



All are welcome in this place.

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September 2021

Issue 403

Scottish Charity No.
SC014212

PROSPECT

Magazine of Stepps Parish
Church

Contact Us:

Minister: Gordon MacRae

0141 779 5742

minister@steppsparishchurch.org

Session Clerk: Lorraine Robertson

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

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)

Tel: 0141 779 5742

Session Clerk

Lorraine Robertson

Tel: 0141 779 5838

Email:
sessionclerkspc2020@gmail.com



Sunday Services

Morning Worship at 11am

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

Scotland moved beyond Level 0 on the 9th of August 2021. Although it is now possible to offer a range of seating options, the Church of Scotland's Covid-19 group suggest that for the next few weeks congregations may wish to stick with the 1-metre physical distancing rule which was so recently put in place. We will continue with that suggestion for the next few weeks as we monitor the rates of infection within the community. We can safely accommodate between 55-65 people within the sanctuary depending on whether individuals or couples are sitting together or if there are slightly larger family bubbles sitting together where we can stretch the number a bit more. There is also the opportunity to visit the Sanctuary each Thursday from 10.00 am- 12.00 noon.



You can now check into our buildings using the Test & Protect Check In Scotland App using your smartphone (see page 12 for details)

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/UCI7mTSz5OI-vW_gMKKjcXAw

Charity No: SC014212

Pastoral Letter Rev. Gordon MacRae

I am sure most who are women have completed them and maybe some men too. You know, those surveys in magazines, the ones where you read out around thirty to forty questions answering from the multiple-choice questions.



If you were faced with a choice between and, what would you choose?
Do you regard yourself to be more like..... or?

Then your friend adds up the scores and tells you what kind of person you are. Somehow these questions can determine, beyond doubt, that you are an extravert pet loving party animal, rather than a shy lonely loser!!

We usually participate in these surveys as a bit of trivia, an opportunity to make fun of our friends. Then there are the more serious ones, for example questionnaires from a prospective employee. We might take a little longer to complete that, maybe second guessing each question.

“Why are they asking that?
What lies behind that question?”

I have heard on the grapevine that when an individual is looking for a new boy or girlfriend, he or she no longer asks a colleague or the attractive friend of a friend for a date. Instead, they tune their smart phone to a dating app, troll through hundreds of faces and, if one takes their fancy they swipe left, or is it right, to send a message of intent to the person in the picture.

Surveys and questionnaires can lead one down all sorts of paths... even lifelong relationships!
We, as the Church of Scotland, are on a path.

The Presbytery of Glasgow is carrying out a survey among all 125 charges within its bounds. They want some answers, a ‘word picture’ of each congregation’s life worship and Christian witness. They want screeds of data; answers to hundreds of questions so they can assess how they can create a kirk in Greater Glasgow that they believe can be better suited to the ‘new normal’ that we all face.

So..... as I write a small task group appointed by our Kirk Session is completing a survey that we hope and pray best describes how we “do church” what ‘kind and character of church family we are, how we do worship and how we envision Stepps Parish Church in 5-10 years from now. This survey is far from trivial. It is the first step on a path that leads to as yet we do not know.

Will there be a Stepps Parish Church in 5 years' time?
If the answer is yes, what will our church look like?
Will we go forward as one congregation, as we are now?

Will we be obliged to link or unite with another congregation?
Who knows???

Well, I do know the answer to that question....

God Knows!



.... and I do know that whatever our future, we will continue to work in partnership with our Master, Jesus Christ to bring His love to all whom we are called to serve.

Please pray for your Kirk Session and all our office bearers. Pray for those who complete the survey on our behalf and for officers of Presbytery and General Assembly. Pray that the symbol of the Kirk, The Bush that Burns yet does not Consume will continue to burn in Scotland and that the Kirk in Glasgow and Stepps will flourish by the preaching of God's Word and the Glorifying of His Name.

God bless

Gordon

Session Clerk Letter

Dear Friends,
I hope you are all well and had a restful Summer. As I write we are just entering a new phase in the life of our Church, as the process for discerning the Presbytery Mission plan Act begins in earnest.



An information gathering exercise has already begun, with a congregational survey and a period thereafter of engagement and consultation exercises with those tasked to develop a set of agreed principles by November 2021. In addition, congregations will be invited to make full use of the General Trustees' Buildings Toolkit to help decide on the future of all church buildings.

These twin strands of work will be brought together in autumn 2022 to form the Presbytery draft Mission Plan.

And so the clock is already ticking and this is where we seek your support in engaging with the process. Much of our early discussions has required us to reflect on our internal structures, which includes how we currently serve our church through active participation or volunteering, as well as what services we provide to serve our ever expanding community. It is easy for us all to sit back and let others take the lead, but is that truly serving God and responding to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom, nurturing new believers and responding to human need through loving service?

This is where you can help. You may feel fatigued and have that sense of having been here before and feel more inclined to sit back - and indeed, we have been here before - but I urge and encourage you all to seriously consider doing what you can.

Life as we know it is vastly different to how we remember it pre-Covid, but we strive to keep going in faith in these challenging and uncertain times. Some of our church community services will be returning and we need people willing to come forward and help us to sustain and build a viable future.

Where are we going and how do we keep going as our numbers get smaller? How do we progress but can't see the way forward in the midst of a wider plan outwith our control to decide? How are we going to progress when we can't see the way?

Jesus encouraged us to...

"Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added unto you"

Matthew 6:33

We must put our faith in God as we go forward, remembering the parable of the mustard seed so recently spoken about by Gordon.

"...Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to the mountain, move from here to there, and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you"

Matthew 17:20

Life and Work Sunday

Life and Work: The Magazine of the Church of Scotland

If there is one individual who can be said to have shaped the Church of Scotland of the 20th century, it is probably the minister and theologian Archibald Charteris (1835-1908).

Charteris, Moderator of the General Assembly in 1892, was instrumental in the founding of the Women's Guild, restoring the office of Deaconess in the Church, and helping to establish the national social care initiative that would evolve into the Social Care Council (CrossReach).

And in amongst all that, he found time to start a magazine which has been communicating news to its readers for over 140 years.

Life and Work – an appreciation

Within the Church of Scotland it is easy to be proud of the fact that we are Presbyterian, when actually, many of us, whether we are aware of it or not, are in fact Congregationalist! For most of the time our focus is on our congregation, our minister and our building. There is nothing wrong with taking the local issues seriously. Indeed, if we don't the danger is that we become spectators rather than participants. But we shouldn't stop there. We can be immeasurably enriched as we learn more about other churches, their stories, insights and experience. We can support them in prayer and other ways when they face challenges. We can learn from them and be inspired by them as



they take opportunities to do new things or things in a new way.

One of the best ways of learning about the churches that make up the Church of Scotland is by reading Life & Work. Monthly through the post or electronically, and more frequently on social media, it helps its readers to feel part of something bigger than the local church. The articles range over a number of areas. We can read reports on what has been going on or briefings about what is going to happen soon. We are given cameos on places and people within our church, or who have taken their faith into the public arena. Issues are discussed and insights given on aspects of the faith. The letters from the reader's page remind us how seriously people take their faith and how passionately they feel about it.

I have found over the years that it has enlarged my understanding of the Church I am glad to serve. It has given me material on which to reflect that shows the width of our Church. There has been a warmth in it which has meant that I have felt included "as part of the family." It has helped me keep in touch. It has made me not only part of a Church of Scotland congregation but part of the Church of Scotland.

Very Rev Colin A M Sinclair

Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 2019

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on Christian life in Scotland and further afield.**

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To celebrate Life and Work Sunday and support the magazine of the Church of Scotland we are offering *new* subscribers the choice of two money saving subscription offers.

Annual PRINT Subscription

Buy 12 issues for the price of 10 and pay ONLY £30

Purchase and save at www.lifeandwork.org/subscribe using promotion code **LWS2021**

Annual DIGITAL Subscription

Receive 34% OFF when you buy 12 issues and pay ONLY £13.99

Purchase and save at <https://pktmags.com/lwspromo>

Promotions valid until 30 September 2021



Our warmest congratulations to Marvyn MacKay who was Hallowed a full Member of the Iona Community on Sunday the 8th of August, 2021 a Spiritual journey that Marvyn has dedicated much of his life to over the past few years. The Iona Community is a Christian ecumenical community working for peace and social justice, rebuilding of community and the renewal of worship. A community of people from different walks of life and different traditions in the Church engaged together, and with people of goodwill across the world, in acting, reflecting and praying for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Congregational news

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Dr. Mary Davidson (retired GP in Chryston) who died peacefully at home on Friday the 6th August 2021 after a long illness. Mary was a member of our church family for many years and a well respected member of our community as well as being the beloved wife of the late W. Keith Davidson, much loved mother of Keith and Mhairi, and adored and devoted gran to Ailsa and Jill.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all the family at this sad time and hope that they will all know the comfort of our Lord Jesus Christ in their time of loss.

Cranhill Parish Church

Over the Summer approval was given, following receipt of written requests: To permit the demission of Rev. Muriel Pearson from the charge of Glasgow Cranhill to take up a post with the Faith Impact Forum with effect from 31st August 2021, the charge becoming vacant on that date. The vacancy committee met remotely to agree the appointment of Rev. Gordon MacRae as Interim Moderator during the vacancy period.

We wish Muriel well as she takes on a new challenge and wish her a safe and meaningful time serving the wider Church of Scotland in her new charge in Tiberius – Israel. We look forward to forging new relationships with the congregation of Cranhill Parish Church and hope that we can learn and grow from each other. Muriel will be leading worship with us on Sunday the 5th of September. Please join us in person or online and hear more from Muriel.

Dear Friends,

During July I visited the Lodging House Mission to thank the staff and volunteers there on behalf of Presbytery. The LHM is our longest standing Presbytery of Glasgow project and provides invaluable support to some of the most vulnerable of our fellow citizens of Glasgow.



Robert Hynd: Moderator Glasgow Presbytery

The LHM has been through a difficult time over the last 18 months. In addition to the pandemic they have also had to cope with both the tragic death earlier this year of their Manager Stephen Mitchell and with Deacon Claire Herbert suffering a rare adverse reaction to her second Covid vaccination. We all wish Claire a speedy return to full fitness. Of the staff at the LHM, who are Helen, Angela, Claire, Mark, Archie, Mark, Chris and June; Chris and Helen have also had Covid.

This Presbytery and the city of Glasgow owe all the staff and volunteers at the LHM an enormous debt of gratitude. Although they don't shout about it, what they do is not routine. They all intervene in the lives of visitors to the LHM for the better and give people a chance to live a fuller life. Whether it's providing a meal or showers, or a course of instruction or education or just keeping someone away from their addictions for a few hours.

The streets of Glasgow can at times feel unsafe and unfriendly, but at the LHM the law of the streets is left out there and I have no doubt that the Love of God starts immediately within its doors. What is done by the staff and volunteers of the LHM is beyond price. I couldn't do it and I doubt if many of us presbyters could. But rest assured, what is being done by the LHM is God's work and is the very embodiment of our Lord's assurance in Matthew 25 that whatever is done for their visitors, the least of those amongst the citizens of Glasgow, is being done for Him.

I have no doubt that if we were to take a poll of those who attend our churches, what is done at 36 East Campbell Street would be seen as amongst the most important work which we, as a Church and Presbytery could ever support. Even with a necessarily restricted service, during the week I was there, the LHM still provided 243 meals for their visitors.

Earlier this summer June Macleod joined the staff of the LHM as Day Centre Manager. She brings with her a wealth of experience and, as all new folk do, some new ideas. These include revising the menu, although visitors may rest assured that breakfast rolls on sausage and fried egg will still be available.

A typical LHM menu now includes a hearty, freshly made lentil soup followed by a baked potato with various toppings, homemade coleslaw and side salad. The folk using the LHM have been very receptive to the menu change and the hope is that they will enjoy some fabulous new flavours and feel the benefit health-wise too.

From the beginning of this month the LHM has also been re-establishing its other activities, including its education and other regular programmes.

As the days get shorter and harvest time gets underway, our various Harvest thanksgivings are not far off. This is traditionally a time of year when we in the Presbytery of Glasgow think more deeply about the work of the LHM, with many congregations generously providing tangible support with contributions of foodstuffs and money. This year, with the introduction of the new menu, they would also love to receive donations of fresh produce alongside the usual dried and canned goods.

Given the difficulties which the LHM has overcome in this last 18 months in order to keep its vital services functioning, it would be greatly appreciated if those congregations who regularly support their work could consider increasing that support this year. If your own congregation has never previously supported the work of the LHM then 2021 would be a very good year to start.

In an effort to reduce food waste and see it being put to better use than land fill, the LHM would also like to find a farm or smallholding that might like to take their vegetable peel and non-meat waste for animal feed. If anyone knows of somewhere that fits the bill, please do get in touch with **June Macleod at the LHM on 0141-552 0285**.

As you will have gathered, I am unashamedly a supporter of the work of God being done, every day - not just at Harvest-time - by the Lodging House Mission. As one of our Presbytery of Glasgow Projects, it relies on each and every congregation in the Presbytery to support its work with donations of food, money and of course, we also always want to remember that work in our prayers.

Thanks for taking the time to read this message. It could be *the* few minutes which changes someone's life for the better through the vital work of the LHM.

May God bless you all,

Robert

Robert G Hynd

Moderator,

The Presbytery of Glasgow

NEWS SNIPPETS FROM THE LODGING HOUSE MISSION

- LHM now has a new Day Centre Manager, June Macleod, who brings a wealth of experience from a senior third sector role in the Highlands
- We wish the LHM Chaplain, Claire, a speedy recovery from her recent spell of ill health
- The LHM Day Centre is in the midst of a phased return to “business as normal”, with appropriate Covid precautions in place to protect visitors, staff and volunteers
- The new Moderator of Glasgow Presbytery, Mr Robert Hynd, paid a generous visit to LHM last month to thank staff and volunteers on behalf of Presbytery for all their work to support the City’s most needy citizens during the pandemic.

Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021

As you will be aware, the process of developing a set of principles to shape and inform the Presbytery Mission Plan Act 2021 is underway which has a number of different stages to it. The initial data gathering stage has produced a set of data, for each congregation and parish area along with a congregational survey to be completed by congregations for the 5th of September.



The Presbytery Mission Plan Review Group (PMPRG), will then be tasked with bringing back these principles to Presbytery for approval by this year's end in order to guide the creation of the detailed Plan. Alongside the information-gathering exercise from each congregation an informative engagement process stage will be used alongside it, allowing each congregation to have the same opportunity to share what is important to them, their thoughts, ideas and concerns. We seek your prayers as we engage in this initial stage of the process ahead of the deadline.

As we embrace a changing future and take reasonable steps to steward what we have at our disposal carefully, we must do so in faith, mindful that

“God is able to do far more than all we ask or imagine” (Eph.3:20)

Friendship Club

Just a reminder that the Club will be starting up again on Monday, 4th October at the usual time of 1.30p.m. until 3ish.

It will be great to meet up again after a year of enforced closure. Those of you who received the July Prospect will be aware that we will be trying out a WEEKLY meeting and will review this in the New Year. This is to make up for the fact that I haven't booked any speakers (entirely due to the current Covid -19 restrictions).

We will just have to force ourselves to enjoy a blether as we drink our tea and coffee! That shouldn't be too hard. Kind regards to you all.

Kate Houston

Fundraising for

**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

This years date for Macmillan is September 24th. After much consideration the organisers have decided that it isn't feasible to host our usual charity afternoon. We were unable to host last years event, but that didn't prevent us here in Stepps from raising £1000. Much of that was down to Amy Sommerville, pool walking at Bannatynes Sports Club. Amy has very kindly offered to do the same again this year.

Charities like Churches have suffered a huge impact on income. If you are able to support Amy's efforts and ultimately donate to Macmillan Cancer Support, it would be greatly appreciated. Please speak with Amy or Margaret Crawford. Alternatively please put your donation in an envelope and give it to either of the ladies. Many thanks for all your support in the past years.

Margaret Crawford

Stepps Community Development Trust (SCDT)



SCDT will be hosting an Engagement Party with the wider community on **Saturday, 4th September from 1.30pm until 3.00 pm** in the Church halls on Whitehill Avenue. The Friendship Club will be one of the Community representative groups present to advertise the Club and would like as many of their members to be present to help talk to anyone who wants information about the club. Please make a note in your diary and come along and help us. Tea and coffee will be available to entice you. So why don't you come along and find out what we are all about.

All welcome

A poster for NHS Test & Protect's "Check In Scotland" campaign. It features a QR code and a smartphone icon. The text includes: "NHS Test & Protect", "Check In Scotland", "Stopping the spread starts with all of us", "Scan the code:", "Scan the QR code on the left with your phone camera to check in or out", "Unable to scan the code? Visit: checkin.scot/07567148A", "This location: Stepps Parish Church Hall, STEPPS PARISH CHURCH, WHITEHILL AVENUE, STEPPS, G33 6BL", "PRIVACY POLICY: mygov.scot/your-data", and "#wearescotland".

September Door Welcome Duty

	Welcome at Door	Track and Trace	Beadle
September 5th	H. Baker S. Baker	J. Burns	J. Hope
September 12th	M. Crawford R. McGovern	S. Maclean	H. Corbett
September 19th	F. Shields C. Skinner	E. Watson	S. Baker
September 26th	F. McGovern J. Hope	M. Crawford	H. Baker

After Church Fellowship

Churches can now offer Teas and Coffees after church with these served from a table or hatch and members being allowed to mingle with cup in hand – **vertical drinking**. Having said that attendees would still need to wear a face covering when queuing or moving around the hall (e.g. going to use the toilets). It would also be obligatory to keep records for **Test & Protect** as per the hospitality sector regulations. The Scottish Government are still "strongly encouraging" table service where possible to minimise the risk of transmission. With this in mind we are currently looking for a volunteer(s) to coordinate / assist with weekly after Church fellowship in the form of Tea and Coffees.

With the addition of outdoor seating, weather permitting we can offer indoor or outdoor seating arrangements. It's our intention to evaluate how the Chestnut Café operate given the new hospitality guidance but would like to resume this informal fellowship going forward. If available to help please contact **Lorraine Robertson** to put your name forward. Your help would be most greatly appreciated.

190th Glasgow Boys Brigade

We are delighted to be back indoors from Monday the 30th August, Stepps Parish Church.

Anchors 6.00pm – 7.00pm

Juniors 6.00pm – 7.30pm

Company & Seniors 7.00pm – 9.00pm

New Recruits welcome!!!

Contact Colin Goodall

Captain 190thglasgow@hotmail.com

Tel. 07828 032807





With the easing of Covid-19 restrictions both in the church and for the community in general, it is with great delight that we can announce that the Chestnut Café will reopen on Thursday 2nd September from **10.00am** to **1.00pm** when once again we look forward to welcoming and serving customers with our range of 8 barista style coffees, a variety of teas and hot chocolate. Scones, pancakes, toasted tea loaf and sweet cakes are on the menu and from about 11.45am, soup and rolls in the winter and sandwiches in the summer are served. Payment is by Donations only and every week the Café more than covers its costs.

For those who may be uncomfortable being inside, with grant aid from North Lanarkshire Council, the café has been able to purchase some outdoor furniture so that when the weather is suitable, our drinks and snacks can be served outdoors in the church grounds. This will also allow more space for social distancing which will remain at 1 metre indoors and face masks will also be required before taking seats indoors. All customers, whether sitting indoors or outdoors will be asked to supply contact details for NHS Scotland Test and Protect. Staff will always wear masks and there will hand sanitising facilities available on arrival and at all tables for your convenience and safety.

For the time being the social and recreational activities from 11.00am to 12.00noon are suspended, but as conditions and restrictions change this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Watch out for further notices. These activities have ranged from carpet bowls, craft and artwork, flower arranging, carol singing, music and reflection, family history tree and the most popular, Tai Chi and Qi Gong movements classes. All activities are designed to improve the health and well-being of adults and older people in the community.

More volunteers would still be welcome and anyone who would be able to assist should speak to a member of the Team.

Jim Burns, Esther and Ian Hyndman and Marvyn Mackay

The Chestnut Café Team

PRAYER FOR AFGHANISTAN

Let us Pray

As we go to print, the situation in Afghanistan remains very tenuous. Please join us in this prayer circulated by the Church of Scotland.

Rev Dr Marjory MacLean, convener of the Committee on Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces, has written us a prayer for Afghanistan as we remember the sufferings of the people of that land and the sacrifices of our military personnel.

Let us pray

All-loving God, Your hands have fashioned every lovely corner of this treasured planet, and the beautiful land of Afghanistan is as precious as every other place Your children call 'home'. By its rivers and mountains, its fields and gardens, its busy towns and ancient villages, it is the heart's desire of its people and the place where their lives and loves are nurtured.

We grieve today with Afghanistan, the indeed, the people to leave, and the men countries who have years in the cause of



those who grieve over people who call it home exiled or suddenly having and women from other made sacrifices in recent that country's future.

We remember with renewed sadness the loss of lives of military personnel during the years of this country's involvement in Afghanistan, conscious of the questions that must today be troubling the minds of those in our community who were bereaved, those who were wounded on operations, and those who were forever changed by experiences suffered there.

We pray for peace, dignity, freedom and confidence for the men, women and children of Afghanistan; for courage, vision and generosity within the international community responding to such need; and for tranquillity of mind amongst our own Service community and its wider family.

In the name of Jesus Christ, the peace-giver, we pray,

AMEN.