



SC005478

June 2021

## Moderator Address To The General Assembly

Saturday 22nd May 2021

For as long as I'm a part of the Church of Scotland and have a voice within it, I'll call on it to announce - and to be - 'good news to the poor, liberty to the captives, sight to the blind' - to be present with the downtrodden and the marginalised and the oppressed and, as scripture has it, 'the least of these.'

Why? Because that's what Jesus was about and I've no interest in being part of anything which isn't primarily focussed on making real today that which Jesus set in motion.

And what will all of that look like in practice?

It will be what we call the mission of the Church - and might I say, the much talked-about five marks of that mission?

Here are the last three of these marks:  
And so...

Until the last food bank in Scotland is closed - because there is no longer any need - we've got work to do.

For as long as there are children growing up in Scotland who's life chances are at best 'compromised' and at worse 'ruined' because of their postcode - we've got work to do.

Until we can find more productive and humane and effective ways of dealing with those who break our laws - but who in truth are usually victims themselves - we've got work to do.

And it goes on.

For as long as there is planning for the retention of - even the increase in numbers of - nuclear warheads on OUR shores - there is work for us to do.

For as long as many of our impoverished communities continue to be awash with drugs - and we Scots continue to have the worst drugs deaths stats in Europe - there is work for us to do.

For as long as there are despairing people, struggling with poor mental health, having to wait months and years for suitable treatment - there is work for us to do.

And among them, for as long as there are ANY who sense that 'darkness is their only friend' - to quote the Psalmist - and who resort to ending their lives - there is work for us to do.

I know that both His Grace, the Lord High Commissioner, and the First Minister, are with me on that.

And for as long as we continue to pollute our rivers, poison our air and fill holes in the ground with our waste - there is work for us to do.

For as long as anti-catholic, anti-Irish bile is spewed onto our streets by so-called football fans - there is work for us to do.

Until every person in Scotland - and in all those places where the Church of Scotland is present - is treated according to who they are and not by the colour of their skin and not by the place where they worship and not by the language they speak - there is work for us to do.

For as long as people - predominately young women - are trafficked into Scotland to work as sex slaves and in the off-the-books economy - there is work for us to do.

And for as long as women - of any age and from anywhere - don't feel safe walking home at night - there's work for us to do.

For as long as it's possible for someone seeking asylum - someone like Mercy Baguma - to die while supposedly in our care - there is work for us to do.

For as long as there are lost souls sleeping rough in shop doorways or families in damp, substandard bread & breakfast style accommodation - there is work for us to do.

And yes, though it be far-off and 'over there,' for as long as the skies over the Holy Lands are ripped open by another barrage of rockets and mortars and the overwhelming superiority of attacks from the air - in some small way, there is work for us to do.

That's what it will look like - all of that and more - for us to give ourselves to the ways of the Kingdom as set out by Jesus in his 'here's why I'm here' manifesto.

And so it's for us too.  
.....

But here's the problem. Unless we get our act together - and rapidly! - there's hardly going to be any church left to do it!

I've heard it so many times that, for the Church, it's not about numbers. It absolutely will be about numbers if the numbers are so low that the Church can no longer run Cross-reach or local caring services because the local church isn't there any more!

So I long for the Church to be about that Kingdom work but, oh boy, how we need the Church to be refreshed, renewed, revitalised, remade and, yes, reformed that it might do it more effectively.

(Continued over)

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**ST. ANDREW'S ARBROATH****Member Records****May 2021****Baptisms and Blessings** - None**Weddings** - None**Funerals** - None**IMPORTANT DATE****JUNE EDITION****Word Processed files, as attachments, should be  
sent directly to the Editor****Tuesday 22nd June (Word-Processed file)**

I long for an alive, vibrant church - a Church that has traded in the lukewarm... and instead is passionate in its love of Jesus in such a way that others will want a piece of that action.

I long for a Church empowered as it worships - a Church shaped by the Word, alive in the Spirit - a Church that knows itself called AND sent - a Church that is confident in the Gospel in the face of both hostility and indifference - a Church that teaches and baptises and nurtures new believers in Christ.

In other words, ALL of the five marks of mission - we better see to 1 and 2 if we're going to be any good at 3,4 and 5!! It's all got to hang together.

So even as we let go of some of what, sadly, has passed it's sell-by date, let's commit ourselves to planting new Christian communities - that are low on maintenance, high on impact. And let's be better at identifying, equipping and commissioning pioneers - ordinary folk working on the margins.

And let's commit to every part of Scotland but at the same time, crack on with well-equipped spaces in the right places and so deal once and for all with an over-dependence on abundance of buildings.

And yes mission to the whole of Scotland, as per the Third Article, but maybe in new and creative ways - ecumenically, for sure, and with an emphasis on Christian community and evangelical endeavour in every place rather than, necessarily, all of what we used to mean by the 'ordinances of religion...' and everything that went with that.

And let's get on with the reorganisation that we've started out on - that the sooner we sort the structures, the sooner we can get to what really matters... proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom!

.....

Tomorrow is Pentecost? A day of fire. I believe the Holy Spirit is still in the business of starting fires; it's time for the Church to start fanning those flames and to put away those fire extinguishers.

The Good News of Jesus Christ is not subject to a health and safety committee! Let the fire burn.

That kind of Church - signed up to ALL that is meant by mission.

I'm absolutely up for that.

**Martin Fair**

## From the Session Clerk

Can it really be just over a year since we bade farewell to Martin, but here we are - the General Assembly of 2021 has taken place and Martin as Moderator has installed his successor Rt Hon Lord Wallace of Tankerness as Moderator of the General Assembly for the coming year.

Martin will take a short holiday and will return to serve us as The Very Reverend Dr Martin Fair on Sunday 20th June 2021.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported me during this year. I would especially like to thank Ian Gray who has supported me pastorally, and Linda for everything she has done to keep the administration of the church going, through what has been a challenging year for us all.

I pray God's blessing to be upon all of the church family of St Andrew's

Yours in Christ

**Joan**

# Theophilus

## The Fourth Commandment

*Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.* Exodus 20:8

*The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.* Mark 2:27

‘Sabbath’ means ‘ceasing’ and therefore ‘resting’. The Sabbath is a loving gift to us, so we cease from the rush of living, and rest in God. Since our Lord rose on the first day of the week, Christians have celebrated Sunday, the Lord’s Day, as a Day of Rest.

Lord, I need a Day of Rest.

I’m even more busy since I became involved in Church. As well as work and family, there are now other activities—evenings out, extra meetings, emails to write, people to see. Life has become so hectic. I hardly have time to think.

Lord, I need to appreciate Your Day of rest.

How good to be with You in worship

—the Day You surprised Mary Magdalene in the Garden, as dawn came, and she lingered alone, overcome by sorrow;

—the Day You met Simon Peter, after he had denied you three times, and you forgave and restored him;

—the Day You joined Cleopas on the dusty road of life, and his heart burned as you shared with him things concerning Yourself;

—the Day you breathed Your Spirit on Your trembling disciples as they hid in the upper room;

—the Day You confronted Thomas with all his doubts, and he worshipped You as Lord and God;

Lord, I need to enjoy the gift of Your Day.

Even when my shift work falls on Sunday, I still make time to be with You; when the week has been too full, ironing needs doing, the garden needs weeding, the car needs washing, I must still preserve the luxury of your Day of Rest; when the fever of life intrudes, and the rush and bustle tries to rob my of your peace, I must still guard the gift of Your Day.

*My Child,  
This is the secret of enduring: to be still and know that I am God.  
This is the art of renewal: to rest and be quiet before Me.  
This is the way of growth in faith: to share in the worship of My Name-  
For they who wait on Me will renew their strength,  
They shall mount up with wings as eagles,  
They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*

**David Searle**

## Dalitso Project Update

It’s that time of year again, when we start collecting the presents for the sponsor children. Details have been sent out through the emailing list, our online magazine and on Facebook. If you have not seen a copy of the lists then please do get in touch with one of the team.

We are this year collecting both Summer and Christmas gifts as I know many missed buying 2 last year. For the majority of our children these will be the only gifts they receive. Like with container donations, please get in touch to arrange drop off of your gifts. The deadlines are as follows.

Summer Present - June 30th

Christmas Present - July 31st

If you would prefer to make a donation and have one of the

team buy your gifts then please get in touch. If you do not sponsor but would like to buy a gift for one of our older young people who are not sponsored please also get in touch and we can provide a name, age and size.

We have some great news from our team in Malawi. The Dalitso Project family has a new addition. Iona Kunsauka was born in May, a 3rd daughter for our administrator Kiri at Thyolo and her husband. Please do remember Kiri and Iona in your prayers.

Our latest magazine is now online and can be found at the following link -

[https://issuu.com/dalitsoproject/docs/edition\\_6\\_-\\_may\\_2021](https://issuu.com/dalitsoproject/docs/edition_6_-_may_2021)

It is full of up-to-date information on the projects in Malawi.

**Charis**

## 7<sup>th</sup> Arbroath BB

It's been a long time since we have had anything to report due to the time we have been living in.

The good news is that two of our boys who have been working during the lockdown have finally completed their Queen's Badge completion course on Zoom on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May.

**Tom Christison and Robert Thomson**

are now Queen's Men. We as a Company are delighted that this has been achieved during these difficult times. We hope to have a presentation in the summer to mark this great occasion.

It has been a year like no other and this has reflected on our BB company and decisions that have been taken will be known to you all in a future Quest report.

**Captain Wilma H Ewart.**

## Thy Kingdom Come

The Sunday Club children recently took part in the 'Cheeky Pandas: Thy Kingdom Come' 2021 global initiative run by the Church of England. This programme ran between Thursday the 13th and Sunday the 23rd of May to mark the period of time between Ascension and Pentecost.

Thy Kingdom Come produced some fantastic content for children such as an interactive prayer map (which utilised artificial intelligence), cartoon episodes and a full activity programme for each day. We provided all the craft materials required for the eleven sessions and there was the option

for families to provide their own ingredients to take part in baking/cooking activities.

Each child's pack consisted of a lot of resources as we very much understand that the families may only have selected one or some to complete over the programme time. We are happy that they can complete them at their own pace and can always save them for a rainy day if they wish!

It is fantastic that we can continue our family ministry through 'faith at home' initiatives such as 'Thy Kingdom Come' and look forward to next year's activities.

**Carla**

## Reflections

Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair shared his thoughts on how he successfully adapted the unique role during a special event streamed live online from the Assembly Hall in Edinburgh on Wednesday, 19 May.

In conversation with Seonaid Knox, an elder at St John's Parish Church in Gourrock, Inverclyde, he talked about the highs and lows of acting as the Church's ambassador during an incredibly challenging year.

The interview was on the Church of Scotland website and Facebook page and a recording will be made available.

Dr Fair said: "It's hard to get my head around the fact that 'my year' is almost over. Though, of course, it has been far from normal. I've never been idle and have had something of a bird's eye view of the life of the Church throughout the period of the pandemic. I'm hoping that through this special review evening I'll be able to share some of that and some reflections on how the role of Moderator adapted to rise to the challenges that were faced."



**The 'Thy Kingdom Come' children's resources packed and ready to be delivered.**



**A Pentecost dove (similar to our May Messy Church Pack craft) displayed in the church window for our family service.**



**Martin on his 'Kiltwalk'**

## Fidget Blankets - Thank You

Helen Wallace and Heather Black would like to thank everyone who donated items for the fidget blankets. Your donations are very much appreciated and will help make lots of blankets. Thank you!