

Reforming the Kirk

— the future of the Church of Scotland

Rev Dr Doug Gay

Lecturer in Practical Theology, Principal of Trinity College, University of Glasgow

FEBRUARY 1st, 8th and 15th, 2017 • 6.30pm • St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh

In this series of three lectures, Glasgow-based Practical Theologian and Kirk Minister Doug Gay offers a candid, forthright and bold analysis of the state of the Church of Scotland and the choices facing it.

LECTURE 1

WED 1st FEBRUARY

Walls Without Church?

The first lecture explores 'what just happened?' tracing the decline of the Kirk as a national institution since the 1960s.

LECTURE 2

WED 8th FEBRUARY

Call And Response

The second lecture explores the relationship between the church's understanding of its own calling and its response.

LECTURE 3

WED 15th FEBRUARY

Grand Designs

The final lecture makes the case for radical structural reform of the Church of Scotland over the next decade.



Doug describes the lectures as 'hard thinking done with a soft heart' and 'radical thinking offered in a cautious spirit'. He hopes the lectures will both contribute to a broader understanding of the state of the Kirk across Scotland and the international reformed community and to a creative and productive conversation about reform within the Kirk.



The Church of Scotland

FREE to attend, or WATCH online:
www.churchofscotland.org.uk

Reforming the Kirk

—the future of the Church of Scotland

In this series of three lectures, Glasgow-based Practical Theologian and Kirk Minister, Dr Doug Gay will offer a candid, forthright and bold analysis of the state of the Church of Scotland and the choices facing it.

He will explore what it means to be 'presbyterian' in today's Scotland, in which even kirk members are ambivalent about their identity. Recognising the significant challenges facing the church in the coming decade, he will offer a manifesto for enacting structural reform, including key economic reforms, within the Kirk and will argue that change is essential to address deep seated problems of decline and dysfunction.

LECTURE ONE – Walls Without Church? (*Glory without power...*)

The first lecture explores 'what just happened?' tracing the decline of the Kirk as a national institution since the 1960s and asking about the spiritual and psychological effects of this on those who have lived through it. It also asks 'what's left?' - exploring what the Presbyterian inheritance means in today's Scotland, in terms of values, ideas and concrete presence on the ground across 1 parishes.

LECTURE TWO – Call and Response (*I don't know but I've been told...*)

The second lecture explores the relationship between the church's understanding of its own calling and its response in terms of organisation and resources. Arguing that the economics of the Kirk is a key area for spiritual and theological reflection, it questions how resources are raised and allocated for the work of the Church of Scotland. It also looks at the looming deficits in human resources, as numbers of ministerial vacancies continue to increase and asks what a missional response to church decline might look like.

LECTURE THREE – Grand Designs (*the architecture of reform*)

The final lecture makes the case for radical structural reform of the Church of Scotland over the next decade, suggesting that a reformed Kirk should aspire to a creative reinterpretation of reformed identity, rather than hold to a narrowband presbyterianism. It argues that where recent attempts to reform key areas of the Church's life have been unsuccessful, it is because they have failed to address the architecture of the system as a whole. While recognising the limits of what structural reform can achieve, Doug will make the case for a new balance of power and initiative between local, regional and national bodies, arguing that the case for reform should be based on how it will serve the church's mission.