

APRIL 2019 NEWS FROM SEI

March RWE: It was a joy to have several friends with us during the March Residential Weekend: Mrs Linda Harrison (SEI Administrator), the Revd Jennie Godfrey (Diocesan Advisor), Canon Graham Taylor (SEI Chaplain), Canon Dr Marion Chatterley (session presenter) and the Revd David Coleman. David, a URC minister and Environmental Chaplain with Eco-Congregation Scotland (on the right below with URC student Susan Henderson), writes:

It was a privilege - and, given my role as Environmental Chaplain - a reassurance, to join this Residential Weekend with a community brought together by the considerable pressures of training, but held in prayer and fellowship. I found a community clearly defined, but not closed to a visitor, and shaped, though not exclusively, by the particular cherished traditions of the Scottish Episcopal Church. (As a fly on the wall, I felt in no danger of being swatted).



And since I exercise a rather peripatetic and irregular ministry, it was refreshing to join in the regular rhythm of prayer throughout.

It was also immensely helpful, as I prepare for work with other colleges, to confirm that the key preparation for those in leadership in churches to encounter the climate crisis and its impact on societies and communities, is the spiritual discipline, skill and habit of reflective practice.



This will be even more crucial than such valuable specific eco-theology studies as may be offered by universities and colleges, since spiritual responsiveness in the face of unprecedented and unpredictable global threat seems likely to define the place, purpose, and value of the Church for the whole of the careers of those currently being prepared for the 'general practice', as well as more specialised ministries of various sorts.

Revd David Coleman

(left to right: Linda, Jennie and Graham)

Jennie writes: RWE 4 2019 felt different from my experience of a TISEC RWE, though there was much that was familiar! I felt the focus was less on academic work, which is undertaken elsewhere in the course and underpins the weekends, and more on "how to". In groups there was the opportunity to put reflective practice into action in a real circumstance brought by one of the students. The exegeting of a local area followed by presentations of discoveries served to deepen awareness of urban surroundings and their issues and their blessings. Those students responsible for leading worship, preaching, delivering presentations or bible studies receive both staff and peer feedback – I am sure this is a great help to everyone. And at the end of a long busy day there is the blessed peace of giving silence to one another at Compline and thankfully offering the day to God.



(Brechin ordinand Roxanne Campbell)

(Not) Mixed Mode Training – other things that Richard does: As well as overseeing the Mixed Mode ordination training programme, our Director of Mixed Mode Training, Rev Richard Tiplady, is also responsible for working with the Mission Board to support the delivery of education for mission in the SEC.

Although it is still early days for this part of his role (getting the Mixed Mode programme up and running is his first priority), Richard has already begun to convene regular gatherings of the Local Mission Resourcing Group, which brings together the diocesan missionaries and mission enablers, or diocesan representatives in the absence of a dedicated mission enabler. They meet for mutual support and learning, to share information, and to work on common projects. The third of these meetings took place in late February at the Glasgow and Galloway Diocesan Centre.



From left to right: Rev Richard Tiplady (SEI), Rev Canon Gerry Bowyer (AO), Drs Chris and Ros Brett (A&I), Rev Canon Jane Ross (Convenor, Mission Board), Rev Annie Naish (E), Rev Canon Sarah Murray (MRC), Rev Canon Audrey Stewart (GG). Not pictured: Rev Canon Kerry Dixon (B).

Issues that have been discussed at these meetings include co-operation between SEI and dioceses on training for Recognised Ministries; the current review of the Mission and Ministry Support Grant system and a potential New Initiative Fund to sit alongside this; plans for the development of diocesan mission strategies; the outline of a pioneer ministry strategy that recognises what is already happening across the SEC and seeks to support and develop it; and a closer relationship with Church Army (including a desire to see evangelistic vocations and training for Church Army evangelists being developed within Scotland). As part of this growing relationship with Church Army, in early March Richard taught on a Mission Entrepreneurship module being offered to Church Army trainee evangelists in Sheffield. All of these matters have also been discussed at Institute Council and/or the Mission Board.

In addition, Richard recently submitted his PhD thesis on the development of entrepreneurial leadership in the Church in Scotland. The viva should take place sometime in May. And he keeps a reasonable work-life balance going by bagging the odd Munro in his spare time. Here he is on top of Glas Bheinn Mhor in Glen Etive (his 84th Munro) just two days before the above Local Mission Resourcing Group meeting.





Staff Conference: Core staff and Associate Tutors gathered last month in the Conforti Institute, Coatbridge for the annual Staff Residential, a 24-hour event which seeks to feed the staff team by the provision of theologically challenging input and also to increase the pedagogical competence of us all. Both aims were amply satisfied this year, thanks to the good organisation of Dr Hull, SEI's Director of Studies, and the quality of input from the two speakers.

Dr Eric Stoddart, Lecturer in the School of Divinity, St Mary's College, presented a paper entitled 'Surveillance from the Cross' in which he sought not only to flip our understanding of the concept of surveillance, reframing the practice in terms which cohere to the being of God, but also to demonstrate a method of working which can be deployed with regard to any issue of contemporary public concern. This superbly challenging input was complemented by the three sessions which Dr Karen O'Donnell then offered: 'What is digital culture?' 'Doing theology in a digital age' and 'What is digital culture?' Dr O'Donnell, Co-ordinator for the Centre for Contemporary Spirituality at Sarum College, was previously Research Fellow in Digital Pedagogy at Durham University's CODEC Research Centre, working with the Common Awards team on the relationships between theological learning and the digital world. Dr O'Donnell stretched our thinking considerably and also gave us tools to guide us as we seek to explore those relationships ever more faithfully.

The Spring edition of the *Scottish Episcopal Institute Journal* is now online. In it Professor Elaine Graham writes about the creation of a theology for a learning church in which all Christians are engaged in ministry and mission. The Revd Lynsay Downs notes that the term 'Christian' ought not to be colonized by those who may seek to use it in pursuit of ends in disharmony with the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures; she reminds us of our need to pray, to lament, and to make our voices heard in such instances. Both articles urge us to pursue mission on a scriptural basis, the very topic of that from Canon Nicholas Taylor on Scripture and mission. Mission is not peculiar to any group of Christians, and so the Rt Revd Monsignor Philip Kerr's take on twenty-first century perspectives on ecumenism from a Roman-Catholic point of view is particularly noteworthy. The Rt Revd Dr Brian Smith prompts us to remember that theological reflection is an ongoing effort by taking special note of the value of the Gifford Lectures. The edition concludes with five book reviews.

Ecumenical working: Megan Cambridge spent her Final Year placement working in and with the local Church of Scotland parish in Keith: Keith North, Newmill, Boharm and Rothiemay together with Keith St Rufus, Botriphnie and Grange. Since being licensed as a Lay Reader last autumn, she and the SEC congregation in Keith under the Revd Canon Michael Last have continued to foster these links. She writes: 'I had the great privilege of leading worship at Keith St Rufus in the first of their week-long celebrations for the 200 anniversary. We had the Keith and District Silver band playing which gave us a rousing start.'

Megan with the Kirk Beadle



Training Fund: SEI's Chaplain Graham Taylor was installed as a Canon of St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth at the Synod of the Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane in March. Our warmest congratulations to Canon Taylor! At that Synod the Principal was presented with a cheque for £1767.07, being the proceeds from last year's Diocesan Lent Appeal which were being given to the Training Fund. She thanked the diocese for its immense generosity and outlined some of the new developments in SEI.



The photograph, through the kindness of Lis Burke, shows the two new Canons, Christine Fraser and Graham Taylor, with Bishop Ian.



Warm thanks also go to the congregation of Holy Trinity Haddington (Diocese of Edinburgh) for donating the offertory uplifted at the Institution of the Revd Liz O'Ryan on 12 March to the Training Fund. Liz is pictured here after the service resplendent in a Gambian stole. St Augustine's Dumbarton, the congregation in which she previously served, has strong links with that country, setting up and faithfully supporting the 'Gambia and Dumbarton London Corner Nursery School.' Liz is currently a Diocesan Advisor to a first year SEI student.

Huge thanks also to Anthea Westcott (Moray, Ross and Caithness) for her kind donation, and to Ian Scott (right), Lay Reader in the Central Fife group (Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane). Ian generously gave the McQueen Fund (which supports Lay Readers in training) the travel expenses he received in connection with the recent Diocesan *Photography as Prayer* exhibition which travelled around 10 churches and The Bield in the autumn.



Ian writes: 'This grew out of a spark of an idea seeded by SEI's Principal in the mind of the Revd Dr Nerys Brown, who was our Mission Enabler, when she spoke to her about a book on the subject. That seed did not fall on stony ground, so I felt I wanted to recognise the not-so-small part played by SEI in providing a spark of an idea to be fanned, and in forming me and others who took part, such that we felt enabled for this satisfying work. It was a full-on project which involved me throughout, along with a team of volunteers including my wife Hilary whose art background helped enormously with the mounting of images. Frequently the meditative prayer which took place at most exhibition sites was led by fellow Lay Readers, and I myself led a reflection on how I find the act of taking or viewing images to be potentially prayerful. In all cases the feedback from those attending was most encouraging. Some venues arranged concerts to coincide with the exhibition and so maximize viewing'. **Ian Scott**