



CROSSTALK

*The Newsletter of
South East Edinburgh Churches Acting Together*

Issue 21 February 2019

CHRISTIAN UNITY . . .

. . . is what SEECAT is all about! In the Week of Prayer we were all challenged to pursue justice, and at the main service at St. John Vianney's we looked at Luke 4, 14-21, where Jesus says he is fulfilling the prophecy of good news for the poor, sight for the blind, freedom for the prisoner, release for the oppressed. We were challenged to commit to one step to further God's justice in our broken world, and then to pick up someone else's pledge and pray for them as they sought to fulfil their promise.

Justice is one of SEECAT's aims, as is mission, and those of us from Protestant churches will read with interest about an RC initiative which is very relevant to all of us—see page 3.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Our local service in 2019 is 2pm on Friday 1st March in Liberton Kirk. Please join it if you can—and pray for good weather, as last year's service had to be cancelled!



FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 25 February—10 March

This year's focus is on cocoa, where a drop in global prices is affecting small growers very badly. Trade is central to our lives—we all buy goods; many of us work in retail—but why is "fair trade" vital, and why should we as Christians be part of it? See page 2!

ARE OUR GOOD FRIDAY EVENTS IN YOUR DIARY?

Yes, we know it was freezing cold outside Morrisons last year, but Easter is much later in 2019! It's warm inside Gracemount High School, especially if the hall is full of people so



book
the
date
now!

April 19th
11am and
3pm, and
prayer-walk from 10am if you can.



CAMERON TOLL CHAPLAINCY



Amidst all the gloomy retail news Cameron Toll is doing well—the Gym open and busy, empty units being re-let, an Argos outlet expected. Over the Christmas period the true story was put over in several ways: the nativity scene was at the heart of the centre mall display, the “angel trail” round the shops attracted interest, even if two of the knitted angels “went missing”! Our carol singing was appreciated by Sainsbury shoppers—you can see



from the photograph that we were making a difference!

Our next opportunity to pray for Graham and Denise, our two Chaplains, and for the Centre and its people, is on Friday 8th March at 11am in Sainsbury's Café—join the Support Group there!

PASSOVER MEAL

You will need a ticket for Monday 15th April at Tron Kirk Moredun—they will be on sale at £5 in churches in March. Numbers are limited—make sure you get one!

FAIR TRADE AND TRADE JUSTICE from Tricia Kaminski

Normal trade between developed and developing countries has its problems. Producers will be paid below subsistence prices if the market will tolerate it. Working conditions at the production end are not the responsibility of the buyer, and labour rights will not always be enforced by local legal systems, sometimes weak, corrupt or influenced by transnational interests. For the buyer, short-term contracts are more efficient.

Fair trade initiatives have come about to tackle these problems. “For Christians, indeed for ethical people, economic life needs to reflect not just self-interest or a narrow definition of efficiency, but fundamental values” comes from Rev. Richard Tucker in “Fair Trade: A Christian Ethical Perspective”. What values? Preservation of life, justice, economic freedom, sustainable development, peace in its widest sense, are just a few.

Fair Trade is part of the struggle, but to achieve trade justice requires systemic change, looking at tariffs and speculators—people with no connection to food buying up sections of basic food markets (now 61% - see www.wdm.org.uk). Fair trade should be supported and encouraged—it helps the producers and Richard Tucker says it is a beacon of best practice. Fair Trade is a part of the struggle for trade justice which remains an essential element of the Christian response to world poverty.

AN EXCITING & INSPIRING DAY
described by Stuart Holden

On 12th January the RC Cluster met in Liberton Kirk Halls for a day of prayer, talks, drama and discussion ending with the celebration of Mass. Fr Mike outlined the process leading to the Cluster deciding to produce a five-year Pastoral Plan, based on the book *Divine Renovation : from Maintenance to Mission*.

The book maintains that the gradual decline in faith commitment and attendance requires us to look afresh at Jesus' command to "go forth and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19), instead of trying to maintain what we've got with fewer resources. This means each and every one of us being actively involved in our churches, serving our communities in whatever way we can.

A drama called *The Way We Were* depicted how the early church organised how it ministered to itself. There was gripping testimony of how attending an Alpha course had changed lives and input from a children's group which had also discussed what the book said. Small groups then discussed the Pastoral Plan.

All agreed the day had excited people, but the basic message was that prayer was the engine to get things moving: the prayer of reflection followed by the prayer of action.

QUIET MORNING
from Lib Anderson, a first-timer

The lovely leaders (*photo below*) did a great job and the morning was not only relaxing but fun. LOVE, PEACE AND JOY were the topics which were described beautifully and the Taize music brought an air of them into the room. We had a choice of crafts near the end—everyone mingled together and socialized giving a good end to the morning.



Alice Anderson and Lily Johnston from St. Barnabas, flanked by Kate Jackson (left) and Norma Packham (right) from Liberton Northfield.

A THOUGHT ABOUT JUSTICE AND PEACE
from Mike Mineter

Micah 6:8 calls us to act justly and love mercy. Too often, worldwide, churches seem to act with mercy and only passively love justice. It is of course right to meet the needs of a person or group—but we also need to work for the social, political and structural changes that justice demands. Our daily choices are part of that work; what we buy, what we say
(see also page 2)

JUSTICE & PEACE PLANNING

Two initial areas of focus have been chosen for 2019. We want to hear about what our church communities are already doing, and invite speakers to raise our awareness of how personal choices and actions can make a difference. The areas are:

1. Environmental issues: human-caused global changes, sustainability; the role of our choices when shopping etc.
2. Christian action against poverty—how can/do we meet local need in our area?

Look out in your churches for the first date in the spring.

The new J & P Secretary is Tricia Kaminski, and Treasurer Jacqui Sanger. Both will understudy each other's jobs.

LENT STUDIES

There will be Study Groups for the five weeks beginning w/c 10th March and sign-up sheets in churches later in February. This is a great way to get to know people from our other churches better.

PRAYERS NEEDED

- *for our Good Friday services at Morrisons and Gracemount High School to be a powerful witness of our faith and our unity*
- *for Fair Trade fortnight from 25th February, that the publicity would encourage many to buy fair trade goods and campaign for a more just economic system*
- *for health and strength for all our church leaders and their families*
- *for a new sense of unity in our aims of justice and mission as we reach out to the people around us*
- *for wisdom for our political leaders, for a willingness to work together, for a good future for our country*

SERVICE IN HOLY WEEK

Our Stations of the Cross Service this year is at St. Gregory's (a change from the programme as printed), on Wednesday 17th April at 7.30pm.

This newsletter is also on our website. The next issue will be in May, and suggestions are welcome—please contact any of the SEECAT representatives in your church or speak to Ruth.

CROSSTALK is the Newsletter of SEECAT and is published by Ruth Davies, Liberton Kirk Centre, 28 Kirkgate, Edinburgh EH16 6RY.

The churches in SEECAT are Gracemount Church, Liberton Kirk, Liberton Northfield, Tron Kirk (Gilmerton and Moredun), St. Barnabas', St. Catherine's, St. John Vianney's and St. Gregory's. Our website, www.seecat.org, has links to them.

