

The General Assembly opens in Edinburgh

The General Assembly 2025 opened in Edinburgh at the Assembly Hall on The Mound on Saturday and will continue until Thursday.

The Rt Hon Lady Elish Angiolini LT, DBE, PC, KC, FRSE, represented His Majesty King Charles at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on Saturday.

Lady Angiolini said that people are the creation of God and all require “love, forgiveness and support” in all their imperfection.

She said she was profoundly honoured to be chosen as the first practising Roman Catholic to be Lord High Commissioner at the annual gathering which began in Edinburgh today.

Lady Elish’s appointment was only made possible after both Houses of Parliament in London changed a law dating back to 1689 that barred Roman Catholics from holding the role.

Addressing the General Assembly, she said: “I am so pleased to be here with you all and particularly pleased I actually made it here.

“I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone who helped secure my presence here today.”

Her Grace said she believed that prejudice and sectarianism can be overcome by the recognition that we are “all Jock Tamson’s bairns”.

Lady Elish said she was 11 when she remembered how that “essential love of humanity” manifested in January 1971 when there was a crush among the crowd at an Old Firm football game at Ibrox, which caused 66 deaths and more than 200 injuries.

Her father and neighbours went to the aid of people caught up in the tragedy.

Lady Elish said: “I, in turn, was on the receiving end of such compassion when I was a victim in the front carriage of the train when the Polmont rail disaster occurred in 1984

“Again, it was the kindness of complete strangers, other passengers, that I recollect to this day, as I lay trapped in the wreckage, comforted by their love and compassion as they teased me about how hopeless Celtic was to distract me from the horror of the situation we were in.”

[Read all of the reports and documents for the General Assembly 2025 here.](#)



General Assembly of the Church of Scotland 2025: Day One.

Moderator Rt Reverend Rosie Frew is installed as Moderator in a ceremony at New College, Edinburgh. Her Grace Lady Elish Angiolini is Lord High Commissioner representing the King during the Assembly week. Pictured with at left First Minister for Scotland, John Swinney.



Her Grace Lady Elish Angiolini is Lord High Commissioner representing the King during the Assembly week.



General Assembly of the Church of Scotland 2025: Day One. First Minister John Swinney and the Rt Hon Lord Provost Robert Aldridge left watch on as Her Grace Lady Elish Angiolini is Lord High Commissioner representing the King during the Assembly week.



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Pictured left Her Grace Lady Elish Angiolini.