

# THE SCOTS KIRK PARIS

Not long to go...



In addition to the regular offerings received in the collection bags on a Sunday and your monthly bank transfers, the income of the Scots Kirk Paris is greatly boosted by one-off donations.

The end of the year is fast approaching; if you are in the habit of supporting the church in this way and have not yet made your donation, you still have time if you want to receive your tax receipt for 2024!

If you are reading this and think that you would like to donate in this way, you should know that as a French taxpayer you are entitled to 60% tax relief. The treasurer will send you a receipt justifying the amount given.

Alternatively, you can scan the QR code opposite which will take you to our HelloAsso account where you can make a one-off or regular monthly donation; a tax receipt will be generated automatically.



Finally, you can visit the Church of Scotland's [Donate](#) page.

The treasurer will be happy to give you the IBAN for our French and/or RBOS accounts.

Thank you as ever for your support. It is much appreciated.

## A word from Laurence, our Interim Moderator



Last December I found myself in Paris - and bumped into four singing reindeer at the Christmas Market!

Clearly, people experience Christmas celebration at all different levels! Many have winter... but no Christmas...well, not our kind of Christmas anyway!

Singing reindeer - but choirs of angels? Not so much!

And yet, so the story goes, something is going on inside people's heads...inside their souls... but whatever it is... religion in general, and formal religion in particular...and "organised" religion, definitely...misses the mark.

People apparently are happy to be "spiritual" - but they are not happy with "Religion...!"

They see spirituality as personal...soft-centred - with rounded edges...Spirituality is private - and that private, inner, journey is bolstered by tools to encourage the journey.....little disciplines of the spirit...nothing too in your face or demanding...in its place - of its time...a bit of meditation here, a walk in the countryside there.

Spirituality is not evangelical - out to win converts...

It's just there - as a resource...no proselytizing zeal required, still less encouraged...

You can have it if you want...but no pressure,

If that's how it really is with people, then that's a great place for religions various to start. There is in all of us, apparently, a spiritual dimension- to tune into, to connect with, to relate to, to harness.

However, the risk is that, left to itself, "spirituality" floats off into the ether, and becomes nothing more than a vague notion, an idea - that makes no difference to our lives, and how we live them.

Good religion will never allow us that luxury, for it wants to make a difference to us, in us...and through us - to the world.

Have a great Advent Season - and watch out for those reindeer!

Love as always, Laurence

### Treasure...or not?



There has been a lot of clearing out going on at the church and one of the things we have come across are these plates. Our research has revealed that Church of Scotland Huts were set up during the First World War for Scottish servicemen in France. Read this article from [Life and Work](#) to find out what purpose they served. Huts and canteens were also provided during the Second World War and you can read about this [here](#). Likewise you might be interested in a 17-minute film you can [watch here](#); while our plates are not clearly visible, they must be in there somewhere!

If anyone can shed light on how these plates came to be in our cellar, we'd love to hear from you!

This seems like the perfect opportunity to say that if you are, or ever were, part of a club or association that might have left unwanted items in any of the church storage spaces, now is the time to speak up! While we are hoping to trace as many owners as we can, we intend to be quite ruthless when it comes to throwing things out so if anything springs to mind you should stake your claim without delay.

Alternatively, if you'd like to take a look at what we have with a view to taking some of it away, feel free!

### In December

We are delighted to be welcoming back **Rev. John Munro** who was our locum in March and April last year. John was born and brought up in Glasgow where he attended the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and Glasgow University. A move to New College, Edinburgh, to study theology followed. He was thereafter invited to become the minister, at Stockbridge Church, Edinburgh, and thereafter at Fairmilehead Parish Church, Edinburgh, where he was the minister for 25 years. Following retirement, John worked for over a year in East Lothian as a locum minister in a linked charge and now he is back once again in Stockbridge such is the shortage of ministers currently in the Church of Scotland. John is married to Lillian who recently retired from the Scottish Qualifications Authority, and they have one daughter, Emily, who works in Glasgow with the Scottish Film Archive as part of the National Library of Scotland. They have two grandchildren. Like some others who have acted as locum minister at the Scots Kirk, John has known Laurence Twaddle, our interim moderator, for many years. Like John he grew up in Glasgow and attended Whitehill Secondary School. John is very much looking forward to seeing both old and new faces in Paris. His claim to fame? He once shook the hand of Rev. Donald Caskie - need he say more!



John will be with us for six weeks. If you would like him to visit you or simply meet up for a cup of coffee, speak to him directly or contact one of the elders.

### Congratulations!

Congratulations to Nne who this summer successfully completed her nursing course. Nne was a midwife in Nigeria but had to retrain to be able to work in France. This is a great achievement since all her studies were in French (a new language for her) as was her end-of-course dissertation.

Very well done Nne and all the best in your new career!



## Nourishing minds

### International Presbytery Mission Project CHANGING LIVES ONE CUP AT A TIME



The **Nourishing Minds** project was launched five years ago by Jane and Hans Broere who are members of the Geneva congregation.

Almost 8000 children in six schools are currently being provided with a cup of porridge to start the day; without the project, they would have nothing to eat.

### OUR AIMS

CHANGING LIVES  
ONE CUP AT A TIME  
*Coin*

- 1 To reduce malnutrition amongst Primary School Children in the Ekwendeni Catchment Area in the Northern Region of Malawi.
- 2 To increase attendance and pass rates at Primary Schools in the same Catchment Area.
- 3 To empower the unemployed youth by providing an opportunity for them to be involved in a project in their communities.
- 4 To promote community involvement and to create sustainability for the project.

Funds are needed to provide training equipment, cups and spoons and to plant, grow and harvest the crops for the porridge.

As a member of the International Presbytery, SKP is supporting this

project. As you can see, we have altered the slogan slightly and are asking you to give one coin a day in December in the lead-up to Christmas in the form of a reverse advent calendar. Instead of taking something out every day we will be giving something to others. All contributions are welcome and if you feel like putting in a note, well, that will be fine too!

The calendars will be available in the vestry from the middle of November.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUABLE SUPPORT

Our reverse advent calendar initiative to raise money for this year's International Presbytery mission project is well underway with calendars like the one below taking shape all around the Paris region!



All you have to do is tie the little bags to a branch, a coat hanger or anything else suitable et voilà!

There are still a few kits available so don't hesitate to ask for one if you would like to participate in the project. No coin is too small - it will all add up in the end. Thank you on behalf of the children in Malawi.

## Advent and Christmas services



**Sunday 22nd December**  
**11 am**

Family Christmas service when you are asked to bring a wrapped present for the homeless men in the care of the Missionnaires de la Charité




**Tuesday 24th December**  
**7 pm**

Watchnight service

Come and enjoy a taste of Christmas from 6.30 onwards

## Moderator's challenge

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Rt Rev. Dr Shaw Paterson, is launching the following challenge in his moderatorial year. As he says, it fits well with Advent but is certainly not limited to this time of year. Follow the links to find out how you can support this project.



The Church of Scotland  
MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SJP/CAM

13 November 2024

Dear Friends,

### The Moderator's Challenge – Let Your Little Light Shine

Please find below a link to a resource which has been developed following my visit to Malawi in August this year:

[https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/128215/FAPLT-Let-Your-Little-Light-Shine-RESOURCE-V10.pdf](https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/128215/FAPLT-Let-Your-Little-Light-Shine-RESOURCE-V10.pdf)

On that visit I was able to see so much of the wonderful work carried out by our partners, the Church of Central Africa (CCAP), throughout the country. One thing which stood out for me was the hunger for education at all levels. The Church has a range of educational institutions and are providing such valuable learning for their students. This has made me keen to support one small part of this ambition to help build the people of God in Malawi.

I am commending to you the resource above, which you can find out more about on the Church of Scotland website: <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/articles/moderators-challenge-to-light-up-learning-in-malawi> - it gives you the opportunity to join me in supporting the provision of solar power, through light libraries in CCAP Primary Schools and solar panels for the new PhD centre at Zomba Theological University.

My challenge to you is to help me to provide that much needed light to allow study in the hours of darkness in Malawi. I wonder how many light libraries we can achieve? A solar light costs just £10.

As well as direct transfer and cheques for any donations we have a donate button on the webpage: <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/connect/moderators-challenge> and also a QR code on the resource. This has all gone live today, and will continue accepting donations until the beginning of May 2025. So although this might fit well during Advent, there will still be an opportunity for you to participate throughout the first part of 2025. The Church of Scotland website will also have a downloadable PowerPoint presentation, poster and some art work within the next week.

With many thanks and every blessing,

**Rt Rev Dr Shaw J Paterson**  
**Moderator of the General Assembly**  
**Church of Scotland**

Rt Rev Dr Shaw J Paterson  
121 George Street • Edinburgh, EH2 4YN  
Tel: 0131 225 5722 • Email: [moderator@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:moderator@churchofscotland.org.uk) • Web: [www.churchofscotland.org.uk](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk)  
Scottish Charity Number: SC011353

## International presbytery meeting



The October meeting of the International Presbytery at the Scots Kirk Lausanne began with a discussion about the future of the Church of Scotland based on the Assembly Trustees' (AT) "New Directions" leadership engagement programme launched after this year's General Assembly (GA). The idea is to work with presbyteries as local "coordinating units" to consider how the Church operates at its various levels and how it fulfills its mission locally. As a result of our discussions, the International Presbytery will be able to provide some input to the ATs, hopefully enabling them to produce some concrete proposals to take to the GA in May 2025. Some startling figures were given at the outset - at the GA in May the ATs reported a projected budget deficit for the Church of Scotland (the Church) in 2024 of £8.1m and emphasised that the General Fund of the Church which pays its core costs will be extinguished by 2032. Also according to the Scotland census for 2022, 51.1% of the population said they had no religion, with the Church of Scotland seeing the largest decrease from 32.4% in 2011 to 20.4% in 2022. We were asked to consider a number of points e.g. what can we as a Presbytery do more effectively and/or efficiently at local level? does the church have too many Acts and regulations? how do UK laws (charity law, safeguarding law, data protection etc.) relate to the IP? how can we remodel our presbytery and congregations to

carry out Christ's mission better, bearing in mind the financial situation and the shortage of ministers?

The discussion was lively and many points were raised including the following: declining membership is the major issue facing the church; why are we not attracting young people? should we be offering worship at times other than Sunday? we need to make better use of modern technology; we need to consider forming local ecumenical partnerships; we must learn from congregations that are growing.

Obviously no definite answers were given, the only consensus being that something had to be done urgently.

If you would like the full background paper to our discussions and the list of points raised, Valerie and Scott can provide them. Likewise, if you have any comments or suggestions that we could take back to the IP for submission to next year's GA, please contact either one of us.

As you know, SKP is a member of Eco-Congregation Scotland. On the Friday afternoon we welcomed Rev. David Coleman who is the Eco-Congregation Scotland chaplain. He encouraged us to care for creation as a whole, stressing that we could not undo what had already been done but that we could prevent things from getting worse. He showed us maps of the areas around all the cities represented in the Presbytery highlighting the expanses of land which could find themselves under water in the not too distant future. Quite sobering! The IP Mission and Creation Care Committee has issued an eco guide to organizing IP meetings. It covers issues such as travel, the use of plastics, the extent to which the practices of the hotels we use are eco-friendly etc.

The other very important item of business for SKP was the IP's approval of the amended mission plan, allowing us to call a part-time minister. The Board and Kirk Session are working hard to move the process forward and you will, of course, be kept informed at the various stages.

These are just a few of the topics covered over the weekend. If you are interested in reading the reports submitted by the different congregations and committees, Scott and Valerie will be happy to provide them along with any information you would like about IP meetings in general.

**Next IP meeting - PARIS, 7-9 March 2025**

**Watch this space!**

## National Eric Liddell awards

On Friday 1st November 2024, the National Eric Liddell Awards took place at George Watson's College. Over 360 guests attended the event which was presented by Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal. The Scots Kirk Paris was present at the kind invitation of Thomas Chalmers, Partner at Leading Figures LLP and member of the Kilsyth congregation, whom some of you may have met as he attended services at the SKP recently in the framework of the Eric Liddell events. Thomas knows Rev. James Patrick very well and showed us a video with James early in July.

The awards celebrated some of the outstanding individuals who have made significant contributions to athletics, sports and community work in Scotland.

The ceremony was hosted by Sally Magnusson - broadcaster and author of 'The Flying Scotsman: The Eric Liddell Story' - and sports broadcaster David Tanner. Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal presented eight winners with the National Eric Liddell Award, with Eric Liddell's daughter Patricia and Scottish Rugby icon Chris Paterson in attendance.

In her message, Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal mentioned the Scots Kirk Paris which she had visited on 26th July stating that she was confident that Eric Liddell was still very well remembered.

John MacMillan, Chief Executive Officer of The Eric Liddell Community, who also visited the Scots Kirk Paris in March, said: "The National Eric Liddell Awards were an incredible finale to what has been an unforgettable year celebrating Eric Liddell's legacy".

The National Eric Liddell Awards marked the end of an incredible year dedicated to Eric Liddell 100 celebrations.

The Scots Kirk Paris is delighted to have played an active part in the following events:

- Unveiling of the plaque in honour of Eric Liddell at Stade du Manoir, Colombes
- Hosting the play 'The Chariot of Fire' by the Searchlight Company
- Organization of an exhibition on Eric Liddell, thanks to the kind support of the Eric Liddell Foundation (John MacMillan, CEO and Caroline Clark)
- Support of the charity run by St Eltham's College from Paris to Saint Andrews, organized by Michael Scott



- Attendance at the Prom Praise Concert at the Royal Albert Hall in May
- Attendance at the Service of Centenary Celebration and Remembrance for the 'Flying Scotsman' Eric Liddell at St Giles' Cathedral Edinburgh on 22nd June
- Hosting of a one-man play 'Beyond the Chariots' by Rich and Joyce Swingle
  - Celebration of the centenary of Eric Liddell's preaching at the SKP on the 6th July in the presence of the Moderator of the Church of Scotland
  - Visit of Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, to the Scots Kirk and unveiling of a plaque to Eric Liddell on 26th July
  - Invitation to the National Eric Liddell Awards on 1st November at George Watson's College in Edinburgh

See also the article published on the Eric Liddell Foundation website.

The Scots Kirk Paris wishes to express its most sincere thanks to:

- John MacMillan (CEO) and Caroline Clark (Programme Manager) from The Eric Liddell Community,
- The Scottish Government France office (Miranda McIntosh, Jamie Campbell and Alice Candy) and the Diaspora Funds
- Rev. James Patrick and Thomas Chalmers for making connections
- Michael Scott for organising and leading the Charity Run with Eltham College from Paris to St Andrews
- Searchlight Theatre Company (David Robinson, Michael Taylor, Rebecca Rogers and Simon Rodda)
- Rich and Joyce Swingle
- Rt Rev. Dr Shaw Paterson and the Church of Scotland
- HRH Princess Anne and the UK Embassy in Paris
- And last but not least, the Scots Kirk Paris congregation

for all their invaluable support and contributions.

*"As the centenary year of Eric Liddell's Gold medal win in the 1924 Paris Olympics comes to an end, the work accomplished in 2024 will ensure that Eric Liddell's legacy will live on for generations to come."* (Eric Liddell Foundation)

Fabienne and Derek Bonin-Bree

## And finally from Scott...



This year I've travelled a total of 12,160 km by TGV, back and forth between Aix and Paris, the same distance as Paris to Hawaii...but without the same weather. I arrived in January when it was snowing and almost 12 months later, the snow returned last week.

Sunday 24th November was my last Sunday with you on probation, as my probation year came to an end. My final probation review and the overall review of my ministry training takes place on Friday 13th December and ordination should take place early in 2025.

I started the journey around 5 years ago - I was told it only takes 2 years 😊 - but it has absolutely been worth it. I have been training for Ordained Local Ministry (OLM) - this is the part-time, unpaid form of ordained ministry, the other form is Full Time Ministry where the minister is inducted into one parish, so I will serve within the International Presbytery and not just one congregation. An OLM minister can conduct all forms of worship, including the Sacraments (Baptism and Holy Communion) and I will still be attached to the SKP ministry team in some way, so you will see me again!

This has been a really wonderful year, with so many highlights and things that have made me laugh and sometimes cry a little bit (when the projector or internet didn't work). I have learnt so much along the way, especially just to keep smiling, all will be well. Without a doubt, the

best thing has been seeing the same familiar faces each week, coming from far and wide to our little church family in the centre of Paris. And how amazing to have 10 nationalities represented on my last Sunday.

I've conducted 30 services altogether and I have been so fortunate to have had some great experiences this year. I can't imagine many other probationers have had the opportunity to host the Moderator of the General Assembly and the Princess Royal in the same month, nor to conduct a wedding blessing in St Tropez, not to mention the Eric Liddell events during the Olympic Games. Oh, and let's not forget the Good Friday Tenebrae service, Luciano's baptism, Holy Communion, the Remembrance Service in the Cathedral at Les Invalides,

the YoPros lunch in March and the Lent Bible Study. And of course the minister's job does not start and end on Sunday morning, pastoral care takes place behind the scenes but goes unnoticed to the congregation on Sunday.



I could not have got through this year without my family's support - Sasha, Alex and Penny (and Jack) who have supported me throughout and I am so grateful to them for adjusting their lives around my training. I'm also very grateful in particular to Valerie and to Rev. Alastair Duncan who helped to ensure that everything worked out smoothly for me.

Thank you all for your prayers and friendship this year.

And thank you Scott for all the hard work you put into this year (in addition to your day job!), we loved having you with us and learning from you.  
Looking forward to seeing you again soon with your brand new title!