

Park Church Stirling

Newsletter

Winter 2025



Last Christmas.....



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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



Dear Friends,

Thinking about Christmas, I opened a drawer in my study which is full of a wonderful bounty of Christmas cards from past years. I found myself smiling at the familiar sight, the colourful envelopes, the careful handwriting of most, the kind words that travelled through the post to reach my door. My one friend always jokes that a small forest must have been felled to produce the cards that arrive each Christmas, and perhaps she has a point! But I am warmed by the hope that a good proportion of the trees which were felled to produce these cards were 'sustainably sourced', and that the cards were mostly purchased to benefit a charity, or a variety of charities.

I love Christmas because ... it's the one time of year that friends 'put pen to paper' to let you know that, even in a tiny way, at very least, you're still in their hearts! I love seeing their actual handwriting, the ink on paper. It seems to be the only time that you ever do, these days. If not a real card, then an e-card sent from friends abroad, which takes time to select, means just as much. I love the exchange of personal greetings, and I hope, in my lifetime at least, the tradition of exchanging cards, sentiments and greetings does not die. Somehow, despite all the fuss about cutting down our beautiful, life-giving and essential trees, even when they are carefully sourced and sustainably removed, there is something very special about a Christmas card that reigns supreme. I love the personal messages that they bear; the sentiments contained within; the opportunity to let another know that they still occupy a corner of your heart, even despite the crazy hubbub of the rest of the year, when we may never hear from these dear hearts, short of receiving a brief text ... or three!

I love Christmas because ... of the carolling. I adore the Christmas hymns, songs of worship, of the anticipation of the coming to earth of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, heralded in beautiful music and song. And I love the story of the Nativity, told and retold musically by choirs and congregations, individuals and small groups, and by whole, massive audiences right across the world.

I love Christmas because ... even if just for a moment within the whole year, within all of our lives, Christmas provides an opportunity for something positive to open our hearts to. There is this glorious hope which is contained in the Christmas Story. There is something to hold onto, and believe in, even when our sad old world is wracked with pain and loss, deprivation and suffering. The Christmas Story, told and retold, over and over again, year after year, from millions of different pulpits, lecterns, altars, and at bedsides too, through the lips of countless preachers, readers, parents, children, and believers, somehow never ever seems to lose its intrinsic power to influence and creep into some of the darkest corners of our lives. We have added the lights and the twinkle that were absent from that lowly, darkened manger on that holy night. But it was the indisputable brilliance of that heavenly light radiating from one star in the East that guided the Magi to the very place of the holy birth.

I love Christmas because ... something innate within us stirs; makes us realise this is no ordinary time of year. Whichever way it may be celebrated, or not, it is a time of year that cannot be ignored. We may nudge each other to pass the Good News on, or we may simply tuck into a little bit of extra-special fare. The fact is: we all know when it's Christmas! In every man's heart there is a desire to believe in something 'higher'; a need not to be left out, even when we seek utter solitude for one reason or another.

I love Christmas because ... it gives us an opportunity to reach out, to shake hands in friendship, to hug, give and share; to look deeper into our own hearts ... and prepare ourselves to grow in a new way in the New Year.

So, thank you for sharing your fellowship, worship, friendship, your lives, and your hearts with me and others in our congregation and community. Therefore, my prayer for you and all humankind is that this Advent season will draw you close to that Holy Light once again. May you know, deep in your heart, that you are loved by the One whose birth we celebrate, and that through the love of Jesus Christ, we are bound together as His people.

With every blessing for a peaceful and joy-filled Christmas,

Attie

Your minister and friend

"We love because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19)



KIRK SESSION UPDATE

Our meetings alternate between strictly business meetings and those discussing other issues. When we met on 5th November, we focused on our Action Plan for the future, and new guidance from the General Assembly and Presbytery asking us to rate our progress in several aspects, but encouraging us to concentrate on a few key priorities.

One of these is reviewing and developing a range of worship opportunities for people. We are encouraged by the monthly Tea and Testimony Tuesday evening services, which have been inspiring and well received. We are part of a national “Growing Young” programme, sharing ideas of how to develop an Intergenerational church which engages and attracts people of all ages in our community. If any member or friend has any suggestions of how we might “tweak” or further improve what we do, please do not hesitate to contact Attie or myself.

One of our other priorities has been building resilience and additional help for the Minister and office bearers; and we are heartened by the invaluable offers of help with many aspects, for example with audio-visual services, welcome teams, coffee rotas and newcomers to various teams and committees. We continue to seek and welcome fresh ideas and new volunteers in a variety of ways. If you have hidden talents you would like to share, please let us know.

We also discussed the Duties and Guidance for Eldership, including spiritual leadership and trustee responsibilities; and recognised that if elders, who are ordained for life, step down as trustees, they might contribute in other ways.

Session gives thanks for the life and work of Eleanore Hunter. She was a much loved Mum, grandparent, and loyal friend to many. She served the congregation with grace and humility for over four decades in various roles, including Youth Fellowship leader, Safeguarding Coordinator, elder, choir member and most recently communion convenor. She will be greatly missed.

Peter Murdoch
Session Clerk

Congratulations to Attie on being awarded British Citizenship recently. He was presented with his Citizenship Certificate at Stirling Council's Registration Office.

There's no escaping us now, and aren't we glad about that!



In Loving Memory of Eleanore Hunter

Eleanore was a dear and special friend to many people in this church and far beyond.

Her church commitments were wide and varied. She was a caring, active elder for many years, and with Yvonne organised the communion services. The choir, welcome teams, hospitality in the hall, holiday clubs, school p7 initiatives – she helped in all of these.

Going back to the days of huge numbers in Sunday school and Bible classes, she was involved there too – Bible class days out and weekends away, Mother's Day daffodil picking, cake sales, barbecue lunches in the church grounds, Easter dawn services with other churches at the top of Dumyat, decorating the church at Christmas – just some of the activities where Eleanore's help was vital and readily given.



Her interests were diverse. She was a member of book, walking and cycling groups and she loved music and art. She took part enthusiastically in keep-fit classes. She was a member of the Iona Community, prison visitors' team and of course The Munro Society. She loved the hills - completing all the Munros, some of them many times, along with trips to Corbetts and Grahams. She shared many of these good times with her close friend, the late Bob Proudfoot.

She coped on her own with a young family, full time teaching jobs and even graduated with a degree from Stirling University. She stayed in touch with many colleagues from these times.

And of course, she cared deeply for Jennifer and Mark – taking great pleasure from their achievements, their happy lives and families. Her home was warm, comfortable and welcoming, with lovely food for visitors and family alike.

Eleanore touched so many people with her kindness. She will be sorely missed, but long remembered with love.

Helen Collie

UPDATES FROM AUTUMN 2025

Celebrations for Stirling Guide Hut Centenary

Thank you to everyone in Park Church who supported the Guide Hut centenary celebrations, both by coming along and by spreading the word about the event to your friends and family. We had a lovely day catching up with friends and people we hadn't seen for many years.

The celebrations included a beautiful birthday cake, a display of archives, lots of old and new Girlguiding activities to try, and a chance for everyone to share memories and catch up over refreshments and cake. The day finished with everyone joining in singing some traditional campfire songs.

A special mention goes to Park Church member Margaret Cook, who impressed everyone with her memories of being a Brownie in the hut in the 1930s – the Girlguiding Forth Valley County Commissioner has been using her as inspiration for current leaders to provide activities which today's girls will remember in 80 years' time!

Marie Muir

Guide Leader and Member of the Guide Hut Management Committee



Church of Scotland @ Freshers' Week 2025

Once again I was privileged to spend a couple of hours with some wonderful people from churches around Stirling on 22nd September. Armed with accessible information about all of the Church of Scotland churches in the Stirling area and lots of chocolates on the table, we encouraged students to stop and chat with us. I met quite a few 'new' students and returning students, who engaged in conversation about their chosen subjects and, some of them did show an interest in exploring the Christian community in the area.

Please pray for all students from the UK and abroad in your prayers, as they set out on the next chapter of their lives. Hopefully we'll welcome some more students into our congregation soon.

Sandra Harvey



Stirling's Doors Open Day



Photos taken from the top of the Church Tower by David Stirling



Christian Aid Coffee Morning

The Christian Aid Coffee Morning this year celebrated **80 years** from when the charity started in 1945. Its main aims were to fight against poverty and injustice, and it was founded by the British and Irish churches together, to help refugees after the Second World War, raising an amazing £80,000 then. Later it became involved in crises around the world and created the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC). In the 1990s, it worked with over 50 countries to campaign against World Debt. It is the charity associated with the Church of Scotland.

At the Coffee Morning this year, we celebrated with a birthday cake very kindly donated by Hamilton Cheesecakes.



As usual, the members of **nine** local churches assisted, along with several of our younger members. The event was very successful, raising **£1,016!**

The final figure for the **Christian Aid Harvest collection** amounted to £1,260, plus Gift Aid of £236.

The total donations to Christian Aid this year, including Gift Aid, is **£4,121**.

A big **THANK YOU** to everyone who has supported us during the year.

Helen MacDonald & Helen Reid



The Food Train

The Food Train is a registered Scottish charity supporting folk roughly over 55 who may need help with their shopping to live independently at home.

Volunteers call clients every week or fortnightly for their shopping list. In Stirling, The Food Train shops at Sainsburys, Morrisons and Waitrose. The cost for a weekly delivery is £40 a month and a fortnightly delivery is £22.

Shopping is delivered by vans and the delivery teams are happy to put shopping away and help with any small household tasks. Deliveries are as far away as Callander, as well as Clackmannan, Kippen, etc.

The Food Train tries to make this service as personal as possible. Volunteers are very enthusiastic about their role, as are the office staff.

If you would like more information, please contact The Food Train on 01786 450536 or at stirling@thefoodtrain.co.uk.

Lyndsay Boyack
Volunteer



Start Up Stirling

Start Up Stirling is a local charity, focused on relieving poverty of people in crisis across the Stirling council area since 1994. Park Church has been a supporter of Start Up Stirling for a number of years, mostly through donations of food and cash.



There are three main strands of Start Up Stirling's work. The first is running eight food banks per week in Stirling, Callander, Killin and the Eastern villages. These typically support 300 people per week, providing food packs for 3-4 days.

The second is non-food support to those who are starting a new tenancy, perhaps due to circumstances such as family breakup. A household may need a kettle, toaster, pots and pans, duvet and pillow – Start Up provides hundreds of each during a year. Non-food support can also be help preparing for a job interview, such as clothing or a shaving set.

The third strand is providing advice by listening with empathy and without judgement, to empower people and signpost them to services.

The most useful donations of goods are non-perishable everyday food, cooking utensils, cleaning products (eg. washing up liquid, cleaning spray, toilet cleaner, cloths), basic kitchen cupboard items (eg. tea, coffee, sugar, salt, pepper), as well as toiletries, baby food and nappies. Any donations of goods can be left in the collection box in the church vestibule.

Start Up also welcomes donations of cash – details of how to donate online are on their website at startupstirling.org.uk. Start Up also welcomes people who can give their time. There are around 100 volunteers who sort donations, staff foodbanks and drive cars and vans – full details are on their website .

Thank you all for your support for Start Up Stirling – it is much appreciated.

Hugh Buchanan
Volunteer



Stirling Street Pastors

The work of Street Pastors in Stirling was celebrated during October at many of our supporting churches. This was to tie in with our Annual Conference which was held at Stirling Baptist Church at the start of October.



Street Pastors at their own local or neighbouring churches took part at Sunday services by talking to congregations, being presented with a certificate of service and being included in prayers.

The main focus of these events was to look for more volunteers to join this happy family and serve the people of Stirling either on Friday or Saturday evenings in town, or Friday afternoons on the University campus. We only ask that each Street Pastor patrols once per month, and all the current volunteers say it's very rewarding for themselves, as well as a huge benefit for all those they help. It's not unusual for someone on the street to come up to a team and say "You saved my life when you helped me!".

Training for new recruits will begin early in 2026, so get in touch now!

From the Street Pastor Website

If anyone would like more information about training to become a Stirling Street Pastor, please speak with **Peter Murdoch or Ingrid McLean**.



Ingrid with her Certificate of Service

REMEMBRANCE 2025

Over the last few years, as part of the solemn Act of Remembrance, it has become our tradition to read out the names of the fallen as they appear on our combined war memorials. Last year, the reading was accompanied by John Williams' "**Hymn to the Fallen**", the theme music from the Tom Hanks' movie "**Saving private Ryan**".

This year, "**The Mighty Deep**" was played as an accompaniment; the theme tune from the BBC series "**Band of Brothers**", composed by Saul Zaentz and Michael Strauss.

In addition, John Conway read "**Dulce et decorum est**", the poem by the World War 1 poet, Wilfred Owen.

This is a powerful, anti-war poem by Owen, that vividly depicts the horrors of World War I, and challenges the notion that it is "sweet and fitting to die for one's country".

Dulcē et Decōrum est by Wilfred Owen

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.—
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est*
Pro patria mori.

(Latin phrase is from the Roman poet Horace: "It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country")

Wilfred Owen – soldier and poet

As part of this year's tribute to the fallen on Remembrance Sunday, we heard a reading of Wilfred Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est...." a poem on the horrors of trench/gas warfare in the First World War. The poem was drafted initially in 1917 while Owen was a patient at Craiglockhart Castle Hospital in Edinburgh, undergoing treatment for and recovery from what we call shellshock or, in its modern form, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Owen was encouraged to write by his mentor at Craiglockhart Hospital, the better known, and fellow patient and poet, Siegfried Sassoon. The original draft of "Dulce et Decorum est" was written in October 1917, first published in *The Nation* and subsequently, more widely, posthumously, in 1920. Ironically, Owen was killed in action back at the front at Sambre-Oise canal in France on 4th November 1918, about a week before the Armistice was signed.

Duncan Crombie



Craiglockhart Castle War Hospital - Edinburgh



You are warmly invited to join us in
THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION
on Sunday 7th December at 11am in Park Church



The Christian Calendar

The Christian calendar is divided up by festivals and seasons.

Some, like Christmas Day, happen on the same date every year, while others move around within a range of dates. The main festival that moves is Easter, and since many other festivals have their dates fixed in relation to Easter, they move with it.

Advent (30th November – 24th December 2024)

Advent is the four-week period before Christmas. There are four Sundays in Advent. The word “Advent” means “coming” or “arrival”, and in this case points towards the birth of Jesus celebrated at Christmas. One special service involving children is called Christingle and can be held during Advent, Christmas, or Epiphany.

Christmas (25th December 2024 – 5th January 2025)

The season of Christmas begins on 25th December and traditionally lasts for twelve days, ending on 5th January. Christmas is the time when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Epiphany (6th January 2025)

The Epiphany, or revelation, of the baby Jesus as the Son of God come into the world, is traditionally celebrated on 6th January.

Lent (5th March – 17th April 2025)

Lent is the 40-day period before Easter, beginning with Ash Wednesday and ending on Maundy Thursday. During Lent, Christians may fast, or give up some of their usual routine, to give time to personal examination and to reflect on their relationship with God.

FESTIVE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Advent 1

Sunday 30th November

11am Sunday morning service followed by Congregational lunch

Advent 2

Sunday 7th December

11am Celebration of Holy Communion, Park Church
+ Christmas Gift Collection

NB. Christmas gifts for children (babies to teenagers) in disadvantaged families will be collected for distribution by Women's Aid.

6.30pm Stirling Kirks Together - Christmas Carols' Songs of Praise, Park Church

Wednesday 10th December

12 noon Stirling Kirks Together - All Age Friendship Lunch, Park Church
(Christmas lunch with carol singing)

7.30pm The Liltin Lassies - Joy & Light Festive Concert (Victoria Hall, Dunblane)

Advent 3

Sunday 14th December

11am Lessons and Carols for Augmented Church Choir and Congregation

7.30pm Stirling City Choir Christmas Concert (Church of the Holy Rude, Stirling)

Advent 4

Sunday 21st December

11am All Age Service - Come to Bethlehem (A Nativity Play)

3.00pm The Strathcarron Singers - A Christmas Carol (Park Church, Stirling)



FESTIVE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

CHRISTMAS EVE

Wednesday 24th December

6.30pm **Family Carol Service, Park Church**
(Tea, coffee and biscuits will be served after the service)

11.30pm Watchnight Service, Park Church

CHRISTMAS DAY

Thursday 25th December

10.30am Short Christmas Day Family Service, Park Church

Sunday 28th December

11am Morning Service led by the Young Adults' Group

Sunday 4th January 2026

11am Morning Service led by Dr Peter Murdoch

Sunday 11th January

11am Morning Service led by Rev Jake Leham

Sunday 18th January

11am Morning Service led by Dr Peter Murdoch

PLEASE NOTE

The Minister will be on leave from 28th December until 18th January. Pastoral care during this time will be provided by Rev Gary McIntyre, who can be contacted on 01786 474421.





Come to Bethlehem....



Invitation to an All Age Service

Sunday 21st December 2025

11.00am, in Park Church



Christmas Nativity Service

We are having an All Age Service on Sunday 21st December and wish to welcome you all to "Come to Bethlehem...". Rehearsals have taken place since October involving the adults, but children will be welcomed on the day to be part of the proceedings. Costumes will be available for the children to dress up as shepherds, angels or pages to the Kings. We are hoping to have a large congregation that morning to enjoy a slightly different interpretation of the well known and well loved story of Christmas.

Come along and enjoy the morning.

Joy Macfarlane

THE LILTIN LASSIES
JOY & LIGHT
FESTIVE CONCERT

With our friends **Blackford Sings, Song Squad** and **Sangschule**

Wed 10th December | **Victoria Hall, Dunblane**
7.30 pm (Doors 7pm) | **Tickets £8 BYOB**

This year we are raising money for Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland and have our usual Start Up Stirling Foodbank Collection Point

HAMPER RAFFLE

Tickets available from Meldrum's or from any Liltin Lassies member

STIRLING CITY CHOIR
CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Church of the Holy Rude
 Stirling

7.30pm Sunday
14th December 2025

Musical Director
Michael Segaud

Organist
Ian Boulter

Join us for a variety of classical and popular festive music
Tickets £15 (including programme and refreshments)
 Available from our website www.stirlingcitychoir.org.uk or from choir members (limited tickets available on the door)

Celebrating 75 Years
in 2026

THE STRATHCARRON SINGERS
www.strathcarronsingers.org

MUSICAL DIRECTOR - MATTHEW BROWN
ACCOMPANIST - DAVID BROWN

Present
A Christmas Carol
 A Celebration of Words and Music

Sunday 21st December 2025
Park Church - Stirling FK8 2NA at 3.00 PM

With Special Guests
The Broxburn And Livingston Brass Band

ADMISSION IS FREE
 All donations will go to Strathcarron Hospice

Special Thanks to Park Life Magazine for their Support

The Strathcarron Singers are looking forward to presenting their third Christmas Concert in Park Church next month.

It is entitled "A Christmas Carol – A Celebration of Words and Music", with an updated programme to suit all tastes. We are very happy that The Broxburn and Livingston Brass Band will be coming along, both to give us some joyful music and to accompany some of the carols.

The singers enjoy performing in Park Church and always receive a very warm welcome, and as the concert is at 3.00pm, we are hoping for a strong turnout. All donations will go straight to Strathcarron Hospice, which costs such a lot of money to maintain, in order to ensure that it can continue to offer its wonderful service both in the Hospice and with the At Home Service within the community.

Please come along, for as well as enjoying an afternoon of heartwarming music, you will be helping to raise these much needed funds.

Joy Macfarlane

Christmas Quiz (Answers on Page 26)

1. What is Scrooge's first name?
2. Which aptly named green vegetable eaten at Christmas was first developed in Belgium in the Middle Ages?
3. What was the name of the department store in the 1947 film 'Miracle on 34th Street'?
4. According to tradition, which household item do Norwegians hide away before they go to sleep on Christmas Eve?
5. Which fruit is used to make a traditional Christingle light - orange, apple or pear?
6. Under which festive branch might one enjoy a kiss?
7. Which comedy actor played the central character of Buddy in the 2003 film 'Elf'?
8. 'Tis the season to be jolly' are lyrics taken from which Christmas carol?
9. Panettone is traditionally eaten in which European country at Christmas?
10. What were the names of the Three Wise Men?

Something special's going to happen tonight

Something special and it feel's just right

High in the sky there's a bright new star

Shining upon us from afar

Shining upon you wherever you are

Something special's coming soon

Something special's coming soon



WHAT'S ON - SPRING 2025

Coffee Club

Coffee Club continues weekly on Thursdays, 10.30 - 11.30am, in the main church hall.

All are welcome, including young children, for whom there will be toys to play with while the adults chat over a cuppa, biscuits and home baking!

If anyone would like to volunteer to bake and/or serve at the Coffee Club on a rota basis, please contact Rae Scott or Sarah Murdoch.



NB. There will be no Coffee Club on Christmas Day or New Year's Day. It will resume on Thursday 8th January 2026.

Young Adults' Group

Tea & Testimony

We launched our latest initiative, "Tea & Testimony", in September 2025, happening on the last Tuesday of the month. This is a time for fellowship, sharing of faith and a different format of service, to appeal to as many people as possible. Can't make it on a Sunday because of work commitments? Try Tea & Testimony. Can't manage a morning service and an evening suits better? Try Tea & Testimony.

So far, we have been lucky enough to have both Lewis and Edit sharing their story, and the overall response has been wonderful! Our next service is Tuesday 25th November, when Susie will share her testimony, before a break, and starting off again in January 2026. We would love to see you there, and if you would like to share your story, please contact me.

Eilidh Wynd





STIRLING KIRKS TOGETHER
INVITE YOU TO THE

**All are
Welcome!**
ORIENTED

ALL AGE FRIENDSHIP LUNCH

WEDNESDAY 10TH DECEMBER 2025
WEDNESDAY 14TH JANUARY 2026
WEDNESDAY 11TH FEBRUARY 2026
WEDNESDAY 11TH MARCH 2026

CONVERSATION, SOUP & ROLLS, TEA/COFFEE AND HOME-BAKING



Time: 12.00 - 1.30pm

Location: Park Church, Main Hall

Donation: £3.00 (optional)

For further information, please
contact

Johan Stirling on 01786 461571

Park Church Ladies' Group

Spring Syllabus

The Ladies' Group resumes after the festive break on 12th January 2026 at 7.30pm in the Main Hall, and thereafter on alternate Monday evenings until 23rd March.

We are a welcoming group meeting for fun and fellowship, we are open to all and are not restricted to members of the congregation.

12th January: Andrina Downie will be speaking to us about **The Salvation Army**

26th January: Join us for our take on **Burns' Night**, with guest speaker Ken Dow

9th February: Murray Cook will be talking to us about **The Stirling Field & Archaeological Society**

23rd February: Julie Ionta will be presenting to us on **Parkinson's UK**

9th March: Tricia Chillas will be putting us through our paces with "**Exercise to Music**"!

14th March: Park Church Coffee Morning - please put the date in your diary!

23rd March: Closing Meal - venue will be confirmed in due course

A very warm welcome is extended to everyone to join us at any or all of these events.

Rae Scott
Secretary



Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal

Park Church and the Ladies' Group donated 21 boxes, 3 gift bags and a large box of extra toiletries, small toy and accessories to Blythswood Care, for families in need in Eastern Europe. A few extra toiletries which were too large in size were passed on to Start Up Stirling.

Thank you to everyone who donated.

Rae Scott



SPRING INTO SOMETHING NEW in
2026
OUR **ART CLUB** is

baa-k!



Thursday 22nd Jan → Thursday 12th March
at Park Church

2-4pm £2 per session

ALL abilities welcome!

Contact Kate: 07971529485 for
more details

NEWS FROM AROUND THE CHURCH

Forbes Mair - Park Church Project October 2025

I have started S1 in Dunblane High School and in my R.E. class we did a religious building project made from recyclables.

I chose Park Church because it is my church and I felt it was my responsibility to show my class.

The tower was my favourite part to build, a beautiful building!

When I am sitting in church I like the colours of the Centenary Window, just stunning!

Forbes Mair



Church Flowers

As we approach the end of yet another year, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking most sincerely, all those who have contributed in whatever way, to ensuring the success of our "Church Flowers". We greatly appreciate the continued generosity of our sponsors, the commitment of our flower team in arranging the flowers week by week, as well as those who deliver to families and friends of our congregation after the service on a Sunday. This forms an important part of our "outreach", as those who receive the flowers know they are remembered, whether it be a sad or happy time in their life.

Our flower team is very aware of, and grateful for, the feedback we receive and for the contribution so many make in all aspects, to make this possible. We are always looking for new volunteers, particularly at the moment for additional arrangers. Support would be given – enthusiasm and a love of flowers are really the only pre-requisites! Should you like more information, please do get in touch. You would be most welcome!



Maureen McArthur
Flower Group Co-ordinator

Standing Orders

Since the merger of the two congregations, we have been working with three bank accounts. To simplify our Church accounts, the Finance Committee would like, if possible, to amalgamate these accounts into one. To enable this to happen, we would like to ask any members who have a Standing Order payable to **The Royal Bank of Scotland**, to consider changing this to the following bank account:-

Account Name: Stirling Park Church of Scotland

Sort Code: 80-91-29

Account Number: 00116778

Further details, if required, can be obtained from the Treasurer, Catherine Jones, at treasurer@parkchurchstirling.org.

E-Newsletters

If anyone would like to receive their copy of the Church newsletter electronically, please email Sheena Tait, Church Administrator, to request this. You will find her contact details on Page 30.

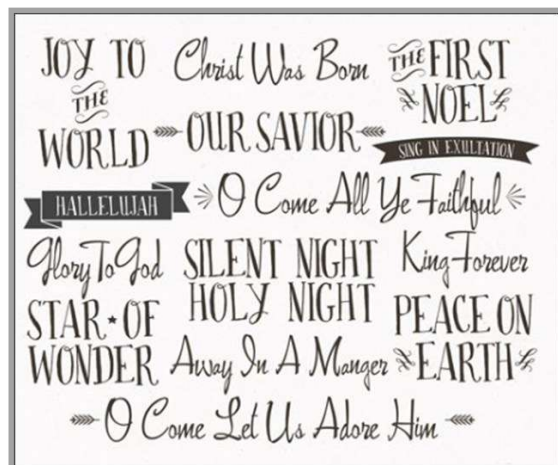
Please note that you can also read Newsletters on the Church website at www.parkchurchstirling.org.

Park Church Choir

Church Choir practices continue on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm in the main church hall.

Anyone wishing to sing in the choir is very welcome to come along and join us!

NB. Practices will resume after the festive break on 8th January 2026.



Christmas Quiz Answers

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Ebenezer | 2. Brussels sprouts |
| 3. Macy's | 4. Brooms |
| 5. Orange | 6. Mistletoe |
| 7. Will Ferrell | 8. Deck the Halls |
| 9. Italy | 10. Caspar, Balthazar & Melchior |

Music in Park Church

King's Park Chorale



Following upon the success of the 2024 Christmas Cantata performance, the ladies of the King's Park Chorale presented Martin Sirvatka's arrangement of Walter Hawkins' spiritual, *I'm Goin' Up A Yonder* during the service on October 26th. The twenty-two volunteer singers for this performance, who learned the work in a mere four weeks of rehearsals, were conducted by Jennifer Barker and accompanied on piano by Alasdair Smith. Their beautiful and highly engaging performance of this well-beloved spiritual was received with much gratitude and joy from congregational members.

The King's Park Chorale of Park Church is an ad hoc, occasional choir, formed in order to provide an additional opportunity for members of our congregation to participate in services through music. The intention is for this choir to perform three or four times per year. Each rehearsal period will be four weeks prior to the performance, thereby enabling participation for members of the congregation who are not able to commit to long-term activities. Members of the congregation are invited to sing with the ensemble for any four-week rehearsal period that fits into their life and work schedule. The name for the ensemble was inspired by the Stirling King's Park: a public space, open and welcoming to people of all walks of life; a place where people can gather and enjoy time together. The King's Park Chorale is therefore an opportunity for all members of our congregation to gather, sing, and enjoy fellowship together.

Jennifer Barker

CONGRATULATIONS!



Congratulations to Rita McDonald, who celebrated her **100th birthday** on 17th October. She was born in Glasgow and lived for many years in first Canada and then the USA, before returning to Scotland, where she joined Allan Park South Church. She is an inspiration and blessing to many of us.

Peter Murdoch



Rita with her daughter Lynn and son Glen

A 90th Birthday Thanks

What a surprise I got when I entered the hall for the coffee club on the 6th November. With Attie at the piano, everyone sang Happy Birthday. There was a gorgeous cake, birthday cards and balloons.

That was not the only surprise - at the head of the table, seated in a wheelchair, was my wife Marjorie, making her first visit to Park Church since March. Mairi, our daughter, had arranged an adapted taxi to bring her from Annfield House. I am so grateful to everyone for making it such a joyous occasion.

Ross McGowan

Congratulations Ross! You deserved all the fuss made over you on reaching your 90th birthday!



Congratulations to our Editor on winning The Victory Cup and Wilson Trophy during the 2025 season at Stirling Golf Club.

She was presented with her trophies at the Annual Prizegiving Dinner at the end of October.

Sheila was persuaded by her Editorial Team colleagues to include this. She is not blowing her own trumpet!!

Church Roll

In Loving Memory

It is with sadness, but great thankfulness for a life well lived, that we share the news of the death of the following members of Park Church:

- Colin Oliver
- Anne Baillie
- Tony Stewart
- Dr Gordon MacPherson
- Andrew Middleton
- Eleanore Hunter

New Members

We are delighted to welcome the following new members to Park Church congregation:

- Dr Katya Neumann
- Karen Edwards (adherent)

Colin Oliver

We would once again like to thank the Rev Attie Van Wyk for his lovely service at Park Church, Stirlingshire Crematorium and comforting words.

Also, at this time, grateful thanks to Ian Jones and his team for the streaming of Colin's service. This enabled family, friends and colleagues to be part of the service.

To the Welcome Team, we also extend our appreciation for their time and effort at the church.

Thank you all.

Ethel Oliver and Family

NEW CONTRIBUTIONS ALWAYS WELCOME

Please submit any items for the Spring 2026 Newsletter to the **Editor**, Sheila MacCallum, at parkchurchnewsletter@gmail.com by 5pm on Friday 6th February 2026, to enable material to be formatted, reviewed, and proofread before being printed in time for Elders to distribute from 15th February, two weeks before Communion on Sunday 1st March.

Articles, notices and other content should be in **WORD** format.

Please submit photos in **JPG** format to allow re-sizing as appropriate.

Handwritten copies will be accepted, typed up and returned for your review prior to being included, as long as sufficient time is given.

We reserve the right to edit or hold over copy if necessary.

The Spring edition will cover March, April and May 2026.

If you have any queries, please contact the Editor on the above email.

CONTACT DETAILS

Minister: Rev Attie Van Wyk
Tel: 01786 478269
Email: Avanwyk@churchofscotland.org.uk

Session Clerk: Dr Peter Murdoch
Tel: 01786 473087
Email: murdochps@btinternet.com

Depute Session Clerk: Mrs Johan Stirling
Tel: 01786 461571
Email: johan.stirling@btinternet.com

Organist: Alasdair Smith
Tel: 01786 834460
Email: alsadair.smith@scottishwidows.co.uk

Treasurer: Mrs Catherine Jones
Tel: 01786 473601
Email: treasurer@parkchurchstirling.org

**Church Administrator
& Roll Keeper:**

Mrs Sheena Tait

Office Tel: 01786 462400 (*messages can be left on this number*)

The office is open Tuesday to Friday, 9.30am to 12.30pm

Email: parkchurchstirling@gmail.com

Church website: www.parkchurchstirling.org





Photo by David Stirling

Park Church Stirling (SC001414)

We warmly welcome you to join our activities and events.

Each Sunday we gather together at 11am for worship and fellowship.

Our mission is to share the love of God in a modern world.

Website: www.parkchurchstirling.org

Instagram: [@parkchurchstirling](https://www.instagram.com/parkchurchstirling)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ParkChurchStirling