

Church of the Holy Cross

DAVIDSON'S MAINS

EDINBURGH

SEPTEMBER 2020



THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

FROM THE RECTOR

Dear friends,

The weekly e-news continues to be our main way of keeping in touch and sharing news among the congregation but it is good that we are now able to meet each Sunday for the Eucharist. It is also good that work has started on our new heating system and we hope that it will be finished before the end of this month so we will have a warm church for this autumn.

This is a month of patronal feasts for Holy Cross. Our Indian friends in the Syrian Orthodox congregation which meets in our church tell me that they are not yet ready to meet for the Liturgy and so we will not have their splendid patronal feast of Mary this year. I am sorry to miss it. We will, however, celebrate our own patronal feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on Sunday 13th September with a Eucharist on the day and a Vigil at 7.30 p.m. the night before. More details are on page 5.

‘The Cross’ is shorthand for the death and resurrection of Christ and it is the heart of Christianity and the ground of our hope. The proper day for our feast is 14th September and it is a more joyful commemoration of the Lord’s Cross than that on Good Friday – our feast is sometimes called the ‘Triumph of the Cross’. It was first celebrated in the fourth century as the dedication of the church built by the Emperor Constantine over the site of the crucifixion in Jerusalem – you may have visited it if you have been to Jerusalem, it is called the Holy Sepulchre. The date was chosen because it was the day the Emperor’s mother, St Helena, found the original cross of Jesus which had been hidden by the Christians of Jerusalem before the Romans destroyed the city.

Our feast is called the ‘Exaltation’ (lifting up) of the Cross in reference to John 3:14, ‘just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life’, and John 12:32 where Jesus says, ‘I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself’; because of this in the Greek liturgy a cross is lifted up and shown to the congregation.

For me the Cross sums up what Christianity is all about. I am very pleased to be the Rector of a church and congregation dedicated to the Cross. One of the rare times that someone has angrily stormed out of one of my sermons was when I was preaching on the Cross – the person said the Cross was nasty and in the past and shouldn’t be mentioned, as Christianity is now only about joy and peace. I was content to remind them that the authors of the New Testament have a different opinion, but although the Cross is an instrument of

torture and retains its horror, it does bring joy and peace. In our world, joy and peace without the Cross is an illusion.

Christ on the Cross gives hope to those who are suffering because they know that God suffers with them and that the ultimate triumph of love over death and evil is guaranteed. I look forward to sharing with you for the first time our Patronal Feast, to exploring with you the meaning of God's love shown in the Cross of Christ, and to working together to share this joyful news with others.

This message is at the heart of our community but it is not all we are and do. We have been sharing in a good crop from our church garden, thanks to Anne and all who work there. The vegetables are given away as a sign of God's love which is freely given to us. Our partner organisations are gradually returning to our hall, with the Reindeer Playgroup and the After School Club being the first back. This is a commercial arrangement which gives us an important source of income, but I trust it is also a partnership and a way Holy Cross can live up to its place at the heart of our community. Unfortunately we are not yet able to meet socially as a Church, apart from socially distanced chats outside after the service. This means that we can't have the annual Bridge Afternoon. Another event which is cancelled this year is the Davidson's Mains Christmas Lights switch on, although the lights will still be put up (and switched on). Nearer the time, when we know more about the public health situation, we will have a conversation with the Christmas Lights Committee about how we can mark the day in an appropriate way.

With love in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen", with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

P.S. **Donations** to Holy Cross or to the heating fund may be paid into the Church's bank account:

Royal Bank of Scotland, sort code 83-18-47, account number 00170278, account name Church of the Holy Cross; or a cheque in this name can be sent to me at Holy Cross Rectory, 18 Barnton Gardens, EH4 6AF.

PATRONAL FEAST EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is 14th September and this year we will celebrate it on the previous Saturday and Sunday with these services.

Saturday 12th September 7.30 p.m. Vigil of the Holy Cross

Sunday 13th September 10.30 a.m. Eucharist of the Holy Cross

The Vigil of the Feast is usually a **gift day** for the congregation, when we make an annual extra offering to the work of our Church. This year we have decided not to hold a gift day as the congregation has been so generous in supporting the heating appeal over the past few months (although if you still wish to make a donation, details can be found on the previous page and there will be a plate by the door on Sunday).

This year we are having a shortened **Vigil** at Holy Cross on Saturday evening and all are invited to come along for part or all of it. Feel free to come and go as you please. Coronavirus precautions are as usual. It will be in three parts:

7.30 p.m. **First Vespers** of the Holy Cross. A said service of Evening Prayer in modern language, in the same format as our Evening Prayer on Zoom.

A booklet with the words of the service will be available.

7.55 p.m. **Silent prayer** before the Blessed Sacrament ending with **Benediction** at 8.45 p.m. During the silence there will be three 'stations', each consisting of a reading, prayer for each member of the congregation by name, and a Holy Cross prayer from the Greek Orthodox tradition. Incense will be used at the beginning and end.

This is a time for quiet prayer and you can come and go as you wish.

9.00 p.m. **Compline** by candlelight in traditional language, sung by a cantor. Unfortunately congregational singing is not allowed at this time.

An explanation of some of the parts of the Vigil:

First Vespers – Like 'Evensong', 'Vespers' is an original name for the service of Evening Prayer. It is traditionally prayed at dusk and the name comes from the Greek *hesperos* and the Latin *vesper* which means 'evening' and is taken from the name of the Evening Star (Venus). For the ancient Jews the day began at dusk and the Church has continued this by having feasts begin the evening before with 'First Vespers' and concluded after 'Second Vespers' the evening of the following day.

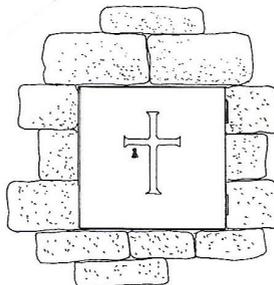
Benediction – This means ‘blessing’ (*benedictio* in Latin) and it is given with the Blessed Sacrament, the consecrated bread that is kept at Holy Cross in the aumbry – the gold locker in the East End of the church. The Sacrament is one important way that Jesus is present among us, as he said, ‘Behold I am with you always, even to the end of the world’. In our time of prayer the Sacrament will be put on the altar as a focus for our prayer, something some of us find very helpful. At the end of the time of prayer the priest blesses the congregation with the Sacrament.

Incense – This was taken over by the early Christians from the worship of the Jerusalem Temple and is mentioned in the New Testament (Revelation 8:3-4) where it is said to symbolise the prayers of the saints ascending to the throne of God. The Scottish Episcopal Church coronavirus guidelines recommend that it is used in moderation at this time.

Stations and Names – A ‘station’ is literally a place where you stand (*statio* in Latin), a stop on the way. It is used of stops on a pilgrimage, like the Stations of the Cross we do in Holy Week, and thus also of fixed prayers made in a time of silence. Holy Cross Day is the feast of our congregation so it seemed important to keep the tradition of praying for each member of the congregation by name during the Vigil.

Holy Cross prayers from the Greek Orthodox tradition – The ‘Exaltation of the Precious and Life-giving Cross’ is one of the most important feasts in the Orthodox year and has a series of beautiful prayers and chants. Our Church has a number of links to the Orthodox Churches and so it seemed good that we might share the richness of their tradition.

Compline – This is the traditional Night Prayer of the Church which calls on God for protection during the hours of darkness. If sung in the ancient Gregorian Chant, using the traditional words, it is one of the most beautiful of services and has become very popular in recent years especially with the younger generations.



FLOWERS IN CHURCH

Thank you to Sarah, Yvonne and Kate for the flowers since the church reopened.

The rota is on the noticeboard and has plenty of gaps, especially in October. Please fill them.

6th September	Yvonne Boughton
13th September	Alison Jack
20th September	Mary Egan
27th September	?
4th October	HARVEST



Please consult Sarah about church decoration for Harvest. Cash donations in advance are appreciated.

PLEASE NOTE: Until the work on the heating is finished there will be no access to the church Monday to Friday.

MAGAZINE – STILL ONLINE ONLY AT PRESENT

At present the magazine is available online only. We don't know yet when printing and deliveries will resume. If you would like to continue accessing your magazine online and come off the paper delivery list, please contact Liz Henderson or me. This seems the perfect opportunity to update the list.

If you know of anyone who does not have internet access, please keep them informed of anything they may have missed.

Margaret Deas

BRIDGE AFTERNOON POSTPONED



The Bridge Afternoon planned for 24th October has been postponed. We hope to arrange a new date next spring, coronavirus permitting. Watch this space.

SILVER SOCKS

Handing in arrangements to be announced. In the meantime, please remember to feed your little sock.



TREASURER'S REPORT

Including 'a tale of two energy companies'

Our financial reserves have held up remarkably well during lockdown, thanks to the generosity of so many members of the congregation and a VAT refund from CNG Gas.

We now have sufficient funds to have given the go-ahead for the installation of our new central heating system. We have also applied to the Provincial Buildings fund for a grant towards the costs. In the unlikely event that this application were to be approved in full, we should be within a few thousand pounds of our final goal. (Please see details of how to contribute on page 4.)

Our gas supply for the church and hall comes from CNG Gas. At the end of March, when lockdown started, I switched off the gas boiler in the hall and we have used no gas since then. We received our last bill in April and Sally started reading the small print (as one does). She noticed that we were being charged VAT at 20% and that, as a charity, we were entitled to pay at a reduced rate of 5%. In May I applied to CNG for a reduced VAT rate and this was approved. I was delighted to be told that they would also refund overpaid VAT for the last four years. Last week they transferred more than £2,000 directly into our bank account.

The moral of this story is: Always read the small print!

When Douglas and Arabella left the Rectory in June 2019, we set up an account with Scottish Power to provide gas and electricity while the Rectory was empty. We paid by Direct Debit and since we were using very little power we were significantly in credit by the beginning of February when we closed the account and gave them a final reading. They confirmed we were £350 in credit and they would send a cheque in ten working days. After that period, Sylvia received an email and Stephen received a letter at the Rectory demanding final payment of £350 (the amount which they owe us). Since then, every three weeks or so I have spent an hour or two contacting Scottish Power by telephone or email, to be told that we are £350 in credit and that they will send a cheque, only for them to then send final demands to Sylvia and Stephen for the same amount a couple of weeks later. I am still struggling with Scottish Power to get back the money which they agree that they owe us.

The moral of this story is: Think very hard before you open a new account with Scottish Power for gas or electricity, even if they offer it free or you may have cause to regret it later!

Colin Mair

HARVEST FESTIVAL

This will be kept on Sunday 4th October, which is also, appropriately, the end of 'Creationtide' and the feast of St Francis.

As before we will accept gifts of non-perishable goods for the Granton Food Bank and Edinburgh City Mission Food Store. The Bank needs ordinary basic food, plus personal and household hygiene items.

Creationtide is the period from 1st September to 4th October dedicated to God as Creator and Sustainer of all life, a time of thanksgiving for the great gift of creation and of prayers for its preservation and healing. It was originally an Eastern Orthodox initiative but has now spread to Anglican, Roman Catholic and Protestant churches. In a time of environmental crisis it is important for the Christian voice to be heard.

CHRISTIAN AID UPDATE

Even though Christian Aid Week had to be cancelled, I included in the May magazine a report of the theme for the Week.

When we first met Rose in Kenya, she had barely seen a drop of rain for 400 days. She was hungry and thirsty. Now she has a long-lasting source of water near her village. Rose and her community came together to prepare their earth dam, so they would be ready to store water as soon as the rains arrived. Thankfully, the rains fell at last – bringing joy and hope to her family.

For Rose, every last drop of water is precious. Now she has enough water to drink, wash, and grow fresh vegetables for her grandchildren.

She told Christian Aid: 'I am happy that we have water. Water is life. I'd like to say a big thank you to our friends in the UK. Through their kindness, we have seen the grace of God in our community'.

Loving God,

Come now and make us into a global neighbourhood,
looking out for each other through struggle and crisis,
reaching out to strangers who become sisters and brothers,
shape us into a caring community,
strengthening each other though every challenge,
standing together until justice comes for all.

In your name we pray. Amen.

Christian Aid/Wendy Lloyd



Margaret Deas

FRESH START UPDATE

FreshStart
walking to end homelessness

Resuming taking LIMITED starter pack donations

Here at Fresh Start, we have been very busy since day one of lockdown providing people with emergency food packs.

Due to Covid-19, we had to stop taking donations to ensure everyone's safety. We are now pleased to say we would be delighted to start taking the goods listed below from our church supporters (but please – only the goods listed below) and we do need to ask you to call in advance to get an appointment time to drop off your most welcome and much appreciated donations (0131 476 7741).

The reason we are only taking these specific goods is for the safety of our staff. If you give us goods that are not on this list we will not be able to accept them. You may be aware it costs us money to get rid of goods we cannot use. However, this is mainly to keep the Fresh Start staff and volunteers as safe as we possibly can. We have worked hard during the crisis to put in place very strict safety procedures including the receiving of donations. **We can only take donations from churches and not the general public at this point.**

What we will take:

- Mugs
- Tumbler glasses
- Small side plates
- Large dinner plates
- Soup / cereal bowls
- Cutlery
- Pots and pans
- Small electrical appliances
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Soap
- Shower gel
- Toilet cleaner
- Anti-bacterial spray
- Washing up liquid
- Bleach

We do hope that you will be in a position to assist us in starting taking donations as it is a vital way of us generating goods, but we also hope that you understand the new procedure at this time. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need further clarification.

Fresh Start, 22-24 Ferry Road Drive, Edinburgh EH4 4BR

0131 476 7741 www.freshstartweb.org.uk

Fresh Start (Scotland) is a company limited by guarantee registered in Scotland no. SC197784.

Scottish Charity No. SCO29184.

If you have any donations, leave them in church, in the box marked Fresh Start, and they will be delivered. ONLY THINGS ON THE LIST, PLEASE.

BOOK REVIEWS

Two members of the congregation have reviewed two very different books on St Paul's teaching.

Phobe: A Story by Paula Gooder. *Review by Anne Williams*

What might it have been like to be part of a Christian group in Rome in the first century? To receive Paul's letter to the Romans, brought by Phoebe, to hear it read and discuss it?

Who was Phoebe? What was her story?

This imaginative and riveting story, based on rigorous research, also gives insightful glimpses of Paul and his thoughts.

What Saint Paul Really Said by N.T. Wright. *Review by Andrew Vass*

N.T. Wright is both brilliant and confusing. Here we have a historian who has been the big influence on Lordship Theology. Can one easily cross disciplines – can theologians use history for theologising? Wright seems to be saying 'identify with Jesus as Lord, have the zeal of the early Messianic Jews, and you have joined the Christian fold'.

While St Francis seems to express a similar idea – when God asked him if he was treating Jesus as Lord or as a servant – there is a wider ranging approach suggested by Wright than by Francis. Wright tells us to 'bring Lordship to bear on every aspect of our lives'. This means we should be open to being psychologically and politically introspective:

'for Paul, there is no area of existence or life, including no area of human life, that does not come up for critique in the light of the sovereignty of the crucified and risen Jesus; no area that is exempt from the summons to allegiance'; and later on he writes:

'if Jesus is lord of the whole world, the great god mammon is not'.

I like it a lot, but I see problems – churches are run by theology trained types; but Wright would seem to suggest that the training for the church must be interdisciplinary – psychology, sociology, politics, history – and perhaps also life coaching.

That's a tough training, particularly as it requires theologians to be self-aware of their prioritising – prioritising church traditions over Lordship zeal would be perhaps non-progressive.

Despite the reservations, I like Wright's version of Lordship theology.

WORSHIP

Our main service is the Sunday Eucharist which is celebrated in the church at 10.30 a.m. and is open to the public. All are welcome although numbers are limited – so far we have had a few seats left each week. Coronavirus precautions are in place and everyone is required to wear a mask or similar face covering (unless they have valid reasons not to) and to use hand sanitiser.

Holy Eucharist will also be celebrated privately for your intentions on Wednesdays at 10.30 a.m. in the Rectory, while the church is closed for the installation of the new heating system. Please join me in spirit then. When the work is finished we will re-start a public Eucharist on Wednesdays at 10.30 a.m. in the church, although there will not be the usual refreshments afterwards.

A Holy Cross worship video will normally appear on our Facebook page at 10.00 a.m. While the church is closed they will be of a simpler form. These and all our videos are available on the [Holy Cross YouTube channel](#).

On Thursdays at 5.00 p.m. a group from Holy Cross meets online on Zoom to say Evening Prayer. All the words are provided. I will send out an invitation each week to those who regularly take part and if you wish to join us, email me at rector.hce@gmail.com and I will send you the invitation and password which will enable you to join in on your computer (it needs to have a camera).

6th Sept. **PENTECOST 14**
Ezekiel 33.7-11
Psalm 119.33-40
Romans 13.8-14
Matthew 18.15-20

27th Sept **PENTECOST 17**
Ezekiel 18.1-4,25-32
Psalm 25.1-9
Philippians 2.1-13
Matthew 21.23-32

13th Sept. **HOLY CROSS**
Numbers 21.4-9
Psalm 98.1-5
Philippians 2.5-11
John 3.13-17

4th Oct. **HARVEST**
(Pentecost 18)
Deuteronomy 26.1-11
Psalm 65
2 Corinthians 9.6-15
Luke 17.11-19

20th Sept. **PENTECOST 16**
Jonah 3.10 - 4.11
Psalm 145.1-8
Philippians 1.21-30
Matthew 20.1-16