



# ***CROSSTALK***

***The Newsletter of  
South East Edinburgh Churches Acting Together***

Issue 26 August 2020 (N.B. there was no issue in May 2020 because of the pandemic)

## ***CHURCH BUILDINGS MAY HAVE BEEN CLOSED BUT THE CHURCH IS STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE IN SOUTH EAST EDINBURGH!***

- \* Our Lord and Saviour is being worshipped
- \* Prayer is rising from every corner of our patch
- \* We are keeping in touch with each other and the vulnerable
- \* The love of Jesus is being shown in our communities

*(more on these on the inside pages)*

Things are beginning to change. Our smallest church, St. Barnabas', opened for worship on 26th July, with two services a week to enable social distancing (but contact David if you wish to attend). Restrictions in general are being relaxed, but for many the next few months will bring worry and hardship. As lockdown gradually eases how can we carry forward the good things, particularly to help our stressed and hurting communities?

---



### ***FATHER MIKE FALLON TO RETIRE***

Following his 75th birthday in August Father Mike will retire from his post in the R. C. Cluster.

Because of the pandemic, he had to communicate his decision to retire to his parishioners by video on YouTube.

This is sad news for SEECAT—Father Mike has been a staunch supporter, a visionary and innovator, and a wise adviser over the years. Thank you, Father Mike.

The good news is that he hopes to continue to live locally and to participate in the life of the R.C. Cluster and St. Catherine's.

We wish him every blessing in his retirement and hope to welcome him to SEECAT events when they can take place.

## **CLAVERHOUSE CONVERSATIONS**

Liberton Northfield have an open Claverhouse Conversation, using Zoom, on Saturday 29 August at 9.30am. The guest, who will be in conversation with the church's John Sturrock, is Jo Berry, international peacebuilder and the founder of Building Bridges for Peace. Her father, Sir Antony Berry MP, was killed in the Brighton hotel bombing in 1984. Jo has spent the past twenty years in public conversations with Patrick Magee, the IRA member who planted the bomb. To join the Zoom meeting, email [crosstalk@seecat.org](mailto:crosstalk@seecat.org) and tell us, and you will be sent the Zoom access details.

## **CAMERON TOLL CHAPLAINCY**



Now that most shops are open again in the Centre, our Chaplains are looking for safe ways to continue chaplaincy whilst meeting all Government and local rules.

Andy Gregg has been appointed National Director for WorkPlace Chaplaincy Scotland from 13th July and funding has been secured for WPCS until the end of 2020.

## **KEEPING IN TOUCH**

On-line access is not always available, and churches have used dedicated 'phone links, printed newsletters and socially distanced doorstep visits. Telephone calls have been vital, and offers of shopping much appreciated.

## **FEEDING THE HUNGRY**

The two food banks in our area have been well supported by our churches. Uptake at Tron Basics Bank rose from 350kg to nearly a ton of food weekly at the peak, with 28 families (up from 12-15) using the bank. Tron also helped with a weekly "pantry" with Goodtrees and the Cyrenians, giving groceries to some 22 families.

In partnership with Goodtrees Tron have hosted and helped deliver over 40,000 packed lunches. Bethany have also been at work in Moredun, issuing a "Keeping Well" leaflet and helping local people. Liberton Kirk started providing a Monday lunch for about 30 shielding parishioners but then teamed up with Empty Kitchens (Bridgend) who were providing meals every day for those needing help. These were packed and distributed from Liberton Kirk Centre, where cake, bread and fruit were added. For two months, until Empty Kitchens' staff returned, 500 meals a week were distributed, involving more than 50 volunteers. Now 100 meals a week are provided to folk in Liberton and Gracemount from the Kirkgate Café.

## **RETREAT WEEKEND**

If the 2-metre rule is relaxed, we hope to hold the Retreat planned for 9th-11th October at Gullane. The cost will be £60, and anyone interested should contact David on 01875 812985.

## **SISTER MARY STEEDMAN**



Sister Mary, who died on 20th April, has been part of St. Catherine's since 1966 when she arrived as a teacher at St. Catherine's Primary School. She celebrated her Golden Jubilee in 2016 but has had failing health in the last couple of years. She was always supportive of SEECAT and will be missed by people from all the churches.

## **ZOOMING AND STREAMING!**

On line is where a lot is happening! Worship from Liberton Northfield, Tron and Gracemount, and a Zoom service from Liberton Kirk. The R.C. Cluster have a great on-line weekly newsletter with links to many features—worship for all ages, favourite hymns, prayers and even recipes from Father Alex! Liberton Kirk and Tron have daily reflections/devotions, and Liberton Northfield have embraced Zoom in a big way for Sunday evenings, young people on Sunday morning, Saturday prayers and several meetings and social gatherings. Zoom prayer meetings have taken place at Liberton and in the Cluster, supplementing regular prayer arrangements. Small connect or link groups meet on Zoom in the Cluster and at Liberton Kirk, and at Tron Weekly Bridges to Freedom zooms in for those struggling with addiction.

## **ECO NEWS from Mike Mineter, Justice & Peace Planning Group**

These times call us to recognise urgently how interlinked are issues of poverty, human well-being, economic activity and the health of the planet. "The environment" is not an isolated issue. We are called to hear the connected cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth.

It is all there in front of us: the impact of climate disruption, pollution, loss of biodiversity, soil degradation, leading to shortages of water, disruption of food supply and more, having a disproportionate impact on the poor, whose lives are less resilient. It is not only COVID that shows we are in different times to those we are used to. Urgent action is needed.

The Christian response to this was the subject of the evening with David Coleman of EcoCongregation on 16 July (see video of his talk etc. on the SEECAT J & P events page, <https://seecat.org/justice-and-peace/jp-events/>)

In response, SEECAT J&P is now hosting "Eco: see and pray" Zoom meetings on each Tuesday and Friday, 6pm—6.20pm, for people to drop in to share knowledge and pray. We also hope to form a SEECAT EcoCircle of people who will commit to meet regularly to understand more and respond to the signs of our times. Details on the web page (link above).

## **NEW MINISTER AT LIBERTON NORTHFIELD**



Welcome from SEECAT to Rev. Attie van Wyk, now at Liberton Northfield. He was inducted on 14th April in a virtual service. Attie, who comes from South Africa, was in his old parish of St. Andrew's Lhanbryde and Urquhart in Moray at the time and until he moved to Edinburgh the two congregations shared Sunday services on line. We look forward to getting to know him and wish him every blessing.

## **KEEP KITKAT FAIRTRADE**

From October Nestlé plan to stop buying fair-trade cocoa and sugar for their KitKats. Please sign a petition supported by the Scottish Fair Trade Forum, CAFOD, Church of Scotland and others. Look for "Keep Kitkat Fairtrade" on the website [www.change.org](http://www.change.org).

## **GRACEMOUNT IS HOMELESS!**

The Council has stopped outside groups hiring their premises in the present crisis. Gracemount Church is therefore looking for a home, as the school is no longer available.

## **PRAYERS NEEDED . . . . .**

- *for all affected by Covid 19—the sick, the bereaved, the anxious, those losing jobs and livelihoods, that they would know God's strength and comfort*
- *for a continuation of the good things which have developed in lockdown to care for the needy and the lonely*
- *for a new understanding as we emerge from this crisis of the connectedness of the environment with human well-being and the need to care for our planet*
- *for our church leaders in changing times that they would know your guidance and inspiration*
- *for a meeting place for Gracemount Church while school premises are not available*
- *for guidance and inspiration for those planning a SEECAT programme for the coming year in the current uncertain times*

---

This newsletter is also on our website. The next issue will be in November—contributions should be sent to [crosstalk@seecat.org](mailto:crosstalk@seecat.org) by the end of October.

**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](http://www.seecat.org), has links to them.