

SEI's May Residential Weekend and Vocations Sunday both had to be handled differently this year; this Newsletter recounts how.



Electronic endings for the SEI community: It was time to say goodbye although no-one will be leaving on any jet planes for a while we needed to say 'so long and farewell' to the people we have been having the time of our lives with, and make sure they didn't forget about us as they headed somewhere over the rainbow in the knowledge that they will survive and we will always love them, *writes Lesley Penny.*

So on the Friday night of the Residential Weekend, courtesy of Lisa's excellent organisation and Zoom account, we gathered to wish all the best to our friends and SEI colleagues who were completing this stage of their training. It was frustrating not to be able to do this in person, and we would have loved to have been together at Kinnoull where the formal farewells would doubtless have progressed into a small glass of something and a significant amount of cheese and chocolate. Instead we spent an hour together beginning with each of us talking about a significant memory of the year as well as a word of encouragement for the Leavers. (see p.4)

It was moving to hear the comments and how clearly the main thing people had felt was the strong sense of community right from day 1 of the first residential week. There were funny memories too, but voice after voice returned to how much they appreciated being part of the SEI student body. The Group Leaders then prayed for each of the Leavers and Graham, our Chaplain, said a few words and a blessing before we shared Compline together. Under the circumstances this was a special time together. However, we do hope to be able to do something non-electronically-based together in person in the future!

Lesley Penny

Roberta Ritson reflects on Saturday's proceedings

Despite dry, sunny days it has often felt like a harsh Eastertide, each member of the SEI community cut off physically from the other and from many loved ones too. The circumstances surrounding the final 'residential' weekend of 2019-20 resulted in the entire programme taking place on-line. Participants joined from Caithness to Northumberland and everywhere between.

The day was punctuated by prayer. I sometimes like to 'hear' each fellow student's unique voice as I read the 'blue book' at home from time to time. (I am one of those non-conformist members from the far side of the border). The sense of being gathered is not taken for granted these days.

During the previous residential weekend we had been acutely aware of Richard's absence in the wake of his climbing accident. Seeing him once again, 'larger than life', joking in broad Yorkshire tones, was a reminder that many prayers had been answered.

The Reverend Dr. Gillian Straine delivered two deeply thoughtful sessions. As physicist, priest and recovered cancer patient she brought a wealth of experience to the topic of health and healing. Gillian's approach was concerned with the whole person rather than with diagnosis and symptoms. Indeed, healing may not involve 'cure' as we understand it. From a Christian perspective, personal relationship with God is an integral part of wholeness. Missional healing through and beyond the current ill-health crisis is a timely challenge. In practical terms, such work might happen through listening carefully over a cup of tea. The time seems ripe for redefining potential for life in all its fullness. It appears that crisis is nudging individuals and whole societies to a re-vision of values. God is at work even in the thick of night.

Many felt that matters of faith and health might profitably continue over a very substantial course, perhaps as a detour in response to the present times.

Small groups met over lunch and it was acknowledged that peers finishing their course this summer would be missed, not least the indomitable Beki Cansdale who also led a Bible Study on Jeremiah 31.

Reflective Practice via Zoom demanded gentle perseverance as tone of voice and body language can be so compromised.

A highlight of the afternoon break was the presentation of an original animation to the staff. Thanks to the creativity of Louise Sanders, the little film featured every student. It was delightful watching Anne's face. She must have wondered what on earth was coming next!*



Bishop Ian Paton of the Diocese of St Andrew's, Dunkeld and Dunblane spoke about 'vocation', starting with a study of Canon 22. Many of us have experiences of different worship patterns from various stages of our lives and, as an outsider, I found myself full of questions about Scottish Episcopal identity which I have only just started to absorb over these past ten months. There was time to read poetry and scripture, raising questions about priestly responsibility. Lonely frustration should not be surprising as it is not a given that fruits of ministry will be seen, nor that they match expectation.



As clocks in our various physical places chimed 10pm we had reached the end of a very long day. There was no train ride, real or virtual, to enable people to unwind a little. Despite widespread fatigue there was a general feeling of having been there for one another, in mirth as well as in grief.

Thank you to Linda Harrison who put so much skill into the preparation for our weekend. Linda kept everything running smoothly, appearing just before Evening Prayer.

Throughout the day there was beauty in all kinds of detail. Perhaps it has always been so. Speaking personally, the capacity to notice has shifted.

Roberta Ritson

*The video, from which the photos of Philip and Claire are taken, is accessed [here](#).

Vocations Sunday 2020: *Some years ago the College of Bishops decided that the fourth Sunday of Easter, 'Good Shepherd Sunday', would be kept as 'Vocations Sunday', thereby offering the opportunity to consider what 'calling' means in the Church, and how our gifts may be best used in God's service. Students were duly rostered as usual to preach across the Province on 3 May, but plans had to change. Here two of them describe what actually took place...*

Lisa Curtice, second year ordinand from the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway, preached in two charges within the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway via Zoom. Lisa writes:

In the strange new world of Zoom, the shifting of space-time boundaries can be disconcerting, but on Vocations Sunday I discovered some unexpected blessings. The congregations of St Mary the Virgin, Hamilton and St Andrews, Uddingston gathered for worship at the same time. Even the Revd Matthew Little, the soon-to-be Rector, beamed in!



As visiting preacher, I could see everyone's faces closer in. And it was moving to be connecting from each other's homes, as if we were creating a new sacred community space between us. It felt so much of a team effort with the reading and prayers from different members. The Revd Jonathan Livingstone led us through with confidence, shepherding us in familiar ways, even to small group chat after the service. It was altogether an encouraging experience for an apprentice preacher.

Valerie Cameron, Lay Reader candidate from the Diocese of Edinburgh, preached in two charges within the Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane via YouTube. Here she and the Revd Elaine Garman, Rector of St John's, Forfar and St Margaret's, Lunanhead, and Interim Pastor of St Mary's, Kirriemuir, reflect on the experience. Valerie writes:



With lockdown in place, I had a few emails with Elaine about the IT platforms and format of her services. I have learned that churches are using various IT systems to engage with congregations and ensure compatibility. I got to grips with iPad video recordings and used a shared Dropbox with Elaine. I found a useful guide on Vocations Sunday also known as 'Good Shepherd Sunday' on the SEC website. My homily focused on my own calling and reflected the messages in the Gospel reading – John 10:1-10. My church journey has been quite long and I think I have been called several times during my life but things always got in the way: study, work, children and family, but like the Good Shepherd, the Lord is patient and waits to guide the stray sheep home.

I have learned a lot about IT communications recently and what a blessing it has been, but conversely for those without the right kit, it identifies inequality and exclusion that we must try to address. I look forward to the time when we can travel as I will go to Forfar in person to meet Elaine and her congregation.

Elaine adds: As a congregation it is always good to have a connection with those in training for authorised ministry and what better way with a fresh face in the pulpit; even (maybe especially) an electronic pulpit! I was thrilled when Valerie agreed to participate not only by recording a homily but also reading the gospel and leading intercessions. Enormous thanks to Valerie's courage to rise to the challenge and help lead our worship. If you would like to view it is still available on You Tube at https://youtu.be/M_bcVdpD0fA

This year's Leavers

We praise and thank you, God of the journey, for our brothers and sisters who are soon to leave us. We entrust them into your loving care, knowing that you are always the faithful traveller and companion on the Way. Shelter and protect them from all harm and anxiety. Grant them the courage to meet the future, and grace to let go into new life; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Details of curacies will be included in September's issue of the SEI Newsletter.

Josh Cockayne, Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane



David Todd, Diocese of Edinburgh



Jaime Wright, Diocese of Edinburgh



Pauline Jones, Diocese of Edinburgh



Beki Cansdale, Diocese of Argyll and the Isles



Russell Duncan, Diocese of Edinburgh



I thank my God, every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel. And this is my prayer, that love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ we may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. Philippians 1: 3, 4, 9.

Church In The 'New Normal': An Introduction To Pioneer Ministry



Looking for the path ahead

A recent meeting of the Provincial Mission Board discussed what it could offer to the Church, to address the question of what mission looks like in the time of Covid-19. The Director of Mixed Mode Training, Rev Dr Richard Tiplady, has been working over the past weeks with the Mixed Mode students to consider what the principles of pioneer ministry might contribute to ministry and mission at this time.

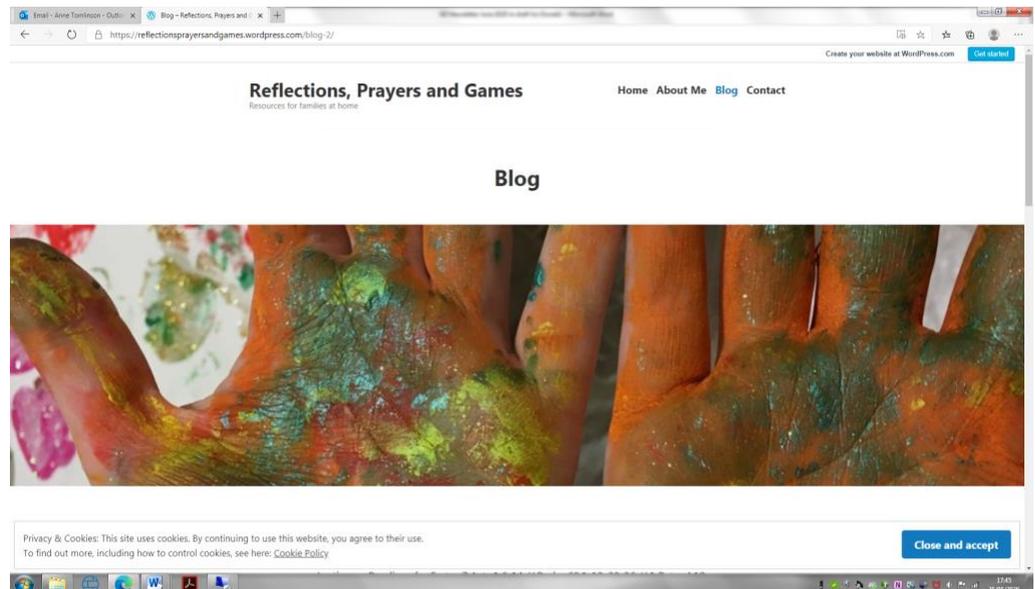
The Mission Board and SEI decided to offer a short introductory course to pioneer ministry in June/July, led by Richard and open to anyone in a leadership or ministry role in the SEC. The course will run via Zoom (like everything else at the moment) and is limited to 12 participants to allow plenty for time of discussion. The first course offering was fully booked within 3 hours of going online, and so Richard decided to offer it twice, with the second course also being fully booked within a few hours

There will be 3 sessions: Introduction to Pioneer Ministry, Getting Started, and Developing a Pioneer Culture in the Local Church, with required pre-reading before each session.

Richard is willing to run the course again in August if there is sufficient demand. To register your interest in such a course, please contact Richard at DMM@scotland.anglican.org

Beki Cansdale's blog

Arising from one-to-one sessions with his Mixed Mode students, Dr Tiplady was aware that during lockdown, Beki Cansdale, one of the current Mixed Mode ordinands, had been supporting parents in the congregation in which she serves by providing resource materials for families and children.



He suggested that the Mission Board consider promulgating that material on a weekly basis. Beki was more than happy to turn her weekly email into a blog. *Reflections, Prayers and Games. Resources for families at home* can be found at <https://reflectionsprayersandgames.wordpress.com/>