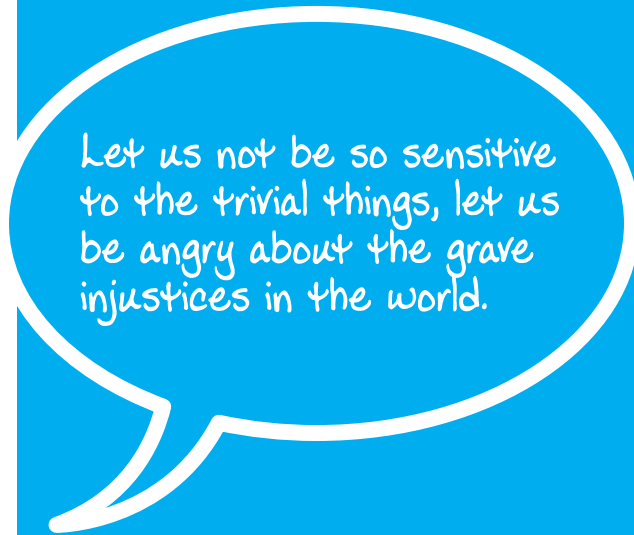




📺 Questions

- What are the responsibilities of a host in making guests and visitors feel welcome? How far does our society go in meeting these responsibilities?
- Do Church of Scotland congregations reflect this diversity and acknowledge the diversity and challenges it brings throughout the country?
- What is it about the culture of our church which fails to resonate with the culture that we inhabit? Excuses may also be real barriers. Does poverty exclude people from church? Does holding our main services on Sunday mornings, when most Scots now use their leisure time in different ways? What about our attitudes towards others, or a perceived dress code? Do our rituals and language connect with those who have not been brought up in the Church of Scotland? Are our worship services and all our activities intentionally welcoming to incomers and outsiders?
- Diversity in the church must also be acknowledged; theological; liturgical; geographical and in many other ways. How do Christian communities engage with the idea of one nation, many cultures and yet still remain distinct faith communities in their own right?



📺 Keep in Touch

Sign up to receive our monthly enews.
Order or download more leaflets.
Find out more about this and other topics.

Church and Society Council
121 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YN
Tel: 0131 240 2267
Email: churchandsociety@cofscotland.org.uk

Scottish Charity Number SC011353

www.churchofscotland.org.uk



The Church of Scotland
Church and Society Council

One Scotland, Many Cultures



Discussion Points



'There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.' Galatians 3:28

One Scotland, Many Cultures

▶ Part of the remit of the Church and Society Council is to engage with social and political issues on behalf of the Church, often through the development of theological, ethical and spiritual perspectives on relevant issues.

It is in this context that the Council has written a report called One Scotland, Many Cultures for the whole Church of Scotland to consider. This report is available from the Church of Scotland website at www.churchofscotland.org.uk/GA2011 or from the address on the back page of this leaflet. An accompanying study guide - Exploring One Scotland, Many Cultures - to help individuals and small groups explore some of the issues has also been produced.

▶ One Scotland

The report One Scotland, Many Cultures takes its name from a Scottish Government project aimed at tackling racism and discrimination in Scottish society. The Church of Scotland has offered its support for the eradication of racist views, prejudice and discrimination in Scotland, with our prayers and action for racial justice and equality.



We exist not for our own interests but for the interests of all people.

Christ calls us to have soft hearts and hard feet.

We need to be open to the possibilities of change.

We are convinced that God still has a role for the church in society, and that we can - and do - make a positive difference to people's lives.

We have a positive identity to affirm.

▶ Radical Hospitality

Luke tells the story of Jesus visiting the home of a Pharisee for dinner. He said to his host that he should not invite his friends or relatives or rich neighbours to dinner in case they invite him back, in which case he is repaid. Instead, Jesus told him, when he gives a banquet he should invite the poor; the lame and the blind. As Christians, we are about breaking down the barriers that keep us apart and about building bridges that lead us to ways we can walk together. Looking to the deep and rich images we can bring to bear from scripture, our stories point to a society that not only welcomes strangers and foreigners, but more profoundly has a shared empathy with their needs. Deuteronomy 24:17-22 forms the cornerstone of this foundation as we identify at every level with the people of the exile, the ones on the margins. They become the most important priority and a bias towards their welfare is explicitly written into our code of conduct and train of thought. This is clear and controversially counter-cultural.

▶ A Role for the Church?

We have a conviction that, as a national Kirk, we still have a central role in Scottish culture. We realise that our position has changed from that of a generation ago, where people may have seen our culture as the culture for Scotland. Instead, we celebrate the richness that a plural and multi faith society brings to all aspects of our lives.

▶ Migration and Identity

Scotland's face is changing as a result of net in-migration, following hundreds of years of net out-migration.

The culture of the Church itself is not homogenous. We need to ask how our culture fits in with a diverse and changing Scotland.

Of central importance is how as a Church with a real focus on mission, our culture can speak to those outwith the Church, either as a counter-cultural witness, or as a way to reach those to whom the Church's traditional way of being is outside their comfort zone.

Continuing to offer Jesus' radical hospitality must remain one of our core principles.