O C T O B E R 2 0 2 6

WALKING TOGETHER

News from Sherbrooke Mosspark & Ibrox

Dear Friends,

It is such a joy to be writing after the positive votes for union at Sherbrooke Mosspark and Ibrox. We have travelled a long road together, with plenty of conversation, prayer and, understandably, some uncertainty along the way. Now both congregations have chosen to move forward together. I am delighted, and deeply grateful for the patience, generosity and grace that have brought us to this point.

There is so much to celebrate. These votes show that we are ready to trust one another, step into this new chapter together and believe that God still has work for us to do in this corner of Glasgow.

Now comes the important part: learning to become one congregation.

A vote can agree a union, but becoming one congregation takes time. It happens as we learn each other's names, share our stories, worship together and discover what matters to one another. It happens over cups of tea, through small acts of kindness, and when someone notices a familiar face is missing and picks up the phone.

Each of us brings memories, traditions and a deep affection for the places where our faith has been nurtured, and those things deserve to be honoured. We also bring gifts that our new congregation will need. My hope is that everyone will be able to say, "*There is a place for me here, and something I can offer.*"

Emily Dickinson wrote, "'*Hope' is the thing with feathers*". I have always loved that image of something alive and sometimes fragile, yet still able to lift our eyes beyond what is right in front of us. Hope has been present throughout this process, even when the way ahead was hard to see. Now we have the chance to give it room to grow.

There will, of course, be practical decisions to make, new arrangements to get used to and times when we get things wrong. Please be patient with one another, and with me. If something is worrying you, talk about it kindly. If someone seems unsure, give them space. We all move through change at different speeds.

Above all, let us keep looking beyond ourselves. Our neighbours need friendship, compassion, a warm welcome and the good news of God's love. The purpose of our union will become clearer as we serve them together.

Thank you for taking this step with such courage. Please keep praying, lending a hand and making room for someone you do not yet know well. I look forward to discovering with you what God will make possible.

With love and every blessing,

Rev. Adam Dillon

Sermons

Long ago, in days of yore
Sermons were hellfire, blood and gore
Repent, you miserable sinners
Or you'll never be winners.

At times, on and on they went
Till everyone's patience was spent
Minister – sorry no clock to see
All – in the pulpit a calendar there be!

Nowadays, less formidable
Down at the communion table
No gowns – just a clerical collar
Too casual; traditionalists holler.

More relaxed, even laughs and applause
Do jokes and funnies help the Cause?
We'll probably not know till we meet our fate
And gather together at St Peter's gate.

John Thomson

The Teddy Hospital

Did you know that the Royal Hospital for Children in Glasgow has a Teddy Hospital that is run by Glasgow Children's Hospital Charity? It helps children see the procedures that they might have to go through performed on teddy bears so that they don't feel so nervous about having them.

I am one of the volunteers that takes the Teddy Hospital out to nurseries and primary schools through our *Ted-ucation* services. I take my friend Kami Bear with me and show children stethoscopes, thermometers,

blood pressure cuffs, oxygen masks and crutches so that they won't feel scared if they come across them at the doctor's surgery or in hospital. They also see pictures of different areas of the hospital and the people they might meet there.

The children love interacting with Kami and hearing about him falling off his scooter and breaking his leg. I even have his X-ray to show them! I get lots of stories about their experiences of going to hospital and all the injuries they have had or imagined they have had. I always leave them with a '*Ted-ical Degree*' so that they can take it home and tell everyone about my visit. I love going out with my bear and meeting lots of different children and their teachers.

Morag Fleming

Proposing a Car Rota

I am conscious that the union and creation of '*Bellahouston Parish Church*' means that our catchment area is wider. Furthermore, many of the members of the congregation don't drive and yet they wish to come to Church Sunday by Sunday. I am hoping to set up a car pick-up/drop-home rota whereby members who wish to come to Church can get a lift by willing volunteer drivers. If we can get enough drivers, I hope that a single driver would pick up and drop home two people who live relatively close to each other. To be workable, we will need the equivalent of one driver to one attendee so that the same driver isn't doing the car run every week, i.e. **one driver would pick up two people on alternate weeks**. I will need a list of people who:

a) need a lift and b) are willing to be drivers.

Each person should be willing to provide their home and mobile numbers and preferably an e-mail address, and for **those being picked up**, obviously their home address too! The drivers will also need to provide a **description of their car** (make, model, colour and registration number) so that those being picked up can recognise the car. You **must** be willing to have this information **shared** so that I can then let the people know who are being picked up and by whom (and vice versa).

If you wish to get a lift and/or are willing to be a driver, please could you e-mail or call me and I can start to put together a potential rota. I hope this will also allow even greater interaction as we get to know each other better.

marco.gaudoin@btinternet.com **07925 152637**

Marco Gaudoin

Welcoming the Dawn of Autumn

Caution: may contain unsolicited advice from a yungpursun.

I have lived in Glasgow for six years now. Five before that in Manchester, and thirteen growing up in Cumbria. Excusing my birth in Portsmouth, almost all of my life has been spent on the cruel yet comforting, wet and wild west coast. As such I feel sufficiently qualified and quietly confident in confiding my tips for thriving throughout the mardiest of seasons.

***Soup is essential**. Your cupboards should at all times be at least six cans deep in case of a sudden incursion of friends or family on a blustery day. You must, at the drop of a horse chestnut, be able to dole out searingly hot tomato soup and load bearing wedges of bread. The soup will feed their bodies, and the company and good humour will enrich your soul for days and weeks to come.*

*Glasgow's firmament in the coming months offers little in the way of certainty, so **always bring a jacket or a proper umbrella**. If caught without, adopt more acute walking angle, grit your teeth and dig in until you achieve shelter. The best defence is a good offence, so Attack the Weather! Do not allow yourself to become a victim of invisible forces; instead duel the whirling upstart leaves and smothering curtains of rain into bitter embarrassment and crying shame. That umbrella, tightly-furled and confidently-upheld is especially good at dealing a killing blow.*

***Be wary of your footing** upon any rotted vegetable matter on the pavement. That taupe slurry we trudge through on our way to the Kirk may seem a benign nuisance, but to quote a doctor friend of mine "*it's hip fracture season*". Scour your paths, scrape your driveways and sweep the pavement outside your house if you can. You may not receive thanks, but you can live in a little less fear.*

***Make an extra effort to connect with people**. Socialising in summer is easy, almost to the point of irritation. Everyday a barbecue, every weekend a wedding. Autumn and winter offer fewer of these annoyances, but it turns out we actually enjoyed the conviviality all along, needed it even! It is harder with shorter days and more violent weather to coax out your address book, but the extra effort required is well worth it for all involved.*

There it is, and Here we are. I'm sure I could write out a few more tips but I think I'd be messing my own point. The best way to thrive in autumn and then get through winter is to try and live just a bit faster than you can think. Defy the darkening sky and the shrinking hour, and with your smartest and pointiest umbrella deliver a murderous thrust to the heart of The (Wet) Black Dog. Of all things, don't wish the day away; and instead branch out this autumn.

The days are longer than you think.

Rory Spencer