

'Let Your Light Shine' urges Moderator

How this year's Moderator's Challenge will bring 'light in the darkness' for young people in Malawi.

CHURCH members are being encouraged to be a "light in the darkness" to help school pupils and students in Malawi.

The Rt Rev Dr Shaw Paterson, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, is asking congregations and others to help fund solar power energy initiatives for students.

The Moderator's Challenge appeal will enable children to do their homework and advance their education with the aid of small solar lights they can borrow from their school's 'light library'. It will also provide solar panels to enable PhD students at Zomba Theological University to study during the hours of darkness.

The Moderator was inspired to encourage people to support this challenge after his visit to Malawi in September, when he saw the difficulties children faced in studying during the dark evenings without lights.

Daylight hours in sub-Saharan Africa are short and most children are forced to do their homework by the light of candles,



kerosene lamps and fire.

Dr Paterson also witnessed first-hand power outages in Zomba Theological University and said the call to action fits the theme of his Moderatorial year, Building Together.

"As much as I love a good DIY project, this theme is more about 'Building the People of God'," he said. "Allowing everyone at whatever level they are at, to be encouraged and supported to take the next step on their journey through life."

Donate at <https://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/donate/?fund=128170> 

Welcome to the Life and Work monthly newsletter, a free resource helping Church of Scotland members stay up-to-date with everything going on in the Church and its partners.

Each month there will be exclusive features, news and updates from Church organisations.

The newsletter is free to download from www.lifeandwork.org/newsletter. Feel free to share with church members, friends and family, and get in touch if you have any comments or suggestions.

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Securing a future for at-risk churches

Thomas Baldwin reports on a new Lottery programme supporting current and former places of worship

A SCOTLAND-WIDE programme that will help secure at risk churches for community use is being launched thanks to The National Lottery Heritage Fund's new Places of Worship initiative.

Funding of almost £500,000 has been awarded to the Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS) for its New Futures Programme, with a key focus on former places of worship.

It is the first funding award in Scotland under the National Lottery Heritage Fund's £15 million Places of Worship strategic initiative. The three-year initiative is being delivered as part of the Heritage Fund's ten-year strategy, Heritage 2033.

Around a further £85million is expected to be awarded through National Lottery Grants for Heritage grants programme over the next three years across the UK to support current and former places of worship.

Welcoming the announcement of the £491,708 support for its New Future Programme, Linda Gillespie from DTAS said: "With many historic places of worship in Scotland now potentially being disposed of, this grant will enable us to work with communities across the country to help them retain these key assets for generations to come."

The National Lottery Heritage Fund Director for Scotland Caroline Clark said: "The National Lottery Heritage Fund has been supporting places of worship for 30 years. Since 1994, we've

invested more than £1billion into more than 8,200 places of worship across the UK.

"We recognise the scale of the challenges facing places of worship and those who care for them, and want to be as creative and responsive as possible to the sector's needs, now and in the future.

"We're really pleased to support this strategic project with DTAS as it will help communities explore new uses for former places of worship and, where appropriate to look community ownership models giving these cherished buildings a bright and sustainable future."

DTAS is an independent, member-led organisation, with a network of more than 350 development trusts, which aims to promote, support and represent development trusts - community-led organisations using a combination of enterprise and creativity to improve the quality of life for local people in urban, rural and island communities across Scotland.

Its New Futures Programme – Former Places of Worship will provide specialist advisors to work with community organisations, research and engage with communities to identify where additional support is most needed, provide toolkits for community engagement, and support mentoring and sharing good practice.

There will also be development of a



Leith St Andrew's Centre has received funding for feasibility work on community ownership.

dedicated support service for groups to access support more quickly where needed, and a microgrants programme offering support with the cost of community consultation events and communication. This will be particularly helpful for disadvantaged and marginalised communities.

Find out more about the Heritage Fund and places of worship at <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/our-work/places-worship>

Find out more about DTAS at <https://dtascot.org.uk/> ■

Put your church on the map

Is your church welcoming to refugees? Do you run any groups that would help people who have moved to Scotland? If so we would encourage you to put yourself on the map.

Scottish Refugee Council are updating their New Scots Connect Map, a tool to help people who are new to Scotland to find support, friends, information and advice in their local area. Scottish Faith Action for Refugees are encouraging faith groups who are welcoming to refugees and migrants to register with New Scots Connect. You can list any groups, support you offer, and worship services so people know they are welcome to join.

The link to the form for the map can be found at <https://www.cognitofirms.com/scottishrefugeecouncil1/mapandforumregistrationform>

You can also reach out to your local SRC Regional co-ordinator for more information, listed at <https://scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/communities/new-scots-connect/>

And if you want to explore ways your church can become more welcoming to New Scots, get in touch with Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees for advice and support at moodie@churchofscotland.org.uk

Chalmers Lectures

The 2024 Chalmers Lectures series continues over the coming weeks with three lectures from the Rev Professor John Swinton, Professor in Practical Theology and Pastoral Care and Chair in Divinity and Religious Studies at the University of Aberdeen.

Dr Swinton will give three lectures on 'Being present: finding friendship in a 'hopeless world', taking place online on November 28 and December 3 and 5 from 7-8.30pm. That will be followed by a hybrid Q&A session with Dr Swinton and Dr Katie Cross (who delivered the first three of this year's Chalmers Lectures), chaired by the Rev Dr Alison Jack.

The Q&A will be a hybrid event, online or in person at the King's College Conference Centre, Aberdeen.

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/chalmerslectures2024

London Book Festival

Top writers including Alexander McCall Smith, Ian Rankin, Ann Cleeves and Chris Brookmyre are appearing at a new Scottish book festival in London kicking off next week.

The St Andrew's Book Festival includes over 35 events, most of them taking place in St Columba's Church of Scotland in Pont Street.

For full details visit www.standrewsbookfestival.org

What's On

Iona Community

**John Bell in conversation with Ricky Ross
November 22 at 1pm**

Govan and Linthouse Parish Church and via YouTube

To celebrate the launch of John Bell's new book "And then she said", John will be in conversation with broadcaster and musician Ricky Ross.

"And Then She Said" offers a glimpse into the extraordinary lives of ordinary people, revealing the power of faith, the beauty of human connection, and the unexpected ways in which God can work in our lives.

John L Bell is known for his contributions to liturgy, spirituality and social justice through his work with the Wild Goose Resource Group and the Iona Community.

Ricky Ross is a songwriter, broadcaster and the frontman of Scottish band Deacon Blue.

Sign up to attend online or in Govan via

<https://tinyurl.com/JohnBellRickyRoss>

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In December's Life and Work

Christmas

How churches in the midst of conflict or danger are marking Christmas
Lynne McNeil learns about the growth of Christingle service
Seasonal message from the Moderator

Time to Act

As World AIDS Day approaches, Carol Finlay highlights the need for vigilance

Letter from the Holy Land

The Rev Dr Stewart Gillan emphasises the need to keep the light shining, 'piercing the darkness together'.



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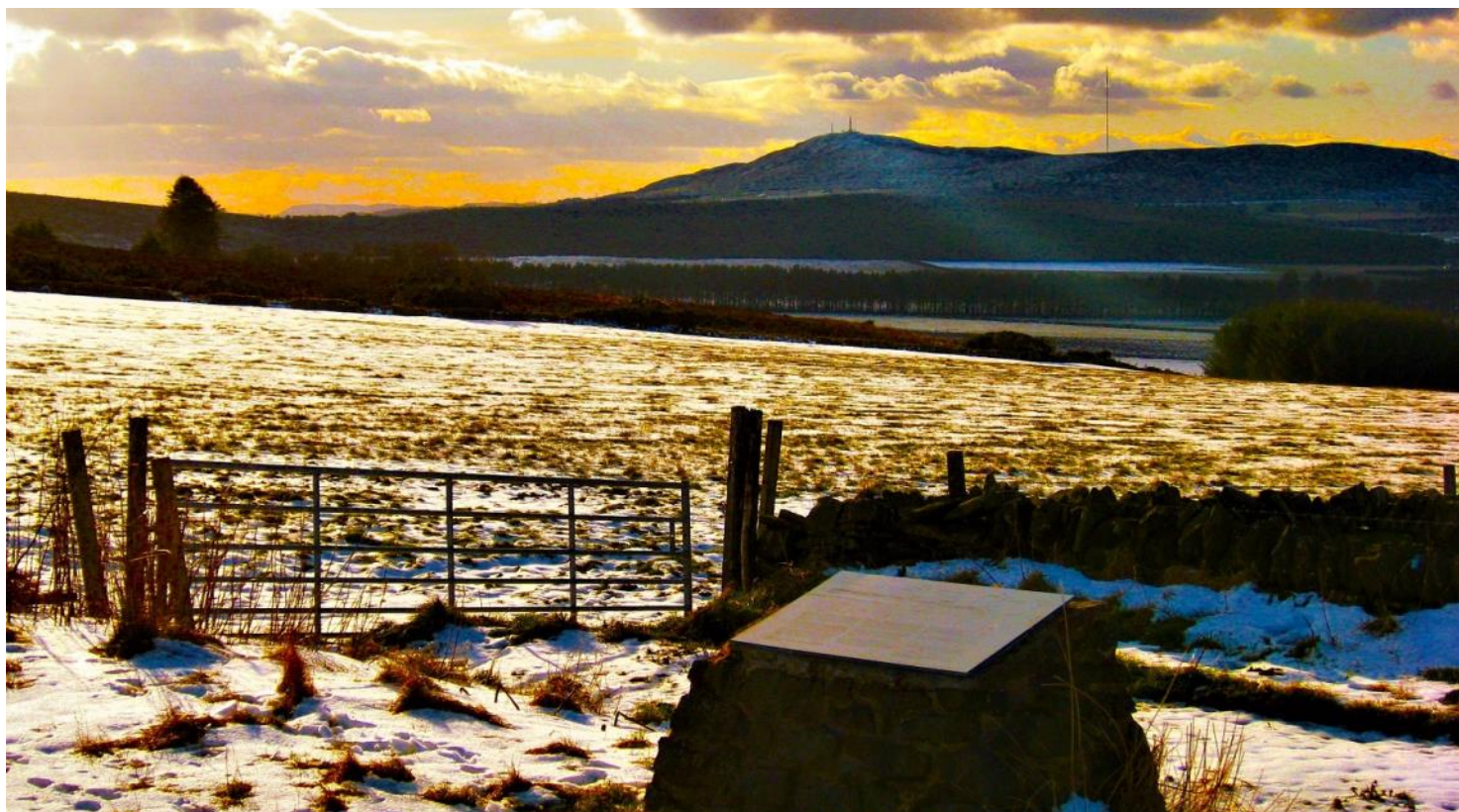
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The Big Picture

Craigowl from Carrot Hill by John Crichton



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