



The Church of Scotland

stepps parish church

PROSPECT

www.steppsparishchurch.org

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



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Pastoral Letter

You are God's Unique Creation, so be Creative

As we come to the end of September we also conclude our Session of Creation when we have considered God's Narrative of

Generosity and, particularly, the Story of God's Beautiful Earth.

The whole of God's Good Earth offers us an incredible reason to glorify and praise God. From the magnificence of a mountain skyline to the feel of a baby's tiny hand holding ours we know, we simply know, that God is the author of creation. We are God's creatures living in the creation, created by the Creator. All of these



words point to one of God's most supreme qualities: creativity.

Creativity is intimately woven into God's person. To see the creativity of God is to see God. When we are amazed by the sky at sunset we are experiencing the creativity of God. When waves crash against the shoreline we know God's power. When we look into the faces of our fellow human beings we see the face of God

Our Narrative of Generosity Programme asks that we become more and more aware of God's story and how this story enriches ours. Knowing that abundant generosity we are asked to respond. How are we to respond? We might respond to the Creativity of God in our own creativity? The words of the earliest chapters of Genesis tell us that Humanity is created in God's Image, surely our ability to create is a vital element in being God's images. We, whom God created and declared good, love to create, we paint, build, draw, sew, design, mould, form, write, and so many other things – often for no more reason than enjoying the act of doing it. There is creativity in thought, culture, and art, mathematics, science, medicine and in all other areas of human activity.

So how can I, how can you, how can the church, employ that wonderful human creativity to bring glory to our Creator?

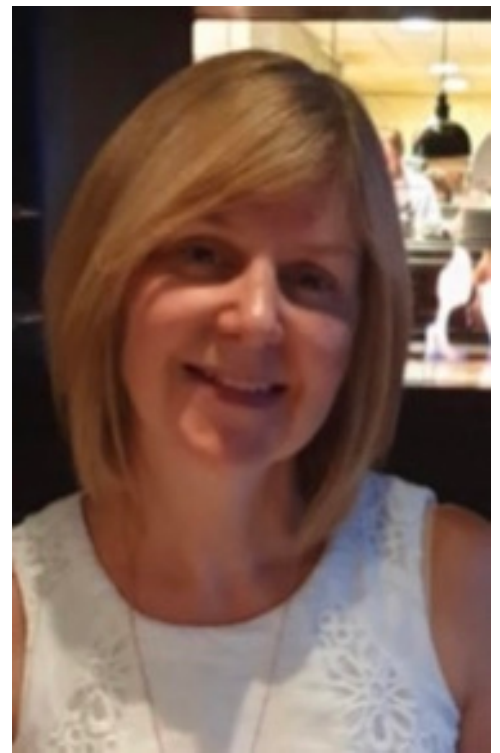
We face enormous challenges in our church life. How do we move forward in these times when moving at all seems stilted and slow? how can we reform our way of 'doing church' so it is fit for purpose in this new normal Covid 19 has brought us? How can we serve our Jesus as He calls us to go and find new ways of bringing his love, his peace, his hope to a community who so need to know his message?

How?

By being more creative, by reforming, remoulding, refreshing our ministry and mission. For too long we have been content to look at and admire the creative work of the 'Old Masters', we need to draw up a plan and paint a new picture of church. We need to pray that God's Holy Spirit might reenergise and inspire our God given creativity, to think out of the box, to find new and exciting ways of being Jesus and in partnership with God to build God's Kingdom.

Gordon

Dear Friends,
It has hard to believe that we are fast approaching October and slowly easing into the Autumnal nights. These past few weeks Gordon has taken us on a celebratory and exploratory journey through the Season of Creation. We have looked at the Earth stories as part of our Narrative of Generosity series and what a beautiful journey it was. Not only did we acknowledge the wonders that make up God's marvellous Creation, but it also highlighted the plight that our wonderful planet faces because of environmental issues or climate change. We watched in horror as we saw images in the news of wildfires ravaging the countryside of California and Oregon. Cyclones affecting Greece and floods affecting many parts of China. We explored the elements of Earth, Wind, Fire and Water with each Sunday somehow carrying particular significance as we heard the Creation stories, experienced the winds, watched the fires in America and shared the Joy of Baptism on our last Sunday.



I have always loved the warm Autumn days and the glorious colours that come along with it. We think of previous Harvest services that we have been blessed to share in years gone by and feel disappointed that we are prevented this year from coming together in our usual manner and sharing our Harvest thanksgiving gifts with others. We remember this year in particular, the work of the Lodging house Mission and Christian Aid who continue to provide vital aid during these challenging times and whilst we are not able to come together in our usual Harvest service, we still think of those less fortunate than ourselves. The aforementioned partners ask that you consider a small monetary donation instead of our usual food parcels this year. You can access the links though our church website by clicking on the links or simply post a cheque to the appropriate organisations.

As we face further local restrictions many of us have taken the opportunity to enjoy our gardens or the wider outdoor spaces more during these last fleeting days of summer and cling to the warmth of the autumn days before we face the shorter days and longer nights ahead. Gordon reminded us that the Narrative of Generosity programme started in a garden and so it seems

only right and proper that we conclude this chapter in a garden. As part of our commitment to our young people in the uniformed organisations the Kirk Session pledged to hold a Tree Planting Ceremony and we are delighted that some representatives from both the GB and BB will be able to join us.

Please join us as we host some outdoor activities in our own church garden on Sunday the 4th of October to give something back to the Earth. We hope that by planting our new trees and possibly a few bulbs that we can look forward and enjoy some vibrant new life and colours next Spring when we do hope some of these darker days are behind us.

Lorraine Robertson
Session Clerk

General Assembly 2020

This year the Church of Scotland will take an unprecedented step when - amid the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic - the 2020 General Assembly will convene remotely during the evening of Friday 2 October and all day on Saturday 3 October.



Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair is the 2020-21 Moderator of the General Assembly.

In previous years, some 800 people would be converging on the Assembly Hall in Edinburgh. This year the Commissioners, Youth Representatives and Corresponding Members will take part remotely—from congregations and presbyteries around the country and indeed the world.

Only a small number of people will be in the Assembly Hall: those running the proceedings, those reporting to the Assembly and those livestreaming and recording the event.

Rev Dr George Whyte, Principal Clerk to the Church said:

“We are really pleased to be holding the General Assembly of 2020 when earlier in the year it seemed we could not meet. The use of technology, while not without its challenges, will

help us make the decisions that are needed now to guide what we do in the coming months.

“Given that this is a new way of working for everyone involved we ask for grace and patience as we explore what technology can do for us.”

Important decisions will be made

Of necessity, the 2020 General Assembly will be much shorter than usual and there won't be the same valuable opportunities to network, socialise and enjoy one another's company. We will not have a Lord High Commissioner although the Queen will write to the Assembly expressing her support and encouragement.

Nevertheless, there will be prayer and worship led by the Moderator and the Commissioners will be making important decisions which need to be made now so that the Church can move forward. Under consideration will be reports from the Assembly Trustees, the Faith Impact Forum and the Faith Nurture Forum.

Debate will range from church finance to the Church's engagement with the pressing issues facing our nation and the global community.

This year too, the discussions, the voting and the amendments will all be done online.

Commissioners and Youth Representatives will sign-in through the Church of Scotland website to a new Assembly Hub, where they can ask questions and put forward amendments and new ideas.

Corresponding Members will also be able to sign into the Assembly Hub through the website.

Training sessions to ensure everyone can participate effectively will be held in advance of the Assembly

Everyone is invited to watch

We invite everyone—wherever you are – to join in and watch the livestream on the Church of Scotland website or Facebook page. The Friday session will run from 7pm to around 9pm and the Saturday session will run from 9.15am to approximately 5pm. On Saturday there will be coffee and lunch breaks.

The original plan to hold the General Assembly in Edinburgh from 16-22 May 2020 had to be set aside due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

To ensure the work of the Church continued in challenging times, the Commission of Assembly has dealt with urgent business and a special service was organised to install the Moderator Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair.

New Website Launched

We were finally able to see our new website launch last month, and I hope that those of you who can access it have been able to look at it. The new site permits access directly into our Facebook and YouTube channel making it more interactive but it also serves as a fresh medium to keep the congregation and our wider community up to date with news and events as they happen. There are visual icons and hyperlinks that should also take you more directly into some of our partnerships organisations such as the Lodging House Mission and Christian Aid as well as the national church making information more readily at hand for those that are keen to follow it. A small team will have the administrative rights to update the site with news items, upload photographs or notices. If you want to share any information about your organisation then please contact either Suzie St Denis, Yvonne Wallace, Gordon, or myself who will be happy to add it to the website for you.

Lorraine Robertson

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Telephone Ministry

We are now delighted to be able to offer our new dial in worship service each Sunday on our new On-Demand telephone service courtesy of Greyfriars Parish Church in Lanark who host the service of us. Simply dial 0141-815-1335 to listen in live to our Sunday morning worship service. All calls are charged at your local call rate and can accessed from your home telephone.



Congregational News

Baptism

We were delighted to welcome baby Isla Flora Morrison into our congregational family on Sunday the 27th of September following her Baptism Service. Her Parents Debra and Graham travelled up from London to introduce us all to the new addition to their family and we were thrilled that we were able to share in this special family day with them all. We look forward to welcoming you all back again when you are next visiting the family.

Parish Funeral: Mrs Caroline Kelly 11th September 2020

We remember in our prayers the family and friends of Mrs. Caroline Kelly who sadly died last month and who's funeral was held in the church. We wish her family strength and peace during these especially difficult days when we are prevented from coming together.

Thank you

The family of Caroline Kelly would like to thank her friends and neighbours who paid their respect both at the church and at the cemetery. Also for all the cards and flowers. A special thank you to Gordon for a moving sermon again both at the church and grave side . Both families found it a great comfort at that time.

Congratulations

Our warmest congratulations go to Mr & Mrs Mackay who recently celebrated 40 years together. I am sure you will all join me in extending our best wishes to both Marvyn and Sandra on reaching this significant milestone. Lots of good wishes to them both from all your friends at Stepps Parish Church. Peace and joy to you both.



Pastoral Care

Current Covid-19 restrictions mean that Gordon is prevented from carrying out any home pastoral visits. Should you have any pastoral issues or concerns please contact either Gordon directly on his mobile on he can be reached on the manse telephone number.



When We See The Harvest

By: Susan Y Nikitenko, April 25th, 2011

*A harvest of apples, a harvest of corn;
A harvest of plenty, an autumn adorned.
With bright coloured leaves, a fall festive blend;
A wonderful time for families and friends.*

*A harvest of pumpkins, a harvest of grain;
A harvest of bounty, and cool autumn rains.
A big harvest moon- way up in the sky;
A harvest of blessing that God has supplied.*

*Be grateful, be humble, give thanks to the Lord;
He has showered His blessing here in our world.
But have we been faithful, and have we been true?
Have we put God first in all that we do?*

*A harvest that God sees is not food or crop;
Not pumpkins, or grain, not apples that drop.
But God see the harvest of souls needing Him;
A harvest of people who need saved from their sin.*

*A harvest of souls and A harvest of love;
A harvest of mercy from our Father above.
When we see the harvest, let's see through God's
eyes;
And share with the nations the life He supplies.*

Six Little Stories /Six Little Life Lessons

In a village ravaged by drought, the villagers decided to pray for rain. Everyone gathered on the day of prayer. Only one little boy came with an umbrella.

That is Faith.

When you throw babies in the air, they laugh, because they know you will catch them.

That is trust.

Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning. But, still we set our alarm to wake up.

That is hope.

We plan for tomorrow, next week, next month, in spite of zero knowledge of the future.

That is confidence.

We see the world suffering, but still we get married and have children.

That is love.

An elderly gentleman's shirt sported this sentence. "I am not 80 years old; I am sweet sixteen with 64 years of experience."

That is attitude.

Author unknown. (taken from social media.)

Pulpit Supply

We look forward to welcoming Christine Reid back with us as she leads us in worship on Sunday the 11th of October as Gordon and the manse family take some much-needed time off. We wish the manse family well as they look forward to their long-awaited October break in Lindisfarne and pray that they will come back feeling rested and refreshed.

190th Glasgow Company, The Boys' Brigade

I'm glad to be able to report that things have moved on for the Company in the last few weeks, as BBUK have now given permission for us to resume face-to-face activity outdoors. We have been running

Monday evening outdoor activity for 4 weeks now, on Monday evenings, at local parks. From a basic programme of games, we are starting to build in a wider range of activities as part of the BB award scheme, and will continue to offer the Boys as broad a range of opportunities as possible.

The Company will be attending the Harvest service on Sunday 4th October, where Callum Hoy will

(finally!) receive the Queen's Badge which he earned during the previous (curtailed) Session.

This is long overdue and we are grateful to Lorraine and Gordon for suggesting that this be included in the service. We will also be taking part in the tree planting ceremony.

We remain open to new recruits. Anchor Boys for Boys in P1 to P3, and Junior Section for Boys in P4 to P6 meet at Stepps Playing Field on Mondays from 6.00pm to 7.00pm. Company Section for Boys in P7 and above meet at Hoganfield Loch on Mondays between 6.00pm and 7.00pm. All recruits are very welcome indeed.

Colin Goodall, Acting Captain

Captain190thglasgow@hotmail.com

Bible Class

The Bible Class will resume on Friday 23rd October from 7pm until 9pm , meeting in the large hall. We hope to see our young people from P7 to secondary school age for some fun activities and discussion.

Anne, Marvyn, Lorraine, Yvonne,

Bible Class leaders

Friendship Club

The Friendship Club will NOT resume in October as planned due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation. All members have been informed. This is a big disappointment for everyone but never mind, we will meet again.....sometime!

Kate

Life and Work

I was delighted when June Bennie responded so quickly to my appeal for someone to take over Live and Work Distribution from January 2021.

I will continue to the end of 2020 and take subscriptions for 2021. As I don't yet have a price for 2021 I shall delay taking orders until I have heard from Edinburgh. Orders can then be placed and PAID FOR at that time .

Hopefully, this information can be included in the November Prospect or announced in Church earlier.

Kate Houston

Abstract Thoughts, Food for Thought

Look for the good in everything

Look for the good in everyone

Stay safe

Be positive

And

Be kind

When we all pull together

We will make a difference

Keep smiling at everyone

And

The world will smile with you

Remember God is our refuge and strength

Never more so

Than in the present weird and traumatic time

Anon..

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