

THE SCOTS KIRK PARIS

HM Queen Elizabeth 1926-2022

The Scots Kirk Paris extends its sincere condolences to the members of the Royal family on the death of HM Queen Elizabeth on 8th September 2022. The Queen died in Scotland where she enjoyed being away from the hustle and bustle of court life and Scotland has featured prominently throughout the official 10-day period of mourning.

The SKP of course has a special connection to Her Majesty as it was on 10th April 1957 that she laid the foundation stone for the previous church building. At the opening of the new building, Rev. Donald Caskie read the following message from the Queen: "I thank you and the congregation of the Church of Scotland in Paris for your loyal greetings which gave me great pleasure and I wish you every blessing at the opening and dedication of the new church in Paris" (from the archives of [Life and Work](#)).

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Rt Rev. Dr Iain Greenshields, who read a prayer at the Queen's funeral, says that "It was a privilege and a real pleasure to spend time in the company of Her Majesty the Queen. (...) I was struck by her tremendous recall and her obvious love for Balmoral and indeed Scotland".



A word from Laurence, our Interim Moderator

Warmest greetings!

I wonder if like me you enjoyed the change of pace in Church life during the summer months - when the organisations and commitments all but ceased and there was time to relax a little - without thinking about what had to be fixed and arranged and attended to. We need some space or we go pop - it's as simple as that.

The many pressures pushing down on people's lives never cease to astonish me - and fill me with admiration at how people cope with such a range of demands and responsibilities.

And for those sandwiched between elderly parents and demanding teenagers - or little children and sick relatives...or work and home - or leadership demands and the needs of the domestic situation...or children's hobbies and the desire to be at church - I can only offer an understanding ear and a sympathetic heart. These are busy and challenging times - and it must sometimes seem like the last thing anyone would want to do would be to take on a role or an additional responsibility in the life of the church.

It's for that reason that I am so filled with respect and admiration for those who do make sure that the work of the church continues with energy and restless imagination.

It would be so much easier to withdraw behind the parapet of a person's own in-house needs, and never participate - never be involved. That so many do give so much time and dedication to ensuring that the church does not stagnate - or look in on itself, or drift, is a wonderful blessing and explains the aliveness and the attractiveness of our life together.

And those contributions are important not least because the world needs the church to be there...telling The Story, offering the sanctuary, opening arms in welcome and comfort!

This is why we take the road of service - for them...the searching ones, the hurting ones, the drifting ones, the scared ones.

We do it for them.

And for Him!

Love as ever,

Laurence

Incumbents board

One of our outstanding jobs was finally completed on 4th September with the hanging of the text explaining Stan Blacklock's connection to the SKP and the reason behind his wish to donate our incumbents board.



Stan has been in ill health recently but managed to make the journey over to Paris on his own. We look forward to seeing him again in November when he will be accompanied by his niece.

Bags of Hope

Our **Bags of Hope** project continues until the end of the year. We are already well over half way to our target of 100 bags. The hot summer months are behind us and as the temperatures drop and the nights get colder the need is once again for warm socks and hats, along with all the other imaginative items people have been putting in the bags. Let's keep up the good work just a little longer.

Second-hand books

Please take a look at our bookshelves the next time you're in church. We have a large selection of second-hand books on all sorts of subjects, all priced at the very modest sum of €1 or €2! Most of them are in very good condition and would make excellent presents. Of course this would be a very minor contribution to church funds but every little helps and no contribution is too small!

Welcome

Baby Vera Elizabeth was welcomed into the family of the Scots Kirk Paris and the wider family of God at her baptism on 11th September.



Vera is the daughter of Boris and Geraldine Rendambo who were married in the Scots Kirk by Rev. Jan Steyn. Rather unusually the service started without the baptismal party since, as frequently happens, many roads in the vicinity of the church were closed for a sporting event, making it extremely complicated to get to the rue Bayard. Despite everything, little Vera was as good as gold. Her proud mum and dad were presented with a children's Bible and Vera's name was added to our baptismal register.

Welcome to the SKP family Vera!

Jubilee tree



A mini-ceremony was held on 4th September to inaugurate the plaque for our jubilee tulip tree which is thriving - but then again, so many people know that it has to be watered that it would be astonishing if it wasn't doing well! Even before the tree was bought by Pierre Mure, the Sunday School children set about digging the hole and marking the spot with drawings of what they thought a jubilee tree would look like. Many thanks to Louise Anderson for seeing this project through with the children and for coming to church with her shears and goodness knows what else to tend to our tree. It must be the most pampered tree in France! And of course it has a special significance for us now.

And now a word from Alan, our locum

Someone once said that the Queen was like a soundtrack playing in the background all our lives and it was only when it stopped that we realized what wonderful music we had. And that is how I felt on hearing the news of her death at the end of my first week as your locum here at the Scots Kirk. I am sure that feeling was shared by a huge number of people in the church, in the country and throughout the world. Inevitably the media looked back and, through archives of her life and service, reflected upon her astonishing reign. Here in SKP there are some who can recall her visit - 6 days before this retired minister was born! - to lay the foundation stone of the previous building. Looking back, there is so much to be thankful for. Just as inevitably, we find ourselves looking forward to the reign of King Charles III. God bless our new King!



As your new, and very temporary, locum I am delighted beyond words that my wife Judith and I have been given the opportunity to serve SKP and to meet and work with your wonderful congregation. This, too, is a time when you are rightly looking back at the journey you have been on over the many, many years. But it is looking to the future that must now preoccupy the thoughts of us all, and that future is still uncertain. What a privilege to be with you at this strange, in-between time. On my second Sunday, as well as acknowledging the tremendous sadness of the death of the Queen, we had the wonderful joy of the Sacrament of Baptism during the service. As the congregation wrote prayers for little Vera Elizabeth they were, naturally, all forward looking. The service was in a way a picture of the world at that exact time: looking back at God's wonderful blessing of us through Her Majesty's unstinting faith and service, and looking forward with complete trust that this child, her family and the world in which she would grow up were all in the hands of God - and safe in those hands. There is a saying: "The problems before you are never greater than the power behind you!" and I'm sure that we will discover this to be true - as individuals and as a congregation.

International presbytery meeting

The IP will be holding its next meeting in Budapest from 7-9 October. The focus will once again be on the Presbytery Mission Plan which has to be submitted to and approved by the Church of Scotland by the end of the year. We are not the only ones wrestling with the problem of how to meet the allocation of full-time ministers we have been given. In the IP we often put forward the argument that our congregations are far apart geographically and that linkages, unions etc. are impossible but in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland the problem is the same if not worse. We have high-speed trains linking many main cities but the people on the islands have to rely on ferries and cross their fingers that the weather conditions allow them to run! The IP Planning Committee met regularly over the summer and will be reporting to presbytery that it is doing its utmost to move the discussions forward to ensure that the congregations in Europe and beyond can continue to thrive.

As a reminder, the C of S congregations in the IP are:

- Amsterdam
- Bochum, Germany
- Bermuda
- Brussels
- Budapest
- Colombo, Sri Lanka
- Geneva
- Lausanne
- Lisbon
- Malta
- Paris
- Rome
- Rotterdam

Candles for sale

Gamelieh's friend Claude is a familiar figure to many of us. Gamelieh has bought a stock of his handmade candles and these are on sale for church funds. If you would like to buy one (or more), see Louise or Valerie. Looking a good bit further ahead, a little candle would be a great stocking filler!



Welcome back barbecue

It was lovely to see so many familiar faces at our barbecue at the beginning of the month. Our new chefs did a grand job and as usual there was more than enough to go round. A huge thank you to all those who contributed, helped to set out the food and cleared up afterwards and to those who made it such a great occasion simply by being there. This really was a time of fellowship for young and old and we are already looking forward to our next get-together.

