

JANUARY 2019 NEWS FROM SEI



Residential Weekend. The December weekend was busy, and full of guests! Peter Marsh, Treasurer at St John's Perth, led us through the complexities of being a charity trustee with great skill. On Saturday morning the whole cohort was challenged by hearing about the missional work of the Revd Dr Wesley White in Glasgow. The Revd Dr Michael Paterson looked at *'Soul and Role in Context'* as part of the Level 5 Reflective Practice module, and the Revd Graham Taylor, Chaplain, spent time with the student body at Chapter. It was also good to have the Revd Moira Grigor with us (shown here talking to Richard Tiplady) throughout the weekend. Moira is the Diocesan Advisor of a final year ordinand from Moray, Ross and Caithness. The weekend culminated in a URC Communion presided at by the Revd Dr John McNeil Scott, Principal of the Scottish United Reformed and Congregational College.

Ordination: The Revd Margaret Pedersen was ordained priest on Saturday 1 December by the Rt Revd Dr John Armes, Bishop of Edinburgh, in Holy Trinity Melrose, the charge in which she is serving her curacy. This was the last of the ordinations and licensings of the 2017 and 2018 'Leavers', appropriately on the final day of the church's year. We take this opportunity once again to thank all the congregations which have hosted services and have generously given the offerings therefrom to the SEI Training or McQueen Funds, and to the many people who have supported the candidates in prayer or by their attendance at the services: the candidates' sending and receiving charges, people amongst whom they have done placements and their fellow students.



Graduation: Final year diaconal candidate Jean Souter (Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney) recently completed an MTh at Kings College Aberdeen, supervised by Professor John Swinton, submitting as part of the degree a dissertation on Funeral ministry entitled 'Who cares for the bereaved?' The photograph shows her at her graduation in November. Congratulations, Jean!



Book Grant: we are delighted to announce that we have been awarded a substantial book grant by the Rebecca Hussey Book Charity which 'provides religious books to institutions in the United Kingdom', especially those that have little or no existing funding for a library. SEI applied for the money to enable us to populate with books one of the new courses we have initiated this academic year, 'Developing Ministry and Mission in Context'. This module is a general introduction to some questions about ministry and mission in contemporary Western society, identifying key social and cultural trends and considering their implications for theology, mission and ministry.

SEI Training Fund: The following congregations and individuals have given generous donations to the Fund over the past month, and are warmly thanked for their kindness: Holy Trinity and St Barnabas Paisley (Glasgow and Galloway); the Revd Sally Gorton (Glasgow and Galloway); the Revd Lorna Mortis (Edinburgh); the Revd Canon Robin Paisley (Glasgow and Galloway); St Mary's, Carden Place (Aberdeen and Orkney); Holy Trinity Melrose (Edinburgh); St Mary's Dunblane (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane); Holy Trinity Ayr (Glasgow and Galloway). We are also extremely grateful to the Revd Professor Gordon Graham (Edinburgh) for the consignment of theology books which he kindly gifted to SEI recently, the sale of which raised a substantial amount for the Fund, and likewise to the Revd Dr Michael Paterson (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) for the generous donation of clerical shirts, sold likewise at the last RWE.

‘Extra’ placement opportunities: SEI seeks to enable students to experience as many ‘extra’ placement opportunities as possible throughout their years of formation, in addition to the standard annual parish attachment. This year one student will shadow Canadian deacons for six weeks in the summer, while the three New College students will travel to Wittenberg and Prague. Third year ordinand **Harriet Oxley** (second right) recently spent time with the Revd Canon Dr Sarah Hills and the Community of the Cross of Nails, Coventry Cathedral, learning about reconciliation ministry. The *Newsletter* will in future endeavour to report on these varied experiences. Here we hear about one such.



A new short course on ministry among older people was run in the autumn at Cliff College, Derbyshire in association with The Bible Reading Fellowship. Feedback from the event dubbed it ‘inspirational’, ‘excellent’ and ‘affirming’, and it is to be run again next year. Third year diaconal candidate **Kathryn Sanderson** (Diocese of Moray, Ross and Caithness) was part of the first cohort to study the course, one of a group of twenty-six students from Britain, Europe and Canada.



Kathryn writes: ‘Our course designer and leader Debbie Thrower mapped out the programme for the week comprising aspects of the spirituality of ageing, the spiritual care of people living with dementia and the enhancement of pastoral skills. In addition to informative presentations, discussions within our groups and the sharing of wide-ranging experience in ministering to older people enabled the establishment of a network of invaluable links. I came away with a much increased awareness of current thinking and confidence in my ability to seek to resource and offer ministry to older people. My experience of being resident among the Derbyshire hills, meeting college staff and course members was a most enjoyable one’.

The photo shows from left: Ian White, Senior Tutor and Programme Leader of Short Courses at Cliff College; Debbie Thrower, leader of the Bible Reading Fellowship's The Gift of Years and of this inaugural Short Course; Kathryn Sanderson; Julia Burton-Jones, Dementia Specialist Project Officer for the Rochester Diocese.

‘Regular’ placement opportunities: Final Year students engage in a year-long placement with a single congregation, learning about the exercise of pastoral care in its many and various forms both within the congregation and beyond. Third year ordinand **Annie Hughes** (Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) is currently on placement in Perth, learning from the congregation of St John the Baptist and the Rector, the Revd Graham Taylor. Annie writes: ‘Last November ‘Eat 2 Go’ in Perth invited Revd Graham Taylor to bless their pizza parlour. There emerged that morning a blessed, gentle unity. We were part of the great family of things with a sort of sacramental conviviality in our differences – two Scots reverently and joyfully worshipping alongside a Sri Lankan and a Latvian. After the sprinkling, Graham offered them the remaining Jordan water. A little dish was fetched, thoroughly cleaned, filled and placed safely on a shelf. Such tender care was a joy to behold. Whose was the greater blessing? Graham and I were so very deeply touched’.

