

# PRESBYTERY NEWS



News and Views for the Presbytery of Edinburgh

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## A PLACE FOR HOPE

Conflict is an inescapable part of life, whether in Church or the wider society. The Ministries Council has been highlighting the need to work in partnership with others to help individuals, congregations and communities resolve their differences and restore relationships.

As part of this work they are looking to establish in Scotland an ecumenical Centre for Reconciliation and Peacemaking - A Place for Hope. This centre will help people address conflict with the Church and beyond.

To take matters forward there will be an ecumenical conference held this November (15-18) in Aviemore. It's title is "Christianity, Conflict and the Soul of the Nation".

As a Presbytery we have been invited up to four individuals who are regularly involved in the difficult situations that arise within the family of the Church.



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## NEW FACES

Rev David Cameron - Dalmeny with Queensferry



'With all of my life having been spent in the Glasgow area you can imagine the surprise when the call came to 'head east' to the linked charges of Dalmeny and Queensferry.

So east I have come having spent the last 16 years as minister of Maxwell Mearns Castle Church on the south side of the city and prior to that as a Quantity Surveyor with a Glasgow firm near Charing Cross. Married to Lesley for 30 years come October we have 3 children (Lyndsay, Matthew and Mark) now all up and away and though looking so young (!) we became grandparents with Ruby's arrival some 2½ years ago.

"One's destination  
is never  
a place but rather  
a new  
way of looking at  
things"

*Henry Miller*

One of the unexpected highlights in ministry has been getting involved a committee - sounds strange I know, but when I was invited to join a group being formed from 4 Presbyteries to put together a regional celebration of the Church Without Walls then 'The Big Saturday' was born. This was followed by Nexus some time later and before I knew it found myself as the convenor of the Church Without Walls planning group - two lessons I've learned: Committees needn't be boring and the diversity of gifted people on board makes for much fun, late nights and OK a few gray hairs!'

### A COUPLE OF WEBSITES:

Church buildings maintenance

**[www.maintainyourchurch.org.uk](http://www.maintainyourchurch.org.uk)**

Scotland's Churches Scheme

**[www.sacredscotland.org.uk](http://www.sacredscotland.org.uk)**

and one which is rather different to the Kirk's

**[www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)**

## Rev Rolf Billes - Colinton

Having been born and raised in communist Romania, my family and I moved to the south of Germany when I was a teenager. There I went to Secondary School and, after completing fifteen months of national service in the army, began to study for the ministry at Tübingen University.

During a trip to Scotland I met Shirley on a summer mission team. Our long distance relationship and subsequent marriage meant that I spent time studying at New College and graduating with a BD from Glasgow University.

After completing my training as a Probationer Assistant at Renfield St Stephens in Glasgow, I became the minister at Kilmarnock: Shortlees and, five years later, at St Andrews-Lhanbryd & Urquhart.



Having returned to the central belt after eight years in Moray, I look forward to my ministry in Colinton with anticipation and excitement. At present I am the vice convener of the Parish Development Fund.

Shirley and I have four daughters: Anna (14), Rachel (12), Katie (8) and Molly (5).

I love making music on various string instruments, cycling and walking my dogs Angel (golden labrador) and Paige (border collie)."



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"I ended my year impressed with the widespread realism, tenacity and faithful witness of many of Christ's servants."



## I thought this article by an American Jewish writer might strike a chord across at least a couple of boundaries:

"We live in a time of tremendous societal upheaval. While history is often cyclical, showing both change and continuity, there are times when change is so systemic and deep that we enter a fundamentally new era. These changes are of such profound magnitude that they are redefining how life is lived in many areas we assumed were unyielding givens. In broad terms, we might think about boundary shifting, permeability, and cross-religious and cultural appropriation as the motifs that characterize this age. Culture, economics, history, biology, technology--all areas of life are up for reassessment or revision because of these forces. Whether we in the Jewish community view our current era as essentially more of the same or fundamentally different is not a moot issue. Rather, it influences whether we apply current models of thinking about all aspects of our world or if we need different ones.

Remember the website:

[www.edinburghpresbytery.org.uk](http://www.edinburghpresbytery.org.uk)

For shorthand, I refer to our contemporary era as the Age of Four A's: anything, anyone, anytime, anywhere. It is in this crucible that Jewish life is being recast today. This shorthand description of our times captures well-described attributes of daily life, if not precisely for boomers, then increasingly so for Gen Xers and Millennials:

*Anything* (almost)--products or services--can be modified, or if nonexistent, can be created with relative ease.  
*Anyone*, regardless of credentials or pedigree, can be his or her own expert in many fields that were typically reserved for specialists (for example, we can be our own stock brokers, financial planners, publishing houses, filmmakers, business consultants, and educators).  
*Anytime*, we increasingly demand that goods and services be available to us at our convenience.  
*Anywhere*, in real time or virtually, at home or abroad, we can experience different cultures on a global scale.

The good news is that the age of anything, anyone, anytime, anywhere raises profound issues of meaning, making existential questions about life more insistent:

- If I live in an age when I can get whatever I want, how do I decide what is ultimately most important?
- If I have unlimited control over my life, how do I exercise it wisely?
- If I can choose to be a part of any community, which one is most desirable for me to join?
- If I live in a world that is always "on," how can I ensure that I find ways to disconnect so that I do not lose my soul?
- If I live in an age of unlimited power, how do I remain humble, not exploit others, and work to ensure that all people are treated with basic human dignity?
- If I live in a world where I can keep taking, do I have a responsibility to give something back?"

**From THE THIRD PLACE by Hayim Herring**  
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