

# ***Newsletter***

***Crown Church, Inverness***

**October 2020: No. 764**

**Parish Minister: Rev Douglas Robertson**



## **SUNDAY SERVICES**

Douglas will be broadcasting live on Sunday mornings at 11 am. To watch these and previous recordings please go to the Crown Church facebook page.

9.30 services have been suspended for the time being.

Sunday 4th October	Morning Worship at 11 am
Sunday 11th October	Morning Worship at 11 am
Sunday 18th October	Morning Worship at 11 am
Sunday 25th October	Morning Worship at 11 am
Sunday 1st November	Morning Worship at 11 am

**Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.**

**In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.**

**Letter to the Philippians, chapter 2 verses 1 to 5**

Dear Members and Friends of Crown Church,

The English author, scholar and clergyman John Donne has become famous across nearly 400 years, mostly thanks to a single stanza from which we can all quote the start and the end: "*No man is an island, entire of itself;*" and "*ask not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee*".

Most of us might not even know that there are other, equally profound words in between these two oft-quoted phrases, let alone that this in turn is part of a much larger work,

Meditation 17, in a book of 23 "*Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*," written during a period of severe illness which the author clearly believed would be the end of him.

In the days before the internet or even newspapers, ringing the church bell was a way of communicating to the parish that something significant had happened, with a long, slow, repeated, single ring, indicating that someone had died. But in Meditation 17, Donne also refers to the tolling of a bell to call people to prayer in the morning and again in the evening.

For him, suffering was itself occasion for prayer and for an increase in devotion to God, even suffering unto death, such that, in the face of death, he ended this Meditation by talking about "making my recourse to my God, who is our only security".

It seems to me as if the struggles of the last few months, wherein a virus barely visible under a microscope has highlighted the fragility of our 'way of life' as much as the fragility of life itself, could be heard like a bell tolling.



Perhaps it is calling us out of the lethargy of comfortable repose for morning prayers; perhaps it is calling us to evening prayers in the twilight days of 'how things have always been'. It's hard to tell while we are in the midst of it, like the parishioners who heard the church bell ringing long and slow and asked, "Who has died?" Donne warned them, perhaps it is you.

The good news is that Donne recovered, just as I am confident that so much of the life that we cherish will recover, but perhaps now is the time to reflect, as he did, on the fragility of all that we take for granted and the reality of our mortality, and ask ourselves, "At the end of the day, when the bell tolls, what really matters?"

Every blessing,

**Douglas**

### **And the good news!**

I write to let you know that one of our own, Judith Macleod, has been accepted as a candidate for full-time ordained ministry in the Church of Scotland. The final step of the approval process was completed last month when the Presbytery of Inverness approved her candidature and a training placement at St Columba's in Inverness.

Judith has said that her journey to this point began some time ago with a growing sense of God's call on her life. But let her tell the story in her own words:

*The process for candidates to be approved has changed in the last couple of years. It begins with a discernment conversation with a member of the team from 121 George Street. From that conversation the decision is made as to whether or not an applicant will enter into the discernment process. This involves a Discernment Placement at a different church, exploring the role of ministry and what the role entails, along with time spent in discussion with the Minister to discern the call. The Presbytery also appoint an Assessor, who meets with you a few of times throughout the placement. The Discernment Placement, which in my case was 3 months long (although it can take up to 6 months), was followed by a "Local Review".*

*By this time lockdown had begun so this interview, which takes place with the Minister supervising the placement, the Presbytery Assessor and a National Church Assessor, took place on Zoom.*

*The decision of this meeting was that I should proceed to a National Assessment Conference. Usually these conferences gather together the applicants from a number of parts of the country for an overnight stay, with a series of interviews and tasks to assess your suitability for ministry. This was initially booked for the start of May, but as time went on it became obvious that it could not happen in the usual way. So this step of the process also took place over the internet in mid-June. It was a long day of interviews, with tasks to prepare in advance and to complete between the interviews. The outcome of this conference is that I was approved to proceed to training as a candidate for full time ministry of word and sacrament.*

*Training involves academic study as well as a series of placements at other churches. So I have begun my training with a weekend National Conference for Candidates, online instead of a weekend in St Andrews, where I met the other people who are in training for the ministry. I have just started academic study at University of the Highlands and Islands, Highland Theological College, which this year is fully online due to the pandemic. My first placement will be with St Columba's new charge in Inverness.*

I'm sure you will join me in wishing Judith God's richest blessings throughout all of the challenges that still lie between now and ordination, and assuring her of our full support and every possible assistance that we can provide.

**Douglas**

# Crown 20/20 Group Update

**“Crown Church aims to invest in a major upgrade of our church buildings to provide a warm and welcoming home for worship, equip us with modern and accessible facilities to support Christian outreach into our community and to help our church meet the needs of that community.”**

Dear Members of the Congregation

We are delighted to let you know that all systems are go for work to commence on the major refurbishment of the Upper Hall on 13th October. All the church permissions have been granted and the Upper Hall has been cleared, ready for contractors I&K Ferguson to move on site. Our hope is that the work can be completed ahead of The

Highland Council commencing work at the end of this year or early next year on the conversion of the Lower Hall into a pre-school facility for Crown Primary School. Crown 20/20 are grateful that the proposed timetable will mean very few people will be inconvenienced while the upper hall is being refurbished.

The upgrade of the Upper Hall will see removal of the stage to provide more storage and better use of the space as well as a new kitchen, improved toilet facilities with the addition of a shower, improved insulation and a décor makeover. It will be the first stage in making our premises fit for use in the 21<sup>st</sup> century - part of

our response to the recognition by the Church nationally that such immediate action will underpin the revitalisation and strengthening of the work of the church.

How are we paying for the upgrade? Mainly we have received funding from church reserves. Unfortunately our application to the Ferguson Bequest was not granted. A new application has been made to Inverness Common Good Fund. But to be successful with our applications we must demonstrate the support of the congregation, through giving. Hopefully everyone received a letter signed by our Minister, Douglas Robertson, Crown 2020 Chair Jimmy Gray and Head of Fund-raising Alan Nelson inviting you to consider making a donation, large or small, to the costs of not only the Upper Hall upgrade but other planned improvements to the church building.

This includes other areas of the church building and a remodelling of the Sanctuary to make better use of the space and provide a more modern and welcoming facility at the heart of our Crown community. These developments of course will be a few years in the planning and the fund raising, and we expect by then to be in a happier position and able to hold congregational meetings to discuss them.



The early responses to the appeal letter have been hugely encouraging and we are immensely grateful. We have a long way to go to meet the contribution needed to meet our aspirations, but the amount of around £12,000 announced by our Minister on Sunday has at the time of writing now gone up to £18,694. These amounts include the Gift Aid which will be recouped. We welcome all donations, large and small - every penny counts. We ask you to give it your prayerful consideration.

We hope this update assures you that despite the challenges of Covid-19, very real progress is being made by the Crown 20/20 in realising our goals as set out at the top of the message.

P.S. Please contact Eileen Ardern (eileenardern@hotmail.com) if you have

- Any questions
- If you did not receive an appeal letter and would like one.
- If you think the set of bowls we have found in clearing out underneath the stage in the upper hall belongs to you!

P.P.S All organisations with equipment stored anywhere on church premises can take advantage of the skip which will be in our little car park from Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October until at least Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> to dispose of unwanted items. Remember the downstairs stores will all need to be cleared temporarily while the work is carried out in the lower hall.

**Don't miss this opportunity!**  
**The Crown 20/20 Group**



## **Young Crown – Locked down-but- not-out!**

The day of writing this brief article marks 6 months exactly since the announcement of the lockdown measures we have all become familiar with and are showing increasing signs of returning to. You don't need me to tell you that lockdown has drastically changed what's been

happening with Young Crown; suffice to say that, despite how painful this is, now is not the time to be encouraging extra gatherings of people. The freedom to meet young people in schools, clubs, toddler groups, in church and out and about has been put on hold; but we are still encouraged at the ways in which we can still minister. If God still has good news for us and the children, young people and families around us then we still have a gospel to declare!

So how can we be good news in school when we can't be in school? Well, there's two ways. One is that we get invited in as teachers to provide lessons. The other is to team up with our friends at Out of the Box to provide a video-based curriculum RME teaching resource which can be used as a high quality resource for teachers and also as a support to Christian work in Primary Schools potentially anywhere in the country. These are both opportunities we're exploring over the coming months which could be as exciting as they are surprising!

How can we be good news for toddlers when we can run toddler groups? Well, lockdown won't last forever – but when it is over, we'll have a brand new hall and have prepared the best version of toddler groups we've ever put on – with revised and improved formats, spaces and beautiful new equipment.

How can we share the gospel at home when we can't visit? We're working on putting some top quality resources online for families to explore together. Our hope is that by advent, there will be a new set of resources available for families to use and celebrate together – even if this is no ordinary Christmas season.

God is still good and so we still have good news to tell; praise Him for these opportunities we'd never have had in 'ordinary' times!

**Struan**



# ***Prayer Diary***

## ***October 2020***

This prayer diary has been prepared by the Discipleship Team. We hope that you will find it useful. You may like to detach it from the newsletter and use it to pray for our church and community.

If you have particular prayer requests for the next month (November 2020) please do send them to our ***church secretary, Gloria*** who will pass them on, or e-mail Jude Madeleine; [judedmond@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:judedmond@yahoo.co.uk)

### **October 5 - 11**

Pray for those who are grieving; those whose lives have changed through loss, that they will know the peace of God that passes all understanding. May they know that they are helped in the palm of God's hand.

Pray that God will help staff of our local care homes to touch the lives of others for good, whether through the words they speak or by their actions. Pray for the wellbeing of all those suffering from anxiety, depression and other mental illnesses; that they continue to receive the help and support during this pandemic.

On this day, 10<sup>th</sup> October World Mental Health Day, remember all those who are struggling with mental issues, pray for them and their families; pray for the church to prioritise people with mental health issues and to be recognised in the community as a loving and supportive environment.

### **October 12- 18**

Pray for the Harvest Thanksgiving Service and remember those who are in need for food. Give thanks for all donations to the Foodbank. Pray for the volunteers who help keep this vital service running in local communities. Pray 1 John 4:18-19. 'There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been in perfect love. We love because he first loved us'

Lift up people you know who have lost jobs due to coronavirus. Ask God to help them find new, fulfilling roles. Pray for employers to support their staff who have been furloughed or are at risk of redundancy. Loving Father, help us to trust You when we have financial worries. Open our eyes to those around us who need our help and give us the courage and opportunities to be generous. Amen.



## **October 19 - 25**

The health of loved ones has been a significant concern this year. Thank God for His faithful presence in worrying as well as joyful times.

Pray for our political leaders, for strength and wisdom in making very difficult decisions on the economy and the increasing restrictions to control the spread of the infection. Pray for the communities affected by increased in number of infection.

As the number of infections and deaths continue to rise, pray for the many countries around the world without adequate healthcare services. Pray for charities and organisations who are trying to improve the availability of medical care globally.

Pray Psalm 91:1-3, 'For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence'. Give thanks for all the work of medical science going into research and for success in finding a vaccine.

## **October 26 - 31**

Pray for the children and young adults you know. Pray that they will know that they are loved by God, and that they would have an awareness of their value in Christ. Pray for opportunities to support and love the young people in your life. Remember those in prison and pray they may feel a sense of peace and purpose as they serve their sentence. Pray for their protection from the Covid-19 infection in prison.

Pray for our neighbours, for people who live alone, for people who are struggling with illness and for God's peace to fall on them. Pray for protection and safety over our neighbours' homes and families, and ask God to give us opportunities and courage to share His love with those around us.

Pray for each and every member of the congregation, that God's spirit continues to flow throughout their lives whatever their circumstances; Pray that each of us will place God at the centre of our lives and seek Him and His purpose in our lives. Amen



## **An excerpt from the facebook page of Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair on 23rd September**

It was six months ago - on the 23rd March - that nationwide lockdown restrictions were first put in place. And in that time, and since the virus began to bite?

Over 40,000 deaths, 2,500 in Scotland

Nearly 140,000 job losses

We've clapped for carers (for 11 weeks), we've eaten out to help out. We've downloaded the track and trace app.

We've cried, we've been frustrated, we've been furloughed, we've felt tired of it all. And now more restrictions, even though decision-makers are aware that the public is tiring of the battle against coronavirus.

Today, let us acknowledge our tiredness and frustrations, our sense of loss and that there's a long road still ahead of us.

But in all of it, let us call to mind that there is One who acknowledges these realities and in the face of them, promises 'never to leave us nor forsake us' (Hebrews 13:5) Shall we then 'trust in the Lord for help and so find our strength renewed?' In so doing might we discover again that those who do so 'will rise up on wings as eagles, that they will run and not get weary, walk and not faint.' (Isaiah 40:31) For both Church and the country, I assure you of my continuing prayers.

**Right Reverend Dr Martin Fair,  
Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland**





Let's talk about the  
climate emergency

**Hear from inspiring climate project**

**Granton Goes Greener**



**Granton Goes Greener**  
**Monday 5th**  
**October 2020**  
**7.30pm -**  
**8.30pm**  
<https://>

[www.ecocongregationscotland.org/event/grantongoesgreener/](http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/event/grantongoesgreener/)

Join us to hear all about Granton Goes Greener. Set up in 2018 by Granton Parish Church following an award from the Climate Challenge Fund, the north Edinburgh project looked at ways to reduce CO2 emissions within their existing buildings and to work with the local community of Granton to 'Go Greener'.

Granton Goes Greener now provides a clothes swap, "Share 'n' wear" and redistributes surplus food from FareShare. This inspiring climate project has also been doing lots of outreach like family fun days, Christmas fayres, sewing classes, mental health support groups and more. In recent months Granton Goes Greener has also adapted well to the challenges presented by COVID-19.

# A JUST TRANSITION FOR SCOTLAND'S HOUSING

## A Just Transition for Scotland's Housing

**Saturday 17th October 2020**

**10am - 12.30pm**

<https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/event/housing/>

Scotland's climate change ambition means that Scotland's housing will be moving to a net-zero emissions future. Making homes energy efficient and carbon-free can be an opportunity to improve the quality of our housing stock, tackle fuel poverty and create jobs. If our transition is going to be just, it has to be fair for all.

At this event you will hear from the Just Transition Commission set up by the Scottish Government along with experts on Scotland's net-zero ambitions and what it means for the housing sector. You will also be able to contribute your ideas on how we can reach net-zero emissions and put an end to fuel poverty in Scotland.

This open event has been arranged by Stirling Methodist Church and Eco-Congregation Scotland, in collaboration with the Just Transition Commission. Registration is now open here. We will be sharing more on the agenda and speakers for this major event in our next newsletter too.



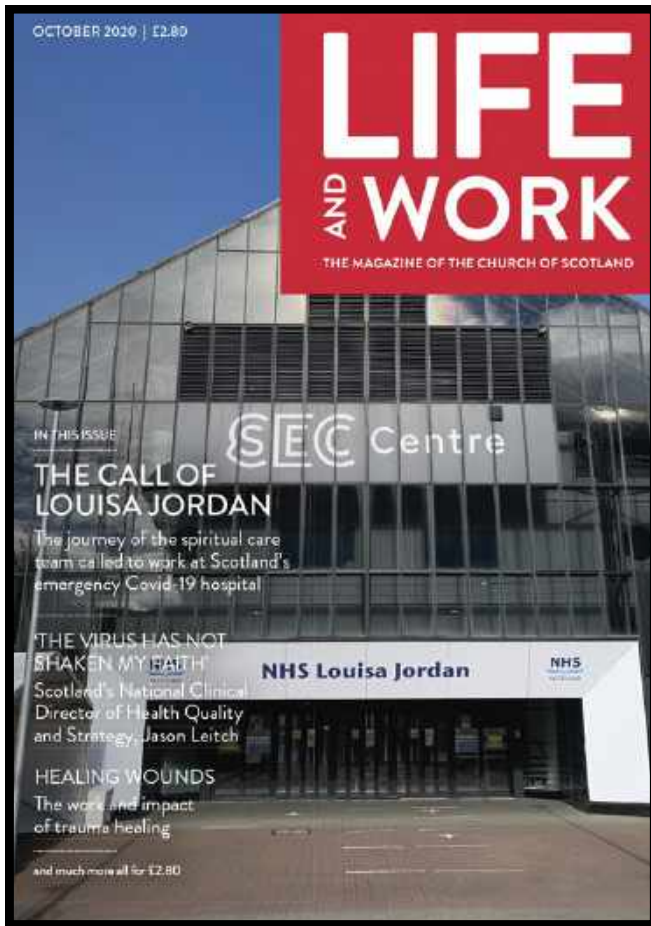
If any of your friends would like to receive our newsletter they can subscribe here.

Please donate to our work here, helping support our Local Networks and encourage growing interest in environmental activities across Scotland's churches.

Eco-Congregation Scotland, 121 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YN

Our office is currently closed due to the coronavirus situation and staff are working from home. Please contact Eco-Congregation Scotland manager Stephen Curran at: 0141 423 4671, 07554 905275, [manager@ecocongregationscotland.org](mailto:manager@ecocongregationscotland.org)

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## **LIFE AND WORK OCTOBER 2020**

### **The Call of Louisa Jordan**

The journey of the spiritual care team called to work in Scotland's emergency Covid-19 hospital

### **'The Virus Has Not Shaken My Faith'**

Interview with Scotland's National Clinical Director of Health Quality and Strategy, Jason Leitch

### **Healing Wounds**

Jackie Macadam discovers the work and impact of trauma healing

### **Recognising our Limitations**

The Moderator of the General Assembly on a prayer journey up the four 'Cardinal Munros'

### **Surveillance and Social Justice**

In the continuing series marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Church of Scotland SRT, Eric Stoddart explores the ethical implications of surveillance in daily life

### **Salt and Light**

Ruth Harvey considers the issues of transformation and social change in Matthew 5-7

### **A Compassion Which Knows No Boundaries**

Ron Ferguson explains why Christianity is uncomfortable

### **Letting Go**

The Very Rev Dr John Chalmers emphasises the importance of letting go of the past and living in the present.

### **Online**

Visit [www.lifeandwork.org](http://www.lifeandwork.org) for news and exclusive features, including Coronavirus Diaries from Church of Scotland mission partners across the world. You can also find us at [facebook.com/lifeandwork](https://facebook.com/lifeandwork) or on Twitter @cofslifeandwork

**Subscribe** online from £12, or download a digital copy for £1.99; return the form in the magazine or speak to your church's Life and Work coordinator.

## **Daily Bible Readings**

### **Sunday, September 27, 2020**

Monday: Egyptian Midwives Save Hebrew Babies, Exodus 1:1-22

Tuesday: Birth and Youth of Moses, Exodus 2:1-25

Wednesday: God Calls Moses, Exodus 3:1-15

Thursday: Plagues 1-3, Exodus 7:1-8:19

Friday: Plagues 4-6, Exodus 7:20-9:12

Saturday: Plagues 7-9, Exodus 9:13-10:29

### **Sunday October 4, 2020**

Monday: Pillars of Cloud and Fire, Exodus 13:17-22

Tuesday: Crossing the Red Sea, Exodus 14:1-31

Wednesday: Songs of Moses and Miriam, Exodus 15:1-21

Thursday: Manna and Quail, Exodus 16:1-36

Friday: Jethro Advises Moses Concerning Leadership, Exodus 18:1-27

Saturday: The Ten Commandments, Exodus 20:1-21

### **Sunday, October 11, 2020**

Monday: God Calls Joshua, Joshua 1:1-11

Tuesday: Rahab Helps God's People, Joshua 2:1-24, 6:1-27

Wednesday: Deborah Helps Barak, Judges 4:4-10

Thursday: Gideon Tests God, Judges 6:36-7:23

Friday: Samson and Delilah, Judges 16:1-31

Saturday: Ruth and Naomi, Ruth 1:1-22

### **Sunday, October 18, 2020**

Monday: God Calls Samuel, 1 Samuel 3:1-18

Tuesday: The Ark of God Captured, 1 Samuel 4:2-11, 6:2, 11-13

Wednesday: Samuel Anoints Saul as King, 1 Samuel 9:27-10:8, 10:17-27

Thursday: Saul Rejected and David Anointed, 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Friday: David Defeats Goliath, 1 Samuel 17:1-54

Saturday: David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem, 2 Samuel 6:1-23

## **Sunday, October 25, 2020**

Monday: David Commits Adultery and Murder, 2 Samuel 11:1-26

Tuesday: Nathan Condemns David and Solomon is Born, 2 Samuel 12:1-25

Wednesday: David Loses His Throne to Absalom, 2 Samuel 15:1-17

Thursday: David Regains the Throne, 2 Samuel 19:9-15

Friday: Solomon Becomes King, 1 Kings 1: 1-53

Saturday: David's Instruction to Solomon, 1 Kings 2:1-12

## **Sunday, November 1, 2020**

Monday: Elijah Meets God, 1 Kings 19:11-18, 2 Kings 9:30-37

Tuesday: Elijah Ascends to Heaven and Elisha Succeeds Elijah, 2 Kings 2:1-18

Wednesday: Elisha Heals Naaman, 2 Kings 5:1-19

Thursday: Amos Prophecies Against Israel, Amos 5:18-24

Friday: Hosea Prophecies Against Israel, Hosea 2:1-13

Saturday: Micah Prophecies to Both Kingdoms, Micah 6:1-8

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## **Readers for October**

4 October Pat Douglas

11 October Gus McGowan

18 October Eileen Ardern

25 October Sheena Ferguson

1 November John Barbour

## NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

### DEATHS

Doug Morrison, Lodge Road on 18th August  
Mrs Muriel Gordon, Aden House on 8th September  
William Dawson, Lochardil Place on 20th September.

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For just now, the newsletter is not being printed and distributed in the usual way but if you know of anyone who is unable to see the newsletter on screen and who might wish a paper copy of the newsletter, please let us know and we can arrange for one to be printed and delivered.

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Congratulations to Gloria and Robert MacKintosh who celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary this month

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### **Items for the November Newsletter by Sunday 25th October please!**

Please send any articles, photographs or news to the Forrests at:  
marionandbobnewsletter@gmail.com

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