



Church and Society Enews April 2017

Speak Out Tackling Injustice, Living Hope

Church and Society at the General Assembly 2017

Heart and Soul: 21 May 'Word of Life'

Come and join the Church and Society team in Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh, from 1pm as we explore the variety of work we engage with through our seven Speak Out themes; hear and share

stories of hope and justice that are emerging from this work through all-age activities.



Church and Society Report: 23 May

This year the Church and Society Report includes the Speak Out Implementation Plan, a report on Surveillance and Social Justice, an update on Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees and a joint report with the World Mission Council titled 'Embracing Peace and Working for Justice - A joint report on the centenary of the Balfour Declaration'.

Find out more about the General Assembly and [download the Blue Book report](#).

Speak Out: Doing Politics Differently



Meet Your MSP

The Meet Your MSP project is ongoing and there have been over 80 meetings to date between churches / church groups and their MSPs. Project resources and further information regarding meetings that have taken place are available online at www.scpo.scot

Elections

Local council elections across the UK take place on Thursday May 4. Guidance for holding an election event is available on the [Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office \(SCPO\) website](#).

The next General Election will take place on Thursday June 8. SCPO has updated its General Elections Hustings guidance for anyone wanting to hold a hustings event; this can be accessed on the [SCPO website](#).

The Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) has also published resources for the General Election on its [website](#) - this includes biblical reflections on some of the key themes of this election and a resource containing everything you need to know to hold a hustings in your constituency.

Churches need to work together post Brexit

'Europe – Where Now?' organised by ACTS, the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) took place at the start of April with churches from across the UK and Europe represented.

The conference was told that the need for Christian denominations in the UK to work together is greater than ever. A range of speakers brought perspectives from across the UK and Europe with the challenge for churches to have a stronger prophetic voice and to develop a European strategy for action.

Find out more on the [Church of Scotland website](#).

Eco Congregation Scotland Annual Gathering

SCPO attended the Eco Congregation Scotland Annual Gathering on Saturday 22 April and led a workshop on 'How To Engage with Politicians.' They were delighted to meet with a number of Eco Congregation members who have taken part in the Meet Your MSP project and held a Tweet Your MSP exercise at the end of the workshop, supporting attendees to tweet their local MSPs with messages about the importance of educating on the environment.

Speak Out: Building Global Friendships

Breaking the Silence: Gender and Genocide

In March, our Violence against Women Development Officer took part in a specialist delegation to Bosnia to mark Remembering Srebrenica's 2017 gender and genocide theme. The delegation was made up of women working across the UK on violence against women, gender inequality and women's empowerment in both faith based and secular contexts.



By visiting key memorial sites and support organisations and by meeting, sharing and learning from survivors of the genocide the delegation was able to explore the gendered nature of the genocide in Bosnia. The trip centred female victims of sexual violence, created space to hear and share

the untold stories of women's courage and survival and highlighted the absolutely essential role of women in the process of seeking the truth, seeking justice and creating peace after war and genocide.

Katherine will be speaking about her experiences in Bosnia and sharing the lessons that will impact on our work at a Parliamentary reception on 31 May. For more information about Srebrenica and the war in Bosnia or to find out what you can do to get involved visit the [Remembering Srebrenica website](#) or contact [Katherine](#).

International Youth Leaders Programme: Rwanda/Scotland 2017/18

In partnership with PROCMURA (Programme for Christian & Muslim Relations in Africa) the Church of Scotland and key Islamic institutions in Scotland have embarked on an exciting new project that aims to build the capacity of young people to become interfaith leaders both locally and internationally. They are offering a group of young people (ages 18-25) the chance to explore their faith, issues facing young people, religion and international relations over the next 18 months.

The group that will be selected will receive training and orientation over the summer to prepare them for a week's excursion to the PROCMURA office in Rwanda where they will learn from the model of joint faith collaboration and dialogue.

For further details visit the [Church of Scotland website](#).

Speak Out: Health and Well-being



Health and Well-being Film Launched

Earlier this month we launched the sixth in our series of Speak Out films, highlighting ways in which Church of Scotland congregations are contributing to issues of health and wellbeing in their local communities. The launch showcased the Havilah project in Arbroath, which has been reaching out to people dealing with addictions for over 10 years and offering them a listening ear and a helping hand.

Read more about the Havilah project on the [St. Andrew's Arbroath website](#).

Visit the [Church of Scotland website](#) to view the film and find out more.

Events

Go For It Free Learning Events

9 May - Community Research Workshop, Glasgow

20 June - Fit for Funding, Glasgow

To book email: scalderhead@churchofscotland.org.uk

Reclaiming Gospel Non-Violence: The centrality of non-violence in Christianity

12-14 July, Perth

Book via the [Church of Scotland website](#)

Contact Church and Society

The Church and Society team can be contacted by emailing

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