

## **Additional material – CrossReach and Social Care Sunday**

### **Sunday 19 November 2023**

The Faith Action Programme would like to thank Rev David Nicholson, CrossReach Board Member, for his reflection on today’s Lectionary passages for this CrossReach and Social Care Sunday.

CrossReach have also provided materials that you can use as part of your gathering this week: a video from the Moderator of the Assembly of the Church of Scotland and prayers read by residents of Morlich House; short video stories; and prayer resources to help us to pray for the people and work of CrossReach as we worship together.

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## Reflection

Rev David Nicholson, CrossReach Board Member

I had a conversation with another minister, many years ago, which has never left me. I wasn't even a minister myself at that time, so we are going back almost a decade, showing the sticking power of this encounter. I was spending time with a minister who had completed a rather impressive Church remodel and refurbishment, documenting it for the media. I was surrounded by beautifully chosen heather-coloured chairs, subtle tones of paint on the walls, and a stunning floor to ceiling window arrangement, offering a dramatic vista of the Scottish Highlands.

Naturally the conversation turned to the success of the Church and ministry, and whether the building was enabling that. You see it wasn't just the building that seemed healthy, the church was bustling throughout the week, connecting with new people all the time. However, in a surprising turn, the minister told me that wasn't the right way to look at it.

They began to tell me that they were often taking phone calls from fellow ministers and Church leaders insisting, "I could do so much more in terms of mission, if only I had the resources you have managed to get!" Their response was always the same and has never left me.

"Do what you can, with what you've got".

If that isn't a prophetic word for our Church today, on Social Care Sunday, I don't know what is. Looking at the lectionary readings this week, we find the turmoil of Israel in the book of Judges, as they swing back and forth between stability and anarchy because they will not consistently listen to and work with God. Psalm 123 and Psalm 90, which remind us about the frailty and brevity of our time here on Earth, compared to God's timeless strength and perfection. In Zephaniah we read an indictment of God's people – though they might have plenty possessions they lack the heart to work to do justice with their wealth, and mistakenly think God is indifferent to it all.

But perhaps most salient today is Jesus' parable of the talents in Matthew 25. Jesus is seeking to help His followers understand what His mission and kingdom is truly about. He assures them, however long it takes, what they have given their lives to will be weighed and measured by God in the end. The master returns in the parable and is pleased with those who have invested and gained a return, and displeased with the servant who buried the

treasure. And of course, the parable is not really a lesson on investment banking – but the treasure that God gives in the form of our short, frail lives.

I cannot think of a better way to sum up that message than ‘do what you can with what you’ve got’. I wonder on this Social Care Sunday if we can hear the challenge and opportunity from Jesus directly. Our Social Care system in Scotland is struggling amidst a myriad of challenges. It’s something we all depend on now, or likely will at some point in our lives. And I hope this isn’t taken to be an onerous burden. Because this parable should free us up to be creative in our response to God’s call to see that all are cared for in our society. Perhaps we don’t have much money to give, well the parable doesn’t demand money just to use whatever we do have. Maybe that’s time to volunteer, or a fervent dedication to prayer. Perhaps we are gifted in administration, or even have political connections where we can agitate for justice. For Church leaders, we have immense influence and can remind our flocks of the imperative to do justice for all, and how well CrossReach provides an opportunity to take part in Christ’s mission.

Ultimately, God has planted treasure within each of us, capable of producing riches and beauty in the lives of those around us by His grace. So, seeing the needs around us this Social Care Sunday, let us do what we can with what we’ve got.

## **CrossReach resources and information**

One of the themes of the text for Social Care Sunday is our call to love one another and as a community to uplift and be people of light. At CrossReach, as care is provided daily up and down the country, this Gospel imperative is lived out through the dedication and compassion of a strong and committed team of staff and volunteers, and the hard work of the people we get alongside to offer support.

Operating with over 70 services the areas covered include:

- Children and Families
- Counselling and Support
- Justice System
- Homelessness
- Learning Disabilities
- Mental Health
- Older People Services
- Substance use

[Watch a video](#) from the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland as she introduces CrossReach, provides a message of thanks to all those who support this work and invites and encourages further advocacy and action from those within the Church of Scotland. The video also includes prayers read by residents of Morlich House.

#### Stories from CrossReach

- [Jacqueline's Story](#)
- [Robbie's Story](#)
- [Latest News](#)

#### Praying for CrossReach

- [Prayer diary app to download](#)
- [Prayer diary widget for Church website](#)

#### Congregational Supporting with CrossReach

- [Share the love](#)

#### Working or Volunteering with CrossReach

- [Careers Page](#)

