CROSSTALK

The Newsletter of
South East Edinburgh Churches Acting Together

Issue 29 February 2022

LENT STUDIES

It's always good to get together with people from the other churches in SEECAT during Lent. Even though it can be difficult to make time for something extra to our own church activities it is always worthwhile. We have three groups to choose from:

1. In person at St. Barnabas' at 1.30pm on Wednesdays, starting on 9th March.
2. In person at Tron Kirk at 3pm on Tuesdays, starting on 8th March.
3. On Zoom, led by the SEECAT Chair, Rev. Janet McKenzie, at 2pm on Thursdays, starting on 10th March.

All these groups will run for five weeks. If you would like to be involved, please contact Clare on clare.roller@icloud.com.

The material this year is based on the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity theme "We saw his star in the east" and picks up timeless subjects for discussion from the story of the magi.

HOLY WEEK 2022

Provided the Covid restrictions keep reducing, there should be:

1. A Passover Meal at Liberton Kirk on Monday 11th April (ticket only)
2. An Ecumenical Stations of the Cross Service at St. John Vianney's on the Wednesday.
3. A Good Friday (15th April) Prayer Walk from our churches, hopefully ending in a service at Morrisons.
4. A Good Friday Service at 3pm at Gracemount High School.

Pray that we will be able to meet in numbers and in safety in this very special week.

CHOOSE THE WORLD YOU WANT -

and Fair Trade Fortnight from 21st February to 6th March is a time to start. To think about people around the world who don't receive a fair price for their goods. To think about paying just a little more and making a big difference in the lives of the producers. See page 2 for the oranges!



Do you want a world where there is justice for all?

CHRISTIAN UNITY WEEK

Our first service was in person at Tron, led by David Dixon. It was well-attended by people who were clearly delighted to be able to see each other again. The second was on Zoom, led by Fabiano Soares, the Probationary Minister at Tron Kirk. Christians in Israel/Palestine had outlined the theme of "We saw his star in the east" and Fabiano introduced his friend Sally (from his studies in Germany), who would soon be the first female Lutheran Minister in Israel/Palestine, and she was able to speak from her experience of that country. It was a delight to hear this lively young woman speaking about her future task.

PRE-CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Sadly we weren't able to do any carol-singing this year—the new Covid variant came at just the wrong time!

We were, however, able to hold our usual Advent Quiet Morning—on Zoom again as in 2020. It was good to have this short quiet time at the beginning of December—many thanks to members of the Contemplation Group who led us.



DON'T LET MEMORIES OF COP 26 FADE AWAY!

SEECAT has a weekly prayerful ECO Circle get-together at 5.30pm each Tuesday for 45 minutes on Zoom. Please join us: https://seecat.org/justice-and-peace/jp-events/ to register.

OPERATION ORANGE!



You may see oranges being offered in South East Edinburgh and ask why. They are part of a project supporting migrants in Calabria, Italy.

The Italian Protestant Churches' Refugee and Migrant programme "Mediterranean Hope" has a base in that fertile region to support migrants working in the fruit fields who are exploited, working for little pay and living in appalling conditions without running water or electricity. One partnership is with a local cooperative SOS Rosarno which has created an ethical supply chain. Workers get a decent wage, buyers get excellent fairly-traded products. Some of the price paid is ploughed back into social projects such as those run by Mediterranean Hope.

This is the source of the oranges!



An MH worker, a migrant himself, wrote in a poem: *"I weep for the world and a system which does not value a human being."* If an orange comes your way, pray for change.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND CHANGES

The Church of Scotland is undergoing a major reorganisation which will change the way all its churches work. It had to come—falling income, a people shortage, expensive buildings, all contribute to an unsustainable position.

Effective mission is the overall aim—reaching out to those who do not know Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. SEECAT's four Church of Scotland churches are in the Edinburgh consultation, where the number of ministers will reduce by 40% and "working together" will be vital.

What does it mean for us? There will be seven Mission Districts in Edinburgh, and we will be part of the South District. Within that, our four congregations (Liberton Kirk, Liberton Northfield, Gracemount and Tron Kirk (Gilmerton and Moredun) will work together as one, with reduced and shared staffing. (the consultation continues—no final decision yet!)

It's good to know that the Roman Catholic churches in this area have been through a major reorganisation process recently and come through it as a strong united "Cluster".

Jesus' call to us to seek first God's Kingdom should unite all of us. Times of change can be disturbing but they can also be exciting and fulfilling. Our communities need us working together!

WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING ON THAT BUS?

"Why are there so many high school boys and girls queueing at the church?"



Admittedly it's not often that there are queues at any of our churches, but Toastie Tuesday, offering lunch, a warm welcome and good company to Liberton High pupils, is back at Liberton Northfield Church with Young Life. News of its return soon spread, and there were 140 there on the first day!

GRACEMOUNT TATTIES!

If you would like to support a local event in the community, try the Gracemount Tattie Celebration on Saturday 26th February from 12noon to 3pm in the Gracemount Community Garden (beside the Mansion). Food, music, activities for children, and gardening tips.



"I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU"



God's words, spoken by the Prophet Jeremiah to the exiles in Babylon, are the theme for the World Day of Prayer on Friday 4th March. Our local service will be at 2pm that day at St. John Vianney's, Fernieside Gardens, and there will be refreshments afterwards. Do come along and join in the world-wide prayer.

AUTUMN RETREAT

The House and Cottage at Gullane have been booked for 7th-9th October and it will be possible to accommodate 18 people this time. If you would like to come, or would like to know more, please contact David Dixon on 01875 812985.

GRACEMOUNT BACK AT LAST

Gracemount Church have been able to hold Sunday Services again at Gracemount Primary School since January—later than hoped but very welcome!

PRAYERS NEEDED . . . .

- *for help and hope for those in our community who are really struggling with the rising cost of living*
- *for justice and peace across the world and for awareness of ways we can help as individuals and as churches*
- *for the Church of Scotland as it goes through a difficult period of reorganisation*
- *for all our churches as they seek to reach out to those in our communities who do not know the good news of Jesus*
- *for our church leaders, for health and strength and supportive people around them*
- *for our Holy Week events that they will be able to take place this year*

FAREWELL TO ATTIE VAN WYK

We were sorry to say goodbye to Attie Van Wyk, who has moved from Liberton Northfield to a church in Stirling, and we wish him well in his new charge.

This newsletter is also on our website. The next issue will be in May—contributions should be sent to crosstalk@seecat.org by the end of April

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.