



The Church of Scotland

stepps parish church

PROSPECT

www.steppsparishchurch.org

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



Scottish Charity No. SCO14212

May 2020, Issue 390

Pastoral Letter

*When this is all
over.....*

*How many times
have you heard
someones say
this or indeed
heard yourself
say it?*



When this is all over I will (we will)....

When this is all over the world will be....

When this is all over let us go (or do).....

*We, as yet, have no idea when or how this present
crisis will be all over we would all like it to come
to an end. We want to be able to leave our homes, visit
with or be visited by our loved ones and our friends.
We all wish we could return to some kind of normal.
However we also know that to do so now or too soon
would endanger those whom we love.*

*Some kind of normal ... what will that normal look
like; what will that normal be?*

When this is all over.....

*The closest friends of Jesus must have said that on so
many occasions. Earlier when they walked with Jesus
through Galilee and into Judea they surely knew that
their journey would not last for ever, that at sometime
it would be all over. Jesus spoke of a future time, a*

new future, a new normal. Jesus spoke of Jerusalem, that is where it would end, but when, but how? On the Friday we now call Good it seemed to them it was all over.

The end: So, what now?

As they sat in that upper room, the same room where Jesus had spoken some puzzling promises of his continuing presence, The Holy Spirit, She would come to comfort, to reassure, to protect and to inspire them to do the things he had done and still greater things in His Name.

“When these things are all over I will send you a helper, The Holy Spirit”

In that upper room their musings and remembrances were burst open as Mary burst in to give the Easter Good News and later the same day Jesus came while the room was locked, breathed the Holy Spirit upon them and said: “Peace be with you”.

When this is all over.....

What will you do when this is all over? What will the world be like? What will the Church be like? I am absolutely certain that whatever, whenever “over” comes, what we knew before, what we know now will never be quite the same. Does that frighten you?

It frightens me! However I also feel a sense of excitement and anticipation that, maybe just maybe, the good things that have emerged from this situation, that is largely and for many far from good, will

remain. The great acts of sacrificial kindness, the mutual respect of all particularly the poor, the low paid and the marginalised. I pray that will remain when this is all over. In our church life we have been deprived of coming together for worship and from caring and touching our fellows, but we have discovered so many lovely and new ways of caring and loving, of sharing the Easter Good News and the truths of our Christian Faith. In our use of social media like Facebook, the Website and Youtube we have made contact with numbers of people that we could only dream of before. These numbers include many new followers and those who we had never touched before the crisis. Crisis is a word that is usually used for something negative and frightening but the dictionary defines crisis as “an event at which the trend of all future events, especially for better or for worse, is determined; a turning point.”

So we are in crisis, it is a frightening event, one that we wish was all over. However God can take that moment, that crisis, and use it to transform a challenge into an opportunity, an opportunity to make the world we live in a far better place when this is all over. God can send the Helper, the Holy Sprit who will enable us to do the greater things that Jesus would have us do in His name.

With all God's Blessings Gordon



Thanks to Gordon on the 6th Anniversary of his ministry with us at Stepps Parish Church



Praying with Psalm 116 in this time of pandemic

We love you, O God, because you have heard the voice of our supplications,
because you have inclined your ear to us whenever we called upon you. (Psalm 116, v. 1, adapted)

Because you have been faithful to us, O God, from time immemorial, bringing us time and again out of despair into hope, out of death into new life, yet even now in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic shall we trust you.

The cords of death entangled us;
the grip of the grave took hold of us;
we came to grief and sorrow. (v. 2, adapted)

The count of the dead, and the ill; the endangered; the closed-in, the unemployed or out-of-business or unable to provide for their families – the numbers are beyond our comprehension.

We can't even name, let alone mourn, that many lives lost, so many countries locked down, so many people trying to shelter in place, so many families disrupted, so many at risk of starvation.

We are buried in our grief and shock; tangled between our desire for life to return to normal (soon, if not even sooner) and fear-filled and realistic prudence (that warns it may be months or years before we can safely end our social isolation).

The sheer numbers are beyond our stunned comprehension. Yet you, O God, have known and adored us before we are even born. You count the hairs on every head. You accompany every person who dies and comfort every person who grieves. You restore the trembling nations. Even now, we shall trust.

Then we called upon your holy Name:

“O God, we pray you, save our lives.” (v. 3, adapted)

And we see your saving hand at work, not through a sudden magic snap of your fingers, but in so many large and small daily items: You, O God, are the one who gives us life, and gives it abundantly. Even now, we shall trust.

We will walk in the presence of God,
In the land of the living. (v. 8, adapted)

We celebrated Earth Day on April 22, marking the 50th such annual celebration. Even from

within our COVID-19 restrictions, we could look out and know the presence of God...in a flower, a hummingbird, the stars, the wind....in the face of a loved one here with us, or online, or in our memories...in the commitments we make, to made this a life-giving planet...

For you, O God, have entrusted us with this your world, and with one another – your beloved children.

How shall we repay God
for all the good things done for us?

We will lift up the cup of salvation
and call upon the Name of God.

We will fulfil our vows to God
in the presence of all people. (v10-12, adapted)

Even now, we trust.

Amen.

G33 Messy Church

As with other activities at the moment, G33 Messy Church due to be held on Friday 1st May has been cancelled. Whilst we can not meet in person, Messy Church HQ will put together activities to do at home each week until the end of June. These can be found on the Messy Church

website. Messy church home resources are hosted at <https://www.messychurch.org.uk/covid-19>

We hope these ideas can be adapted to allow us to continue to learn of God's love for us and his world over the coming weeks. We look forward to when we can come together to celebrate again.

The G33 Messy Church Team

Christian Aid

Hi everyone I hope you are all safe and well, and we will see one another very soon.

We would have been celebrating our Christian Aid Lunch this month so I thought a little note would help us focus on the cause.

From Christian Aid correspondence.

The Coronavirus has shown us that our future are bound together more highly than ever before. In an interconnected world, this virus affects us all.

The most vulnerable are falling ill. The economics impacts are pushing people who were already struggling further into poverty, without a way to feed at home and abroad.

In time we will need a global rescue package to support the most vulnerable.

Right now as this virus continues to spread globally, over 850,000 Rohingya refugees living

in over-crowding camps in Cox's Bazar are at serious risk.

Across the world, we're responding with local partners, including faith leaders to reach the most vulnerable communities with urgent messages to keep people safe drawing on our experience in combating the Ebola crisis.

We are helping to inform people about dangers, provide hygiene and hand washing training and ensure that health facilities in MOs have space for people who have contracted the virus.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all the volunteers.

The Coronavirus is affecting everyone of us, but even into darkest moments, love gives us hope.

Jean



Peace in Europe 75 years on

Like most other major events to fall foul of the Coronavirus, VE Day on the 8th of May is yet another victim but while planned celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day have gone astray, there are still

ways to mark the occasion from home.

VE Day, or Victory in Europe Day, is a day dedicated to commemorating the official end of the Second World War.

The day celebrates the formal acceptance by the Allies during World War II of Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender of armed forces, on 8 May 1945.

Millions of people rejoiced the news of Germany's surrender, and took to the streets in celebration, with parties, singing and dancing. Crowds gathered in Trafalgar Square in London and up The Mall to Buckingham Palace, where King George VI and Queen Elizabeth appeared on the balcony, overlooking the masses cheering below.

What celebrations were planned for VE Day 2020?

Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, the government announced that 2020's early, May bank holiday would be moved for only the second time in history, to mark the VE weekend of 8th May, in order to allow a three- day celebration. At present, all scheduled plans for VE Day are to be moved later in the year, to the weekend of 15 and 16 August, coinciding with VJ Day.

Victory in Japan Day commemorates the day on which Imperial Japan surrendered in World War II, on 15 August 1945.

Members of the public have also been advised to temporarily cancel all planned VE Day celebrations.

In a statement on the VE Day website, Pageant-master Bruno Peek said, “I am afraid that the terrible Coronavirus emergency and consequent Government guidance means that we must advise participants to cancel or postpone the majority of the VE Day 75 community celebrations due to take place on the bank holiday weekend of 8th – 10th May.

“It is right and proper that people should be kept safe and healthy.”

How can we celebrate VE Day from our homes?

Members of the public are still being encouraged to take part in the ‘Nation’s Toast to the Heroes of WW2’ from the safety of their own home.

The toast will take place at 3pm on Friday the 8th May and will serve as a thank you to those who gave their lives to ensure the freedom the country enjoys today.

People can also get involved in celebrations by joining their BBC Local Radio Station Initiative

and making their own VE Day Great British Bunting. If you would like to take part.

Make your own special VE Day 75 ‘Great British Bunting’ to display in your window at home you can download some templates from the BBC website.

UK residents are also being encouraged to host their own ‘stay at home celebration’.

Why not get involved and join the nation to remember those who gave so much in order to allow us all to be blessed with such peace.

If you are looking for recipes, decoration ideas, or a playlist for your party, there are some [tips for planning your VE Day party online](#).

Finally

We remember our friends at St. Enoch’s Hogganfield as Rev. Elaine MacRae continues to convalesce at home.

We have been gladdened to share in some very meaningful joint services of worship over the past weeks and been encouraged to see Elaine looking so well during her short online video sermons.

May she continue to gain strength knowing that her friends from Stepps Parish Church continue to hold the Manse family in their thoughts and prayers.

Staying Connected with your Church



Church buildings are closed. Worship has moved online. We are living in unprecedented times across the country - and the world - churches are exploring

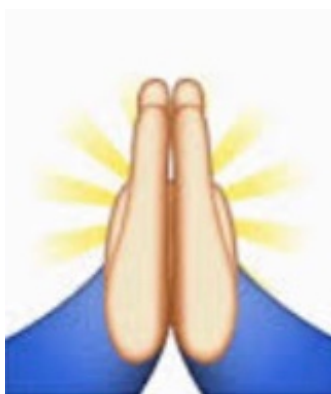
how to connect our congregations when we are unable to gather together in shared worship.

Offline

For those who do not have the access or technical capabilities to use online resources, there are still ways to keep engaged with the Church of Scotland at this time. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Bible studies and reflections

Rev. Dr Lezley Stewart, the Kirk's Recruitment and Support Secretary suggested that one of the best things to do during this time is to “ground ourselves in God. It’s really important in this time to practice care of self in a holistic way – body, mind and spirit,” Dr Stewart said.



As we connect with God and one another in this way, we remind ourselves that we are part of something much bigger, and that we do not rely on our own strength in all that we are facing.

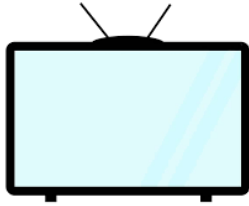
“The best way to be a resource and strength to others, is to begin from a place where we have something to give. Sometimes it’s hard for us to put ourselves at the centre, when we are used to thinking of others first, but spending time in contemplation, acknowledging our own thoughts, fears and hopes before God is important. As we ground ourselves in God, so we find a place from which some peace and calm can shape our days. Take time to engage with daily reflections and not just wall to wall news!

Take time to pray, and perhaps choose a Psalm or Scripture passage each day to aid your reflection. As we connect with God and one another in this way, we remind ourselves that we are part of something much bigger, and that we do not rely on our own strength in all that we are facing.”

Radio and television

- [BBC Radio 4](#) and [BBC Radio Scotland](#) both broadcast a weekly Sunday service. [Premier Christian Radio](#) is also available all week. Other radio stations are available.
- Songs of Praise on BBC One recorded a broadcast from Glasgow Cathedral on Palm Sunday 5 April at 1:15 and featured the artist ID

Campbell speaking about his work at St George's Tron Glasgow. You can also see it watch it on the BBC catch up or iPlayer service.



BBC One Scotland are now broadcasting their new half-hour weekly show, Reflections at The Quay, every week. You can [catch up with the latest episodes on BBC iPlayer](#).

Keeping in touch with your minister



Gordon has been Taking Stepps (pardon the pun) to keep in touch with the congregation in a myriad of new ways, in whichever way works best for individuals where possible. Some of these ways now includes through the church Facebook Page, WhatsApp Chat, through our website, Prospect, Zoom, YouTube and by good old telephone.

Sanctuary First is an online worshipping community led by Very Rev Albert Bogle, will be

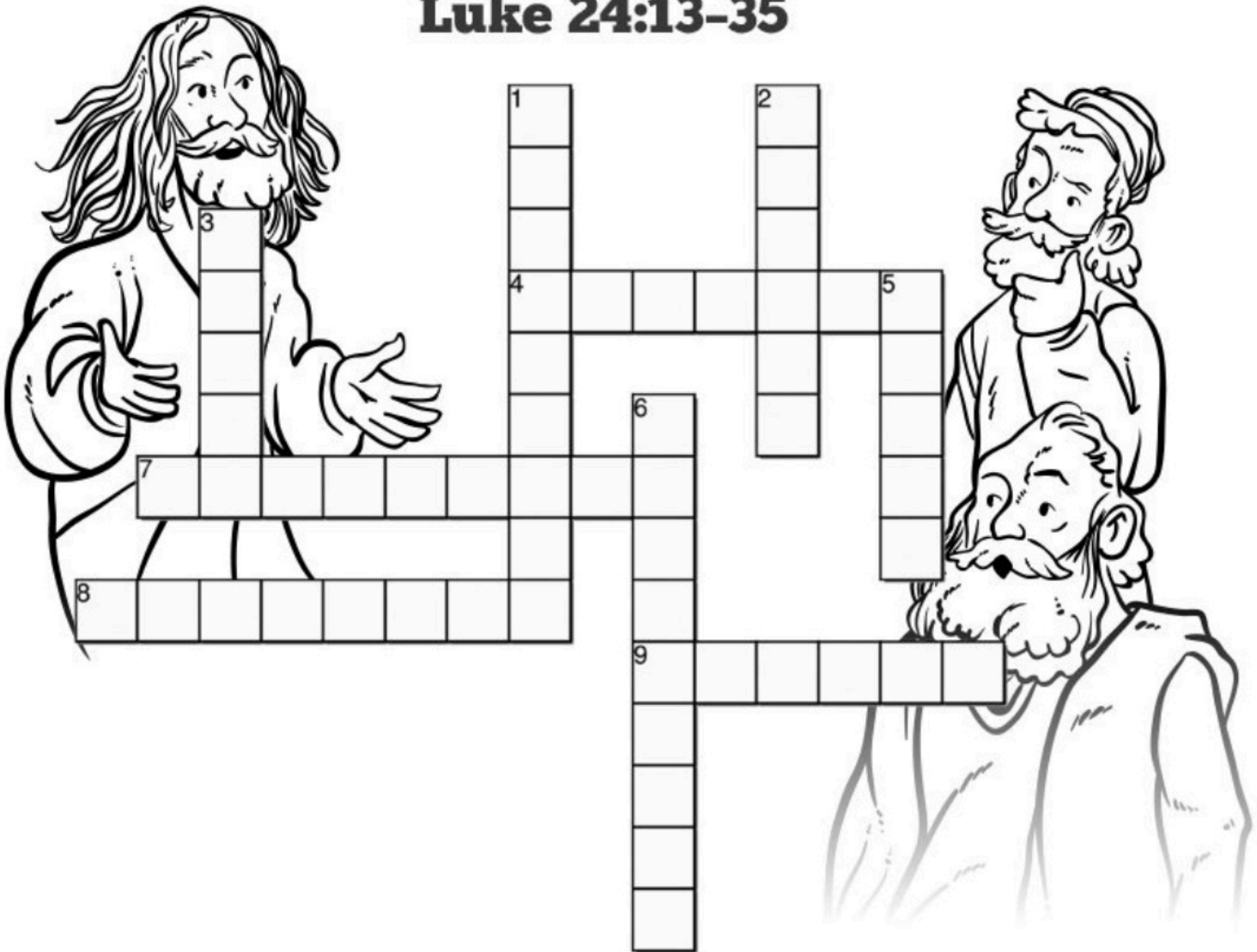
running a series of different events over the coming weeks:

- Every Friday night from 9pm-10pm: A live chat show, The Friday Night Review, goes out live on Facebook. This will be hosted in rotation by three or four resident presenters. This is also streamed live to the Sanctuary First website.
- Every Sunday from 3pm: The Sanctuary First Sunday worship service will be available to stream live on their website.
- Every day from 10am-12pm: The newly launched Virtual Coffee Shop is planning to run. To find out more or how to get involved, please email [Very Rev Albert Bogle](mailto:VeryRevAlbertBogle@churchofscotland.org.uk) on albertogle@churchofscotland.org.uk
- In difficult times such as these, pastoral support prayers based on theme are available <https://www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/>

• <https://www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/>

THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Luke 24:13-35



Across

4. What was the disciple's name, who answered Jesus's questions?
7. When Jesus first joined his disciples on their journey, they did not know it was him because they could not _____ him.
8. As soon as the disciples recognized Jesus, he _____ from their sight.
9. Jesus told his disciples that according to scripture, the Messiah would have to _____ before his death.

Down

1. Jesus pretended not to know that three days earlier he had been _____.
2. When the disciples arrived at their destination they invited Jesus to join them for _____.
3. The disciples didn't recognize Jesus until Jesus _____ bread with them.
5. How many miles long was the journey to Emmaus?
6. After Jesus was crucified, what city was left in turmoil?



UPDATE FROM LHM'S CHAPLAIN



Dear Friends,

First and foremost, I hope this finds you all safe and well during this worrying time as the nation battles against the Covid 19 virus.

I want to update you on the situation at LHM as I realise our vulnerable client group will very much be in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult period.

LHM was compelled to close its Day Centre rather abruptly on 16th March when we became aware that both our Manager and a Volunteer were displaying symptoms of the virus. The LHM Board was of the firm view that we could not run the risk of exposing our vulnerable client group, let alone our staff and volunteers, to the potential presence of the virus in the Day Centre where the recommended practice of social distancing is impossible to achieve.

I am delighted to reassure you that our Manager and the affected Volunteer are both on the road towards full recovery.

Most of our staff are currently furloughed until the Day Centre can re-open. However, this is not to say that LHM are doing nothing to support our vulnerable client group in the city. We are actively working with other partner agencies to freely offer our available resources of food, toiletries and clothing for distribution to the needy at this time.

Many of our homeless clients have been allocated temporary accommodation in hotels scattered throughout the city and every effort is being made to supply their needs.

We know that once we are in a position to re-open our Day Centre, we can rely on our wonderful volunteers to help us get “up and running” once more and that the generosity of our supporting churches, including your own at Stepps, will faithfully assist us in replenishing our needs.

Until then, we put our trust in the Lord to bring the Mission and its clients safely through this trying time.

May God bless you and keep you safe.

Claire Herbert

Deacon and LHM Chaplain

World Mission: Prayer for the World

The Convener of the Faith Impact Forum, the Very Rev Dr Susan Brown, has written a prayer to remember our own situation and that of our sisters and brothers throughout the world during the Caronavirus pandemic.

These times, Lord God,
Are a reminder of the one world you created to be
enjoyed by

All

But which has become so fractured in so many
ways.

Let your love put us back together again...

Along with all your people on this earth
We look to you for strength and hope in these
times

And for the courage to care for others

Wherever in the world they are

For we are one in your Spirit.

Amen



80th Glasgow Girls Brigade

The Officers & Girls were delighted to be able to donate five DAB Radios to the nursing team & patients of Ward 6, Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

We'll Meet Again....

In last month's copy I spoke of the amazing Dunkirk spirit that we often see in the community during times of challenge and crisis. Little did I realise then quite what the impact or enormity of the situation we would be all be facing. Covid- 19 has in some way affected each and every one of us. We continue to face an uncertain future and are likely to see the effects of the virus on our lives, whether it be through social distancing or restrictions to our usual routines for some time

yet but rather than focus on the negatives I wanted to just share with you some of our more positive news.

Despite not being able to meet in our usual way each Sunday we have instead been reaching out in new and adventurous ways with video sermons, embraced podcasts and now have our very own designated YouTube channel- See link below:

<https://youtu.be/ckXpWGWtcIE>

We have almost 300 followers on our Stepps Parish Church Facebook page and we have engaged in a virtual Zoom Easter morning service with our friends from St. Enoch- Hogganfield Church. This was preceded with a very successful series of short Holy Week reflections which were also uploaded onto our website. This series of reflections culminated in a shared Maundy Thursday service led by Gordon and Elaine with both Churches then participating in our virtual Easter morning service with around 40 participants logging in to share the joy of the Risen Lord.

Not to be outdone our youngsters are also embracing the technology ... probably far better than us older ones I hasten to add with online Messy church and their weekly craft activities to help keep them entertained and in touch with their friends in our G33 Messy Church as well as a new designated BB Facebook page to keep the boys in touch with the wider BB organisation and a means of engaging in some light relief from the boredom of lockdown.

Many of us have embraced new ways of worship and have whilst it does not replace the fellowship that we all enjoy when we are all together on a Sunday Morning, it continues to sustain us until we are once again able to throw open our doors where I promise you one day soon...like the iconic song by Dame Vera Lynn (1943) suggests,
“We'll meet again

Don't know where

Don't know when

But I know we'll meet again some sunny day

Keep smiling through

Just like you always do

'Till the blue skies drive the dark clouds far away”

Lorraine Robertson

Session Clerk

BB News

The BB organisation have set up an online and Facebook page and are encouraging the Boys and their parents to participate in online activities through #BBatHOME. The activities are open to anyone, BB member or not. Just google #BBatHOME, or click on this link:

<https://boys-brigade.org.uk/bbathome/>



There are weekly activity packs on the site, with new ideas in each. Closer to home we've had a bit of good news just before the lockdown, when three of our Boys, L/Cpl. Ross McLaughlin, and Ptes. Ben Heriot and James McLaughlin took part in the Glasgow Battalion Novice Drill Competition and gained second place. We congratulate the boys on their fantastic achievements.

Colin Goodall 190th BB Captain

Christian Aid week 10th – 16th May

***Love never fails. Coronavirus impacts all of us.
But love unites us all.***

Like most other things affected by the Coronavirus Christian Aid Week is moving online! We would love you to join them in showing your love for our neighbours near and far, as a global family.

Why not host your own virtual event, send an e-envelope to your family and friends or simply join them in worship? There are lots of creative ways for you to take part in.

Christian Aid are building a vibrant, virtual Christian Aid Week so you can take part with their online community.

As this virus spreads across the world, love rises in response. We've already seen incredible acts of kindness in our own and wider communities and across the UK as a nation. Now is the time to reach out to your neighbours both near and far.



During Christian Aid Week

It's more important than ever that we come together as a community to worship and to share fun and fellowship. That's why during Christian Aid Week this year we really urge you to come together as a community at a time where the world needs this more than ever.

We have all been heartened to see incredible stories of collective action, local neighbourhood help, and prayer. Now is the time to stand together in love and solidarity. There will be the opportunity to get involved and we urge you all to consider during this period of lockdown to sign up and join Christian Aid for their daily live-streamed services with guest speakers during the week, so we can come together online in prayer and worship with our brothers and sisters around the world or participate in their online fun daily quizzes to raise funds.

Sign up to take part and they will email you more information about these events.

Your love protects. From storms, from drought, and now from coronavirus. Your love protects our global neighbours battling the spread of this illness. Your love protects. With soap, clean water and medical supplies.

By supporting Christian Aid Week, you can reach out and protect more of your neighbours today. We will as a congregation be encouraging the work that Christian Aid does throughout the week on our website and through our Facebook Page.

Life and Work May Edition

During this challenging period, Life and Work is committed to helping keep our Christian community connected and so they have made the May 2020 issue available on their website. This can be accessed by clicking here or visiting <https://www.lifeandwork.org/resources/free-download-may-2020>.

To enjoy a complimentary issue as many of you will not be able to get your usual printed copy.



Highlights from this issue includes:

- **FEEDING THE HUNGRY:** Reflection on foodbanks and impact of Covid-19
- **‘GOD HAS NOT FINISHED WITH SCOTLAND’:** The Moderator-Designate, the Rev Dr Martin Fair
- **WAR’S END:** The role of churches in peacebuilding across Europe on the 75th anniversary of VE Day

The General Assembly cancellation 2020

The General Assembly is a significant annual event in the Church of Scotland calendar. Throughout the week, commissioners to the

General Assembly examine its work and laws and make decisions that affect the future of the Church.

People enjoy watching the proceedings for the passionate debates, special guests, festivities and large-scale worship.

Due to COVID-19, the 2020 General Assembly has regrettably been cancelled for the first time in over 300 years. The 2021 Assembly will be held in the General Assembly Hall on the Mound in Edinburgh. It will open on Saturday 22 May and will close on Friday 28 May. The public gallery will be open for anyone who wishes to watch the Assembly.



9th April, 2020

Dear Moderator,

As we approach Easter, I wanted to acknowledge how difficult a time this must be for the Church of Scotland and your Ministries. You have had to close your Churches at the very moment when you normally come together, and when your communities need you the most.

It is heartening to see how the Church of Scotland, like so many other faith communities across the country, is re-inventing itself digitally to continue providing worship, support and guidance for your congregations. I have no doubt that this support, as well as other means of offering help, is hugely appreciated at this extremely challenging time, particularly by the elderly, vulnerable, those economically affected and of course those who have so tragically lost family and friends. I am sure that this continuing connection and support will be particularly welcomed this Easter weekend.

It is sad but understandable that the pandemic has resulted in the cancellation of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. As you know, I was very much looking forward to spending a week in Scotland this May as Lord High Commissioner. I know how much work goes into preparing for the General Assembly week, and I wanted to pass on my thanks to all involved.

Please pass on my warmest wishes to all Ministers, Elders and Members of the Church of Scotland, who I know are working tirelessly to serve their communities in the most difficult of circumstances.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Sinclair', with a stylized flourish at the end.

The Right Rev. Colin Sinclair,
Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

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