The Church of Scotland

MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

24 May 2023

REPLY TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS LETTER

TO THE KING'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 most gracious letter to us.

As a Church it was our honour and privilege to offer thanksgiving for the life of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth: a life exemplified by faith and service. We continue to hold Your Majesty and the whole Royal Family in our thoughts and prayers as you continue to mourn the death, not only of our Queen, but of your mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

We greatly value Your Majesty's continuing pledge to maintain the historic rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland. So soon after the Coronation, we give thanks for the example of Christian duty and service which Your Majesty has already given to the nation as our Sovereign as well as for your years of dedicated service as Prince of Wales and Duke of Rothesay. Please be assured that Your Majesties will continue to be in our prayers as together you work for the good of all.

The re-appointment of the Rt Hon Lord Hodge as Your Majesty's Lord High Commissioner to our General Assembly has been wholeheartedly welcomed. His Grace's deep commitment to and knowledge of the Church of Scotland and indeed the General Assembly is truly appreciated by us all.

We appreciate your Majesty's understanding of the ongoing challenges which the Church of Scotland is facing as we continue the process of reform. As a Reformed Church we remain committed to reform; as a National Church we seek to love God and to love our neighbours. This task calls us to follow Christ and listen for the Holy Spirit's guidance as we continue the work of prioritising the use of our limited resources. There are many difficult choices to be made but we face them with the love and the hope that our faith in Jesus Christ brings us.

We thank you for your words of encouragement about the work of our local congregations who are a beacon of light as they faithfully serve others in their communities. We also greatly appreciate your acknowledgement of the Church's continued commitment to support those most vulnerable and marginalised in society which includes our work in collaboration with others for refugees and asylum seekers.

We join Your Majesty in praying for a swift end to the current hostilities in Sudan to ease human suffering and to bring peace to that whole region. We remain determined to continue to foster and nurture friendships amongst our Christian brothers and sisters as well as with other faith communities: deepening understanding and building relationships based on trust and acceptance with all people will lead to peace, a peace which our world so desperately craves.

Finally, we commend Your Majesty and Her Majesty The Queen to the unfailing grace and protection of Almighty God, and we pray that God will bestow favour upon Your Majesty, as you continue to 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 Right Reverend Sally Foster-Fulton, Moderator of the General Assembly on this 24th day of May 2023.

Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton
Moderator of the General Assembly

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