



Winter morning at Stepps Parish Church

***Welcome to the December - January
2023 edition of
Prospect***

In this edition find all our usual features and congregational news, information about Advent services and our Christmas Appeals for this year.

There is also an invitation to join our friends at St Joseph's for their Carol Service on Sunday the 18th of December.

If you have any ideas for additional features, please get in touch.

**December 2022-
January 2023**

Issue 416

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SC014212

PROSPECT

**Magazine of Stepps Parish
Church**

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**Watch us on YouTube each
Sunday at 11.00 am.**

Follow us on Facebook.

www.steppsparishchurch.org

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

**To submit an item for Prospect please
email Lorraine on**

sessionclerkspc2020@gmail.com



Stepps Parish Church

Minister



Rev Gordon MacRae (BD
MTh)

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Session Clerk

Lorraine Robertson

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Sunday Services Morning Worship at 11am

The Scottish Government have removed all COVID rules and restrictions, but the virus has not gone away. Instead of legal constraints the government are asking people to use 'COVID sense' to help protect themselves and others. The same principal of using 'COVID sense' should apply to our church buildings, congregational activities and the support you offer communities.

[Getting your vaccine](#) when offered to ensure you are fully protected

Staying at home and resting if you have symptoms

Opening windows when meeting indoors

[Wearing a face covering](#) in indoor public places and encouraging the use of face coverings in church buildings wherever possible.

Washing your hands to protect each other

Taking an LFD test if you have symptoms or before visiting someone in a hospital or care home.

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

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI7mTSz5O1-vW_aMkKjCxAw



Charity No: SC014212

Pastoral Letter Rev. Gordon MacRae



“The angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger”

How many times have you heard those words?

How many times have I proclaimed them in worship?

The Message of Good News to a band of shepherds.

We know them, we can recite them, they are written on our hearts, but have we fully grasped how wondrous these words are?

Before you read any further, read them again, read them slowly and carefully, take in every word and ponder on every phrase.

These words were for each and all on that first Christmas Eve. Yet, the wonder of God’s Word is that they are for you, each and all of you, the Child, lying in that feeding trough, is *here for you*. The Child is God’s anointed; the Child is Your Lord.

He is born, not just on that night but every day. God comes for you, for me, for all. As on that first day he came unnoticed by all save a few ragged tired shepherds, still today many think nothing of Him, yet for them the Child is Born.

This Advent in our sermon series we recall the well-used words: ***Hope, Peace, Love, Joy*** and we think on them, not as abstract nouns but as dynamic verbs.

We make them real and intentional

The Words of the Angel make it clear that God came among us. The One God, Creator, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Sarah, Rachel and Ruth, comes among us.

Gods coming among us was real. God came in the soft, precious skin of a newborn. God became Us in all our human vulnerability. God is Real, God is Incarnational. God is Intentional.

God so loved the World, that He gave us His Son.
God gave us The Word Flesh and Jesus was born here in our neighbourhood, for us. So, how do we respond?

Again, return your gaze to the top of my letter. Read them once more. Then take each of our Advent words: Hope, Peace, Love, Joy, and rethink them as dynamic verbs, Doing Words. If we thought in this way how much new energy might power our discipleship? There is our calling for Advent, Christmas and on into the New Year. The New Year will bring challenges greater than most of us have known. The world, our nation, our community, the Church, we all face difficult times. Yet, I believe that if we craft our Christmas gifts from Jesus' hope, peace love and joy, we will see these gifts become Incarnational and Intentional. Real.

As Jesus Beloved Community let's Do Hope, let's Do Peace, Let's Do Love, let's Do Joy all in the name of he who was Born in Bethlehem and now, today born in our hearts.

Philippa and Elaine join with me in wishing you all a very blessed Christmas xxx



Luke 2: 10 Image courtesy of heartlight.org

Session Clerk Letter



Dear Friends,
As always, this time of year seems to creep up on me so quickly and despite vowing to be better organised every year it never seems to quite happen. Despite all the franticness however it is a time that I enjoy immensely. It also allows me an opportunity as I write my final letter of the year a time to reflect on the year just gone. We were all horrified as we watched the invasion of Ukraine unfold after weeks of escalating threat from Russia and as we near the end of one year we continue to light our candle of peace as a sign of support and remembrance for all who suffer because of this injustice. It has also been a year of loss closer to home as we suffered our biggest loss of members within our congregation since my term began. We also saw the loss of our Queen in September only three short months after we marked her Platinum Jubilee and so began a new Carolean era with King Charles the III.

The summer months were heavily dominated in cluster conversations and mission planning and we were thrilled when Marvyn was officially approved as a worship leader by Presbytery. Our Boy's Brigade have gone from strength to strength and life within our church buildings and halls has returned to almost pre-pandemic levels again with our lets and regular worshippers. Despite this we also mark with sadness the demise of the Friendship Club due to falling numbers. I also need to prepare myself as we soon mark another loss and that is of course to prepare for Gordon's retirement.

I know that I could never have got through the past 3 years without you all and to those who unfailingly support me and work tirelessly in the background to keep the smooth operation of our church buildings and finances in good order. To Gordon for his wisdom and guidance, I will cherish this last Advent season with you and will hold dear my memories of all that we have come through in the most challenging of times.

Our Advent theme this year is '**Peace on Earth**' and I can think of nothing more apt this year as we continue to think of those affected by the war in Europe and beyond.

My prayer for you all this Christmas is that you feel His true *peace* within and extend it to all those around you whom you love.

"A child is born to us! A son is given to us! And he will be our ruler. And he will be called, "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God," "Eternal Father," "Prince of Peace."

(Isaiah 9:6)

Good News Translation

Lorraine x



Congregational News

Death: Mrs. Margaret Mitchell 21st November 2022

“The LORD is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit”

(Psalm 38:14)

Birthday Wishes: Mr. Billy Hamilton

Many happy birthday wishes to Billy who turns 93 in December.

Wishing you all the best for the year ahead from all your friends in Steps Parish Church

Friendship Club



December meetings: -

5th Dec: Christmas Lunch Garfield House Hotel To be seated for 1.30pm

12th Dec: Afternoon Tea and Christmas singalong with Alasdair Sim on Piano

(Final Meeting)

It is with great regret that the ladies of the Friendship Club will not be returning in the New year as ill health and loss of members has meant it is no longer an option to keep going. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported our organisation over many years and to all who helped to entertain and attended throughout the years.

Your support has been greatly appreciated and I know it will be remembered fondly by so many.

Janet Hyslop

Flower Fund

May I take this opportunity to thank all who continue to support the Flower Fund through their giving of both time and monetary donations. It is very much appreciated by myself, and those who receive flowers each Sunday that help to brighten their day, letting them know their friends and church family continue to think of them.

I wish you all a blessed Christmas season and a very happy and healthy New Year.

Regards

Margaret Crawford

Ministers Retirement

We have made no secret of the fact that very soon Gordon will be leaving us. I can now advise that Gordon has officially advised the appropriate authorities of his intention to retire and will formally demit on the grounds of age. His last Sunday with us will be on Sunday the 26th of February 2023.

The matter will come to Presbytery in December and Gordon along with the congregation shall be cited to hear this matter tabled as part of the order of deliverances. We will of course advise in due course how we mark Gordon's retirement appropriately.

Lorraine Session Clerk

December- January Door Welcome Duty



December	Welcome at Door	Welcome	Beadle
4 th	F. Shields	C. Skinner	J. Thomson
11 th	H. Baker	J. Burns	L. Ashmole
18 th	S. Gowans	J. Hope	S. Baker
January 8 th	A. Macdonald	R. McGovern	J. Burns
15 th	F. McGovern	S. MacLean	J. Hope
22 nd	F. Shields	C. Skinner	J. Thomson
29 th	E. Watson	H. Baker	L. Ashmole
February 5 th	S. Baker	J. Burns	H. Baker

If you are unable to do your weekly rota. Please ensure you arrange someone to cover.

June Thomson

Christmas Tree Festival December



St. Enoch's Hogganfield are holding a Christmas Tree Festival in their church in the week running up to Christmas and have invited the other 4 Cluster, including Stepps Parish Church, to each display a tree on a theme of their own choosing.

The Trees are brought in bulk by St. Enoch Hogganfield and the churches are simply invited to decorate theirs as they choose.

Due to limited electrical points, any lights will need to be battery driven.

It is suggested we decorate our tree on the theme of "White Christmas" with all-white light decorations and lights. The congregation are invited to donate one white decoration each to help dress the tree.



Reminder Christmas Post

Posting Dates

Church: From Sunday 4th December - Sunday 11th December

Halls: From Sunday 4th December - Thursday 15th December

Cards will be delivered during the week 18th December.

Please ensure all cards have full address inc. house no.

Donations suggestion 30p per card or 4 cards for £1.00

Volunteers required for delivery: Please Contact Angela Orme on 0141 779 2206

Cards will be ready to collect Sunday 18th from the large Hall



With the cost-of-living crisis, many of us are facing tough decisions. Some of us have moved to working from home following the pandemic and are facing a winter with increased energy bills. Others are facing even harder decisions about whether to heat or eat. We don't think this is right and we wanted to do something to help. We understand that this winter will be challenging.

That's why Stepps Parish Church is working in partnership with our friends in St. Joseph's RC Church and Millerston UF Church to extend a **Warm Space Welcome** to our local community during the winter months. We are grateful to North Lanarkshire Council for supporting us and making funds available to us to allow us to extend or in some cases support new ventures to offer a **Warm Welcome**. Whether you simply want a quiet space to read, use your laptop or simply enjoy a warm plate of soup everyone will be made most welcome.

Please find a list of what is available in the area. Other activities may be added in due course secondary to demand and uptake.

It is also our intention to provide some leaflets/posters from NLC and partners giving information and advice regarding relevant issues to help support families who may need more support.

Stepps Parish Church

17 Whitehill Avenue, Stepps, Glasgow. G33 6BL

Warm Welcome Activities

<https://www.warmwelcome.uk/spaces/dashboard#Dashboard>

Thursday 10.00 am – 14.30 pm Community Café – Activities and Drop in space.

Come along and enjoy some tea or Barista style coffee, cakes, soup lunch and a chance to chat with friends, or make some new ones. There is a weekly activity class in our larger community hall.

(We meet in the Lesser Hall, accessed off Whitehill Ave with activities classes from 11-12.00pm in our larger community Hall)

**Millerston United Free Church of Scotland,
1545 Cumbernauld Road, Glasgow, G33 1AB**

Tuesdays, from 10.30 am – 12.30 pm – Coffee and Craft group

All are welcome to come along and join with other folk who enjoy crafting and chatting over tea or coffee. You can bring your own craft materials, or use something from what we have available, or just come for a blether, whatever you like.

Fridays, from 10.30 am – 12.30 pm – The Cheery Cup Friday drop-in

Come along and enjoy some tea and coffee, some snacks and home baking, and a chance to chat with friends, or make some new ones. There will also be some board games if you fancy playing.

(We meet in the church small hall, accessed off Cumbernauld Road. There's tea, coffee and snacks on offer. We have wheelchair access and an accessible toilet)

For more information, please contact Rev. David Miller on 07975531585 or by email – david.millerstonpastor@gmail.com

**Saint Joseph's RC Church
73 Cardowan Road, Stepps, Glasgow, G33 6AA**

Monday 9:30am until 11.00am – Jumpy Joey's – Parent and Toddlers Group

Meet fellow parents and enjoy each other's company, as your children enjoy each other's company. For more information Contact Sherrie at Sherrie55@hotmail.co.uk

Monday 12-3pm – Line Dancing

Come along for a chat and enjoy some dancing too. *For more information contact Margaret on 0141 779 3540*

Wednesday 12:15 until 3pm – The Wednesday Lunch Club

The Wednesday Lunch Club is open to anyone living in Stepps, Cardowan, Millerston, Muirhead or Chryston, offering a programme of entertainment and activities. For more information contact Ruth on 07932 800390

Due to the nature of the Line Dancing and Lunch Club there can be capacity issues therefore please contact Margaret or Ruth before attending in the first instance.

For any more information please contact us on 0141 779 2001 or stjosephsdominic@rcdom.org.uk



Holy Communion Sunday 4th December

We will once again celebrate Holy Communion on Sunday the 4th of December. Currently, it is still not permitted to share common elements. Therefore, common cups will not be used and plates will not be passed from person to person. Instead, we will be serving the elements in individual glasses, after observing good hygiene practices and washing our hands. A glass of

alcohol-free wine and a piece of pre-cut bread in individual glasses and condiments will be collected by individual worshippers.


LHM, 35 East Campbell Street, Glasgow, G1 5DT

AUTUMN/WINTER EVENTS

You're Invited to Celebrate with Us!

10.30am, THURSDAY 24TH NOVEMBER
Annual Service of Remembering
In partnership with City Mission

1pm, WEDNESDAY 7TH DECEMBER
Mother Goose Panto
places limited so book through June/Angela

2.30pm, THURSDAY 15TH DECEMBER
CHRISTMAS SERVICE of CAROLS & READINGS
Guest speaker Rt Rev Dr Iain Greenshields,
Moderator of General Assembly
& Mission Voices

Closed January 2nd & 3rd



Thank you to the Chestnut Café.

Gary and I would very much like to thank everyone involved with the Chestnut Cafe, the valued staff team, volunteers and not forgetting the dear customers who come along every Thursday morning.

As you know Gary suffers from a brain injury which affects his short-term memory due to an infection on his brain and needed some support from a team of Occupational Therapists and Psychologists to help with his recovery. As Gary had spent most of his working life in hospitality, it was suggested that Gary could perhaps help out at the Church Cafe.

This was the best and most significant part of his recovery on so many levels.

The Chestnut family welcomed, encouraged and supported him and after a short time, witnessed the improvement in his confidence, interactions and all his professional skills which he thought he had lost forever.

After months of love and support from everyone at the Cafe, he has taken his first tentative steps back into working in a restaurant in the City Centre.

His nurses place a lot of value on everything you all have done to support Gary, especially feeling valued, working in a caring and supportive team environment. This enabled him to make this remarkable transition back into the workforce, which he is thoroughly enjoying and doing exceptionally well.

As a very appreciative Mum I see our Chestnut Cafe as a place for fellowship, sharing conversations, building friendships, supporting friends just looking for some company and of course all the fun and laughter to go along with the tasty treats which complement our tea and coffee.

When Gary was asked about his shifts, he asked if he could have Thursday's off as I know he wants to continue to serve his special customers who have given him this most valued part of his life back again.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Linda & Gary Swan

Home Comforts



Home comforts North Lanarkshire is a group of people from local churches. We collect items and put them into packs, which are given to people across North Lanarkshire who are moving into flats or houses or who are in housing need. We hope the items in this pack are of use to you. What a blessing home is.

*May God bless you and your family and
the place you live.*



Find us on Facebook

Can you Help us?

Home Comfort relies entirely on a great team of volunteers. Maybe you could help in one of a number of ways: Become our treasurer, board member, help with distribution or donate goods or money. If you can offer any help, please get in touch.

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

Starter Pack Contents

A cleaning pack is enclosed in blue cellophane and usually contains:

- Basin
- Washing up liquid
- Cream cleanser
- Plastic brush and shovel
- Hand Towels
- Tea Towels
- Sponge Pads
- Pot Scourers
- Toilet Roll



A hygiene pack is in a clear plastic folder and usually contains:

- Hand Towel
- Face Cloth
- Sponge
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Shower Gel
- Deodorant
- Soap or Handwash



Christmas Charities 2022

As Christians we think of others and as is our custom in Stepps Parish Church we nominate two charities: one overseas and one closer to home to support. This year I'm sure you'll agree that both charities are worthy of our support. Our two chosen charities are **SamH** and **Sightsavers**. Retiral collections will be collected over our Christmas services and divided between the two. We thank you in advance and urge you to give generously.



Around since 1923, SAMH is Scotland's national mental health charity.

Today, in over 60 communities we work with adults and young people providing mental health social care support, services in primary care,

schools and further education, among others. These services together with our national programme work in See Me, respectme, suicide prevention and active living; inform our policy and campaign work to influence positive social change.

It's as important to look after our mental health as it is our physical. Mental health problems can affect the way you think, feel and behave. Some mental health problems are described using words that are in everyday use, for example, 'depression' and 'anxiety'.

This can make them seem easier to understand but can also mean people underestimate how serious they can be.

A mental health problem feels just as bad, or worse, than any other illness – only you cannot see it. Although mental health problems are very common – affecting one in four people in Scotland – there is still stigma and discrimination towards people with mental health problems, as well as many myths about what different diagnoses mean.

There are also a lot of different ideas about the ways mental health problems are diagnosed, what causes them and which treatments are most effective. However, despite these challenges, it is possible to recover from a mental health problem and live a productive and fulfilling life. It is important to remember that, if you have a mental health problem, it is not

a sign of weakness. Most people experiencing a common mental health problem see their symptoms pass quite quickly. Symptoms may return from time to time but people are often able to manage them after the first experience. With more serious mental health problems, people also usually find a way of managing their condition. For many people, getting better does not mean going back to their previous life, but might mean making choices to live differently and having power over areas of life that seemed out of control before. Some people emerge from the experience feeling stronger and others having learnt more about themselves.

There is a range of support and treatment to help you and also information for your friends and family that might help them understand how you feel.

For almost a century, SAMH has been Scotland's mental health charity. We're here for people, where and when they need us. Every day, we have teams reaching people all over the country. So, if you're going through a tough time, you're not alone. We've got lots of resources and information

Got a question about mental health? SAMH can help.

The SAMH Information Service provides information and support on mental health.

Whether you're seeking support, looking for more information for you or someone you love, or just want to have chat about mental health, we're here.

Talk to the SAMH Information Team

- 0344 800 0550
- info@samh.org.uk

Open 9am-6pm, Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays).

Calls charged at local rates, charges from mobile telephones vary considerably. If you need to speak to someone urgently, or require a listening or crisis service, please [seek support here](#).

Christmas Appeal



Mehnu had an eye screening test at his school he couldn't see much and failed.

"I want my eyes fixed for learning ABC"

Will you help give more children like Mehnu a fair chance this Christmas?

Every child deserves a fair and equal chance in life.

At five years old, Mehnu was ready to learn his ABCs, make new friends and have exciting new experiences. But his eyes caused him so much discomfort that his father, Daniel, would have to leave work and collect him from school.

It is extremely hard for many families in Liberia to get access to a doctor, let alone treatment to stop a child going blind from preventable conditions. This means many children like Mehnu go untreated – putting them at greater risk of dropping out of school because they can't see well enough to read and write.

We want children to have a better future. Through projects like SHIP – School Health Integrated Programming – we can transform children's lives. SHIP trains teachers to run eye screenings in schools. This gives children access to diagnosis and treatment in their communities, now and for generations to come.

The Sightsavers-supported SHIP project can help to identify and treat a range of health conditions, including cataracts, refractive error and worm infections. It aims to give children a fair chance at an education and avoiding the poverty cycle.

Mehnu came to a screening day at a local school. One of the trained teachers tested Mehnu's eyes, asking him what he could see on the eye chart – he couldn't see much and failed the test.

After this, he was referred to a specialist for a follow-up. He was diagnosed with cataract in one eye, which had developed as a result of an injury. Without treatment, his chances of regaining his full vision would've been slim.



Even after Mehnu's surgery, Daniel was worried about whether it had worked. He told me, "The doctors said we shouldn't remove the bandage on Mehnu's eye. I didn't sleep all night, checking and telling Mehnu not to remove it".

The next day, during the journey home from the hospital, Mehnu suddenly shouted: "Oh my! I can see everything around me!"

Since that moment, Mehnu has become a happier child – more confident and playful. He is engaging with his world and will soon be back in school. He couldn't be more hopeful for the journey ahead.

Will you help give a child a better chance of a brighter future this Christmas?

Read Mehnu's story on <https://www.sightsavers.org/appeals/mehnu-cataract-liberia/>

All images courtesy of @Sightsavers /Carielle Doe

Advent services



Sunday 4th December

11.00am Gift Service

Sunday 18th December

11.00am: Family Nativity Service

Christmas Eve

4.00 pm: Family Service

St. Enoch's Hogganfield Church

11:30pm: Watchnight Service

Stepps parish Church

(Refreshments will be served afterwards)

Christmas Day

11am: Family Celebration Service

Our friends at St. Joseph's RC church are delighted to be hosting their Carol Service this year after 3 years and will be on Sunday 18th December 7:00pm in St Joseph's Chapel.

All welcome

