

THE SCOTS KIRK PARIS

Faith Will

Faith Will is a new partnership set



up by Christian Aid, the Church of Scotland and the Quakers to encourage church members to leave a gift to

their church in their will. As the head of Christian Aid Scotland says, "Leaving a gift in your Will is a personal but powerful way to make a difference and create lasting change." Our own treasurer, Douglas Anderson, has been talking about this for some time and has this message for us:

"A legacy is a way to give part of your Estate to the church through your will. It is a way of showing your commitment towards the long-term future of The Scots Kirk Paris and you will be remembered by the Church's community for your generosity towards the future of the Kirk. If you are fiscally resident in France, then the legacy is exempt from taxes and death duties, making it an efficient way to transfer money. If you are fiscally resident outside France then there may still be tax advantages, especially for UK residents. We believe that the legacy can transit via the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh and avoid death duties and taxes. If you wish advice on the best way to make a legacy, contact our treasurer, he may be able to help".

If you think this is something you would like to do, visit the [Church of Scotland website](#) to find out more.

Thank you for your continuing support of the SKP.

A word from Laurence, our Interim Moderator



Warmest greetings to everyone!

It was a delight, as always, to meet up with Valerie and Denis at the Presbytery meeting in Rotterdam last week.

There comes a moment...in the middle of the procedure, the agendas, the minutes, the reports, the deliverances, the notices, the technical hitches... there comes a moment, when

all these things are forgotten, and we remember why we are there, what we are about...what this whole astonishing, frustrating, wonderful business of being a Christian, serving in the church, being the church is all about.

For me, at last week's Presbytery, it was during the Sunday morning service...the longest I think I have ever attended... two hours plus...(there was an Ordination, a Setting Apart - special singings, appreciation shown for so many people) but, in the midst of it all ...at the heart of it all - explaining the heart of it all...we sang that wonderful hymn *I, the Lord of sea and sky* - with its haunting question...**who will go... who will bring my love to them...who will tend the hurting and the broken?**

And the reply, *"Here I am Lord! Is it I Lord...I have heard you calling in the night..."*

I will go Lord - if you lead me, I will hold your people in my heart"

Never mind the baloney, the pressures, the times when we get it wrong, or don't get it at all...This, I thought, this, I felt...is where I want to be...and these are the people I want to live my life alongside...walk alongside, and have walk alongside me.

Untidy pilgrims, shabby tigers, by no means always getting it right...myself as much as anyone...

But this is the Church! This is the Church I am honoured to be part of, to serve in, and to be nurtured by.

Nothing else will do.

Nothing else will do.

Love as always, Laurence

Can you help?

Our very successful **Bags of Hope** project finished at Easter but we continue to collect a wide range of products for homeless men in the care of the Missionnaires de la Charité. You should find the basket outside the sanctuary every Sunday - if it isn't there, it's in the vestry so do feel free to pop in with your contribution.



But of course collecting is one thing, distributing is another! We are looking for volunteers to help take the items collected to the Missionnaires in rue Violet in the 15th arrondissement. This could mean going in the car with someone after the service or perhaps coming into the church during the week to pick up a couple of bags. Rest assured that if you would like to help, we'll find a way to make it happen!

The brothers are always extremely grateful for our donations and may even invite you in for a chat. And if any of the homeless men are around, well it's always good to meet them in person. Our giving becomes less abstract and much more meaningful.

If this is something you would like to be involved in, just have a word with whoever is in the vestry on a Sunday.

Thank you in advance! Your help will be very much appreciated!

A well-travelled tea towel

Back in May (which seems like a long time ago now), our Sunday morning visitors included a couple, Janet and Jonathan Cameron, from the US. They bought one of our Scots Kirk tea towels and announced that they were taking it with them to Congo! Our first reaction was to say that this was probably the furthest one of our souvenirs had ever gone but then we realized that if they had taken it home to Pasadena, Ca. it would have gone almost twice as far!

Janet says: "For those of you who have joined our list this year, you may not know that we are in Congo because of Jonathan's



dream to be able to do something to help the people in the country of his childhood. In a country where poverty is so severe and needs everywhere are so great, it is hard to know



what to do to make a difference. Jonathan sits every day in our middle bedroom, his office, and works on writing software to improve patient care at rural health clinics. We house and feed people whose purpose is to come and help the people of Congo or to come to receive further training to help the people of Congo where they live and work and minister (...) You can't help everyone, but we try to make a contribution, one person at a time".

And for those of you who think driving in Paris is a nightmare, take a closer

look at the photo above!

We will be sending Janet and Jonathan a copy of this newsletter (at Janet's request) and pray for the work they are doing so far from home. It was a pleasure to meet them both and we hope that they will come back to the SKP the next time they are in Paris.

We always do our best to extend a warm welcome to visitors on a Sunday but we in turn are greatly blessed to be able to meet so many different people from around the world, each with their own story and experience of serving Christ in their local communities and beyond.

A message from the Moderator of the General Assembly on the Israel Gaza conflict

Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, has issued a statement in response to the outbreak of violence in the Holy Land.

"Friends,

"I reach out to you all, as we continue to grapple with the shattering violence unfolding in Israel and Gaza, and to ask for your prayers and your action.

"Across Scotland, our Jewish friends, neighbours and colleagues grieve the loss of loved ones following the devastating terrorist attacks we witnessed unfolding over the weekend, worry for friends and family who have been kidnapped and fear the possibility of increased antisemitism in their own neighbourhoods as tensions rise across the world.

"In Scotland, our friends with family in Gaza mourn the loss of loved ones, worry for those unable to find safety or a place of refuge and fear an even more uncertain future.

"Together we agonise, yet again, over peace gone to pieces. We desperately try to fathom how we can be any comfort to the members of our global family trapped in the middle of such a barrage of violence and fear. We are appalled by the horrifying levels of brutality and the inhumanity of mass murder scenes of which were broadcast across our screens in horrifying, gut-wrenching detail.

"We call for calm and active consideration for the innocent civilians who are suffering in Israel and Gaza. Peace in our world can never come through violence. Peace in our spirits can never come through revenge.

"So, what can we do in the face of war?

"If you pray, pray from your guts, not your lips - offer a prayer that moves in you and through you - one that calls you to reach out to a fearful neighbour, to speak up for peace and calm and the unity of humanity.

"Pray for all those many people injured and those mourning the loss of loved ones and those living in abject fear who await news of family members missing.

"Wherever you are, check in on your Jewish neighbours, friends and colleagues.

"Wherever you are, check in on your neighbours, friends and colleagues who have family in Gaza.

"Wherever you are, be mindful of your words. Tarring with a broad brush adds more fuel to the fire, so be kind to one another wherever you find each other.

"The Zulu phrase, Ubuntu, is the theme for my year as Moderator and its challenging truth resonates powerfully today. 'I am because you are.' We are one global family. When we look into the face of another human being, God looks out from the windows of their souls. Today, love God by loving each other."

A prayer for peace



'In days to come ... they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more.'

God, it is said that you are the peace that passes all understanding. We sit now, staggered at how quickly the fragile half-peace we had pieced

together has unravelled.

The lessons we have so desperately needed to learn have been laid aside as the instruments of war begin their horrible, haunting reprise. Call us back to our senses.

For the angry, abused and frightened among us, who strike out in a distorted quest for victory, help us find ways to convince that there is no victory to be found in violence.

Peace-making is a daunting path to tread, especially when fear follows so closely behind, so breathe your loving spirit into our hearts and help us walk your way.

We pray ceaselessly for our family in Israel and Palestine, for we are all family and when one part suffers, we are all depleted. Peace in pieces is a collective, shared shame.

God, you are the peace that passes all understanding, so help us understand how to find you.

[Church of Scotland website](https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/)

International Presbytery meeting

The International Presbytery's October meeting was held in Rotterdam, a city with the most amazing modern architecture, in stark contrast to Amsterdam with its more traditional buildings.

As usual, many topics were discussed, not least the future pattern of presbytery meetings. Concerns had been raised about both the financial and environmental impact of having two meetings a year but it was decided that these were essential in view of the fellowship they afford and the fact that business is almost always better done face to face.

Another important item on our agenda was the examination of an overture presented by the Theological Forum to this year's General Assembly. The proposal is to replace the Church of Scotland's Westminster Confession of Faith by a Book of Confessions containing documents from five stages in the Church's history. This is a very important subject which is clearly explained in [this video](#).

The International Presbytery's mission project for next year will be Nourishing Minds in Malawi. This was started by an elder and her husband in the Geneva congregation which already supports children in the country; further details can be found on the Geneva church's [website](#).

Our Sunday morning service in Rotterdam was a very special one. Sia van de Bremt from Brussels was set apart as a Reader and Cindy Campbell from Bermuda was ordained as an Ordained Local Minister. It was a privilege to witness these two ceremonies, conducted by the Moderator of the IP, Joanne Evans-Boiten, who has twice been our locum in Paris.

If you would like to read the reports submitted by the various committees or indeed the congregational reports produced by the different churches in Europe and beyond, contact Valerie Prieur or Scott MacSween at scotskirkparis@orange.fr.

The next IP meeting will be held in Rome in March 2024.



The thistle mosaic



Sia (left) and Cindy

And a word from Alan, our locum...

Those who say ‘the sky’s the limit’ are, frankly, just lacking in imagination! That’s a message I would love to leave with you after my month as one of your locums. I have been so mightily impressed, as I was last year, at the wonderful opportunities this unique congregation and very special church offer. Not least of all, I have been so impressed by how much is done by everyone I’ve met.

Things are not easy, I know. All of us have struggles, the world is still in a troubled state and the church is in a precarious place. Everyone feels frustration at the need to make the Presbytery Plan work, and many feel real pain over the changes to this congregation and the others it will bring about.

I believe, however, when Jesus said he came to give us ‘life in all its fullness’ he meant that we were to genuinely work hard at enjoying life, even in the midst of our woes. There is a difficult paradox in our faith: nobody wants to experience any sort of crucifixion, but without it we cannot experience resurrection.

My wife, Judith, and I have experienced nothing but welcome and kindness and encouragement in our time here. And that generosity of spirit to the many visitors has been the hallmark of the congregation, even in these uncertain times. Now, we can be sad because we are only here for a month or we can thank God for all that goes on in SKP - and all that WILL go on here. And thankful we are. You have excellent leaders here, from your exceptional Interim Moderator, my old friend Laurence Twaddle, to those who serve the coffee and ensure all are welcome. We thank you all and we thank God for your fellowship over this past month.

Can I leave you with one other thought? Aim for the stars - and you might just reach the rooftops!

Excessive Blessings!

Alan



Paris 2024



Looking ahead to next year, no-one who lives or works in or around Paris can ignore the fact that the Olympic Games will be on us before we know it. Opinions are divided: some see it as an exceptional opportunity for Paris to upgrade its transport system, leisure infrastructure and international reputation while others see it as no more than a financial disaster and a security headache. At the SKP we see this as a fantastic opportunity. Why? Because of Eric Liddell who, at the 1924 Olympics in Paris, exactly 100 years ago, refused to run in the heats of the 100 m on a Sunday. Instead he chose to preach in the Scots Kirk. Under the impetus of Rev. James Patrick, our locum at the end of last year, we are hoping to become closely involved in the Eric Liddell 100 project. Details still have to be worked out but we are confident that we will be able to attract many visitors both at the beginning of July (on the anniversary of Liddell's preaching in the SKP pulpit) and during the Olympics themselves. We are most grateful to elder **Derek Bonin-Bree and his wife Fabienne** who are spearheading our project for next year

and devoting an enormous amount of time and energy into ensuring that we can commemorate Eric Liddell and his sacrifice in the most fitting way. More details will be given in due course.

SKP snippets

Our congratulations go to **Heather Rivron** who became a granny/grandma/mamie last month. We wish her lots of joy and happiness in her new role and look forward to seeing photos of baby Cyrus, son of Matthew who many of us remember as a wee boy in the SKP Sunday school!



Even on holiday **Dorothy and Pierre** have the Scots Kirk in mind. Many thanks for this lovely photo produced by Pierre on the beach on North Uist in September!



Elder **Scott MacSween** draws our attention to this event in Paris in November

Paris: Sunday 19th November 2023

Join the brothers from Taizé in prayer on Sunday 19th November 2023 in St. Ignace church, 33 rue de Sèvres, Paris 6e.

Prayers will begin at 5.30 pm as part of the programme to celebrate the centenary of French composer Jacques Berthier.

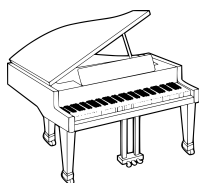
On the 19th:

- 11h: mass with music by Jacques Berthier
- 15h: round table
- 16h: concert
- 17h30: time of prayer with Taizé songs
- 19h: refreshments

Do you need to get in touch with the minister? As well as the manse landline (01 48 78 47 94) , we have a French mobile phone which means that it doesn't cost you anything to get in touch with him. Contact our locums on **07 64 82 58 53**. And remember that your elders are on hand to liaise with the minister when necessary.



A huge thank you to **Nicola, Felipe** and **Nathan** for providing us with such good music during our Sunday morning services. Their playing is much appreciated by regulars and visitors alike and certainly helps us with our singing! If you can play an instrument and would like to take part in our Sunday services, there's room for everyone!



And finally, a prayer from Rev. Muriel Pearson, minister of the Church of Scotland in Tiberias, Galilee

**Pray not for Arab or Jew,
For Palestinian or Israeli,
But pray rather for ourselves,
That we might not
Divide them in our prayers
But keep them both together
In our hearts.**