

St Mark's Unitarian Church
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Lay Celebrant & Lay Preacher:

Joan Cook

(Available for rites of passage)

WHO'S WHO

Convener: Mary McKenna
Secretary: Margery MacKay
Treasurer: Ali McDonald
Pulpit Secretary: Lesley Hartley
Social Secretary: Lynsey Bailey

Management Committee: Ann Sinclair

Ministry Team: Lesley Hartley

Church Flowers: Mary McKenna

Music: Ailsa Aikenhead

Children's Programme Co-ordinator: Ida Silkenat

Email: stmarkschildrensprogramme@gmail.com

Venue Enquiries: venue@edinburgh-unitarians.org.uk

PASTORAL SUPPORT AND CONCERNS

If you know of anyone who has any pastoral concerns, and may like some support, please let us know. In the vestibule, there are paper slips on the table and a box on the ledge, for such concerns. Alternatively please telephone or email us. Details are below.

Contact details: 0131 659 7600

minister@edinburgh-unitarians.org.uk

Waymark

Editor Jane Aaronson
for Unitarians in Edinburgh
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Waymark is published ten times a year for members and friends of St Mark's. If you wish to receive Waymark by post, a suggested donation of around £15.00 per year towards the cost of publication will always be welcome. For more information please speak to our Treasurer, Ali McDonald.

We welcome contributions, though space is limited, therefore contributions will be published at the discretion of the editor. Email to ja@ednet.co.uk by the 7th of the month. If you cannot send copy electronically, please note that Audrey Simon will type and email material to the editor. Please contact Audrey at St Mark's.

Attendances

June	25	46 (adults) + 4 (children) = 50
July	2	48 + 4 = 52
July	9	38 + 0 = 38
July	16	41 + 3 = 44

During the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, details of events in St Mark's
will be found either in the church, or Fringe brochure

SUNDAY DUTIES AT ST MARK'S

SUNDAY STEWARDS

August 6 Margery MacKay 13 Lesley & Roger Hartley
20 Hilary Anderson 27 Kirsty Murray

September 3 Margery MacKay 10 Lesley & Roger Hartley
17 Rachael King 24 John Reid & Mary McKenna

October 1 Lynsey Bailey

PEACE CANDLE LIGHTING

August 6 Jean Lapsley 13 ICUU 20 David Wood
27 Roger Hartley **September** 3 Christina Hamilton 10 ICUU
17 Jack Bell 24 Tony Finlay **October** 1 Bláthnaid Quinn

*International Council of Unitarians and Universalists

WELCOME

August 6 Kate Foggo & Jon Bagust 13 Lynsey Bailey &
Margery Giles 20 Susanne Urquhart & Jane Aaronson
27 Lesley & Roger Hartley **September** 3 Margery MacKay &
Ali McDonald 10 Julie Finneran & Louise Rhodes-Ritchie
17 Mary McKenna & John Reid 24 Anne Witcomb & Billy Lee
October 1 Kris, Kenna & Jamie Calder

COFFEE

August 6 Liz Lumsden & TBA 13 Jill Stamper & Liz Marshall
20 Niall Urquhart & Margaret Ross 27 Kris, Jamie &
Kenna Calder **September** 3 Lesley & Roger Hartley
10 Margaret Mackenzie & Lynsey Bailey 17 Kirsty Murray &
Hilary Anderson 24 Tony Finlay & Niall Urquhart
October 1 Bláthnaid Quinn & Heather Coates

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMME

August 6 Susanne Urquhart & TBA 13 Tom Stamper &
Rachael King 20 Susanne Urquhart & Bláthnaid Quinn
27 Lynsey Bailey & Ida Silkenat **September** 3 Amy &
Ali McDonald 10 Susanne Urquhart & Rachael King
17 Lynsey Bailey & Tom Stamper 24 Susanne Urquhart &
Bláthnaid Quinn **October** 1 Amy & Ali McDonald

FLOWERS

August 6 Kate Foggo 13 Jane Aaronson 20 Lynsey Bailey
27 Heather Coates **September** 3 Margery MacKay
10 Elizabeth Marshall 17 Anne Snoddy 24 B Jones
October 1 Sharon Boateng

Roster of volunteers for St Catharine's Homeless Project



At the time of going to press we do not have the dates when volunteers are needed for the months of August and September. Elaine Edwards will contact volunteers when she has more information. Meanwhile please keep in touch with Elaine. Email details are below.

If you would like to be a part of this worthwhile initiative, please speak to Elaine Edwards or email elaine.m.edwards@virginmedia.com

Our Principles and Beliefs

by MARY MCKENNA
Convener of Council

If we are Unitarians, what do we stand for? Can we be a religion without a prescribed creed? How do we describe the key characteristics of our community? If we are not clear about what we stand for we can't complain when we are poorly described by others.

Some of us come to St Mark's because we found the dogma of other religions restricted our enquiring minds; some found they were no longer relevant for the 21st Century; while others would not describe themselves as religious, and yet are comfortable within our community. I was attracted to St Mark's because I found it respectful of my Christian heritage while encouraging me to think beyond one perspective and to find inspiration from a range of sources. The Unitarian values of justice, compassion, respect and equity fit with my values, and allow me to grow and develop my understanding of these simple yet complex words.

The principles on which our Unitarian community is based have evolved over time from our Free Christian roots. In 2016 members and friends of St Mark's were invited by our minister, Rev Maud Robinson, to revise and update these principles. We agreed the following six Principles:

- We nurture individuals in their personal and spiritual growth and respect their freedom to believe according to reason, conscience and their experience of the divine.
- We support freedom, exploration and respect for diversity in religion.
- We value insights from all faiths and world views, and acknowledge the Christian roots of our community.
- We cherish creation and respect the interdependence of the whole natural world.
- We seek to make our community relevant through public opportunities for spiritual exploration and practice; non-judgmental dialogue; and compassionate care and service to one another and to the wider community.
- We seek to maintain, preserve and enhance the church premises, which are provided for the use of our Members and the general public.
- We ask Members of our Society to share these principles.

When asked what are Unitarians these principles may hold the answer. However they do not trip off the tongue. Ida introduced a simple rhyme to the children to explain what being a Unitarian is, with actions in italics.

We are Unitarians
(Making a U with cupped hands)
This is the church of the open mind
(Opening hands covering eyes and forehead)
This is the church of the caring heart
(Covering heart with hands)
This is the church with the helping hands
(Open hand)

At time when tensions between religions are evident and there is increased discrimination of people of religious faiths, Unitarians are committed to dialogue and understanding. These principles are even more relevant. This is what we stand for and for those of us who dare to dream of a world where love overwhelms hate, our principles give us a shared template for living our lives.

Music, Music, Music a reflection by LYNSEY BAILEY

With Festival time on us, the arts come to the fore. For me, music is such a big part of my life that when I was asked to write this reflection, it seemed the perfect topic. There is something about music that can speak to us on an unconscious level and stay with us. Our lives, whether we're aware of it or not, have their own soundtrack. How many times have you heard an old favourite song for the first time in years and been instantly transported back in your memories to the places, people and emotions tied to it? And we're always adding to our life's soundtrack, sometimes discovering songs that seem to express something we perhaps haven't got the words for, or didn't even realise we needed to express before. As Hans Christian Andersen once said, 'where words fail, music speaks'. There is real power when the poetry of lyrics is complimented by a melody and somehow it can speak to us more deeply than way and be almost therapeutic in emotional terms.

I'm definitely stating the obvious by saying that music always has an integral role in our services. The communal hymn singing cements our sense of unity as our voices (however tentative we may be on occasions) combine as one. Given that the hymns are usually carefully chosen to fit with the theme and message of the service, joining in the singing also gives us a sense of participation and (dare I say?) affirmation of that. Although there is that old joke that Unitarian hymn singing is normally quite distracted because we're usually scanning the words ahead to see whether we agree with them! The musical offering that accompanies the time for reflection can help to deepen that reflective state and have a calming, healing effect for those who may need to quiet their mind for a time. We also have the Chalice Singers and, speaking personally as a member of this choir, the rehearsals and contributions to the service are always a joyful experience.

We are also very lucky that St Mark's has wonderful acoustics that make it a popular venue for musical performances, both during and outside of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Providing these opportunities to simply appreciate music for its own sake, or as another form of escape from the stresses of daily living, may be just as important as the what we have in the spiritual setting of our services. Whether in a spiritual or entertainment setting, it's safe to say that music is very much part of the fabric of our church and the beloved community within.

Chalice Singers Rehearsals

If you enjoy singing, do come and rehearse with us. You don't need to be able to read music

We will meet in the upper hall from 10.00-10.45
on the following Sundays

August 6
August 20
September 3
September 17
October 1

Speak to Lesley Hartley to find out more

'To Be a Pilgrim'

by JOAN COOK



'To Be a Pilgrim'; Pilgrimage; what do we mean by pilgrimage?

What does it mean to be a pilgrim? Well we certainly heard in our opening hymn what Bunyan thought it took to be a pilgrim, what trials and tribulations are involved when undertaking a pilgrimage, and the rewards of having made a pilgrimage.

Richard Niebuhr describes Pilgrims as;

'Pilgrims are persons in motion-passing through territories not their own- seeking something we might call contemplation, or perhaps the word 'clarity' might do as well; a goal to which only the spirit can point the way.'

When we talk about or hear of 'Pilgrimage', what comes to mind is a journey to a shrine, or some place of importance in a faith context. Well, yes, it can be something along these lines, but not necessarily. Emmerson describes Pilgrimage as a 'sacred affirmative'.

The reasons for undertaking a Pilgrimage may be personal, communal, or spiritual. They may involve physical journeying, a metaphorical journey, time for personal reflection, or have a missionary intention. Pilgrims may prefer to make their journey in isolation, personal, alone; or in the company of a like-minded *[or not]* group, community or gathering of individuals. However, we might decide to undertake our pilgrimages, any pilgrimage needs a purpose, but not necessarily an aim, or goal. It may be that our pilgrimage is, our life's journey.

Our pilgrimage may be an adventure, travelling to far-off places, spending time in a different culture. It may be personal exploration, looking objectively and critically at ourselves, our motivations, patterns of living, being with others. Examining our relationships with others, our place within the communities in which we live and work, as well as the wider community. It could be something as simple as reading texts that will encourage us to take a different view of our world, and how it is.

But for a journey, exploration or appraisal to be something other than 'A Holiday of a Life Time', an Anthropological Field Trip, Self-Indulgent Introspection, or simply a good read, there needs to be something more.

What is required, is that there is learning. That either during, on completion, or on reaching the end destination, something is acquired, some new truths are learned, there is greater insight. That whoever we were at the outset, we will have

grown, have made progress as individuals, as members of our species, and are prepared for more involvement with our neighbours and communities. That we have achieved a greater degree of wisdom, and are able to see and understand that things are not always as we perceive them to be.

If our intention were to develop spiritually, then we would expect to have found a deeper understanding of our faith, that the overcoming of obstacles and difficulties reinforces our faith, and beliefs, and perhaps enable us to reach a greater level of connection with whatever it is we 'hold worthy'. That we are inspired to take this new understanding and use it, using it to help others, tackle injustices, contribute to the creation of a better society, world.

The idea of making pilgrimages is not a new one. There are several Biblical references to great journeying. In Exodus we hear of the Israelites in the Desert, and their journey out of Egypt, a journey fraught with difficulties as the journeyed to their spiritual homeland. Luke tells of Jesus' instruction to his disciple to go 'journey abroad' to proclaim the kingdom of God.

The early Christian saints also undertook pilgrimages to spread the Christian faith, Bede writes of the travels of Augustine, and Ethelburg as well as his own travels to spread the teachings of Christianity. As did St Columba, who travelled through Ireland, and northern France, before settling in Scotland, and founding the abbey on Iona.

The premise of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, written between 1387 and 1400, tells the stories, or tales, of thirty-odd people (expert opinion is divided as to how many pilgrims there were), making a pilgrimage to Canterbury. Although the content of their tales is not always what we might expect of those making a pilgrimage to a religious shrine!

So, the pilgrims in the Bible were setting out to reach the Promised Land, to spread the word of God; the saints, to establish Christian foundations in other parts of the world; Chaucer's pilgrims were looking for forgiveness, healing, as well as more worldly gains. The ancient pilgrims to the tombs of Saints Peter, James and Thomas did so for religious reasons, to pray, and perhaps to connect with a Saint who has importance for them.

So where might one go, on a pilgrimage?

Of course, where people may make a pilgrimage varies greatly, according to their individual circumstances, what they

(image from Google docs)

are seeking to achieve, as well as their faith. What is important is that the Pilgrims' route should be testing in itself. The route should challenge the pilgrim, with difficulties, distractions, obstacles to overcome. The route should encourage the learning, the growth and development we heard of earlier, by providing opportunities for the pilgrim to have to deal with difficulties, both his own and those of others, necessitating his giving aid to others.

In his book, 'Pilgrim's Progress', Bunyan describes various places along the journey taken by his protagonist; the Slough of Despond, City of Destruction, Difficulty Hill, Valley of Humiliation, Valley of Death, Doubting Castle, Giant Despair, and the necessity for Pilgrim to wade through the Dark River, the River of Death, before being whisked up to the Celestial Gate. Although not literal, maybe the obstacles along our journeys' routes, don't need to be quite as severe as Bunyan describes!

Today people make pilgrimages to all sorts of places, for all sorts of reasons. But this also changes with time. In mediaeval times, Bardsley Island, Ydra Enlli, off the coast of Wales, which is reputed to be the burial site of over 20,000 saints, (as well as that of King Arthur!) attracted over three times the number of pilgrims as Rome! Now when I wrote this address, I ended this paragraph with the line '*and who has heard of Bardsley Island today?*' Well that had to be changed when I switched the TV on to catch the news one Sunday evening, and I caught the end of 'Songs of Praise', not a program that features on my regular viewing, and weren't they just talking about Bardsley Island!

Apparently, people still make pilgrimages there, staying at the retreat house on the island. Bardsley is recognised as being a 'thin place', one of the places where the boundaries between worlds is especially 'thin'. The author of the poem we heard earlier, the Rev. R.S. Thomas, was a frequent visitor there, as the island lay within his parish.

One of the more popular pilgrim routes today, is the walk to Santiago de Compostela. This was originally a religious pilgrimage, which began in the 9th century when the burial place of one of the disciples, St. James was discovered, and a church built on the site. The church and shrine began to attract pilgrims, and the walk to Santiago de Compostela became one of the major Christian pilgrimages, alongside the walks to the tomb of St. Peter in Rome and the pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Pilgrims carry a drinking flask, a walking stick, and wear a wide brimmed hat. The sign adopted by those who complete the pilgrimage is the scallop shell, attached to their clothing.

But what about today? Why do people go on pilgrimages in the 21st century?

We still have people who want to visit Holy sites, a place of importance in their religion; the Golden Temple of Amritsar, the Kaaba in Mecca, the tombs of St. Thomas in Chennai, and St. Peter's in Rome, Varanasi on the Ganges, the Haifa-'Akká , or to Jerusalem and the Western Wall. Either to experience being at a site with fellow believers, or to receive healing, atonement or blessings.

Carl Jung defined people as being one of twelve identified archetypes which symbolise basic human motivations, amongst these is the Explorer, also known as the pilgrim. According to Jung, people belonging to this group are seekers, wanderers, individualists.

I think that modern day secular pilgrims, those not undertaking a pilgrimage for religious reasons, but for their own self-development being members of this group, as they search to discover more about themselves through exploring the world. They hope the experiences they have will lead to a more authentic, fulfilling life, ultimately attaining complete autonomy.

These seekers are not all aimlessly wandering, trying to escape inner emptiness, or feelings of confinement, many of them are actively, and deliberately searching and seeking out new experiences as a way to accomplish those aims, what we might term as spiritual, if not religious!

I would argue that we are *all* on a pilgrimage! We all endure difficulties in our lives, some more so than others, but no life is free from its dark times. There are those whose journeys encompass the physical and the metaphysical, those who have lost their homes, even their countries. Stateless people aren't only a product of the World Wars, many of today's refugees and migrants have no homes to return to.

As we make our personal pilgrimages, we will be joined by others, either for a short time along the way, or for some of the stages we pass along. It may be that some we meet will remain with us for the complete journey, others introducing us to alternative routes. We may illuminate the route for others with our understanding, and they may do the same for us, by the sharing of their truths.

It is beholding on pilgrims to encourage the involvement of others as companions on their journeys, and with them seek to overcome the hardships we encounter with faith and hope; giving everyone the opportunity to learn and develop through providing mutual support.

With any pilgrimage, the outcome will hopefully be improvements in how we work together, our relationships with each other, the enhanced contributions we can make to our families, societies. Eventually achieving the goal of all Unitarians; that is the creation of caring & compassionate communities.

To close, some words you may find familiar, written by Richard Gillard, and taken from his hymn in 'Sing Your Faith'.
(Compiled by Rev Andrew M. Hill and David Dawson)

'We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk a mile and share the load.

I will hold the Christ light for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow
'til we've seen this journey through.'

*Given in St Mark's on 5 March 2017,
Joan Cook has the sermon copyright of this sermon.
It is used with her permission*

*Joan Cook, our Lay Celebrant and Lay Preacher, is a member of
St Mark's and President of the Scottish Unitarian Association*

The next meeting of BOOKMARKS!

.....will be on 17 September, at 13.00 (bring your lunch).
We shall be reading 'Remarkable Creatures' by Tracy Chevalier
contact Joan Cook for further information joancook@hotmail.co.uk

Symbols

by ROGER HARTLEY

I am going to describe to you how this grand old building can speak to us about the past using symbols. Some of these symbols are still easily readable others are less so and some we have perhaps lost the meaning of in the 182 years since the church was built.

This church was built in 1835 for the congregation and it cost £2,230. The building reflects the period of time after the law, making it penal and a blasphemy to deny the Trinity, was abolished in 1813.

The task of making a building which satisfied everybody's requirements is a hard one as we did just finding a carpet for the upper hall which was acceptable to the majority!

Orientation

Firstly, churches are usually 'oriented'. That literally means 'facing the orient' or East. If you think about St John's round the corner, it has its altar and pulpit at the Eastern end. Our church, although it does not have an altar as such faces near enough West.

What does this tell us? Perhaps that the architect was allowed or even encouraged to build it with this previously unthinkable orientation.

Already you are looking at this old building in a different light.

Columns



As you can see the gallery is supported by two types of columns, the type called 'Doric', quite plain, and the so-called 'Corinthian'. The Corinthian columns have a very decorative capital (the top bit) and are fluted - they have grooves running up and down. These are meant to convey a deep knowledge of history and ancient civilisations. The fluting is inspired by the ancient Egyptian practice of representing everyday practical objects in stone.

Some Egyptian columns are thought to represent bundles of papyrus, as used as supports in humble dwellings of the period.

Christogram

Above us in the gallery between the pillars are little plaster flourishes properly called cartouches which contain the letters IHS. This motif is also repeated on the pulpit cover or sounding board.

The Christogram IHS is a monogram being a symbol of Jesus Christ in form of acronym. From Greek it is an abbreviation of the name ΙΗΣΟΥΣ (Jesus). IHS appears on the coat of arms of Pope Francis.



Corbels



The 'S' shaped bracket, called a corbel supports the overhang of the balcony - or it may simply be decorative. It looks very similar to corbels I have seen in other parts of the city. It was probably a very standard piece in the kit of parts for architects in the 1830s. However, what struck me most about it is that it looks like a crocodile with its teeth in sideways!

Urns

On the top of the frontage to St Mark's are six decorative urns. Urns are meant as memento mori. They remind us that we are mortal. The urns you can see are quite strange in that they have a very pointed cover with clamps holding it in place. There are exact replicas, gilded, on the sounding board over the pulpit. I was quite disappointed when I looked closely because until then I had believed them to be tiny golden elephants on their hind legs raising their little trunks to heaven.



The Flaming Chalice - on the front of the pulpit

Most of you will know this but for those that do not. A flame within a chalice (a cup with a stem and foot) is a primary symbol of the Unitarian Universalist faith tradition. Many of our congregations light a flaming chalice in gatherings and worships and feature the chalice symbol prominently.

Hans Deutsch, an Austrian artist, first brought together the chalice and the flame as a Unitarian symbol during his work with the Unitarian Service Committee during World War II. To Deutsch, the image had connotations of sacrifice and love. Unitarians today have many different interpretations of the flaming chalice, including the light of reason, the warmth of community, and the flame of hope. (taken from the UUA Website).

The Octagon

The sounding board above the pulpit, is designed to reflect the sound of a preacher's voice towards the congregation. It is octagonal. It has eight sides. Apparently now demolished chapel in Paradise Street in Liverpool which was the living of one James Martineau was octagonal. The Octagon Chapel in Norwich, one of our most architecturally important Unitarian Chapels, is of course octagonal. Why did the original architects of the church include the eight-sided shapes? Were they leaving us a message in the structure of the building?

The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem is an ancient temple in the form of an Octagon surmounted by a golden dome. It dates from about the 7th Century and presents the first example of the Islamic world-view. The very site where it was established, the structure of the building, its dimensions and proportions, its external outline, are all representative of the faith that inspired its construction.

(continued on page 7)

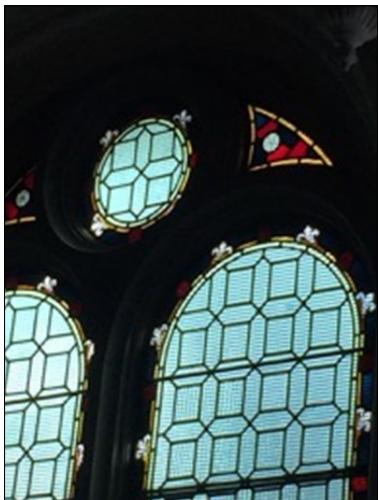
(continued from page 6)

The Clock

Over on the back wall behind most of you is a clock. Most of us can find out how far we are through the day by glancing at the clock. The dial of the clock with its numbers has evolved from the sundial which cast the sun's shadow (always problematic in this country) which itself evolved from a stick in the ground casting its shadow. The dial with pointer has evolved into a more general device for indicating for example the temperature in your deep fat fryer to the speed of your broadband.

Another symbol we take for granted is shown above the door through into our upper hall. The green sign with the stick figure of a person running with an arrow next to it. We can all clearly see that it is telling us that if you run through that door you will fall down the stairs!

Window



To the west are two huge windows, handily letting in the light and seemingly quite plain and functional. They were paid for by a Perthshire business man and it is likely that he had some choice about their appearance. (*The Unitarian Heritage, An Architectural Survey: Chapter 7 'The Unitarian Chapels of Scotland'* by Rev Andrew Hill). They have a pleasingly coloured surround with little fleur-de-lis and red flowers. I can find no evidence, but I suspect these flowers had some significance to the donor now lost. I did for a while wonder if the red flowers were in fact slices of orange and that there might be a Dundee marmalade connection, but that is perhaps because my surname makes me sensitive to mentions of preserves.

The rest of the window is an abstract design - or is it? If you look a bit more closely you will see that the leadwork divides the window into segments and these segments look very much like the display on an electronic calculator. When I look at it, as I sometimes do when my mind wanders as it sometimes does, I see the number eight. If you look again you may be able to see four, six and nine, in fact all the numbers. Calculator displays can also be used to show letters. If you use your imagination you could form words such as PRAY, LOVE, GOOD, JOY, GAIN, FEEL, or if you are really not enjoying the service you may find, HELL, OUCH, FISH and CHIP. Now I suspect that when you look at the window during future services you will find it is making its own comments that may well be relevant. SOON, GONE and NAP.

A young visitor recently asked me why there were no religious symbols in the church such as crosses. There are crosses in this Church but you need to know where to look.

Look at the window again, at the very top there is a circular window. Is it just a decorative motif or is that a cross with a saltire in the centre? Is the window in fact filled with crosses? You could read the whole window with its stone transom and mullion forming a cross in the centre.

So, what does all this amount to?

The meaning of the symbols in the church are after 182 years not all immediately obvious. Perhaps I am trying to read too much into it and all they did was pick design No. 236, A church shaped like ship with extra crocodiles and some elephants.

The Church was opened in 1835 and in that year every member of the congregation was required to give formal assent to this contentious declaration of principles:

"Being desirous of admission to the privileges of a member of the Edinburgh Unitarian Society, I solemnly declare that it is my intention to associate with them for the worship of the 'One God, the Father' to the exclusion of all other persons, beings or subsistencies, in obedience to the instructions of our blessed saviour whose divine mission I fully recognises evidenced by His life, death, resurrection recorded in the new testament and whom I regard not as the supreme God but as the 'one mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus.'" This is very close to the text still to be seen high up on the front elevation of St Mark's. There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ.

In 1839 a number of members left the church rather than conform to that affirmation. It was not until 1854 that the constitution was changed to 'conceded to each other entire freedom in the interpretation of the records of the Christian faith'.

Think of the people who have passed through these doors in the last 182 years. A rough calculation gave me nearly 1,000,000 attendances. All that goodwill and love has sort of polished the aura of this place, hasn't it?

All those people have nearly all heard music, listened to the sermons, sung hymns, said prayers, meditated and seen very nearly the same building you see now. They are part of the Unitarians in Edinburgh story as are we. Symbols and their meanings will appear and fade but we have built on the values which our forebears developed. The building is beautiful, but it is in the end just a building, whereas Unitarians in Edinburgh is a long surviving peaceful, caring and tolerant community.

Copyright Roger Hartley
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given in St Mark's on 28 May 2017

This article is an edited version of a longer address given by Roger Hartley. Roger, who is a member of St Mark's, took the photographs for this article.

Teens and Tweens Group

We meet from 11.00 -12.00 noon
in the upper hall
on the third Sunday in the month
during term time

For more information please speak to
Ida Silkenat or email

stmarkschildrensprogramme@gmail.com

Please note that we will not meet in August
We will meet again on 17 September

The History of St Mark's as an Edinburgh Festival Fringe Venue

This year we celebrate thirty-five years of St Mark's as an Edinburgh Festival Fringe Venue. On this page, ROSS, our Front of House Manager traces the history. (Additional material by Rev Andrew Hill, Ann Sinclair and Mike West).

1835 St Mark's built.

1958 onwards St Mark's new minister, Rev Bruce Findlow, led special Festival services which included poetry and music and attracted large numbers of visitors. For several years an art exhibition was held in the upper hall and the church was open for a few hours each day.

Circa 1965-1970 First documented evidence of St Mark's being used as rehearsal space for the Fringe; no evidence of performances. Rehearsals were for Theatre Workshop (Artistic Director Rosalind Clark). Rev Bruce Findlow, highly supportive of St Mark's being used for rehearsals (source: Waymark, September 2009).

Early-1970s Two-deck pulpit replaced by stage to accommodate grand piano and allow for artistic performances.

1975 & 1976 First documented evidence of St Mark's being used for performance during the Fringe (source: Waymark, October 2010). No further evidence beyond 1976.

1982 First year of determined effort to make St Mark's a Fringe venue on an annual basis (sources: Waymark, Oct 2010 & Jane Aaronson, editor: Waymark). Programme of approximately two to three performances per day from both local and national companies compiled by Rev Andrew Hill who continued as programmer until 1983.

Pre-1986 St Mark's assigned Fringe venue reference Venue 90.

1983-1986 St Mark's member Mike West assumes programming duties.

1987-1989 St Mark's member Bryan Wade assumes programming duties.

1990 David Hume, director of Edinburgh-based amateur musicians, Philomusica, takes over programming (source: official Edinburgh Festival Fringe programme).

A warm welcome back to Patrice Fitzgerald and Richard Leslie

We first met Patrice and Richard in August 2010 when, as members of the Westport Unitarian Chamber Choir they participated in a Sunday service. Subsequently the choir gave a concert at St Marks.

At our venue, on 6 August at 15.30, Patrice and Richard will present the great American Songbook as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Patrice will lead worship on Sunday 13 August, (see front page).



1994 St Mark's becomes Venue 125.

1999 Edward Prince becomes programmer, booking shows based on Philomusica's mailing list. Edward considerably increases the number of shows to between fifteen to twenty and the number of performances to thirty-five to fifty. Noticeable is the St Mark's' Fringe programme entry which is recognisably different from previous years.

2006 artSpace@StMarks becomes the venue's official name for Fringe performances (note: exact spelling of venue name, artSpace@StMarks, not agreed until 2014).

2007 Ross joins as Edward's assistant.

2011 Performer Richard Michael wins Herald Angel award for Outstanding Contribution to Music.

2012 Nutshell Theatre Production *Thread*, staged in an Assembly venue in the lower hall, wins Fringe First award.

2013 St Mark's not a venue due to management illness. Michael Mulligan appointed programmer. Ross becomes Front of House Manager.

2015 artSpace@StMarks programme rises from around two to three performances a day to four to five. The figure increases to five to six from 2016. Cathal McConnell wins Herald Angel Lifetime Achievement award.

2016 Theatre production, *The View From Castle Rock*, sponsored by the Edinburgh Book Festival, sells out its entire run of 150 seats per performance before Fringe has begun.

2017 St Mark's 35th anniversary as a Fringe venue.

Do you have a special memory of an early Edinburgh Festival Fringe show at St Mark's that you would like to share with our Waymark readers? Please email the editor ja@ednet.co.uk by 14 August.

Mindfulness @ Lunchtime

Mindfulness@Lunchtime will continue to meet on Tuesdays at 12.15 at St Mark's throughout the Festival Fringe period

speak to Jon Bagust for more details

www.facebook.com/mindfulnessatlunchtime

Interbeing Buddhist Meditation

PLEASE NOTE that Interbeing Buddhist meditation will not meet during the Festival Fringe period
For further details go to www.edwildgeese.wordpress.com/

Meetings at St Mark's will resume on 7 September

STOP PRESS - Book Festival – free and un-ticketed event - Story Shop. St Mark's attender, Rose McDonagh, will be reading two of her short stories on 21 August at 15.00 in the Spiegel Tent in Charlotte Square. Do go and support her!

Charity in Progress

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



August Good Cause in St Mark's

We were most fortunate that during the service on 2 July, Tom Spark's, from Amnesty International spoke to us about the work of the charity.

The charity works to protect women, men and children wherever justice, freedom, truth and dignity are denied. It is the world's largest grassroots human rights organisation. It investigates and exposes abuses, educates and mobilises the public, and helps transform societies to create a safer, more just world.

Pauline Kelly from Amnesty International explains that this year's Edinburgh Festival campaign is to free two imprisoned British-Iranian nationals in Iran; Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and Kamal Foroughi.

It's just over a year since British-Iranian charity worker Nazanin was arrested. In September 2016, she was charged with "membership of an illegal group" connected to her work with BBC Media Action and Thompson Reuters Foundation. Following an unfair trial held before a Revolutionary Court in Tehran, she was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

She is currently very depressed and suffering from severe neck, arm, and back pain and has extremely limited movement in her arms. She is not receiving adequate medical care.

Kamal Foroughi, 77, was arrested on 5 May 2011 by men in plain clothes who offered no warrant or explanation for his arrest. He was held in solitary confinement for 18 months in Iran's notorious Evin Prison. In 2013, he was sentenced to seven years and one year in prison for espionage and "possession of alcoholic beverages" respectively.

He urgently needs cataract surgery in a hospital outside prison.

Nazanin and Kamal remain in prison they are missing out on precious moments with their families. Nazanin has a three-year-old daughter and Kamal is a father and grandfather. They should be at home with their families, making memories'.

For more information about Amnesty International go to www.amnesty.org.uk

Chalice Lighting Words

On Sunday 18 June, RACHAEL KING lit our Chalice. This is what she said.

Watching the tragedy of Grenfell Tower unfold is heart-breaking, and we dedicate today's candle to all affected.

We give thanks for emergency services and to the communities who have provided help so quickly, and ask that those in a formal position to offer support, especially politicians, have the strength and grace to be guided by humility and compassion above all else.

The Good Cause in St Mark's in September & October

ST CATHARINE'S HOMELESS PROJECT

The good cause in September and October will be The St Catharine's Convent Homeless Project.

On 17 September, our 'Friendship Table' will receive our annual donation of consumable items for the St Catharine's Homeless Project. This year the Project would like us to collect tins of Baked Beans, Lentils and Soup.



help in seeking

The homeless project gives support to the homeless in Edinburgh, the number of whom is increasing all the time. As well as serving over 90,000 free meals a year, the project offers a huge range of services, from guidance with job applications; help for support groups for addicts; to counselling and medical assistance.

The project is used by up to two hundred people a day. These range from long-term homeless people who are sleeping rough or staying in hostels around the city, to old age pensioners who bus in from their flats in the Edinburgh estates for a meal and some company.

On Friday evenings, two people from St Mark's help serving the meals.

If you would like to be a part of this worthwhile initiative, please speak to Elaine Edwards elaine.m.edwards@virginmedia.com



The Bereavement Support Group

will meet on Saturday 9 September

at 11.00

The Bereavement Group offers support to anyone suffering a loss through bereavement, separation or estrangement

Please speak to Jane Aaronson
Email ja@ednet.co.uk

Poetry Reading for Pleasure

will meet on Sunday 10 September at 13.00

Come and share some favourite poems

Want to know more?

Please speak to Margery MacKay

AUGUST & SEPTEMBER IN ST MARK'S

Every Sunday 11.00 Church Service and Coffee
Every Tuesday 12.15 Mindfulness@Lunchtime

AUGUST

Sunday 3 August – Saturday 26 August Edinburgh Festival Fringe

Sunday 6 10.00–10.45 Chalice Singers Group Rehearsal (see page 3)
Sunday 20 10.00–10.45 Chalice Singers Group Rehearsal (see page 3)

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 3 10.00–10.45 Chalice Singers Group Rehearsal (see page 3)
Saturday 9 11.00 Bereavement Group.
email ja@ednet.co.uk
(see page 9)
Sunday 10 13.00–14.00 Poetry Reading for Pleasure
(see page 9)
Sunday 17 10.00–10.45 Chalice Singers Group Rehearsal (see page 3)
Sunday 17 13.00–14.00 Bookmarks (see page 5)
Saturday 23 14.00–17.00 The Elgar Society,
Michael Butterfield,
'Elgar and Wagner', the influence of Wagner on Elgar's music
Saturday 30 11.00 Waymark mailing.
Email ja@ednet.co.uk
if you would like to help

OCTOBER

Sunday 1 10.00–10.45 Chalice Singers Group Rehearsal (see page 3)

Water Communion on 3 September

Ida Silkenat invites you to bring a small amount of water from your summer holiday, or from a meaningful place, to the service. By 20 August, please send Ida (preferably by email) any aquatic-themed pictures that she can use during the service. There will be a jug of locally sourced water available, so that anyone who does not bring water will be able to participate.

stmarkschildrensprogramme@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE!

We are planning our next Bring and Share Supper to take place on Friday 20 October. Further details to follow in October Waymark but in the meantime, please save the date. Contact Lynsey Bailey, for further details. Lynsey's email address is lynsey.bailey@yahoo.co.uk

SUNDAYS SEPTEMBER

Services are at 11 am in the church, with coffee and conversation in the upper hall afterwards. Children sit with their parents for the opening part of the service, and then follow their own programme.

The good cause in September and October will be St Catharine's Homeless Project.

September 3 Sunday

Ida Silkenat

Water Communion

Attendees are invited to bring a small quantity of water from a place that is special to them. Our combined offerings of water will symbolise our shared faith coming from many different sources. (see adjacent column for more details)

Ida Silkenat is a member of St Mark's

September 10 Service led by the Wild Geese Sangha (part of the Community of Interbeing)

Waking Up: Presence, connection and community in the teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh

Mindful awareness of breathing enables us to keep our 'appointment with life' in the present and appreciate more fully the wonders of life within us and around us. Sustained collective practice underpinned by clear ethical guidelines leads us towards deeper understanding of our inter-dependence.

September 17

Joan Cook

'The Meaning of Life....'

Acknowledging the importance of the cycles of life as we celebrate one of the most important festivals of most Church calendars, the festival of Harvest thanksgiving. As usual we shall be collecting for the Homeless Project at St Catharine's. Please see page 9 for the items particularly requested by St Catharine's this year.

Joan Cook, our Lay Celebrant and Lay Preacher, is a member of St Mark's and President of the Scottish Unitarian Association

September 24

Rev Brian Cooper

From the Local to the Global

An Inter-faith service marking the United Nations International Day of Peace

Rev Brian Cooper is a retired Baptist minister

October 1

Rev John Clifford

'If You Change Nothing, Nothing Will Change'

As the theme for his sermon, John Clifford will be using Luther's courageous posting of ninety-five theses for debate as background to the idea that 'If you change nothing, nothing will change.'

Rev John Clifford is a retired Unitarian minister, a member of St Mark's and a past Unitarian General Assembly President