates next year's show are Sunday August 28th to Saturday September 3rd.

Lynn Dailly

Poppyscotland

Looking for a new way to help Poppyscotland during this difficult time and keep yourself moving?

Well, it's as Easy As 1, 2, 3...

Step 1 – Run or walk 5k. Step 2 – Nominate 2 friends to do the same.

Step 3 – All donate £5 to Poppyscotland by texting "POPPY" £5 to 70007

That's how easy it can be!

'Easy123' is a great way to incentivise yourself to be more active, enjoy a walk or run with your friends and family all whilst raising money for Poppyscotland and helping our Armed Forces community.

It really is as Easy as 123! For more information or to get involved contact Frances Beveridge on 07734979990 or email fundraiseforus@poppyscotland.org.uk

CHRISTMAS CARD LAMENT

Christmas comes but once a year and always far too soon
It seems it's just a fortnight since we said goodbye to June
And now we're into Advent and I haven't bought a thing
There's quite a while to go yet so I'll not start worrying

You won't receive a card from me of Santa on his sled
I much prefer a "proper card" of Jesus on his bed
I'll rake around until I find the cards I always bought
The Three Wise Men, the camels and the presents that they brought

The sales begin on Boxing Day, the cards would be half price
And if I'd had the sense of mind to heed my own advice
I would have trotted up the town and bought a box or two
Of course I'd have them written out before the year was through - *NOPE*

I've written out and posted off the cards to go abroad
It's only just December and I'm feeling pretty proud
There's plenty time to write the rest and get them posted too
Advent's only started so there's weeks to see it through

Writing out the envelopes gave writer's cramp to me
But now I'm using labels so it's quicker, don't you see
It also has a down-side and I'll tell you what it is
You contemplate what's left to write when supping on Buck's Fizz

It's party time, I'm turning up, receiving cards from you
Mine aren't even written and I'll have to post them too
A little bit of forethought and I could have saved some cash
Never mind, forget it now and let's go on the lash

And now it's nearly Christmas Eve, how did it come so fast?
I'll knuckle down to write those cards, I'll get them done at last
I'll have to take a mortgage out to send first class to you
If I had got the finger out then second class would do

So what's the thoughts for next year? Well, I have a better plan
To buy the cards on Boxing Day and write them there and then
They'll then go in a cardboard box 'til Advent comes round
And then I'll buy another lot because they can't be found

Diana

Felicity interviewed by Diana:

As a member of St Martin's have you always been aware of God in your life or did that awareness come to you later on? We know your dad was a minister and how did that impact on your beliefs?

I grew up in Rectory and went to church with the family from a very young age and even knocked the frontal off in my father's church as he was about to say " joy in felicity " in the set prayer!

I went to Sunday school and had some inspirational teachers. One asked us to draw all the Sundays in the year and Trinity was the longest. I wished we still used Trinity instead of Ordinary time.

I went to the Nurses Christian Union at Hammersmith Hospital and attended at Holy Trinity Brompton.

In Argyll I went to Christ Church Lochgilphead and later to the Church of Scotland in Tayvallich. When I walk in nature I feel the presence of God in my life. God's beautiful world brings peace. St Martin's has nurtured my faith and is like coming home.

Is there someone in your life who has been a great influence on your beliefs?

My daughter was born prematurely and was in the Queen Mother's hospital Glasgow for 99 days. She had many episodes when she stopped breathing and I wanted to be near her in case she died. My father then a retired priest advised me to have her baptised, a priest came from the Episcopal Cathedral in Glasgow and after she was baptised she started to improve. My father has helped my belief and also Roy Flatt rector at Christ Church Lochgilphead. He had great empathy and especially helped me and my family. He was also deaf so really understood Laura who is deaf from birth. He understood when I was concerned about my son and his school work. Sadly Roy Flatt died at the local hospital of cancer while still rector at Lochgilphead. He worked in the parish for as long as he could. I really admired him.

When you were a child, did you go on a bus trip with the Sunday School in summer? What do you remember about that?

I remember as a member of Sunday School at St John the Baptist, Clarendon Park, Leicester going on a Sunday School trip to a farm in the country. I was not impressed as I had grown up in a village, Medbourne, and the rectory where I lived had a glebe where we had chickens, we so had fresh eggs. The field next to us had sheep and one bit my finger so I was taken to hospital for a tetanus injection. There must not have been any good news stories that day as the local reporter wrote a piece, Rector's daughter bitten by a sheep. The farm we visited for the outing had nothing new for me, but the city children liked it.

Did your Church have a children's Christmas Party? What do you remember about that?

I do not remember much about Christmas parties except one where one child hit her forehead badly and it bled profusely. Our Guide captain was administering first aid. Other than that I remember playing pass the parcel, musical chairs, and grandmother's footsteps.

At the start of the pandemic when we were all told to stay at home and only go out if necessary, how did you feel? Were you fearful or optimistic?

I went out for exercise. It was a very strange time, suddenly all face to face activities cancelled and I did go out for a walk each day making sure I went out at quiet times. I tended to walk round the small shared flat garden at the weekends as more people were out on the streets then. I got up early to go to the shops so as to meet less people. I was apprehensive.

Were you alone or with family?

I was very fortunate having my son and his wife living with me.

How did you cope with being apart from family?

I kept in contact with my daughter in Balerno by phone once or twice a day as she lives alone and is a people person and felt very lonely.

What lifted your spirits?

Going for walks in new places and seeing the Spring come. I started to grow more plants in the shared garden and gained great pleasure seeing them flower.

What did you miss in particular [socially perhaps]?

Going for bus rides to different parts of the city and into the country. We were told to only go on essential journeys.

Have you noticed a difference in how we interact with each other since?

During the pandemic I was meeting very few people but I telephoned my friends and family so kept in contact. I took a long time to come back to Church in the Church attending on zoom instead. Once I came back to Church and helped at the Art show it was so good to be with friends again the only difference was having to wear a mask and keeping a distance.

“Thank you Felicity for speaking to me, Diana”

Eco Group News

We are looking forward to COP26.

Art Exhibition “Our Precious and Precarious World”

The exhibition is organized by the Together Trust Eco Group

Tuesday 26th – Saturday 30th October 2021, 12-5pm

St Cuthbert's Church, Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH1 2EP

Enjoy Singing for COP26 ON 6th November 2021 10am to 12noon in St Martins.

During the first two weeks of November, the UN climate talks will take place in Glasgow. On **Saturday 6 November** there will be actions across the UK and the world to demand the system change we need to avert climate catastrophe. Together, we can make enough noise that our voices cannot be ignored.

The 6th November is to mark a Global Day of Action for Climate Justice when many activities are taking place in Glasgow as part of COP26. We plan to sing for justice in the Church as our contribution. Come along and enjoy making a joyful sound together.

Recycling

We can now recycle biscuit and crisp packets at Church, see collection box in the kitchen. Now empty medicine blister packets can be collected at Church too.

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Craft club

Craft club was temporarily suspended at the start of lockdown and opened again briefly in September in the main Church Hall for a few meetings but sadly had to close again with the new restrictions from Friday 9th October.

The craft club continues to meet on Zoom on Saturdays at 2.00pm and 3.00pm for 40 minute slots. If anyone wants to drop in just for a wee chat let me know and I'll email the two links to you. You can drop in anytime and if you feel you're having to wait a few minutes it's probably because I'm looking down counting stitches and I need to see you in the “waiting room” to let you in. **Of course I won't actually “see” you, only a blank screen and, in case you're concerned about being seen on Zoom, you can keep it that way and still join in with the conversation. It's up to you whether you're “seen” or not.** We are looking forward to meeting in Church once more – it's been a long time!

Diana

Advent Angel Service

The Advent Angel Service will return in the Church on Saturday 27th November 2021 at 4pm to sing Advent Carols followed by non-alcoholic punch and mince pies as long as Covid rules allow. Then the advent angels will be hung around Muriston Park and Harrison Park.

St Martin's Strollers

A trip to Silverdykes Caravan Park

Prior to the pandemic, one of the walks we had planned was based around a visit to Jim Armstrong's caravan based near Anstruther in the East Neuk of Fife. At this year's Art Show, we met up with Jim and decided that it was time for a group walk. The date settled on was the 29th September and initially it looked as if a small group of 7 of us would be going. However, on the day in question only 4 of us were able to make it.

We arrived at the caravan site at 11am and had a short walk through the site and on into the village of Kilrenny. Jim knew quite a lot about the history of this village including the fact that it used to be the administrative centre for Fife. The round trip brought us back to the caravan for lunch and cake.

After lunch Jim suggested a number of possible walks but it was decided to walk into Anstruther, through the village of Cellardyke, made (in)famous when a swan was washed into the harbour which was carrying Bird flu. Anstruther was relatively quiet so it was nice to walk round without having crowds. The chip shop was still doing good business though.

Back to the caravan for more cake – we had to eat the cakes allocated to those who couldn't come – I mean it was only polite and then the journey home.

There are lots of walks in this area so we all agreed that we would be back next year, hopefully, when more people could make it.

It is hoped that a walk round West Lothian can be organised for early November. Watch the weekly sheet for further news

Peter Moir

Zoom and Church Services

Church services started again from Palm Sunday also available on zoom.

A big thank you to Rosie for hosting the Zoom Service.

Sun 28

10.30am

Celebrating Communion – Advent Sunday
Harvest from a small garden.

