

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS : www.holycrossedinburgh.org

Congregational e-news for Easter 7

Sunday 16 May 2021

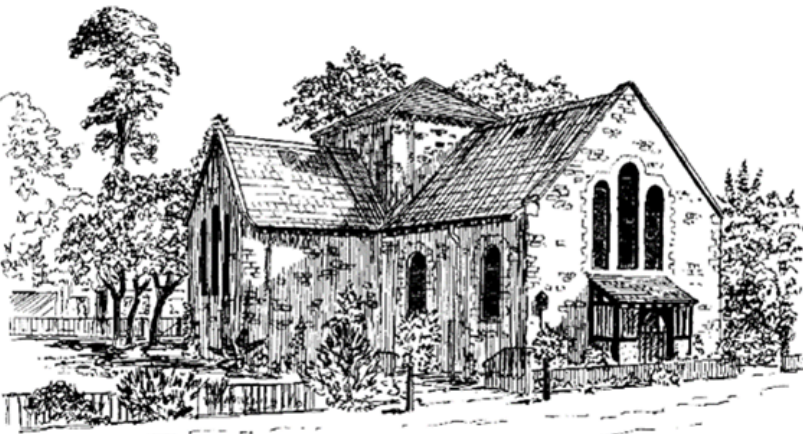
From the Rector, the Revd Dr Stephen Holmes

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Church Bank details: Church of the Holy Cross; 83-18-47; 00170278.

Dear friends at Holy Cross,

It was good to see so many people in Church on Rogation Sunday (Easter 6) and to start our worship outside with a blessing of our garden and grounds. The rain did nothing to dampen our spirits and acted as a sign of God's blessings both natural and supernatural. It is also good to see our country opening up again, an example of that being the resumption of the Anglican 'eighth sacrament' - coffee after the service.



We had a good Vestry meeting this week at which we reflected on our experience as a Church of living through lockdown. Some of the results of this will be in the June magazine. It is interesting how we have so many connections all over the world. We saw this the other day when a recent visitor found she had mutual connections with two members of the congregation in India and South Africa. This is great as one of the

truths of our faith and of natural reason is that we are all interconnected, both as members of the human race and of the one, holy Catholic Church of Jesus Christ ('catholic' is used in the sense we use it in the creed, 'universal', not to denote that part of the Church in communion with the bishop of Rome)

Part of this interconnectedness is that if one part of humanity suffers, we all suffer. As the poet said, 'no man is an island'. The terrible suffering in the covid pandemic in India has touched some of us and, with the support of the Vestry, we have agreed to hold a special collection to support covid relief at the Christian Missionary Hospital, CMC Vellore. Sally writes more about this below, and this hospital has also been recommended by the Primus, Bishop Mark Strange, who has an Indian priest who was formerly at CMC Vellore in his diocese as Rector of Forres. Donations may be given at the services on the next two Sundays and you can pay online directly into our bank account putting INDIA as the subject: Church of the Holy Cross; 83-18-47; 00170278. I know some of you have already given generous support to India, but it is also good for us to act as a community, especially where we have a direct connection.

The Holy Cross community is a wide and varied one, people come and join us and others move away. One of the latter is Mrs Adeleide Peebles, who moved south some years ago, and her daughter recently contacted me to say that she had died on 8 May. The funeral will be in Chepstow but there will be a deposition of ashes here later in the year. We pray for her and for her children Hillary, Alan and Gillian.

At the other end of life, some of you may have noted that we sometimes give holy communion to infants, when the parents and priest think it is appropriate. This is the practice of the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Orthodox churches of the East. I have a blog, where I write on things historical and theological, and this week I published a post explaining why this is done and showing it has important consequences for our understanding of humanity. You may find it interesting and it can be read here: <https://amalarius.wordpress.com/2021/05/10/holy-communion-for-babies-or-what-it-means-to-be-human/>

We had a good and fruitful Vestry meeting this week. Some of what we discussed will be in the June magazine but there was some enthusiasm for a Holy Cross pilgrimage to Inchcolm later in the year and for exploring the world of pilgrimage and the Celtic Saints. 2021 is the 1500th anniversary of the birth of St Columba. This year was meant to be the Scottish Episcopal Year of Pilgrimage but events made us stay at home!

We will be on holiday from 15 to 29 May. Visiting priests will take all the Sunday and Wednesday services during this time, the Church Wardens will deal with any urgent issues and other local clergy will be available if you need a priest. I hope you are enjoying the gradual opening up of our society and it is good to hear how many of you are meeting family and friends again - even though I appreciate the need for the restrictions in our society, there is an Orwellian horror in my heart when I hear that the State is giving us permission to hug those we love!

May God bless you and all whom you love, and may you hug and be hugged to your heart's content (if that is your thing...)

With love in Christ,



INDIA CRISIS COLLECTION 2021, BY SALLY MAIR

Over the last few weeks there have been distressing reports emerging from India with regard to the Covid crisis and many people have asked me about my friends there. It was with a degree of inevitability that I heard on Tuesday of the death of one of my friends there, Jeyapaul, a man I had known since 1997 and who I visited whenever I could. It was a distressing tale of driving from hospital to hospital to try to find a bed. Eventually one was found in one of the government hospitals, but too late, he died a few hours later. His wife Glory and his brother are now also in hospital with the virus. The funeral took place the next day, but with no church or religious service possible. These people are like many of us, educated, with good jobs and living conditions. Jeyapaul was a former bank official and Glory the principal of a teacher training institute.

By coincidence, Revd Sarah Miller who celebrated for us last week spent a period in Madurai, a town around 80 miles from Tirunelveli where I go each year. Eileen Thompson, who has taken several services for us, including last Wednesday lived for around 20 years in Chennai (Madras) the state capital of Tamil Nadu, which is the same state as Tirunelveli and Madurai. While chatting after the service with Eileen last week we discovered that we had friends in common! In a state of almost 79 million inhabitants that is a remarkable chance!

After my friend Jeyapaul died, I asked Stephen if he thought it might be possible to have a retirement collection in Holy Cross to send some money out to help with the crisis there. In the past we might have held a coffee morning but this is not possible just now.

I have done some research and a good place to support is CMC Vellore, a Christian Missionary Hospital and medical school (open to all faiths, not just Christians) in Tamil Nadu. It has a high reputation and is doing a lot of very good work in the current situation. We are able to do a direct bank transfer to the Friends of CMC via a UK bank which is easy and means that the money will go directly to the right place. If you would like to help then I feel that we should move quickly, so we will have a basket at the back of the church on the next two Sundays. Some of us will find it easier to donate online and Colin Mair, as treasurer, would be happy to receive online donations to the Holy Cross bank account (details above), please just put India as the reference. I shall make sure that the money is banked and sent very quickly.

I do hope that you think this is a good idea. I am always happy to talk about India and my work there. I am aware that many of us have felt quite helpless seeing the distressing images coming from India. Stephen has talked about Love and in particular loving our neighbour, here is a way we can do just that.

SERVICES AT HOLY CROSS

Sunday 10.30am **Eucharist with Music**
Wednesday 10.30am **Eucharist**
Thursday 5pm **Evening Prayer on Zoom**

To join us just click on this link:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/78181732182?pwd=T3VmVWhCTFBUS0NRbTh4Q0s4cWNuUT09>

The Rector will send out the order of service each week to those who wish to join us, it is also shared on the screen. While I am away, if you wish to join, contact Sally Mair on sallymair@gmail.com Meeting ID: 781 8173 2182; Passcode: Ez0b6e.

KALENDAR & PRAYER LIST

The Holy Cross Kalendar, with Saints days, collects and readings for our services, is found in the magazine and a new one will come out in June.

HOLY CROSS PRAYER LIST, May 2021

The Queen and our political leaders; India; peace in the Holy Land; Bishop John; Holy Cross and our mission and growth as a Christian community; local Churches.

For the sick and those in need: Jennie; Nancy; Graeme; Robert; Andy and Julia; Lucy; Jean Kendrew; Lynn Kirk; Minmin Yu; Doreen Gardiner; Douglas Kornahrens and Arabella; Penny Munro; Margaret; Andrew; Pat and George Gunn; Ruth Innes, priest; Mike Holmes; Katrine; Isobel, Glory (wife of Jeyapaul) & family.

The recently departed: Adelaide Peebles; Jeyapaul.

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: James Niven, priest (16/5); Lydia Ross (20/5); Dominique Millée (21/5); John Andrews (22/5); Mary Thickett (23/5); Catherine Edmonds (28/5)