



The Church gardens looking towards the Vestry

Prospect Magazine will be taking a break over the Summer until the beginning of September and during this time it's contributors will be taking a break.

Whether you have something nice planned or simply a staycation have a wonderful summer and see you all in September.

**July - August
2021**

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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
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Sunday Services

Morning Worship at 11am

(Services will be reduced and limited in numbers until further notice)

Congregations are now legally required to publicly display their buildings' maximum capacity with physical distancing (PDBC) taken into account at the entrance of their buildings where the public can see it. Unfortunately our maximum capacity safe limit has been set within the sanctuary to 36 people to be covid-compliant with our risk assessment maintaining the 2m physical distancing rule. Covid-19 new variants continue to be a concern and as such congregations are advised to continue to practice good social distancing and wear face coverings indoors. We are all strongly encouraged to do what we can to reduce transmissibility of the virus by avoiding crowded spaces.

An additional 12 seats are available as an overspill area to watch the weekly service from our large hall.

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 Steps Parish Church YouTube channel

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI7mTSz5OlvW_qMkKjCxAw



Charity No: SC014212

Pastoral Letter Rev. Gordon MacRae

Top Marks!



That's what we all strive towards, getting Top Marks. No matter if it is exam results, improving your darts score or completing a magazine quiz. We like to do our best and thus get approval and reward for our efforts. We aim to get top marks! and if it is beyond our ability, we aim to do our best.

Over the last few weeks or so our school children have been receiving their marks towards whatever qualifications they are striving towards. The manner in which these marks are awarded has been different from past methods. Because of the impact of Covid-19 examinations have been suspended replaced by continuous assessment. I can imagine the strain such developments have caused for the students but I feel even more for their teachers who have to lay aside any personal favour and apply objective processes to award their student a fair set of marks. Who got Top Marks? Were any painfully disappointed? I would pray that all our young people have achieved the best results they had hoped for.

Over the summer and into autumn we in Stepps Parish Church will be assessing how we as a church family might be marked on our striving to be the best, we can be in the Mission set for us by our Teacher, Jesus.

Our Mission is to go out and teach what Jesus has taught us and to bring more into our church family, the community of Jesus' Church.

How have you done? How have we done? If you were marking our progress, what score would you give?? Would we get Top Marks??

In our striving to progress our Mission to the people of Stepps and the surrounding area, how do we mark our effort? What marks can we use?

In last month's General Assembly, The Church of Scotland decided to apply a "**Set of Marks**" to measure the Church's progress in shaping a *new way of church* that is fit for purpose in the years to come.

The 5 Marks off Mission

The mission of the Church is the mission of Christ:

- o To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- o To teach, baptise and nurture those who follow Jesus.

- To respond to human need by loving service
- To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

The General Assembly agreed that these 5 Marks of Mission will be the scale, the ruler against which we should measure what we do and what we plan to do as a church.

From General Assembly down, through Presbyteries and Kirk Session and congregations, we are asked to apply these 5 marks to our planning and decision making.

In our discussions and planning we should ask questions, for example.

- Does this new venture satisfy at least two of the five marks of mission?
- Is our new built plans bringing us closer to at least two of the 5 marks?
- Does the new form of worship address at least two of our marks?

If they fail to score in the marks, then we are asked to review our decision and reset them to “fit” the marks of mission.

We in Stepps Parish Church will be striving to get Top Marks in our Christian Mission.

In addition, I suggest that we might all strive to **apply these 5 Marks to our own individual Christian service**. To check our decisions, all the decisions we make, against the 5 Mark questions. I think you might find it an interesting exercise.

However, at all times in all occasions KNOW that Jesus does not judge us as we do. But never forget, we humans might judge other’s and our own behaviour in a judgmental fashion.

God marks us all through the measure of God’s Grace

Grace is the **unmerited favour** of God, God’s undeserved kindness that God shows through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

That is how we are marked and how we are called to mark one another.

Please check out our YouTube channel where my Wednesday Coffee Reflections from the latter two weeks and in the Wednesdays to come will focus on how I understand the Five Marks of Mission

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

Meanwhile I think we all deserve Top Marks!!!!

Love Gordon

Session Clerk Letter

Dear Friends,

Summer is finally upon us and many of you will be hoping to take a much-needed break from work or the normal routine. Whilst some restrictions are still in place as I write there is some renewed hope as we learn of the prospect of reduced social distancing or scrapping it altogether. The news looks promising for a more normal way for us all to come together in worship.



We are now allowed to have meetings indoors as a Kirk Session and Congregational board and we will soon be able to accommodate more of you all back into church without the need to keep everyone 2 meters apart.

Some of you may be concerned about a return to Church if you have not yet been back in person but let me assure you that all of the necessary precautions and good practice that has already been implemented will remain in place and all guidance will continue to be followed in order to make us Covid compliant ensuring everyone's safety.

More of us are vaccinated now- making the threat of significant illness less likely.

Already discussions are in place for the re-opening of the **Chestnut Café** hopefully making use of some outdoor space when weather permits. The Friendship Club also hopes to reconvene for a new session in the Autumn.

Gradually life for us all will resemble a more gradual return to how things were before as we learn to adapt and live with the threat of Covid-19.

It has been a difficult time for many of us and of course challenges still remain as we go forward in faith and mission. Gordon has spoken of the 5 Marks of Mission, and you will all hear more of that as we aim to engage in conversations and prepare and plan for the new Presbytery Mission Plan Act. A timeline has already been set out for congregations to engage with, that will facilitate the information gathering needed by Presbyteries as they seek to implement a wider more radical plan. The utilisation and occupation of our buildings will be considered as part of that consultation period before an implementation group are faced with the difficult task deciding whether our buildings are retained or are earmarked for closure.

This is a terrifying thought than none of us can bear the very idea of, so I urge you all to prayerfully consider how we go forward.

I pray that some respite over the summer renews and revives us all and that our wider church family feels able to return once again in faith and in person within our beautiful Sanctuary helping us to grow and thrive and pick up from where so much of life as we knew it was changed so abruptly back in March 2020.

May you all have a peaceful and restful summer.

God bless.

Lorraine



The Lodging House Mission is seeking

Volunteers

to assist with general duties in its Day Centre at East Campbell Street as it prepares to re-open after Covid lockdown.

Applicants should be double vaccinated (+3 wks)

(Appropriate Covid precautions are in place)

If interested, please email
gus.smeaton@lhm-glasgow.org.uk
for fuller details



The LHM is looking for Volunteers as they get set to re-open its doors on the 1st of July, they are currently short of volunteers to assist with general duties in its Day Care Centre at West Campbell Street as it prepares to re-open after Covid Lockdown. They are looking for kitchen and table service duties. The work is not demanding but the service you give will be rewarding and so if you think you have some time to spare to be able to offer any assistance please get in touch. The

LHM have a strict hygiene discipline in place and all LHM staff require to be double vaccinated at least three weeks prior to offering any assistance.

All Appropriate Covid precautions are in place. If interested, please call

0141 552 0285 for further details.

The First Minister has indicated that the Scottish Government intend, should the infection numbers allow, to reduce the indoor distancing from 2m to 1m in mid-July, followed by a complete removal in early/ mid-August. Before a church can increase the numbers for worship or activities our congregational Risk Assessment will need to be updated and approved. This work will begin over the summer holiday period but for now we ask for your patience as our volunteers take some well deserved time off over the holiday period.

Covid Restrictions Update

The staged process for the lifting of legal restrictions on physical distancing - which will be conditional upon reviews ahead of the respective changes - is as set out below. These are indicative dates at this stage, and final decisions will be taken in the reviews preceding 19th July and 9th August by the Scottish Government.

19th July Conditional on a review of the epidemic ahead of this date : All areas move down to Level 0. Reduce outdoors to 0m Reduce indoors to 1m.

9th August Conditional on over 40s being fully vaccinated and a review of the epidemic ahead of this date

All areas move beyond Level 0 (Levels restrictions lifted).

All physical distancing regulations lifted.

We pray this is good news for us all.

Congregational News



For those of you who don't know a certain Kate Houston celebrates a rather special birthday this August. Our very own Kate will reach the grand old age of 90 on the 20th of August. Kate also a twin to sister Mary was one of the original members of St. Andrews congregation before its union with the former Whitehill Parish Church and formed many lifelong friendships from both congregations. Kate established many of these friendships whilst a member of the Young Wives and Mother's group and later founded a knitting bee with her good friends Amy, Ellen, Irene, Nan and others. This carried on for many years until Covid put paid to these regular knitting sessions. Kate served as a church Elder for many years and also helped out on the finance committee as well as being a part of our Church choir for many years where her lovely singing voice could be readily heard. Kate managed to juggle all of this whilst bringing up a young family and also working in the Garfield for many years.

More recently Kate helped out with the weekly Humpty Dumpty club until it wound up and was always the first to give assistance during the Summer Holiday Clubs. She was also our co-ordinator for the Church of Scotland Magazine *Life & Work* for many years ensuring copies were issued or delivered to those who subscribed on time as well as being a member of the Friendship Club of which she is now the Secretary.

Kate has a keen interest in all things Community and shares a great desire to see improved amenities for our growing community as a director in the Steps Community Development Trust (SCDT) which was instrumental in securing funds for a community Foodbank service in direct response to the Covid Crisis. No stranger to hard work Kate once again rolled up her sleeves and was one of the weekly volunteer's manning the Foodbank from our Church Halls.

A truly remarkable service over a lifespan of almost 60 years service to her Church and still clearly showing no signs of slowing down.

Kate you are an inspiration and from all your Church family we all wish you the happiest of birthdays with many more to come.

God Bless and thank you for everything you do in your own unique and humble way.

Friendship Club

After such a long enforced closure we hope to resume our meetings on Monday the 4th October at 1.30p.m.

Because we have not met for such a long time Janet and I have decided to hold the meetings **every Monday** for a trial period until the end of 2021. This is, of course, subject to change depending on Covid restrictions at that time.

I shall keep you all informed if there are any changes to our plans.

Until October stay well and stay safe and enjoy your summer.

If you require more information please telephone

Mrs. Kate Houston on 0141 779 2960

Kate Houston

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Door Duty

With the expected return to Level Zero by mid-August and the removal or reduction in social distancing restrictions we anticipate our Sunday morning services becoming busier and we will of course be able to accommodate greater numbers back in church. This is excellent news after almost 16 months of reduced capacity. For that reason, we will be resuming our door duty rota again from Sunday the 5th of September.

This will include having a weekly rota of two door stewards, one person for Track and Trace information gathering and a Beadle.

We will aim to pick up from where we left off using our current volunteers. If you are unable to continue with door duty or would like to be removed from the rota if you could possibly advise

June Thomson on 07909 042366 who will be putting the rota together.

The Visitor

A well-dressed young man in a smart suit arrived at a church where he hadn't worshipped before. He walked in, looked around and walked towards a seat near the back of the church. Just then a man approached and said "You can't sit there. That's my family's place. We always sit there". The man simply smiled, rose to his feet and walked towards the front of the church where some children were sitting. A little girl saw him approach and said "These places are for the Sunday School only". At this the man turned back, and sat in a seat beside the aisle. A woman who had just entered the church asked him to move. "That has always been my place" she explained.

The man turned round to face the congregation. He was wearing a simple but tattered robe, soaked in blood. Suddenly, they noticed a crown of thorns on his head, his forehead torn and bleeding. His hands were badly injured and blood dripped from them. The people who had spoken to him were horrified. "What happened to you?" they asked.

"I took your place" he replied.



Recruiting for 2021-2022 Session

190th GLASGOW COMPANY, THE BOYS' BRIGADE

All Sections of the Company have continued with an outdoors activity programme (weather permitting) right up until the end of our Session this week. We finished up with presentation of some awards, and some al fresco food. Photos and further information are available on our Facebook page.

There will be a lot of changes after the Summer, with Boys moving from one Section to another as they reach the age limits, but the Company will carry on as always. We will be looking for new members over the next couple of months, so if you know any Boys who may be interested in joining, please put them in touch.

We hope you all have a great Summer and look forward to starting back in August.

Colin Goodall

Captain

captain190thglasgow@hotmail.com

Tel. 07828 032807

Follow us on FaceBook

<https://m.facebook.com/190thGlasgowBoysBrigade/>

2021

THE BOYS' BRIGADE
> the adventure begins here

THE BOYS' BRIGADE IN THE EAST END OF GLASGOW
ARE RECRUITING !

If you are age 5 to 17 and live in
or around **Steps** area ?
There is a place for you !

Find out more by searching online for
190th Glasgow Boys' Brigade

or email: captain190thglasgow@hotmail.com

Based at
Steps Parish Church
17 Whitehill Avenue
G33 6BL

<https://m.facebook.com/190thGlasgowBoysBrigade/>



80th Glasgow Girls Brigade

2011 saw Joanne, Ann (Green) & myself welcome our first group of girls to the newly reformed 80th Glasgow Girls Brigade.

Fast forward a few years & Christine (Skinner) joined us, as the numbers went from strength to strength.

We enjoyed bringing life into the halls every Tuesday night - filling them with laughter, joy, singing & often the sound of marching feet, with a waft of something baking from the kitchen.

And not to forget the additional activities such as the Christmas Fayre, Santa's Grotto, Remembrance Day & the Christmas Nativity to name a few - when the girl's were able to really be part of the wider Church family.

Fast forward to March 2020 & suddenly we have to leave the halls silent & still, because of the pandemic.

In those early days of March there was a little hope - surely it won't be long, we can simply push back our plans & move parents night out a little.

Some 15 months later - each & everyone of of us find ourselves still adapting to the pandemic & living with various

restrictions.

And as we continue to live in this 'new normal' world, Joanne & I as the two serving officers of the Brigade have had to make a very difficult decision - unfortunately, we are unable to recommence the Brigade & so have to step down from our positions.

I am deeply sorry that we are not able to return. It has been a privilege being part of the Girls Brigade both as a girl moving through the ranks, Captaining the 80th for the past 10 years, following in the footsteps of my mum, Ann Green, a previous Captain of 80th.

My personal thanks to the girls, we simply could not have been a brigade without your enthusiasm every Tuesday; to my mum & Christine for their support & guidance; Joanne for being an amazing Officer, leader & friend.

And, on behalf of the girls, Joanne, Ann, Christine & myself, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each & everyone of you for your support of the Brigade over the years - we would not have been the Brigade we were without your support.

Wishing you all well - stay safe!

Gillian Green

Captain - 80th Glasgow Girls Brigade.