



The Steeple Church

September 2018

a church at the heart of the city . . .



. . . with the city at its heart

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Dear friends

This month is notable for the opening of the Victoria and Albert museum of Design in Dundee. Designed as a 'living room for the city' that reconnects the city to its historic waterfront, the V&A Dundee puts Dundee on the world map. It builds upon December 2014 when Dundee was named as the UK's first City of Design by the United Nations. The city has been recognised by UNESCO for its diverse contributions to fields including medical research, comics and video games. Through Dundee's own innovative people, it has joined a small group of global design cities such as Seoul, Kobe, Montréal, Shenzhen, Berlin, Buenos Aires, Helsinki and Bilbao.

Though this eye-catching development will bring jobs and new visitors to the city, there is a controversy brewing from some quarters about the worth of the expenditure on the V&A museum and whether it would have been better spent. The criticism is that much of the £80.1 million spent on the museum could have provided a lifeline for the poor and all who experience austerity on a daily basis. It is claimed that the city needs to give more attention to the shocking level of child poverty, food bank usage, benefit problems, low wages and drug deaths.

In the Steeple Church we want to identify with the whole city. In 'Parish Nursing' we are able to come alongside and help many vulnerable men and women. But it is 'a drop in the ocean'. We also believe that everybody needs beauty as well as bread. People need places to play in as well as pray in. That's why we want the church to be more open for everyone. I have friends who as painters, actors or singers have really struggled to make it a living. They easily identify with many who cannot get jobs that pay adequately. Some who have struggled mentally and emotionally would be very annoyed if they were told that their work was only reaching one section of society.

Art has the potential to heal and give strength to our spirits. The poor need art and beauty as much as anyone else. I can remember when I was a young minister on the Glasgow housing estate that I often felt my Roman Catholic colleagues had an advantage because of their beautiful ornate sanctuaries compared to the rather worn-out gym hall that was St. Mark's. (We made up for that in many other ways.) I also noticed how many poor families that I visited went to great lengths to make the inside of their homes bright and beautiful compared to the dirt on their doorsteps. They want beauty too!

Over the summer the lunchtime service on Wednesdays at 12.30 has followed the theme of art and design in the bible. We have been looking at songs, music, ritual and statues. We learn that the God who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ uses many forms to engage with us. Some of us are 'bookish', others are 'arty' and others more action types who like to get it done. But God accommodates himself to us all. Especially to those most excluded in life.

Over the weekend of the opening of the V&A, the Steeple is going to open to everyone, whether local Dundee people or visitors to the city. We will offer a visual and interactive opportunity to think about the theme of 'journeying'. We hope to continue to be open on some evenings with stunning imagery that offers a place to stop and think. Already Monday and Friday afternoons offer all kinds of people the opportunity to reflect and pray, view an exhibition or come together to relax and play games. Come and give a couple of hours to make this a worthwhile experience for all!

Your friend and minister
Robert Calvert

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

This summer the **'Recovery Roadmap'** was launched to provide vital information and help. Through Rachel McReady and her team a range of resources with addresses and telephone numbers is now available on a map for people suffering with poor mental health.

The **'Alpha' course** is on every second Tuesday night starting 11 September. This is for everyone who wants to find out about Jesus or take a refresher on what Christianity is all about. Can you bring someone? Could you make a meal for one of the evenings? It is likely that a An Alpha Marriage course will also start up – watch out for further information!

On Saturday 29 September, **'CreationFest'** is a celebration of Christian faith from midday to 8 pm. Bands and artists will play from podiums set up on City Square. Acoustic musicians will have their own venue. The seminars and workshops will take place in Gilfillan Memorial Church during the day with a final session here at the Steeple on Saturday night. Mission Aviation Fellowship bring their flight simulator. There is skateboarding, football and graffiti-art. A prayer tent, an information point, a tent with street chaplains and parish nurses and an information point. We are looking for volunteers from local churches. We need people to be involved to offer hospitality and information, to work with children, to prayer and to steward. We have also put together a brochure "God Loves Dundee" for handing out.

Welcome to our **interns from the Netherlands!**

They are here for six months and will work with the Steeple, the Episcopal Church and RockSolid in Douglas. They write: "Artur is from Spain and Lauren was born in the United States, although she spent most of her childhood in Romania. We met each other while studying at Tyndale Theological Seminary and have now been married for two years. We graduated from Tyndale in June. Being passionate about teaching and helping others grow in their faith, we are excited to serve here in Dundee and see what God is doing in this city."



FINANCE UPDATE

Members of the congregation continue to give generously both financially and in volunteering to assist with hall lets. When the Dundee Presbytery representatives came earlier this year to do their 5 year assessment they commented on the high level of financial giving per person in The Steeple. However, there has been a reduction in giving in 2018. An analysis of the figures was considered by the Congregational Board and it was noted that the number of givers has remained almost unchanged but some generous donors have re-assessed their giving which is the reason for the reduction. Because giving remains generous and because the Board are aware that many people also gave to help clear the Development loan there is not to be any general appeal to the congregation to increase giving. The only request I would make is that if your giving has been at the same level for a number of years please could you review it. This is because expenditure increases with inflation and a static level of giving effectively means a reduction each year.

Congregational Giving January to July

Total to 31/07/2018	Total to 31/07/17	Percentage Change
£55,103	£59,909	-8.02

Apart from congregational giving our main source of income is from hall lets. The surplus from this has previously been used to pay off the development loan and I am delighted to say that this loan was cleared earlier this year. In the current year hall income is partly being used to fund an improved projector and an upgrade of the floors. However, the decline in congregational giving and an increase in expenditure this year (particularly on maintenance) means that an amount of around £20,000 is likely to be needed this year from hall lets income in order to balance the general account. Therefore, our current situation is that without hall letting income we would not be able to fund missional and other activities.

Bob Potter

SAVE THE DATE – Friday 30th November! There will be a Celebration Ceilidh, to thank God for his provision and to thank everyone who has contributed, whether by their prayer support, volunteering work or financial giving, to enable us to fully pay off the redevelopment loan.

CROSSREACH does so many things ...

The real story of CrossReach is the work our staff do. Here are a few stories of people we have supported and cared for.

Substance Misuse

Christine turned up at one of our residential rehabilitation services for those addicted to alcohol at a point in her life where “My addiction had eaten away at me, robbing me of my family, confidence, self esteem and finance; the feeling of loss and of being lost overpowered me.” After her time with us, Christine is now free from her addiction, has rediscovered her faith and belief in herself.

Children and Families

Sid has been in foster care since being 6 weeks old. There is a plan to re-introduce Sid, now 11 months old, to his mother and family. The plan includes Sid and his mother attending a Baby Massage Training Group. Sid’s mother was physically abused and beaten during pregnancy. The fight was with another drug dealer. Sid’s parents met whilst teenagers – they were both in care. Sid’s mum knows this is her “last chance” to keep Sid.



Learning Disabilities

Banff with my mum and dad, aye right! Daniel was 19 in a wheelchair, had learning disability, was introverted and wanted a life. So, instead of Banff, went to Benidorm with guys of his own age on one of Crossreach’s holidays with support.

Daniel did not see it, but others watched his growth in self esteem and confidence with Crossreach as he became involved in interviewing staff for jobs and advocating for others. Daniel was no longer quiet and reserved, but outgoing, growing in competence.

And his parents well they had a guilt free holiday in Banff, their first for 20 years where they could relax.

Older People

Mary developed dementia in her early 70s and was cared for by her daughter Sandra for several years. As Mary's health deteriorated the demands on Sandra and her family increased causing a great deal of strain. Despite this, it was with reluctance that Sandra eventually accepted that her mum should enter one of CrossReach's Specialist Dementia Care Homes. Several months later, Mary has settled well in her new home and Sandra has the knowledge that her mum is getting specialist care. Sandra now has peace of mind and enjoys her regular visits to her mum.

But they can't do everything ...

They ask us to pray for staff who have transferred to other care providers from services that CrossReach could no longer afford to sustain; and for those who set budgets for each year, that God will give them wisdom as they steward our resources.

(Crossreach magazines and prayer diaries are available at church.)

Coffee and Conversation at the Connections Cafe

This project (a joint venture between the Steeple Church, Meadowside St Paul's Church and St Andrew's Church) is open every Monday from 10-12 at Meadowside St Paul's to provide a safe space for the 'New Scots' and others to meet, to make new friends and practice their English. If you want to know more, please speak to John Clark or email ccdundee@outlook.com. There is also a FB page at <http://bit.ly/2Cyzb22> where you will find more information.

FAMILY PLAYGROUP continues fortnightly on a Saturday morning 10am - 12noon at The Steeple. We are always grateful for new volunteers to help with activities, crafts and making the families feel welcome! Speak to Emily or Fiona (community@thesteplechurch.org.uk)

REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR FRIENDS SERVING THE LORD OVERSEAS...

David & Lenuta Chronic, "Word made Flesh" in Galati, Romania
Steve and Catriona Bennett at Gahini hospital in Rwanda
Kate McDonald in Israel

MAGAZINE DEADLINE



Items for the
November issue of the
Newsletter should be
given to Brenda Elwell-
Sutton or sent to the
church office by
Sunday 21 October

The Newsletter will be
available from 4 Nov.

CHURCH OFFICE

The Church
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