Welcome to another edition of e-news, giving information on events and resources specifically from the Mission & Discipleship Council.

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Conferences and Events

**INSPIRE II** is a conference organised by Mission Development Worker, Steve Aisthorpe, and Lochaber Presbytery. Inspiring worship and word will be followed by a selection of workshops on themes related to youth work, mental health issues and Messy Church. **24 March, 10am–3.30pm, Kilmallie Church (Caol, near Fort William).** The event is free, but registration is essential and a simple soup and sandwich lunch will be available on the day at a modest charge. To register, contact Ella Gill on 01967 431834 or Lochaber@cofscotland.org.uk

**IAN MASSON FRASER  ‘Work, Prayer, Thought’** Ian Fraser has been described as Scotland’s greatest living theologian, whose theology is lived out in action, prayer and poetry. This conference provides a rare opportunity to explore, in the round, the ways in which Ian’s gifts of thought and language have expressed themselves, in a unique witness for our times. Contributors include Ian Fraser himself, Kathy Galloway, Elizabeth Templeton, Tim Duffy, Douglas Galbraith, Alison Jack and Elspeth King. The conference is being organised by Stirling’s Drummond Trust, in association with the Scottish Storytelling Centre, and the Smith Art Gallery and Museum. **24 March, 10am–5.30pm, Allan Park South Church, Dumbarton Road, Stirling, with further events in Holy Trinity Church and the Smith.** Cost (including buffet lunch and tea/coffee throughout the day until 3.45pm) is £10; senior citizens, students, under 18s and unwaged, £8. Wine and soft drinks will be available at the smith where donations to the restoration fund are welcome. To book, contact the Scottish Storytelling Centre on 0131 556 9579 or reception@scottishstorytellingcentre.com For further information, contact the Conference Co-ordinator, Donald Smith, at donald@scottishstorytellingcentre.com

The conference programme is as follows:

**Part One: Allan Park South Church, 10am – 3.30pm**
10.15am: I was There; Where was God? Crisis and Liberation in a Life Journey – interview and open discussion (Ian Fraser and Ian Cranston, with Donald Smith).
11.30am: One Christ; One Church Ecumenism and Theology in the Life and Thought of Ian Fraser – presentations followed by group discussion (Elizabeth Templeton and Tim Duffy).
1.00pm: Lunch
2-3.30pm: Naming the Powers Political Witness in the Life and Thought of Ian Fraser – presentations followed by general discussion and debate (Ian Fraser and Kathy Galloway).

**Part Two: Holy Trinity Church 4pm – 5pm**
Words are Worlds Creativity and Language in the Life and Thought of Ian Fraser (Douglas Galbraith, Alison Jack with the Gargunnock Songsters)

**Part Three: Smith Art Gallery and Museum 5.15pm – 6.15pm**
Hanselling the Buiks Launching writings new and renewed (Elspeth King and Andy Campbell, with Ian Fraser)
MISSION SHAPED MINISTRY  Suitable for all denominations, this course consists of 24 units delivered over a combination of Saturdays and a residential weekend. Individuals or teams, leaders and members, clergy and lay people learn side by side in the sessions to make msm a major contributor to lay and ordained ministry training. Course content includes the mission of God, vision and values, gospel and culture, evangelism, discipleship, leadership and team roles, spirituality, worship and the sacraments, how to keep going when things get tough, and what is Church?  A new course will begin on 5 May (until 12 January 2013), with Saturday sessions (9am–3.30pm) at Sheddocksley Baptist Church, Aberdeen. Cost: £300 per person, which covers all materials, refreshments and the weekend away.  Church of Scotland ministers may use their Study Leave allocation, and financial support may be available for other people.  For further information, contact Anna Reid on 0131 225 5722 or areid@cofscotland.org.uk or visit www.missionshapedministry.org/aberdeen12

TRANSFORMING DISCIPLESHIP – following Jesus in the 21st century  This one-day conference is designed to explore – biblically and practically – what it means to be a 21st century disciple. It will be a mix of teaching, stories, models and conversations to inspire and encourage, and the style of the day will be provocative, motivating and challenging. The conference will be led by Bishop Graham Cray of Fresh Expressions, and case studies will feature some of the Church of Scotland emerging church projects.  12 May, 9am–3.30pm, Queen’s Park Baptist Church, 20 Balvicar Drive, Glasgow G42 4RT.  £20 including lunch.  For further information and to book, visit www.transformingdiscipleship.org.uk or contact QPBC on 0141 423 3963 or office@qpbc.org The conference is jointly sponsored by QPBC, Mission Scotland, Evangelical Alliance Scotland and the Mission & Discipleship Council’s Church Without Walls Team.

WHY BELIEVE?  Two conferences have been organised to help people ‘give a reason’ for the faith. The emphasis will be on workshops to help church members explore contemporary ways of responding both to new questions and classic issues, like science, suffering and pluralism, and also to explore the opportunities of today’s changing social contexts in presenting the claims of Jesus Christ.

What can I say? – commending faith in a sceptical age.  12 May, Palmerston Place Church, Edinburgh EH12 5AA.  Keynote Speaker is Amy Orr-Ewing, evangelist and training director for the Zacharias Trust, Oxford. Delegates can attend three workshops from the following:

“All that stuff about God? It really doesn’t matter!”  What can I say in an age of APATHY?  Led by Peter Neilson, church leader and consultant in Christian communication.

“No God could allow this!”  What can I say in an age of SUFFERING?  Led by Amy Orr-Ewing, keynote speaker.

“We don’t need any other explanations!”  What can I say in an age of SCIENCE?  Led by Wilson Poon, Professor of Physics, Edinburgh University, and Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

“Why Jesus – I can find God anywhere!”  What can I say in an age of TOLERANT PLURALISM?  Led by Pauline Hoggarth, writer and facilitator of Bible reading in different cultures.

“I trust only what I can see – and enjoy!”  What can I say in an age of MATERIALISM?  Led by David McCarthy, Senior Pastor at St Silas Church, Glasgow.

“Christianity is the root of all evil!”  What can I say in an age of ILLUSIONS?  Led by Colin Sinclair, international conference speaker and minister of Palmerston Place Church.

How can I say it? – sharing faith in a post-modern age.  27 October, Queen’s Park Church of Scotland, 170 Queen’s Drive, Glasgow G42 8QZ.  Keynote Speaker is Jeremy Begbie, theologian, musician and professor at Duke University, USA. Delegates can attend three workshops from the following:

Faith in the Workplace  Led by Ruth Walker, Mission Scotland.

Faith and Social Media  Led by Stewart Cutler, Children and Youth Development Officer for the URC Synod of Scotland.

Faith and Film  Led by Jolyon Mitchell, Director of the Edinburgh University Centre for Theology and Public Issues.
Faith and Using Print Media  Led by Lynne McNeill, Editor of Life and Work.
Faith and Learning Difficulties  (leader tbc)
Faith and Using the Bible Imaginatively  (leader tbc)

Conference Fees:  What Can I Say? £10; How Can I Say It? £15. Or book both conferences now for a combined cost of only £20! Tea & Coffee are included, but please bring a packed lunch. (Crèche facilities cannot be offered.)

To Book:  Contact Sheila Reeves on 0131 225 5722 ext 2239 or sreeves@cofscotland.org.uk to request a Booking Form to pay by cheque, or call to book and pay by credit card. Please note – places are limited, and workshops will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis.

HEART and SOUL 2012 is the follow-up to last year’s Roll Away the Stone celebration on General Assembly Sunday in Princes Street Gardens. This year’s event will embrace the full length and breadth of West Princes Street Gardens, with more attractions, stalls, exhibitors, and activities for children and young people. 20 May, 1–6pm. Again, there will be a massed choir at closing worship, made up of singers from all over the land. Numbers will be limited to 250, so if you would like to take part, sign up soon at www.heartandsoul2012.org.uk

New for this year will be dedicated space for individual congregations to tell their story about how it is – or aspires to be – the ‘Heart and Soul’ of the local community. Applications will be prioritised on the basis of how well they reflect the event’s theme of Seek, Love, Serve. For further information and to apply, visit the website as above.

Look out for information in future editions of e-news regarding the Mission & Discipleship Council’s stall.

BREAKING BARRIERS – the National Youth Assembly 2012 will explore some of the barriers that prevent us from getting to where we’d like to be, or even who we’d like to be! Social, political, financial, technological, cultural and even theological are some of the barriers we encounter in our lives. How might we overcome them and explore difficult things that may help us to break down the barriers and bring about change in the world?

Over the four residential days of the NYA there will be the daily debate providing an opportunity to explore issues and to tell the wider church what you think. And each day there will be time for worship, prayer, celebration, fun, exploring faith, encounter, exchange and conversation. And some sleep!

If you’re aged 16–25 years and have a connection to the Church of Scotland then you’re warmly invited to come to the National Youth Assembly which takes place in Dundee at the West Park Conference Centre from 10–13 August.

Places are LIMITED, so please book early to avoid disappointment! To book, contact Lesley Cameron on 0131 225 5722 or lcameron@cofscotland.org.uk or book online at www.madstuff.biz

Follow Church of Scotland Youth on Twitter @cosy_nya  Join the COSY group Facebook page at http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1113199679#!/groups/179615422095406/

******** Planning is underway for a NATIONAL MUSIC EVENT on 16 March 2013 ********

Specifically for Church Musicians, Worship Leaders (lay and ordained), Children and Youth Workers, Church based Community Arts Workers, Conductors, Organists and members of choirs and orchestras. We will be celebrating a variety of styles of music from contemporary, classical, children’s and community music. Look out for further information in future editions of e-news......

Scottish Storytelling Centre and Network
43–45 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1SR
www.scottishstorytellingcentre.co.uk
SUBSCRIBE TO THE WEEKLY EVENTS BULLETIN by clicking here:
http://visitor.r20.constantcontact.com/manage/optin/ea?v=001DFR09IDUFIUaoAlv4zICJ3%3D%3D
### EVENTS

To book tickets, contact Reception on 0131 556 9579 or reception@scottishstorytellingcentre.com

#### Ceilidh Culture

Now in its 10th year, Ceilidh Culture is Edinburgh’s annual traditional arts festival and a great opportunity to get involved with the traditional arts, whether it is music, song, dance or storytelling – right in the heart of Scotland’s capital city. Look out for more Ceilidh Culture events in April at the Centre.

**A Time to Keep** *(Music)*

Poet and songwriters Lise Sinclair from Fair Isle performs an intimate acoustic set of songs from her forthcoming CD A Time to Keep, based on George Mackay Brown’s collection of short stories of the same title. Tying Scottish and Nordic cultures across time, Lise will be joined by the album’s co-writer, Ástvaldur Traustasson of Iceland, as well as a host of players from Orkney and Shetland — Bryan Cromarty, Inge Thomson and Ewen Thomson — plus Icelandic translations by Adalstein Asberg Sigurdsson. Funded by Creative Scotland and Scotland’s Islands.

- **15 March** | 7.30pm (2hrs) | £8/£6 | 12+

#### An Irish Jaunt *(Storytelling)*

Join charismatic Claire McNicol, mighty Alexander Mckenzie and dauntless David Campbell, along with the acclaimed piper Hamish Moore, who invite you to an Irish celebration of story, music and song.

- **16 March** | 7.30pm (90mins) | £6/£4 | 14+

#### Through New Eyes: BSL Performance *(Storytelling)*

A night of storytelling in British Sign Language to celebrate the eve of ‘BSL Day’, taking place throughout the UK on Sun 18 Mar. Combining live performance with film, this evening will present new perspectives on old fables and showcase innovative signed stories for both children and adults, introducing the audience to a wide range of signing styles, from ‘plain’ BSL to richer and more visual forms of the language. Performed in BSL with only the introduction and closing remarks interpreted into English, this performance will be most suitable for people with some interest in or knowledge of BSL, including those attending BSL classes.

- www.actualsigns.com | **17 March** | 7pm (2hrs) | £8/£6 | 14+

#### Tiny Tales *(Storytelling)*

Spring is in the air and the Garden Guzzler is hungry again! Join Sylvia Troon and her garden fairyfolk for songs, rhymes and weathery adventures!

- **20 March** | 10am & 11.30am (40mins) | £6 | Age 6months-2yrs

#### The Coming of the Unicorn *(Storytelling)*

"Stories are something you carry with you, something to last your entire life, to be passed on to your children, and their children for evermore." (Duncan Williamson). Join us in celebrating the release of Duncan’s posthumous collection of wonderful folk and fairytales for children, collected from the traditions of Travellers, as well as the crofters, farmers, and shepherds he met along the way. The Coming of the Unicorn includes tales of cunning foxes and storytelling cats, hunchbacked ogres and beautiful unicorns, helpful broonies and mysterious fairies, rich kings and fearsome warriors, as well as stories about ordinary folks trying to make their way in the world. Linda Williamson and David Campbell come together to celebrate Duncan’s unique storytelling voice, full of colour, humour and life.

- **22 March** | 7pm (1hr) | £5/£3 | 8+

#### Tall Tales Oscar *(Storytelling)*

Hilarious, mysterious or plain ridiculous – listen to tall tales, ferocious fibs and fables performed live on stage by Scotland’s finest tellers, then you decide who wins the lucrative accolade of Oscar the Leprechaun! Scotland’s annual tall tales storytelling competition is hosted by last year’s outrageously amusing winner, Jack Martin. A guaranteed crowd-pleaser, booking in advance is recommended.

- **24 March** | 7.30pm (2hrs 30mins) | £8/£6 | 14+
**Guid Crack (Storytelling)**
Edinburgh’s monthly adult storytelling session at The Waverley Bar presents an open floor special for the Ceilidh Culture festival. Accompanied young adults welcome. **30 March** | 7.30pm (2hrs 30mins) | By donation (suggest £3) | Adults

**Movings of the Spirit (Music and Storytelling)**
Through story and song, Mairi Campbell and David Francis explore the life of Mairi’s grandfather, Duncan Campbell: Highlander, seanachaidh and itinerant preacher. **30 March** | 8pm (1hr) | £10/£7 | 14+

**GODDESS: Women's History Month**
We are used to seeing women in images; often this portrayal is predictable, derogatory and even damaging. What happens when a group of female artists are let loose and invited to express how they see the female experience? A feast for the eyes that is both beautiful and challenging, enjoy a range of work on display from established, emerging and community artists. Many pieces will also be available to buy. Strange Theatre presents this exhibition and accompanying series of events in collaboration with the Scottish Storytelling Centre to celebrate the **101st International Women’s Day (on 8 March)** and **Women's History Month during March**. Also, don’t miss the accompanying workshops ‘Ancient and Modern Goddesses’ and ‘Making Your Own Red Shoes’ on 9 and 10 March. Full details are available here: [http://scottishstorytellingcentre.co.uk/events/main_event_display.asp?id=232](http://scottishstorytellingcentre.co.uk/events/main_event_display.asp?id=232)

**TRAINING EVENTS**
Please book through Reception 0131 556 9579 or reception@scottishstorytellingcentre.com

**Signing Stories** Intermediate skills | Skills
Explore the performance of signed stories and poetry, and begin to discover your own storytelling language, with the aim of telling and retelling signed stories to Deaf and hearing audiences. This day-long workshop is facilitated by BSL trainer and Deaf storyteller Mark MacQueen and Deaf linguist Gary Quinn of Heriot Watt University, in partnership with Actual Signs. Designed for native BSL users and advanced level BSL users. Don’t miss an exciting BSL storytelling performance the same evening! **17 March** | 10am-4pm | £36/£32 Network Members

**Scottish Step Stories** | Themes | Traditions, communities and cultures
Explore Scottish step dancing with an evening of practical techniques and a dip into the tales and traditions the dance stems from. **28 March** | 5-8pm | £30/£26 Network Members

**Telling Scottish Folktales** Intermediate skills | Traditions, communities & cultures
Get back to the roots of Scotland’s oral storytelling heritage with a day that explores folktales and their contexts, and offers some pointers on telling and retelling the tales today. With storyteller and writer Janis Mackay. **31 March** | 10am-1pm | £30/£26 Network Members

**Traveller Traditions** | Themes | Traditions, communities & cultures
Discover the story tradition of Scotland’s Travelling people, and pick up some tales and tips for re-telling, with storyteller and writer Jess Smith. For storytellers and others interested in learning about and sharing the stories of Scotland’s rich Traveller culture. **31 March** | 2-5pm | £30/£26 Network Members

**Resources**

**DIFFERENT VOICES** is an online magazine about church music in Scotland, produced by the Mission & Discipleship Council. It is for all those who sing in choirs, congregations and praise groups, play organs or other instruments, and all who plan, lead and choose music and hymns for worship. The price is £4 per issue and details of how to order can be found here:
There are many advantages to this move to a new media – networking the readership more easily, embedding mp3 files and videos of new music into the magazine, linking directly to external resources, allowing the reader to change font size to suit and even voice reading software for the blind (via pdf reader programmes). The main advantage will be user-generated content – that is, the ability for readers to make contributions, comment on existing articles, ask hard questions and share practical ideas with one another. This opportunity for interaction with one another certainly promises a new way of experiencing ‘Different Voices’. Further enquires can be made to Anna Reid, Senior Administrator for the Faith Expression Team, on 0131 225 5722 ext 2359 or areid@cofscotland.org.uk

**PREACHER PERSPECTIVES** At the end of each month, the Mission & Discipleship Council publishes a short manual on preaching, to develop your own skills or to train others. These manuals have been written by some of the church in Scotland’s most practiced preachers, and are aimed both at those familiar with the art of preaching and those brand new to it. To download the material, visit http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/starters_for_sunday/preacher_perspectives

For any further information, contact Anna Reid, Senior Administrator for the Faith Expression Team, on 0131 225 5722 ext 2359 or areid@cofscotland.org.uk

[See also the Good News section]

**FUTURE FOCUS: a way forward for congregations** Future Focus is a facilitated resource. General information is available to download at Future Focus information but to request a facilitator please contact the Mission & Discipleship Council at mandd@cofscotland.org.uk

**PRAY IT FORWARD** This popular initiative features an attractive collection of high quality credit-card sized cards carrying a range of blessings inspired from scripture, for churches and individuals to give away free to others. The aim of the cards is to encourage and bless the recipient, and to encourage them to pray for, and bless, someone else in turn, ie to focus outward, and not just on what God can do for ME! They are ideal for use in outreach, pastoral care and personal contexts (eg pop one in with each greetings card you send throughout the year). Each box of 80 cards features an assortment of 8 different designs. £5 per box. To order, visit www.madstuff.biz or email mandd@cofscotland.org.uk

**PRESBYTERY ADULT TRAINERS** are available to run training events in congregations and Presbyteries. If anyone would like to contact a PAT, or find out how to become a PAT themselves, contact Pauline Steenbergen, Leadership Development Worker, on 07854 711988 or psteenbergen@cofscotland.org.uk

**NEWS FROM ST ANDREW PRESS**

A VERY SPECIAL OFFER to all readers … **Insights Easter** by William Barclay, with a foreword by Diane Louise Jordan

A short, simple and searingly insightful guide to why the Easter story remains so important today – ideal for individuals, for Bible study and as a really meaningful gift.

The *Insights* series is written by Scotland’s most loved Bible commentator, William Barclay. With his roots in the Church of Scotland, Barclay’s down-to-earth books have sold over 17 million copies worldwide. His thrilling enthusiasm will refresh, renew and excite your own depth of understanding of the New Testament. Barclay’s writing helps all the generations to ‘know better their Bible, their God and their Saviour’.

To buy: SPECIAL OFFER: available only through St Andrew Press distributor – Norwich Books and Music: RRP is £6.99 – but you can buy for £5 inclusive of P&P for UK orders. Call now on 01603 785925; fax 01603 785915; or e-mail orders@norwichbooksandmusic.co.uk. Orders are fulfilled quickly and you can pay by credit or debit card. **CODE EASTERN12** must be quoted in order for the offer to be applied. Offer closes at 12 noon on 4 April. UK customers only. International P&P rates on application.
PRAY NOW 2012 – Daily Devotions on the Theme of Time  Pray Now is a popular annual collection of modern prayers for all, whatever their denomination, written by individuals, prayer groups and leaders of worship. It offers a place to start when you feel you have no words of your own, and prayer activities that allow time to think and space to listen. This year’s theme is ‘Time’. The Pray Now Group is a team of experts who care deeply about the role of prayer in our lives. Drawn from an ecumenically minded Church of Scotland group, their work is written for a wide, diverse and international readership. OUT NOW! ISBN: 9780861535972

Bulk offer (UK addresses only)
1-9 copies are priced at £7.99 each. 10 or more are £6.99 each. If you order 100 or more, they are £4.99 each.

[See also the Good News section]

SEEDS & ROOTS  This DVD tells the stories of seven ‘fresh expressions’ of church, most of which are not quite what are generally recognised as church yet, but the missional instinct of these pioneers is driving them on to plant new expressions of church in areas and among networks not presently being reached by our churches. Discussion starters are included for use with Kirk Sessions, Bible Study groups or other small groups to see if they might feel called to consider a new expression of church where you are. The DVD can also be shown during worship or in other public meetings simply to raise awareness of this important agenda for today, to inform and to encourage those who are interested in one of the ways God’s spirit is moving in our land. £10. To order, visit www.madstuff.biz/browse-resources/details/48/seeds-roots-dvd.html

Three of the initiatives are featured in the report by John and Olive Drane – ‘Reformed, Reforming, Emerging, and Experimenting’, a study in contextual theology reflecting the experiences of initiatives in emerging ministry being funded by the Church of Scotland – copies of which are available free of charge by contacting mandd@cofscotland.org.uk

STARTERS FOR SUNDAY offers a range of suggested material which can be used each week for individuals and congregations to develop. Sometimes there may be background material to the readings, at other times it may be ideas for deepening prayer, or involving children, or using drama. Musical suggestions are usually included. For further information, visit www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/starters_for_sunday  [See also the Good News section]

WHY BELIEVE? is a resource to encourage the Scottish churches to provide a reasoned case for Christian belief (apologetics) amid the challenges and opportunities of today’s Scotland. It brings together a group of Christians of different denominations, administered within the Mission & Discipleship Council, and also supported by ACTS (Action of Churches Together in Scotland). To download the ‘What Can I Say?’ leaflet, giving brief responses to some things that people say about Christianity, click here: http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/5479/what_can_i_say.pdf  [See the Events section for details of two conferences.]

The group has created a new website, providing access to a wide range of resources, including text, audio and video clips. “If you always wanted to know about God... but were afraid to ask”, visit www.godsearchscotland.org.uk

Rural Church

ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW: 21–24 June
Volunteer representatives from various denominations are sought, as follows:
• People who are gifted at interacting/chatting with others.
• People who could pray with others.
• People to hand out leaflets.
• People to make tea and coffee for the public.
• People to help set up the marquee on 18 June (normally from about 9am).
People to clear out the marquee on 24 June (normally from about 5–8pm, but could be a little later).

For further information and to request a Volunteer Form, contact Lesley Cameron on 0131 225 5722 or lcameron@cofscotland.org.uk before 4 May. Training will be available on 12 May.

If you are unable to volunteer, we would ask you to remember us in prayer for this important outreach from the Churches in Scotland to one of the largest gatherings of people in Scotland.

THE SCOTTISH CHURCHES RURAL GROUP now has a Facebook page. To view and/or join, visit http://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/churchesinruralscotland/

GOOD NEWS / HELP REQUIRED

BODY AND SOUL FAIRS – anam cara (Christian mystical accompaniment)
For the last year the Council has had a presence at Body and Soul Fairs in Glasgow and Edinburgh, inviting people to explore Christian spirituality and faith. The team are there to pray with and for folk, and to offer help and assistance with prayer for people who have perhaps never thought of praying before.
At each event we have been given the opportunity of an hour long seminar slot, where we have covered a variety of subjects – from finding the spiritual practices which suit you best, to the Sermon on the Mount, and inviting people to think about blessing. It was in this context that the Pray it Forward cards were developed, and have been very warmly received there.
At the most recent event last month in Glasgow, we had the privilege of engaging with over 100 individuals who came to us for prayer, to be blessed, to ask for prayer for loved ones, to chat about their own spiritual experiences or ask how they might explore Christianity further. Some commented on how safe it felt to sit and talk at our stall.

Leaflets are available on the stall giving the anam cara ethos, as follows:

**Christian:** We are rooted in the Christian faith. We believe in one living God, who became a human being in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, in order to open up a new way for us to live in relationship and harmony with God and each other.

**Mystical:** Mystical Christianity is primarily experiential, rather than intellectual. Through engagement with symbolism, ritual, ancient wisdom, the arts and nature, we can encounter the living God in a way which goes beyond intellectual understanding.

**Accompaniment:** Anam Cara is an ancient Celtic term, meaning Soul Friend. The Anam Cara was someone who accompanied the spiritual traveller, pointing out signs of God’s love along the way. Our desire is to accompany you – even for a short time – in your spiritual exploration, and to provide resources for your journey.

For further information, contact mandd@cofscotland.org.uk

LIFE AND WORK feature writer, Jackie Macadam, has a request……
We’re thinking about a series called ‘The Sign of the Cross’, where we’ll feature special crosses in churches across Scotland. Some churches have crosses made for a special reason or by a special person. Maybe even out of a special material. Or for a particular reason. We’ll be looking for a good photograph of the cross and tell its story. Could I ask people working in churches across the community to keep an eye open for interesting crosses and get me in touch with someone who will tell the story. Please email me on jmacadam@lifeandwork.org and tell me all about the cross that holds a special place in your church or community.

EQUIP – inspiring and resourcing your congregation. The third of three events was held recently in Paisley Abbey. Here’s what some delegates had to say:
I found the day very worthwhile, especially having the opportunity of meeting people who had a different perspective, and so the exchange of views with a number of different people was both helpful and illuminating.

Very interesting ideas which I would hope to use as a ‘springboard’.

Really enjoyed the day. I learned a lot and it was awesome and humbling to be amongst so many dedicated folks. Thank you.

Thank you so much for a wonderful inspiring day. To be honest, I did not arrive with high expectations but I left on a real spiritual high. It was a valuable and informative day and I met so many people who were so full of grace – it was just the lift I was needing.

PREACHERS’ PERSPECTIVES
Some comments from users of this new resource:

I am very happy to report that, as most of the members of our church House Group lead worship midweek on a regular basis, we used the Preacher Perspectives material for a few weeks in January and early February. Many thanks for a very valuable resource.

I am a Reader-in-training and have been finding your Preachers series very helpful, and mostly quite down-to-earth and practical, although this varies between contributors. It’s a very good idea and I am looking forward to the next one.

I have just had a look at the material in ‘Preachers Perspectives’ and will find this very useful in my preparation of Services. Thank you very much

[For details of how to access this, see the Resources section.]

PRAY NOW
The following was received by email:

Just to tell you how much I am enjoying and benefiting from the new Pray Now. Have not had it before and it is so beautiful to read and re-read and so full of thoughtful ideas. What a treat and a help. Many thanks to the Faith Expression Team for all the work, thought and prayer that must have gone into this beautiful daily devotion book.

[For details of how to order copies, see the Resources section.]

STARTERS FOR SUNDAY
This area has been receiving the greatest number of monthly ‘hits’ on the Church of Scotland website for a while – and has now risen to 16,000!!

[For details of how to access this, see the Resources section.]

Trusts/Funding

EMERGING MINISTRIES FUND was set up in 2008 by the Church of Scotland to explore and encourage new patterns of church around Scotland. The fund is available to congregations and Presbyteries, who can apply for grants in relation to local or Presbytery-wide need. Applications will be considered by the Emerging Ministries Task Group at regular meetings throughout the year. For information on how to apply and to download the guidance notes, visit www.churchofscotland.org.uk/connect/emerging_church#fund