CROSSTALK

The Newsletter of
South East Edinburgh Churches Acting Together

SEECAT

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BALMWELL HEALING SERVICE



It was a lovely afternoon on Saturday 18th May for the annual Healing Service at the Balm Well in the grounds of the Toby Inn, who were once again helpful in providing electricity for us.

The service was led by John Young, and a good number were there to join in the songs he led and be part of the prayers. Alastair Cameron spoke to us about the healing power of God.

At the end of the service prayer was available for anyone who wished to pray for healing for themselves or anyone else—healing of body, mind or spirit.

DAY RETREAT

A Day Retreat is planned for Saturday 28th September from 10am to 4pm at Liberton Northfield Church. This will be led by Gerry Mulvenna. Those attending should bring a packed lunch, but tea/coffee and biscuits will be provided.

There is no cost to participants but it is helpful to know how many will be coming so please book through Revd. David Dixon, tel. 01875 812985.

TAIZE PRAYER SERVICE

At the end of May St. Catherine's held a Taizé Prayer Service and several from other churches attended. It was generally agreed that it would be a good idea to repeat this type of service, perhaps in different churches in the area, Taizé being ecumenical and focussed on reconciliation and care of the planet and "journeying together", which is what SEECAT is about too. This idea of similar events in the future is being taken further.



PILGRIMAGE WALK FOR THE SEASON OF CREATION—Saturday 21st September— ROSLIN TO ST. CATHERINE'S WELL



- morning departure from Roslin
- 6+ miles including Straiton Pond Local Nature Reserve and Burdiehouse Burn Local Nature Reserve
- One way route helped by 37 bus
- Bring a picnic lunch and dress for all weathers

As well as enjoying the company, the chat and the scenery we also intentionally include prayer, listening and silence (from humans) and perhaps share any reflections among the group. We finish at the Balm Well with a short symbolic act of worship with the well water there for the Season of Creation.

This route is suitable for people who walk or exercise regularly. 30 mins per day of brisk walking that makes you feel a bit warmer and breathe a bit faster is recommended for most people— if you are not already doing this, then that will be a good start to preparations for our pilgrimage (and good health). In addition, if you have not walked 6 miles in the past 6 months then it would be a good idea to do a 3 mile walk before our pilgrimage to make sure your shoes are still comfy. These preparatory walks will add to the pleasure of the season.

Folk who prefer a sit spot or a gentle stroll are welcome to join us at the Well, Straiton Pond Local Nature Reserve or Burdiehouse Burn Local Nature Reserve—though our timings will not be precise because pilgrims never know what they will encounter on the way.

It would help the organisers get an idea of numbers and be able to update you on plans if you email to note interest, but you are free to just turn up on the day if you prefer. Full itinerary by emailing pilgrim@seecat.org or at https://seecat.org/pilgrimage/

DISABILITY AWARENESS SUNDAY—Scottish Churches Disability Group tell us that this year Disability Awareness Sunday is on 22nd September, following a week starting 15th September with this special focus, although hopefully we are all disability aware during the year. If you want to mark this Sunday in your churches you can order a resource pack from Through the Roof **here .**

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION DAY—29th June at Liberton Northfield—thoughts from Jacqui Sanger



What is Christian Meditation? It is a prayer without thoughts, words or images, just being with God in silence and stillness. In the present moment we find the presence of God within us.

The Contemplation Group (which meets every Tuesday in Liberton Northfield Church Hall), hosted this Day led by Alex Holmes. Alex, a former organiser of the Scottish branch of WCCM (World Community for Contemplation and Meditation), is a stonemason by trade, but also spends much of his time working with Eritrean refugees in the Calais camps and keeps contact with many who have been able to make a life in the UK.

His theme for the day was 'The exact number of stars'. He offered a morning and afternoon reflection, each followed by 25 minutes of contemplative silence, and both ended by all saying The Lord's Prayer.

21 of us made a circle round a centre point of cross, candle, flowers, and bible. Approximately half were from our local churches and others from WCCM groups within travelling distance. We enjoyed chatting over lunch and also sharing in an open reflection at the end of the day. *For me it was a very special, spiritual, reflective day, really appreciated in the midst of the turmoil in the world today.*

There will be other opportunities to share in future days led by Alex in Advent, Lent and next summer—SEECAT reps will be given the details.

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eco congregation Scotland

Following a loss of grant funding, Eco Congregation Scotland were thankfully able to raise more than £15,000 through crowd funding to help them through a period of structural change. The Board of Trustees is hoping to secure a budget of £60,000 for 2025 by introducing a new funding model to be launched in September.

There are now over 620 churches registered as eco-congregations, ranging across 16 denominations, accounting for one in six of all Scotland's churches, although not all contribute to the funding of the central organisation. We hope and pray that Eco Congregation Scotland will be able to continue to provide encouragement and support to churches in their actions to care for God's creation.

COVID MEMORIAL A REALITY



The Covid Memorial at the South West corner of Liberton Kirk (near the cairn) was dedicated on 12th May at a moving service. It was good to see people from other churches there, and others from the community. The corner is a peaceful place where anyone can stop and rest and remember. Some of those who died during the pandemic are remembered on plaques on the benches, and the memorial remembers also all those who suffered in any way in that difficult time.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SEECAT's A.G.M. will be held on Sunday 15th September at 2.30pm in Liberton Kirk Centre. All are welcome to hear us review our year and plan for the coming one.

PRAYERS NEEDED . . . .

- *of thanksgiving for the Healing Service in the sunshine on 18th May and the sense of the healing presence of Jesus*
- *for our A.G.M. on 15th September, for God's guidance as we plan our programme, openness to new ideas and a willingness to contribute*
- *for the Pilgrimage Walk on 21st September—for good weather, good company, and enjoyment of God's Creation as we journey to the Balm Well*
- *for continued financial support for Eco Congregation Scotland as they work to encourage us all to care for God's creation*
- *for peace in our troubled world, in our country and in our communities*
- *for our churches to be beacons of hope in South East Edinburgh, radiating God's light and love to all around us*

This newsletter is also on our website. The next issue will be in November 2024—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.