



The Society of Friends of St Andrew's, Jerusalem

Newsletter No 9

June 2019

News from St Andrew's

Church of Scotland Delegation into Gaza (June 2019)



It's 3pm and the sun is beating down on Gaza City. Donkeys pulling fruit carts negotiate the dusty streets, as child-vendors and stall owners call out to passers-by trying to sell their merchandise. Gaza City is a vibrant and colourful cacophony of sound and colour; where its citizens are doing everything they can to survive amidst the crushing poverty and political impasse.

We walk past a bombed-out building that has not been rebuilt since the 2014 war. Children run around and play amidst the rubble, climbing up crumbling stairs and over the debris of rock and broken glass. If you are aged 11, you will have lived through three major wars (Operation Cast Lead 2008-2009, Operation Pillar of Defence 2012, Operation Protective Edge 2014); in addition to continual flare-ups that seldom make the news, such is the normalisation of violence here.

Whoever you think is the blame for the situation in Gaza, it is the young people and children who bear the brunt, and they have done nothing to bring about this conflict. Gaza has one of the youngest populations in the world, and is one of the most densely populated, with around 2M people living on a strip of land 25 miles long and 7 miles wide.

But the main reason for our Church of Scotland delegation into Gaza is to visit the projects that the Church of Scotland support, to follow up with advocacy, to encourage the dwindling Christian community in Gaza (estimated at around 1000 from a population of 2M); and to think of ways in which we as a Church can help those working for peace and justice.

It all feels like a drop in the ocean given the needs of Gaza, and yet it is vital the Church does not walk away, but remains faithful to its call to do all it can to build God's Kingdom of justice and compassion in our conflicted and unjust world.

The Near East Council of Churches act as our hosts, and always pick us up from the Gaza border and obtain permits from Hamas for us to enter (you need permission from the Israeli side and from Hamas). The NECC (who oversee many of the projects that the Church of Scotland partners with) are involved in diverse work across the Gaza Strip that is making a real difference. Their work includes supporting primary health clinics and psychosocial projects for some of the most vulnerable:

NECC has been operating health services in the Gaza strip since 1952 and currently runs three primary health care clinics in Shijaia, Darraj and Kherbet al Adas neighborhoods supporting a population of more than 160,000 people



Thanks to the generosity of the FoSAJ, we were able to pass on £5000 to some of the

projects run by the NECC that are operating in circumstances that are near impossible (£1,500 to the NECC, £2,000 for the Darraj Family Health Clinic, £1,000 to a woman's cooperative project in one of the most deprived refugee camps in Gaza, £500 [which was added to another donation of £500 from a church in Scotland to make it £1,000] for the Psychosocial programmes which help children traumatised by war). A Church of Scotland member also donated £5,000 for the Arab Ahli Hospital in Gaza, which is a Christian hospital providing invaluable care in a place of unspeakable need; and £5,000 to PHRI (Physicians for Human Rights Israel), which is an Israeli charity that send doctors and medical supplies into the Palestinians Territories (including Gaza).

I would like to end by expressing my heart-felt thanks to the FoSTAJ and all who support the mission of The Church of Scotland here, not just in terms of finance, but through prayer, friendship and being a witness to the pain and suffering of all those trapped in this intractable conflict.

Rev Dr John McCulloch

Welcome to our new President, Colonel Andrew Campbell.

Andrew is no stranger to the Society – he has been a Friend of St Andrew's Scots Memorial Church, Jerusalem since 2008 and Vice President since 2012.

In 2017, Andrew took part in the Friends' Centenary visit to Israel, a visit that allowed him not only to get a little under the skin of the Country but also to follow in the footsteps of his Regimental ancestors who fought in Sinai / Palestine in the First World War. He found the visit to be educational, inspirational and challenging all at the same time.



Andrew attended Edinburgh University and read for a Bachelor of Divinity degree at New College. He joined the Army in 1977, being commissioned into the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and retiring in 2008. He then became, and still is, Secretary of the New Club, Edinburgh. He is a Presbytery Elder of his Kirk Session; one of Her Majesty's Commissioners at Queen Victoria School, Dunblane; and President of the Edinburgh and Lothian's Branch of SSAFA. He is married with three grown up children.

As we welcome Andrew to the post, we offer heart-felt thanks to the Rev Alistair McGregor who held the reins of the Friends for 4 years from 2015. Alistair, we wish you well, acknowledging the strides you have overseen, focussing on the future of Society.



Tabeetha School at the General Assembly



12 young people from Grades 7 to 9 accompanied by Margaret, Principal, and Rachel, Head of Primary, attended the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh in May. They visited and promoted Tabeeetha at Riverview Church (who hosted them), at the

General Assembly, at Friends of Tabeeetha AGM, with the Duke of Buccleuch at Holyrood Palace as well as at two secondary schools.

Margaret fills us in on their visit.

Our Tabeeetha banner was seen in the visitors' gallery at the General Assembly so no-one could forget Tabeeetha's importance in the work of the Church of Scotland in Israel.

We also enjoyed seeing some Scottish sites and taking part in some leisure pursuits – Falkirk Wheel, the Kelpies, Edinburgh Castle, Edinburgh Climbing Centre, Camera Obscura and Holyrood Palace. Inevitably, our young participants were surprised by how green everything was and loved the buildings and architecture of Edinburgh which is quite different to anything to be seen in Israel.



As we still do not have mission partners and feel that acutely, we were unable to visit Church of Scotland churches to promote the work done in

Tabeeetha to CoS more, but it was still great to hear our youngsters speak about why they are glad to be at Tabeeetha, of the racism they sometimes experience outside of Tabeeetha, how they value diversity, of their aspirations for the future and what they would change if they could.



It was a very successful trip, making us determined to make this an annual event and keep Tabeeetha on the Scottish map!

Tabeeetha's representation at the General Assembly was recorded by [BBC Scotland](#). Seen worldwide, it provides a wonderful insight to the uniqueness of the school.

Margaret MacDonal, Principal

St Andrew's Guest House, Jerusalem



The Guesthouse had an excellent year in 2018 with occupancy of 69% for the year, 4% higher than the previous year. Financial results have followed and are also much stronger. Until the end of March 2019 occupancy was running at 74% - a very encouraging start to the year. It is hoped that the recent creation of a bar area will increase drinks revenue – exciting times.

On the other hand, the sale of the land belonging to the Greek Orthodox Church has resulted in uncertainty for the future with potential development impinging on the garden area.

Along with the Memorial Church, repairs and maintenance are scheduled to be undertaken on a large scale, hopefully towards the end of 2019.

... and the Scots Hotel, Tiberias



Reflecting the trend at the Guesthouse, occupancy at the Scots Hotel continues to provide encouraging statistics.

Excellent feedback and a strong performance in 2018 ensure that its reputation as a standard bearer in the market is maintained.

A Tour Behind the Wall



Maureen Jack and I led a tour, “Behind the Wall” in April 2019, on behalf of the World Mission Council. For half of our time we lived in Bethlehem. For the other half we were at St Andrew’s Jerusalem. Almost all had been before: all wanted to learn more about the

conflict – its causes and effects. For every one of us it was a powerful experience.

As I expected, St Andrew’s turned out to be the ideal place to be based. No matter how often you see it, the view from the Terrace looking over Jerusalem early in the morning is wondrously beautiful (I once heard a professional soprano sing “Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Were you there when God raised him from the tomb?” on that Terrace as the Easter dawn broke). We were made very welcome at the Guest House, as I expected. I hope all Church of Scotland groups make St Andrew’s their first preference when they stay in Jerusalem: they will not regret it.

Living in the Guest House as we did, it was possible for us to attend Sunday worship twice at the Scots Memorial Church. Maureen Jack had noticed that we would be there on the anniversary of the ordination of the minister John McCulloch, in 2018: so I was able to bring him the best wishes of the Moderator of the General Assembly.



John McCulloch was a wise and challenging support to our group: we greatly benefitted from his company and his advice and his theological analysis while we were at St Andrew’s. In particular, we all appreciated his determination that we meet, and be inspired by, the courage and hope of many local people. And I was not the only one to profit from his introduction to a cookery class in a refugee camp in Bethlehem!

The Very Rev Dr Andrew McLellan

Scholarly News

Looking back ...

Carol Morton gives us the background of her involvement with Sunbula, the subject of research by Craig Dobney, our 2018 Scholar, highlighting the continuing commitment of the Friends to support their projects.



When you give us work you give us life

This message thirty years ago from Mrs. Julia Dabdoub, then chair of the Bethlehem Arab

Women's Union, has been the foundation of all the work of both Sunbula in Jerusalem and Hadeel in Scotland, supporting the Palestinian economy through Fair Trade.

In 1988, at the start of the first intifada, my husband Colin was appointed minister of St.

Andrew's and Director of the Hospice.

Women's empowerment and income generating



projects blossomed all over the West Bank and Gaza because of the inability of men – wounded, disabled, deported, killed – to provide the family's income. In a deeply patriarchal society, women had not been used to being bread winners. The economic need was, and still is, enormous; marketing was crucial but nonexistent. The idea of a Fair Trade shop, [Sunbula](#) thus was born, with a mission including the survival of a culture under threat. The first tiny 'shop' under the stairs in St. Andrew's Guest House was designed by Walter Dunlop, then working in Israel. My previous work as Regional Adviser with Traidcraft was immensely valuable.

After 9½ years, Colin returned to Scotland; consequently my work with Sunbula ceased. The need did not. In 2003 the [Hadeel](#) shop opened in Edinburgh - a registered Fair Trade shop, importing directly and marketing products from Palestinian social enterprises in the West Bank, Gaza, and Fair Trade organisations in Israel.

Hadeel keeps a close relationship with Sunbula, and the Friends and World Mission partners now include several of our producers.

- Along with Shirabe, Director of Sunbula, Craig visited many of our producer groups: [Bethlehem Arab Women's Union](#), [Ma'an Lil Hayat](#), [Oasis Workshop](#), [Domari Society of Gypsies](#) and [Idna Ladies Association](#).
- We import za'atar and soap from [Sindyanna](#) of Galilee, (see p10).
- Sunbula first marketed carpets for [Lakiya](#), the Bedouin project begun in 1991; the Friends recently funded a carpet for the church in Jerusalem.



Amongst tangible elements noted above, our support has also provided

- Income generation
- Dignity and hope
- Capacity building
- Occupational therapy
- Preservation of land and trees

I honestly believe that supporting the Palestinian economy, maintaining long-term personal relationships through Fair Trade, is one way, though not new, to help keep hope alive and thank the Friends for their support.

Carol Morton, Administrative Committee

And looking forward ...



Did you know

that a key object of the Society is "to provide scholarships to divinity students recognised by the Church of Scotland to enable them to travel and study in the Holy Land"?

The historical reason? In designing the Memorial the intention was to combine a place of worship with a Church of Scotland theological college in the Holy Land which, for a number of reasons, did not materialise and the proposed college is now the Guesthouse. (Read "Faith Rewarded. The Story of St Andrew's Scots Memorial, Jerusalem" See page 7.

The Scholarship programme goes a considerable way to honour the concept.

For many years the Society has been able to fulfil this objective with students taking advantage of being able to pursue their university studies in Israel/Palestine. However in recent years we have been experiencing a steep reduction in applications, even notes of interest. We are anxious to reverse this trend.

We appreciate that the thought of venturing overseas to this region of the Middle East can be exciting yet quite daunting. However with a grant of up to £2,000 and hugely experienced human resources both in Scotland and in the Holy Land to offer first-hand information and guidance with making arrangements, we are here to encourage more students to take this opportunity in what, for many, has been a life enhancing experience.

As Members, you can help. Do you or your friends have family studying divinity at any of the Scottish universities who you feel would benefit from this Scholarship? If so please alert them to this programme and encourage them to contact [Walter Dunlop](#).

You've read John McCulloch's report on his recent visit to Gaza.

Now help us to help them

Do you know someone who has visited St Andrews Scots Memorial Church who isn't already a member of the Friends?

Yes? If so, please let them know why they should join us. Their membership will...

- help us support the current work that the church undertakes – often in partnership with other Christian organisations.
- contribute to the awarding of scholarships
- ensure that those who follow behind are left with that overwhelming impact that they experienced when first visiting St Andrews Scots Memorial Church.

Life membership	£50
Annual membership	£10

Easy – just click [here](#) or email friends@standrewsjerusalem.org to find out more.

Email or post?

If you've received this through the post then do please share your email address with us. Quick, economical and instant access to the links in the newsletter. friends@standrewsjerusalem.org will find us.

Wanted!

Your input towards the future of our Society



At the AGM it was explained that the Society's finances had been examined to see whether there was a better way to support St Andrew's Scots Memorial Church in encouraging the Minister in his work – one of the Friends' Constitutional objectives.

The examination led to a proposal at the AGM that the General and Organ Funds should be amalgamated. The Church uses an electronic organ, which the Friends helped to pay for. This is considerably cheaper to run and maintain than a 'proper' organ and therefore the requirement for a separate organ fund was felt to be redundant. The motion to amalgamate these two funds was passed at the AGM.

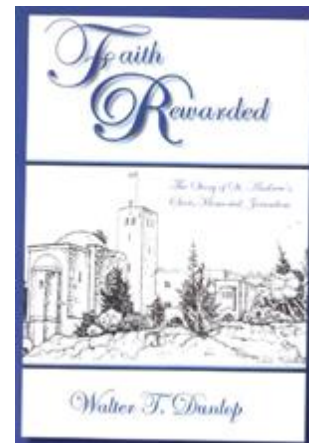
The examination also looked at the regular support the Friends give the Minister, trying to maintain the current level of support which, again, fulfils our constitutional objectives. This support included: helping to maintain the Church and Hospice (with the World Mission Council leading); funding scholarships; encouraging the Minister by helping to provide those little extras that make a difference (the recent purchase of easy chairs and a rug etc); supporting visitors; supporting the Minister in his work with Palestinian groups (the Sindyanna project which the Friends have agreed to support for four years); and encouraging the Minister by supporting his Palestinian Relief Work.

The Committee wish to maintain this sort of supporting activity for as long as possible. But

this would inevitable drain, over time, our funds and therefore require active fundraising.

Various ideas will be looked at this year and presented to the 2020 AGM. The papers for the 2019 AGM included a brief on the issue and the Administrative Committee would welcome any further ideas from the Friends. Please send any ideas to [Walter Dunlop](#), the Hon Secretary.

The History of St Andrew's



The story of one man's dream, a vision. It is the story of an enterprise unparalleled in the history of the Church of Scotland. It is the story of commitment in the face of danger and dogged persistence in facing up to immense obstacles in Scotland and the shifting political scene in Palestine and Israel. It is the story of a depth of faith that leaves you questioning your own.

£11.99

(£10 for new members)

Available from
[Dorothy McMonagle](#)
 c/o Church of Scotland,
 121 George Street, Edinburgh
 EH2 4YN



How we have supported St Andrews this year



As part of the enhancement of the back of the Church for Bible studies, prayer meetings and events for smaller groups, the Friends are pleased to facilitate the purchase of chairs and tables. We have also enabled the purchase of a rug from [Lakiya Negev Bedouin Weaving](#). Along with showcasing the work of the communities throughout the Holy Land, these additions enhance a haven of welcome, peace, and comfort.

As confirmed by the Minister, the transformation at the back of the church has made an immediate impact both in terms of holding small group Bible studies and hosting smaller gatherings; in addition to serving as a comfortable space for young parents and children during the Sunday service.



The Society is delighted to continue to donate towards the Reception following the St Andrew's Day Service. This annual event is much appreciated not only by the local Christian family but the wider religious community.



STOP PRESS

St Andrew's Day 2019 falls on a Saturday
but we'll still be celebrating – in Jerusalem and Edinburgh.

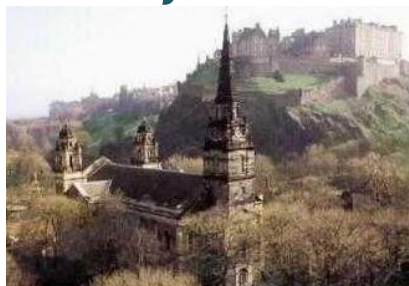
Please consider joining us.

St Andrew's Day 2019 - Jerusalem



Would you like to support the Minister and congregation in Jerusalem on St Andrew's Day? Financial assistance to participate in this unique service and celebration is available from the Friends - just contact the [Secretary](mailto:friends@standrewsjerusalem.org) (friends@standrewsjerusalem.org) with your request and a brief reason as to why you should be considered.

St Andrew's Day 2019 - Edinburgh



Saturday 30th November at 14.00
St Cuthbert's Church, Lothian Road, Edinburgh

Donations towards a project supporting communities in the Holy Land –
suggestions welcome

Supporting St Andrew's in The Holy Land



Along with The Scots Hotel, the Guesthouse and Tabeetha, The Friends have pledged to support [Sindyanna](#) of Galilee in their Olive Grove project at Rocha. This year our contribution amounted to £5,000 and we hope to continue that commitment for the next three years.

Sindyanna is run entirely by women, and markets Palestinian olive products on the principles of Fair Trade. Established in 1996 it aims to advance the Arab economy in Israel to help preserve the land and support the mainstay of the farmers. Any oil which cannot be used for food is made into soap, using traditional methods, **Sindyanna** being responsible for cleaning, packing and exporting the products.



Can we help you? – just click on the link.

[St Andrew's Scots Memorial Church, Jerusalem](#)

[The Friends of St Andrew's Jerusalem](#)

[St Andrew's Facebook](#)

[St Andrew's Scots Guesthouse](#)

[The Society's Secretary and Membership Secretary \(Walter Dunlop\)](#)

[Church of Scotland World Mission Council](#)

Society of Friends of St. Andrew's Jerusalem

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