

Our Mission in the Marketplace: Preparatory service for re-entry to the redeveloped church building

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Preacher: William Philip

[0:00] all this to in the center of Glasgow. So I'll explain what we're going to do this evening in a little while, but we're going to begin by singing. And don't reach for your hymn books because it's not there.

It's on the screen. But we're going to sing one of the great hymns of the Scottish Church, which is the Metrical Psalm, number 24.

We sing some modern versions of this in our praise hymn book. They're quite good, but they're nowhere near as good as this. And if you don't know this well, we're going to sing the whole psalm. We sing the first six verses to one tune.

That's St. Matthew, which you'll know. And then the final part to the tune, St. George's Edinburgh. Ye gates, lift up your heads on high. And if you don't know it, then it's time you learned it because we're going to sing this next Sunday.

And we're going to sing it with the tremendous sound of our new church organ. And I'm hoping that we'll raise the roof. Well, not too much in case the building team are upset, but you know what I mean.

[0:58] So tonight is our practice. And we're going to practice raising the roof. And it's a special request from Douglas Hamilton, who's so thrilled that we're having a new organ that he's particularly asked that we would sing this on the first Sunday.

So, Dougie, this is for you. And we want to do you pride. So if you listen, when you get to the end of verse 6, there'll be just a tiny intro to the bit that begins the tune, St. George's Edinburgh.

And don't be against it because it's St. George's Edinburgh. You can call it St. George's Tron if you'd rather. And don't be upset about the East Coast influence, but it's a very, very fine tune and a great psalm of praise. St. George's singing, ■■■■■s from Ephesians.

I'm J in complete with Amen.

In The earthly love that knew the Lord, and all that we could be, the world that is in the heart again, and all that we could be.

[2 : 22] The earthly love that knew the Lord, and all that we could be, and all that we could be, the world that we could be.

The earthly love that knew the Lord, and all that we could be, the world that knew the Lord, and all that we could be, the earthly love that knew the Lord, and all that we could be, the earthly love that knew the Lord, and all that we could be, the earthly love that knew the Lord, and all that we could be, who had the earthly love that knew the Lord, and all that we could be, the earthly love that knew the Lord, and all that we could be, The only man of love we live, the only in the home.

The only man of love we live, the only in the home.
The only man of love we live, the only in the home.
The only man of love we live, the only in the home.
[4 : 35] The only man of love we live, the only in the home.
The only man of love we live, the only in the home. The only man of love we live, the only in the home.
The only man of love we live, the only in the home.
The only man of love we live, the only in the home. The only man of love we live, the only in the home.
The only man of love we live, the only in the home.
[5 : 51] The only man of love we live, the only in the home. The only man of love we live, the only in the home.
The only man of love we live, the only in the home.
The only man of love we live, the only in the home.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.
[7 : 19] Well, let's pray together. Who is the King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty. The Lord mighty in battle.
And the gates of heaven lifted up their doors on the day the King of Glory ascended to reign supremely on high forever and ever to the praise of the heavenly host and the countless number that no man can ever number.
Of men and women and boys and girls. Of the martyrs, the prophets, the apostles and the saints of the glorious, glorious kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.
And Lord it thrills our voices and our hearts even now to sing these words to join that peon of praise which is something of a shadow just of the immortal praise and honor and glory due to your name.
For the triumph of our Lord Jesus, our Savior. And Lord it is because of his triumph we are here tonight and only because of his great resurrection from the dead for our justification.
[8 : 38] Only because of his great ascension that assures our bodily ascension also to the glory of your kingdom on the day when these bodies though they have been destroyed and returned to dust will be remade, reconstituted in glory forever and ever.
So Lord, we pray, remind us tonight of the glorious hope in which we are saved and the glorious truth which has saved us through the blood of the eternal covenant poured out in the cross of our Savior at Calvary.
And may the glory and the joy and the wonder and the triumph and the majesty and the might of that glorious gospel fill our hearts and minds and thrill us together as we think tonight as a congregation of the step that we begin to take this coming week the beginnings of a new ministry in the place that you have placed us.
So help us our gracious God to take in all that you are calling us to to rejoice in it and to respond to it with gladness and with readiness and with a thrill in our hearts.
And may all that we hear and see this evening cause us to follow you more nearly in the days that lie ahead to the praise of our glorious Redeemer and King Jesus Christ our Lord in whose name we pray.

[10 : 10] Amen. Well you're in good voice and if it's as good as that or better next week that'll be very good indeed. Remember I used to preach in Gilcombs in South and this is still he used to say to me after the service I'd say how did I get on?

That and better will do he used to say. Very encouraging. Anyway often with the emphasis on the and better. Next Sunday as you all know is our first Sunday back and of course we're very excited.

It's inevitable that we should be. We're going to a pristine new building. It's not like going back at all. In fact George McElvain has been fining all the development team any time they've used the word going back.

Five pounds in the swearing box for that. We're going forward he says and that's absolutely right. And of course it may be some of us are thinking rather nostalgically tonight and I have to confess I am too.

Well it's been great up here. Do we really need to go back to the old building at all? Perhaps you can remember it. It's rather drafty at times a bit drab not very bright it was a crush wasn't it getting in and out sometimes.

[11 : 14] The toilet experience wasn't just quite wonderful. Not quite as good as the gents not quite as bad as the gents toilets in the basement here which Bob File has called Sheol but some of us will be rather glad to see the back of that.

But you know all the things that we've come to enjoy up here in the halls the greater space and yet at the same time a greater sense of intimacy the catering facilities the better toilets and all these sorts of things we're going to find that they're abundantly there also in our new building.

We're going to discover a wonderfully practical building but also a building that's been beautifully restored as well as wonderfully modernized. But what we mustn't forget amidst all the excitement of this is of course what it's all about.

Why we've done all this redevelopment in the first place. We mustn't ever forget that. We didn't do it because our building was a bit tired and a bit uncomfortable for us. We didn't really do it so that we would have better facilities on a Sunday when we got together.

That's not why we did it. We didn't do it for the sake of comfort or cosmetics. If you remember right back to the beginning we did this all for the sake of ministry and mission.

[12 : 31] Because God has given us a wonderful location right in the heart of Glasgow. Right in the center of our greatest city. And we wanted to make our building far more fit for purpose for ministry and for mission in our 21st century and in our location.

So tonight I think it's really important that we remind ourselves of that purpose and also why and how the gospel and the demands of the mission of the gospel have in fact driven from the very beginning and all the way through everything about this building project.

Right down to every detail about various areas and issues in the building itself. We need to be right at the outset very very clear in our minds that the purpose of what we've done hasn't been for us at all.

It's been for the Lord Jesus Christ and His glory. And His glory we trust as more and more people hear of Him and hear His word and come to know Him and come to love Him.

Psalms 115 verse 1 is a great reminder isn't it for us? Not to us O Lord not to us but to Your name give glory for the sake of Your steadfast love and faithfulness.

[13 : 47] So tonight we've got two purposes. First to show us all again how the needs of the mission that we're engaged in and the needs of the mission that we hope to be more and more engaged in particularly weekday opportunities that we have as a church how these things have shaped the rebuilding and the redevelopment of our building.

And secondly as we do that to give us a preview of what we're going to see next Sunday morning so that we know what to expect in advance and so that we can understand it better and so that hopefully next Sunday we'll not be so taken up with all the new things that we don't focus on the one far more important thing the Lord Himself and His Word and the thanksgiving that we'll be giving to Him as we meet together.

So to explain tonight's proceedings we're going to have five sections in Word and in Picture and various of our staff are going to lead us through the building and its uses and in each we're going to think of some of the key aspects of ministry and mission that has informed and that has shaped every aspect of the development and the work done.

We'll intersperse that with singing and with Bible readings and hopefully at the end of this time we'll have a bit of a time for questions and answers just not on everything but on things particularly that we might need to know details about next Sunday and so on.

So our first thing tonight is in the marketplace and I wonder if you'd turn with me in your Bibles to Acts chapter 17 because we want Scripture to be informing everything that we think about tonight as it has informed the building program and page 926 in the church Bibles which remember will stay here at the end of the service and not find our way into where they shouldn't be.

[15 : 37] Acts 17 at verse 16 let's remember these words Now while Paul was waiting for them in Athens his spirit was provoked within him as he saw the city was full of idols so he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there.

Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him and some said what does this babbler wish to say? Others said he seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection and they took hold of him and brought him to the Areopagus saying may we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting for you bring some strange things to our ears we wish to know what these things mean and of course they then listened to him preaching about Jesus as the risen Lord and then in verse 32 we read this when they heard of the resurrection from the dead some mocked but others said we will hear you again about this but some men joined him and believed among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Daramus and others with them.

Reasoning in the marketplace day by day we are certainly in the marketplace aren't we? In St. George's Tron in Buchanan Street and the Lord has caused thousands and thousands of people to just happen to be outside our building and near where the Lord has put us.

So first of all Alex is going to speak to us about how our great consciousness of the weekday opportunities that we have in the marketplace of Glasgow how these things have been key in shaping our project.

So Alex I'm going to hand over to you to speak to us now. I'd like to talk about this interface between our church and the marketplace and we'll begin by going back in time.

[17 : 41] 1808 and the doors of our building were opened for the very first time and Dr. Porteous was the minister back then. It was a brand new building and it was fit for purpose.

Outside as you can see there's no cars no students no shoppers just the bleating of sheep. You see West Nile Street and Bass Street where we are now it was just fields back then in 1808 and as you probably know the railings around the building they were to keep the sheep out.

And we moved to the earlier 20th century and our church building's there on the right hand side. Can you see it? And the stock market there in the centre the in the centre of the building.

Can you see there's even cars on the scene now and I counted 37 people and 6 horses.

2009 and tens of thousands of people pour past our doors every single day. Shoppers tourists the city residents workers the unemployed the homeless the famous we had Rod Stewart on Buchanan Street last year in 2008.

[19 : 14] So from Partick to North Korea you know people home in converge on Buchanan Street don't they from all around the globe.

We're sort of hemmed in aren't we by our mission field. But here's the problem friends think about this think about people's thinking most people think that the church is sort of from another age you know they think it's irrelevant that's what most people think when I speak to them on Buchanan Street or Socky Hall Street Noel Edmonds well he famously once said church is the most boring experience on offer and sadly friends that's a perception of many people isn't it?

Am I right? They put it in a different compartment in their thinking something they could never relate to and sadly I think our 1808 building well it sort of confirmed this perception that many had and so think about this we have a responsibility don't we?

We have the responsibility to be the interface of nothing less than God's kingdom to break down those barriers are you with me? He's where's that?

Do you know where that is? Borders bookshop on Buchanan Street the photograph is taken from the pavement looking inside and can you see what's happening there?

[20 : 48] The frontage of Borders bookshop it's all glass and it's like breaking down these boundaries do you see? So that there's some sort of interface and it's like when you're actually outside on Buchanan Street but you feel you're on the inside does that make sense?

And so there's less boundaries in walking inside the building right let's have let's watch a video and you'll see how much easier it is to walk into our building just watch this we begin on Buchanan Street so that's me walking in you'll see the automatic sliding doors and now you can see right through the building through where the war memorial used to be that's Terry those wooden doors will normally be open you see straight away it's a much brighter place isn't it?

So I'm walking in the gents' loo was in that area this is where the blue curtains were and they're gone and we're entering there the auditorium part of the building can you see that?

So there we have it it's a much smoother seamless transition isn't it I'd like to think from Buchanan Street he's the disabled entrance that's also where the gents' loo used to be so that's the disabled entrance it's nice and bright and wide you can see on the left the disabled loo here's a picture looking from outside that's actually on the north side looking in and you can actually can you see right through the building there you can see that shop on the other side and right on the other side of the building there that's myself and you doing a little bible study you see that interface thing you can see right through from the outside right the way through to the other side of the building I guess the people on the number 11 to Rob Ruston couldn't join the bible study on that particular picture and that's a view from the south side and incidentally you can see me there just looking at a bible that's not actually an entrance door that's a large glass panel and it was quite interesting when you and

I were there doing this bible study for Kieran taking the photographs a lady walked past and she wanted in so she was looking in trying to work out how to get into the building and then she disappeared for a minute and then she came back I presume she was trying to get in the front door which was locked and then she came back again looking in trying to get into the building so there we are that's our mission in the marketplace it's our interface the building will be open for a minimum of six hours each day from Monday to Saturday and there'll be a church team there inside the building trained and fully resourced to communicate the gospel to a lost world so under God's hand we've moved haven't we from 1808 to 2009 and our building is once more fit for purpose not so much this time to be keeping sheep out but drawing them in thanks Alex well there's more to come but we're going to sing again and it's number 305 a hymn that expresses what we are seeking to do in the middle of

[24 : 26] Glasgow that Jesus our Lord shall take the highest honour and the highest praise in the city centre of Glasgow 305 30573 CHOIR SINGS Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[28 : 01] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. becomes a finder, or rather is found. Remember, perhaps in the story, the very next moment, Paul and his companions bumped into a very, very different woman indeed, a very needy woman.

Remember the exploited slave girl, the one who had a demon and was being used by her masters. And she also was transformed, wasn't she, by that, well, what seemed to be a chance encounter with the Lord's people.

[29 : 26] But of course, there's never any chance encounters in God's economy. And we know that we have many, many opportunities with those who come seeking. They come to our building. They come into it.

There's people sitting here tonight, loving the Lord Jesus Christ, because the first time they came, they came not knowing what they were seeking, but seeking something. And they found it in our church.

And so Agnes and I are going to come and explain why and how our desire to meet that need of the seeker in particular has shaped much of the redevelopment work. So Agnes.

Our building was always quite an awkward building, an awkward place to make people welcome and to get into good conversations with them. It was rather like inviting somebody round for dinner, but never buying a dinner table that they could sit round in comfort.

It was okay, we managed, but it gave the impression that people were not 100% welcome. And we wanted to make everything about the setup of the building 100% welcoming to those who were coming into the church building, perhaps, as Willie said, without any really clear idea themselves of why they were there, but drawn in by the Lord and receptive to the gospel.

[30 : 45] Our aim is to engage the seeker with the gospel, isn't it? And to make a comfortable setting for an uncomfortable message. And so the aim, and I think success, has been to make everything about the new layout say, we expect people to spend time in here with us talking.

Now that's a view from the new pulpit. And you're looking towards, I never know whether to call it the back or the front, looking towards the way you would walk in. Everything about it says, we expect people to spend time in here with us talking.

Have a look at this. Okay, I need a helper. Do you see on the right-hand side of that picture, there's a little room.

You probably can't orientate yourselves, don't worry about that, you'll get that in just a second. Coffee, we'll be able to make coffee in there, so we've got somebody we've got into conversation with. It'll be easy when you're within sight and sound of someone to carry on chatting and just say, let me just pour you a coffee, and then we can sit down and carry on this conversation in comfort.

So maybe someone has had a bad news at the Breast Screening Centre, which is on the same square as the church building, and maybe as they left, they find themselves just walking into the church building without really knowing what they were doing.

[32 : 12] One of the volunteers notices that they're a bit distracted and upset and says hello, and they're clearly wanting to chat. And so you grab a coffee from there, and you sit in the foyer, or maybe just through the screens where you can see the red chairs, in comfort to have a conversation with them.

It all signals care and purpose, that we actually want them to be there. It's not accidental. If it's the person at their ease, they're more likely to stay. It might mean they'll come back for a service.

And that's kind of the first part of our strategy, an environment and facilities that show that we expect people to spend time in here with us talking.

And of course, we have the gospel to talk about with them. Now, you won't have missed the bookshelf. Let's see if this one works, shall we? You won't have missed the bookshelves, as I've been talking there.

And that area under the gallery is going to be known as the Epaphras Book Room. And that's also part of our strategy to engage the seeker with the gospel, and to make a comfortable setting for an uncomfortable message.

[33 : 18] I don't know if you've ever been to a strange place. Maybe you've been to a wedding, and you're the only person you know is the bride. I've done that. And you're standing around, waiting for them to have their pictures taken. And you quite like to talk to somebody, and you don't want to go away, but you can't just stand in the middle of a room, looking like a dually.

You do need something to do. So what do you do? You read the posters, don't you? And if there's leaflets lying around, like in the doctor's surgery, you pick them up and read them. You want to hang around and chat, and you just need a way to do it.

So you read the posters. Well, we are laying on a whole book room of things for people to read, to keep them lingering, and to provide openings for gospel conversations.

Yay. So it might go something like this. Are you looking for something in particular? Can I help you to choose? Yes, actually, my daughter's friend has just died, and I don't know what to say to her.

You see, that's not what I expected. That's not just a book request. That's an opening for a gospel. It's gone to the wrong place, Ewan. It's an opening for a gospel conversation, and that's another part of our strategy, to engage seekers with the gospel and to make a comfortable setting for an uncomfortable message.

[34 : 36] And finally, another part of our strategy is simply to make good Christian books available to seekers and to others. The book room isn't large. It won't have every Christian book.

That's not its purpose. It will have maybe two or three of the best books on key subjects, and, of course, evangelistic books, books for the seeker, will always be available and prominent, and these can be bought or given to those who are seeking.

You know, we've always had tracts in English and in a huge variety of other languages. Well, the book room is just a brilliant extension of that. Some people may not be willing to talk and to listen when they're in the building, but it's the most natural thing in the world, isn't it, for a tourist to look at the books available in an attraction they've been into, or for someone else to pick something up that they think might be interesting.

And someone who won't talk might go home with some dynamite in their pocket. And so our aim was to make an environment and facilities that show that we expect people to spend time in here with us talking.

And I'm thinking mainly about Monday to Friday, Monday to Saturday, when most of us are doing other jobs of work. A whole book room of things for people to read to keep them lingering and to provide openings for gospel conversations.

[35 : 52] And good Christian books available for seekers and others. Thanks, Agnes. Sorry we got a bit confused in the slides there.

We'll sort that out just while we're singing in a minute. But I think one of the things that you'll see is just what an excellent book area we have. And Malcolm and Miriam Lyrie are greatly to be thanked for that. They've been working tirelessly to get that all ready and to get a great range of things there.

It'll be a great, great resource for us as a church family. And hopefully also for others, many other Christians too. These things have all been chosen very carefully and we hope it'll be a very, very valuable resource for all of us.

But what a lovely place for people who come in off the street to be able to browse and sit down and do something and not feel like they're out of place. And we're going to be praying that we'll be able to meet seekers and that many hearts also will be unraveled as Lydia's was that day.

I'm going to sing again number 746, a hymn that expresses love for the Lord. And it's our desire that many others would join us in singing. As water to the thirsty, as beauty to the eyes, so is my living Lord to me.

[37 : 04] and I love you, and I love you, and I love you.

Thank you very much. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

We're back on top of the technology, fear not. Lots more pictures to see. But think about this. The New Testament church does have a great focus, doesn't it, on reaching out, on spreading out in mission.

But also there's a very clear focus too, isn't there, on ministry to those within the church as well as those on the outside. And in the New Testament that is always a mutual ministry.

[39 : 51] I'm sure you notice that when you read the New Testament letters. Paul tells us plainly, doesn't he, in Ephesians chapter 4 that the specific gifts of word ministry, that is pastors and teachers and so on, that they are given to the church to equip the saints.

What for? For their works of ministry. So if anyone says to you, by the way, who's the minister in your church? The answer is, we're all ministers in our church. Isn't that right?

I hope so. Because that's what the Bible says we are. Some of us are called to full-time word ministry to equip all of us for our own ministries. Every one of us in this room and downstairs, everyone in our fellowship is a minister.

So ministry is mutual. And it's very importantly about encouraging one another. And that's not just about large gatherings. It is about large gatherings, but not just.

Remember how Paul, in Acts chapter 20, he reminded the Ephesians that while he was among them, he taught them both publicly and from house to house. Okay, that house to house isn't like our little houses.

[40 : 54] It's probably household to household, but it's smaller groups as well as large. And everywhere the New Testament encourages these small, more informal forms of ministry. One to one, where twos and threes gather together.

Just remember how the Hebrews writers puts it. Hebrews 10, 24. Very important verse. Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works. Not neglecting to meet together as some in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another.

And all the more as you see the day drawing near. He said the same thing earlier on in Hebrews 3, verse 12. Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you, in the church, an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.

That's a warning, isn't it? To a believing church. What are you to do? Exhort one another daily, every day, as long as it's called today, that none of you may be hardened with the deceitfulness of sin.

For we share in Christ if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. You see? Mutual ministry, one to another. We need that if we're not going to have hearts that become hardened.

[42 : 07] If we're not going to drift away from the Lord Jesus Christ. If we're going to keep right on until the day of the Lord's coming. Remember the pastoral epistles, they also echo just exactly that thing, don't they?

Do you remember we studied not too long ago in Titus and in 2 Timothy? Titus urges older women to encourage younger women, older men, younger men, and so on. So a vital part of our ministry involves that kind of mutual encouragement in smaller groups, in one-to-ones, in all sorts of things, as well as our public meetings.

And so one major factor of the development has been to try and provide as many as possible flexible spaces for that kind of smaller group ministry, gatherings, one-to-ones, all of these things to be able to happen.

Not just sitting in rows in pews, but doing things one with another, as well as with the outsider. So Brian's going to show us some pictures of that and some of the things that will make that easier than it was before.

Brian. Thanks, Willie. Well, the main feature of having a brand new building is being able to have flexibility in how we use the space now available to us.

[43 : 21] A big and exciting feature of the redevelopment project has been to massively increase our scope for more informal, multipurpose meeting areas in the building.

What you should be seeing is the old creche room. That's on the first floor. Now, when Alex showed you the staircase, at the top of the stairs, there was a room, and it looked just like that.

And a big change can be seen in this first floor area of the church building, where there was just this one room, used mostly for creche. The design team have cleverly given us three beautiful rooms.

A tower room, which is this room here, and it's now sandwiched with a Buchanan south room and a Buchanan north room. These all have stunning views out onto Buchanan street and George street and create a dynamic space for use both on a Sunday and for the ministry of the church throughout the week.

On a Sunday, two of these rooms will be used for creche during the morning service. The area is therefore completely changed, giving us the opportunity to have small meetings, one-to-ones, workspace for staff and volunteers during the week.

[44 : 44] The three rooms are all linked together, but there is flexibility to create privacy for prayer or for confidentiality. So there you see the top of the stairs, and that's one of the ends of one of the new rooms.

So this picture shows that the rooms were formed from what was effectively dead space at the top of the stairs in the building previously. The accessibility to the main entrance also means that these new rooms are right at the heart of the practical use of the building.

Two of our best models there as well. Or one of them. Well, as we've watched the redevelopment take place, as Agnes said there, this book room, this will also be a fellowship area for Sunday.

A chance for people to stand and chat, whereas before there was a bit of a squash to get out. There's now this lovely fellowship area where you can stand around, bright and easy surroundings there.

Well, as we've watched it, the redevelopment takes shape with George McElvain's updates, and excellent as they've been. It's been quite something to see the building stripped right back to the bare walls to a shell and a very large hole dug down into the earth.

[46 : 16] We didn't hit oil. Thankfully, we didn't hit water or the underground. And now we have a brand new space in our building. The lower ground floor consists of a flexible meeting area, a brand new kitchen space, and brand new toilets, also housing the heating and audiovisual hardware.

So here's the finished article. A fantastic additional space that brings a completely new dimension to the building. The dedicated projector and screen means that any multimedia presentation can be handled in the new and relaxed surroundings.

The space is ideal for Sunday school, for tea and coffee after the evening service, and then during the week for one-off events or informal meetings, for example, internationals or the youth.

The kitchen, as you can see on the left there, means that the area is a self-contained unit to provide for refreshments for any group meeting there.

There we are. The new toilets are a very welcome addition. I won't tempt a fence by showing any pictures, so you just have to see for yourself. Needless to say, I have seen inside both the men's and the women's toilets, and they are worth the wait.

[47 : 45] Now, this open space in the lower ground floor, it can also be partitioned to provide two meeting areas, which adds to the flexibility of the area.

The partitioning creates a corridor, which means that there is still access to the lower ground floor without disturbing any of the meetings going on.

Sunday school will use the two partitioned areas on a Sunday morning. So that is our meeting areas.

The only thing missing are the people. Thanks very much. Thanks, Brian. I, too, have seen inside the ladies' toilets.

And, ladies, you'll be glad to know there's enough room in there to hold the ladies' convention. Never mind just anything else. They must be the largest ladies' toilets in the history of the world. So if I hear a single complaint, you can find another church.

[48 : 46] Right. Did you think all of that space could be inside that building? It's amazing, isn't it? Great to see all of that. And that's just a taster of what you'll see in three dimensions next week.

Just a couple of things to say. Those three rooms right across the front, the tower and the north, what is it called? Buchanan North and Buchanan South, that's right.

They're lovely rooms. And all that lovely furniture that you saw in there, those rooms have been furnished and kitted out entirely as a gift from the trustees of Cornhill, Scotland, who wanted to make a contribution to our building project.

So we're very, very grateful for that. As also was the beautiful, enormous new coffee machine, which you might have spotted there in the kitchen.

So we're very, very grateful for that. And also for many other gifts. One thing that will remain as a surprise, all around the walls, in the wind, and in these new rooms, downstairs and upstairs, you'll see very beautiful pictures, which have now been hung.

[49 : 54] Every one of those a gift to us and to the new church as well. So that's something for you to look forward to on Sunday. Let's sing number 723.

Number 723. That reminds us that it's all about knowing Jesus. That there's no greater thing. And that that's why we're doing all this. So that we can reach out and share with others the wonderful news of the one that we have found and built our life upon.

Number 723. Number 723. That there's no great thing.

No higher thing. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[53 : 03] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Remember what Paul says in Acts 19, or rather what Luke says. Acts 19.8. Paul entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God.

But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus.

This continued for two years so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. Now if you think about our building, we've got both the synagogue and the lecture hall of Tyrannus in one, haven't we?

[55 : 46] We've got a place to preach and to reason with the God-fearers, with the faithful, with those who come to hear deliberately the word of God on Sundays or Wednesdays. But also, it's our lecture hall of Tyrannus.

It's our place where we're right in the marketplace, all week, and where we have the opportunity to do both of these things. And of course, we're going to continue as a fellowship meeting Sundays, reasoning boldly, Sabbath by Sabbath, the word of God.

And the whole of the main auditorium has been refitted and changed. And although we'll be doing the same thing, it'll be in rather a different atmosphere.

And Ewan's going to come and tell us about some of these changes. Thank you. A few years ago, I was in the barber, and I announced I was going to begin working for a church.

And he said, what are you going to do between Monday and Friday? So, that's the impression people have, isn't it? The church is only open on Sunday. The work of ministry only happens on Sunday morning, and the gospel has nothing to say to the working week.

[56 : 53] So, we want the new auditorium to be a place that serves its function very well on Sundays, but also every other day of the week. A place that can accommodate great crowds of people, hearing the gospel, listening to the word of God, but can accommodate smaller meetings, smaller gatherings, and one-to-one studies.

This is a picture of a former auditorium. And as we look at the new one, we can see that it's light, it's clean, it's welcoming. It's the kind of place that you would be happy to spend time in.

I'm told the Japanese have a saying that the door of a church is very high. It's very difficult for some people to enter a church. So, we want to remove as many obstacles and fears as we can by creating a pleasant space where people can sit and be comfortable.

It's very spacious. We can see, this is the architect illustration, we want to fill the place both on the ground floor and in the gallery, and we can see how much space there is.

The pews have been retained in the gallery and replaced by chairs on the ground floor. Several hundred people can gather at once to hear the gospel preached, perhaps for the first, perhaps for the last time. Several hundred people can gather for a Sunday service or a conference.

[58 : 08] It is a great space and has great potential. But it's a flexible space. I'm going to show you a film of the seating before and after. This is before, two years ago.

You can see the pews. Through the wonder of technology, these pews can turn into chairs. It wasn't quite as simple in real life. And as Agnes mentioned, we're not doing this simply for our own pleasure.

We're creating a comfortable environment for an uncomfortable message. We want people to be able to pay attention to what is being said. But it's a flexible space. We're not committed just to being in the pulpit.

It's possible to rearrange the seating for a smaller conference. A one-day conference, a ministry assembly, a one-off lecture event, for example. And the seating is versatile.

It can be arranged in many different ways. But the space itself is versatile. I'll refer back to the last slide. But you can see if we take those chairs away, it's possible to have, for example, a men's breakfast, a breakfast meeting.

[59 : 17] It's possible to have a lunchtime service, as we do on Wednesdays. It's possible to bring tables in, set the chairs around the tables for a welcome cafe, which we do during Freshers' Week, or a cultural event, such as our Chinese New Year event.

It's also possible to set tables, to have dinner, to have an evening dinner, as we did in the city chambers we can now have in our own building. And we hope to do that during the mission week with Rico Tais.

So a large space, but a flexible one, versatile for daily use. But there are small spaces within the large space. And some recesses have been created in the gallery, both sides, front and back.

Again, they're light, they're bright, they're comfortable. And it's a place where people can meet individuals or small groups. They can speak, they can share, they can read the Bible together.

It's a public place, but it's a private place, because you're out of earshot. And this has several advantages. Firstly, it's transparent. That's good for the staff. If we're talking to someone we don't know, it means we're safe.

[60 : 19] Other people can see us. It keeps us above reproach. We always seek to be beyond reproach in all that we do. But it means that people can see who we're talking to, and see that we're behaving in a way befitting of the gospel.

Especially if speaking to a member of the opposite sex. But it's safe as well for the guest. If somebody is a little bit tense, a little bit fearful of being in a church, it means they're speaking in private, but they're in public.

So they don't need to be afraid about being locked in a room. You can see again just how versatile these spaces are. Very dramatic backdrop to a midday meeting.

Finally, there's an entirely new audio-visual system. We won't talk too much about that, but it's excellent. Projection facilities, loudspeakers, and so on.

There are also some plasma screens on the walls. These can be in use during the service. For example, the hymns, which we've just been singing. But we're in the process of completing a series of films to show to the public.

[61 : 21] Evangelistic films explaining the gospel. Films detailing the history of the church and the contribution of missionaries. And we hope to show these to members of the public when they come in. To school groups, to groups of tourists.

Whoever comes in, thereby presenting the gospel to them in a way in which they can just sit comfortably and listen and consider for themselves. So we aim to use the auditorium seven days of the week for large groups, such as is gathered here, small groups, and individuals using a range of media as it befits the occasion.

Well, how are you liking the look of it so far? Pretty good? I think it's great to see it in two dimensions.

Of course, next week we're going to see it in three dimensions, be in there and be part of it. And I think you're going to see just what a great job has been done and just how much we've got to thank God for. And just how worth it it's been.

Because we have been sacrificing, haven't we? Many of us have been sacrificing a great deal as we've been giving to this project. There'll be more to do. We're not going to talk about money and that sort of thing tonight.

[62 : 31] The final accounts and all that sort of thing are going to take some time to come in. But there will be more money to raise. We know that. We've known that from the beginning. But I think when we're in there and when we see it, when we begin to understand the potential of what we can do in this great facility God's given us, I think we'll find that our hearts are just overcome with thanksgiving in all that God has done in changing this building for us.

So we're going to sing again. As we sing, it's a good opportunity for us to take up the offering tonight. It's number 601. 601. That reminds us that above all, it's our great message, isn't it?

That God so loved the world that he gave his only son that he might die. That believing in him, we shall find eternal life. It's something that overwhelms everything else.

God's generosity to us and ours in return to him just pales, doesn't it? Remember that we have to change the third line of the chorus. Not believing in him, we shall find eternal life.

But whoever trusts in him shall find eternal life. No theological difference, by the way. It just fits the music better. Whoever trusts in him shall find eternal life. Number 601. And we'll receive the offering as we sing.

[63 : 41] Yeah. Amen. Amen.e Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Be ready in season and out of season. That means when people want to hear it and when people don't want to hear it. Reprove, rebuke and exhort with complete patience and teaching.

[67 : 57] For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching. You hear what he says? Continue in sound teaching for the time is coming when people will not endure it.

Do what people do not want you to do. But having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions. And will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

As for you, always be sober minded. Endure suffering. Do the work of one who preaches the gospel.

And fulfill your ministry. Well, it's obvious, isn't it, that unless the word of God is at the very center of our church life, we won't have any real church life at all, will we?

Because the Bible is plain. Man does not live by bread alone or by buildings alone. Important for us to remember that, isn't it? But by what? By every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.

[68 : 54] That's why the pulpit has always been central in St. George's Tron, at least in living memory. And we trust it always will be. And by the way, that's your job. Is to hold me to that.

And others who preach. To hold me to that and to make sure that your next pastor, whoever that may be, is held to that too. Nothing loaded in that statement, by the way. Even though, when you see the beautiful new ministers, boards that have been made, beautiful new boards that combine all the old memorials in the church.

One for the war memorials and one for all the ministers in the past. You'll see that there is still a gap in the date at the bottom right-hand corner, which has my name. One version did come back with 208 against it.

But George hadn't realized that it was a bit of a joke when I said, oh, you've missed something out there. So he put it in. Anyway, maybe that was a hint. But our job together is to make sure, isn't it, that the pulpit will always be the center of our church life.

Not just as a symbol, but as a reality. Now because of that, it's no accident, I think, that one of the greatest difficulties that we faced during this building project was over the issue of the pulpit.

[70 : 06] Do you remember the many prayer meetings we were praying very particularly about that? I'm sure you do. Remember all the planning difficulties that we had? Remember the many times that we were almost at our wit's end?

There were lots of design challenges too, of course, especially in relation to visibility for the pulpit in that church, where you have two levels, a gallery upstairs and downstairs. Very difficult.

But there were also design issues because there had to be rear stairs down into the wind downstairs for fire regulations. But in the end, I'm very happy to say that at least I'm very, very pleased with the outcome.

And I'm sure you will be too. I think brilliantly the team has achieved everything that we set out to achieve. And I'm going to hand over to George McIlvain, the leader of our building development team, to tell us a little bit about that.

And also to Kenny Stephen. And they're going to tell us a little bit about the design issues, particularly about the pulpit, but also about some of the invisible things that you won't see next Sunday.

[71 : 09] Things behind closed doors and above the rafters and in hidden places, which are actually the skeleton and the guts of the building that hold it all together. You won't see it, and I hope you won't hear too much of it, but it's really quite impressive.

And we thought you'd like to see some of the innards of the building as well. So over to George and Kenny. Allow me, if I may first of all, to explain to you what the objectives were in the construction of this pulpit.

First of all, that the speakers would be visible from all around the church building. Secondly, to have a pulpit of a good size, a decent size for a variety of our needs.

Thirdly, to try to achieve this in a way which didn't take up too much floor space. And then, fourthly, to ensure that the pulpit was a real focal point within the building.

Now that, I'm sure you'll be saying, that's pretty obvious stuff. But for us, actually, that's where the fun starts. There were so many people, so many important people, that had to be satisfied.

[72 : 33] There were architects, there were engineers, there was building control, there was the dreaded Church of Scotland Committee of Art and Architecture, and of course there was a minister.

Now, all of these people didn't have the same objectives as we had at their heart. And I think that I would share with all the members of the development team in saying that at the beginning we thought, what have we got in our hands here?

This is a real cracker. So let me now explain to you... I've forgotten to press the button. Let me now explain to you the solution that was created.

At the back of the building, immediately under the stained glass windows, there had to be an escape staircase which comes up from the lower ground floor.

Now just picture for a minute putting a large, long box over this hole in the floor with just enough headroom for people who would be coming up the stairs.

[74 : 05] Well, the top of that box, this imaginary box, that is the floor of the new pool pit. That floor, and this is terribly important to understand, is virtually the height of the old pool pit.

And it had to be that height because the original architects of the building had calculated it brilliantly for visibility from all over the gallery and from all over the ground floor.

So getting a solution in which the pool pit is within a smidgen of the same height as it was previously was key to the solution.

The staircase, as I said, goes most of the way across the back of the building right underneath the stained glass windows.

And therefore, this floor, the top of the box, the floor of the pool pit, actually goes most of the way from one side of the gallery to the other.

[75 : 20] So the bonus to this is that we have now bags of space in the pool pit. Indeed, we have a pool pit and a platform in one.

And that's a size which will cater for the wide variety of our requirements. We were so pleased with this solution primarily because it used space which couldn't have been used for anything else.

It was one space. And it saved the pool pit having to come out further into the ground floor and taking up valuable seating accommodation. And so finally, the pool pit has become a real focal point of the building.

The face of the pulpit has been treated with American cherry panels which coordinate with other woodwork throughout the building.

And also with structural glass for increased visibility of the speaker. We are automatically, our eyes are automatically attracted to areas of greatest light.

[76 : 39] And a facility has been built into the lighting system where the lighting around the pulpit can be increased in intensity and the other areas reduced in intensity.

and that will help if required to accentuate this focal point of the pulpit within the building. So just to summarise, it's the same height as the previous pulpit for maximum visibility.

We've now got bags of space. It's all created out of its one space, potentially dead space, and it is the focal point within the building.

Now I want to ask our co-worker, Kenny, to come here. Our valuable co-worker, may I say. Pull back the curtain and let us see the hidden parts of the doorway.

Thank you. As George has said, the pulpit is very much the focal point of the auditorium. And we really have inherited a beautiful, elegant, internal space in the church.

[77 : 55] But if we recall some of the goals that we had for that space, it was very much compromised. It's a 200-year-old building that's been adapted from time to time to try and bring it into the 20th century.

So we had toilets within the two stairwells, which once were spacious but were now cluttered and too narrow. We had the north and south room within the sanctuary, which were very necessary because we needed space to have tea prep kitchen facilities.

But they encroached within the beautiful space of the sanctuary, and we'd lost the vaulted ceilings, which were above them. We also had the redundant organ pipes behind the pulpit that screened off the stained glass windows.

And I'd always wondered what it would be like to see those windows. Of course, we can now see that. So our goal was really to try and clear away all that clutter and to restore the building to the elegance and the proportion that it was designed for.

And really, in creating the space on the lower ground floor, it allowed us to move the toilets there and to give us a much better toilet provision and also to put a much larger and more flexible meeting space and much better kitchen facilities there.

[79 : 25] But that wasn't all we were faced with. Perhaps a greater challenge was to deal with the building services infrastructure. How could we implement new services, 21st century services, into a 200-year-old building?

And what we're talking about is we needed a new heating system, a new ventilation system, a new foul drainage system, comfort cooling to the lower ground floor meeting room.

We had new power, new lighting, data, security alarms, CCTV cameras, fire alarm, audio-visual system, a new telephone and internet system, and a new organ and speaker system.

So it was a real challenge to try and integrate that into the building. And if I go to the slides, I'll explain how we tried to do that.

The first thing we've tried to do is utilise every square inch of the existing building that we had. So what we see here is the attic space.

[80 : 34] And you'll see that there is a plethora of ductwork there that's all an air handling plant that is all part of the new ventilation system.

So we've tried to utilise as much space as possible. The next slide is not a mistake. It's not the boiler house of a Russian nuclear submarine.

It's actually a brand new plant room which is located in the lower ground floor and that's got most of the heating equipment that needs to go in there.

But one of the biggest challenges was really dealing with the miles and miles and miles of cabling that's required for all the audio-visual and power and lighting systems.

And we had allowed in the contract for stripping out or ragging the walls. that's a technical term. It means to cut a groove into the existing plaster work that you can put conduit in and cabling and then plaster over.

[81 : 35] However, when we actually got down to the nitty-gritty of the construction we found that the plaster work was not in a good repair at all and virtually all of the plaster work had to be stripped out from the entrance foyer, the two stairwells and the sanctuary.

I think the only bits that are remaining are the cornice in the sanctuary that's been reinstated and kept and some, not all, of the vaulted ceilings below the balcony.

And you can see some of the reasons why the plaster work wasn't in good condition. It was what was behind it. This shows a timber lintel that's... Some people were a bit surprised there was timber in there carrying all this heavy masonry, but timber is actually a very strong material.

It's just after 200 years or so it's reached its sell-by date. So we had lots of structural repairs to carry out and then we had to re-plaster all the walls and all the ceilings.

Similarly, this just shows another area that required strengthening works. This is the... looking from the foyer through to the...

[82 : 47] the stairwell. And so, when you see this building on Sunday, those things won't be readily obvious, but they were all part of the works nevertheless.

And the interior... We're very pleased with the way the interior's worked out and we trust that when you go in there on Sunday you will find it to be a welcoming and inviting space and befitting of the purpose and the goal we all share for this building that it might be a centre for evangelism in the heart of the city of Glasgow.

Thanks. Well, thank you, George and Kenny. There you are, a virtual tour.

You'll know what to expect next Sunday morning now, although it'll be in three dimensions, but more importantly, I hope it's been a reminder to all of us about what this is really all about. It's about playing our part, isn't it, in this generation, in this place,