



THE STEEPLE CHURCH

A church at the heart of the city with the city at its heart

July 2021

Currently we meet together on Sunday mornings at 10.30am using Zoom. After the service we go into small breakout rooms to chat and share news with one another. If you would like to be sent the Zoom link each week, please contact the church office.

The Zoom service is also projected on the screen in the church sanctuary. This allows those who are unable to access Zoom at home to be part of our Sunday Zoom Services at 10.30am each week. Anyone is welcome to attend the service at The Steeple, but priority will be given to those who do not have access to Zoom at home. Please email or telephone the church office by 12 noon on a Friday to reserve a seat for that week. Please give your name, contact details (for Test & Protect) and the number of seats you want to reserve.

An audio recording of the service is put on the church website after the service. You will find it on the 'Service Recordings' page (under 'Sundays').

We look forward to the time when we can all once again meet without restriction in our church building. The Kirk Session is keeping up to date with the Scottish Government and Church of Scotland's guidelines and information will be sent out once it is possible for us all to worship together again in our church building.

Many of our other weekly church gatherings continue using Zoom. Please contact the church office if you would like more details about any of our events.

Items for the September magazine should be sent by email to the church office by 22 August 2021.

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Matthew 11:28-30

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle
and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

We are nearing the time of summer holidays, at schools and workplaces and in church. I would imagine most people could do with a holiday. It has been a long stretch with lockdowns and restrictions since summer last year. This year has given everyone the chance to reflect on those things that are draining, those things that have taken all our time and those things we really don't want to do but continue to do so we don't upset others or stand out in a crowd.

Summer gives us a brief respite to routines and work. It is the place in the year we are actively encouraged to rest and relax. But I wonder how many of us go full pelt normally into holidays, travelling and dashing about doing this and that and the next thing so that when we return home, we do need a holiday to get over the holiday we have just had?

This year we may have to do things differently from previous years. But I wonder where does Jesus fit into your holiday schedules? Jesus encourages us to do things differently when it comes to living. He encourages us to seek him, to come to Him to where we can lay down the things of this world that aren't life giving, that drain us, that lead us from God and instead take up his ways. Ways that give our souls rest.

I have been reading a book called The Wired Soul where the author argues that our lifestyles coupled with technology and our over reliance upon it have changed our capacity to interact with one another and with God and that our capacity for the things and ways of God are being diminished. She points to meditation, prayer and pilgrimage as requiring time that many are now unwilling to spend due to technology reshaping us physically and spiritually. She argues that one day technology may be acknowledged as harmful as smoking to us. She may or may not be right but can we honestly say that given the chance to pray or play on our phones, or tablets which one we would rather do?

Jesus invites us to come to Him. I wonder how often we really take up that invitation and lay down the things that we really know aren't good for us whatever they may be. I was thinking about what a soul at rest may look like. Maybe one who is only moved by the voice of God and not by the competing voices of the world, that seek to overwhelm that part of the still small voice within us. Maybe a soul in Jesus rest is one who makes time to pray, to read and to listen, to observe what God is doing in the world. Maybe a soul at rest is one content in Jesus company, who longs for that connection and is happy to seek him out.

Jesus gave us an open invitation "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest" maybe it is one we should consider taking up this summer?

Wishing you every blessing over the summer months.

Emma

PRAYER

Lord we lean into the silence
Expectant and hopeful
To hear your still small voice
We give you praise for the blessings of this day
And for the times of rest that beckon us back to you.
Lord help us be mindful in our living
And in our resting
Mindful that you set us a Sabbath
To find rest, to worship and to focus on you and your ways.
Jesus tells us that his ways are not of the world
But that they are easy and his yoke light.
So help us live into this Lord as holidays edge closer and
for every day of our living that we may find our rest in you. Amen

NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Nominating Committee has now been formed and a search for a new minister is underway. The Nominating Committee has now met twice with a third meeting being arranged soon. There is much to discuss and there are some time restrictions which they need to be mindful of because of some decisions of the General Assembly which are affecting Presbytery Plans.

The Nominating Committee consists of; Jan Potter (Convener) David Stibbles (Clerk), Dona Robertson, Mark Parsons, Barbara MacFarlane, Stefan Ward, Stewart Millar , Rachel Toth, Heather McKenzie, Piers Bowser, Maureen Bowser, Robin Liddell, and Rosalind Alexander. As Interim Moderator I will attend meetings in a purely advisory role and will not take part in discussions or interviews and will not make any comments to the Nominating Committee about any candidates who apply. Decisions during the process will be made by the Nominating Committee alone.

Jan will give you an update occasionally going forward over the next few months. Please don't ask anyone from the group about what's going on as the whole process should be confidential. Instead, may I ask you to pray for the committee and their work that they are undertaking on your behalf.

Thank you.

Emma McDonald (Interim Moderator)



Several of our Home Groups are using Zoom to continue meeting for bible study and fellowship. If you would be interested in joining one of these, please the church Office .



Our regular Thursday Coffee Morning (10.30am) and Tuesday Afternoon Tea Break times (3pm) continue on Zoom. Why not drop in and have a catch up with friends.

FINANCE UPDATE

We are continuing to closely monitor income and expenditure in these abnormal times. Expenditure is generally in line with budget predictions this year but income is lower than predicted because of our delayed return to full worship on Sundays and because there are no hall lets just now. If you normally make your offering by envelope or cash please could you do this at Sunday worship or contact the Church Treasurer. The Church building may not be open as usual but we still have ongoing costs. Bob Potter, Finance Team Leader

LETTER FROM ROBERT AND LESLEY-ANN

Friends, thank you very much for your cards, the church pew and for your generous gift. We used it to erect a couple of 'hobby' sheds between the back of the cottage and the busy road (A91). The sheds allow us to keep the house from becoming too 'busy'. We're getting to know our neighbours in the six other cottages in this hamlet between Gateside and Strathmiglo.

We are now into a second month in our cottage looking onto the West Lomond. Though still unpacking boxes, most of them are upstairs in the floored attic. As this is where visitors can stay, we need to do this for next month before our grandchildren from California arrive. Our children were over for a day for the funeral of Robert's mum. They are planning to come over with their families when we shall inter her ashes in my father's lair at Langholm cemetery.

The garden is attractive for sitting in with its variety of poppies and fruit trees. We are discovering some great walks. The cats and hens have adapted well. Lesley-Ann is cold-water swimming at St. Andrews, the Ferry and several lochs while I'm getting more intimate with the Eden and Kinross Fishery.

We have started to visit churches on Sunday mornings at Portmoak, Kinross, St. Madoes, Cults and Auchtermuchty. It is a bit strange having so much time and so little responsibility! We're aware that healing takes time and of many who are struggling. We're taking time to rest and recover. It is lovely to live here. We walk with sheep and lambs, watch deer and the occasional raptor.

With our love and prayers
Robert and Lesley-Ann Calvert



There is a private Facebook and WhatsApp Group for the Steeple family so that folk can easily and quickly inform others in the Steeple community of any prayer requests or practical needs, in particular if they become unwell or are needing to self-isolate. If you have not already joined, details from the church office.

FROM THE PARISH NURSES

We continue to be busy throughout these days. Since re-opening at the Steeple, with Covid-19 regulations in place, we have seen between 20 and 45 people attending each session on Mondays and Thursdays. We've met quite a number of new people attending, and it's great to get to know them a bit better, building trust and friendship.

We have some new volunteers as well, people who found us through various ways, but we are delighted to have welcomed them into our team. One is also now volunteering with Eagles Wings as well. The feeling of family with Eagles is great – we all support each other. Sadly, one of the Eagles volunteers, Bill Newall, died after a long illness, and we were all able to give thanks to God for his life and service.

Kirsty is settling into full-time working, partly by re-organising the office – it has not been so well-organised ever, so that's a huge step in a positive direction. Clear office, clear thinking! We are working on redeveloping the links we had with drugs services in Dundee before the pandemic Staff from ISMS were attending weekly to see their patients. We hope they'll soon be back, although they are now called Dundee Drugs and Recovery Service, D-DARS. Kirsty is also organising the next Building Bridges meeting, and we are really hoping that regulations (both CofS and Covid-19) will permit us to meet together at The Steeple at long last again.

There has been a lot in the papers this week about the role of street benzodiazepines in contributing to well over 60% of drug-related deaths in Scotland and Dundee. Dundee seems to be in the grip of the use of 'crack cocaine' and street 'benzos', with terrible results. Please pray for our city leaders, DDARS and the Alcohol and Drug Partnership, that they and we will find effective ways of reducing the desperately awful drug death toll on our city. Each person who dies is somebody's son, mother, daughter, brother, and the impact on families is truly heartbreaking.

Kirsty and Barbara

SUNDAY @ SEVEN THIRTY

A time for the Steeple Church family
to meet together
for reflection and prayer

Every Sunday evening at 7.30 pm, we meet to pray together, using Zoom. Details from the office or on the Church Family Facebook page under Announcements.

PARISH NURSING - SPONSORED RUN



A group of six keen runners met at Camperdown Park on a warm Saturday in early June to run a half marathon in aid of Parish Nursing. Michael seemed to set off at a Usain Bolt pace but good news - he went the wrong way in Camperdown and we temporarily caught him up! Into Templeton Woods and Stefan was ignoring his coaches advice ie. talking when he should have been

saving his energy for running. Michael was out of sight by the time we got to Clatto, not to be seen again until the finish but I later discovered he went the wrong way a few times and ended up doing about 15 miles!

Meanwhile, Rachel M, Angie and Claire were all progressing at a good pace as you would expect from regular runners but hand signals were sometimes needed to keep Claire on the right route. Crossing Arbroath Road slowed us all as we had to wait for lights. When we got to the downhill section on Grange Road Stefan found his accelerator pedal and sped off so fast that he was out of earshot to hear the route.

Eventually all runners arrived at the finish well within the maximum target time of 2 hours 30 minutes. A big thanks to all the runners and to the support team of Moira, Barbara, Rachel T, Emmy and Stewart ably coordinated by Jan.

Almost £2,200 was raised for Parish Nursing which will help to fund this vital work.

Bob Potter



What's been happening recently at **CONNECTIONS CAFÉ** and what's next?

What's been happening recently?

In the February Steeple News we wrote of a successful outcome to the funding application to support refugee families during this difficult time. As in last year's October half term programme, Sarah Emslie-Smith once again co-ordinated an Easter Holiday Family Fun event designed by a planning group involving refugee friends, students, Sandy Greene at [ScrapAntics](#) and Isa Malik at [Bikeium](#). You can view a short video on the Connections Café website [here](#). Parts of the video were included in the video produced by Fiona Reynolds for Dundee Presbytery's contribution to 'Good News Stories' for the General Assembly.

The upcoming Zoom meetings on the environment, also referred to in February's Steeple News, were attended by folk from STAR (Student Action for Refugees), the newly formed Steeple Eco Group, and from further afield, friends from Egypt and England! They were very informative, and at the same time disquieting as we reflected on the significant challenges we already face and will continue to face from climate change in the future. At the first meeting Dr Rana Abu-Mounes, a post-doctoral researcher at the [Centre for Muslim-Christian Studies](#) in Oxford gave a presentation and led a conversation on the future diverse impact of water scarcity and at the second Milli Crouch, the student volunteer co-ordinator for STAR, studying Politics and History, led an equally disquieting and thought provoking conversation on Climate and Migration. Does the good news of Jesus have any relevance? I guess that's what the Steeple Eco Group are challenging us to think about?

We may be on the verge of being 'Zoomed out' but one benefit is to allow us to link up with people from across the world. For example in May, during Israel's ethnic cleansing of Sheikh Jarrah in Jerusalem and the sequelae, we were able to hear directly from Mariam Afifi, a Palestinian from East Jerusalem, and listen to her account of the ongoing troubles in Israel, Gaza and the Occupied Territories. Also in the conversation was Haroun from Hebron and Tareq, a medical student, from Gaza. Mariam, a double bass student at Edward Said National Conservatory of Music and a member of the Palestine Youth Orchestra, was arrested in Sheikh Jarrah on Saturday 8th May after going to the aid of a young woman who had fallen to the ground. Mariam was filmed being dragged along the ground and subsequently questioned a soldier about his morals. She was released the following day. Rebecca Minio-Paluello, a member of the Connections Café community, came to know Mariam when she was living in Bethlehem from 2015-2018 and teaching violin at the Edward Said Conservatory of Music in East Jerusalem. You can view an extract from the conversation on the Connections Café Facebook page [here](#).

What's next?

Connections Café began in February 2018, so we've been going for almost three and a half years, the last year within the restrictions imposed by Covid. It's been a varied, roller coaster and enriching journey during which, we believe, God has been present and for which we have much to thank Him.

Nevertheless as the author of Ecclesiastes reminds us "There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens". Like the book of Job, it refuses to dodge the hard questions of life and doesn't allow easy solutions. Maybe the God's



"next" for Connections Café can no longer be contained in the wine skin of the past three years? The lives of many in the Connections Café community have moved on....maybe the Holy Spirit is prompting us, as we were reminded recently by our Interim Moderator, to follow the example of Abraham by leaving our old idols and following Him into new territory, or maybe He's suggesting that we call it a day! What do you think?

STEEPLE AUTUMN ALPHA - CHANGE OF PLANS

For well over a year I'd been looking forward to leading a Steeple Alpha Team in anticipation of running a Zoom course from September to December with Morag. However, I feel I need to step back from leading this year's Alpha team because we now anticipate moving from Dundee to Edinburgh by the end of the year. From the Steeple Alpha point of view we're very sorry about this turn of events. Going to Edinburgh is motivated, long term, by us wishing to be nearer children and grandchildren in the central belt. There may be a just chance of someone else running with the Steeple 2021 Alpha Course baton but that's not something I am able to determine. Rather than leave a blank Alpha space in the July Steeple Magazine I thought you should all hear from me about our anticipated change of city since all that the removing process involves precludes us from being available to lead a Steeple Alpha after the summer.

Jim Robertson, Alpha Leader

Nobody needs to be reminded what a strange year this has been so far... it's been all kinds of tough, draining, worrying, weird and wonderful for **HOT CHOCOLATE** too. We've been working to stay alongside young people and support them as effectively as we can through all the variations of covid guidance.

This has meant digital open sessions and online 1:1s; working outdoors with individuals and groups; detached work around the city centre streets, parks, car parks and wherever we find young people hanging out; and even some indoor work now too. We've done anything from art exhibitions (check out www.hotchocolate.org.uk/artefacts) to dungeons and dragons, study groups and nature sessions to training on how to support friends around suicidality. Now, we're looking forward to starting our Exodus programmes next week! This year's theme is "Grit", exploring perseverance, resilience, beauty out of pain... you can probably guess how we came up with that. We're spreading the programme over 6 weeks to allow a more low-key sustainable pace, rather than three weeks of madness as we've done in the past, but with lots of exciting activities and trips to come.



Many young people continue to face some pretty stark challenges and you'll have some sense of how hard the pandemic has hit young people's education, employment prospects (16-24s are much more likely to have lost jobs due to Covid), and mental health. This has been particularly hard for those who are already dealing with big challenges unrelated to the pandemic. We're privileged to be able to support so many to meet these challenges and we're determined to keep doing that.

If you'd like to help us then there are at least four ways:

We send out prayer letters (never as often as we intend to...) contact admin@hotchocolate.org.uk to be on the list

We have a new Volunteer Coordinator! So if you've an interest in volunteering somehow get in touch with her georgia@hotchocolate.org.uk

If you'd like to support Hot Chocolate financially check out how you could Adopt-a-Shark <https://www.hotchocolate.org.uk/adoptashark>

Or if you'd like to support youth work across the city (Christian and non-Christian together) then get involved with the 29,000 Reasons campaign. It might be something you could encourage your workplace to consider supporting... <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/29000ReasonsDundee>

Dave Close, Executive Director

CROSSREACH

Care you can put your faith in

Crossreach, the Social Care Council of the Church of Scotland, offers loving care to people of all ages who are in need of a helping hand, supporting them to live life to the full whatever their circumstances.

Crossreach Mission Statement

In Christ's name we seek to support people to achieve the highest quality of life which they are capable of achieving at any given time.

Below are some excerpts for prayer from the Crossreach prayer diary which is available on their website www.crossreach.org.uk

Week beginning Sunday 27th June

Heart for Art

Uses creativity to support and encourage people with a diagnosis of dementia and their families. The groups connect people in communities and provide therapeutic art sessions.

- Peace for every person experiencing the challenges and concerns arising from a diagnosis of dementia.
- Blessings for each member of the team as they continue to support the artists and their families with dedication and compassion.
- Thanks for the beauty of art and for the amazing creativity and talent being unlocked as the artists take part in the classes.
- For the artists to continue to feel supported and free to express themselves through creative arts.
- Blessings for the carers and volunteers whose love, commitment and free-time are given to support those with a diagnosis of dementia.
- For ongoing funding, so this needed and valued service will continue to be delivered and developed.
- Blessings, for all the Heart for Art groups and the people who attend and support them.

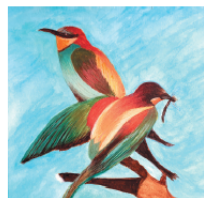
Week beginning Sunday 11th July

The Oasis Bankfoot & Tryst day care services, Perthshire

Day care services for older people who live in their own homes.

These prayers were composed with people who use the service.

- Thanks for the friends we meet when we come to The Tryst and Oasis Bankfoot, it is nice to meet new people and enjoy activities together.
- Give thanks for our families and all they do to support us. May we all have good health and many years of happiness together.
- Thanks for the Lord's promise that says when we are weak He makes us strong and that when we are weary and heavily burdened we can go to Him and He will make us strong and give us peace.
- Give thanks to the Father that He is the source of all that is good. His beautiful creation is testimony to His artistry and handiwork.
- Remembering those who are going through bereavement: may they be comforted.



Elizabeth Tavener 'Tea for two'
Artwork from Heart for Art

