



Society, Religion and Technology Project

**Week of Prayer
9th—15th June 2019**





SRT Project Week of Prayer

Welcome to the SRT week of prayer. While we value your prayers on all aspects of our work at any time of the year, we ask that you particularly remember us during the second week in June each year- a date chosen to co-incide with the anniversary of the birth of one of Scotland's greatest scientists, the physicist James Clerk- Maxwell. Clerk- Maxwell was also a prominent Christian and an elder of the Church of Scotland.

Project

Since the SRT Project was set up in 1970, it has covered a wide variety of topics- from stem cells to synthetic biology, and from economics to environmental issues. It seeks to bring a Christian ethical understanding to issues which are often controversial.

Give thanks for those who had the vision to establish this unique interaction between the science and faith communities, and pray that God will continue to guide and bless this work.

People

The SRT Project is currently led by two staff, Dr Murdo Macdonald (Policy Officer) and Karen Hunter (Project Administrator), who are based at the Church of Scotland offices in Edinburgh. The work is overseen by a committee of 12 people, which is currently chaired by Dr Caroline Cowan. In addition, experts in specific areas are consulted in relation to particular issues.

Pray for all the people involved in the SRT Project, that they may be guided and protected as they seek to serve the church in this work.

Scope

God has given us a wonderful world, and has given us the ability to explore and understand it. We can also manipulate our environment- for good or ill. As a species, humans have had a huge impact on the planet- and continue to do so. One of the questions which is often considered by the SRT is: "Just because we CAN do it, does that mean that we SHOULD do it?"



Pray that God will give guidance and discernment to all who seek to draw lines between helpful and harmful innovations.

Impact

We are interested in the impact of technology on society. Scotland has changed a great deal since the SRT was established in 1970- and much of that is down to technology. The impact of things like the Internet on how we work or shop, for example, or developments in reproductive technologies such as test tube babies and their influence on how families are formed. Sometimes technological innovations can have a negative effect on some people- e.g. cyberbullying or internet gambling.



Pray for the impacts of technologies on society- on how we interact, on how we view ourselves, other people, or the world around us- even how we view God.

Contacts



The SRT works along with congregations and presbyteries throughout Scotland. We are available to speak to churches, guilds, Rotary clubs, schools, day conferences, public debates, etc. If your church hasn't thought about inviting the SRT to speak please contact us at srtp@srtp.org.uk

Give thanks for the opportunities to explore the issues that technology raises; pray for wisdom as we reflect on how these technologies might be used.

Witness

Jesus called on his followers to be salt and light- to have an impact on the communities in which we live. Sometimes that might mean writing to your MP or MSP about an issue that concerns you. Sometimes that might mean offering your church hall as a venue for the local science or book festival. The SRT may be able to help- please see our website (www.srtp.org.uk) for further details.



Pray that, as we seek to witness for God in the world, we will do so in a loving and gentle way, always remembering that we need to be faithful to our calling to be salt and light.

Future

How is technology going to change society in the future? What are going to be the big issues that will need to be wrestled with in the years to come? Sometimes science and technology take us in unexpected directions. Part of the work of the SRT Project is to discern what may be of interest in the future, and to help the church to start thinking theologically about the issues and what they might mean.

Give thanks for the past and pray for the future direction of the SRT Project; pray for courage to stand for God in an often hostile or sceptical environment.



Some issues covered by the SRT project in recent years....

General Assembly 2017

Border, Benefits and Biomedicine: Surveillance and Social Justice

General Assembly 2016

Energy Issues and Fuel Poverty

General Assembly 2015

Transplantation: Opting in or presumed consent for organ and tissue donation?

General Assembly 2014

Striving together: Celebrating competitiveness in sport

Families and the Church in the 21st Century: The meaning of kinship bonds

General Assembly 2012

Neuroethics: Who has the right to see what you're thinking? What about manipulating people's brains?

Sustainable Agriculture: How do we reconnect with where our food comes from?

Ethics and economics: What has happened to ethics in economics?

General Assembly 2011

Suicide among young men: How should the church respond?

Mental health issues: Mental health friendly churches.

Ethics and the Internet: How has the Internet changed the way we interact?

General Assembly 2010

Synthetic Biology: Should we create artificial life forms?

General Assembly 2009

End of Life Issues: Caring for carers

For more information, contact:

Dr Murdo Macdonald
SRT Policy Officer
mmacdonald@churchofscotland.org.uk
121 George St
Edinburgh
EH2 4YN
Tel: 0131 240 2267
www.srtp.org.uk



The Church of Scotland

230119 Scottish Charity Number SC011353