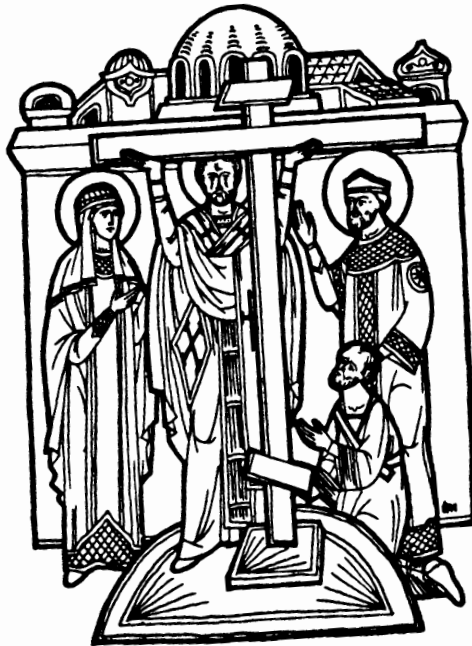


Church of the Holy Cross

DAVIDSON'S MAINS

EDINBURGH

SEPTEMBER 2023



THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH



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FROM THE RECTOR

Dear friends,

September is a busy month at Holy Cross, with our patronal feast and lots of services and events and also significant developments in our ministry team. Our curate, Ross Jesmont, will be ordained priest at our sister church of St Salvador's, Stenhouse on Wednesday 27th September. Our assistant priest, Br Joseph Emmanuel SSF, will become priest in charge of St David's, Pilton on Wednesday 4th October, when a new Franciscan community of three friars will be established there. From September until Christmas we will have an ordinand (trainee priest) with us, Eilidh Proudfoot, who introduces herself on page 8.

All members of Holy Cross are invited to Ross's ordination and details are on page 7, including an opportunity to get or offer a lift so that no one need stay away because they don't have transport or don't like driving at night. It is a significant occasion in our life as a Church; our last curate, Beverley Macfarlane, left in 1994. (We should note that one in six of our curates so far have become bishops; no pressure on Ross....) There will also be an opportunity to attend Br Joe's institution and I will announce the details in church later this month.

Since the last magazine, Ross and I have been to Ukraine. It was a very powerful experience; I spoke about it on the Sunday after we returned and have written about it in my blog (search for 'Amalarius Ukraine': amalarius.wordpress.com/2023/08/04/a-trip-to-ukraine/). One thing I learnt from being in a war zone and meeting priests and troops from the front line in the Donbas is that we in the West often live detached from reality, wrapped up in our own little worlds. When their country is being invaded, its hospitals targeted and its people murdered by an evil regime, it is interesting how the Ukrainian people have focused on what is important: their faith, their families, their freedom and their culture and country. What would we do?

Here at Holy Cross faith and families are certainly central. Elsewhere in the magazine, Izzy writes about our activities for children and we have a lively liturgical life. Culture, and particularly music, is also part of our life and I am particularly pleased about our developing link with the charity Live Music Now Scotland. They have sponsored our successful children's concerts and want to continue this, and they have also provided musicians for our fundraising Folk Concert this month (details on page 5). We are grateful to Icon Research, a company run by one of our neighbours, for sponsoring this concert.

This is the month of our patronal feast, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. You are invited to a series of services around the feast – a contemplative Vigil on Thursday 14th (the day of the feast), Toddler Church for children on the 15th, the Latin Mass with glorious polyphony on the 16th, and our main celebration on Sunday 17th, followed by a congregational meal. On the Sunday we hope to be joined by our previous Rectors, Bishop Bob Halliday (1963–83) and Canon Douglas Kornahrens (1983–2018). I am not sure of the collective noun for rectors (a riot?) but we will have 60 years of them present. Bob was instituted before I was born, and I'm glad to say I have known both of them: Bob when I was a student at St Andrews in the 1980s and Douglas since I came to Edinburgh 15 years ago.

This month, on Our Lady's Birthday, is the patronal feast of one of our Indian congregations, St Mary's Syrian Orthodox Jacobite congregation. Before I came to Holy Cross I was impressed by photographs of their colourful procession but sadly because of the pandemic it has not been able to be held until now. I'm looking forward to it. We are fortunate to share our church with two Indian Syrian Orthodox congregations who bring the riches of the Syriac Christian tradition to Davidson's Mains. They both belong to the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch. The Jacobites are a Church founded in India by the Apostle Thomas and named after Jacob Baradeus, who organised the Church in the sixth century (not King James VII, the grandfather of Bonnie Prince Charlie, after whom the Scottish Jacobites are named). Our other congregation are Knanaya, who share the same Oriental Orthodox faith but are endogamous (they only marry within their community) and are descended from Thomas of Cana (Knaï Thoma) who led a migration of Christians from Mesopotamia to India in the first millennium.

It is indeed a full month and I am pleased that we belong to a growing church with a rich and varied life. Since I arrived we have weathered a number of crises, including the pandemic, and we now face another one described by Colin Mair in his treasurer's report – the loss of significant income from our hall due to the closure of the playgroup and after school club. This is due to changes in childcare and we will not be able to replace them with similar groups. Vestry is considering various options and will continue with the hall renewal project with our new fundraiser and project manager so that the hall will continue to be part of our mission and a source of income.

The good thing from Colin's report is that, thanks to your generosity, congregational giving has risen over the past year. This is partly due to new members starting to give regularly, partly to one-off gifts, and partly to increased regular donations. Unlike other churches, Episcopalian

congregations fund themselves, so if the members don't give money the congregation closes or loses its priest. Giving is, however, more than just keeping the show on the road. What we do with our money and other resources reveals where our heart is! There is a good opportunity to help this month when we have our annual Holy Cross gift day, more about this and how you can help is given below.

One thing that has struck me about this crisis is the positive response of Vestry. Holy Cross is in good heart, good things are happening here and we trust God will not abandon us. A quiet sign of God's enduring presence is our aumbry or tabernacle in the east wall. There Christ is present in his sacrament at the heart of our community, both the congregation and the wider community in which we live. From our tabernacle communion is taken to the sick and the holy oils are taken to bring healing. It is called a tabernacle because in the Bible a tabernacle or tent is where God lives among his people and Jesus is said to have taken flesh and 'tabernacled' among us (John 1.14, the Greek for 'dwell' here literally means 'pitch his tent'). Thanks to a generous grant from the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament we now have a worthy light burning before our tabernacle as a sign of this presence, and there is more about this below.

May the Lord dwell in your hearts and families as he lives in the heart of our congregation.

With love in Christ,



FLOWERS IN CHURCH

3rd September	Sarah Millée
10th September	Margaret Deas
17th September	Holy Cross Day
24th September	?
1st October	Harvest

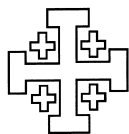


There is a shortage of volunteers. Please sign up if you can help. A simple vase of flowers is fine if you don't have great arranging skills. The rota is on the noticeboard in church and vases are in the vestry.

If you would like to donate the flowers but cannot arrange them yourself please contact Sarah (sarahmillee@aol.com).

HOLY CROSS PATRONAL FESTIVAL

Thursday 14th September, Exaltation of the Holy Cross
7 p.m. to 9.15 p.m. Holy Cross Vigil



7 p.m. Vespers of the Holy Cross; silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, with prayer for each member of the congregation by name

8.45 p.m. Benediction

9 p.m. Sung Compline in Gregorian Chant

Come to as much or as little of this as you wish. All welcome.

Friday 15th September 10.30 a.m. Toddler Church

Saturday 16th September Vigil of the Holy Cross, 6 p.m. Sung Latin Mass with polyphonic music by the *Cantores Sanctae Crucis*

Sunday 17th September Holy Cross Day, Patronal Feast of our congregation

Eucharist 9 a.m. and 10.30 a.m.

Gift Day – see opposite

Parish Lunch to follow the 10.30 a.m. service. Food provided (suggested donation £5); BYOB. There is a list on the noticeboard – please sign up if you plan to come. We need two teams of **volunteers** on the day: one to clear tables and generally tidy up, one to wash glasses, cutlery etc. Please tick your name on the list if you can commit to helping, or contact Sarah (237 5147) or Janette (336 3417). Sarah and Janette will have done a lot of work before the lunch – please don't leave them with the clearing up as well.

We will be joined for our celebrations by the two previous Rectors, Bishop Bob Halliday and Canon Douglas Kornahrens.



ORDINATION TO THE SACRED PRIESTHOOD

of our curate the Revd Dr Ross Jesmont

Wednesday 27th September

7 p.m. at St Salvador's

If you would like (or can offer) a lift please contact Neville Long by Sunday 24th September so that he can make arrangements:
nashdom167@gmail.com

This is an important day for Ross and for our two churches so Ross will value our supporting presence.



FOLK MUSIC

Saturday 23rd September 7–8 p.m.

with Mairi McGillivray & Katie Allen
• voice • guitar • fiddle

EUROPEAN
FOLK · DAY

£10 per person • Tickets on the door
Proceeds go to refurbishing our community hall

Sponsored by Icon Research www.iconresearch.co.uk The logo for Icon Research consists of the word 'ICON' in a bold, sans-serif font above the word 'RESEARCH' in a smaller, all-caps font, with a horizontal line separating the two words.

If anyone would be interested in sponsoring a future concert, please contact Izzy via families.hce@gmail.com. To hire two musicians for an hour's concert costs around £350, to cover their travel and a professional musician's fee. Sponsorship for all or part of the cost would be very welcome, or ideas about organisations that might be interested in sponsorship. We are keen to support Live Music Now Scotland in their work with young professional musicians.

GIFT DAY

Our annual Gift Day, as mentioned in the Treasurer's Report below, is on our patronal feast, this year Sunday 17th September. Donations can be paid into our bank account: Account name: Church of the Holy Cross. Account number: 00170278. Sort code: 83-18-47; cheques should be made payable to 'Church of the Holy Cross, Davidson's Mains'; and if you pay UK tax please fill out a Gift Aid form (available in church or on our website) so Holy Cross can recover 25p for each pound you give.

Thank you for your continuing generosity to Holy Cross. Below, taken from our website, is about the spiritual meaning of giving:

'Members of Holy Cross give money generously to support our ministry; as Jesus said, 'Freely you have received; freely give' (Matthew 10:8). We get no outside funding apart from the grants we occasionally get to maintain our buildings, so we depend for our existence on the giving of our members. Holy Cross is administered prudently in accordance with rules of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and all accounts are audited.

What are the deeper, spiritual reasons for giving? It is part of the good use of resources that is asked of a Christian and a natural response to the generosity of God, as we say in our Liturgy, 'all things come from you, and of your own have we given you' (1 Chronicles 29:14). We give for the mutual growth, wellbeing and collective purpose of our church. We also give so that others may experience God's love and, when we give, God promises to

honour our generosity: 'each of you should give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver' (2 Corinthians 9:7). Finally, giving is not a legalistic obligation but it does reflect our spiritual maturity; it is an essential part of following Jesus (who gave it all for us). As we release money to God, he promises to honour our obedience: 'give, and it will be given to you... for with the measure you use, it will be measured to you' (Luke 6:38).'

TREASURER'S REPORT

As I write, we are 11 months through the financial year which ends on 31st August. Next month I will be preparing the annual accounts and reviewing our income and expenditure over the year as well as forecasting our budget for the following year. Already it is fairly clear what our position will be on 31st August and what I can expect as Treasurer in 2023/24.

There is a mixture of good news and not-so-good news. I referred to this in the last magazine report, and the position two months later is similar but more so.

First the good news. Income has continued to be considerably better than I had forecast, mainly due to a significant increase in congregational giving, for which I thank you all, plus grants towards building works and children's ministry. Expenditure though has also been more than I budgeted for, almost entirely due to the unexpected cost of bringing the electrical supply in the church, hall and Rectory up to standard. This has once again been partially offset by grants received. We will be in surplus for the year and will be close to restoring our reserves to our target level.

Now the not-so-good news. The cloud on the horizon that I mentioned last time has become somewhat bigger and darker. We already knew that the Reindeer Playgroup was closing after the summer holidays. With the increasing state funding of full-time nursery places, there is falling demand for the part-time provision the Playgroup offers and it was no longer viable for it to continue. Now we have been told that the after school club is also ceasing to use Holy Cross as a base after the summer holidays. It has been operating in two places, Holy Cross and the Royal High School, but has seen falling numbers and can now accommodate all its children in one venue. The organisation has chosen to move its entire operation to the Royal High. This is a serious financial blow to us. We have come to rely on the steady income that these two groups have provided. Between them, they accounted for around two-thirds of the weekday hours booked and around two-thirds of

our rental income. This is a loss of around £18,000 per annum which is income we will not easily replace in the near future. It will be mitigated to some extent by reduced costs for cleaning (I have reduced the frequency from five to two days per week) and lower gas and electricity costs, but I estimate we will still be more than £13,000 per annum worse off. We are actively seeking new tenants for the hall, but this may take some time and we are unlikely to fill all the hours lost. Our challenge therefore is either to find ways to replace this lost income or to dramatically reduce our expenditure. I am sure we shall weather this situation as we always have in the past.

There is an immediate opportunity for us all to help. Holy Cross Day is on Sunday 17th September, and we traditionally have a Gift Day at this time. We used to supply pre-printed envelopes for the congregation to use for their cash or cheques. Nowadays most of you do your giving online but I will still be happy to accept cheques and cash – please put them in an envelope marked Gift Day and include your name so I can claim Gift Aid. Alternatively, you can send money direct by online banking. If you choose to do this, please add the reference ‘Gift Day’.

Thank you as always for your generosity.

Colin Mair, Treasurer
August 2023

MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

September brings the start of our financial year, which means that magazine subscriptions are due. You can pay your subscription into the church bank account (details inside front cover), put it in an envelope in the plate in church or send it direct to the Treasurer. Cheques to Holy Cross, please. Whatever method you choose, please make sure it is marked as ‘magazine subscription’ with your name.

Paper magazines

If you like a ‘proper’ printed magazine, you can have it delivered to your door by a volunteer or pick up your labelled copy from the bench in church. There are always a few spare copies too, for visitors or newcomers. The subscription remains at £8 for the ten copies each year. If you live further away you can receive the magazine by post; the subscription for this is £15 to cover postal costs.

Online magazine

The magazine appears on the church website, and if you are on the Rector’s

email list you will receive a copy from him. There is no charge for online.

Are your details correct?

If you get the magazine by post, are your name and address correct? If not please tell me (contact details inside front cover). If you are reading this online and would like a regular paper copy, or if you would like to change the way you receive your paper copy, or no longer want one, please let me know.

Thank you

My thanks to Angela who proofreads, Willie who helps with the printing and to the faithful band of distributors. The Editor/Distribution Manager's job would be a lot harder without them! (Thanks also to Flora, the Secretary of Davidson's Mains Parish Church, who does the copying if I'm not available, and the Sycamore Tree Café volunteers who regularly fold the Sunday pew sheets. Our publications are an ecumenical effort.)

Margaret Deas

WELCOME TO EILIDH

From mid-September until Christmas we are delighted to welcome to Holy Cross a student for the priesthood from the Scottish Episcopal Institute, to share in and learn about our life as a congregation.

Eilidh writes:

Hello everyone! My name is Eilidh Proudfoot and I'll be spending a fair bit of time at Holy Cross over the next few months as part of my training with the Scottish Episcopal Institute. As a third year Ordinand my time is divided between full-time study of Divinity at New College, University of Edinburgh and various courses from the Scottish Episcopal Institute which are taught over various residential weekends and evenings. These studies are complemented by placements each year and in previous years I spent time with Workplace Chaplaincy and the congregation of Old St Paul's.

I was brought up in the Hebrides but have lived in Edinburgh for the past 20 years. I was a high school teacher prior to training for Ordination and taught business studies in Prestonpans and most recently at The Mary Erskine School. I'm married to Andy and we have two children.

I'm looking forward to meeting you all and learning the rhythms of Holy Cross, a church that plays such an active part in its community.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

We've had a very busy summer at Holy Cross! Through July I ran activities in the church hall for families with children aged 0–5. Each week we had two parent and baby/toddler 'stay and play' sessions, a Toddler Yoga class, and one 'Quiet Space' session.

Toddler Yoga sold out and had a waiting list within 24 hours of me advertising! I have taken that as a hint to continue so have just advertised more classes between now and December.

The parent and baby/toddler sessions were very popular, attended by parents, childminders, grandparents and even one great-grandparent. On average we had 21 people at each session, which meant the hall felt lively, but the noise wasn't overwhelming. I set out various play stations around the room, along with a craft table. I had planned to close each session with parachute games and songs but in the end didn't need to – people were happy to continue playing and gave feedback that they appreciated the low-key atmosphere during the sessions. Meeting twice a week through the month meant we built a real sense of community, seeing the same faces many times. We ended with a lovely experience. One of the mums had been coming to the sessions all month with her young toddler and heavily pregnant with her second child. In the final session she turned up with the new arrival, only four days old! A big thank you to Jane Allan for helping me run these sessions. The one week she was away I was left in charge of the kitchen and it looked like a bomb-site. Never underestimate the organisational skills of a former nurse!



Quiet Space had very low attendance. It was similar to the parent/toddler sessions above, but advertised for children who like life a bit quieter – those who aren't comfortable crowding round a parachute together, or who would rather be left alone to get on with activities, or would prefer to read quietly on their own. There are precious few places suitable for children who prefer quiet. Despite the low numbers I still believe there is a need for this sort of activity and the few who came (with toddlers who were very shy, or non-verbal and autistic) said they hadn't found anything else like it. However, to be sustainable it would need much more focused advertising and the building of personal contacts, which is not something I can give time to at the moment. To be put on the back-burner as they say!

We also had the last of our four family concerts in July. These have been a huge success, with an average of 49 people at each concert, up from the

average of 26 last year. The concerts are put on in collaboration with the charity Live Music Now Scotland (LMNS). We have agreed to continue this work, with the Holy Cross concerts becoming a regular part of LMNS's annual concert programme.

The concerts were free to families though we welcomed donations, and the activities in the hall were charged at a very low rate (£8 per child for Toddler Yoga and £3 per family for everything else). It is an important part of our mission to offer families access to affordable activities during school holidays, and to affordable wellbeing activities. That said, through the concerts, yoga and parent/toddler sessions we raised just over £650.



Now to look towards the autumn term. Toddler Church starts back on 1st September and, following feedback from parents, I am offering a more structured plan of topics and activities. We'll have a theme each month. September is 'Loving God's Earth' (for Creationtide, Harvest Festival and St Francis), which will include planting bulbs and sowing seeds in the new children's flower bed in front of the hall.

October is 'Service', learning about the different roles people have in church. Keep your eyes peeled for some flower arrangements and (hopefully) an icon made by small hands! In November we'll think about 'Remembering', to include Remembrance Sunday and our second Toddler Communion ('Do this in remembrance of me'). In December we will turn to the Christmas Story, reading different versions of it and exploring the characters, so that the children can approach Christmas Day with an understanding of the true meaning of Christmas.

This month I ask your prayers for two things. First, my new plans for Toddler Church. Planning Children's Ministry (ministry in general I suppose) involves much prayer and listening and reflection, but putting those plans into action involves a lot of self-confidence and self-belief, and I am a champion self-doubter, especially when I'm tired! So, please support me in prayer.

Secondly, I ask your prayers for our applications for funding for my work to continue into 2024. We are applying to the Province this year rather than the Diocese, asking for around twice as much money this time (around £5,000) so that I can expand the work in response to feedback from parents this year. Our first application is in progress. I will keep you posted...

Izzy

HARVEST FESTIVAL SUNDAY 1st OCTOBER

Details to follow. This is a good time not only to celebrate the harvest of our gardens and church grounds but also to remember those in a less fortunate position than most of us. **St Salvador's Community Food Initiative** is always in need of support – see below – as are similar ventures elsewhere.

Decorating the church Please consult Sarah about any financial or practical help needed.

St SALVADOR'S COMMUNITY FOOD INITIATIVE



The St Salvador's, Stenhouse, Community Food Initiative is still seeing a large increase in visitors. These may be single people, including students, or families. Some are on benefits, many work hard in low-paid jobs but cannot earn enough to buy all they need.

The Initiative is in need of volunteers and supplies or financial support. Non-perishable foods such as rice, pasta, cooking oil, sugar, tea and coffee, tins of fish, meat, soup or fruit are needed. With costs rising, a hot meal that does not need the use of too much fuel is appreciated. As well as food, the Initiative gives out nappies and personal hygiene and home cleaning items.

We have a donations box on the bench by the door at Holy Cross. Your gifts are regularly taken over to Stenhouse. If you would like to help speak to Ross, Br Joe or the Rector (contact details inside front cover).

Almighty and eternal God,
you crown the year with your goodness
and give us the fruits of the earth in their season:
grant that we may use them to your glory;
so that none may hunger,
none may thirst,
and all may cherish the gifts of your creation:
through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, world without end.

OUR NEW SANCTUARY LAMP AND REMEMBERING OUR DEPARTED LOVED ONES

‘A church without the eucharistic presence is somehow dead, even when it invites people to pray. A church in which the eternal light is burning before the tabernacle is always alive, is always something more than a building made of stones.’

These words from a 20th-century theologian express the importance of having Jesus present in his sacrament in the tabernacle at the heart of our church. Reserving the sacrament like this is an ancient Episcopalian tradition and goes back to the early days of Christianity. We are grateful to the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, an Anglican devotional society where Br Joe sits on the board, for the gift of a beautiful sanctuary lamp in the same Romanesque style as our church. Engraved on our lamp are the words of John 1.9, in Latin, ‘the true light, who enlightens everyone, was coming into the world’.

The small flame in the lamp will burn continually, as a sign of prayer and presence, and some members of the congregation have suggested that people might like to sponsor the lamp for a month in memory of a loved one. This can be done at a suggested minimum donation of £15, which covers the cost of the candles. If you would like to do this, please give or send the name to the Rector.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LIFE

Sally found this on Facebook. It links well with a sermon of Stephen’s in July.

Love one another	John 13.34
Love one another	John 13.35
Love one another	John 15.12
Love one another	John 15.17
Love one another	Romans 12.10
Love one another	1 Thessalonians 3.12
Love one another	1 Peter 1.22
Love one another	1 John 3.11
Love one another	1 John 3.23
Love one another	1 John 4.7
Love one another	1 John 4.11
Love one another	1 John 4.12
Love one another	2 John 5

HISTORIANS ON BIBLICAL HISTORY

Review of THE NEW TESTAMENT

Bart D. Ehrman lectures in *THE GREAT COURSES* (www.thegreatcourses.com)

Must we look at the views of historians, I hear you say? Sceptics have loved Biblical historians in general, because they have trashed the idea that the Gospels are precise and uniformly accurate primary sources. But Christians ask: is this fair? Are not the Gospels valuable sources because they are anchored authentically in the Jewish life and times of Jesus?

But one must ask why historians in general have been so impressed by the Jesus story – even as they exposed discrepancies in the Gospel narratives. The reason is that the sheer number of literary compositions devoted to the figure of Jesus in the first centuries of the common era is impressive.

Ah! Notice the common idea here among historians, that the writings about Jesus have a literary style – if one had a Jesus pantomime the baddies would clearly be the Pharisees – you can just imagine the boos.

But the insights are more sophisticated than that; here is an analysis of Mark's writing: 'Mark's use of irony enables a double-edged reading of his fast-paced narrative. On the surface, it is a story of the past about Jesus's powerful deeds and tragic death. On another level, it is a story about the present: The readers who naturally identify with the disciples are challenged by the account of their failure'. Doesn't that sound like literary skill?

Okay, so there is a literary style – but that does not lead to the populist assumption that the New Testament is just free composition. Modern historians disagree with the view that Jesus is a legendary figure – a King Arthur of the Jews. The authors of the Gospels are real people giving us different perspectives on a real person: our Saviour Jesus. 'Luke does not think favourably of his predecessor Gospel writers.' Ehrman goes on, 'Luke's portrayal of Jesus' death is completely different from the one in Mark. Rather than being silent and shocked, feeling forsaken of all, even God, in Luke Jesus dies in complete control of the situation, in full confidence of God, knowing what must happen and why. As a prophet, he knows what must happen'. In Luke, everything that happens to Jesus and his followers happens according to God's plan.

By considering the purposes of the editors (the Gospel writers), historians such as Ehrman have gone some way to demolish the idea the New Testament is a uniformly precise eye-witness account. Nevertheless, they acknowledge that there is a coherence in the messages and the claims of

Jesus, that give reliability to the early stories. Bart D. Ehrman claims that Jesus's main point was that the Pharisees were wrong in thinking that God was concerned with the letter of the law instead of its spirit: 'Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath' (Mark 2:27–28).

In *Mimesis*, Erich Auerbach (famous for his representation of reality in western literature) makes a similar point about the humanity of Jesus – that there had never been a serious treatment of common people in literature before the New Testament. If they appeared at all before, they were treated comically. This is the result of Jesus's concern about us focusing humanely on the 'spirit of the Law'.

After the New Testament, it became possible in literature to treat fishermen, prostitutes, tax collectors, the sick, the paralysed, the lame, the lost and the erring seriously. In literary terms, this may be the historical revolution brought about by the New Testament. Historians may tell us that the writers of the Gospels were more editors than simple eye-witnesses, but they were inspired by a real person.

Historians have similarly asked questions about the epistles, especially of Paul's letters. Some of the letters attributed to him were possibly not by him. Ephesians doesn't have typical Pauline words or style, Ehrman tells us. Timothy's language is also more second century. And yet the intention of all the epistle writers (known and unknown) was to reflect on the coherence of the messages given to us by Christ and carried throughout the world by his apostles. The apostles had indeed learned from Christ.

This can be seen in the compassionate way Paul tried to solve the conflicts within the Corinthian church. When Paul tried to settle the quarrelling among the Corinthians (Ehrman tells us), he used a sophisticated argument. 'This is not an age, even for believers, of glory and grandeur; it is an age of weakness and suffering – all sides have erred in thinking that full spiritual wisdom and power have already come in this age.' And yet God is concerned with our bodies – they are like temples, and we must take seriously the need to be responsible for how we use them.

So, historians need not be off-putting for Christians. The New Testament provides us with mirrors, and Jesus, his Apostles and writers are our main guides as we try to see ourselves more clearly. 'He may be what we are, but we need him to tell us who we are.' If we listen for the deep insights, we can all be invited to help spread the good news – even if we do perhaps unconsciously put our own spin on the story.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 9th September Birthday of Our Lady, Patronal Feast of our Jacobite Syrian Orthodox congregation of St Mary. Holy Qurbana (Mass) from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. with a procession about midday – members of Holy Cross are welcome to come along for this.

Thursday 14th September Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 7p.m. to 9.15 p.m. Holy Cross Vigil – see page 4

Saturday 16th September, Vigil of the Holy Cross, 6 p.m. Sung Latin Mass with polyphonic music by the *Cantores Sanctae Crucis* – see page 4

Sunday 17th September, Holy Cross Day, Patronal Feast – Eucharist 9 a.m. and 10.30 a.m. followed by Parish Lunch – see page 4

Saturday 23rd September, 7–8 p.m. in the church, Folk Music by Mairi McGillivray and Katie Allen – see page 5

Wednesday 27th September, ordination to the Priesthood of our curate, the Revd Dr Ross Jesmont at St Salvador's, at 7 p.m. – see page 4

Friday 29th September St Michael and All Angels 2 p.m. Sung Mass

Sunday 1st October, Harvest Festival

Wednesday 4th October, Feast of St Francis. In the evening (time to be announced), licensing of Br Joseph Emmanuel SSF as priest-in-charge of St David's, Pilton, and establishment of the new Franciscan Community.

WORSHIP

Our usual weekly services are:

Sunday **9.00 a.m. Eucharist (traditional language)**
10.30 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Wednesday **10.30 a.m. Eucharist**

Thursday **5 p.m. Evening Prayer on Zoom**

We pray together for about half an hour, using the fixed words of the service with a space for free prayer. To join us contact the Rector.

Friday **10.30 a.m. Toddler Church (in term time)**

First Friday in the month, 2 p.m. Healing Eucharist with anointing

Any variations are noted in the Kalendar.

KALENDAR and READINGS SEPTEMBER 2023

'Creationtide' is from September 1st to the Feast of St Francis, October 4th.

Friday 1st September – Giles, Abbot, c.710 – **10.30 a.m. Toddler Church – 2 p.m. Eucharist for Healing**

Saturday 2nd September – Martyrs of New Guinea

Sunday 3rd September – FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Eucharist 9 a.m. and 10.30 a.m.

Readings: Jeremiah 15.15-21 Psalm 138
Romans 12.1-8 Matthew 16.13-20

Wednesday 6th September – Eucharist 10.30 a.m.

Readings: Colossians 1.1-8 Psalm 34.9-22 Luke 4.38-44

Thursday 7th September – Evening Prayer on Zoom 5 p.m.

Friday 8th September – The Birth of Mary, Mother of God – **10.30 a.m. Toddler Church**

Saturday 9th September – Patronal feast of our Syrian Orthodox Indian congregation – Liturgy at 9.30 a.m., **procession at 12.00 p.m.**

Sunday 10th September – FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Eucharist 9 a.m. and 10.30 a.m.

Readings: Ezekiel 33.7-11 Psalm 119.33-40
Romans 13.8-14 Matthew 18.15-20

Wednesday 13th September – Cyprian of Carthage, Bishop and Martyr, 258 – **Eucharist 10.30 a.m.**

Readings: Colossians 3.1-11 Psalm 145.10-13 Luke 6.12-19

Thursday 14th September – Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 7 p.m. to 9.15 p.m. Holy Cross Vigil - 7p.m. Vespers of the Holy Cross; silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, with prayer for each member of the congregation by name; 8.45 p.m. Benediction; 9 p.m. Sung Compline in Gregorian Chant. Come to as much or as little of this as you wish. *No Zoom Evening Prayer.*

Friday 15th September – Mary at the Cross – **10.30 a.m. Toddler Church**

Saturday 16th September – Ninian of Whithorn, Bishop, sixth century – **Vigil of the Holy Cross, 6 p.m. Sung Latin Mass** with polyphonic music by the *Cantores Sanctae Crucis*

Sunday 17th September – EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS (Patronal Feast) – Eucharist 9 a.m. and 10.30 a.m., followed by congregational lunch.

Readings: Numbers 21.4b-9 Psalm 98.1-5
1 Corinthians 1.18-24 John 3.13-17

Wednesday 20th September – Eucharist 10.30 a.m.

Readings: 1 Timothy 3.14-16 Psalm 111.1-6 Luke 7.31-35

Thursday 21st September – Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist – Evening Prayer on Zoom 5 p.m.

Friday 22nd September – 10.30 a.m. Toddler Church

Saturday 23rd September – Adomnán of Iona, Abbot, 704 – Folk Music concert, 7–8 p.m. in the church, Mairi McGillivray and Katie Allen

Sunday 24th September – SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Eucharist 9 a.m. and 10.30 a.m.

Readings: Jonah 3.10-4.11 Psalm 145.1-8
Philippians 1.21-30 Matthew 20.1-16

Monday 25th September – Finbar of Caithness, c.610

Wednesday 27th September – Vincent de Paul, priest, 1660 – Eucharist 10.30 a.m.

Readings: Ezra 9.5-9 Psalm 48 Luke 9.1-6

Ordination to the Sacred Priesthood of our curate, the Revd Dr Ross Jesmont **at St Salvador's, 7 p.m.**

Thursday 28th September – Evening Prayer on Zoom 5 p.m.

Friday 29th September – St Michael and All Angels – 10.30 a.m. Toddler Church – 2 p.m. Sung Mass (in English)

Saturday 30th September – Jerome, Priest and Teacher of the Faith, 420

Sunday 1st October – EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (HARVEST FESTIVAL) – Eucharist 9 a.m. and 10.30 a.m.

Readings: Deuteronomy 8.7-18 Psalm 65
2 Corinthians 9.6-15 Luke 12.16-30

Wednesday 4th October, Feast of St Francis, in the evening (time to be announced), licensing of Br Joseph Emmanuel SSF as priest-in-charge of St David's, Pilton, and establishment of the new Franciscan Community.

