

News Release

24 March 2023

Faith in Scotland's constitutional future?

Academics at the University of Glasgow have been awarded funding to look at the role of faith in deciding Scotland's constitutional future.

[The Paristamen Charity](#) has awarded its 2023 Blue Sky Grant of £25,000 to a team led by Rev Dr Douglas Gay and Professor Heather Walton, who work in the University of Glasgow's Theology & Religious Studies subject area.

The Charity asked for proposals to increase understanding of [Christian Reflection on Scotland's Constitutional Future](#). The aim of the project is to bring together those on all sides of the independence debate, including those who are undecided, to listen and respond to a range of arguments and perspectives.

Dr Gay and Professor Walton will oversee research throughout Scotland, exploring how church members and adherents apply faith-based arguments to Scotland's continued belonging to the UK or its becoming an independent country.

[Rev Dr Gay](#), Senior Lecturer, Theology & Religious Studies, based in the School of Critical Studies at the University of Glasgow, said:

“There are high levels of interest today in the place of faith in public life in Scotland. We are delighted to have received funding from Paristamen to explore these issues with folk in the pews and to deepen our understanding of how people relate their faith to their thinking about constitutional options.”

Professor Gareth Morgan, Chair of Trustees of The Paristamen Charity, added:

“Paristamen has funded a number of projects to encourage debate and exploration of sensitive or controversial issues, usually from a Christian perspective. We were delighted to receive an extremely strong proposal for this project from the University of Glasgow and we look forward to working with their team.”

Research will include ecumenical field work across a range of Christian churches and traditions in the Autumn and Winter of 2023/4, leading to a final report in the first half of 2024.

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Notes to Editors

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[The Paristamen Charity](#) is a small grant-making charity based in East Lothian, Scotland. Founded in 1985, in recent years it has awarded a wide range of grants mainly to smaller Scottish charities, and one larger “Blue Sky” grant. It is governed by four trustees who have a range of Christian affiliations and varying political views.

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