

Reply to the Queen's Letter — General Assembly 2021

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

May it please Your Majesty We, Your Majesty's loyal subjects convened in General Assembly, have received with pleasure Your Majesty's gracious letter to us.

We greatly value Your Majesty's continuing pledge to maintain the historic rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland.

Your Majesty has been continuously in our thoughts since the passing of the Duke of Edinburgh. We know that you will have been sustained by your Christian Faith yet your loss will have been keenly felt and we wish to assure Your Majesty that many people in the Church of Scotland and beyond have prayed for you and members of the Royal Family in these testing times. In due course, and when pandemic restrictions allow, we will gather in St Giles' Cathedral to give thanks for the Duke's life and his contribution to the nation of Scotland.

We are grateful for Your Majesty's concern and prayers for the people of this land as they have journeyed through the pandemic. These have indeed been difficult days shadowed by illness, bereavement, unemployment and economic damage. We would want to humbly acknowledge Your Majesty's steadfastness throughout these troubled times – leadership that has never been wanting throughout the years of your reign. We have sensed always your desire to serve and in that we are minded that Our Lord came not to be served but to serve.

As Your Majesty has acknowledged, the Church has also been deeply affected and in this General Assembly we will be seeking to find where God will lead us as we look to heal and support the various communities which we are privileged to serve.

The depredations brought by Covid-19 have made it essential to forge the links to which Your Majesty has alluded. We are already beginning to see how we might build on these relationships as, God willing, we leave behind emergency restrictions.

We take encouragement from Your Majesty's appreciation of our commitment to the care of this planet. Along with other churches and faith groups we will seek to bring that sense of stewardship and responsibility to the delegates from around the world who will gather in Glasgow for COP26 later this year.

Finally, we commend Your Majesty to the unfailing grace and protection of Almighty God, and as we begin our deliberations we pray that God will continue to bestow favour upon Your Majesty, that you may long reign over us.

Your Majesty's most faithful and loyal servants.

THE MINISTERS, ELDERS AND DEACONS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND CONVENED IN
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Signed in our name, in our presence and at our appointment by the Lord Wallace of Tankerness, Moderator of the General Assembly on this 24th day of May 2021.