



University of Edinburgh Chaplaincy

Annual Report 2008/9

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Cover picture: Lismore - venue for Chaplaincy retreats

I - Executive Summary

“The Chaplaincy Centre is emerging as a leading university resource in Scotland, the UK and internationally for multi-religious practice. As such it is ripe for documentation and analysis. Inter-religious engagement and co-operation is likely to become an increasingly prominent feature of the contemporary world at a number of different sites.” (Member of staff)

“From my period as a history undergraduate and staff member at Edinburgh University I think the Chaplaincy represents one of Edinburgh's greatest achievements. It is welcoming, friendly and supportive and hits the right balance between introducing many faith and faith issues without alienating non religious people such as myself. (Member of staff)

The Chaplaincy continues to thrive as a vibrant well-used facility for the University Community and beyond. Feedback from students and staff has been overwhelmingly positive, and much is quoted throughout this report.

Our extremely high rating for Chaplaincy/faith provision in the International Student Barometer indicates how important the Chaplaincy is in a higher education institution which is concerned with internationalisation and world class quality services. The University Chaplain's MBE highlights the importance of the University of Edinburgh Chaplaincy in the expanding area of multifaith development. We appreciate the focus and time that the Associate Chaplain has been able to bring to our multifaith work. It has helped us deepen the provision.

Despite resource challenges, the highly committed Chaplaincy staff have managed to provide excellent service to the University Community.

A major challenge for 2010 will be the closure of the Bristo Square Chaplaincy Centre for several months due to the installation of a lift. We foresee a great deal of uncertainty over service provision for this period. We hope to be re-housed in a venue that can sustain our range of work with students and staff.

*University Chaplain
May 2009*

II - Continuous Quality Improvement

1 - Quality People

“Big thanks to [Chaplaincy Staff]! I owe ALL the enjoyment from my social life in Edinburgh to the Chaplaincy. When I was a fresher here 3 years ago, I had no where to go...Came to the Chaplaincy when totally distressed by missing home, culture shock, etc, etc, etc... Chaplaincy helped me finding friends, finding home and more than that, finding myself. Thanks!” (Student)

“My first acquaintance with the Chaplaincy I was sitting alone in the library upstairs. Then, out of nowhere, [the Chaplaincy Assistant] approached me, genuinely wanting to get to know me better. This personal approach is the hallmark of the Edinburgh University Chaplaincy. I wish such a warm and friendly attitude would persist. Thank you!” (Student)

“The Chaplaincy are doing a wonderful job of facilitating and providing an atmosphere of openness, peace and dialogue – from their warm and friendly staff to the very building itself providing a place to think and disconnect from the hectic world we live in – Thank you.” (Student)

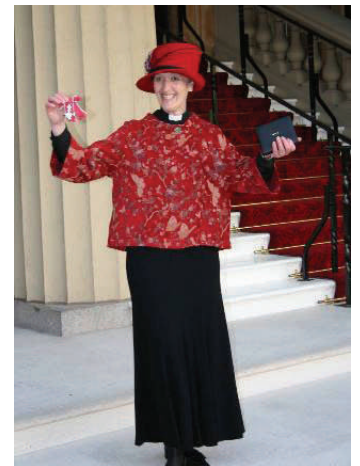
“The staff have always been supportive and approachable but without over-supervising so the space retains a very open feel.” (Member of staff)

Our staff continue to be a dedicated and hard-working team, seeking to provide high-quality services and a friendly, welcoming presence within the University.

Following the return of Kate Langton to America, our replacement Chaplaincy Assistant, Tamara Knowles, took up her new post with us in September and is fitting in well with the team and the students. Initially on a temporary contract, we were pleased when Tamara’s position became a permanent one. She brings many gifts to her role.

Di Williams, the University Chaplain, was awarded an MBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours list, much to the delight of staff. She enjoyed a useful sabbatical during which she spent much time researching labyrinths and writing a book on the subject.

Our Multi Faith Team of Honorary Chaplains has continued to provide invaluable support, at no cost to the University. They are available for emergency cover when required, surgery hours for staff and student pastoral support around the University, and participation in Chaplaincy projects. They are responsible for providing Graduation Thanksgiving Services at Greyfriars Kirk, and increasing numbers of them have participated in University Graduation Ceremonies.



Di Williams MBE

Rabbi David Rose joined the team as acting Honorary Jewish Chaplain.

As well as accredited Honorary Chaplains we welcome Local Contacts representing other traditions. This year we welcomed Tim Maguire (Humanist), Brahmachari Vrajvihari Sharan (Hindu) and Vajrahriaya Avinash (Buddhist).

We continued to build team cohesion and partnership among the Honorary Chaplains and Chaplaincy Staff, helped by a series of extended training sessions, staff planning days and a team away day as well as our weekly team and staff meetings.

2 - Quality Services and Ceremonies

“Chaplaincy services were instrumental in making me think about the human side of the world over the past 2 years. I could have so easily lost touch with it, lost in my little world of academics. Thanks a ton to Chaplaincy and my heartfelt best wishes to keep up the good work.” (Student)

Chaplaincy is involved in numerous ceremonies and services throughout the year.

We welcomed Bishop Brian Smith as preacher to the University Service at Greyfriars Kirk in September 2008. This service helped to mark the beginning of the new academic year.

The University Carol Service continued to be one of the most popular events in the University’s calendar. In previous years there had been a problem with large numbers of people being unable to gain entrance. This year all publicity advised those planning to attend to be seated early and mentioned that there was the possibility of not having enough space and this seems to have been a very successful strategy to cope with the great numbers of attendees. A record amount of money was collected for the two charities being supported this year - School Aid India was given £1000 and the Maggie’s Centre over £860.



Maggie's Centre and Labyrinth, Dundee

The annual University Anatomy Memorial Service and Universities’ Remembrance Service both gave different sections of the University Community the chance to pay respects to those who had given their lives for others.

Chaplaincy continued to be involved in both Graduation Ceremonies and Services. This significant time in students’ lives is celebrated with them in attending the ceremonies, leading reflections and providing space for giving thanks for all that University life has meant.

The Chaplains led reflections and benedictions at meetings of the General Council and at the Installation of the new Rector.

This year saw the inaugural University Multi Faith Public Conversation – a multi faith alternative to the largely Christian University Service at the beginning of the academic year. This signal event was attended by the Principal, several Vice-Principals and staff, students and others from diverse religious, spiritual and cultural groups. Speakers Rabbi Nancy Morris, the Rt Rev Bruce Cameron and Dr Salah Beltagui opened up the theme of the conversation – ‘The Richness of Diversity’.



Multi Faith Public Conversation

The event was so successful that we have invited Arun Gandhi, the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, to speak at the next Multi Faith Public Conversation in October 2009. This will be in collaboration with the Edinburgh Inter Faith Association which will be celebrating its 20th Anniversary.

The Chaplains continued to provide numerous personal services for many members of the University Community in the form of weddings, funerals and memorials, and naming ceremonies or baptisms.



Baptism

3 - Pastoral Care

“A very supportive and safe place which has provided the chance to make many wonderful connections with people of different faiths and beliefs, to learn more about practices and make lasting friendships. Supportive.”(Student)

“The Chaplaincy is like a home away from home. Helped me settle down in a new city and find myself.”(Student)

“The Chaplaincy helps students feel at home and accepted and helps ease the tension of being in a new, fast paced environment.”(Student)

“A forum where you can speak with the confidence of being listened to and understood.”(Student)

“Fantastic support is always on our doorstep. The Chaplaincy Centre has really promoted a sense of community to the spiritual societies and non-spiritual student groups alike.”(Student)

“A notice on the front door of the chaplaincy centre was requesting feedback, suggestions, etc, on the centre. I thought this would be an opportunity for me to express my appreciation for the space provided in a quiet and safe environment. The contemplation room and chapel are especially appreciated. Kindest regards.” (Member of staff)

“I really value the work of the chaplaincy in two ways: 1. personally and 2. for my dosees. [Students supported by Director of Studies]

personally...

the chaplains and team are very open, friendly and supportive.

The staff lunches, when I can get to them, afford me an opportunity to meet staff I would not normally come across in the Uni...I really enjoy them and value the interaction. The programme of events always looks interesting and there are many activities I would love to take part in... but I rarely get (make?) time.

for students...

I am so glad to have a resource like the chaplaincy to which to direct students for religious issues, for company, or for events. Everyone I have sent in your direction has come away saying it was helpful and I think a number have continued to attend chaplaincy events.” (Member of staff)

Chaplaincy offers continuous support to individuals and University staff/student groups during day to day times of stress as well as during times of acute need. Tables 1 and 2 outline the approximate percentage which individual Chaplaincy staff spend providing personal or group support.

Personal and Group Pastoral Support

Table 1 - Estimated % of time Chaplaincy Staff provide support for individuals

	2008-09	2007-08
University Chaplain	30%	30%
Associate Chaplain	35%	30%
Chaplaincy Assistant	60%	70%
Chaplaincy Administrators	5%	15%

Table 2 - Estimated % of time Chaplaincy staff provide support for groups

	2008-09	2007-08
University Chaplain	35%	30%
Associate Chaplain	40%	45%
Chaplaincy Assistant	15%	15%
Chaplaincy Administrators	5%	5%

We estimate that around 50% or more of the students we support and work with are international students.

4 - Enhancing the Staff and Student Experience

International Student Barometer

The Chaplaincy was delighted to receive a 98% satisfaction rate for faith provision within the University of Edinburgh. We came out higher than all other support services – not just within the University of Edinburgh but in relation to many of the universities taking part in the barometer.

Beyond Theology

New events for this year have included “Beyond Theology”, led by the Associate Chaplain. This was a new 10-part DVD series exploring the evolution of consciousness, the emergence of a worldview that integrates science and spirituality, and the notion that the guiding myths of modern civilisation are in transition. Throughout this series, noted theologians, scholars and authors reflect upon the fundamental challenges of our time by addressing the roots of contemporary culture wars and global environmental crises.



This series has featured Diana Eck, professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies and Frederic Wertham Professor of Law and Psychiatry at Harvard University. She delivered the 2009 Spring Series of Gifford Lectures in the University.

Spa for the Soul

An over-arching theme for several events this year has been “Spa for the Soul” which has included shamanic drumming (with 9-18 attending sessions twice a month), Taize worship and weekly services of Holy Communion in the Bristo Square Chaplaincy Centre. We have been glad to support new requests from staff and students for Taize Prayer and Quaker Meetings at the Chaplaincy Centre on the Kings Building campus. All these opportunities have provided nourishment for the spirit for the University Community amidst the busyness of study and work.

Exploring Spiritual Practice

This academic year the series Exploring Spiritual Practice offered participants a chance to discover and experience five spiritual pathways from some of the world’s ancient traditions. In the first semester Subhan Anwar from the Islamic Society opened up ‘The Essence of Spirituality in Islam’, Rory Turnbull from the Baha’I Society led a participative session on ‘Discovering the Divine: A Journey into Baha’i Spirituality’ and, Pt Vrajvihari Sharan Brahmachari, a founder member of the Vedic Society shared a fascinating session on Hindu Spirituality. In semester two Alistair Bates opened up an experience of Druidic Spirituality, and Stephanie Brickman and Rabbi David Rose explored the meaning of a Jewish Seder meal through story and song.

Freshers' Week

Freshers' Week saw our now annual Chaplaincy Freshers' Fair, where freshers could meet with the different religious societies as well as Chaplaincy staff and Honorary Chaplains. 'Drop-ins' with coffee and muffins also took place each day in Freshers' Week. They offered a welcome space where freshers could chat with each other or with Chaplaincy staff or just take a rest from the busyness of the induction week.

Re-Imagining Economics Seminar

As this report is being written, we are about to host a seminar looking at the re-imagining of economics in today's financial climate from the faith perspective of several communities.

International Student Gatherings

While many events have been well attended, one event which seemed to have run its course was the International student gatherings. These were discontinued.

5 - Buildings

Bristo Square Chaplaincy Centre

"Chaplaincy is both a wonderful place for community during the week, with an open auditorium and work place. Meeting with people I would never otherwise meet, in such a relaxed, accepting and 'free' atmosphere. As well as being somewhere which wonderfully facilitates multi-faith relationships, and understanding between these different societies. Much of this is thanks to the openness, love, enthusiasm, willingness and care of the Chaplaincy staff for the people of the Chaplaincy and our university." (Student)

"Thoughts on the Chaplaincy: It's a great place to meet lots of different people – everyone's really friendly and welcoming and I'm looking forward to working with them in the future!" (Student)

"Nicely organized and managed. Value of time. Opportunity to meet with interesting people. Central location" (Student)

"I've been using the contemplation room regularly over the past few months - I think it's a wonderful resource. The Chaplaincy staff have been unfailingly helpful and friendly, and the building is clean and well-maintained. Thanks." (Member of Staff)

"I feel that the layout of the Chaplaincy centre is ... almost perfect. Having the huge auditorium gives groups a space to meet for free which is not available elsewhere and is important to big student societies and to allow the Chaplaincy to host festivals, arts projects and events which are vital to bringing the wider community into the University... The smaller rooms and library upstairs also



Stained glass in Chaplaincy Centre

provide a much needed retreat and area for inspiration in an overstressed world and I especially like the private meditation room. The ethos behind the Chaplaincy, that it is there to support and enrich people, is palpable and unique and should be carefully retained.

Basically, I ask that when Potterrow is rebuilt that the Chaplaincy continues to have such a central, accessible presence and that the layout be similar, so it doesn't become marginalised and only used by particular groups, losing its holistic nature. I think it is important that students have such a space, both for their own benefit-i.e. a calming, supportive environment and because it does such a good job of promoting and demonstrating the positive, tolerant side of religion.

It remains one of my favourite places in the University and throughout my 5 years at Edinburgh has been a place of comfort, inspiration, edifying thought and literature and connection with the wider world and different types of people. I think it is rare that such a perfect note is hit and the redesign of the Chaplaincy should take into account how important the Chaplaincy in its current form is." (Member of staff)

Bristo Square Chaplaincy Centre Usage

The Bristo Square Chaplaincy Centre continually enhances local and international student and staff experiences. The Centre functions as the largest Chaplaincy space within the University and the focus of much that Chaplaincy has to offer.

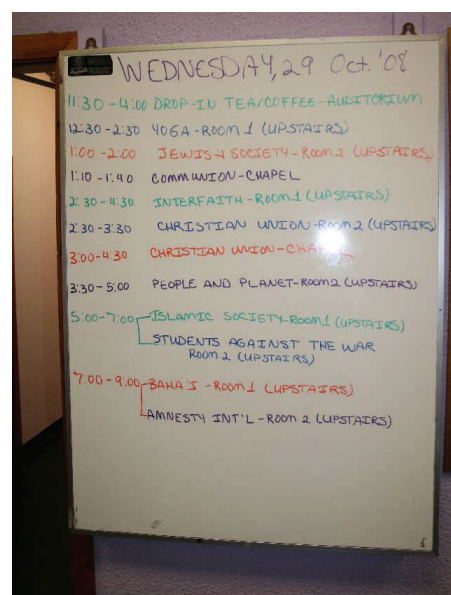
This includes

- hosting over 30 different societies/groups per week, who come for meetings, to cook food, worship or organize various events.
- personal support for staff and students
- welcoming and safe space for multifaith, political and social dialogue
- sanctuary for reflection and individual space
- workshops, seminars, courses and meals

Table 3 - Groups using Bristo Square Chaplaincy Centre

3.1 - University Religious/Spiritual/Meditation Societies (12)

Bahá'í Society
Buddhist Society
Christian Union
Edinburgh Labyrinth Group
FONELISCO
Islamic Society
Jewish Society
Shamanic Journey Group
Tai Chi Society
Taize Prayer
Vedic Society
Yoga Society



Day's events at Chaplaincy Centre

3.2 - External Religious Groups (3)

Episcopal Diocesan Gifford Lecture Discussion Nights
Esther de Waal “A Living Tradition: The Monastic Vision”
Ismailis

3.3 - Chaplaincy “Exploring Spiritual Practice” Workshops (6)

Islam “The Essence of Spirituality in Islam”
Bahá’í “Discovering the Divine: A Journey into Bahá’í Spirituality”
Hinduism “A Passage to Vedic India”
Druidism “A Colloquy of Sages”
Paganism “Gathering Around the Hearth of the Goddess”
Judaism “Music, Food and Community”

3.4 - Other Multi-faith Initiatives (15)

Beyond Theology (Inclusive)
Chaplaincy Freshers’ Fair
Christian Communion (Inclusive)
Diwali (Vedic celebration open to all)
Festival of Colours (Vedic celebration open to all)
Honorary Chaplains’ Meetings (Regular)
Interfaith Meals (Chaplaincy and Student-Led)
Interfaith Meetings (Student-Led)
Islamic Society Fundraisers
Labyrinth (Indoor and Outdoor)
multifaithCOLLOQUY
multifaithFORUM
Multi Faith Public Conversation
Prayers for Peace and Justice (Inclusive)
Workshop for Middle Eastern Festival of Spiritual of Peace (Inclusive)

3.5 - Non-Religious University Societies (17)

Afro-Caribbean Society
Amnesty International Society
Country Dancing Society
Edinburgh Students Charities Appeal Society
Edinburgh University First Aiders (Red Cross)
Engineers Without Borders
Fair Trade Café
Hellenic Dance Society
Humanists Society
Juggling Society
Modern Dance Society
People and Planet Society
People and Planet Clowning Society
Stop the War Society
Tibet Society
Vixens (Cheerleaders)
Young Greens Society

3.6 - University and External Non-Religious Groups/Events (over 20)

Book Group
EUSA Staff Training Weekend
Graduation Receptions
International Student Gatherings

Meadows Edinburgh Marathon
University Retired Staff Association
Sick Kids Memorial Service
Stratos (International Office Training)
Edinburgh Fringe Festival
Photography Exhibits (Various)
Staff Lunches
Celebrations acknowledging staff achievements

TOTAL of Groups over 73

Drop-in

In addition the Chaplaincy Centre welcomes approximately 2,500 students each week, many of whom are not directly involved with the above mentioned societies/groups. There has also been a distinct increase in staff usage.

Building Work

The Easter holidays saw the refurbishment of the kitchen area on the first floor of the building. This greatly improves kosher facilities, general welcome and hospitality, and provides a more pleasant area for our staff use. We are grateful for the successful funding from the small capital project scheme.

After much discussion concerning the addition of a lift to the Chaplaincy Centre, to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act, it seems that the building will in fact have to be closed down for approximately three months while the extensive work is carried out. The work is now planned for April to June 2010 which we hope will diminish the huge effect incurred by users of the Centre. This will, of course, be majorly disruptive and consequences of the closure are still being discussed.

Kings Buildings Chaplaincy Centre

The University Chaplain has worked with staff and student colleagues to clarify the designation and use of the Chaplaincy Centre on the Kings Building campus. The Centre provides a significant space for Muslim Prayer and bookable space for a range of groups based at Kings Buildings. These include a Quaker Meeting, the Islamic Society, staff gatherings and a Taize group.

She is supported in responsibility for this site by the Rev Geoffrey Baines, a member of the Honorary Chaplains team, and the Chaplaincy Assistant.

Dick (Vet) School

Immediately prior to the academic school year, great effort was put into updating the room in the Dick (Vet) school. This update saw the room have a good cleaning, new seating provided, softer and calm lighting used and Chaplaincy pamphlets brought in.

6 - University Committees

Chaplaincy Committee

We were delighted to welcome Vice-Principal for Equality and Diversity, Professor Lorraine Waterhouse as the new convenor, as well as several new student members. Thanks are expressed to Professor Zenon Bankowski who had convened the committee for several years.

The Race Equality Action Group

The University Chaplain has been invited onto this new committee within the University.

The convenor, Rowena Arshad, met with the leaders of various faith/belief groups who make up the multifaithFORUM as a focus group for the work of REAG.

Sustainability Issues and Fair Trade Task Group

The University Chaplain has been invited to be a corresponding member of this group.

Equality and Diversity Committee

The University Chaplain came off this committee in 2008 and Rev Frances Burberry is now representing Chaplaincy and issues of faith and spirituality.

7 - University Collaborations

Student Counselling Service

This year the Chaplaincy has collaborated with the Student Counselling Service in bringing the excellent resource of Bibliotherapy to the student body. This project, set up by the Counselling Service in 2008, seeks to place good self-help books, covering a range of mental health issues, on the shelves of the University Library and one or two other locations. Chaplaincy purchased a set of these recommended books for the library of our own Spirituality and Multi Faith Resource Centre.

International Office

We are developing our collaboration with the University of Edinburgh International Office and are beginning to plan significant events together.

Fair Trade Café

We continue to offer the Fair Trade Café kitchen and distribution space to operate their weekly lunch. This is a sell out each Friday! Several other student societies share the space with them. Each week the auditorium will be full of happy eaters as well as students from Amnesty meeting together to write their weekly letters.

III - Engaging with our wider community

1 - Multi Faith Partnerships

“I’ve been to a number of multifaith events at the Chaplaincy as well as the Buddhist meditation, Baha’i Society, and religious celebrations and I always feel welcomed and despite being from no specific faith group and despite not knowing anybody when I first came, I’ve never been somewhere that I felt like I was such a part of something. There is a real sense of community which isn’t sense often in this country and I feel privileged to have been able to take part in it.” (Student)

“The Chaplaincy is an excellent space to work and socialize during the day, where it doesn’t matter what faith group you belong to. Everyone is catered for

here, and everybody comes to the table as people first rather than representatives of their groups. As an atheist I have been remarkably welcomed, which is one of the many reasons I come to the Chaplaincy every day.” (Student)

“In a world and student/university community where spirituality/faith/religion is a taboo, unsupported and derided, it is essential that the Chaplaincy continue to encourage and support students to participate in and discover their own, and other, faith systems and communities, as well as inter-faith dialogue. The University, and students’ association both seem too often unsupportive and disinterested in spiritual societies, who play an essential role in their members lives (and in the lives of many non-member participants). Their societies’ only form of support, help, guidance and friendship very often is the Chaplaincy Centre. Also, the building and environment of the Chaplaincy Centre is a great asset, unlike much of Potterrow!” (Student)

“Chaplaincy does a great job for the last whole year. As part of the member I been learning a lot from the multifaith events. But I do admit that we still have some challenges to face. For example more varieties on events and include all faith groups to join in. Thank you very much!” (Student)

“Most of the multifaith meetings happen during working hours. It would be great if some of such activities can be scheduled post 5pm. Keep up the good work!” (Student)

“The Chaplaincy is a wonderful place that allows for and celebrates interfaith relations. No space like this exists at universities in the States. Today’s event was very well done: delicious food, wonderful speakers, and warm conversation between people of all faith societies. The Chaplaincy could definitely use more funding.”(Student)

Table 4 - Spirituality and Multifaith Contacts Maintained and Developed 2008-2009

Bahá’í	Muslimism - Ismailis
Baptists	Muslims – Shia
Brahma Kumaris	Muslims - Sufi
Buddhists - Friends of the Western Buddhist Order	Muslims - Sunni
Buddhists - Thai	Orthodox - Coptic
Christian Union	Orthodox - Greek
Church of England	Orthodox - Russian
Church of Scotland	Pagan
Divine Feminine	Quaker
Druids	Roman Catholic
Edinburgh Inter Faith Association	Scottish Inter Faith Council
Episcopalians	Shamanic
Feminist Spirituality	Sikh
Free Church of Scotland	Student Christian Movement
Hindus	Tai Chi
Humanists	Taizé Community
Iona Community	Unitarians
Jewish - Liberal	United Reform
Jewish – Orthodox	Vedic Society
Lutheran	Yoga
Methodists	

TOTAL of 41. (The number of these contacts for 2007-2008 was 37.)

Chaplaincy Appreciation Meal

On May 3rd 2009 the Chaplaincy held its first Appreciation Meal. The Associate Chaplain initiated this as a means for the Chaplaincy to thank the many students from a variety of religious and belief traditions that have worked with us in helping to create and sustain a culture of understanding and respect for one another across our many differences.

In honour of their interfaith work we awarded a range of certificates.



Chaplaincy Appreciation Meal

multifaithFORUM and multifaithCOLLOQUY

Many of these students have met throughout the year in the multifaithFORUM, a formal meeting of Chaplains and Religious and Belief Society leaders, and multifaithCOLLOQUY, a student-led action based group who have worked together in organising such events as the Annual Inter Faith Dinner and a humanitarian project, in which they sold Fair Trade chocolate to raise money for Gaza.

Vedic Communities

In this last year the University Chaplaincy supported and hosted the Vedic Society in their celebration of Diwali and the Festival of Arts. Both events were extremely well attended by University staff and students and the local Hindu and Inter Faith Communities. These events epitomised the welcome hospitality that Chaplaincy has come to stand for within the University. It was our delight to work with such a creative, compassionate and inclusive group.

Middle Eastern Festival of Spirituality and Peace

In March 2009, Associate Chaplain MaryCatherine Burgess was invited by the Middle Eastern Festival of Spirituality and Peace to facilitate a day workshop entitled 'The Impacts of Transformational Change on Spirituality and Religion'. Based on several themes from her book *A New Paradigm of Spirituality and Religion*, the workshop took place at the Chaplaincy Centre.



Diwali

Parliament of the World's Religions

A multi faith Chaplaincy team of students and staff have submitted applications to present three workshops and a daily spiritual observance at the next Parliament of the World's Religions, which will take place in Australia in late 2009. One workshop would centre on a documentary film entitled 'A Year in the Life of a Multi Faith Chaplaincy', and its title reflects the stories it tells. Under the guidance and teaching of Amy Hardie, Head of Research at the Scottish Documentary Institute, a number of students and staff have been learning to film the events they want to capture for that documentary. The other potential Parliament workshops would focus on labyrinth. Our hope is to send a multi faith University Chaplaincy delegation of staff and students that will coordinate with an Edinburgh interfaith delegation and together participate in what promises to be an amazing gathering of people from throughout the world.

2 - Labyrinth

2008-09 was a good year for development of labyrinth initiatives within the Chaplaincy. We continued to offer a monthly indoor labyrinth with facilitator help from an ex student volunteer. Usually this is a simple drop in space to walk with ones own intention or concern in mind. However, in January 2009 walkers were invited to walk the labyrinth with an intention to focus on 'Peace' within and amongst the earth community. Staff, students and locals use this space each month.

The University Chaplain was invited to take the indoor canvas labyrinth to a women's Christian conference in Edinburgh in March 2009. Over the course of the day around 200 women took time out of the sessions and workshops to find and walk the labyrinth. It became a place of sanctuary and peace in a very busy event.



Women Walking with God Conference

The outdoor Edinburgh Labyrinth continued to be well walked throughout the year. One of the highlights of 2009 was a torch lit walk on a cold, wet March evening, with boys and girls from within the local Scouting movement. The Chaplain facilitated a simple reflection on 'light on our path'.

The first World Labyrinth Day took place on Saturday 2nd May 2009. People walked labyrinths at 1pm in the different time zones around the world.



World Labyrinth Day on the Edinburgh Labyrinth

The University Chaplain will complete her Master Teacher training in Chartres this year which will enable her to develop her work in the UK and Europe training new labyrinth facilitators. She continues to act as Mentor to the Facilitator of the University of Kent Labyrinth Project and is developing her consultancy work with several groups and projects around the country.

As part of the Chaplaincy's aim to lead a delegation of staff and students to the Parliament of the World's Religions in Melbourne in December 2009, the University Chaplain has proposed three labyrinth events at the Parliament. The first of these will be the completion of the creation of a painted canvas labyrinth, begun by a group of staff and students here in the University of Edinburgh and completed by delegates at the Parliament.

The labyrinth website has been successfully transferred to the new polopoly system. This transfer has included a complete re-work of the information on the site. We are very fortunate to have the highly competent computing skills of our Administrator, Lesley McCorkindale, who has managed this project.

www.labyrinth.ed.ac.uk

3 - Exhibitions

The Chaplaincy consistently engages with the wider community through its exhibition space, available for bookings during semester time. This academic year of 2008/09 saw the installations of 'Art Refuge UK', 'Eye of the Heart' and 'Countdown to Copenhagen '09'.

'Art Refuge UK' consisted of works created by exiled Tibetan children using art as therapy. It was a very popular exhibit, demonstrating truly gifted children.



Photo from Art Refuge UK exhibition



*Wood engraving from Eye of the Heart exhibition
by Angela Lemaire*

'Eye of the Heart' was an exhibit featuring pieces focusing on ultimate truth, peace, being in community with nature, and meditation as part of the internationally recognized Middle Easter Festival of Spirituality and Peace.

In anticipation of the international summit on climate change 'Countdown to Copenhagen '09', put on by Christian Aid, exhibited banners depicting and contrasts everyday life in Scotland to Africa. The goal was to broaden awareness of climactic issues with the hope of pledges to reduce individuals' carbon emissions.

IV - Plans for Academic Year 2009/10

Closure of Chaplaincy Centre

From mid-March 2010 the Chaplaincy Centre will be closed for the installation of a lift. We hope to open again in time for the summer graduations.

This closure will affect our planning for 2009/10. Thankfully we were able to deflect closure from the beginning of the academic year (September to December 2009) until a quieter time of year when students and staff would be least disturbed. Nevertheless, we are unsure where we will be operating from and what facilities we will be able to offer to students and staff during the time of closure.

Programme

With the closure in mind, we hope to add the following to our 2009/10 programme.

- Student/staff delegation to the Parliament of World Religions
- Develop UK Labyrinth conference
- Development of Edinburgh Labyrinth Group publicity
- “Chaplaincy Week” 29 September to 7 October 2009
- Continue work on filming and begin work on editing the documentary “A Year in the Life of a Multifaith Chaplaincy”
- Workshop on non-violence facilitated by Arun Gandhi
- Development of multifaith learning opportunities, in response to student request
- An experiential theological series

University Chaplaincy
May 2009

The University of Edinburgh is a charitable body, registered in Scotland, with registration number SC005336