



A wintery view of Stepps Parish Church February 2021

## Pastoral Letter by Rev Gordon Macrae

*Dear Friends,*

I was looking at this photograph of our lovely church and, as I write, I can also look out of my window to a snowy scene and, when I finish writing, I will take Sam out to enjoy more. It's cold outside so I will have to wrap up warm.

I am reminded of the old Scots saying: "Ne'er cast a clout 'til May is oot"

That can be taken literally, or the 'cloots' we cast or refrain from casting can stand for all that we cling to, all that makes us comfortable, all that makes us feel safer.

Jesus once met a man who wore a clout, more likely called a cloak. He was blind and a beggar and the cloak was his sole possession. It kept him warm in the cold of the night and protected him from the strong noon sun. It was also used to collect any coins thrown to him by passers-by.

Jesus hears the man call out "Rabbi have mercy" and Jesus responds by declaring him healed and, at once, the man could see. The man sprang to his feet and threw his cloak aside. The cloak was no longer needed. The man could now work, make a living, support his family. He was free.

It's still cold outside. I will need my heavy jacket. But what about the other things I cling to? I fear the future, the virus is still out there, what protects me from that?

Well, I place my trust in the science. I listen to the regulations and make all effort to follow them.... social distancing, washing my hands, wearing my mask.

More than that I will strive to cast aside my concerns, my worries, all that might prevent me from being free. I may not cast my clout as yet, but I will try to cast aside my fear and place my trust in God and his Son, my friend, and my redeemer Jesus of Nazareth.

God Bless

*Gordon*

**February 2021**

Scottish Charity No.  
SC014212

# PROSPECT ONLINE

Magazine of Stepps Parish Church

## Contact Us:

Minister: Gordon Macrae 0141 779  
5742

[minister@steppsparishchurch.org](mailto:minister@steppsparishchurch.org)

Session Clerk: Lorraine Robertson

[sessionclerkspc2020@gmail.com](mailto:sessionclerkspc2020@gmail.com)

Church Organist / musician: Alastair  
Sim 0141 779 1101

Watch us on YouTube each Sunday  
at 11.00 am.

Follow us on Facebook.

[www.steppsparishchurch.org](http://www.steppsparishchurch.org)

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

## Session Clerk Letter

*Dear Friends,*

It is now over a year since the UK recorded its first case of Covid-19. As we near the end of January a month of grey skies and cold weather it always seems like such a long month, but this year just felt that little bit longer with an enhanced lockdown. Not the start to our year that any of us anticipated or expected but here we are fast approaching February and still no clearer as to when these restrictions will end. How have you all been coping?

We are once again prevented from meeting family and seeing our friends or coming together in our usual way each week in Church. We miss the opportunity to meet up or exchange greetings in the usual way and instead I speak through the virtual lens of a camera as we try to keep going each Sunday from our church. I feel like I am cocooned in a form of hibernation. For some people, a cocoon is a cosy retreat from where they can escape the harsh realities of the world or like our small furry friends where we seem to be spending more and more time indoors in an almost inactive state to get through the depressing cold winter months. Yet we see signs in and around us of life constantly moving forward. The days getting longer, snowdrops appearing in our gardens or the bulbs slowly making their way through the soil and it all serves to remind us that we keep going. News of the vaccine roll out brings renewed hope and as I write many of you will perhaps already have had yours or will soon receive. This is good news, and we feel encouraged that perhaps this will be the breakthrough that we all long for in allowing us all to soon reunite and come together. To see normality, return to our lives. For now, we keep going and continue to follow the public health guidance until we are slowly eased out of this period of enforced hibernation and pray that when we do all emerge from our own little cocoons, we are ready to pick up once again where things changed so abruptly last year and start again.

I am grateful to you all for your continued patience and support. I know that by working together and looking out for each other as we do as a church family, we can meet the challenges ahead.

Everything that you can do to help us through these times is greatly appreciated.

With affection

*Lorraine.*



## Congregational News



Many congratulations to Ailsa and Alasdair Macdonald on their 25<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary this month. We wish them every happiness as they celebrate 25 years of marriage.

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of one of our members Mrs Agnes Fraser who sadly passed away on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December whilst a patient in the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital. The funeral for Mrs Fraser was held in the Church on Monday the 18<sup>th</sup> of January followed but a service at Daldowie crematorium. We remember her husband Jim, her son Graham and daughter Alison in our prayers.

-----  
Belated Happy Birthday wishes to Mr Harry Corbett who celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday in lockdown on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January 2021. We wish Harry well and many more Happy Birthdays to come.

### **Christmas Charity Appeal 2020**

With your help we were able to support our overseas partners Christian Aid with our Christmas Appeal and managed to raise £995 including £244.50 in Gift Aid making a grand total of £1239.50. Thank you to everybody who contributed and supported our chosen charity.





## *Living God,*

In our hour of need we turn again to you and put our faith in you, because you have proved your faithfulness time and again.

We reaffirm our love for you because you have never let us go and we thank you that you are not distant from us but have drawn near, in your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. He has shared our life, tasted our death, and defeated it; He understands our worries and our fears. Help us to respond as your children now.

We pray for this pandemic spreading across our world, remembering all who have lost loved ones and praying for those seriously ill at this time.

We uphold the National Health Service as it responds to this added pressure on its already overstretched services. We pray for doctors and nurses and all in the caring professions, who work to help and support people as best they can.

We remember those working behind the scenes, testing samples, confirming results, giving information to patients. We uphold others trying to understand this virus better, working to create an effective remedy.

May this crisis bring out the best in us, not the worst

Help us to live by faith and not by fear; to build bridges not barriers.

God of grace and God of mercy hear our prayers at this time.

Strengthen us, by your Spirit, so that we may carry on our lives as best as we are able, looking out for others, showing love in action, being faithful in prayer and bringing encouragement, hope and peace; always trusting in you our Rock and our Redeemer.

These prayers we bring to you in Jesus' name.

*Amen*