

## SCOTTISH CHURCHES DISABILITY GROUP NEWSLETTER

### Summer 2017



Welcome to our summer newsletter. We hope that you are enjoying the good weather at home or are planning pleasant holidays soon.

During the spring the SCDG Committee members have been busy:

- planning our autumn conference and Annual General Meeting;
- progressing work on a new website.
- having a demonstration of hearing aids;
- learning about the work of Faith in Older People;

Find out more about all these activities in this newsletter.....

### Breaking Through Barriers!



**Book now!**

**Our Autumn Conference will be on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017  
at Dalziel St Andrew's Church, Motherwell  
Guest Speaker-Jeremy Balfour M.S.P.  
(Chair of Cross-party Group on Disability)**

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**Representatives of the following organisations  
will tell how people break barriers in their churches.**

- **Do You Hear What I Hear?**
  - **Prospects**
  - **Torch Trust**
- **Disability and Jesus**

**Collect a copy of a new pack for churches on learning disabilities**

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The programme and booking form will be sent out with this newsletter  
and they are available on our website: [www.scdg.org.uk](http://www.scdg.org.uk).

## Come and join us at the AGM!

We hope that you will be able to come to our AGM at the end of the conference programme. Thanks to volunteers who responded to our call for new Committee members, we now have nominations for our next Chairperson and Treasurer.

We are still looking for a volunteer for the role of Secretary, which will not include editing the newsletter as this will be a separate role. Further information about the Secretary's role is on our website. Please send your offers of help or suggestions for nominees to the current Secretary at [barbara.graham74@btinternet.com](mailto:barbara.graham74@btinternet.com).

## Our new website: [www.scdg.org.uk](http://www.scdg.org.uk)

Yes – we have joined the 21<sup>st</sup> century and we have a website! Visit it from July onwards and give us feedback. Your ideas for future development are welcome – but remember that we don't have an IT team to make an instant response!

If you are a Facebook user go to our Facebook page - Scottish Churches Disability Group - and give us a like and please share with your friends.

## News for the Deaf community



**Action on Hearing Loss** is the largest UK charity helping people with hearing loss and tinnitus. Their website and publications give helpful information on how to choose suitable hearing aids and how to make best use of them. Their free **Hear to Help service** offers drop in centres and home visits to answer questions and help with cleaning of earmoulds and replacement tubing and batteries.

Contact Action on Hearing Loss at [www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk](http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk).



0808-808-0123

Textphone: 0808-808-9000

## IS YOUR CHURCH DEMENTIA FRIENDLY?

Maureen O'Neill, Director of Faith in Older People, tells us about FiOP projects:

Society is much more aware of dementia and its impact on individuals, families and friends and there are strong movements to help our communities to become dementia friendly. This applies to the communities in which we live, but Faith in Older People (FiOP) wants to ensure that this is particularly related to our faith communities, which play a vital part in the lives of many older people.

We know that congregations try to be welcoming to people with dementia, but we want to support them to develop ways in which everyone is able to participate in worship, prayer and the social aspects of belonging to a faith community.

Our project encourages people to talk about dementia and their understanding of what it is. Dementia often feels frightening and people become anxious about knowing what to do or say around those with dementia. We want people to be aware of the issues and to think about practical steps that can be taken. They can raise questions that need to be answered and overcome fears about communicating; coping with the changes in an individual; enabling people to continue to contribute and think about how it is affecting those who are caring for them.

The basis for our work is a framework created by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. This looks at:

- PLACE            How does the physical environment support people with dementia?  
Signage, lighting, flooring.
- PEOPLE           How does the congregation respond to the needs of people with dementia and what support is available?
- NETWORKS      How do you plan and collaborate?
- RESOURCES     Are there sufficient services, facilities and resources available?

FiOP aims to draw on the excellent work of a number of organisations and to bring it together in a guide, similar to the approach taken for ECO friendly congregations, using an audit tool of bronze, silver and gold levels. This approach considers the capacity of the individuals within the community and congregations' ability to respond to identified needs. The guide will be practical and sympathetic. Part of the discussion will be about how it could be best presented, hard copy or on-line or a mixture so that it is easily accessible and used on a regular basis.

The intention is to pilot the approach to make sure that it fits what congregations need. We can evolve the approach over time and would welcome the opportunity to visit congregations or to hold seminars, individually or on an ecumenical basis. We need to share our ideas and progress so that people with dementia can remain within the church community enjoying the friendship, routines and rituals which have meant so much to them.

The project will look at effective use of IT to bring the church to people who cannot attend; to advise on adapting worship to suit the needs of people with dementia; and how can we support our pastoral visitors to be skilled, confident and comfortable about visiting people in their own home or in a care home. Taking as our focus the individual with dementia, the aim is to build an enabling community around them.

For further information or to arrange a visit please contact Maureen O'Neill, Director, Faith in Older People, email: [director@fiop.org.uk](mailto:director@fiop.org.uk) .

Prospects in Scotland has a new look on its website at <https://www.livability.org.uk/prospects-together/our-work-in-scotland/> . Check there for details of current projects and information on events:



**Abernethy Activity Weekend  
Friday 15th - Sunday 17th Sept 2017**

Join us for a weekend of adventure in Abernethy! We will have various activities, such as canoeing and archery, bible teaching, fun and of course friendship. For more information, or to book your place please contact [trish.archibald@prospects.org.uk](mailto:trish.archibald@prospects.org.uk) .



**Prospects in Scotland Retreat  
7th - 9th September 2018**

Join us for a Retreat weekend in Millport, isle of Cumbrae. This will be a time of real blessing as we take time out of the busyness of everyday life to relax, refresh and unwind. It will be a chance to spend time with God and with one another.  
For more details please contact: [ivyb@prospects.org.uk](mailto:ivyb@prospects.org.uk)  
Tel.: 07827 939 520

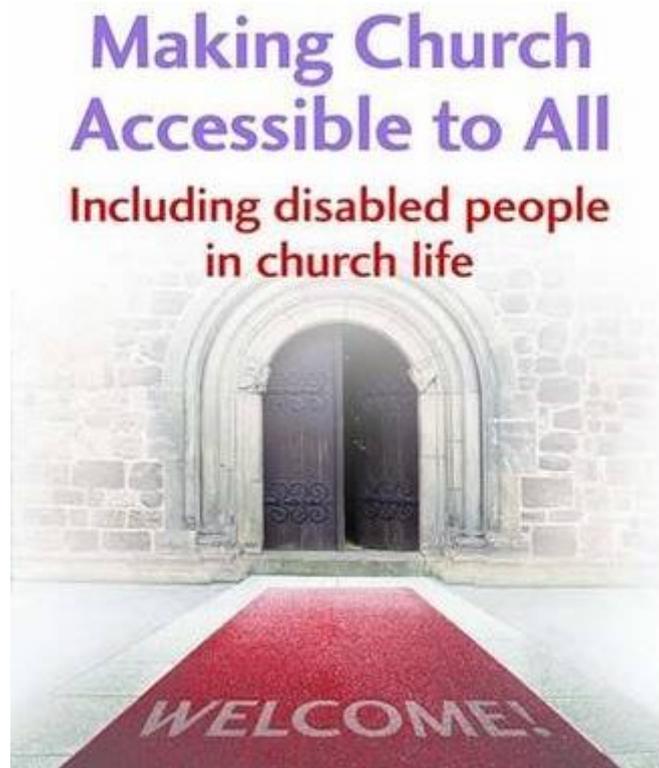
## Book reviews

Inclusive Church is a charity which began in the Anglican Church to confront discrimination against minority groups. It now has partners in other denominations. Its latest publications feature Disability in general and Mental Health. These helpful books were published by Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd in 2014.

Each book contains personal experiences of people who have felt excluded from churches because of their circumstances, a section on the Theology of Disability and a useful list of resources and practical advice. In the book on Disability the Theology section is written by John Hull, Emeritus Professor of Religious Education at Birmingham University, who is blind. In the other book the co-authors of the Theology of Mental Health chapter are Jean Vanier, founder of L'Arche communities which include people with learning disabilities, and John Swinton, Professor of Divinity and Religious Studies at Aberdeen University.

## Share your news

If you would like to advertise events or invite people to join you for a chat, please send your news to the Secretary for the newsletter or by announcement in an e-mail. Contact details: Barbara Graham at [barbara.graham74@btinternet.com](mailto:barbara.graham74@btinternet.com) or 42, Annanhill Avenue, Kilmarnock, KA1 2LQ. Tel. 01563-522108



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