

Park Church Stirling

Newsletter

Autumn 2026



*"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them".*



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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Dear Friends,

There is something quietly reassuring about autumn.

After the busyness of summer, routines begin to return. Schools and universities open their doors once again. Holidays become treasured memories, diaries begin to fill, and the rhythm of everyday life gently resumes. It is also the season when fields are gathered in, gardens offer their final harvest, and Scotland begins to wear one of God's most breathtaking displays. Soon the hills around Stirling will be clothed in gold, crimson, amber and bronze, reminding us that even change can be beautiful.

As another academic year begins, I want to wish every pupil, student, teacher and parent, and every member of our congregation, God's richest blessing, whatever new chapter this season holds for you.

Harvest reminds us that much of life's most valuable growth happens quietly. Seeds spend a long time hidden before they ever produce fruit, and faith can be like that too. We sometimes wonder whether God is doing anything at all, yet beneath the surface He is shaping our character, deepening our trust and preparing us for things we cannot yet see. One of my favourite verses for this season is found in Hosea 10:12:

"Sow righteousness for yourselves, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unploughed ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, until he comes and showers his righteousness on you."

What a wonderful picture. Before there is a harvest, there is always preparation: ground to break, seed to sow, patience to practise. Only then does the harvest come.

Perhaps this autumn, God is inviting each of us to prepare the soil of our own hearts again. It might be as simple as starting one new habit this term: reading a Psalm each morning, praying for one person by name each day, or joining one thing in this newsletter you'd normally scroll past. Small acts of faithfulness like these often become the beginning of God's greatest work.

As you read on, you'll discover many opportunities to worship, learn, serve and enjoy fellowship together. My prayer is that this season will not simply fill our calendars, but deepen our faith, strengthen our friendships, and remind us that God is continually at work among us.

May the God who paints the forests in glorious colour also fill your heart with hope, your home with peace, and your life with His abundant grace.

Every blessing.

Your friend and minister,

Attie

Our New Session & Depute Session Clerks

As there have been no Kirk Session meetings over the summer, there is no usual update, but these will resume in the Winter newsletter. Meantime, by way of introduction, please read on to find out a bit more about our new Session and Depute Session Clerks.

Newly Appointed Session Clerk

Most of you have known me for many years, but for those who do not, my name is Johan Stirling (pronounced Joanne, but the Gaelic spelling).

I was born in the West End of Glasgow and lived there until I headed to Edinburgh University. I studied the degree in Nursing, worked at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, then trained to be a midwife. I retired in 2024 after a wonderful career as a midwife. I have supported hundreds of families over the years and still find the birth of a new baby a miracle and delight.

David and I have been married for 38 years and have three daughters. They are all now married, and between them have blessed us with six grandchildren, aged from 7 years old down to 9 months. Family gatherings have become more complex, but great fun!

As a family, we joined St Columba's when the girls were teenagers, as there was a thriving Bible Class. I joined the choir and David helped on various committees. I started as a Deacon, then became an Elder in June 2017 and now, here I am as your Session Clerk.

We have found St Columba's, now Park Church, to be our Church family, providing stability, friendship and love. I still sing in the choir, organise the friendship lunches and am involved in as many areas of the church as possible. I am a busy Granny too.

I am looking forward to this new challenge. Together we can support our Minister, Attie, our congregation and the wider community, as we worship, share fellowship and praise God in Park Church.

Johan Stirling



Newly Appointed Depute Session Clerk

I'm looking forward to serving as Depute Session Clerk at Park Church. I joined the congregation in March 2025 and have already been made to feel so welcome. I'm a member of the Finance Committee, Communion Committee and Communications Team, and you'll often see me wearing one of the church aprons at the Coffee Club, after worship on a Sunday and at the Friendship Lunch. These roles give me a fantastic chance to chat with familiar faces and meet new people. Before coming to Park, I worshipped at Logie Kirk, where I served as an elder for over 30 years and as Joint Session Clerk for five years.

I was blessed to share a wonderful marriage with my husband, Scott, who died in 2017. We have two daughters, Eilidh and Kirsten, who bring me so much joy. After retiring in 2024, following a career in banking and human resources, I'm enjoying spending more time with family and friends. I love exploring new places and going for walks in our beautiful countryside as well as a good movie or a visit to the theatre.

Looking back, I can see God's loving hand guiding me throughout my life - from bringing Scott and me together to leading me to Park Church. I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve here and look forward to getting to know you all better as we continue to grow together in faith.

**Dianne
MacNaughton**



Dear Friends

A very sincere thank you to Attie and so many friends and colleagues in the congregation for their very kind and gracious words to Sarah and me when I stepped down as Session Clerk. In addition, we were overwhelmed by the very generous gifts we received that Sunday, which was a truly memorable day.

We were truly humbled by your generosity, fellowship and all that you have given us over the years; and indeed continue to share with us.

Thank you all.

Peter



UPDATES FROM SUMMER 2026

Summer Congregational Lunch

On Sunday 14th June, around 100 members of the congregation gathered in the main church hall to enjoy a picnic lunch of sandwiches, crisps, sausage rolls, cupcakes and mini chocolate bites. There were a couple of quizzes to test our memory and we enjoyed a fun sing-along of popular tunes, led by Attie on the piano.

A great time was had by all, and grateful thanks go to Johan and Dianne for organising the event, as well as their team of willing and enthusiastic volunteers who shopped, set up, served, kept tea and coffee pots filled up, washed and cleared up after. A great team effort.





Popcorn and Cake

During the morning and afternoon of Thursday 22nd and also on Monday afternoon 25th May, we had the pleasure of welcoming 77 young people from Primary 7 classes in St Ninians and Allan's Primary Schools to learn about the meaning of Pentecost, a lesser well-known festival for children in the Christian calendar.

We presented the material around this challenging concept through the "Popcorn and Cake" programme, which allows the children to discover more about the importance of Pentecost to the Christian Church. Through a similar format to the other programmes of interactive games, quizzes and activities, the link between popcorn, cake and Pentecost became clearer. The emphasis is always on the two aspects of Pentecost, namely "change" and "celebration", with the popcorn representing a change in appearance, texture and taste as it is heated and changed beyond all recognition from its original state, and the cake representing the celebration of the birthday of the Church. As often happens, after evaluations from last year's Primary 7s, we again made some changes to the section involving The Professor, in an attempt to make it more suitable and more of an adult discussion. Evaluations from staff and children indicated that to a degree this was successful, but as still 12% didn't enjoy it or found it too young for Primary 7, we are perhaps not quite there yet.

As always, each of our programmes finishes with a reflective time and in this one the young people are asked what changes they would make in our world to make it a better place. Some of their thoughts reflect the depth of feeling in some of our young people. We also ask them what they have learned from the session so that again we can evaluate whether we are on the right wavelength. There were a variety of responses as you can see from some of their comments below.

Once again, an enormous thanks goes to all our willing volunteers, and we give a final special word of thanks to Jake Lehman, as he joined our last programme of the year, hoping that he has enjoyed being part of our contingent of helpers throughout his time at St Ninians Old Parish Church. We are indeed blessed with such a generous group of committed helpers.

Children's Reflections

I wish that there were no more homeless people

I would want no more thirsty children and to give the world food if I could

I wish people would stop littering

I would change for our world veterans so that they get a good and comfortable home instead of lying in the streets

I wish that people in the world would listen to each other in order to prevent and stop conflict

No more war and a bright future for others

I want the massive amounts of AI to stop and change since the AI power uses water and the polar bears will become extinct

I would like all to find joy and happiness

What we have learned

I learned about a Christian celebration that I didn't know before. It was interesting and the learning activities were fun

I learned that Pentecost was the birth of the Church

I learned how to make popcorn

I learned a bit that day from the quizzes

I learned how everything was related

We learned that Pentecost is a celebration about change

I learned that Pentecost was 50 days after Easter

I've got nothing to say – it was really good!!

Unfortunately we do not have any photos to accompany this review. The Primary 7 teachers are, understandably, extremely busy towards the end of the school year, and don't return to the classroom until after the summer, well after the newsletter deadline. We are unable to take photos ourselves either, due to safeguarding and GDPR legislation, as we do not know which children have parents' permission for their pictures to be made public.

I hope you will still be interested in reading what went on and in particular, the children's comments.

Joy Macfarlane
Youth Group Convenor

Something brand new is coming!

Behind the scenes, a dedicated, small team is hard at work helping to create an entirely new Park Church website - designed to be welcoming, engaging, and easy for everyone to use. Working with a specialist consultant, we've been gathering information from across all of our organisations to create a website that truly reflects our church community.

To help capture the life of our church, professional photographs will be taken on **Sunday 20th September** for use on the new website and other church communications. We hope as many people as possible will be happy to take part, helping us give visitors a genuine glimpse of the warmth and diversity of our church family. Of course, anyone who would prefer not to be photographed will be able to opt out.

Keep an eye out for updates and get ready to check it out when it launches later this year!

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided as usual after the service, just not until the photographer is finished, rather than immediately after the service!

Dianne McNaughton
Communications Team



At the end of June, SPARKS held their annual Teddy Bears' Picnic. The weather that week was glorious, but unfortunately when the day of the picnic arrived so did the rain! Out of the 6 Teddy Bears' Picnics we have had over the years, only 2 have been able to be held outdoors. Such is the Scottish June weather! However, rain did not dampen the children's fun and we had our picnic in the church main hall. We had a Teddy bear hunt, races, Teddy bear songs and rhymes, a 'bear' story, parachute games and a sumptuous picnic. All in all, a good time was had by everyone, including the Teddy bears and soft toys!



SPARKS PLUS

Also at the end of June we had a session called SPARKS PLUS. This came about after conversations with some of the adults who come to SPARKS. Many of the children's parents, Mums or Dads or both (as some children come with grandparents) do not have the chance to see their children at SPARKS and meet some of our dedicated team. This session was a drop-in one for all our SPARKS families. As usual, many of our popular toys and activities were available, as well as some for older siblings, and teas and coffees were available for the adults. It was rewarding to meet some parents and grandparents for the first time and all said that they had enjoyed coming. Plans are now being put in place to have another session in the future.

Moira Parry



WHAT'S ON - AUTUMN 2026

You are warmly invited to join us in
THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION
on Sunday 6th September at 11am in Park Church



The final figure for Christian Aid Week 2026 was **£2,617** (including Gift Aid).

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this wonderful total.



The Annual Coffee Morning will be held
on **Saturday 24th October 2026**
in **St Ninians Old Parish Church Hall**
10am - 12 noon





SPONSORED WALK

Saturday 22nd August 2026

Stirling University campus walks

Body

Register at the MacRobert Arts Centre at 10am

Parking is free on Saturdays

There are frequent buses from Stirling (Uni Link and others) and Alloa (52)

Please see above poster for details of this year's Sponsored Walk in aid of The Scottish Bible Society. It will cover c2.5 miles round Stirling University Campus and grounds.

Alternatively, if you would like to sponsor Willie Troup, our Church Representative for The Society, there is a sponsor sheet pinned beneath the poster on the noticeboard in the main church hall, to the right of the hatch to the kitchen.

Your support would be much appreciated.

Thank you.



**For further information, please call
Johan Stirling on 07584 834846**

Park Church Ladies' Group

Autumn Syllabus

The Ladies' Group meets in the Main Church Hall at 7.30pm on alternate Monday evenings from September until March.

We are a welcoming group, meeting for fun, fellowship and chat over a cuppa and biscuit, after listening to interesting talks on a variety of topics, or enjoying music and sing-songs. We are open to all and are not restricted to members of the congregation.

The syllabus for the first half of our new session is as follows:-

14th September	To be confirmed
28th September	Positive Steps
12th October	TreeLink Stirling
26th October	Elaine Whiteford (local author)
9th November	Mums and Children in Malawi
23rd November	Musical Evening with Jennifer Barker
7th December	Christmas Meal at Stirling Golf Club

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

Rae Scott
Secretary



Branch Out!

Join our **ART CLUB**

Thursdays 13th Aug → 1st Oct

2-4 pm

£2 per session

Park Church Hall

ALL abilities welcome!

Please contact Kate first
as places are limited 07971 529485

Coffee Club

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

All are welcome, including young children, for whom there will be toys available 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**.



Park Church Choir

Church Choir practices will resume on **Thursday 3rd September**.

If you are interested in joining the choir, you would be very welcome.

Please speak with Alasdair Smith, or any current choir member, if you would like more information.



Poppies at The Park

Just a reminder that our first meeting will be on **Thursday 3rd September at 10.45am**.

Thank you to those who have continued to pop poppies in the box. If you have been stockpiling hundreds at home, thank you too, and please bring them with you.

Even if you don't knit or crochet, but just want to help, then please come along.

Brenda Smith



Stained Glass Windows

In 1977, there was an enormous exhibition in London about the loss of churches and their contents in Britain. Spurred by that, people started compiling lists of stained glass - one of the first in Scotland was by Sax Shaw, who taught stained glass at Edinburgh College of Art; another was compiled by stained glass maker John Blyth, who gave me a copy. My own list was filed at Edinburgh Public Library, where it remains complete with mistakes. There were hand written, typed and word processed lists, and more recently in numerous computerised formats. As a stained glass maker, teacher and researcher, I am always keen to see new (to me) windows but, since I became the Secretary of the Scottish Stained Glass Trust, I have become focused on the enormous aim of the Trust to record all stained glass in Scotland and pull all these lists together. This is more pressing than ever, given church closures and sales of stately homes. We are now working to make one mega list to be available online free to all.

Passing Park Church the other day – happily open! - I popped in to see what glass there was and saw 4 windows by John Blyth, with his “bee” signature. John had given me a list of his windows and this church was not on it. My excitement at finding 4 more windows was quickly dispelled when I realised that he HAD listed them, but as St Columba’s Church. Buildings changing names can cause a lot of confusion, as can windows being moved from one building to another. The Church of the Holy Rude has at times been called East Church, West Church (when it was split) and even Stirling Cathedral. Some rigorous detective work can be called for.

It is also not always clear who the artist and studio are. For example, John Blyth worked for a while for a studio called Clokey, was expected to work in the house style, and the windows were signed Clokey. Then he worked for Willie Wilson, in Wilson’s house style, and the windows were signed Wilson. When he eventually set up his own studio, he started adding a bee for Blyth - many windows do not have a name, but a symbol to show the maker. Even if they are signed it can be missed – I have just found a window that was listed by Buildings of Scotland as by Douglas Strachan. That was in 1987 and all references since have said Douglas Strachan – despite the fact that it is clearly signed Alexander Strachan, Douglas’ brother. So there is also a lot of verifying needed.

We have many thousands of windows listed so far, with as much information as possible, not just where and by whom, but also subject, date, funder, reason for window and so on, so that people will be able to search in multiple fields. We will also have photographs and in some cases reports on the state of the windows. An enormous task.

We are hoping to get the first tranche up online by the end of the year and it will be linked to the Welsh database (<https://catalogue.stainedglass.wales/>) so you will be able to find Scots windows in Wales too! This is very much a work in progress – Martin Crampin has been working on the Welsh list for over 20 years. We expect a great number of corrections and additions.

At the beginning, I said Sax Shaw made one of the first lists – Park Church's Millennium Window is by his son, Christian. I think it is the best window by him I have seen.

The Scottish Stained Glass Trust will be marking our progress on our website and we welcome any contributions! (ssgt.org.uk)

Rona Moody
Hon. Secretary
Scottish Stained Glass Trust



Rae's Swimming Challenge

On Monday 24th August, it will be 10 years since we lost my nephew Ian to an aggressive cancer. In Ian's memory a group of family, friends and fellow members of Kilmarnock Swimming Club are swimming 27 miles to raise funds for the Willow Foundation to celebrate Ian's 27 years with us.

The Willow Foundation organise special days for young adults with life-limiting conditions to create memories for their loved ones to cherish. Ian and his wife Nicola spent a weekend in London, enjoying corporate hospitality at Arsenal Football Club and a West End show. We are fund-raising to enable others to enjoy their own unique special day.

My contribution will be to swim 100 lengths of the 50 metre pool.

You can donate to the Willow Foundation using the attached QR code below, link to Just Giving, or cash direct to Rae.

Thank you for your support.

Rae Scott

Link to page: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/ally-niven-1>



By the Bannock Burn

“Not another walk” was my children’s anguished cry as we set off on a footpath stroll. I ignored their pleas, considering the jaunt was health giving, exposed them to countryside and wildlife, and tired them ready for bed. Your initial thought too perhaps, if you have read previous articles, but an easy walk, exploring local natural and historic environs, brings rich reward.

The route reveals intriguing facets of past battles, weaving, mining and long-gone days of glory, gloom and doom, which loom large in Stirling’s history. Short trips over flat carse lands entice the stroller, while adventurous loop diversions challenge stronger walkers.

The car park by St Ninians Library accesses a path leading east along the tree-lined crest of a defile, home to the Pelstream. In Spring, golden flowered gorse and whin bushes dot the foreground, with wild raspberries and brambles offering succulent berries in the autumn. The flanks of the Ochil Hills stretch to the horizon, until the track spirals down the escarpment. A dash across Wishart Drive into a cul-de-sac leads into a sheltered, leafy tract through Balquhiddelock Wood - locally, “the Bluebell Wood” - which ends at the Bannock burn. Invasive Japanese knot weed competes with rowan trees in pink and white splashes of colour in the glades. Doves and wood pigeons coo above in the branches of aspens, alders and ash and a drum beat heralds a woodpecker at work. I once watched nervous chicks launch on first uncertain flights from tree nest, with a fox hungrily eyeing their tentative flutters.

An alternative path climbs above the wood to a panoramic prospect once shared by soldiers of the Bruce Army. The battle was fought over two days in 1314, between the Pelstream and the Bannock burn. On the second day, archer echelons on this ridge aimed at unprotected English ranks on the Carse below. Paths converge by the burn, where the spire of the parish church beckons beyond Ladywell Park - a grassy sward loved by moles - once home to the Skeoch weaving mill complex.

On the upstream loop lies a remarkable bridge carrying the A9. Few who pass across the span are aware of the ingenuity and arched beauty of the structure. Built by Thomas Telford in 1819, its twin arches are held by stone braces, likened to the splendid Scissor Arches in Wells Cathedral. Viewed from the water right below, it is a marvel of symmetry, grace and engineering skill.

An optional detour by steep steps, or road link, to the other side leads to a high, many storied Victorian mill which rises from the ravine, a reminder of when Bannockburn was a premier manufacturer in the weaving industry. Recent excavations here confirm foundations of many mills which made tartan for the Highland regiments in the 18th century. The first, built in 1700, was visited by King George III, who wore a kilt, encouraging adoption of the fashion by the Scottish gentry.



Further up the burn, the pretty 18th C stone Spittal Bridge catches the eye. Built in 1516, it carried the wagon and stagecoach road into the old village. There was a carpet making mill here and the wynd spirals into the township, with opportunity for refreshment at the 125 year old Tartan Arms Inn.

Venturing west, an old lade runs by the stream which narrows in the climb towards Whins of Milton. Buddleia bushes flank the path and attract butterflies, which flutter over the water under a tree canopy, with encroaching rock walls constraining the ravine into a gorge. A viewing platform thrusts over a former mill dam and four metre waterfall, bathing pools to delight local children.

Another diversionary loop climbs by crumbling steps skirting the little-known Bannockburn Gorge, where the burn surges and plunges through a fearsome constraint, a jungle of undergrowth, tall trees and precipitous rock faces. Known historically as “the great ditch”, it was a deadly trap for English cavalry and swordsmen on the first day of the Battle of Bannockburn. Anecdote has it that the stream ran red with blood of men and horses - a gruesome scene. Near the top of the pass, the path crosses a foot bridge, and close by skirts a sign identifying the site of a well, where James III, when fighting rebellious nobles, was ambushed and murdered in 1488 after the Battle of Sauchieburn.

On a lighter note, following the return loop down a lane and opposite the renovated former Milton Mill, a peak over a wall reveals a private lade, enhanced with flowers, ferns and ornaments, before it plunges into the dark depths of the gorge. The lane leads eastward back to the waterfall and return route, via burnside paths, to convergence of routes near Pike Road. Across the thoroughfare, a path runs beside the burn to locally known Thunder Bridge, named for the rumble of trains speeding across. Traverse under the span can normally be made dry shod, beside a benign stream dappled with white flowers of water cress. The burn, however, can quickly rise a metre in flood and flow over the narrow causeway. Beware of water level before making the crossing. With water overflowing the banks, I once misjudged depth and attempted to cycle through, unaware that a pothole had been gouged out of the pavement. Halfway across, the front wheel plunged into the water-scoured gap and I was thrown into the speeding torrent. Only the quick actions of a passer-by and a despairing grab at a protruding tree branch saved me from being swept to the Forth in the racing water.



On the far side of the bridge, the scene is bucolic with extensive pastures dotted with Highland cattle accentuated by the plaintive call of curlew or wheep of the lapwing. Through the side gate, the winding stream with its Ochil Hill backdrop provides artistic vignettes, especially when snow-clad in winter. Its tranquillity was blighted in 1314 however, for military artifacts from the Battle of Bannockburn have been found here. A main, straight path heads towards a low hill, formerly a pit bing, now covered by bracken and birch trees. I remember when in the mining past

it would glow in the dark, as coal dross smouldered on the crest and glowing chunks tumbled down the flanks. A fox now has a den on the overgrown hillside and a couple of friendly ponies in the neighbouring field welcome the walker. Few passersby are aware of its man-made origin.



The bing pond is home to a pair of swans. The pen nests each year within a metre of the foot path, where she is bombarded with bread crusts by over-zealous children attempting to feed her. A hazardous location, she has successfully reared a brood for many years and her little flotilla of cygnets cruise the water through the summer, in company with families of mallard duck, coots and water hens.



By Millhall auction mart, the footpath joins for a time the national cycle network (76) along the route of the old Polmaise rail track. A pug engine used to pull coal wagons from the pit to join the main line, carrying 175,000 tons of coal annually until 1987. The path ultimately runs to the rear of Fallin village and is edged by a plethora of seasonal wildflowers, initially daffodils, violets, and wood avon, then dog rose and creamy sprays of hogweed and meadowsweet, and later tall spear thistles, a sprinkle of blue harebells, and massed banks of pink champions. Home to linnets, hedge sparrows and gold finches, there are seats for the weary at scenic locations. This is an opportunity to use Merlin App or Google lens, or device equivalent, to familiarise plant and bird life. A quick photo and identification is immediate, with a record to impress others with IT skills!

Prairie-like wheatlands extend to the south, and northwards are the rocky ramparts of the Ochil Hills. The path divides on entry to Polmaise Park, former site of the Polmaise Colliery. A massive bing, now largely grass and bush clad, blots the view and the track follows its lower contours. A side path climbs through silver birch to the summit in easy sweeps. Yellow hammers and finches call from the bushes eyed by buzzards and sparrow hawks above. The view is extensive, embracing the waist of Scotland from the eastern Penland Hills to Ben Lomond. A scatter of bizarre, rusted, pseudo-artistic A frames on the top need close examination, to reveal a potted history of the scene.

Below, a reduced replica of winding gear identifies a small, unkempt, outdoor “museum”, commemorating the colliery and the men who died working below. It deserves a visit for its history. Established in 1907, the colliery had two pits with a 2 metre seam of rich high quality coal hewn manually in hazardous conditions. I once visited the coal face. The journey from the surface in the cage and then along passages beside coal conveyers, hutches and tubs, beside creaking pit props, in semi darkness, was frightening. At the face, men were lying on their sides wielding picks, attacking a seam which had shrunk to 60 cms in height. Heroes all.

The return point, a bus can ease the return to Millhall, or the walker can circle round via the Cowie road and NCN 76, skirting Wester Moss, a rare fragment of carse land peat bog, with time to absorb the revelations of the Bannockburn Way.

I Mackay

A Royal Garden Party

On Tuesday 30th June this year, myself, Lyndsay Boyack and our partners attended the Royal Garden Party at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh. The weather was quite kind to us, and we did catch a glimpse of King Charles, Queen Camilla, Prince Edward and Princess Anne.

Some of the attendees had received special honours, such as an OBE, in a more private setting inside the palace, before joining the thousands of others in the gardens for musical entertainment and a delicious afternoon tea. I was particularly happy to meet Rob Wainwright, who had captained the Scottish Rugby team in the 1990s and was a great friend of the late Doddie Weir. Rob received an OBE for his stellar fundraising for the My Name's Doddie Foundation.

Lyndsay and I have both been involved in fundraising for Motor Neurone Disease (MND) charities, as this condition is very close to our hearts, and is one of the reasons that we were invited to this prestigious event.

People watching and cake eating was the order of the day. Our only disappointment was that we didn't manage to find Jess McNeil and Wendy McLean, who also had the honour of attending.

Sandra Harvey



This year from Braehead Community Garden, three men put on their best suits and seven ladies, including Jess and Wendy, dressed with their biggest hats and had a joyous day at the Royal Garden Party!

Serenaded by the Army Band music, they marvelled at the organisation and smooth feeding of the 8000 guests with 6 choices of sandwiches and 8 different elegant mini cakes and copious soft drinks.

Sorry we didn't meet up with you Sandra and Lyndsay - we gardeners were busy roaming and inspecting the King's beautifully manicured, herbaceous borders, looking for ideas and checking the weeding! We can confirm not a single plant was out of place nor could a weed be found!

Wendy McLean



Ministry of Flowers

The Flower Team consists of volunteers who buy and arrange flowers into two or three vases, which have been sponsored by members of the church to decorate the church entrance and inside of the sanctuary during worship on Sundays. They are often dedicated to the memory of someone or a special event and a small note of this is included in the order of worship if requested.

After the service, the flowers are made into bunches and gifted with a blessing and message from the Minister, then delivered by other volunteers.

At Easter, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas, the church is decorated with extra arrangements, using vases of every size, from empty jam jars to large glass vases. We are not florists and make simple bunches of flowers. We sometimes make tiny arrangements in floral foam and small containers for people who cannot lift a vase.

You could help us by sponsoring a Sunday, or donating to the Flower Fund which enables us to buy extra blooms for special services. We also appreciate offers of foliage from gardens to add to the colour and vibrancy of the arrangements. There are some times of the year when foliage is scarce and very expensive to purchase.

Extra volunteers to deliver flowers are also needed. New members (male or female) to join the flower team are always welcome and should contact Sarah Murdoch or Claire Brown.

Thank you for supporting this congregational and community outreach.

Sarah Murdoch



Additions to the Library

Christian Faith (*Yellow Sticker*)

BEGG Alistair - The Man on the Middle Cross

You are waiting at the gates of Heaven and you're asked 'Why should we let you in?' What would you say? This book introduces three people who had their lives changed when they met Jesus. Each was given hope, restoration and a way back to God.

MOORE Beth - Get Out of That Pit

Straight talking about God's Deliverance

MEYER Joyce - 20 Ways to make Every Day Better

Simple, Practical Changes with Real Results

SCAZZERO Peter - Emotionally Healthy Spirituality

It's impossible to be Spiritually Mature while remaining Emotionally Immature

OMARTIAN Stormie - Out of Darkness

My story of Finding True Light and Liberation

OMARTIAN Stormie - Lead Me, Holy Spirit.

What does it mean to be led by the holy Spirit?

FINDING PEACE in a Troubled World

Whatever the future may hold, there is a place of refuge for all

Bible Study (*Black Sticker*)

Hope to change the World

Daily Bible readings from Easter week to Pentecost

General Reading (*Green Sticker*)

KINGSBURY Karen - Coming Home

A Story of Undying Hope

MEYER Joyce - The Penny

A captivating story of forgiveness and a broken life transformed

Many thanks for all donations.

Lyndsay Boyack
Church Librarian

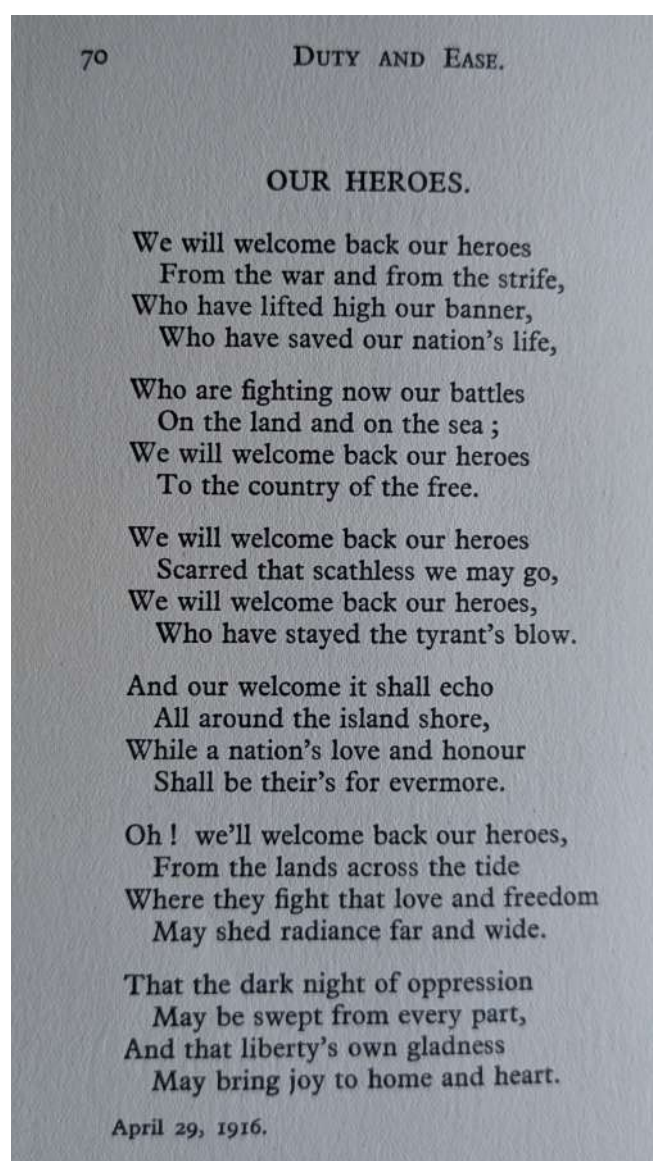
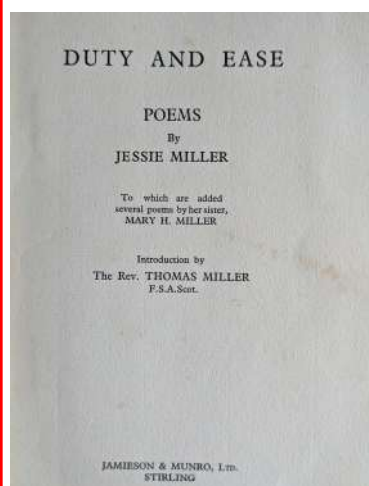
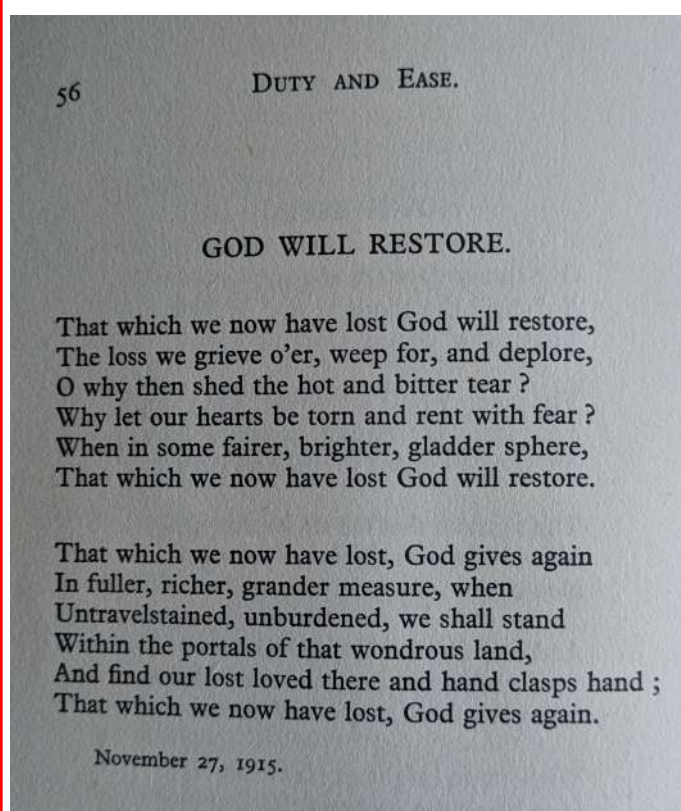


REMEMBRANCE 2026

Remembrance 2026 will be commemorated in Park Church on Sunday 8th November. Morning Service will start at the earlier time of 10.45am, with a two minute silence being observed at 11am.



Below are two poems from "Duty and Ease", a book of poems by Jessie Miller, great-aunt of Jean Settrington, a member of our congregation. Jean has kindly given permission for them to be printed in this newsletter. Jessie wrote an abundance of poems which were sent to the troops during the Great War, for comfort, sympathy and encouragement, and to uplift both the troops and those at home suffering bereavement. Jessie's poems were eventually collated into "Duty and Ease" by her sister, Mary, who also added some of her own works. If you wish to know more, Jean will be more than happy to chat with you about the poems and her great-aunt.

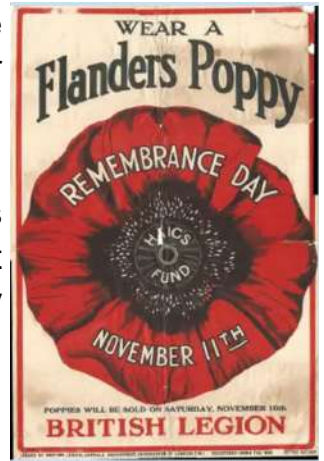


The Poppy and Remembrance

The red poppy is the symbol of Remembrance. It remembers the sacrifices of those who have served their nation. It shows support for today's Armed Forces community. It represents hope for a peaceful future.

For more than a century it has been worn, collected in wreaths, its petals dropped, and represented in countless ways as a mark of respect and Remembrance. To wear one is a personal choice and is greatly appreciated by the Royal British Legion.

What the poppy represents helps to bring society together to recognise, remember and support the Armed Forces community.



Remembrance honours those who serve to defend our democratic freedoms and way of life

We unite across communities, cultures and faiths to remember the service and sacrifices of the Armed Forces community from the UK and the Commonwealth. We reflect on the contributions of those who serve today, and of veterans and their families. We also remember all those who have lost their lives while in service.

Remembrance is deeply personal. It may mean wearing a poppy in November. It could mean joining with others in your community on an anniversary. Or it could mean taking a moment on your own to pause and reflect. Everyone is free to remember in their own way.



Battlefields 2026

My name is Forbes Mair and I was a member of Junior Church at Park (and previously St Columba's) Church for a number of years. I am now at Dunblane High School, but still enjoy coming to church with my sister Harriet and Granny, Janey Denton.

I went to the Battlefields in Belgium in May with 75 pupils from Dunblane High. We were piped onto the bus before travelling to Newcastle, where we got the sleeper ferry to Amsterdam and then on to Ypres in Belgium. It was a moving experience seeing the graveyards from various battles. We stayed in the city of Ypres, which was beautiful but very hot, 30°! We had a day of shopping in Ypres where I bought a lot of chocolate! It was altogether a really moving but fun trip, and I hope to get the chance to go again.



Forbes Mair

Church Roll

In Loving Memory

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

- Peter Galletley
- Catriona Wilson
- Margaret Campbell
- Doreen Robinson
- Jim Munro

New Members

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

- Scott Gingell
- Ben and Lauren Stinson



Jenny Hunter has let us know that the family had this beautiful bench made in memory of her Mum, Eleanore Hunter, a much loved and much missed member of Park, and formerly St Columba's, congregations.

If anyone would like to visit it, it is situated towards the back of the memorial garden at Stirling Crematorium and has a lovely view of the Ochils, where Eleanore enjoyed spending so much of her time.



NEW CONTRIBUTIONS ALWAYS WELCOME

Please submit items for the Autumn 2026 Newsletter to the **Editor**, Sheila MacCallum, at parkchurchnewsletter@gmail.com by 5pm on **Monday 2nd November**, to enable material to be checked, formatted, reviewed, and proofread before being printed in time for Elders to distribute from **15th November**, three weeks before Communion on **Sunday 6th December**.

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

Please submit photos in **JPG** format to allow re-sizing where 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 Winter edition will cover December and January 2026, and January 2027.

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

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Scarlett!

The Hospitality Team are delighted to share the good news that Scarlett Mina, our talented volunteer in the Coffee after Church team (and AV Desk during services), has successfully completed her Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland's **Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate** this summer. Scarlett was sponsored by Park Church to study online for this award and undertook her practical leadership time in the kitchen before and after the coffee service most weeks.



Scarlett went on her school trip to London (the previous newsletter describes her visits to HMS Belfast and the World War 2 battle sites around London), and her outdoor expedition, which have enabled her to finish her **Silver Duke of Edinburgh award**.

She continues to volunteer and contribute to the life of the congregation and community as she commences the Gold Award. It is a tremendous achievement and we hope you will speak to her when you see her and add your own thanks.

Sarah Murdoch, for the Hospitality Team

Photo above: Scarlett on holiday in Ghent, Summer 2026, by kind permission of her parents.

Congratulations to Eilidh!

Did I mention I ran the Edinburgh Marathon in May? I think I have been pretty quiet about the whole thing! Massive thank you to everyone who donated and supported me to help raise over £840 for the Beatson in Glasgow.

The Beatson do phenomenal work and were very supportive of our family, so dragging myself around streets of Edinburgh for over 5 hours in a heatwave was more than worth it.

It was the best and worst thing I have ever done and wouldn't have gotten through it without everyone's support – especially my mum and dad who were there on the day!

Well done Eilidh - a fantastic achievement!!



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

Email: parkchurchstirling@gmail.com

Church website: www.parkchurchstirling.org



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