CROSSTALK

The Newsletter of
South East Edinburgh Churches Acting Together

SEECAT

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BALMWELL HEALING SERVICE



A good number gathered at the Balmwell in the grounds of the Toby Carvery on Saturday 27th May for a lovely short service led by John Young, with David Dixon and Alice Anderson from St. Barnabas' Church speaking. There was then the opportunity, for anyone who wished, to receive prayer for healing of body, mind or spirit.

We were fortunate that the weather stayed fine, and we could gather near the Balmwell itself, as pilgrims have done in past centuries, drawn to it as a place of healing and restoration.



30th ANNIVERSARY OF SEECAT

In 1993 SEECAT came into being, putting on a more official footing the South East Edinburgh Churches Association which had been in existence for about ten years. What did we do together in those early years? Not nearly as much as we do together now!

Yes, we had Bible Studies in Lent, we marked the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we had a Service on the Wednesday of Holy Week, and did carol-singing at Cameron Toll. Some things we no longer do—the annual Carol Party on a Sunday afternoon and the Outing at Pentecost (outings disappeared once bus passes came into being!).

Now we have a Quiet Morning, a Service of Healing and a Retreat, and our Holy Week events and our joint witness on Good Friday are the highlights of our programme. These have built up gradually over the years, as has our feeling of togetherness as we all work towards God's Kingdom.

This feeling is a special gift—not repeated everywhere else, and therefore something to be treasured and developed as we move forward together.

KATE JACKSON

Sadly we lost Kate Jackson in July. Kate, from Liberton Northfield, was part of SEECAT for many years, and was one of the leaders at our Quiet Morning a few years ago. She was a Reader in the Church of Scotland and spent a lot of time in recent years outwith our area leading worship and preaching in other churches. We will miss her, and send our sympathy to her family.

SCOTTISH CHURCHES DISABILITY GROUP

SCDG

Churches for all in Scotland

All the SEECAT churches give people a warm welcome, but the SCDG is keen to ensure that for disabled people the worship is accessible too. They have good ideas on their facebook page, their website (www.scdg.org.uk) and in their quarterly newsletter.

Their annual meeting this year on Saturday 7th October is at Dalziel St. Andrew's Church in Motherwell, close to buses and trains. This is a church which has made great efforts to include people with mobility issues, hearing loss, visual impairment and other disabilities. Graeme McDonald of Richmond Craigmillar in Edinburgh will lead an Inclusive Music Workshop. The meeting is also on line, but you need to register for either—see their August newsletter on the website for the full programme and how to book.

SOCIAL CARE STAFF PETITION



The Scottish Faith Leaders Declaration on Fair Pay in the Social Care Sector was signed in May by the Catholic Archbishop of Glasgow, the Most Rev. William Nolan, and the then Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Iain Greenshields.

The declaration emphasised the importance of social care workers and the need for better social care in Scotland. It called on the Government "to do everything in its power to ensure all frontline social care workers be paid a minimum of £12 per hour immediately, and that the appropriate funding is made available which allows all social care staff to be recognised for their skills, experience and contributions, in whichever role they serve."

We can play our part by putting pressure on our politicians about social care funding which is much needed for our ageing population.

ST. JOHN VIANNEY'S CHURCH

The invitation to the final Mass in the Fernieside Gardens building said "St. John Vianney Parish . . . . Moving Forward" with a quote from St. John Vianney himself: 'On this path, it is only the first step that counts'. That set the tone for a wonderful evening of celebration, with a joyful Mass and a great get-together in the hall (and spilling out into the car park) afterwards. Good to see Father Kenneth, Father Jock and Father Mike alongside Father Alex too!

Of course there was sadness—so many memories linked with that building, as the commemorative booklet and the photos in the hall showed so well. But there was great optimism too! The church community in all its diversity is strong and active and that won't change just because the building changes. The people of God are the church of God.

SEECAT sends its love and support to the church of St. John Vianney as it "moves forward" to its new home base in St. Gregory's.



30 YEARS AGO . . . . .

. . .we were active on the justice and peace front, campaigning against under-18 homelessness with Newington Council of Churches. We were out with a stall at the foot of the Mound on Saturdays for a couple of months, and encouraging our church folk to write to Government Ministers. We held a One World Evening too, plugging Fair Trade. We also had knitting parties and sent 310 children's jumpers to Romania, which is today one of the countries which receives the Blythswood shoeboxes.

The need for justice in all these areas is still there today. Mike Mineter, who leads our Justice and Peace work in SEECAT, gives us a reminder of what we can be doing in these summer months, when there may be no events, but the needs are still there:

"In this time of crises we continue to pray and seek to be more informed about injustice in the world, and how we can respond to help change come about, whether for those suffering climate catastrophes, violence from military or political ambitions, or economic violence where those in poverty subsidise the rich."

If you would like to join with others in prayer for Eco matters or for the situation in Israel/ Palestine, please see our website and look up Justice and Peace.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SEECAT's A.G.M. will be held on Sunday 17th September at 2.30pm in St. Catherine's Church Hall, Gracemount Drive.

We will be confirming a new Chair at that meeting—Christine Johnson from Liberton Kirk, who is currently the Vice Chair, and who will replace Rev. Janet Mackenzie. Janet is an Ordained Local Minister at Tron Kirk (Gilmerton and Moredun) and has been Chair for four years—four difficult years, it has to be said.

Janet was appointed in September 2019, and before she reached Holy Week 2020, lockdown had arrived. For the next two years, nothing was "normal", and Janet's offer to stay on as Chair for an extra year was gratefully accepted.

Thank you, Janet, for your leadership over these difficult few years. We will remember too your extended "welcome" to the afternoon service this Good Friday—thank you for keeping everybody focussed until the projector problems were sorted!

PRAYERS NEEDED . . . .

- *of thanksgiving for thirty years of SEECAT and for our continuing development and constantly growing unity*
- *of thanksgiving for the Healing Service on 27th May*
- *for St. John Vianney's church community as it moves forward in a new place of worship*
- *for peace in the world, and a just settlement to conflicts which continue to cause such devastation to people's lives*
- *for those who struggle with hunger, both at home and in the wider world, that they may be fed, and helped to be self-sufficient*
- *for those affected by extreme weather events, and for action by the world's leaders to combat climate change*
- *for all our churches and their leaders, as we seek to focus always on Jesus and to build his kingdom in this part of Edinburgh*

This newsletter is also on our website. The next issue will be in November 2023—contributions should be sent to crosstalk@seecat.org by end 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**, has links to them.