

Prospect

Magazine of Stepps Parish Church



July/August

2025

Issue 442

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Welcome to the July/August

2025 Edition of

Prospect

In this edition, along with our usual features, there is news & updates from our congregation and community.

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Volunteers appeals for our Church Committees and to help out the Boys' Brigade.

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If you have any ideas for additional features or any changes we can make to Prospect it would be great to hear from you.

Contact Us:

Minister: Currently Vacant

Session Clerk: Alastair Sim

Church Organist / Musician:

Alastair Sim 07821 667272

Website

www.steppsparishchurch.org

Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/steppsparishchurch>

Prospect

To submit an item for the September Prospect please email the Prospect Editor Anne by Monday 18th August.

anne.bunyan87@googlemail.com

***At the heart of our community
celebrating faith and life to the
full.***





Stepps Parish Church linked with
Garthamlock, Ruchazie & Craigend

Minister: Currently vacant

Locum Minister: Rev Elaine Mckinnon

Email: EMckinnon@churchofscotland.org.uk

Phone: 07780590575

Interim Moderator: Rev Monica Michelin - Salomon

Email: MMichelinSalomon@churchofscotland.org.uk

Session Clerk: Alastair Sim

Email: alastairsim1972@gmail.com

Address:

Stepps Parish Church,
17 Whitehill Ave, Stepps, Glasgow G33 6BL

www.steppsparishchurch.org

Communion Services

(1st Sunday – March, June, September,
December)
10.00am

Contacts:

Hall Lets: Mrs. June Thomson

07909 - 042366

Safeguarding Coordinator:

Mrs. Ailsa Macdonald

07952 - 095380

Sunday Services

Morning Worship 10am

Please continue to follow the website for information about our Services. We look forward to welcoming you with us but for those who are unable to return we will continue to stream our weekly Sunday services on our Stepps Parish Church YouTube channel

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI7mTSz5OI-vW_qMKKjcXAw

Message from our Locum Minister

Hello again.

Last night around 11pm I noticed that it was still very light outside. So this morning I asked “Alexa,” and she told me it was the Summer Solstice, the longest day. In many cultures this is a time of celebration, but the pessimist in me always thinks about the fact that now the days are getting shorter again and we are on the downward slope to winter, but then I remember that in six months we will reach the shortest day The Winter Solstice and the days will start to get longer again and the cycle will continue. This is just one of the many things in nature that so beautifully illustrate God's love for us. This particular example teaches me two lessons.



1. The scientific facts of the relationship between the earth and the sun and everything else we know about the Universe are so amazing, yet these things are all under the control of our Loving Father. He created all that, just so we could live comfortable lives and know his love for us.
2. The cycle reminds me of what life is like; the long happy days of summer flow into the harsh conditions of winter. The two solstices mark the changeover, but they also remind us that, in all of this God is with us. The Summer Solstice comes just after Pentecost, so we know that as we look ahead to “winter” the Holy Spirit is with us, and we need not face what lies ahead alone. The Winter Solstice comes at Christmas as a reminder that even at the worst times there is hope that things will get better, because Jesus is with us.

The cycle of the seasons is a reminder that God's love for us is always with us, through the good times and the bad, it never ends, it just keeps renewing itself in us.

Now all that remains for me to do is wish you all a pleasant summer; enjoy your holidays and come back to us revived and refreshed.

God's blessing on you all,

Elaine .

2025 – AND BEYOND

A summary of recent meetings with the Congregation to outline proposals for the immediate and long- term future of our Church.

During a meeting with our Link Partners to suggest plans to celebrate important anniversaries, it became obvious both congregations had serious concerns about sustainability. Your representatives Alastair Sim, Lorraine Robertson and Jim Hope compiled a draft Mission Plan for SPC and recently presented it to members of the congregation.

They believe the Church, having an ageing and diminishing membership, faces serious threats, yet they also identify many opportunities for development in an area which has seen a huge increase in population. Some suggestions for long term development will be featured in future issues of Prospect.

Of immediate concern is the state of Church finances.

Average annual expenditure 2020 – 2024 = £76,000

Average annual income 2020 –2024 = £79,000
(inc. £10k donation for Vestry, paid 2025)

Anticipated expenditure 2025-2026 = £110, 000+
(includes £20k to Giving to Grow Fund and estimate of increased costs)

Immediate action is required. Three areas are suggested as targets for income generation

Public Subscription

Increased Hall Lets

Funding Applications

All will require careful planning, stewardship and innovative thought by the following committees.

Anniversary Celebrations

Finance (Budget)

Community Outreach

Funding Applications

Premises Development

We need Church members to join committees and would also welcome input from non- members in and outside the community. Please consider “signing on” and nominate someone you know who might be interested. For convenience, and since a committee will be responsible for making recommendations/suggestions to Trustees, we plan to hold as many meetings as possible on-line.

Our 125th Anniversary is significant, not just in our contribution to Stepps, it also represents a crucial period in church fortunes. Like so many Churches in Scotland our long-term sustainability is under threat.

To do nothing at this stage should not be considered an option.

Alastair Sim, Lorraine Robertson, Jim Hope



190th GLASGOW COMPANY, THE BOYS' BRIGADE

Our last months of the Session have been as packed as ever, rounding off a very successful year for the Boys.

Our Bunny Hop sponsored walk at Hogganfield Loch succeeded in raising a fantastic £734.00. Many thanks to all of those who supported us.

Sgts. Alex Guthrie and Ben Herriot attended their King's Badge Completion Course at Lapwing Lodge, and received their badges at our annual display, which was a great night. Also awarded that evening were President's Badges to L/Cpls. Adam Bowie, Oliver Eynon and Lewis McCallum.



These Seniors will all go on to join Cpl. Euan Adam in working towards their King's Badges. The Boys also took part in the Glasgow Battalion Parade of King's Men in Glasgow City Centre, which was a great experience for all.



Sgt. Ben Herriot was invited to form part of the Battalion Colour Party:



Since the display, we've been focused on Summer activities. Staff and Seniors manned a recruitment stand at the Stepps Primary Summer Fayre. Junior and Company Sections enjoyed an evening at Pinkston Water Sports, all Sections have had games nights around the Church grounds (or indoors when the weather has let us down) and at Auchinstarry Quarry Park, while the Company Section will be rounding things off with a trip to Paradise Island Adventure Golf

We'll be back after the Summer to kick off Session 2025-2026.

CAN YOU HELP?

Due to our growing numbers, we are in great need of adult help on a Monday night. We expect to expand our numbers even further next year, and will really need help at that point. If anyone would be interested in helping out, either weekly or just occasionally, it would be greatly appreciated. Please get in touch with me if you would like to know more.

Anchor Boys for Boys in P1-P3, and Junior Section for Boys in P4-P6 meet on Mondays from 6.00pm to 7.30pm. Company Section meets on Mondays from 7.00pm to 9.00pm for Boys in Primary 7 and above. New members are always welcome.

Colin Goodall

colingoodall91@hotmail.com

Tel. 07827032807

Sunday Club

Due to torrential rain, we had to cancel our summer outing to Footgolf in Cumbernauld. We hope to rearrange a suitable date in August.

The last Sunday Club of the session was the prize-giving which was held on the 22nd June and our young people helped the congregation to craft hands to use during the service. The prizes were presented by Edith, who also led the service.

The Sunday Club will take a summer break and we will return for our usual Bible stories, games and crafts on the 17th of August.

We hope our young people have a fantastic summer and look forward to welcoming any young people on a Sunday morning, aged 3 to 15.

Anne, Esther and Linda



Some of our young (and not quite so young!) people making hands during the Prize-Giving Service.



Chestnut Café

Chestnut Cafe will be taking their annual holiday during the month of August. On the last Thursday in July, we will be having a charity day in aid of prostate cancer. All money donated will go to this very worthwhile cause.

A very big thank you to everyone who comes to our Cafe. We are always very glad to see you. Have a lovely break in August. Hope you don't miss us too much. See you on 4th September.

Chestnut Cafe Staff



The Chestnut café made use of the church grounds to enjoy the beautiful June sunshine. Hopefully, there will be many more hot sunny days in July!

Door Welcome Duty

	Welcome at Door	Beadle
July 6 th	H Baker	L Ashmole
July 13 th	J Hope	S Baker
July 20 th	M Inglis	J Burns
July 27 th	R Mc Govern	J Thomson
August 3 rd	F Mc Govern	L Ashmole
August 10 th	F Shields	S Baker
August 17 th	E Watson	J Burns
August 24 th	H Baker	J Thomson
August 31 st	J Thomson	L Ashmole
Sept 7 th	J Bennie	S Baker



Tea Duty

July 6 th	E Watson	J Bennie
July 13 th	L Robertson	E Henderson
July 20 th	H Baker	E Hyndman
July 27 th	F Maxwell	L Robertson
August 3 rd	E Hyndman	H Baker
August 10 th	S Gowans	E Watson
August 17 th	F Maxwell	E Henderson
August 24 th	J Bennie	C Logan
August 31 st	L Robertson	H Baker
September 7 th	S Gowans	C Logan



First person on tea rota please bring milk.

June Thomson

90th Birthday Wishes

Jess Young celebrated her 90th birthday on the 2nd of June and we all send her happy birthday wishes on this special day and many more to follow.



Celebrating 50 Wonderful Years



Congratulations to Christine and John Skinner on their Golden Wedding Anniversary on the 31st of July! Fifty years of love, commitment, and shared memories is an extraordinary milestone that deserves to be celebrated with joy and admiration.

May this special occasion remind you of all the beautiful moments you have shared and inspire you for many more years of happiness together.

We all wish you a wonderful Golden Anniversary filled with laughter, love, and cherished moments with friends and family.

PartnerPlan
Muriel Pearson & Stewart Gillan
Israel, June 2025

‘I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war.’

Psalm 120.7

We have both written letters which cover similar ground and offer them together along with points for prayer.

Stewart first:

First may I thank all who have sent messages of concern for us here – ministers, staff, congregation, and partners – and who have been in prayer for all in Israel, Gaza, the West Bank and the Middle East. Muriel and I are much encouraged by your care, faithfulness and solidarity.

As you will have seen, the situation, already dire after more than 600 days of military action in Gaza following the Hamas attacks on Israelis on 7 October 2023, has taken a major turn for the worse with the outbreak of a declared state of war between Israel and Iran. The cycle of strike and retaliation since the early hours of Friday 13 June marks a sharp escalation in the conflict, further destabilises the region, and threatens the lives of many in both countries day and night.

I have been replying to the question, ‘How are you,’ by saying I am safe and well, fortunate to have the community of St George’s Cathedral and College around me, and recourse to its secure bomb shelter in the basement of the college. Several times, by day and night, since Friday, we have taken refuge there. The drill is alert, siren, shelter. Most of the missiles are intercepted by the surface to air defence system, though more have getting through this time as compared with April and October of 2024.

That said, our friends and colleagues on the West Bank and in Gaza have comparatively little by way of protected locations.

Reflecting on our situation in worship yesterday, I made metaphorical use of alerts, sirens and shelters, arguing that the alert issued by the Israeli Government at 03h00 Friday morning announced an ‘extreme emergency’ that runs deeper than the current cycle of strike and retaliation between Israel and Iran. It encodes generations of hostility, fear and conflict, and of the failure on all sides successfully to resolve it.

The sirens that sounded Friday night, as missiles launched in Iran began to arrive over Israel, warned of more than the need to move to the nearest protected location. The sirens warn of the long-term psychosocial and political consequences of decades of Israeli military occupation of the Palestinian Territories, and of the violence of resistance to it; of the ongoing reverberations of the attack by Hamas on 7 October and 20 months of IDF attacks by air and land in Gaza. All parties have been dehumanised – Palestinian, Israeli, and International – by the ongoing death, destruction and degradation of life.

The bunkers and protected locations – in homes, schools, firms, and public places – offer shelter from missile launches and drone deployments, but can offer no protection from rage, fear, and enmity. At the same time, they can be, and have been made into, places of pastoral support, of conversation, and prayer. Of psychosocial care and strengthening.

It is not possible to say how long the war will go on, any more than it is possible to say how long the assault on Gaza will continue, and its attendant state of serial displacement and severe malnutrition unto famine and further death.

And peace? What news of it? It lives on in prayer, in our yearnings, in our respectful behaviour with each other, our advocacy for justice and right relations, in our refusal to accept that war is the way of the world, or what we're best at.

'Peace does not keep itself,' argued the American historian Donald Kagan in his influential *On the Origins of War*, 'it must be cultured and protected.' The history of conflict between states from ancient times through to the end of the twentieth century, he says, demonstrates the need for vigilance and proactive measures to prevent war. 'A persistent and repeated error through the ages,' he asserts, 'has been the failure to understand that the preservation of peace requires active effort, planning, the expenditure of resources, and sacrifice, just as war does.'

This holds for states that wish to preserve an existing peace, we might observe. With regard to the current war between Israel and Iran, the argument of the Israeli government is that the war, whatever its horrors, is necessary in the face of Iran's nuclear programme. And that any decrying of it is thus naïve and/or suspicious, almost certainly antisemitic.

Yet do we say, to Israel and Iran alike, and to all of our respective nation states, we are called to study peace and pursue it, to examine ourselves critically, not requiring our enemies to do it for us, to refuse to trade arms, to cultivate stillness, to practice the disarming disciplines of the love, justice and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, in prayer and practical action.

Prayer points:

- For a rapid end to the cycle of strike and counter-strike between Israel and Iran, and a renewed commitment to negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme.
- For a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, and the conflict swiftly ended.
- For the release of all hostages held in Gaza, and of Palestinians held in administrative detention in Israel.
- For the free flow and just distribution of food and medical aid into Gaza
- For a just and lasting peace, that the soul of the Holy Land be saved, and with it the lives of Gazans, Palestinians and Israelis.

Grace and peace to you,

Stewart

And then Muriel...

Dear Friends,

For more than 600 days, wherever you are, you have watched horrified, feeling helpless, and angry, as the people of Gaza have been relentlessly attacked following the dreadful events of 7th October 2023. Most Gazans have been displaced many times, famine is now a very real threat and the suffering is unimaginable.

In the West Bank, settlement expansion has been going on apace and settler violence has increased. Since 7th October there are 800 new checkpoints. Unemployment is about 80% and folks are beyond weary.

Israelis, too, are weary. Call ups to reserve duty are repeated. The families of hostages have been pleading for a ceasefire and a return of their loved ones. More and more are dead.

Humanitarian aid to Gaza, never enough at the best of times, is now cynically in the hands of a private company which has no experience of distribution and many Gazans have been killed, desperate to feed their families.

Many Palestinians are held without charge in appalling conditions in Israeli prisons.

The international community has failed to find a way forward.

And then, on Friday 13th June, Israel attacked Iran, targeting scientists and military leaders and seeking to degrade Iran's capacity to enrich uranium and produce a nuclear bomb.

Last night counterattacks from Iran led to alerts throughout the night. Those lucky enough to have shelters and secure rooms spent the night there. As I write, I can hear airforce jets overhead.

Aside from all the other reasons why Friday's declaration of war on Iran and counter declaration by Iran is catastrophic, our hotel in Tiberias was poised to have 100% occupancy. Food is stocked. Staff were hired. Today I am the only guest, along with a couple of members of staff.

Worship was on Zoom on Sunday and will be until the state of emergency is relaxed.

Here is part of our prayers of intercession from Sunday:

We pray for leaders who have integrity

And put their people first

For leaders not afraid to risk and trust

And build relationship

Who are not in politics only for themselves.

We pray for those institutions set up

After World War 2, flawed though they are
And for those who are left out and
sidelined But have insight and leadership
to offer.

We pray for the leaders we have

And the leaders we do not yet see

And we pray that the wisdom of those on the edge,

Not at the treaty table, may be heard

We pray for the church and people of good will

Around the globe

Longing for a new way of being, a new way of trusting.

How can we move beyond existential fear and brutal inhumanity? The fighting will eventually need to turn to diplomacy. But where is the leadership which puts the most vulnerable first and has the creativity and imagination to begin to build trust?

Thank you for your messages of support and for your prayers. Here are a few pointers:

- Pray for clear international consensus on a way forward which will lead to peace with justice for all.
- Pray for the most vulnerable, the children and the elderly, the injured and the sick; that aid will reach them quickly and plentifully.
- Pray for those bereaved and those held prisoner by a spirit of revenge.
- Pray for all working on the logistics of aid delivery, all those seeking diplomatic solutions, all those prepared to risk talking to the enemy.
- Pray that apathy and a feeling of helplessness will be replaced by a sense that everyone can contribute.
- Pray for the staff of our hotels and school, and our students and their families. Pray that kindness and unity in diversity will continue to shape their common lives and give hope that things can be different.
- Pray that Stewart and I will be given wisdom and grace as we seek to minister here.
- Pray that God's love in all its abundance will be the hallmark of our communities and of our work.