

APRIL 2021 NEWS FROM SEI

The wider SEI community: SEI is committed to learning how to serve students' families better, those who live alongside and support the candidates in their journey of formation. When students and staff were meeting for residential weekends in St Mary's Kinnoull, spouses and families were invited to the Eucharist and Lunch on three Sundays a year, as well as to a dedicated session in May when they would look at 'expectations, hopes and fears'. The year's programme then culminated in a shared lunch in June following the Valedictory Service.



This pattern has been largely continued during this past online year, but into the mix has been added an invitation to spouses to join in the Saturday evening 'Gerard Room' sessions during online weekends, so named after the gathering space formerly used in Kinnoull. This is a chance for each to get to know the community amongst which his or her partner studies, prays and forms close bonds of friendship. Marianne Lucchesi, wife of first year Argyll and The Isles ordinand Tony Clapham (*shown above beside Loch Lomond*) contributes the following reflections on her past year's experience:

'From the living room I often hear the sound of laughter, snatched phrases from a psalm, or hymns wafting on the air. It's the virtual community that crowds into our small study on a regular basis. Every week as we check diaries, my husband advises me of various one-to-one or small group sessions he'll be having with different people for reflection, study and support. On other nights I hear the feverish tapping of a computer keyboard before being summoned to discuss a particularly obtuse theological reading or proof-read essays. Such is life in the home of a woman and her ordinand husband!

'When Tony first started the journey of formation in the SEC ordination programme, I felt a bit at sea, like we were in different boats. Although praying and worshipping together, there was a part of Tony's life quite distant to me. The practical discussions about how to carve out time together seemed to be the main meeting point. As the year has progressed, I have felt more at home and part of the community by way of the warm emails from Anne each month when we are remembered in prayer across the diocese, and it was really good to drop into the Gerard Room on Saturday to meet some of the gang face to face. I am beginning to feel known and that Tony's friends and mentors are becoming my friends too.

'During this year, Tony has explored what formation in ordained ministry means, and deepened his understanding of the spiritual, pastoral and intellectual elements of the vocation. At the same time, I have also been experiencing growth in my continued study of Ignatian Spirituality and the practice of spiritual accompaniment through one-to-one sessions, group retreats, ongoing formation and supervision. And so, Tony and I come back together from our different places of nourishment where we meet brothers and sisters, learn, are fed and stretched in our hearts and minds. When we arrive home (i.e. the living room couch) from our various travels, we share our experiences and in that sharing grow more close in our relationship with one another and God. Spring might be shouting from the March landscape outside, but in this house a wonderful and demanding garden is growing apace. We pray God will continue to help us understand how to tend it, each with our own tasks and in the bringing together of the plants and fruit we enjoy for one another and the world.'

Marianne Lucchesi



A slew of exciting pioneering courses is being made available in the coming months by the Revd Dr Richard Tiplady, Director of Mixed Mode Training at SEI.

Pioneer Ministry course v2.0: Richard teaches two pioneer ministry modules for SEI students, the first on principles, the second on practice. He has become aware that there is interest in a second short course that would mirror some of the content of the practice module, consisting of four sessions of 90 minutes, similar to the first one he has been sharing across the

Province in recent months. Accordingly this will be run in May/June and again in September/October. Bookings for the May/June course can be made now at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/next-steps-in-pioneer-ministry-tickets-148580677807>. Although it is primarily designed for those who have completed the first *Introduction to Pioneer Ministry* course, the content will be accessible for anyone.

Leading In Uncertain Times: Building a Better Tomorrow, After Covid. On a different but related topic, he is offering a new short course, fortnightly for three weeks and starting on Thursday 22nd April, on the topic of leading in contexts of uncertainty. There are still 3 spaces available (bookings close on 8th April). More information at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/leading-in-uncertain-times-tickets-138808392639>.

Table: a participatory resource for pioneers.

As part of his commitment to resourcing those who have attended his courses in the past, Richard is keen to offer materials that would help participants to host pioneer-related discussions within their church and community. Dave Male's [How To Pioneer \(Even If You Haven't A Clue\)](#) book and study guide is his recommended go-to resource for that purpose. He has recently become aware of a new resource called *Table*, which he reckons would be very useful.



Produced by Paul Bradbury, it is designed for use by small groups sitting around a table and having discussions over a meal. There are both physical and online versions available soon, and the physical version includes 5 beautifully-designed A0 tablecloths that are intended to be drawn on, chatted over, debated and discussed while eating together, and then kept as a record of those conversations as the group moves forward. More information at www.poolmc.org.uk/resources. Richard is offering a free one-hour introductory session to *Table* using Zoom and an interactive online whiteboard called Miro. This is for anyone who would like to know more about the resource and explore its use before deciding whether to buy a copy themselves. This will allow you to get an experience of *Table* before committing to buying it (it's not cheap - £50 for the online version and £75 for the physical one). This will be run from 12pm – 1pm on Tuesday 13th April. Book online at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/table-a-participatory-resource-for-pioneers-tickets-148576051971> (bookings close on 8th April).

Staff Conference: ‘Typically, the associate tutors and core staff would meet together at the Conforti Institute in Coatbridge for our annual teaching-staff training,’ writes *Dr Elizabeth Corsar, Associate Tutor (right)*. ‘Sadly, we were unable to do that this year. However, not to be deterred, Dr Michael Hull organised a fantastic two-day online training. We were privileged to be able to listen to and engage with two wonderful speakers. Firstly, Dr Katrin Bosse, Associate Lecturer in Theology at the University of St Andrews, shared with us her paper, “Being Some-Body in the Body of Christ: Dimensions of Embodiment in a Christian Perspective”. This introduced and explored the concept of embodiment and led to some interesting discussions among the core staff, tutors, and visitors from the University of Aberdeen who joined us. Notably we reflected on embodiment and the Church during the time of Covid-19, and the positives and negatives that have arisen from being unable to worship together in person.



Tuesday 2 March 2021		
1325–1330	Welcome with an Opening Prayer	Anne Tomlinson
1330–1530	<i>Being Some-Body in the Body of Christ: Dimensions of Embodiment in a Christian Perspective</i>	Katrin Bosse
1530–1600	Afternoon break	
1600–1650	<i>Formation-Driven Ministerial Training</i>	SEI Core Staff
Wednesday 3 March 2021		
0925–0930	Morning Prayer	Richard Tiplady
0930–1020	<i>The Pedagogy of Theological Education: Inclusion and Critical Whiteness in Theology</i>	Sanjee Perera
1020–1040	Morning break	
1040–1130	<i>The Pedagogy of Theological Education: Inclusion and Critical Whiteness in Theology (cont.)</i>	Sanjee Perera
1130–1145	Wrap-up and the ‘Grace’	Michael Hull



‘Secondly, Dr Sanjee Perera, the Archbishops’ Adviser on Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (*left*), shared with us her thoughts on, “The Pedagogy of Theological Education: Inclusion and Critical Whiteness in Theology”. Her session challenged us to reflect on what we as theological educators are trying to achieve in our pedagogy. In particular, she challenged us to remember that we are training individuals for lay and ordained ministry who come from diverse backgrounds themselves and who will go on to serve churches and communities where there is a great deal of diversity. Both sessions were most informative and beneficial.

‘In addition to these sessions, the associate tutors and core staff were able to engage in a discussion about the formational training that is offered to individuals at SEI. In this session, Dr Hull emphasised that in formational training “one size does not fit all”, and as a group of associate tutors we were able to think about and discuss with the core staff what our roles are in the formational training of our students at SEI, and how we might contribute in new ways and serve all our students as they undertake formational training with us at SEI.’

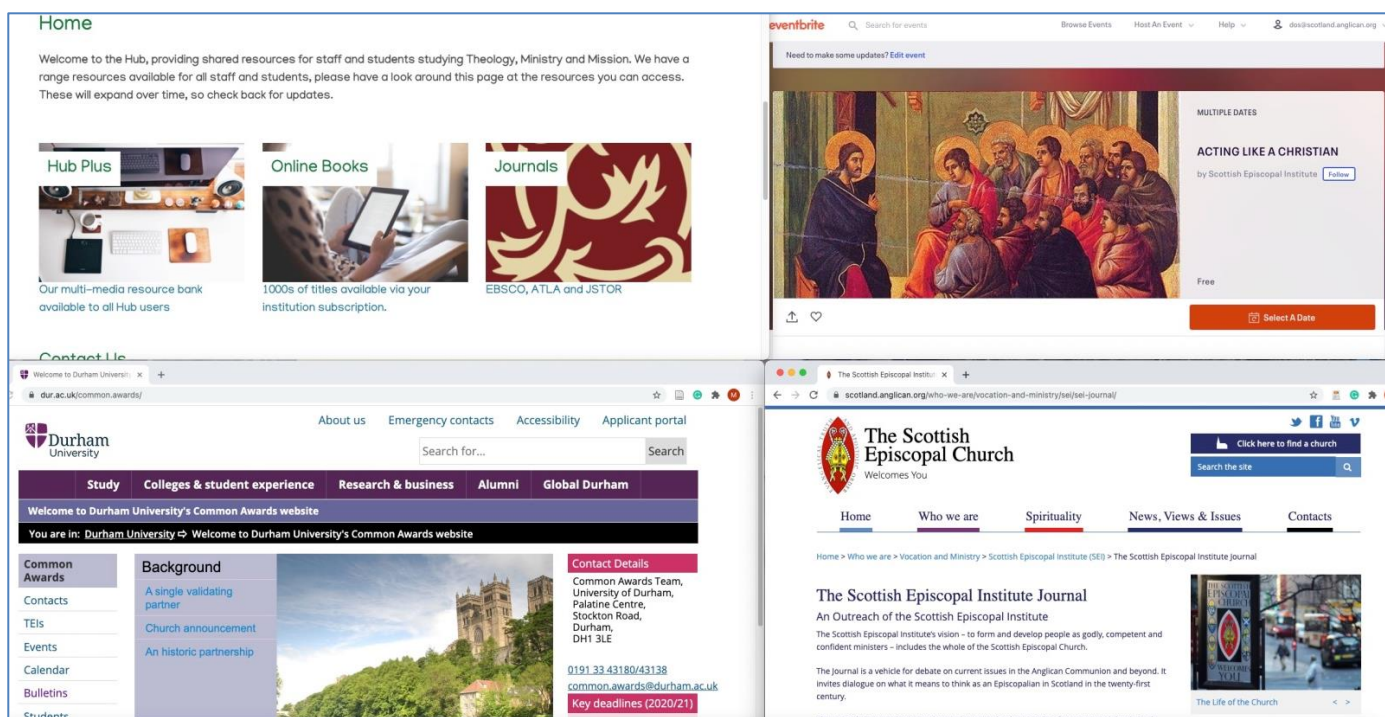
Dr Elizabeth Corsar



The series of features entitled ‘A day in the life of ...’ continues with this account from the Director of Studies, the Rev Dr Michael Hull.

Richard Scarry’s *What Do People Do All Day?* remains a classic fifty years on. What do Directors of Study do all day? Well, on a typical Monday morning my first task is to attend to students’ requests. Since I oversee SEI’s academic study, especially the [Common Awards](#), I help students to navigate their teaching and learning. Some days there are simple questions; other days there are more complicated questions.

As we near Spring, I’m already at work planning for our next academic year (2021–22). Programmes of study have to be set, modules timetabled, tutors recruited and resources placed on our [Moodle](#) to support them. SEI moved all of its teaching and learning online from the first lockdown over a year ago. For that reason, online methods of module delivery (Big Blue Button and Zoom) are crucial when tutors and students cannot meet onsite; so too, online resources are vital when tutors and students cannot get to physical libraries. Although I hope and pray that Covid-19 et al. will be long behind us come Autumn, I have to ensure SEI is prepared for further repercussions of the pandemic.



I’m also working on teaching-staff training. Each year the SEI teaching staff have an overnight training residential, which has been online for two years now, but we long to be back at the [Coatbridge Centre](#), where we usually go, in March 2022. We were been blessed with two excellent speakers this March: [Dr Katrin Bosse](#) and [Dr Sanjee Perera](#). I’ve lined-up the [Reverend Dr A. K. M Adam](#) for 2022, but I’m still working on a second speaker...

The afternoon finds me looking to our [SEI Journal](#). The *Journal* is published quarterly – the latest is just out and can be accessed [here](#) - and the quarters seem to come more quickly every year. I have a whole issue to go through at the moment. That’s over a hundred pages of tight academic writing, and it takes me a long time to do justice to the excellent contributions we’re able to offer year in and year out as a resource to the wider church and beyond. But I can only start on the latest *Journal* issue, for I have to prepare tonight’s ‘Acting like a Christian’, a discussion series I’m offering online on Monday evenings during Lent as a lay-learning short course. It’s from 7pm to 8pm, so my Mondays tend to be a bit late these days. SEI’s not unlike Busytown for me!

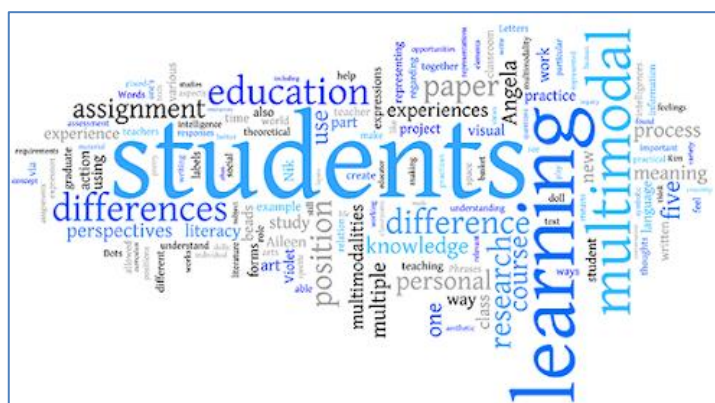
Revd Dr Michael Hull

Poetry, Science, and the Imagination: During Lent, some SEI staff and students have been attending the L'Engle Seminar, a series of events bringing together artists and scientists to explore how their work is in conversation with each other's discipline and with theology. These weekly meetings of over 300 people from across the USA and Europe have been made possible by a grant from the estate of the writer Madeleine L'Engle, and are inspired by three characteristics of her life and work: attention to the generative interplay between faith, art, and science; recognition that all art is incarnational and that science enlarges our understanding of creation; and generous engagement with diverse faith traditions, including diverse Christian communities.



Poets and scientists engage reality through the imagination, and so each hour-long session so far has riffed on this theme. The first, entitled *Only Connect*, featured Professor Tom McLeish, physicist and author of *The Poetry and Music of Science*, talking about the way in which poetry and the sciences, in their desire for beauty, knowledge and wisdom, employ precise language, narrative and metaphor to make unexpected connections. This led beautifully into the second week's offering, *The Same Necessity*, offered by poet and mathematician Mary Peelen, who spoke about order and pattern. Peelen argued that poetry and the sciences begin in observation followed by imaginative reflection, both disciplines attempting to induce an inherent or imposed order in a chaotic universe.

These sessions were immensely absorbing, but the most scintillating so far has been that led by poet-priest Malcolm Guite (*above*) on Coleridge's theory of the primary and secondary imagination. Entitled *The One Life Within Us*, Guite explored the way in which imagination functions in both scientific and poetic discovery. Poets and scientists alike seek to awaken the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom, and direct it to the loveliness and wonders of the world before us, 'an inexhaustible treasure, but for which in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.'*(Biographia Literaria)*. The 'objects' that scientists study, Guite argued, are none other than the language of the divine Poet, whose *poiesis* made us and our minds. A truly eye-opening lecture, helping us to see the whole creation as God's poetry. **Revd Anne Tomlinson**

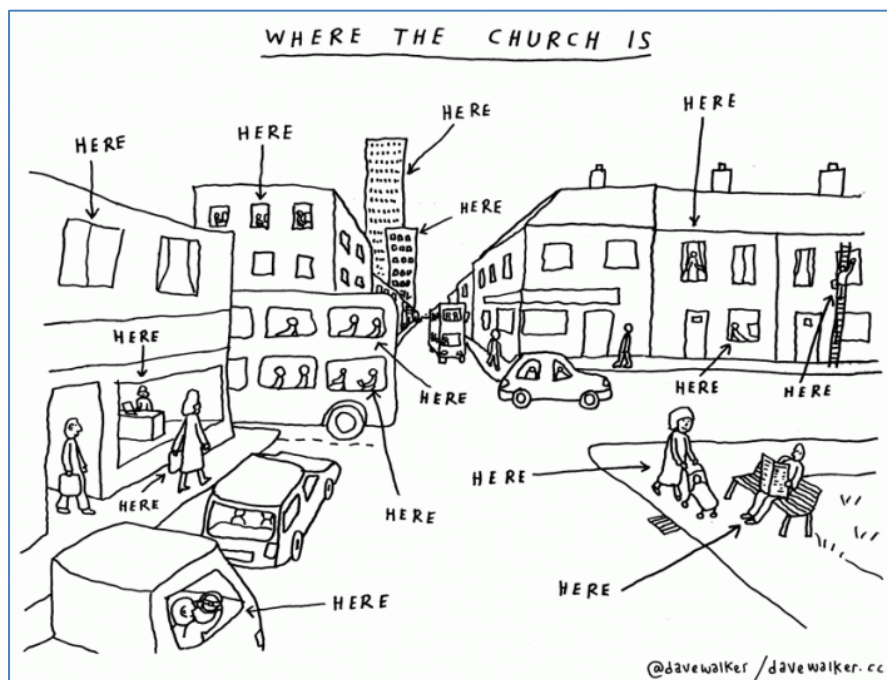


Upcoming seminar on supportive learning: In conjunction with the Provincial Director of Ordinands, the Revd Canon Ian Barcroft, SEI has been seeking in the past year to increase the support given to candidates with Specific Learning Differences (SpLD), drafting a policy detailing the kinds of academic support available and appointing an SpLD ombudsperson to whom students may turn for advice.

Candidates deemed to require diagnostic assessment are now directed to any such testing in the course of the discernment process, with the cost of this being covered for them. This places such assessment at the earliest possible stage and therefore increases the prospect of starting IME 1-3 with suitable arrangements in place. Thereafter SEI (under Durham's auspices) has an obligation to provide reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act to support students with special educational needs to undertake their studies.

In this endeavour SEI is being well supported by the staff of the National Ministry Team, Archbishops' Council (Church of England). In order to enable staff from different Theological Education Institutions to learn from one another and from good practice in the Higher Education sector, a Zoom meeting is being hosted by the Team in late April. This scoping meeting will be an opportunity to identify good resources and examples of good practice, and to discuss how TEIs might go on identifying and sharing such examples and resources.

Revd Anne Tomlinson



Vocations Sunday 2021: *Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'*

Matthew 9:35-38

As the Revd Canon Ian Barcroft, Provincial Director of Ordinands, wrote in February's SEI *Newsletter*, the [4th Sunday of Easter](#) is a day when it is hoped that all in the SEC will focus attention on the discernment of their vocations, individual and corporate. To that end the following students will preach in various charges across the Province on 25 April. We hope to have reports on some of these 'visits' in May's *Newsletter*.

CHARGE	STUDENT
St Mary's Dunblane Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane	Godwin Chimara (first year ordinand) Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney
St John's, Forfar and St Margaret's, Lunanhead Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane	Ferdinand Von Prondzynski (first year ordinand) Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney
St Cuthbert's, Colinton, Edinburgh Diocese of Edinburgh	Rachael Wright (second year Mixed Mode ordinand) Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane
St Anne's, Dunbar Diocese of Edinburgh	Val Cameron (diaconal ordinand – gap year) Diocese of Edinburgh
St Ninian's, Comely Bank, Edinburgh Diocese of Edinburgh	Ross Jesmont (second year Mixed Mode ordinand) Diocese of Edinburgh
St Andrew's, Kelso Diocese of Edinburgh	Sandra Wright (third year Lay Reader candidate) Diocese of Edinburgh
Isla Spey Deveron Group of Churches Diocese of Moray, Ross and Caithness	Pat Ellison (first year Lay Reader candidate) Diocese of Moray, Ross and Caithness
West Highland Region Diocese of Argyll and the Isles	Tony Clapham (first year ordinand) Diocese of Argyll and the Isles

*Lord of all, you have called each of us to serve you in your world and in your Church;
strengthen and equip us by your Spirit to recognise your call to us,
and give us grace and courage to fulfil that calling, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*