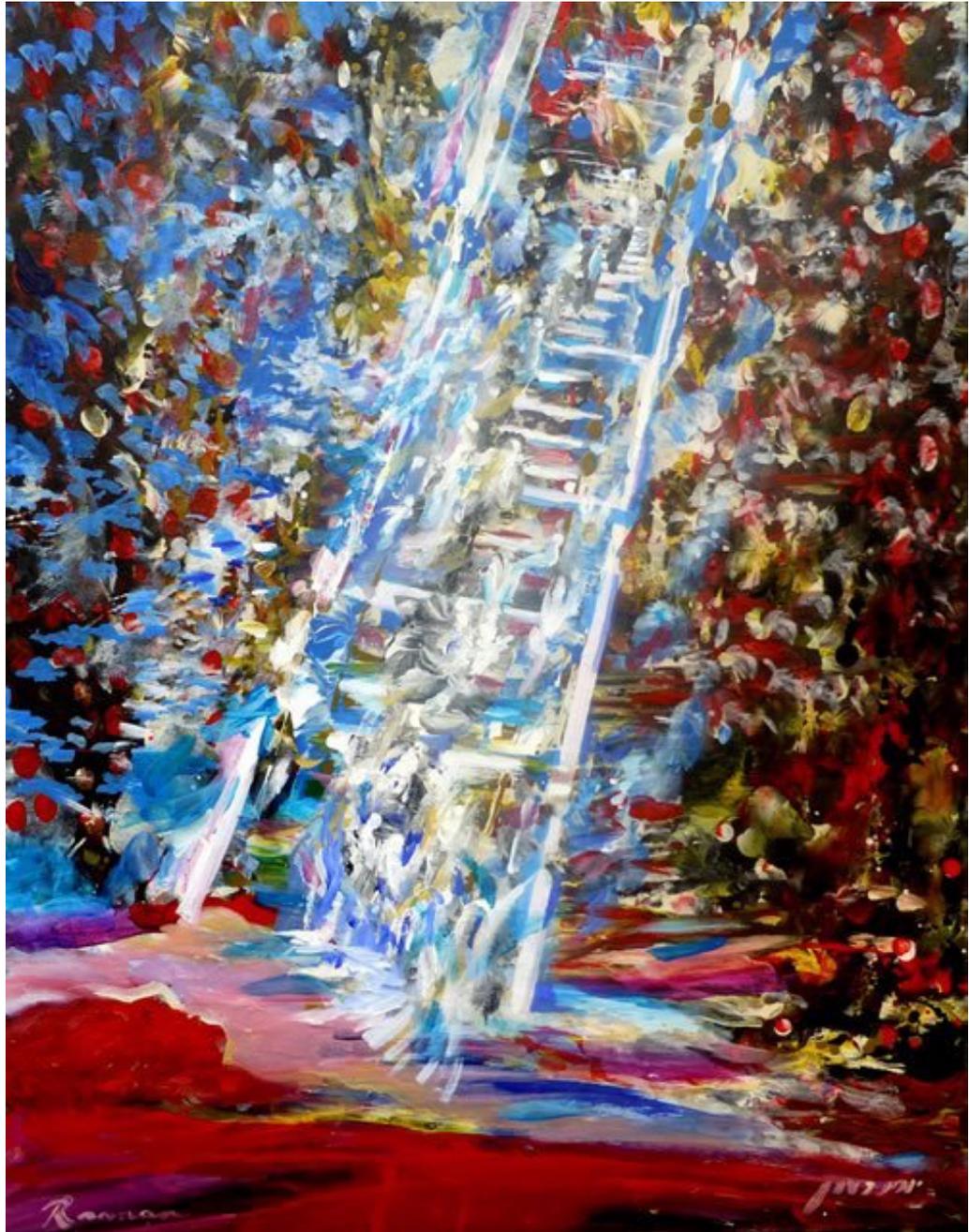




Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney
Scottish Episcopal Church

Newsletter – 29 September 2022
Michaelmas

From the Bishop



This is a painting about a dream, Jacob's dream. Along the bottom there lies the figure of a man (red), on his back with his face upwards. Above him the heavens are divided. Dark dashes of colour depict the night sky, while in the centre a ladder of light emerges, and there are intimations of figures ascending and descending.

Jacob's dream captures his desire to find the connection between earth and heaven, the thin place, where his deeds, present and eternal, will be met.

The picture is by Yoram Raanan, a painted reflection on the passage from Genesis 28:11-17

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the LORD stood beside him and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it!" And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

The artist says this about the painting:

'The midrash describes how man, *adam*, was created from *adamah*, earth. *Adam* (man), *adamah* (earth), and *adam* (red) all come from the same Hebrew root word.

Notice how Jacob's body is one with the red earth upon which he lies. His face, however, looks heavenward, mirroring the way mankind is created in the image of G-d, blessed with the gift of imagination (*adameh*—"I will imagine"), and the capacity for prophetic vision.

The contrast between the earthy reds and spiritual blues reflects both the physical and spiritual blessings Jacob received in his dream. The white ladder with the movement of angels symbolizes Jacob's ability to ascend, step by step, and attain a deep understanding of the divine.'

The ancient Hebrew text is reworked by Jesus, when he says to Nathaniel, "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

The ladder is no longer in a dream, or located in a certain place, but is found in the person of Jesus.

Collect for Michaelmas: Everlasting God, who ordained and constituted the ministries of angels and mortals in a wonderful order: grant that as your holy angels always serve you in heaven, so, at your command, they may help and defend us on earth; through Jesus Christ, our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Nathaniel's Epiphany by Malcolm Guite

A fugitive and exile, Jacob slept,
A man of clay, his head upon a stone
And even in his sleep his spirit wept
He lay down lonely and would wake alone.
But in the night he dreamt the Heavens parted
And glimpsed, in glory, as from Heaven's core,
A ladder set for all the broken-hearted
And earth herself becoming Heaven's door.

And when the nameless Angel named him Israel
He kept this gift, whose depth he never knew;
The promise of an end to all our exile,
For now a child of Israel finds it true,
And sees the One who heals the deep heart's aching
As Jacob's dream becomes Nathanael's waking.

From the Bishop's Diary – for your prayers

- 30 September – 2 October Scottish Episcopal Institute Weekend
- 13 – 21 October: Visit to Diocese of Connecticut for Consecration of Jeffrey Mello (15 Oct), time with Bishop Dorsey in New Hampshire
- 29 October – 2 November: Visit to Orkney, including commissioning of Revd Brenda Dowie as Priest-in-Charge of St Mary's Stromness (1 Nov)

Queen Funeral Cortège Passing through the Diocese

On Sunday 11th September the journey of the Queen's coffin from Balmoral to Holyrood House in Edinburgh passed through the Diocese and adjacent or near to, several churches in the Diocese St Kentigern's Ballater, St Thomas' Aboyne, Christ Church Kincardine O'Neil, St Ternan's Banchory, St Devenick's Bielside, St Mary's Pro-Cathedral and St James' Aberdeen. Some churches had shortened services to allow people to view the coffin as it passed, others began services later after the coffin had passed through.



The Queen passing through Ballater (Revd Canon Vittoria is pictured reverencing the Coffin) (BBC website) and the Queen passing by St Ternan's Banchory, with gathered congregation and Revd Canon Lynsay Downes beneath the great horse chestnut tree (Simon Downes).

Scottish Episcopal Institute Orientation Week 2022

The Scottish Episcopal Institute's academic year began in late August with the Orientation Week 28 August – 3 September. A time of worship, reflection, learning and community building. Reflections from two of Aberdeen and Orkney's Ordinands are offered here.

From Lay Reader to Ordinand – Helen Randall

My second Orientation Week at St Mary's Monastery, Kinnoull, felt quite different than last year's as I viewed it with a different perspective. I knew what to expect, to some extent, and I looked forward to meeting up with friends and welcoming new students. Of greater significance for me was that I had 'let go' of my roles as Lay Reader and Vestry member and 'taken up' my role as an Ordinand in July. Coming to this stage was a long journey for me but I felt a huge sense of relief during my first-year appraisal, when I realised that I could lay down things 'for a season so as to allow freedom' to embrace life as an Ordinand.



I welcomed afresh the rhythm of prayer which surrounded us at Kinnoull, both silent and spoken, led by clergy, staff and students. We prayed together using different liturgies, and, as we moved into the Season of Creation, beautiful displays enhanced our worship. Two interesting and contrasting modules were taught: 'Mission Entrepreneurship', which involved a hands-on field visit to Southton Smallholding, Blackruthven, and 'Introduction to Christian Worship', which included the historical development of our liturgies.



At Southton Smallholding

It was a joy and a privilege to spend a week at St Mary's Monastery, as we built community together, in small groups, as a whole student body, and with caring SEI staff. I look forward to returning soon!



Ferdinand, Helen and Godwin at Kinnoull.

New Year, New Experience, Renewed Journey

Unlike the previous orientation weeks of the last two years, I arrived at this year's orientation week in a new capacity as the Chair of the Student Chapter and Leader of my Small Group. So, a new leadership experience beckons. I left home a day earlier in order to attend the priestly ordination (at St Mary's Cathedral Glasgow) of a beloved friend (Rev'd Dr Lisa Curtice) whom I got to know through the Scottish Episcopal Institute (SEI).



*A Selfie with Rev'd Dr Lisa Curtice prior to the start of the Ordination Service & at The Bield
(Photo Credit: Ross Stirling-Young (Ordinand))*

Five new students joined SEI this year as first year students. I had been in touch with them during the summer to welcome them to SEI (as part of my Student Chapter Chair role) and it was good to finally meet them 'in the flesh'. New friendships were formed while existing friendships were further strengthened. Orientation week marks the beginning of the academic year at SEI as we all gather at St Mary's Monastery in Kinnoull Perth to fellowship together with God and with one another and to set the year and our journeys in motion before we get dispersed to be meeting mainly online and only for 5 weekends for the rest of the academic year. This would be my last orientation week at SEI.

As I thought about what lies ahead of me in this final year of initial ministerial formation, and amid the trepidation, I was invigorated through the activities of the week which centred on worship and mission as they reminded us that this journey is not about us but about God and God's mission to reconcile the world to himself. And it is a privilege to be called by God to be an instrument in this mission (John 15.16) in this place and at this time.



Photo Credit: Blayne Peacock (Ordinand)

Throughout the week, I prayed fervently for peace to return to our Diocese of Aberdeen & Orkney. This Diocese is so dear to me as I was wedded in this Diocese, and all my children were baptised in this Diocese. The words of admonition that came to me as I prayed were from Psalm 34.14 and 1 Peter 3.11 that we should 'seek peace and pursue it'. I also heard the words of our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 5.23-24 which admonishes us that reconciliation (regardless of who wronged who) is a crucial element of true worship of God. In these admonitions, there is intentionality and counter-cultural elements to them, and therein lies attributes of our discipleship. My prayer is that God (the author of peace and lover of concord) will soften our hearts to avail ourselves as instruments of peace in the current crisis that has bedevilled our beloved Diocese. Amen.



**The 2022
SEI Lecture**
Thursday 20 October
Revd Professor Sarah Coakley FBA



The event will take place using Zoom. Please register your attendance via the link:
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-2022-scottish-episcopal-institute-lecture-tickets-406192030297?aff=ebsoporgprofile>

Licensing of Revd Mike Blake as Priest-in-Charge of St Andrew's Alford

On Sunday 18th September during the 10.30am Sunday Service Bishop Anne licensed Revd Mike Blake as Priest-in-Charge for St Andrew's Alford. Mike has been serving St Andrew's as Assistant Curate since September 2019. Mike was a bi-vocational Curate and is now a bi-vocational Priest-in-Charge, working (with a stipend) for part of the time for the church alongside his work in the pest control industry. Prior to ordination Mike was a Lay Reader based at New Pitsligo.



Aberdeen Churches Together Evening Prayer on the Eve of the Queen's Funeral

On Sunday 18th September at 3pm a service of Evening Prayer was held at St Mary's Pro-Cathedral for Aberdeen Churches Together.

Bishop Anne led the service with Pastor Joe Ochei (Jesus House) and Revd Gary Smith (Crown Terrace Baptist Church) reading lessons Revd Canon Terry Taggart (St Mary's Pro-Cathedral) and Revd Dr Jenny Holden (St John's Aberdeen) leading the prayers. We were blessed to be joined by a choir from Jesus House who led us in our hymns and sang the moving 'Song of Farewell' by Ernest Sands that includes the chorus

*'May the choir of angels,
Come to greet you,
May they speed you to paradise.
May the Lord enfold you
In His mercy.
May you find eternal life.'*



The poem Lochnagar by Kathleen Jamie (Scotland's Makar) was read during the service

Lochnagar

Red weighs the rowan-trees
That line the well-loved path which climbs
To Lochnagar from Dee

And knows at last the open hill,
Those ancient wind-honed heights
Where deer stand shy and sky-lined,
Then vanish from living sight,

Where grief is ice, and history
Is distant roiling skies,
Where weather chases weather
Across the lands she strived

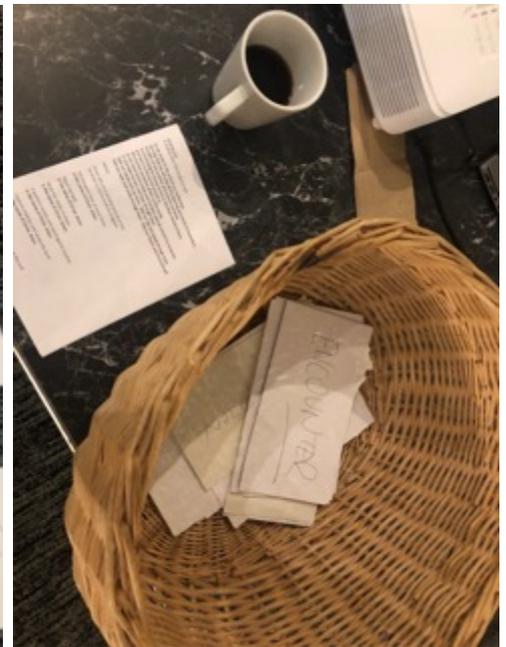
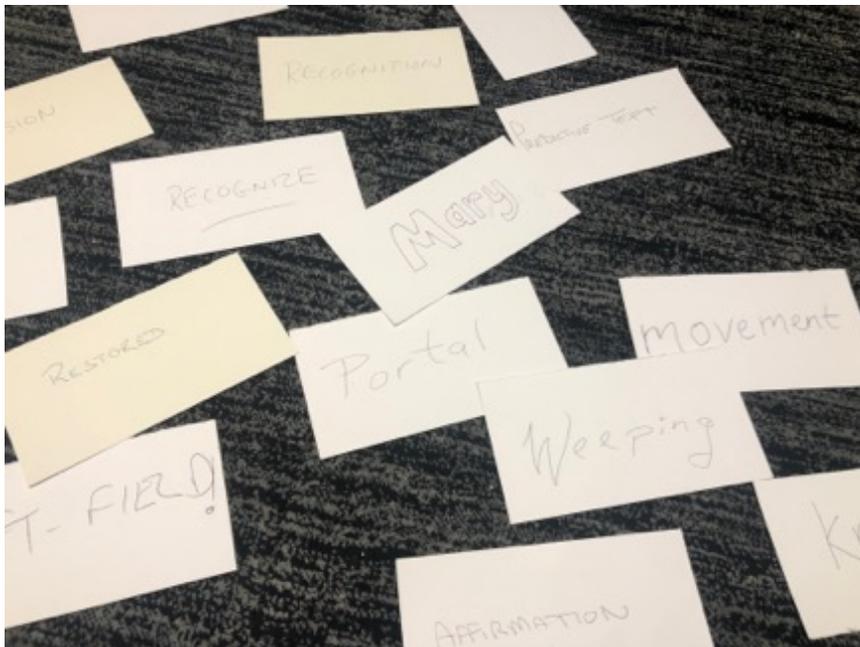
To serve, and served supremely well,
Till the call came from afar:
Back to the country kept in her heart,
the Dee, and Lochnagar.



Candles were lit during a time for reflection and prayer.

Clergy and Lay Readers Conference 22-23 September 2022 Walking Toward Resurrection

The Conference, held at the Douglas Hotel in Aberdeen, was led by Bishop Dorsey McConnell, Assisting Bishop in the Diocese. We looked at the two worlds offered in the Gospel of John— the world that we think of as "ordinary reality" and the world that Jesus considers far more real, the world of the Resurrection. Well before the Empty Tomb, John moves us back and forth between these two realms, and shows us how our lives can be changed by choosing that Risen World as our true home and seeing it in the world around us. We focussed on four key moments in this journey, each a portal to the world of the Resurrection: the Woman of Samaria, the Man Born Blind, Mary Magdalene at the empty tomb and the Disciples on the Beach. Alongside worship, meals together it was good to spend time together and have a conference in person again for the first time since October 2019.



As we come to the end of our conference
we pray that we will take all the learning and words of inspiration;
the gifts of one another and commit ourselves
to continuing to choose to live in the Risen World of Jesus
and see it in the world around us
We commit ourselves afresh to the world,
to our local communities and contexts and we commit to ourselves.
O Lord take my ears and hear through them
Take our hands and use them
Take our lips and speak through them
Take our eyes and smile through them
Take our hearts and mind and will.

Part of the Closing Liturgy from the Conference

Ordination of Andy Elliott to the Transitional Diaconate Saturday September 24th 2022 St Mary's Pro-Cathedral

On Saturday 24th September at 12 noon at St Mary's Pro-Cathedral Bishop Anne ordained Andrew Elliott to the Transitional Diaconate. Andy and his wife Krisi (a Lay Reader) are moving from Ely to Shetland, after visiting and sensing a call from God to move to the Diocese. Andy has undertaken his initial ministerial education at Westcott House in Cambridge with placements in Cambridge and Ely. Once house moving formalities are completed Andy and Kristi will be licensed to minister in St Colman's, Burravoe and St Magnus, Lerwick. Clergy, lay readers and an Ordinand from Shetland were present at the service, along with Bishop Dorsey and Catriona Robertson currently based on Orkney.



Revd Andy Elliott and Kristi Elliott and Bishop Anne, Bishop Dorsey, Revd Andy Elliott and a selection of Lay Readers and Clergy after the service.



The interior and exterior of St Colman's Burravoe

Migrants: Blessing or Burden?

Reflecting on our own experiences in the light
of migration stories from the Bible

Dr Robert Heimbürger
Research Fellow in Theological Ethics
University of Aberdeen

St Mary's Pro-Cathedral, Carden Place, Aberdeen
Monday 3rd October at 7pm

Provincial Services

**Service links are available from the Scottish Episcopal Church
website, and on the Provincial Facebook page**

Sunday at 11am Services from the Dioceses

'Children's Chapel' is on the first Sunday of every month.

Other services

Details of services live-streamed or broadcast by churches across the diocese and province are available from the churches' websites and facebook pages.