

# starters for Sunday

## ***Guild Week 2015***

***15 – 22 November 2015***

The Mission and Discipleship Council would like to thank Iain Whyte, General Secretary to The Guild for producing this material for Guild Week.

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## Quick Guide...

*Helping people prepare for reading the Bible in worship can make a real difference. Overcoming nerves, reading in ways suitable to the text, speaking clearly etc.*

You may wish to email these three links to the people reading Scripture on Sunday to support them in their involvement in worship: [Managing your nerves](#); [Creative readings](#); [Worship at the Lectern](#)

## The Guild

**Guild Week** is an annual celebration of the [Church of Scotland Guild](#).

On the one hand, it is a chance for the Guild to tell others what it does and how it does it.

On the other, it is a chance for the whole Church to celebrate the part that the Guild plays in the life of the Church of Scotland, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

For congregations where there is a Guild, these resources will offer a chance to promote the Guild and to encourage new membership.

For those where there is no Guild, there is the chance to explore having one and to encourage congregations to think about and give thanks for the work that the Guild does as part of the wider Church of Scotland

### The Guild's Aim

“The Church of Scotland Guild is a movement within the Church of Scotland which invites and encourages women and men to commit their lives to Jesus Christ and enables them to express their faith in **worship, prayer and action**”

One way in which we seek to fulfil this aim is by focussing on particular themes and providing resource materials to help local groups in their exploration of the faith.

### Strategies and Themes

Since 1997, the Guild has followed a pattern of adopting a three year strategy to guide its worship, study and project work, focussing on a different aspect of that strategy each year. The strategy, therefore, is divided into three annual themes.

The strategy for 2015-18 is “Be Bold, Be Strong!” This strategy has been chosen to encourage the Guild as it faces many challenges and opportunities in its service and its operations. The first



theme within this strategy will be “Go in Peace”. During the year, Guilds will be considering the different ways in which they can interpret the theme and apply it to the life of the Guild.

Alongside the strategy and the annual themes, the Guild supports six Partnership Projects, running in the same cycle as the strategies. Therefore, as 2015 sees a new strategy, it also sees a new set of Partnership Projects coming on-stream.

These are:

**[Street Pastors Scotland](#)**, in partnership with the Ascension Trust, seeking to develop and extend the invaluable work of the street pastors in the towns and cities of Scotland.

**[Let's Stick Together](#)**, working with Care for the Family to provide support services for families experiencing the stresses and strains that becoming a family can produce.

**Caring for Mother Earth**, which supports the work of [Christian Aid](#) in the provision of solar ovens to Bolivia, offering help to poor communities while addressing climate issues.

**FGM in Kenya**, [Feed the Minds](#), using education of girls in Kenya to address the difficult and topical issue of female genital mutilation (FGM), which strikes at the heart of gender roles and prejudices. The project aims to encourage education as the best way of fulfilling the potential of girls.

**Haiti Project**, [Mission International](#)'s project looking to build a multi-purpose educational and social services centre in Ouanaminthe, Haiti.

**All Friends Together**, with [Prospects](#), which offers advice and support to Churches on welcoming and integrating people with additional support needs into their fellowship.

For more information on these projects, go to the websites of the organisations or the [Guild's](#) own one or visit the Guild office.



## Worship suggestions

### Readings

#### [Deuteronomy 31: 6](#)

This short verse encapsulates the spirit of the Guild's strategy for 2015-18... "Be bold, Be Strong!"

It does so in simple terms, exhorting people to show courage and conviction as they seek to live a life of service. But it is clear that they should not see that as leaving them alone to face adversity, opposition or contradiction. Rather, the strength they need is supported and provided by God. They are his hands and feet and voices, but conduits for his purpose.

It is also interesting to note that Moses issues this advice at the age of 120! Whilst this passage is set at a time when he was passing the mantle on to Joshua, he has not let age be a reason to turn his back on his faith and his God. Rather he is adopting a new way of being active and involved.

#### [Isaiah 26: 1-4](#)

In 2015-16, the Guild's work will reflect the theme of "Go in peace!" Isaiah's song of praise is a confidence booster to the people. It is not necessarily about pride or power, but it is about having confidence in your own strengths... seeing life in a way that is sure in its beliefs and in its purpose. Again, though, the faithful foundation is fundamental to living this out.

#### [Joshua 10: 25](#)

This reading is one that talks of violent struggle and the way in which God will protect His own in battle. In fact, the next verses are more than a little gruesome in their vengeful and explicit nature.

Perhaps for us, though, we can think of the struggles we have in our lives. These may be about conflict between people, places or ideals. They may be about challenges to our faith that arise from ill-health, stress or financial worries. Fear and timidity are rarely the answer in difficult places. Courage and strength are not the same as aggression and domination... they are about facing hurdles and seeking ways over (or around!).



## [Matthew 11: 28-30](#)

This is probably one of the most comforting passages in the Bible. So much of life, including Christian service, can seem daunting and frightening. As in the passages listed above, we are again reminded of the fact that in Jesus we have someone who is there to help, to share the burden and to give us strength by living through us and in us.

In addition, this reading introduces the concept of humility to add to (and enhance) the qualities of strength and courage that are central to the earlier ones.

The Guild is looking to marry the ideas of “Be bold, Be strong!” to the theme of “Go in Peace”. Yet, in common with many in the church, it often finds itself called to service whilst feeling too tired to respond.

What an encouraging and reassuring and timely reminder we find in these words of Jesus!

This idea is again to the fore in [John 14: 27](#).

*These are just a few suggestions, but there are many others that can be used to support this strategy and this year's theme.*

## **Guild Prayer**

Heavenly Father, thank  
you for loving me right  
where I am. Help me to  
know your love deep in  
my heart and enable  
that love to flow from  
me to those with whom  
I am in contact.  
Amen



## Musical Suggestions

Again there will be many options, but some suggestions might be:

Mission Praise 49	Be bold, be strong
Mission Praise 151	For I'm building a people of power
CH4 786	May the God of peace go with us
CH4 644/MP 501	O Jesus, I have promised

In addition, there are these three hymns written for the Guild:

**Lord of our past**                      Tune: Woodlands/Eventide/Highland Cathedral

Lord of our past, we celebrate the saints,  
 Who came before us and still light our way,  
 Whose lives of faith, whose courage and resolve,  
 Are beacons guiding us in this, our day.

Lord of our now, we pray to you for strength,  
 As we take up the torch of history.  
 We seek to serve you, sure in our belief  
 That you are there in all we do and say.

Lord of our future, hold us in your hands,  
 And help us do the work we're called to do,  
 Give us the will, the vision and the power,  
 To dedicate our lives and times to you.

Lord of our all, we bring our songs of praise  
 And offer them as tokens of our love,  
 We lift our hearts and voices up to you  
 Grant us your grace and may our faith be true!

(Iain Whyte, 2012)



**We stand here before you**      Tune: Slane

We stand here before you, our faith to proclaim  
 Raising our song as we worship your name,  
 To you, whose we are and to you, whom we serve,  
 Giving thanks for your presence, your grace and your love.

We join here before you in fellowship's bond,  
 Sharing our lives in this day and beyond.  
 Your hands are there to guide us, your grace to assure,  
 Your presence among us, so awesome and pure.

We go from this place to a world that is yours,  
 Sure in the faith that Christ Jesus secures.  
 Humbly we go in the knowledge that you  
 Will bless and protect us in all that we do.

Repeat verse 1

(Iain Whyte, 2012)

**Inspire us, Lord**      Tune: Londonderry Air

Inspire us Lord, give us the strength and courage  
 To serve with grace, unselfish and sincere.  
 Commit our lives, supporting one another  
 With hope and peace replacing hurt and fear.  
 Reach out and help with love and with compassion,  
 Give strength and hope to those who are in need;  
 To work as one, to change the lives of many.  
 Express our faith in worship, prayer and deed.

So, Lord, awaken us to every challenge  
 With confidence, determined to succeed.  
 Let us act justly, always showing mercy;



Break down the walls, transform lives indeed.  
With willing hearts, we gladly serve the Lord our God.  
In Him we trust and in Him we believe  
And reach beyond our every expectation,  
Let us have faith in all we can achieve.  
(Dianne Cumming, 2012)



## Additional Resources

### Resourcing Mission



[Resourcing Mission](#) is host to Starters for Sunday and other key mission resources for download and purchase. Online booking is available for [Mission & Discipleship events](#). Please check back regularly, as new items are being added all the time. If there is something you'd like to see on this new site, please [contact us](#) via the website.

### Prayer Resources

These materials are designed to be a starting point for what you might look for in prayers. [Living Stones](#) is available from [St Andrew Press](#).



### Music Resources

The hymns mentioned in this material are ideas of specific hymns you might choose for this week's themes. However, for some excellent articles on church music and ideas for new music resources, please check out our online music pages [Different Voices](#).

### Preaching Resources



These materials are designed to be a starting point for what you might preach this Sunday. [Preachers Perspectives](#) is a resource where we have asked twelve preachers to share the insights they have gathered through their experiences of writing and delivering sermons regularly.

### Scots Worship Resources

[The Kirk's Ear](#) - Scots in the Kirk series for Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and other times of the year

[Wurship Ouk bi Ouk](#) - Metrical psalms, hymns, prayers and words for worship

[Scots Sacraments](#) may give you helpful material if you are celebrating Communion or have a Baptism.

*The Mission and Discipleship Council would like to express its thanks to the Rev Iain Whyte for providing us with this Sunday's material.*

*Please note that the views expressed in these materials are those of the individual writer and not necessarily the official view of the Church of Scotland, which can be laid down only by the General Assembly.*

