

# The Moellers to SCOTLAND

Aug/Sept. 2022



## "The Culling of the Churches"

Something that we have shared with you in the past, is the threat of **mass closings of churches in Scotland**. In our area, this situation has moved **from a threat, to a REALITY**.

The **Church of Scotland** is the national church, and the largest Christian denomination in the country. However, statistics say that Scotland's national church is now attended by only **one person out of 40 from Scotland's overall population each week**. The Church of Scotland is about to face what has been called **"...the deepest cull of all in the Church of Scotland's latest proposed massive clear-out of premises and congregations."**

Recently plans that have been discussed by the Denominations ruling body, the **General Assembly of the Church of Scotland**, were leaked to a local newspaper. The article revealed that the General Assembly has put forward a plan to **close down a total of 31 churches** just in our small county area of Moray and the Highlands.

In response to the leak of their plans, one of the members of the Assembly said that these churches have been heavily **"...impacted by falling parish members, a lack of ministers and a reduction in financial contributions."** Basically what it comes down to, is that they have a massive number of old buildings that are **very expensive to maintain**, and there are **no ministers or members** to fill them.

In speaking with many Scots about this, they have responded with a general **sense of hopelessness and in some cases outrage**, at the thought that their village churches could ever be closed. However, it has not seemed to encourage them to want to go and be a part of these churches. A statistic I have shared before, is that on **80% of Scots are only in church 3 times in their life**. When they are **christened as a baby, when they get married, and when they attend their own funeral**. This was made evident to me in a recent conversation:

I bumped into the **CoS** (Church of Scotland) minister at my daughters elementary school. The minister filled me in about what was happening in regards to the churches closing. While we were speaking, a lady whom I had never met, recognized the CoS minister and came and spoke to us. She asked me if I was also a CoS minister, to which I responded, **"No, I am at the Baptist Church in Hopeman."** She looked at me with a fierce expression and said, **"I am proudly Church of Scotland!"** I then asked her which church she attended, to which she said, **"Well, I actually have not been in a church since I was married in 1973."**

After she went on her way, the CoS minister looked at me and said, **"That is why we are all closing."** She then told me that the **local Church of Scotland here in Hopeman will be one of the churches that will be closing**. (This will leave **Hopeman Baptist Church**, as the only church in the village.) She then explained that in fact one of the reasons why the General Assembly decided to close their location in Hopeman is because in their own words, **"The Baptist Church is doing a good job there."**

While it is encouraging to hear that they can clearly see that the **Lord is working in and through our church**, I am still left with a stab of sadness at the thought of **so many churches** shutting their doors. **Some of these old buildings have been sites of Christian worship for over 700 years!**

Another recent interaction that I had with a **young Church of Scotland minister** gives more insight into what is really at the heart this issue:

At a recent community event, this newly ordained Church of Scotland minister, fresh out of **their seminary**, was invited to pray. **She opened her prayer with the words, "DEAR FATHER OR MOTHER GOD..."** It is very clear that if these are the teachings that her Denomination are passing on to those whom they are ordaining for ministry, **how can we expect any other result?** The CoS has certainly slipped a long way since **John Knox, after seeing the idolatry and immorality of his countrymen**, fell on his knees and prayed, **"Lord, give me Scotland, ere I die."**

**Please pray with us, that God will send a great revival to this land,  
He has done it before, and He can do it again! This is Scotland's ONLY hope!**

Your missionaries to Scotland,

**Matt, Ericka, Ellee, and Graycee Moeller**