

SCOTTISH CHURCHES DISABILITY GROUP NEWSLETTER



November 2019



In November our thoughts turn to the season of Advent as we prepare to celebrate the most wonderful gift which was ever given to the world – the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. As you journey through the dark days of winter, remember the promise from the Bible: “***The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine.***” [Isaiah 9:2]

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



The AGM was held at Saturday, 21 September, at St John’s Scottish Episcopal Church, Edinburgh. Thanks were expressed to three members who have completed a term of office after giving valuable service: Angus Morrison as President, Dan Harper as Chairman and Helena Cant as Events Organiser.

The new office bearers joining the Committee in 2019-20 are:

President: Jeremy Balfour, MSP, Convener of the Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Disability, formerly a Baptist Church minister

Chairman: David Nicholson, Deacon in the Church of Scotland

Vice-Chairman: Paul Goode, member of the Church of Scotland’s former Learning Disabilities Working Group

New Committee member: Ashleigh Milroy

Following the elections Tom Sutcliffe gave a presentation on the work of Edinburgh and Lothians Roofbreakers Network. Guest speaker Ian White’s presentation about the Inspiration Orchestra was very well received. Details of the Orchestra’s next performance follow on the next page.



Inspiration Orchestra



Get into the festive mood at concerts by **Inspiration Orchestra** at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 16th and Tuesday 17th December at St Matthews Church, Tay Street, Perth PH1 5TF. It's free, with an optional donation to support the Orchestra.

Follow the Orchestra at <http://theinspirationorchestra.com/>

Edinburgh & Lothians Roofbreakers Network

The aim of this group is “to ensure that disabled people can belong and contribute to their churches”. It is a local branch of a Christian charity called Through the Roof, a title which refers to the paralysed man who was lowered through a roof by his friends to meet Jesus. You are invited to join the group’s next meeting.....

When? Saturday 9 November, 1-4 pm

What for? A simple lunch will be provided at 1.00. You will hear from Janet Eardley of Through the Roof and current Roofbreakers, and share experiences in Edinburgh churches. The meeting finishes with a time of prayer.

Where? Barclay Viewforth Church, 1 Wright’s Houses, Edinburgh, EH10 4 HR
The Church is on Bruntsfield Links, on many bus routes. Going up the hill from the King’s Theatre you will see the church on the left hand side. The level access door is at the left side of the church, next to the grass.

Reply as soon as possible to help with catering.

Contact: Elaine Rumney elaine_rumney@blueyonder.co.uk

Edinburgh Nativity & Carol Concert

Edinburgh City Centre Churches will join in an open air concert at the Mound at 3 p.m. on Sunday, 1st December. BSL signing will be provided. There will be an alternative indoor venue if the weather is bad.



Prospects Across Scotland



Come and join the celebration at an Advent service for everyone.
We Belong to One Another - in Community and in Communion.

"Come and celebrate the great diversity of God's people
and share the bread of life with one another."

Led by Very Rev Dr John Chalmers and Rev Roddy Hamilton.

Sunday 1st December at 3 o'clock
at Bearsden New Kilpatrick Church
28 Kirk Place, Bearsden, Glasgow G61 3RT



St John's Church, Albany Church for the Deaf and St Andrew's and St George's Church in Edinburgh collaborate in running a Messy Church event with BSL signing for families. These events are once a month on Saturday mornings with the location alternating between St Johns and St Andrew's and St George's Churches.

For details contact office@stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk or tel. 0131 229 7565.

News from around Scotland

Appletree Community, Auchterarder

Appletree Community is a parent-led vision of a small, quality community for lifelong care provision for people with complex and profound care needs and their carers, drawing around it wider community, families and friends.

Kate Sainsbury developed this vision when her son, Louis', care home closed in 2017. He was traumatically sent to Hartlepool, 250 miles away, where he lost all his friends, family, familiar surroundings from his care home in Glasgow and his family

home in Perthshire. He was brought back to a disastrous arrangement in Perth that lasted only seven weeks. He was then detained under the Mental Health Act and admitted to the locked Learning Disability Assessment Unit, Carseview, Dundee.

Using funds from the medical negligence settlement she achieved in 2006, Kate has bought premises near Auchterarder to make the vision a reality. An Open Day was held on Saturday 19th October, where visitors saw the suitability of the converted steading, built around a central courtyard, for purpose. The plan is to work in collaboration with a national care provider, who will take responsibility for staffing, supported by The Dany Foundation charity. The name of the charity comes from the founding story of l'Arche. Jean Vanier took three young men home on his first night at Trolly, Philippe, Raphael and Dany, but by morning, had to take Dany back, as he was too difficult to manage. Kate saw the similarity between Dany and her own son, Louis and asked if she might call the charity after Dany. Jean gave his blessing.

The hope is that in time, Appletree Community will be a place of storytelling, art, dance, for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD), and their families and friends, where friendship, can develop over food and sharing.



**Barn, garden and
roundel at
APPLETREE
COMMUNITY**

In Together Church – what is IT all about?



A Perthshire group has launched a project to help churches to be better at working with children with Additional Special Needs and their families. Chris White has sent the following news:

After consultation events, listening and much prayer, we now have three clear aims:

- To provide training to churches and Christian faith groups to help them build inclusive communities where children with ASN and their families can belong.

- To provide a pastoral listening service to parents of children with additional support needs (probably starting in Perth and Kinross initially).
- To start a monthly gathering, a missional expression of church for children with ASN and their families (starting in Spring 2020).

Where we go from here – 3 things...

- **Prayer sessions...** We are hosting 2 prayer sessions where we invite as many of you as possible to join us in praying for **In Together Church**. These are on Thursday 7 November 2019 at 7.30pm and Tuesday 26 November 2019 at 2pm. Both are at Anne Stott's house – 2 Cragganmore Place, Perth, PH1 3GJ.
- **Growing the team...** We are looking for someone with a strong prayer/prophetic gifting to join us on the Steering Team. This would probably require 2-3 hours a week, meeting up fortnightly to pray and be involved in events we run. If this could be you, please get in touch with Chris White.
- **Monthly gatherings...** We will be organising dates for Spring 2020 and we are looking for a team to commit to the first 3 of these as we launch In Together Church. Could you be part of this?

If you wish to know more about In Together Church, please contact Chris White at intogetherchurch@hotmail.com .

<h2>Useful resources</h2>

Disability and Spirituality

'Disability and Spirituality: Recovering Wholeness' by William C Gaventa was published by Baylor University Press, 2018, in the Studies in Religion, Theology and Disability Series.

John Swinton, Professor of Practical Theology, University of Aberdeen, wrote of this book, 'In this warm, practical, and challenging book Gaventa opens up the area of spirituality and disability in a way that not only increases our knowledge, but challenges us in deep ways to change our practices. A wonderfully clear overview of the historical and contemporary developments within the area of spirituality and disability'.

Rev Bill Gaventa is an American Baptist minister, Chair of the National Collaborative on Faith and Disability and Director of the Summer Institute on Theology and Disability. He was in Glasgow in August for the World Congress of the International Association of Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD). The conference included a session on Spirituality and Complex and Profound Disabilities, where he participated, with parents, carers, academics, managers, in discussion led by Kate Sainsbury, Facilitator of Appletree Community. Anybody interested in taking forward a virtual group to develop thinking in this area, please contact Kate Sainsbury at kating@globalnet.co.uk .

Learning Disabilities Newsletter

Church of Scotland Newsletters are available again. If you wish to receive the Learning Disabilities Newsletter, go to the Church of Scotland newsletter webpage. This quarterly newsletter is packed with good ideas and new materials to help develop your community of belonging where all are welcome and included.
https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news_and_events/newsletters

Neurodiversity, Faith and Church

A member of SCDG sent the following account of an event which she attended.

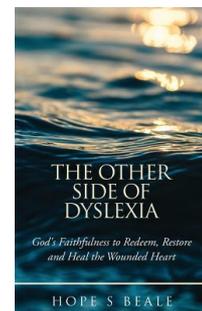
“I recently went to a conference in London on neurodiversity, faith and church. It was run jointly by an organisation called Inclusive Church and St Martin-in-the-Fields Church. Out of 80 delegates, I believe that I was the only one from Scotland.

‘Neurodiversity’ is a term used to describe dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, autism and Tourette’s. However, as one speaker pointed out, these conditions are **part of** neurodiversity, not neurodiversity. So maybe **neuro-untypical** (in contrast to neuro-typical) would be a more accurate term.

I discovered three things at the conference that I’d like to share.”

- 1) A book called ‘The Other Side of Dyslexia’ by Hope S Beale. Quoting from the Bible, the author describes how her faith healed her from the negative effects of dyslexia that she experienced. The book is quite short and includes a 30-day devotional for dyslexic people. For further details please see:

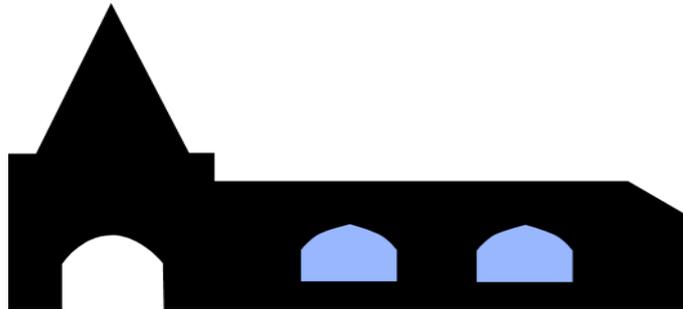
https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/471229_10-the-other-side-of-dyslexia



- 2) A collection of stories by 30 disabled church-goers, describing their experience of church. You can find it at <http://naomilawsonjacobs.com/research-summaries/>
- 3) The Inclusive Church website including the following.
 - Information on joining Inclusive Church as a church or individual at <https://www.inclusive-church.org/join-inclusive-church>;
 - A Small Group Study Guide on disability, available as a free download at <https://www.inclusive-church.org/disability>;

- Information on Inclusive Church's annual disability conference at <https://www.inclusive-church.org/disability> .

Dyslexia-friendly churches guide



Churches are legally obliged to make adjustments for disabled people. There is one exception to this: acts of worship aimed at God rather than people - e.g. prayer and rites such as communion.

This point is explained in chapter 2 of a newly published guide to help churches include dyslexic adults (though this chapter is relevant to all disabilities). The guide is found at <http://inclusivecommunication.scot/blog-dyslexia-friendly-churches-guide>.

The guide is for everyone in churches. It explains what dyslexia is and why churches have to include dyslexic adults. It also suggests things churches can do to include dyslexic adults, and signposts to further information. It is illustrated throughout, and includes several resources in the appendices.

The guide is published under a Creative Commons License, which lets readers use any of the material in their own resources, e.g. on a church website. For details of this see the front cover of the guide.

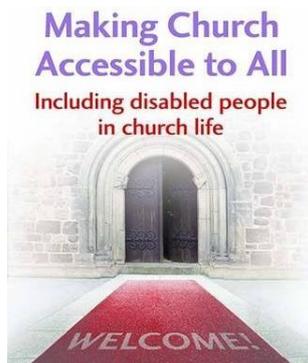
How to contact SCDG

If you want to bring something to the Committee's attention, please contact the Secretary, Scott Gillies, at secretary@scdg.org.uk .
Tel.0131-669-3301 or 07584-139587.

If you want to advertise events or invite people to join you for a chat, please send your news to the Newsletter Editor, Barbara Graham: newslettereditor@scdg.org.uk or **42, Annanhill Avenue, Kilmarnock, KA1 2LQ. Tel. 01563-522108**



Have you seen our website - <http://scdq.org.uk/>? We welcome feedback so that we can improve it. Please encourage your friends to visit the website, which is being developed not only for people with disabilities, but also for churches which want to be more inclusive.



Scottish Churches Disability Group
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