

JUNE 2022 NEWS FROM SEI

This edition focuses upon 'endings and new beginnings'. First we say farewell to four of the six Leavers who graduated from SEI at the May Residential Weekend, the others, Louise Sanders and Roberta Ritson, having been featured in the May Newsletter. Here Ross, Rachael, Janet and Val offer reflections on their time at SEI. Details of their curacies will be circulated via SEI's Ember Cards later in the year.



Ross Jesmont studied on the Mixed Mode pathway and was based at St Salvador's Saughton, Diocese of Edinburgh. He writes: Training for ordained ministry in the midst of a global pandemic was certainly not what I expected from my time with the SEI. However, it turns out that when established patterns and norms are upended, the distance between theory and practice decreases. Thinking about pioneer ministry was helpful when 'doing church' in the strange land of social distancing and lockdowns. Learning to reflect theologically meant bringing the uncertainties of the present into dialogue with the insights of the Christian tradition, in ways that enabled new practices to emerge.

When reflecting on the situation, it became increasingly clear that the pandemic was not an isolated event but rather one that is wrapped in a financial crisis, which is enveloped within an impending ecological catastrophe. The question of how to respond to such complex realities was at the heart of my classes on community organizing and ministry in context. Furthermore, the challenge of holding together a church community during this difficult time has required pastoral sensitivity and leadership skills that I have developed during my studies.

Training for ordained ministry in a time of pandemic has helped shape and form me for my future ministry in ways that I could not have foreseen. For the support, insights, and comradeship of all the staff and students of the SEI, I am very grateful. Or, as it would have sounded on Zoom: 'For...pport, in-in-in...radish..staff and students of the SEI, I...very..grrrrrra...(call ended).'

Ross Jesmont

Rachael Wright likewise studied on the Mixed Mode pathway and was based at the Highland Perthshire Linked Charge, Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane. She was supported in her studies by a generous grant from St Cuthbert's Colinton, Diocese of Edinburgh. She writes: These years of discernment and formation have been an immense privilege. They have been a time to listen, invest, explore, and experiment, under the wonderfully caring watch of staff and supervisors. Strangers became family through the shared experiences of deadlines, placements, and weekends in a monastery! Through it all, time and again, God draws you close and sends you out, inspiring and transforming you to know Them better and yourself more. Perhaps the greatest privilege is that there is not truly an end in sight because the experiences will keep coming, the growth should never stop, students and lecturers are becoming colleagues, and God is always, always faithful. I'll look back on this time with great fondness but I look forward too and with great excitement!

Rachael Wright





Janet Spence trained on the part-time course, moving from the Diocese of Moray, Ross and Caithness to the Diocese of Edinburgh in her final year. She writes: The journey towards ordination started many many years ago; discernment and selection panels were a journey in and of themselves, until finally we gathered for the first Residential Weekend in Kinnoull. There were nerves, of course there were nerves, and a sense of not quite knowing my place here ... telling others of being a teacher, of family, of things close to my heart, and sensing that all of these would form part of the substance of the transformation that would lead to this point now, the end of IME1-3. I arrived in Kinnoull in the knowledge that I came here in order to leave. And now the leaving is upon us...

I have learned so much, been challenged and affirmed, and through it all have felt myself growing. I've been reflecting on Mary's 'yes'; her 'yes' that encapsulated all of her, and was also a 'yes' to the as yet undiscovered Mary that dwelt within her. So too, stepping out into new stages of life always requires a 'yes' from us. A 'yes' to the unknown; a 'yes' to making oneself vulnerable; a 'yes' to discovering a wonderful new group of friends who challenge and support one another; a 'yes' to life-giving change. Who knows what the next 'yes' asked of each of us will draw out, but I feel sure that these 3 years will provide strength and nourishment for all the unknowns as they become the next steps of the journey.

Janet Spence

Dr Valerie Cameron was the first Vocational Deacon candidate to undertake the 'Extended Placement' mode of training, as the Mixed Mode pathway for self-supporting candidates was then termed. She served the SEI Student Chapter as Eco Congregation Scotland Chapter representative and as Eco Champion, and has a passion for the environment and creation care in worship. She writes: My placement churches, Mustard Seed/Soul Food in Easter Road and St Barnabas, Moredun provided superb grounding and have given me a real heart for working with the community. Both the Revd Rich Cornfield and the Revd David Dixon have been wonderful guides on my journey.

I transferred from Christ Church University Canterbury/St Augustine's in 2018 and restarted my studies with SEI in 2019. It has been a wonderful experience and a real roller-coaster of emotions; fun and laughter, joy and of course trepidation when waiting for the results of assignments and assessments.



I heard that being a Vocational Deacon was like being an 'open door'; the open door welcoming people into the church and the open door through which the Spirit guides us in the community. I pray that the heart of my ministry is an open door through which our Lord Jesus can enter in.

Valerie Cameron

May 6-8 saw the final Residential Weekend of the year, at which we welcomed many guests: Bishop John attended the entire weekend, a gesture which was deeply appreciated by students and staff alike. The Revd Dr John McNeil Scott, Principal of The Scottish College (Congregational and United Reformed) very kindly came along on the Sunday and took part in the closing service, blessing the Leavers along with Bishop John. Linda Harrison, SEI's Administrator, arrived likewise on Sunday for the closing service, as did many family members, enjoying a splendid Kinnoull 'Sunday lunch' afterwards. Here we offer a pictorial account of that weekend, thanks to Ross Stirling-Young (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane, who was caught on camera by his fellow photographer, bottom left), and Ferdinand von Prondzynski (Aberdeen and Orkney).



As ever, the weekend's schedule was a tapestry of teaching, prayer, and leisure from the moment Fr Ronnie McAinsh CSsR welcomed us to Kinnoull on the Friday evening (below):



Saturday lunchtime's worship took the form of a Mountain Pilgrimage up Kinnoull Hill, led by the Revd Dr Richard Tiplady, Director of Mixed Mode Training. The idea of Mountain Pilgrimage is less well known, less developed, and less practised than that of Forest Church, but is based on a similar instinct. It is a way of articulating one's emotions and experiences in nature from a Christian perspective, of encountering creation as a gift, and of encountering God as Creator and Sustainer of life in and through creation. However unlike the more static nature of Forest Church, a Mountain Pilgrimage involves a journey and what Richard Hartfield calls 'an endless conversation between the ground and my footsteps.'

Some walked en masse, others in pairs; prayer and praise were expressed in many different ways.



The six second year students – Godwin, Pat, Tony, Ferdinand, Jackie and Blayne (left to right) - serenaded the Leavers in a song created by Pat (with due apologies to Charles Wesley) which they sang to the tune Llanfair in rousing four-part harmony at the Saturday evening's Farewell Festivities.



Hail the day that sees them rise *Alleluia*
Under holy northern skies *Alleluia*
All assessments duly given *Alleluia*
They approach their licensed heaven *Alleluia*.

Their example we admire *Alleluia*
To their pattern we aspire *Alleluia*
There for them bright future lies *Alleluia*
Duly certified as wise *Alleluia*.

Circled round with ancient powers *Alleluia*
Anne's and Mike's and Richard's hours *Alleluia*
They will grace their local scene *Alleluia*
Taking all their learning in *Alleluia*.

Lo we gratefully receive *Alleluia*
The example that you leave *Alleluia*
Hark our grateful lips rehearse *Alleluia*
Thanks and love in this our verse *Alleluia*.

This lovely offering was followed by moving individual tributes from the second years to the Leavers, and much present opening!



Sunday's Eucharist ended with 'Praying our Farewells'. Here we see Principal John and Bishop John blessing Janet Spence, and below that a photograph of the Leavers, altar party (including Blayne Peacock, Sacristan and Server) and staff after the service.



Farewell to the Newsletter: Since indicating that this would be the final *Newsletter* SEI has received some touching tributes. Gill Reynolds, SEI's Ambassador for Glasgow and Galloway writes: *'As the Newsletter ends, I thought a few words ought to follow from me. Above all I hope that the Glasgow people who used to read the newsletter will continue to read the news on the website. I know that if you do, it'll still be a useful tool and one which continues to inform and excite. Meanwhile all my thoughts will be with the SEI staff as they start to inform us by these new methods.'* Our thanks to Gill and to the other six SEI Diocesan Ambassadors - Georgie Middleton (Brechin), Ros Brett (Argyll and the Isles), Jenny Holden (Aberdeen and Orkney), Nan Kennedy (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane), Jennifer Floether (Edinburgh) and Katrina O'Neil (Moray, Ross and Caithness) for their faithful work these past several years in forwarding the *Newsletter* to their respective diocesan links.

The *Newsletter* was also emailed each month to many 'Friends of SEI', and several of them have likewise sent in some kind tributes. Here we cite one from the Revd Canon Jim Francis, Diocese of Durham: *'I have enjoyed receiving the Newsletter and continue to be hugely impressed at the standard and breadth of training that the SEI provides. I am sorry to see the Newsletter coming to an end and appreciate all that it has done so well and imaginatively.'*

Farewell to this year's Placements: This year's placements also came to an end in recent weeks for most students, culminating in review meetings and services of farewell. At SEI, students (other than those on the Mixed Mode pathway which is largely context-based) undertake a placement in each of their three years of formation, allied to a module on Reflective Practice. Those in their first two years spend 50 hours participating in ministry and mission in a variety of contexts, and final year students spend double that length of time focussing specifically upon pastoral leadership.

This year, all first year students and those candidating for the diaconate undertook community-based placements. The range of contexts experienced was wide, from a city centre placement with *Workplace Chaplaincy Scotland* to engagement with *Glasgow City Mission*, the Highland Hospice, *Food for the Way* in Shetland, Inverness Street Pastors and *Mission to Seafarers Scotland*.

Under the expert guidance of their supervisors, these candidates learned what it means to exercise a ministry of patient and prayerful presence: in visiting shops and businesses in the centre of Edinburgh; in sitting at the bedside of those with life-limiting illnesses; in just 'being there'. Lay Reader candidate Camayo Hyde (Diocese of Edinburgh) expresses this learning beautifully:



'A placement with Mission to Seafarers Scotland was nothing like I really expected. I visited ships, yes, but soon realised it was about being available to the seafarers through the good times, or the times they didn't need us, to let them know they could trust us when they needed us through the bad times. And the PPE made it obvious as to who the newbie was; no-one was missing me!'

New beginnings: As you will see at the end of the article on our MA pathways on page 9, SEI will be offering modules in Health, Healing and Mission with Revd Dr Gillian Straine, Director of GoHealth, and Christian Faith and the Environment with Revd Dr Richard Tiplady, SEI's Director of Mixed Mode Training. Here we share news of two events led by Dr Tiplady allied to those concerns and run in tandem with GoHealth.

Wilderness and Wellbeing: The Revd Dr Richard Tiplady will be co-leader of a Retreat 12-18 September 2022, at Bassenfell Manor Christian Centre, Bassenthwaite, Keswick, run by the GoHealth Community.



Many of us discovered the wellbeing that comes from walking on our daily excursions during the lockdowns of 2020-21. Indeed, in the 2021 Denis Duncan lecture, Ruth Valerio noted that 'somehow the beauty of the natural world absorbs our suffering'.

Combining all these ideas, the GoHealth Community gathering will offer time and space to reflect on the health and healing that comes from connecting with nature and with Christian faith. There will be optional walks, time to engage in spiritual practices together and in solitude, and some reflections on the healing to found in nature and mountainous places.

Bassenfell Manor, near Bassenthwaite Lake in the Lake District, is a residential centre hosting school groups, youth groups, church groups and holidays for individuals set on the edge of the beautiful Lake District with its wealth of natural beauty and wilderness. It provides comfortable self-catering accommodation in 19 bedrooms and a separate self-catering apartment. It is situated in an acre of grounds with adventure play equipment and access to its own ancient woodland which is used for various bushcraft and environmental activities. For further information, click [here](#)



'A mountain-top experience? Outdoor adventure, being in nature and healing in Christ': The Revd Dr Richard Tiplady will deliver the 2022 The Denis Duncan Lecture on 10 November, 19.00 - 21.00 online. The Denis Duncan Lecture is an annual event which focuses on the links between health and faith. It is run in partnership with the Church of Scotland and seeks to explore the healing ministry, communication and a whole person approach to wellbeing.

Spiritual experiences are not rare on mountains. In his writings, John Muir reflects frequently on what might be termed 'spiritual encounters' with nature. In *The Living Mountain*, Nan Shepherd writes of her Cairngorms

wanderings in Scotland as bringing a (proto-Buddhist) awareness of 'the essential oneness of all things', (a phrase which also occurs in other climbing writers).

In this lecture, Richard Tiplady will present a Christian perspective on mountain and outdoor adventure experiences. Using an understanding of Creation as Gift and of the human condition as being separated from ourselves, from others, from the environment, and most fundamentally from God, he will explore how the outdoor adventure experience offers a foretaste and anticipation of the healing and restoration that is offered in Jesus Christ, however partially and tentatively this might be experienced in this life. To book your free ticket, click [here](#).

New opportunities for further study: As part of its remit to support life-long learning across the Province, SEI offers two MA programmes of study — an [MA in Theology, Mission and Ministry](#), and an [MA in Contemporary Christian Leadership](#) — in partnership with the [Common Awards](#) scheme.

The MA in Theology, Ministry and Mission provides continuing professional development at an advanced level of attainment for laity and clergy who desire to study at postgraduate level. The aim of the programme is to deliver learning and teaching that enable students to pursue academically rigorous and research-facing engagement with a range of disciplines within theology, ministry and mission. The MA in Theology, Ministry and Mission provides pathways of study that contribute to meet diverse professional and vocational criteria and a firm basis from which to pursue postgraduate research in theology, ministry and mission. It is open to the questions and insights generated by engagement with research and thinking at the forefront of specialised areas of study and professional practice in theology, ministry and mission; it assumes a willingness to be transformed by them. In this programme, one hones the critical skills and disposition needed to go forth in the church and the world with the light of Christian theology as a passionate, articulate and prayerful disciple.

The MA in Contemporary Christian Leadership provides an opportunity for personal and professional development to satisfy the aspirations of those who undertake studies to enhance, broaden and deepen their discipleship in terms of leadership. This programme enables reflective practice on Christian leadership; it provides a firm basis from which to pursue postgraduate research in theological and ministerial studies. The MA in Contemporary Christian Leadership aims to develop dispositions that are congruent with and necessary for leadership and mission. The programme explores questions and insights about leadership in today's church by engagement with research and thinking at the forefront of specialised areas of study and professional practice in Christian leadership. It seeks to inculcate a generous, open and empathetic disposition to engage and cooperate with others in and beyond the church.

Both MAs require 180 credits of study and are part-time programmes (over three or four years). Both are delivered entirely online. Candidates will normally have studied theology to degree level. There is a fee of £20 per credit (or £3600 in total) for either MA.

For more information on the MA in Theology, Ministry and Mission, please contact Revd Dr Michael Hull (dos@scotland.anglican.org); for more information on the MA in Contemporary Christian Leadership, please contact Revd Dr Richard Tiplady (dmm@scotland.anglican.org). To register, contact Mrs Linda Harrison (institute@scotland.anglican.org).

New modules beginning in September

[Health, Healing and Mission](#) with Revd Dr Gillian Straine, Director of [GoHealth](#)

[Christian Faith and the Environment](#) with Revd Dr Richard Tiplady, SEI's Director of Mixed Mode Training

[Preaching in a Ministerial Context](#) with Revd Dr Alasdair Coles, Rector of All Saints' Church, St Andrews

[Research and Reflection: Resources and Methods](#) Revd Dr Michael Hull, SEI's Director of Studies

New ventures for SEI staff: One of our SEI Associate Tutors, Dr Joel Pierce, has been appointed as one of 3 TEI staff from across the UK working with Professor David Clough and Dr Margaret Adam in the coming year on the next stage of the Christian Ethics of Farmed Animal Welfare (CEFAW) project. He will be assisting in the development of resources to be used in Common Awards classes which will draw on the work already done by the CEFAW to develop a policy framework around animal welfare. More information on the work of CEFAW and a set of resources they have already developed (including the framework document and a series of short videos) can be found on the project's [website](#).



The Revd Eleanor Charman, Diocesan Advisor to Moray, Ross and Caithness ordinand Maureen Farquhar, has just been appointed to the Inverness Street Pastors' Management Team as a Director. Before training at SEI, Ellie herself was a Street Pastor in Inverness for many years. She was instrumental in starting Caithness Street Pastors. The Inverness Management Team is delighted to have her back now that she is based at St John the Evangelist, Inverness. Ellie is part of the city centre team, responsible for mission to the outer edges of Inverness, particularly to the south of the city, with responsibility also for curating creative and reflective services at St Mary's, Culloden.

Details of an exciting new post: The post of 'Initial Ministerial Education 4-6 Officer' will be advertised on the SEC and SEI websites on 6 June. The postholder will develop and oversee the delivery of an IME 4-6 curriculum to all curates across the Province, organising gatherings for that cohort both online and in person, thus ensuring parity of educational experience for all. The job is equivalent to one day a week's work; if undertaken by a stipendiary clergyperson, the charge which they serve would be reimbursed at that rate.

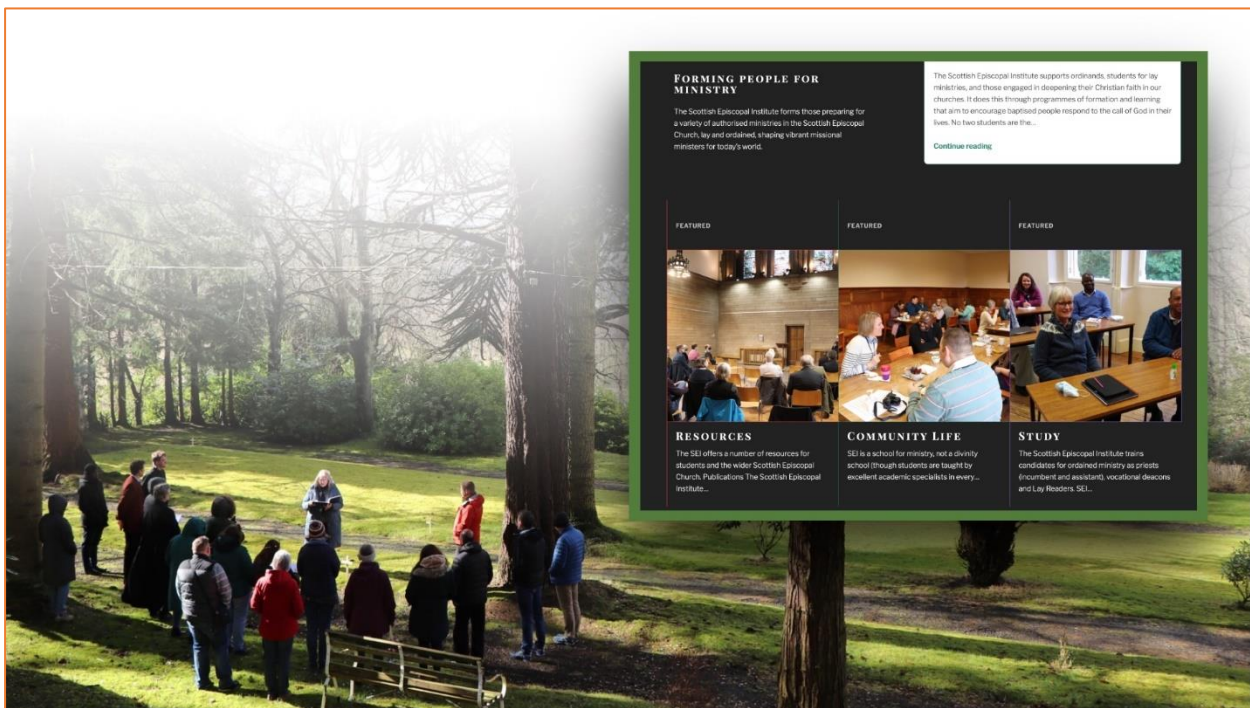
Journal: The [Scottish Episcopal Institute Journal](#) continues to go from strength to strength. The Spring number attends to historical and theological issues attendant to the [St Andrew Declaration](#) between the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Scotland in November 2021. This number is all the more relevant with the May 2022 signing of the [St Margaret Declaration](#) between the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Scotland. Quickly following it will be the Summer number. This is non-themed issue that leads with an article by Professor Ann Loades CBE on women in theology.

Looking farther afield, the Autumn issue will focus on funerary rites, being curated by Dr Nicholas Taylor, Convener of the SEC's Liturgy Committee, as the SEC considers refining those rites in future. The Winter number, curated by Dr Elizabeth Corsar, Tutor in Biblical Studies at [St Padarn's Institute](#) in Wales, will centre on the Bible and mission as the SEC continues to develop its proclamation of the Gospel in Scotland.

SEI Training Fund, the Brazil Fund and the St James Fund: Our thanks this month go to the Revd Sally Gorton and the Revd Canon Robin Paisley (Glasgow and Galloway) for continuing to send their deputising fees to the first fund; to St Michael and All Angels, Helensburgh (Glasgow and Galloway) similarly; to ordinands Jackie Fenton and Ross Jesmont for the sale of theological books at the May Residential Weekend which helped boost the coffers of the second fund; and to the Revd Dr Michael Paterson (Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) for a most generous personal donation to the St James Fund. Our immense thanks to each of these kind benefactors; your support is hugely appreciated. We also thank Dr John Higinbotham (Diocese of Edinburgh) for his thoughtful donation of theological books.

New SEI website: The 1st of June marks the launch of the Scottish Episcopal Institute's new website. Available at www.sei.scot the website will be a source of information on the work of the Institute specifically for prospective students, the wider Scottish Episcopal Church, and the academic community more generally.

The website, which in part replaces the *SEI Newsletter*, brings together news stories and information on the wide range of work that the Institute undertakes. Whilst the website is being launched today, there will continue to be tweaks and improvement made over the coming weeks. A condensed version of the news items from the website will also be sent out monthly, so watch out for more information.



SEI staff welcome comment and feedback on this new digital outreach. And offers their deepest thanks to Aidan Strange, Digital Communications Officer (*right*), who has built the site for us and worked hard over many weeks liaising on the specifications. Thank you, Aidan!



We also take this opportunity of thanking Donald Walker, the SEC's Director of Communications (*left*) for his careful editorial scrutiny of the *Newsletter* every month.



Without his very experienced eagle eye, many a typographical or copyright faux-pas would have been committed, not to mention the inclusion of innumerable double spacings. Thank you Donald!

The SEI Facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com/ScottishEpiscopalInstitute. In future, news items and information about our short courses and events will be shared there. If you haven't already done so, why not go there and 'like' the page? Our thanks to the Revd Dr Richard Tiplady for taking over the administration of this aspect of SEI's communications strategy.