



Stepps Parish Church May 2021



And the Holy Spirit descended on him like a dove. You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased Luke 3:22

Image courtesy of loandbeholdbible.com

May 2021

Issue 400

Scottish Charity No.
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

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Stepps Parish Church

Minister



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Sunday Services

Morning Worship at 11am

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

April the 26th saw us moving down into Tier 3 which means we can once again welcome back our Sunday Club. The cap on 50 people allowed to worship was also lifted allowing congregations to now permit more people whilst still maintaining a social distance of 2metres. Unfortunately our maximum 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 continues to be a concern and as such congregations are asked to ensure that people do not remain in or around the premises to talk and 'catch up' after the service. We are all strongly encouraged to return home after the service and reduce transmissibility of the virus by avoiding crowded spaces.



An additional 12 seats are available as an overpill 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 Stepps Parish Church YouTube channel

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

Charity No: SC014212

Pastoral Letter by Rev Gordon MacRae

Dear Friends

It is the month of May and two church things happen every year, both in the middle of the month.

1. The Church of Scotland hold its General Assembly
2. We celebrate the work of Christian Aid and give, as we are able, to the Christian Aid Week Appeal



The impact of the Covid Virus has been hard on so many individuals. Those who have been infected and have suffered illness. Those who have been hospitalised and, most sadly, those who have died. Those on the 'frontline': NHS Staff, Carers and all those who have worked so hard to keep us safe and well.

Among the many charities that have suffered greatly is The Church of Scotland. This years Assembly will prove to be the most important among the many I have witnessed in my career.

The church is facing a massive challenge. In the next five years the number of ministers will drop by nearly 400. The way we 'do church' will have to transform in a way only comparable to the years following the Reformation. Please pray for all, including Lorraine and myself, who will attend and deliberate at the Assembly. Whatever is decided I know all of us, every member, every one of us will be asked to step up to face the challenges that lie ahead.

Talking of challenges, the greatest challenge in centuries face us all as a Word Family. Only the most wild of conspiracy theorists would deny that The Climate Crisis is the greatest disaster to face the earth in many, many generations. Christian Aid has chosen this disaster to be front and centre of its 2021 campaign. This is something that will impact on us all. However, the extremes of climate have a heavily disproportionate impact on the poor of our world.

They are trying so hard to help themselves. We will hear something of their heroic efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change.



However, it is the richer nations that produce the majority of the pollutant gasses that poison our planet. They, too have the financial and technological resources to tackle the challenge.

The World will Step Up and face this great crisis at the COP 26 that we in Glasgow are proud to host from 1st-12th November this year. We must All Step Up and 'do our bit'. We believe in The Creator God. The planet is not ours to abuse. We are given it by our God who entrusts it to our care and to pass on to our children and grandchildren

Let us Step Up and help. For if we, who believe in *God our Creator* and follow his Son, *Jesus who was with God in the beginning and through whom all things were created*, do not step up who will?

Gordon

P.s. It is a long time since I first heard this story. I thought I would share it with you

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realised that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.



The Parable of Responsibility

Session Clerk Letter

Dear Friends,

"I used to be indecisive but now I'm just not sure"

Tommy Cooper



This expression never fails to make me smile but it is such an accurate reflection of where I am right now. Hardly a day goes by without some flyers being posted through my door from various parties all vying for my vote. Yes, it's May and that means that as a country we are once again facing another election.

It seems that this is the month where lots of important decisions will be made not only through in Holyrood but as a Church locally and nationally this is an important month. It begins with the election of course and who ultimately takes charge of our country's destiny but as a congregation we will finally learn of our fate after almost 7 years under a reviewable tenure. A visiting team from the Presbytery of Glasgow will finally put to bed the uncertainty ***we hope*** over our ministry status. Something that has overshadowed us since we were allowed to call our minister Gordon back in 2014. Much has happened in that time of course not least the enormous impact that an unexpected global pandemic has put us all through. All we thought we had to worry about was continuing to do God's work for our congregation, our community and maintaining a vibrancy and energy in our church whilst outreaching in his name. Now we face even greater challenges as the Church nationally gets set to make more radical decisions on its future. This will no doubt filter down to us all at grassroots level. Gordon has already alluded to the fact that massive challenges lie ahead not least about the numbers of ministers within the Church but how in fact we do Church.

Gordon and I will both attend the General Assembly this month as commissioners where decisions about Church Legal Matters, Same Sex Marriages and of course Presbytery Weightings will be amongst the many discussions we will be asked to deliberate.

This is a month of great significance and importance on so many counts. May I ask that you continue to pray for our Minister and for the future of your Church in Whitehill Avenue during these trying and uncertain times.

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you

Mathew 7:7 NIV

With all God's blessings

Lorraine.



Church Flowers

We are gradually easing back into our routine of having flowers back in church each Sunday. These are funded by donations and purchased and arranged by our floral team, who volunteer their time to beautify our church. They are then distributed to members after each service.

We would like to thank most sincerely, Mrs Janet Wilson, for the many years service she has given to the Church Flower Fund, and for her time, effort and skill in providing us with many beautiful arrangements over the years. Janet has decided this is the right time to pass on the reins to another. However, that does not mean that she has “retired”. Janet has kindly offered to continue to give us the benefit of her talents as and when needed.

Our sincere thanks from all your Friends at Stepps Parish Church.

Our volunteer numbers have reduced, as have our donors. If you feel able and would like to donate, or take a turn at “doing the flowers,” then please let me know. Please don’t be intimidated or feel daunted by this. A simple vase of flowers is all that is required.

To those who already contribute their time and effort, many thanks. We hope to see you return when you feel able to do so.

Thank you

Margaret Crawford

Please contact me on 0141 779 4056 or email me at magsc50@sky.com



Flower Arrangement Chancel Area

Christian Aid Week

10th - 16th May 2021



Juliana Mulee Kivuva and members of the Climate Change Advocacy Group, Masue village, Makueni. - **Adam Finch/ Christian Aid**

Challenge yourself

Or

Sponsor Rev MacRae

Walk 300,000 steps this May whilst getting fit and raising vital funds or join Gordon and Sam on his Christian Aid Challenge during May.

It's simple: take 300,000 sponsored steps across the month of May to raise vital funds for communities battling the worst of this climate crisis.

Our steps challenge clocks in at just under 10,000 steps a day and you can do the challenge alone or with a team, supporting each other to reach your goal. Whether you decide to walk, jump, skip, hop or run your steps is completely up to you!

The next step is to join our [300,000 steps in May Facebook group](#). You'll find lots of people who are also taking on the challenge, get access to top tips, a support network and lots of motivation.

If you're not a Facebook user, don't worry, you can still join in the fun using envelopes to collect in your sponsorship or simply drop it off in church. Collecting cans will also be situated at the doors.

Once you sign up through the form, you will sent you your very own Christian Aid T-shirt.



Gordon & Sam all set for their Challenge

Thank you for stepping up and raising funds to support the world's poorest people.

Week beginning 2nd May

Preparation and determination

***The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those
who seek him shall praise the Lord'***

Psalms 22:26

Give thanks for all those preparing for Christian Aid Week. Pray for people to have a sense of anticipation and excitement as they pull together the practical and logistical plans. Pray that the story of Rose Katanu Jonathan walking miles to collect water and provide for her grandchildren will give us a renewed determination to tackle climate change and raise vital money this Christian Aid Week. Rose said: 'I believe God gives me strength and helps me persevere. I pray that God will help people to help me.' God of strength, May your spirit help us to persevere in our efforts this Christian Aid Week.

Amen

Gordon's Fundraising Page

Want to join me in supporting a good cause? I am raising money for Christian Aid and your contribution will make an impact, whether you donate £5 or £500. Every little bit helps. Thank you for your support. I have included information about Christian Aid below.

Help us build a world free of injustice and poverty. Not tomorrow but today.

Facebook pays all the processing fees for you, so 100% of your donation goes directly to the charity.

<https://www.facebook.com/donate/807677046525750/>

Good Luck Gordon & Sam.

Walking not your thing?

Why not get creative with your own challenge idea. The key is to find a challenge that suits you and will be doable regardless of whatever else is going on in the world.

You could:

- do a sponsored silence
- race to learn 100 words in another language
- organise a bake sale

The possibilities are endless!

If you're looking for inspiration, [check out our fundraising ideas](#) and resources below for virtual fundraising ideas that can be done

Isaiah 61: 11

For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign **Lord** will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.

Sunday Club

We are coming back on Sunday 9th May. All children from 3 to Primary 6 are very welcome to come and join us for stories, craft and friendship. All safety rules as before will be adhered to. All children will sit with a known adult in Church for the first part of the service, then we will go into the small hall and sit at individual tables. All tables and chairs will be cleaned with anti bacterial spray before the children enter the hall. Hand sanitiser will be used by the children before entering the hall. Come and join us and we will be very pleased to welcome back everyone.

Anne, Esther and Linda.



Sunday Club Garden in Bloom

Our Creation Trees

Spring has most definitely sprung and our gardens are slowly coming to life with more birdsong and buds appearing on the Creation Trees planted last October by the Girls' Brigade and Boys' Brigade. The gardens are looking more colourful as I'm sure you will agree with the help of the Spring bulbs and plants planted throughout our grounds.

"From a small seed a mighty trunk may grow"



Tree's planted by our Organisations

Hello everyone,

May is shaping up to be a busy month. We finally have a date set for our final Presbytery review with the visiting team meeting with the kirk session on Thursday the 20th of May. This is long overdue after Covid-19 suspended the usual order of Presbytery business and so we welcome the opportunity to learn of our ministry status as we meet with the Rev. Hilary McDougal and her colleague Rev. Fiona Gardner. We hope after waiting almost 7 years that we will see a favourable decision being awarded to Stepps Parish Church after a reviewable tenure was imposed on our ministry status as part of the Presbytery Planning Process set out in 2014 just at the start of Gordon's Ministry period with us. Much was achieved during those 7 years, with the Take Stepps Programme including the formation of the G33 Messy Church, sadly, no longer running after the Covid-19 Pandemic made the running of it logistically very difficult. Likewise, the creation of the Chestnut Café allowed the coming together of our community each Thursday morning to enjoy an informal time of fellowship and group activities which we hope will continue to flourish as restrictions ease for many years to come. As a Kirk Session and a Congregational board we continue to meet via zoom, discussing and keeping things ticking over until we can meet again in person. Until then please keep the work of our Elders, Trustees and your church in your prayers.

Lorraine Robertson
Session Clerk.

Happy 90th Birthday



On behalf of all at Stepps Parish Church we wish our dear friend Mrs. Nessie Hepburn a very happy 90th Birthday. Nessie celebrated her birthday in style with a lovely drive and afternoon tea with friends. Nessie was a well kent face in the church until recently but hopes to one day return when she is able. Some of you may remember a young Nessie as a Sunday School Teacher and more laterly as one of our Copycat ladies for almost 20 years. We hope you have many more Happy Birthdays Nessie.

May God bless you.

Safeguarding Coordinator

We pass on our thanks and best wishes to Mrs. Isobel Allen as she steps down from her role after 5 years as Safeguarding Coordinator. Isobel and her family are moving out of the area making it impossible for her to continue to take on this role. We pass on our grateful thanks and best wishes to her as she moves into her new home. If you are currently involved in Health or Social Care or have the necessary skills to take up this role we'd be delighted to hear from you.

Lorraine Robertson

A Journey Through The Saints

A Journey Through The Saints

Whilst in our faith we do not venerate saints, we do recognise them as outstanding Christians who we respect and honour. They are the heroes of our faith whose godly lives deserve to be remembered.

SAINT COLUMBA

St Columba lived from 7 December 521 to 9 June 597. The name he is known by today is the Latin version of his given name Colum.

Columba was born at Garten, County Donegal, Ireland. He was a member of the Clan O'Donnell and was of royal descent.

Columba was educated at the monastic school of Moville under St Finnian, who had himself studied at [St Ninian's](#) "Magnum Monasterium" on the shores of Galloway. In 560 a dispute arose over a copy Columba had made of St. Finnian's book of psalms. The result was Columba's instigation of a rebellion by the Clan Neill against King Diarmait of Ireland. This culminated in the Battle of Cooldrevny in 561, at which three thousand men were killed.

Following the battle, Columba's confessor, St Molaise, set him the penance of leaving Ireland and preaching the Gospel in order to convert as many to Christianity as had been killed at Cooldrevny: and never again to look upon his native land.

In 563 Columba and 12 companions left Ireland, arriving first at what is today [Southend](#), on the southern tip of [Kintyre](#). This, though, was still within sight of Ireland, so they travelled further north, landing on [Iona](#) on 12 May 563. The island was granted to Columba for the establishment of a monastery.

At this point Columba was 42 years old. He started his evangelising amongst the Scots of [Dalriada](#), but then turned to the more testing task of converting the northern Picts of Caledonia. The corner was turned when, together with St Comgall and St Kenneth, Columba called on Pictish King Brude at his fortress overlooking what is now [Inverness](#). Brude refused to allow the missionaries into the fortress, but - it is said - at the sign of the cross being made by Columba the barred gates of the fortress simply opened. The story goes on to record that the King, overawed by this miracle, was converted on the spot, with the rest of the Picts not long after him.

St Columba died in the monastery he built on [Iona](#), in 597. The island became a place of pilgrimage, and has remained so ever since.



*Window of St Columba in
St. Columbanus',
Ballyholme Parish –
courtesy of Gloine.ie*



Let Us Pray

Christian Aid Week

**The climate emergency is one of the greatest injustices we face.
Together we stop this climate crisis.**

A prayer by Christian Aid's Global Theology Advisor, Bob Kikuyu.

A resource produced for Christian Aid Week 2021 for supporters to used for their own purposes.

Great God,
Who makes the sun to rise, and opens the heavens
Hear the cry of the people
Who sow in hope for rain, but reap only despair
Hear the cry of the people
Seeking shelter from the storm, their hopes and homes submerged
Hear the cry of the people,
When creation is hitting back, with rage and resistance
Give us hope, grant us salvation,
Give us a new relationship with creation
With reverence to tend this gift from You
And say once again of the earth and all you created
It is GOOD.

Amen.