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New Scots, new neighbours:
Faith-based narratives of 'refugee journeys' and their role in supporting integration with refugees in Scotland

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Abstract

The devolved Scottish Government's New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy (NSRIS), uniquely in the UK, supports refugee integration from Day One of arrival and considers integration as a complex process involving many actors. Faith-based organisations are key actors in grassroots-level initiatives supporting community integration across Scotland, yet their perspectives have often been overlooked in policy and scholarly writing. To address this lacuna, this article considers faith-based organisations such as Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees (SFAR) and the Iona Community in their support of refugee integration in Scotland, focusing on the theological engagement which sustains them in their work. Through a narrative-based interdisciplinary approach, the article examines ways in which faith-based narratives of 'refugee journeys' are an important element of theological engagement which supports faith communities to embody hospitality, justice, and solidarity with migrants and displaced people in Scotland today.

Introduction

Faith is a key element of Scotland's ecologies of integration – from national-level faith-based organisations supporting New Scots, to individual people who provide essential volunteering services. It is also an element which has for many years remained unrecognised within policy writing, both at a Scottish Government and Local Authority level, while forming a key element of what inspires and sustains many local initiatives supporting integration, from volunteer-run ESOL cafés to food sharing to 'Mother and Toddler' settings held in church buildings. It is also true that within the abundant scholarship on refugees and asylum seekers in the UK, less work has been done on the role of churches and church-based volunteers in this context.[1]

This article seeks to contribute to such work by investigating the role of faith-related refugee journeys, and the narratives attached to such journeys, in supporting organisations and individuals within Scotland's ecologies of integration. To do so, it firstly outlines the Scottish integration policy context and the extent to which faith-based initiatives of sanctuary are recognised. It then considers faith-based narratives of refugee journeys as important narratives present in different faith traditions, relating them to the work of faith-based organisations supporting integration across Scotland. The article then turns to examples of faith-based narratives being used against the right to refuge and integration, before concluding with generative questions and suggestions for moving forward.

Context: Faith-based integration work and the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy

The New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy (NSRIS) has been praised by the UNHCR as being 'both humane and pragmatic',[2] and is a source of

[1] Megan Douglas, "Us and Us: Reflections of the Wellbeing of Church-based Volunteers Working with Refugees and Asylum-seekers, Edinburgh, Scotland," *Intervention Journal of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Conflict Affected Areas* 21, no. 1 (2023): 76–79, https://doi.org/10.4103/intv.intv_2_23.

[2] Lawrence Bottinick, Senior Legal Officer, UNHCR London, in the Afterword to Alison Phipps, Esa Aldegheri, and Dan Fisher, *The New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy: A Report on the Local and International Dimensions of Integrating Refugees in Scotland* (University of Glasgow, 2022), 111, https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_900243_smxx.pdf.

pride for many people in Scotland who endeavour to build a nation where all people, including 'New Scots', can flourish. 'New Scots' is a term which denotes people who have been granted refugee status – or another form of humanitarian protection – and their dependents; people seeking asylum as a result of displacement, exploitation or political persecution; people whose application for asylum has been refused, but who remain in Scotland; and people who are or may become stateless and in need of international protection.[3]

The term 'New Scots' was chosen during the initial consultations held before the launch of the first NSRIS, in 2014, with the aim of providing an inclusive term that did not carry the negative connotations often attached to terms like 'refugee', 'migrant' or 'asylum seeker'. Since 2014, the NSRIS has been updated to offer a framework to support organisations, individuals and agencies who work to build integration with New Scots. Faith-based organisations, and their role in supporting refugee integration in Scotland, has been explicitly included in the NSRIS 3, the third and most recent iteration of the strategy, published in 2024.[4] However, the NSRIS is not a perfect document – nor does it make claims to be so. The possibilities, strengths and limitations of the NSRIS are best understood when placed in the wider context of Scotland's position as part of the United Kingdom, and particularly in relation to which powers are devolved to the Scottish Parliament and which are reserved to the UK Parliament in Westminster. Schedule 5 of the Scotland Act (1998) sets out issues that have a UK or international impact and remain the responsibility of the UK Parliament alone: these are known as 'reserved matters'.[5]

Reserved matters include immigration law; decisions related to the dispersal of people seeking asylum across the UK, including on hotel 'accommodation'; decision-making on individual cases pertaining to immigration and law-making on matters related to asylum, borders and immigration; matters related to immigration and employment, such as the ban on work for people seeking asylum. Matters devolved to the Scottish Parliament include policy in the areas of health and education, culture and

[3] Scottish Government, COSLA, and Scottish Refugee Council, *New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy: 2024*, 28 March 2024, 11–12, https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-scots-refugee-integration-strategy-2024/.

[4] Scottish Government, COSLA, and Scottish Refugee Council, *New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy: 2024*, 8, 21.

[5] *Scotland Act 1998*, https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/46/schedule/5.

sport, housing and employability. Although the NSRIS is not a law, it is a strategy which can and does provide a framework for integration to be supported in Scotland in devolved areas, where there has been the possibility to develop devolved and differentiated strategies. Examples include initiatives providing free bus travel to people seeking asylum, support programmes for New Scots within schools, and initiatives to support employability through retraining and volunteering while waiting for asylum decisions.

It is important to note that problems with the NSRIS are not confined solely to the practicalities and consequences of devolved and reserved powers: for many people, including scholars and activists, the very term 'integration' is contested and critiqued as shorthand for assimilation, implying that refugees have the task of integrating as a condition of their leave to remain. Such critiques are related to thinking which questions hospitality as conditional,[6] linked to forms of exclusion[7] and unequal power dynamics.[8] While assimilation is indeed problematic, integration remains a key concern in policy and research contexts, and approaches to integration such as that modelled by the NSRIS have been shown to deliver positive outcomes. Such approaches are restorative in intent and consider integration as a complex, multifaceted process which is a task for all elements of society, and have been shown to bring sustainable and long-term benefits to New Scots and the communities they live in.[9]

A helpful definition is that 'Integration is best understood as a set of overlapping processes operating within different spheres, which can proceed at different velocities, along variable trajectories, and with distinct outcomes.'[10] This understanding opens possibilities for a restorative process enhancing sanctuary, welcome and dignity of all people involved, while engaging many different elements of communities, including faith-based

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[6] Jacques Derrida, "The Principle of Hospitality," *Parallax* 11, no. 1 (2005): 6–9.

[7] Judith Still, *Derrida and Hospitality: Theory and Practice* (Edinburgh University Press. 2010).

[8] Mette Louise Berg and Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, "Introduction to the Issue: Encountering Hospitality and Hostility," *Migration and Society* 7, no. 1 (2018): 1–6.

[9] Phipps, Aldegheri, and Fisher, *The New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy*.

[10] Deborah Platts-Fowler and David Robinson, "A Place for Integration: Refugee Experiences in Two English Cities," *Population, Space and Place* 21, no. 5 (2015): 479.

initiatives. This view of integration implies an ecology of integration, in which all issues are deeply interconnected, and each area of work – from healthcare to housing provision to ESOL[11] – has its own ecologies.

A report on the research findings and literature review regarding the integration of New Scots in communities across Scotland from 2014 to 2022 highlights how faith-based initiatives are often critical parts of community processes of integration, yet previously they were not specifically mentioned as actors in processes of integration.[12] One of the aims of this report was to inform the development of the third iteration of the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy (NSRIS 3) through a series of recommendations based on the research findings. The research behind this report involved interviewing people working for faith-based organisations active in supporting integration with New Scots. This work resulted in many recommendations, including the following two which specifically included faith and faith-based work:

Recommendation 56:

> Faith communities should be present as an important element in NSRIS 3, as part of a commitment to support community development practices which build bridges between communities and develop integration through strong interpersonal and inter-organisational connections and networks.[13]

Recommendation 57:

> The existing resources provided by faith communities should be recognised and supported by NSRIS 3 as significant parts to the integration landscape across Scottish communities. Part of this recognition could involve a validation of the language of welcome present across all faiths which urge people to "welcome the stranger", which is a cultural resource that can be used by a wide diversity of communities across Scotland.[14]

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[11] Sarah Cox and Alison Phipps, "An Ecological, Multilingual Approach to Language Learning with Newly Reunited Refugee Families in Scotland," *International Journal of Educational Research* 115 (2022): 101967.

[12] Phipps, Aldegheri, and Fisher.

[13] Phipps, Aldegheri, and Fisher, 93.

[14] Phipps, Aldegheri, and Fisher, 93.

Happily, these recommendations were taken forward and implemented via the NSRIS Delivery Plan, which sets out the actions that the Scottish Government and key partners will take forward to support the integration of New Scots within Scotland's communities, through a series of key outcomes linked to actions and named partners. Faith is present as an element relevant to the work of integration with New Scots as follows:

As part of Long-term Outcome 2: 'New Scots are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs':[15]

Activities planned for short term outcome	**1: Lead** **2: Other Partners** **3: By when**	**Short-term outcome (1–2 years)**
2.12 Encourage local faith groups to register their information on New Scots Connect and provide information about faith-based services (both general support and worship spaces) in multiple languages that are accessible for New Scots.	1. Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees 3. 2024–2025	Increased numbers of faith communities registered on New Scots Connect. Improved access for New Scots to faith-based services.

As part of Long-term Outcome 4: 'Communities in Scotland understand integration interculturally and respect the diversity and strengths that New Scots bring':[16]

[15] Scottish Government, *New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy: Delivery Plan 2024 to 2026*, "Outcome 2," https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-scots-refugee-integration-strategy-delivery-plan-2024-2026/pages/4/.

[16] Scottish Government, *New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy*, "Outcome 4," https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-scots-refugee-integration-strategy-delivery-plan-2024-2026/pages/6/.

Activities planned for short term outcome	**1: Lead 2: Other Partners 3: By when**	**Short-term outcome (1–2 years)**
4.7 Provide training, awareness raising and access to small grants funding to faith communities looking to welcome New Scots.	1. Faith in Community Scotland 2. Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees 3. 2024–2026	Increased engagement of faith communities in supporting New Scots communities.

Faith-related narratives and dis/integration

So far, an overview of refugee integration debates and policy in Scotland has shown that integration research and policy have (finally) recognised the important role of faith and faith-based initiatives in Scotland's ecologies of integration, with outcomes and plans in place to support this work. Research shows that such work is often underpinned by volunteers, who give a significant amount of time and other resources supporting integration with New Scots[17] – despite an increasingly hostile legal environment.[18] What sustains this remarkable work? With relentlessly negative anti-migration narratives increasingly widespread in political and media discourse,[19] what are the narratives which motivate and strengthen organisations and individuals motivated by faith in continuing to support initiatives of integration?

Narratives of 'refugee journeys' are an important element of integration processes, because narratives are an essential part of social and cultural imaginaries – important and intangible factors which contribute to the formation of individual and collective actions.[20] Social imaginaries, 'the

[17] Karen Wren, "Supporting Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Glasgow: The Role of Multi-agency Networks," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 20, no. 3 (2007): 391–413.

[18] *Illegal Migration Act 2023*, https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/illegal-migration-bill.

[19] Christopher J. Jenks and Aditi Bhatia, "Infesting Our Country: Discursive Illusions in Anti-immigration Border Talk," *Language and Intercultural Communication* 20, no. 2 (2020): 81–94.

[20] Esa Aldegheri and Aila Spathopoulou, "Imaginaries of 'Refugee Journeys' into Europe and Practices of Inhospitality Pending Return," *Language and Intercultural*

deep presuppositions that underpin everyday life',[21] consist of shared images, metaphors and representations; they are closely linked to cultural imaginaries, understood as 'discursive themes, images, motifs, and narrative forms that are publicly available within a culture at any one time, and articulate its psychic and social dimensions.'[22]

'Journey', as well as being central notion in the human psyche, is of course a key element in experiences of forced migration.[23] Fear-based imaginaries of 'refugee journeys' reinforce – and are reinforced by – hostile approaches to forced migration, expressed through labels like 'illegal refugee' which categorise and determine who is (un)deserving of protection.[24] On the other end of the narrative spectrum, Scotland's faith traditions are rich in stories of saints who arrived by boat, seeking sanctuary, journeying towards the unknown and finding refuge upon arrival. These can be termed positive, 'faith-related' or 'faith-based' journeys of refuge.

One of the earliest such stories is that of Thaney, also known as Teneu, now best known as St Enoch.[25] She 'is on record as Scotland's first recorded rape victim, battered woman and unmarried mother'.[26] The story goes that Thaney was a sixth-century princess who was deceived and raped by a visiting prince. When Thaney's pregnancy became known, her father had her thrown off Traprain Law in East Lothian. She survived, miraculously, and was cast away in a coracle – a small boat made of wood and animal skins. Her small boat took her across the Firth of Forth to Culross, where

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Communication 25, no. 6 (2025): 709, https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2025.2562388.

[21] Simon Philpott and Nicholas Morgan, *Understanding Conflict Imaginaries: Provocations from Colombia and Indonesia* (Springer, 2022), 7.

[22] Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (Routledge, 1994), 48.

[23] Gadi BenEzer and Roger Zetter, "Searching for Directions: Conceptual and Methodological Challenges in Researching Refugee Journeys," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 28, no. 3 (2015): 297–318.

[24] Heaven Crawley and Dimitris Skleparis, "Refugees, Migrants, Neither, Both: Categorical Fetishism and the Politics of Bounding in Europe's 'Migration Crisis'," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44, no. 1 (2018): 48–64, https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1348224.

[25] John Durkan, "What's in a Name? Thaney or Enoch," *Innes Review* 51, no. 1 (2000): 80–83.

[26] Elspeth King, *The Hidden History of Glasgow's Women: The Thenew Factor* (Mainstream Publishing, 1993), 13.

she found refuge in the community founded by Saint Serf, and was able to birth and raise her son, Kentigern, also called Mungo, now best known as the patron saint of Glasgow.

Another famous sixth-century journey by small boat was undertaken by St Columba, who cast off from Ireland in a coracle with a few companions and arrived on the island of Iona where he founded a monastery which became a centre of faith and culture. Iona Abbey is now the spiritual centre of the Iona Community, founded by the Reverend George MacLeod, who brought people together in hope and faith to reconstruct Iona Abbey during the times of scarcity, economic downturn, doubt, and poverty which followed the First World War. The Iona Community maintains his strong commitment to justice and peace, and is now an international, ecumenical movement rooted in the Christian faith which maintains MacLeod's strong commitment to peace and justice.[27] Supporting migration justice and restorative integration with refugees is one of the key ways in which this commitment is enacted. Although it is not certain whether Columba journeyed in his coracle seeking refuge from political unrest or as a pilgrim seeking new ways to serve God, the story of Columba's journey to Iona in a small boat is a central narrative sustaining community members in their work and worship.

One of the hymns sung as part of the worship of the Iona Community is based on the "Celtic Rune of Hospitality",[28] which reads:

> We saw a stranger yesterday.
> We put food in the eating place,
> drink in the drinking place,
> music in the listening place.
> And in the sacred name of the triune God,
> he blessed us and our house,
> our cattle and our dear ones.
> As the lark says in her song:
> Often, often, often goes Christ
> in the stranger's guise.

[27] Iona Community, *The Iona Community Strategic Plan 2024–2029*, 23 May 2024, https://iona.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Strategic_Plan_2024_2029.pdf.

[28] Translated from the Gaelic by Rev Kenneth MacLeod (1871–1955).

Here we can find, translated into the cultural context of Celtic Christianity, Christ's words urging his listeners to treat strangers as if they were himself, as told in Matthew 25:35: 'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.' The injunction to welcome the stranger is present in each of the three major Abrahamic faiths. Within the Bible, narratives from Genesis to Revelation feature main characters (Joseph, Moses and Ruth are some examples) who were all forced to leave their homelands and became displaced people, 'strangers'. Jesus Christ himself was a child refugee in Egypt, after his parents fled in the middle of the night to save his life from King Herod's persecution, as detailed in Matthew 2:13–15. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was forced to flee from Mecca to Medina due to religious persecution – this journey of migration, the Hijra, is the event from which the Islamic calendar is dated. Many of the Hadith, the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ recorded and transmitted by his companions, relate to the importance of welcoming 'strangers' and exiles.[29]

Exile and sanctuary, then, are central threads to all these narratives of faith-related journey. In Scotland, with its cultural history so strongly defined by the sea, the mode of journey was often a coracle – a small boat. The imagery of the small boat, in current contexts of forced migration, is often subsumed to narratives of crisis and emergency; but it is also reclaimed by faith-based organisations – the Iona Community among others – who find in it reminders of courage, faith and trust despite adversity. The legal and ecclesiastical tradition of sanctuary, where individuals fleeing persecution could find temporary refuge and protection within the sacred spaces of church precincts,[30] is also a narrative which informs many faith-based organisations supporting New Scots.

One such organisation is Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees (SFAR), a multi-faith partnership which seeks to co-ordinate and promote action by faith communities in Scotland to support asylum seekers and refugees.[31]

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[29] Ori Z. Soltes and Rachel Stern, eds. *Welcoming the Stranger: Abrahamic Hospitality and Its Contemporary Implications* (Fordham University Press, 2024), https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.12348151.

[30] Marina Warner, *Sanctuary: Ways of Telling, Ways of Dwelling* (William Collins, 2025).

[31] See Church of Scotland, "Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees," https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/departments/faith-action-programme-committees-and-departments/scottish-faiths-action-for-refugees.

SFAR has provided small grants, helping faith groups to begin new projects with New Scots; it has also been active in advocacy and campaigning on issues related to New Scots integration, such as the campaign for free bus travel for all people seeking asylum in Scotland. It also provides education and information guides related to forced migration, and here the narrative of sanctuary becomes evident in action: "Sanctuary in Scotland" is a guide providing information on refugee issues for faith groups in Scotland, with facts and figures, issues and ideas for practical action by and for faith communities in Scotland.[32] "God With Us" is a set of free worship resources on the theme of refugees, migration and sanctuary, created collaboratively and turning to the central narratives of exile and sanctuary to provide material to sustain organisations in their work for migration justice.[33]

Such resources are needed in a context where research has shown that there is a recognised potential for vicarious trauma among people supporting New Scots through extreme distress.[34] Research also indicates that faith is a key motivation for people to keep going even through difficulties, 'to obey the biblical commands',[35] and that their wider faith-based organisations and communities are a supportive network to them in their work.[36]

It is important to acknowledge that faith-related narratives and imaginaries also serve to inform the fear-based imaginaries of 'refugee journeys' discussed earlier. Such faith-related narratives are used to

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[32] Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees et al., "Sanctuary in Scotland: Information on Refugee Issues for Faith Groups in Scotland," https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/69738/sanctuary-in-scotland.pdf.

[33] Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, "God With Us: Worship Resources on the Theme of Refugees, Migration and Sanctuary," https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/74121/God-With-Us-SFAR-Migration-Worship.pdf.

[34] Rebecca Guhan and Helen Liebling-Kalifan, "The Experiences of Staff Working with Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the United Kingdom: A Grounded Theory Exploration," *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies* 9, no. 3 (2011): 205–28.

[35] Caitlin Jones and Andrea E. Williamson, "Volunteers Working to Support Migrants in Glasgow: A Qualitative Study," *International Journal of Migration, Health, and Social Care* 10, no. 4 (2014): 199.

[36] Jones and Williamson, "Volunteers," 200.

reinforce hostile approaches to forced migration, in a reversal of the threads of exile and sanctuary discussed above: here, home and homeland are the sanctuaries to be defended against dangerous strangers, illegal migrants, threatening incomers. An example of such reversals can be found in the use of Jerusalem Crusader flags which were hung on a Portsmouth roundabout by an anti-migrant far-right group called 'The Disciples of Christ', as reported by local news in September 2026. According to *The News* of Portsmouth,

> Far-right activist Daniel Thomas, also known as Danny Tommo, endorsed the campaign and said 'the crusade is back' and that 'Christianity is back at the front of the fight.' […] In another post on social media, Thomas said: 'Portsmouth raises the crusader flag! Christianity is back at the front of the fight. Christ is King. The crusade is back.' [37]

This kind of rhetoric is an expression of ethnic hatred rather than authentic religious inspiration, part of broader dynamics of power and discrimination.[38] However, such language is increasingly prevalent across the UK and must be taken into account as an element of the ecology of integration in Scotland; an element of disintegration, perhaps, rather than of integration, but which must be addressed in order to keep building a nation where all can flourish.

Concluding questions

We have seen that faith-based initiatives are an important element within the ecology of integration in Scotland, and that such initiatives are often informed and sustained by positive narratives of faith-related journey from exile towards sanctuary. However, the wider contexts in which these

[37] Freddie Webb, "Jerusalem Crusade Catholic flags endorsed by Danny Tommo hung up in Portsmouth after anti-migrant protests," *The News* (Portsmouth), 19 September 2026: 8, https://www.portsmouth.co.uk/news/politics/jerusalem-crusade-catholic-flags-migrant-protests-portsmouth-9101377.

[38] Ann Kingsolver, "Talk of 'Broken Borders' and Stone Walls: Anti-immigrant Discourse and Legislation from California to South Carolina," in ed. Clare L. Boulanger, *Reflecting on America: Anthropological views of U.S. Culture*, 2nd edition (Routledge, 2016), 121–34.

ecologies exist is one of growing hostility towards migrants in general and forced migrants in particular, often supported by faith-based language which explicitly justifies excluding the Other. It is also the case that Scotland, like the rest of the UK, is becoming a largely secular country, and the decline of religious institutions such as the Church of Scotland has been a matter of debate for decades.[39] In this context, what role can faith-related narratives of journey and refuge hold in supporting processes of integration that are restorative and not assimilationist?

Looking to what is happening outwith faith-based organisations gives us some answers and prompts more generative questions. We see a mosaic of motivations for support and solidarity with New Scots; a NSRIS which is entering its second decade, learning and evolving with the times; and most of all, movements of solidarity and resistance which are both proactive and reactive. An example of the latter is the protest which developed spontaneously in Kenmure Street, on the Southside of Glasgow, on 13th May 2021. Following an immigration raid, local people mobilised to stop the deportation of two men from their flat in Kenmure Street, with a growing crowd of peaceful protesters united in chanting, 'These are our neighbours – let them go.'

The word 'neighbour', in this narrative of collective protest, both encompasses the Christian sense of the word and expands its meaning to gain significance for all the people involved in the Kenmure Street protest – Christian and non-Christian, secular and religious. The ways in which this collective effort of peaceful resistance was sustained, leading eventually to the release of the two detained men, has informed scholarly articles[40] and an award-winning film.[41] The use of the phrase 'our neighbours' is emblematic of a narrative which involves everybody present as neighbours; it channels solidarity, hope, grief, purpose, anger and care, offering alternative ways of understanding how movements are sustained and developed as part of a multilingual, intercultural process.

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[39] Ian Smith, "The Economics of Church Decline in Scotland," *International Journal of Social Economics* 20, no. 12 (1993): 27–36.

[40] See for example Joel White and Peter Hopkins, "Beyond Kenmure Street: Lifecycles of Antiracism Amongst Activists in Glasgow," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 49, no. 15 (2026): 3321–39, https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2025.2607842.

[41] Felipe Bustos Sierra, dir., *Everybody to Kenmure Street* (Scotland: Barry Crerar, 2026), documentary film. See https://www.imdb.com/title/tt36966956/.

The immigration raid on Kenmure Street happened on Eid ul-Fitr, the first day marking the end of Ramadan, one of the most important days in the Islamic calendar. The local mosque was busy. Over the course of the evolving protest, Muslim people handed out Eid treats to the growing crowd, and the Imam opened the doors so that everyone – protesters and police – could use the toilets. These elements of the story show how faith was and is an important element of such processes, as part of the complex and evolving ecology of underpinning processes of integration with New Scots.

In this context, it is worth exploring how faith-related narratives of journey can evolve from factors which inform and sustain faith-based initiatives on integration, to becoming an important element of the language we need to learn to re-use in order to maintain dialogue between and beyond faith-based communities as part of restorative integration. In this way, there is greater opportunity for New Scots to become new neighbours, ensuring that communities are strengthened by integration rather than fragmented by fear-based disintegration.