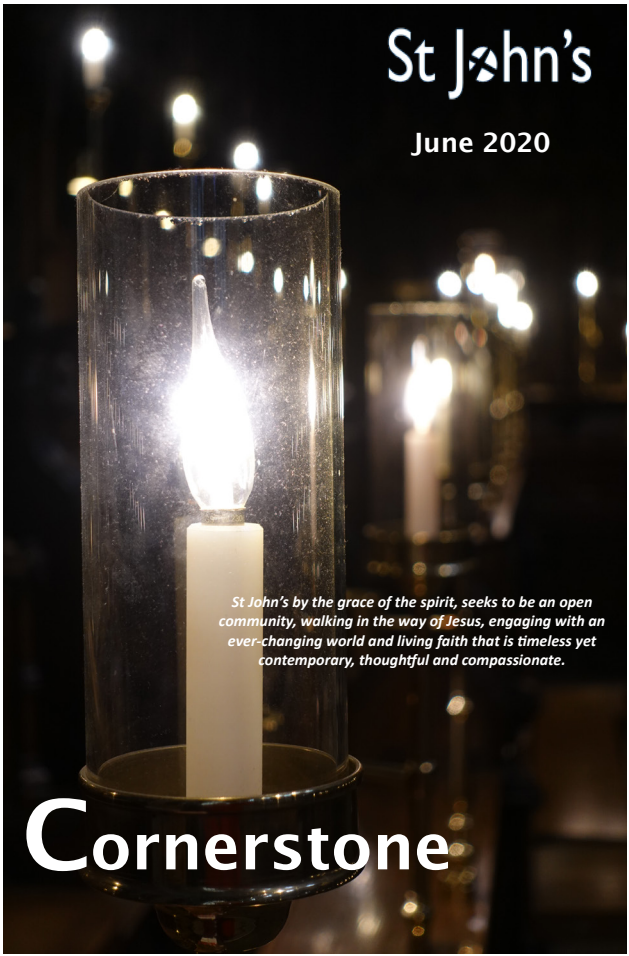

St John's

June 2020

St John's by the grace of the spirit, seeks to be an open community, walking in the way of Jesus, engaging with an ever-changing world and living faith that is timeless yet contemporary, thoughtful and compassionate.

Cornerstone

St John's Ministry Team

The Revd Markus Dünzkofer Days off: Saturday and alternate Fridays	Rector	07962536817or 225 5004 markus@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk
The Revd Rosie Addis Days off: Saturday and alternate Fridays	Associate Rector	07795225098 or 229 7565 rosie@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk
The Revd Professor Kenneth Boyd	Team Priest	225 6485
The Revd Clephane Hume	Team Priest	667 2996
The Revd Eileen Thompson	Team Priest	315 4928
Beki Cansdale	Student Curate	229 7565

In This Issue

Cover Photo taken by Andrew Lyons in Ripon Cathedral

Editorial

"The New Normal"

We have heard this phrase so often of late that it now has the status of a cliché. But what will the New Normal be for the Church, and for St John's? A lockdown is a time for stepping outside the routines we have constructed for ourselves and trying to confront the big questions. Two findings in a recent survey were that during lockdown:

1. 40% of the population has been praying
2. Overall, more people have been logging in to online services than actually attended church pre-lockdown.

The spiritual hunger is there. When we open up St John's again, can we find new spaces and forms of worship and ministry to show that we're not shut off in our own ecclesiastical bunker, but open for dialogue with the world? Here lies the challenge.

Amongst much else in this magazine, you will find two perspectives on the virus, - a spiritual one from Professor Kenneth Boyd, and an epidemiological one from Professor John Frank. We hope you will find there and elsewhere much food for thought.

Editorial team: Grace Durham, Robert Philp and Jeanette Rennie
Desktop publishing: Andrew and Sue Lyons

From the Rector

Dear Friends,

The apostle Paul writes to his friends in Galatia:

"For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. (Gal 5:13)"

It still surprises me to hear about the liberating power of the Gospel. However we and others might have experienced the church in the past (and I know I can sing songs of horror and pain), at the heart of the Gospel is freedom: freedom from fear, freedom from darkness, freedom from injustice, freedom from sin, freedom from death in its various forms. Baptism blows into smithereens everything that seeks to enslave, harm, oppress, and kill us, everything that holds us back and prevents us from living into the beauty that God intends for each and every one of us.

But once we are liberated, we realise we are not alone; it is not about us. There is first and foremost God, who is the great liberator and who, unfortunately, does not get the credit and thanksgiving due. And liberation also opens our eyes to those around us: fellow liberated sisters and brothers, who are a source of joy for us, and also those still locked into all kinds of prisons of body, mind, and soul.

Over the past few weeks, I have written and said a lot about how the pandemic will require us to be different, very different now and in the future. There is no way back to where we have been. This is, of course, a truism. We can never return to where we have come from, because we all change all the time. But the past few weeks have sharpened this experience as they made us consider hard what to do with our freedom – particularly when it seemed curtailed by the lockdown, by the death of somebody we love, or by financial and political instability.

And yet, we remain a liberated people. And with the Galatians, we remain the addressees of Paul's letter: freedom is not a license for egotistical and ego-cen-

tric behaviour. Our freedom allows us and requires of us to focus on others, to become slaves to one another through love.
The first step in claiming a new identity as a post-pandemic church is to give thanks for the freedom that was won for us in and through Christ. The second, equally important though, is to look beyond ourselves and use the freedom we have been given to assist in building up God's reign – a kingdom of liberated people praising God and serving others. The church calls the "how" of using our freedom "stewardship". It is not a fundraising exercise once a year, but it is about making sure we use the resources given to us in ways consistent with the Gospel – and this is true both for us individually as it is true for us as a community. As a family of faith we will have to consider first and foremost stewardship of human resources: people are our most valuable treasure. But we also have to look at utilising for the glory of God and for his kingdom when it comes to our finances, our fabric (i.e. buildings), our administration (including communication), and our governance. Taking into account the current fragile state of affairs all around us and its implication for St John's, Vestry has chosen to focus predominantly on these areas right now, in order to bring about a more secure freedom for all of us.

But we also are considering the second part of Galatians 5:13, i.e. how we become "slaves to one another".

I have recently developed a framework for mission and ministry, which I call the five St John's "Amen-s":

1. *Affirming and nurturing the faith of the members of the Body of Christ*
2. *Making new disciples of Jesus Christ*
3. *Embracing God's call for eco-justice in all aspects of our lives*
4. *Nursing the wounds of those hurting in body, mind, or soul*
5. *Speaking truth to power*

This is, of course, a draft skeleton. Sinews, muscle, and skin still need to grow as we fill each area with ministry, projects, and initiatives. All the while, we must remember to pray for the Spirit to blow life into this becoming and to renew our freedoms, when we become once again entangled in things which hold us back.

Yes, there is lots to do and lots to build up. But God has given us the freedom so to do.

Yours,
Markus

Reflection for the World Day of Prayer: 14th May 2020

The leaders of major faiths, including Pope Francis, called for May 14th to be a world-wide day of prayer for the good of all humanity and for an end to the coronavirus pandemic. St John's responded by streaming online prayers for morning, midday, evening and compline, and also this reflection on the theme of the day by Kenneth Boyd, Team Priest.

On Radio 4 earlier this week, the writer James Meek was interviewed about his novel, To Calais, in Ordinary Time, which is set during the Black Death in 14th century England. Among the ways in which the plague profoundly changed how people of that time thought and lived, Meek cited the case of an English bishop who, because so many priests also were dying, told his people that if no priest was available to hear their confession, they might make it to another layman – or failing that, even to a woman!

Perhaps that was not quite so radical: around the same time, many people went to seek the advice, counsel and prayers of Dame Julian, the 'locked-down' anchoress of Norwich; and a prioress or abbess, such as Hilda of Whitby, often exercised great influence in the mediaeval Church. Even such influential women, however, were denied ordination to the priesthood because of their gender; and since confession to a priest had been obligatory since the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, it must have been difficult for the English bishop to give this advice, even in an emergency.

It is, after all, never easy (as Caiaphas knew: John 11.49-52), for religious authorities to be seen to 'lose control of the narrative'; but (as Gamaliel knew: Acts 5.33-39) there are times when something so out-of-the-ordinary happens as to make people pause and wonder about the direction they are taking. Something of this kind happened, just over the horizon of living memory, when the tragedies of the 1914-1918 war called in question the seemingly unstoppable progress of 19th century industrial and colonizing civilization. The coronavirus pandemic today may provide another such moment for reflection, coming as it does amid increasing concern for the future of the environment, and reminding humanity that no one and no nation is anymore an island.

Religious people have sometimes spoken of out-of-the-ordinary times such as the present in terms of divine intervention or even

divine punishment; but faith in a loving Creator can be more faithfully expressed in terms of respect for the natural order that science explores. The creation, including humanity, that 'God saw…. and indeed, it was very good' (Genesis 1.31), is such that new problems and new possibilities, emerging naturally at certain times and places, will await a response from human intelligence and human good will; and when this response is faithful to the will of its Creator, genuinely new possibilities of goodness will be realized.

Genuinely new possibilities of this kind were realised, Christian faith teaches, when the human Jesus was faithful to his Father's will, to the very end – an end which, in the end, was not an end but a new beginning. To confess this faith, of course, is not to claim that we have any detailed insight into, let alone oversight of, the course of our Creator's purposes in history or the universe. We live, and we die, as the human Jesus did, in the hope of faith alone. But we do so also, insofar as we are able, in the love through which Jesus' faith in his loving Father was expressed; and this loving faith gives us 'hints and guesses' that the Creator's purposes are working out even in our current circumstances - working out not only in the ways in which the pandemic may be making humanity think seriously about a more sustainable and more equitable life on earth, but working out also in the dedication of health and care workers, and in the kindness of friends and neighbours.

The causes and any cure for the pandemic can be determined only painstakingly and over time, by human patience, human effort, and human intelligence: but the will to do this can be sustained by holding fast to faith in our Creator's loving purposes, faith expressed through love - and sustained by prayer: silently without words, brokenly in our own words, together, through the words of liturgies and prayer books ending in the 'Our Father' that Jesus taught his disciples.

Our present circumstances moreover, may be bringing about something else genuinely new and hopeful for humanity. As a testimony of faith's response to our common circumstances, the leaders of different and historically often conflicting faiths have now come together, to call for this world-wide day of prayer for the good of all humanity, and for an end to the coronavirus pandemic. Their call can be fittingly responded to, in the words of a Muslim prayer (overleaf):

Our Father in heaven, may Your name be sanctified;
Your commandment stretches over heaven and earth,
may Your compassion come upon earth as it is in heaven.
Forgive us our sins and wrongdoings, You the Lord of all good things;
cause Your mercy to descend upon us,
Your healing upon this sickness, and it will be healed.
AMEN

Catching up with New (or nearly new) Comers

Nicky Benn

I'm originally from Sheffield and moved to Edinburgh in August 2018 for the second time! I was here for a few years in the early 90s so it's not a completely new city.

I work in operations for the United States arm of World Vision. We're a Christian international humanitarian and development aid agency working across 100 countries to support vulnerable children and their families. I've been blessed to work overseas for many years but am enjoying the opportunity to lay down some roots in Edinburgh and become part of the vibrant St. John's fellowship. I'm an avid gardener and student of all things bees and apiculture.

Nancy Van Kirk

I am a Canadian from Vancouver Island, British Columbia. I retired to Edinburgh in October 2017 with my husband, Ian Wight. Our family remains in Canada. I have spent a lifetime in Music and Art, decades playing cello in orchestras and ensembles. At University I studied Fine Arts Education before having a Museum career devising Public Programs for viewers. In Edinburgh I play cello in amateur groups and attend concerts and exhibitions. I enjoyed contributing to the Bicentenary kneeler project and am now studying Botanical Illustration at the RBGE and learning Scottish Gaelic. In Canada I attended Holy Trinity, North Saanich, and took up religious reading and Contemplative Practice. St John's warmly welcomed me and provides excellent opportunities for growth and service.

Sandy and Mark Coode (Sandy is frequently known by her professional surname, Atkins)

Sandy: Mark and I were both professional Tropical Botanists. Most of our working life was spent as research scientists at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Mark and I met there. Mark worked mainly on SE Asian plants while I worked on Brazilian plants.

I was born and brought up in Surrey. While working at Kew, I tragically lost my son, Tom, and my husband Robert. Mark and I married in 2000 after retirement. We moved to Edinburgh in 2012, so that we could look after grandchildren, while my daughter follows in our footsteps, and is now a research botanist at the Botanics. We are both members of the St John's 'Morning Book Group'.

Mark: born pre-war in Plymouth, taken to India when very small, returned 1944; school, university, then to work at the Botanics on the Flora of Turkey. Keith Arnold was the Rector of St John's and Jack Trimble the Curate; joined the choir under Bob Kydd. I then worked in New Guinea for six years and finally Kew until retirement. I recently joined the Charities Committee. Two of my favourite church windows are in St John's.

Martha Maxwell

I grew up in South Carolina and am married to John Maxwell who grew up in Elie, in the East Neuk of Fife. After moving around and raising our two children in the US, China, Germany, and Belgium, we are happy to have settled in Edinburgh where John has based his executive coaching business. I am delighted to have found a church home at St John's and enjoy volunteering as part of the Together Trust and our homelessness committee. John and I enjoy spending time outdoors, especially hiking, and we spend a lot of time in Valencia, Spain, so that I can keep my language skills sharp.

David McNaughton

My wife Rosa and I are both retired. We met when I was a Professor of philosophy at Florida State University in Tallahassee. She was a senior lawyer in various State government departments. We originally retired to Melrose, where I was Secretary to the Vestry at Holy Trinity, and moved to Edinburgh just over a year ago, with our two dogs. Over the years I have led many discussion groups on C. S. Lewis and Tolkien. I am currently writing about the work of Bishop Joseph Butler. My interests include fell-walking, listening to classical music, literature, and visiting galleries, stately homes, and castles.

Lessons from COVID-19:
An Epidemiologist's Retrospective Commentary

John Frank, Professor and Chair of Public Health Research and Policy, University of Edinburgh

As we enter our third month of lock-down in Scotland, with the economy in tatters, many are asking "Could any of this have been avoided, had specific actions been taken, or taken sooner, by public health and government authorities?" As a physician-epidemiologist originally trained in infectious disease control at the London School of Hygiene, I offer the following observations on this question. These are purely personal opinions, so please take them as such.

Failure to appreciate how infectious this virus is: In the early weeks of the pandemic, many top international experts in viral infections sought to reassure the world that its spread was purely via large droplets from the mouth and nose, likely not to travel further than two meters. In hindsight (always a wonderful vantage point) that is probably not true. Some cases now appear to have been infected by "airborne aerosol" mode of transmission, whereby whole indoor air spaces become saturated with tiny droplets from the sneezes and coughs of the infected. This helps explain why such a large proportion of persons sharing closed spaces – cruise ships, hotels, conference facilities, and now nursing homes – have become infected so quickly after the first case arrives. It is therefore regrettable that some public figures are still promising to achieve control of these closed populations' high infection and death rates. Stopping further transmission within nursing homes, for example, is likely to be almost impossible, given those settings' limited isolation and social-distancing capabilities. The key opportunity here was preventive, some weeks ago: stopping all visitors, and keeping staff housed within the facility, with weekly repeat testing for the virus to provide early warning as to when they should be kept off work.

Failure to put in place early, widely accessible testing for the virus itself (nose/throat swabs) and now, antibody-blood-testing to determine who has been previously infected: The UK seems to have dallied during March on this issue. Given the normally exponential growth of new cases (each case begetting another 2.5 to 3), even a week or two of delay near the beginning of the pandemic meant that the number of cases rapidly grew beyond what can readily be managed by testing, contact tracing, and then isolating those found to be infected. The first general UK population survey using antibody tests has shown that 17% of all Londoners, and 5% of those living outside the capital, have already been

infected, as of mid-May. Contact-tracing, testing and isolating positive contacts of those 4.3 million cases is a task of impossible scale: for each of the newly hired 25,000+ contact tracers (virtually all non-health-professionals), there are already about 170 previously-infected UK citizens, some of whom are likely still infectious, many with multiple contacts each. Even if only newly-tested-positive cases are their focus, this strategy will not likely make a dent in the overall burden of illness. Had "testing, tracing, and isolation" been initiated two months ago, when the total number of infected persons was orders of magnitude less, it might have succeeded.

Broader issues: science, its transparent incorporation into policy, and public trust: I have had no official role advising government or public health authorities about the pandemic, and have no insider knowledge about how critical decisions were made (or not made) in the first weeks after the virus declared itself in the UK. My impression, however, is that the scientific advisory process in Whitehall was dominated by a rather small coterie of scientists, somehow excluding experienced front-line public health professionals (such as the approximately 200 Directors of Public Health across the UK). As a result, certain views came to dominate. For example, it was argued that putting lock-down in place too early would risk non-compliance by the public, and so delay was sensible. This view, apparently emanating from influential "behavioural economists," was uninformed by the potential health costs of that delay, which the UK has been experiencing ever since. Then there was the now-infamous suggestion of the UK's senior Scientific Advisor, to let the pandemic simply "burn through" the population, creating enough immune persons to provide herd immunity to the remaining uninfected. Within days of this announcement, letters to the media from eminent epidemiologists pointed out the shocking toll of hospitalisations and deaths likely to result from that strategy. I am of the view that the UK Government's top leadership did not properly utilise typically divergent scientific expertise, failing to make the scientific advisory process transparent, via full peer review of controversial assertions. In short, proper governance of scientific advisory processes is just as important as its quality and timeliness.

In the end, we will get through this, but the overall burden of what might have been preventable illness and death will leave a long-lasting mark on our society.

Yours in support of our faith community,

John

From The Archive

The first of what we hope will be a regular feature from our Archivist, Leslie Hodgson, on different items within our Church building.

The Sanctuary Lamp, suspended by a long iron chain from the lierne-ribs of the vaulting to the Chancel, was gifted to the Church by Miss H.S. Fraser. Of gilded wrought iron, the hexagonal lamp is unusual for its large size. This makes it more sympathetic to the timber furnishings of the Chancel and suits the lofty feeling of this space, in effect a suitable adornment. The design of such a large lamp differed from the rather more orthodox design expected of a sanctuary lamp, in which only a tiny glow was visible. But this one suits the architecture, and the effect produced gives the appearance of welcome to all who enter the Church, and encourages the sense of worship.

Symbolic of the fire of the Spirit, the lamp was dedicated on Whit Sunday 1931. It is worth comparing it with the lantern held by Christ in the painting "Light of the World" by W. Holman Hunt (1853). This painting shows Christ with his lantern, knocking at a door overgrown with choking weeds, and is a representation of a summons to repentance (the door being the sinner's heart, choked with sin or evil), and refers to Christ's description of himself in the Gospel of St John, chap. 8, v 12.

The lamp was made by Hadden Brothers and designed by Sir David Young Cameron from Glasgow, noted for the etchings he based on his travels in Europe. He was knighted in 1924, and became King's Painter and Limner in Scotland. The decoration round the top consists of a representation of the Passion Flower. The name of the flower arose from the supposed resemblance of the corona to the crown of thorns: the central part to the three nails used on the Cross, and the five petals to the five wounds. Each face of the lamp has a cross with four diagonal rays projecting, and the intervening spaces decorated with 'window tracery'. The base is decorated with turned moulded pendants, and in the chain above are three intertwining circles, a traditional symbol of the Trinity.

The Lamp has an afterlife, as it was the model for the four lamps hanging in the entrance hall of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

Eco-Congregation

We have let our association with Eco-Congregation lapse. In 2020 we are going to re-establish contact.

This is not solely a Scottish organisation. Eco-Congregations operate in several countries, including South Africa, Norway, Canada and the United States. In England and Wales the same objectives are now undertaken by Eco Church. CAFOD runs a similar programme for Catholic churches in England and Wales called Livesimply.

The Scottish branch is specifically Christian, and its vision is simply stated: “A Scotland that cares for God’s creation, now and forever”. Many of the 450 registered congregations have an award. The criteria were made more challenging in 2017. We will have to get going again.

Awards apart: *Eco-Congregation provides a list of “Ideas for Action”:*

Spiritual Living: *For example, there is a very full sub-section called “Greening Worship”. The sub-section “Theology and the Environment” has enough material to occupy a whole sabbatical, or long winter evenings.*

Practical Living: *This contains references to Church buildings and church yards, as well as a subsection on how the church spends its money.*

Global Living: *There are national and global issues that go well beyond our congregational matters.*

Our Green Ginger Group will be studying these and making recommendations to all groups in our church. I am sure the Ministry Team and the Operations Manager will support this.

There are frequent Eco-Congregation events. The plan is to have these announced by notices in the West Porch and by electronic notices in the vestibule by the office.

Find out more at https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/

VE Day Letter

In the monthly Round-up, we carried excerpts from the incredibly vivid account of this occasion written at the time in a letter by Anne Booth-Clibborn. Anyone who wants to read the whole letter can apply to Rosie. What comes through is that London was an explosion of light, - a joyful expression of freedom after years of blackout.

Service with a Smile by DES

"What is the matter with telling the truth with a smile?"

Desiderius Erasmus to Martin Dorp, 1513.

It is well known that the works of literary sages have a prophetic force. I recall our Latin teacher correctly foretold the result of a General Election by consulting the "Aeneid". I am surprised to find that I have just joined the ranks of this noble company. Consider the last line of my "Hymn for a Service of Blessing the Animals"

Come beasts, however humble; come rats and gnats and mice
Bless midges, worms and ladybirds; bless ants and bugs and lice.
The glory of Creation includes the ticks and fleas.
But if you've brought a virus, do be careful not to sneeze.

Ah, the good old days! Here are some medical remedies, unknown to modern government advisors, to be found in John Aubrey's "Brief Lives".

William Butler "discoursed with the patient in the Balcony when, on a signal given, two or three lusty fellows threw him a matter of 20 feet into the Thames. The surprise absolutely cured him."

Sir Jonas Moore: "Sciatica. He cured it by boiling his buttock."

Sir Henry Blount "was wont to say that he did not care to have his servants go to Church, for there servants infected one another…"

DORP: *He was not talking of germs.*

DES: *Don't interrupt!*

"… infected one another to go to the Alehouse and learn debauchery; but he did bid them go to see the Executions at Tyburn, which work more upon them than all the oratory in the sermons"

Dear DES,

I am researching a book on "The Early Fatheads of the Church". I have just read of "embolismic months" and how the Council of Nicaea condemned Quatrodecimanism. I rest my case.

Yours,

Liberal Boomer

Useful Contacts

General Enquiries: Office Open Monday-Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm
admin@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk
Tel: 0131 229 7565 Fax: 0131 229 2561
Operations Manager Iain Herbert 0131 229 7565
operations@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk
Director of Music Anthony Hammond
music@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk
Flowers Anne Goodwin 0131 337 3556
annedgoodwin@gmail.com
Magazine Editor magazine@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk
Postal Secretary - please contact the church office with any queries
Church Photographer Marjory Currie 0131 337 3833
photo@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk
Vestry
Markus Dünzkofer, Rector, 07962 536817 (see inside front cover)
Rosie Addis, Associate Rector, 07795 225098 (see inside front cover)
Austin Reilly, Secretary, vestry@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk;
Wren Hoskyns-Abrahall, Treasurer, treasurer@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk;
Isobel Watson, Lay Rep;
Anne Martin, Alternate Lay Rep;
Nicky Benn; Grace Durham;
Tony Falconer; Azeem Gopalani;
Mo Grant; Sue Lyons;
Fiona McLuckie
Children & Families Ministry sunday-school@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk
St John's Terrace
Cornerstone Bookshop Anna Pitt 0131 229 3776
One World Shop Rachel Farey 0131 229 4541

For weddings and baptisms please make contact initially with the Church Office

The Lower Terrace is Open for Business!

Welcome back! Come and enjoy a breath of fresh air in Edinburgh's City Centre with our ethical social enterprises presented in our garden and terrace - time to treat yourself in a uniquely relaxing setting. The shops re-opened on **22nd June** and look forward to seeing their old customers and new ones.

The Cornerstone Bookshop

sells religious and non-religious books, candles and gift items. Any book can be ordered: it does not have to be a religious book.

Website:	www.cornerstonebooks.org.uk
Telephone:	+44(0)131 229 3776
Email:	edinburgh@cornerstonebooks.org.uk

The One World Shop

sells goods from around the world, all fair trade or ethically sourced.

Website:	www.oneworldshop.co.uk
Telephone:	+44(0)131 229 3776

Keep your eyes open for the **Cornerstone Café kiosk** which will open early this summer, with a range of new ethical offers from homemade soup, delicious snacks and light lunches.

Alex Bakes, award winning bread makers and bakers, provides a hub for genuinely healthier options, especially with a variety of breads and fresh salads - all homemade.

On 8th March 2020 Edinburgh Women's Interfaith Group (EWIG) organised an International Women's day at St John's which included a multi-faceted afternoon involving Arts, Crafts and Origami. Henna hand painting and nail art were very popular as usual, along with a healthy eating café providing food for the mind, soul and heart with tea and coffee.