

## OCTOBER 2020 NEWS FROM SEI

**Orientation Week:** The photo below shows a screenshot of the SEI student community and their Chaplain, Canon Graham Taylor (centre), during Chapter on the closing day of the week's online event. The shot was kindly taken by Dr Lesley Penny (top left), Chair of Chapter, hence her expression of great concentration!

The three Small Group Leaders – Colin Page, Rachael Wright and Lesley Penny - worked tirelessly through the week to welcome and help acclimatise the six new students: Ferdinand von Prondzynski and Godwin Chimara from the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney; Tony Clapham from Argyll and The Isles; Pat Ellison and Blayne Peacock from Moray, Ross and Caithness; and Tim Hatton from Edinburgh. Here five members of the community, representing each year group and the staff, offer their reflections on the week.



**Tony Clapham, First Year SEC ordinand, Diocese of Argyll and The Isles:** A 'virtual' Induction week, utilising technology to facilitate as much of what the normal induction week should hold as possible, was always going to be a different introduction to the life and community of the SEI. However, the strong sense of supportive, prayerful community was clearly and demonstrably evident from even before the Induction week started, through the range of emails and phone calls of welcome, and continued as much as technology could facilitate through the week – and beyond! Orientation Week proved to be a supportive and encouraging 'baptism of fire' for me in starting this new chapter in the journey of preparation, of formation and of equipping for service. I feel very blessed and excited to be, in God's providence, part of the wider SEI community at this extraordinary time in the life of God's Church, and look forward to our journey of formation and learning together ahead.

**Louise Sanders, Second Year URC ordinand:** Wow! Does this mean I have started my second year already? Does it mean I am supposed to know what I'm doing? Orientation Week 'online' would not have been how any of us would have liked it to be, but somehow, when it needed to happen, it just did! We missed the opportunity to see one another face-to-face and welcome the 'newbies' into the community, but through the wonders of technology we managed to do it online.

Having been there in person last year when I made such good friends, it was great to see everyone again, albeit on a screen. The sessions were planned well with lots of breaks and the technology was mastered by all.

Would I like all the residentials to be online? Definitely not! But the SEI made this work when it had to!

**Sandra Wright, Third Year SEC Lay Reader candidate, Diocese of Edinburgh:** Orientation Week 2020 in my third and final year was very different. Covid-19 restrictions meant all our interactions were online, no face-to-face introductions, no tour of the facilities, no gathering in the Gerard Room for shared social evenings, and no physical hugs! However, I think the staff managed an enjoyable, well-balanced online programme. Returning students organised and led the welcome of Freshers at the SEI 101 session, which allowed time for returning students to share their experiences and advise new students on what to expect from the coming year. We had lots of fun getting to know each other in one-to-one online discussions about our 'Desert Island Disc' choices!

I think Orientation Week this year showed how important it is to be adaptable. When well planned, these online interactions can be just as fruitful, building bonds with new students and reigniting old friendships. We still had the sense of prayer, community and fellowship, despite the physical distance between us.



**Linda Harrison, SEI's Administrator,** held the week together behind the scenes. She writes as follows: 'The heart-sinking feeling experienced at having to move the October Residential Weekend online swiftly turned to gratitude as we realised that here was another opportunity to run our 'tried and tested' model for online residentials!

'The energy put into the earlier online Discernment process with four candidates (now new students), was well worth it. It gave great joy to see the encouragement offered by all of the continuing students as they enfolded the new students into the community. It was an even greater joy to read the feedback; clearly all had felt included as far as the constraints of the virtual world allowed.

'Technical glitches? Yes, inevitable. You can set everything up to flow smoothly across a whole week in theory, but the world-wide web, individual computers and remote broadband might decide not to play! Unfortunately, some required to switch cameras off to improve audio, some dropped out of Zoom and had to be re-admitted, and staff seamlessly picked up when a student leading Morning Prayer entered in the chat-box that their connection was breaking up, allowing them to leave, return, and carry on as if nothing had happened. We put 'plan B' in place for the final act of worship when the person sharing their screen experienced connection issues during the amazing Ceilidh the evening before. Plan B was not required, but you definitely need team work to overcome the vagaries experienced online!

'A whole module was transferred from BigBlueButton to Zoom mid-week. As well as background high speed modification, an interesting discussion with Richard ensued around settings for future Zoom recordings. Another difficult-to-find-time-for learning curve was thus addressed during Orientation Week, alongside the students' formation.'

**Rev Dr Richard Tiplady**, Director of Mixed Mode Training, writes: ‘The challenge facing me and my colleague Mike Hull – how to deliver 20 hours of lectures online during Orientation Week without turning all our students into ‘Zombies’? The solution – we’ll make them do the work instead! In my course on *Mission and Evangelism* this meant breaking up the students into small groups, giving each of them a chapter from the course textbook (Stephen Spencer’s *SCM Study Guide To Christian Mission*), and giving them the task of presenting that chapter and leading a discussion with their fellow students. As expected, they rose to the task admirably, leading sessions on topics as diverse as liturgy as mission, the importance of preaching the Word of God and invoking personal faith, the transformation of society by Christian values and principles, and the formation of communities of hope in a postmodern society. Sometimes this lecturing thing feels a bit like Bonfire Night – light the blue touch paper, retire to a safe distance, and enjoy the show!’

**Church in the New Normal? An Introduction to Pioneer Ministry** Back in those long-ago early days of lockdown, I spent time with the Mixed Mode students, thinking through what the implications were for them in their placement churches, *writes Dr Richard Tiplady*. Having taken a Mission Entrepreneurship module in autumn 2019, I invited them to apply the insights from that module to the new conditions (because if Mission Entrepreneurship, aka Pioneer Ministry, is about anything, it is about ‘starting things from scratch’. And in March/April this year, that’s what it felt like we were all doing).

Their responses were so creative and varied that it got me wondering whether there might be anyone else out there who would welcome the opportunity to use the ideas and principles behind pioneer ministry, not just to navigate the uncertainties of lockdown but to consider what church and mission might look like in the much-vaunted ‘New Normal’ that we were going to emerge into someday. The Provincial Mission Board met online at around the same time to discuss the same questions and so, somewhat tentatively, I offered to run a truncated version of the above module (cut down to three 1½ hour sessions) in June/July as a joint initiative of the Mission Board and SEI. I decided to keep the numbers small (aiming for 8-12 people), partly to ensure there would be plenty of time for discussion, interaction, and the sharing of ideas, and partly because I wasn’t sure how much interest there would be.



I was somewhat surprised when the first course was fully booked within 3 hours of going online! A second iteration, which also ran in June/July, was advertised the next day and was fully booked in 4 hours. I soon had a waiting list, and a third iteration ran in August/September, with a 4th round running in September/October.

The course covers the basics – an introduction to what is meant by ‘pioneer ministry’ followed by looking at how to get started, and ending with how to integrate these ideas into the life of a local church. I was able to share from my own experience of a pioneer project from almost 20 years ago, and we were joined by SEC ordinand Josh Cockayne who shared lessons from the *fresh expression of church* that he and his wife founded in York before they came to Scotland. About 40% of the course participants were SEC clergy, with the remainder being split equally between SEC lay pioneers/aspiring pioneers, and ecumenical participants from the Church of Scotland, the United Reformed Church, the Methodist Church, and independent and Baptist churches.

Feedback from course participants said that the following things were helpful: “making me read chapters and articles, a way of starting to get to know the literature”; “connecting with others in transitional ministry”; “the course and reading really made me think, it was like a breath of fresh air in my thoughts”; “it was really good to hear all the different voices and how they have already been using pioneering ministry in their communities”; “I was particularly interested in learning about both *fresh expressions* within more traditional church communities and the potential for offering something completely different”; and “I found the real examples of what’s been tried really helpful”. In most cases, people have now gone back to their churches to share their learning, to explore how to dream some dreams, and to develop some ideas and initial projects. I am continuing to meet with a small group of course participants on a monthly basis. At the moment, no further rounds of the course are on offer, but if there is sufficient interest I would be more than happy to do this. To register your interest, please contact me at [DMM@scotland.anglican.org](mailto:DMM@scotland.anglican.org)

Rev Dr Richard Tiplady, Director of Mixed Mode Training



**Last chance to register!** This year’s SEI Lecture, the fifth in the series of annual lectures sponsored by the Scottish Episcopal Institute, will be given by Dr Cathy Ross, Director, Pioneer Mission Leadership Training Centre for CMS (Church Mission Society) and Canon Theologian, Leicester Cathedral. Dr Ross, one of the world’s leading missiologists, is a prolific writer; her published works include *Women with a Mission*, *Mission in the 21st Century*, and *Pioneering Spirituality*. The lecture is entitled ‘Mission and Formation in a Time of Lament and Hope: Reflections After Covid-19’. It will be held on Thursday 29 October from 17.00 – 18.00 and will be delivered via Zoom, with Q&A to follow. A telephone service will also be available to allow those who do not have internet access to listen to the Lecture.

Registration will be via Eventbrite – click on [this link](#) – and will close on Thursday 22 October, one week before the lecture.

**A first!** On 7 September, SEI joined with the Scottish United Reformed and Congregational College (SURCC) to deliver training for ‘Placement Supervisors’, those clergy and laity who will be mentoring a student on attachment this coming year. This is the first time such training has been done jointly, and it proved to be a great success. SURCC Principal Revd Dr John Scott led participants in a thoughtful consideration of the context and of the expectations of supervisor and students alike, and SEI Principal Anne Tomlinson followed that with a consideration of reflective practice in the context of Field Education.

While Covid-19 will affect how these operate in practice, placements for SEI students this coming year are set to range across a wide variety of settings: prisons, hospitals and hospices, cathedrals, rural and urban charges, and foodbanks. Several offer experience of working with other traditions and faith communities. The locations are equally various, not simply reaching to the very north of Scotland – St Magnus Lerwick and St Colman’s Burray - but with one student spending six weeks in Israel/Palestine (see below page 7).

**Two lay learning/CMD opportunities** (i) *Leading In Uncertain Times*. The much-vaunted post-Covid ‘new normal’ seems to be a long time coming. We live with continued uncertainty and frequent changes in government policy. Our lives feel as though they are on hold. Uncertainty and enforced change feels like a metaphor for our times and for our churches. What if this prolonged uncertainty is the new normal? How then can we lead God’s people well, charting a path when there isn’t a roadmap? As the Spanish proverb puts it, “My friend, there is no path. We make the path as we walk”. But which way do we walk?



These and other questions will be considered in a 5-week online course on *Leading in Uncertain Times* that will be offered in April/May 2021. To indicate your interest and receive more information when it is available, including how to register, please contact Richard Tiplady on [DMM@scotland.anglican.org](mailto:DMM@scotland.anglican.org)

Rev Dr Richard Tiplady, Director of Mixed Mode Training



(ii) *Acting like a Christian*: What does it mean to act like a Christian? Or, to put it another way, what’s characteristic of Christian behaviour? How’s acting like a Christian different from acting like everyone else? Jesus says that everyone will know his disciples by their love (John 13.35). How are his disciples known in the twenty-first century by that criterion? For five Mondays in Lent (22 February and 1, 8, 15, 22 March 2021) we’ll consider these questions. We’ll look to the sources of Christian ethics: to God’s revelation in the Bible and in the world. We’ll look to constructively critical voices from scientists, philosophers and theologians. We’ll try to articulate principles to guide Christian

behaviour as individuals and communities, to identify what place such principles have in the public square as opposed to private lives, and to develop some facility to apply such principles to contemporary ethical questions. [DoS@scotland.anglican.org](mailto:DoS@scotland.anglican.org)

Revd Dr Michael Hull, Director of Studies

**Focus on pilgrimage in text ...** The Autumn 2020 issue of the Scottish Episcopal Institute [Journal](#) lends attention to pilgrimage. Two years ago, the College of Bishops designated 2021 a Year of Provincial Pilgrimage, although the concept will now require a slight revision following the restrictions placed on our lives by coronavirus. The Rt Revd Anne Dyer, Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney, lead bishop in this initiative, said at the time of the announcement: “In this designated year of pilgrimage we will be encouraging as many people as possible to make a holy journey of some kind. This can include taking part in an organised pilgrimage or spending time individually or in groups simply focusing on our own spiritual journeys.”



Whatever the effect of coronavirus restrictions on the Year of Provincial Pilgrimage, this issue of the *Journal* is conceived as a resource for all who consider pilgrimage in one way or another. It includes papers from a Conference at the Church of St Margaret of Scotland, Aberdeen, in September 2018, organised by the Church in Society Committee of the Scottish Episcopal Church. The aims of the Conference were to review the history of pilgrimage in the northern part of Scotland, to assess its contribution to Scottish heritage and culture, and to look ahead to how it might continue to contribute to the development and maintenance of Christianity in Scotland. To those papers — originally presented by David Atkinson, Emsley Nimmo, John MacFarlane, Stuart Little, Nick Cooke, Alasdair Coles, Richard Murray and Wendy Lloyd — this issue adds a paper by Richard Tiplady who considers the blessings of mountain pilgrimages

The *Journal* hopes to continue to publish on the topic of pilgrimage in its Winter 2020 issue and throughout 2021. It also hopes, in addition to its Summer 2020 issue, to continue to be a resource regarding church, ministry and the coronavirus. To that end, this issue concludes with an article by Rafael Vilaça Epifany Costa, of the Anglican Church of Brazil, regarding online councils and new ways of church practice in these challenging times.

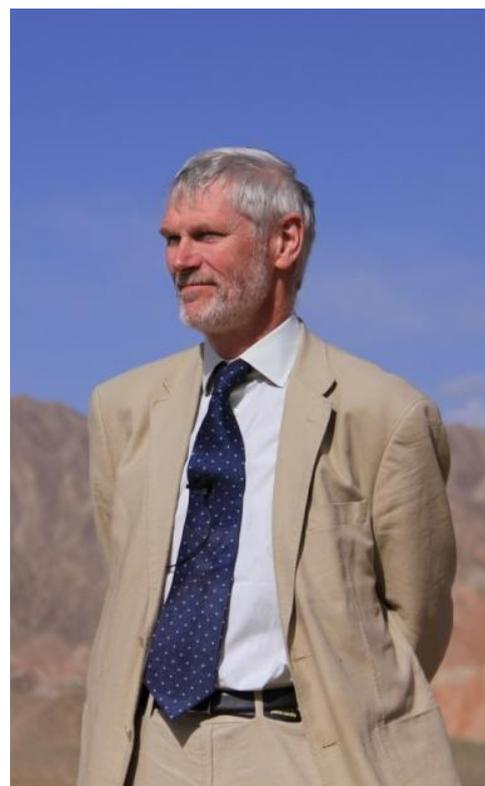
Revd Dr Michael Hull, Convenor, SEI Journal Editorial Board

**and walking the talk ....** Janet Spence, Diocese of Moray, Ross and Caithness ordinand, writes: ‘Pilgrimage: a journey, physical and/or spiritual, often towards a significant spiritual landmark. For my husband and I, 2021 is indeed planned as a pilgrimage year. Our original intention was to walk the [Chemin d’Assise](#), from Vézelay, France to Assisi, Italy: 1500km; approx. 70 days of walking; two countries; camping en route. But plans grow, and our three-month walk is now to be preceded by a six-week programme at the [Tantur Ecumenical Institute](#), Jerusalem, with support from the SEC through the St James Fund and Global Partnerships Committee, as well as the British Trust for Tantur.



‘The Institute, an ‘oasis of learning, community and hospitality’, is committed to ecumenism, interfaith dialogue, and peacebuilding, and offers an opportunity to weave together classroom instruction in e.g. Old and New Testament, and Spirituality of the Middle East, with immersion in the land, its history, current social and political climate, and all its peoples, historical and contemporary. September 2021 will then see the beginning of my 3rd year of training as an Ordinand with the SEC, where the journeying will continue.’

**Church and the Academy: New Season** ‘Church and the Academy is a group that meets once a month during university semesters, drawn from people in the churches and universities,’ writes Canon David Jasper (right). ‘It has for some years been based in the University of Glasgow and is open to everyone. Now, as a result of Covid-19, we meet by Zoom which means that people can attend wherever they are. Our first meeting this academic year took place on 24th September when 35 people attended. It began with talks by Canon Anne Tomlinson, Principal of the Scottish Episcopal Institute, and Professor Scott Spurlock, Head of Theology and Religious Studies in the University of Glasgow, and their subject was the place of theology as it is taught in the Church and in the University. What was clear was the complexity of the word ‘theology’ as both an intellectual exercise and also something grounded in the fabric of the whole life of the Church and the society in which we live. A lively discussion followed from which it was clear that theological thinking is alive and well, and ever closer co-operation between the churches and universities can only be for the good.



‘The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 28th October at 5.30, when the speaker will be Dr Sara Afshari, a leading Iranian Christian scholar who gained her doctorate at the University of Edinburgh.

‘For further information consult our [website](#) If you wish we will be pleased to add your name and email to our mailing list. For the time being we will continue with Zoom, but we hope that it will not be too long before we can return to the University of Glasgow. Meetings are an opportunity to meet new people and develop links between churches and academic institutions in the context of lively and informed debate on current religious issues.’

Canon David Jasper



**Congratulations!** Following the recent Common Awards CA Board of Examiners’ meeting we are delighted to announce that Dr Jennifer Floether has been awarded a Graduate Diploma with Merit, Beki Cansdale a BA (Hons), Class II Division 1 and Dr Jaime Wright a BA (Hons), Class I. Beki and Jaime will be eligible to attend ‘Congregation’ at Durham University, the University’s graduation ceremony.

Jennifer, shown left, is Lay Reader at St Salvador’s, Diocese of Edinburgh. Her dissertation, ‘*The impact of Christology on the ministry and mission of a congregation: a case study*’, involved her conducting in-depth interviews with church members from a city-centre congregation, the analysis of which formed the central part of her thesis. A useful local contribution to a growing field of research into ‘ordinary theology’.

**November’s Newsletter** will feature the services at which **Beki Cansdale, Josh Cockayne, Gary Clink, Russell Duncan** and **David Todd** will be ordained Deacon. Please keep them in your prayers at this time.