

NEW CONNECTIONS

The congregational Magazine of
Strathaven: Trinity Parish Church

March 2026



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IN THIS ISSUE:

Funerals.....	2
Ministers letter	3
Pizza and Praise.....	4
Preaching Rota.....	4
Lectionary Readings.....	5
Maundy Money.....	5
Flower Calendars.....	6
Notices from Shaw.....	8
Holy Week Services.....	8
Memory Tree.....	9
Youth and Sunday School.....	10
Activity Page.....	12
Guild.....	14
World Day of Prayer.....	15
Mission Conference.....	16
Memory Club and Heart for Art.....	18
Boys Brigade.....	18
HHI update.....	19
General bits and bobs.....	20-23
St Margarets Chapel Guild.....	21
Editorial.....	24

FUNERALS

16 th February	Betty McDowall
17 th February	Allen Brown
18 th February	Sally Leggate
19 th February	Jim Wells
20 th February	May Foster
23 rd February	Alison Patterson
25 th February	Alexander Scott



*From the
Minister's
Desk*



March always feels like a month lived in two directions at once. Winter is still very much with us, yet we are beginning to see some early buds on the trees and signs of snowdrops popping through the soil.

It is a month of promise: quiet, steady, hopeful promise. In the life of the Church, March finds us deep on the Lenten road. While Lent has never featured large within our tradition, it has (over the years) become more and more focused on 'giving something up' that we sometimes lose sight of the journey it leads us on. It can feel as though the season is a test of willpower rather than an invitation to walk more closely with God. However, Lent isn't about impressing God with our self-control, it's about making space to notice God's presence in the everyday moments of our lives.

The Christian journey is rarely dramatic. More often it is lived in the gentle rhythm of ordinary days — turning up, praying when we can, offering kindness where it's needed, trusting that God is quietly at work even when we're not sure how. Lent reminds us that transformation usually comes not in sudden bursts, but in faithful steps: one prayer, one moment of reflection, one thoughtful action at a time.

As we move through March, our Lenten journey eventually leads us toward Palm Sunday, when crowds waved branches and welcomed Jesus with such joy and expectation. Yet even then, beneath the celebration, there is a sense of where the journey is heading. Palm Sunday doesn't stand alone; it opens the door into Holy Week, when we follow Jesus more closely than ever as we journey into the upper room, the garden, the cross, and finally the empty tomb.

Holy Week is not just a series of services, it is the heart of our story. It is where we see God's love most clearly. A love that is steadfast, courageous, and willing to walk through suffering into hope. As we prepare for it, we are reminded that we never travel this path alone. Christ walks with us, and we walk with one another.

My hope for this month is that we embrace Lent not as a season of giving something up, but as a journey of discovery. That we approach Palm Sunday as a turning point in faith. Then, as we enter Holy Week we might be ready — not perfect, not fully prepared, but ready to receive the wonder of what God still does in us and through us. This Lent, should our resolve to avoid chocolate collapse somewhere around week two, don't panic. Jesus never said, "Blessed are the perfect." But He did say, "Follow me." That's a journey open to us all.

Every blessing for the month ahead,

Shaw

PIZZA & PRAISE NIGHT!



Join us for an uplifting evening of **fellowship, flavour, and faith** at our upcoming **Pizza & Praise** event!

We'll gather around delicious slices of pizza, share meaningful conversation, and lift our voices together as we learn inspiring new worship hymns. Whether you come for the food, the friendship, or the music, you'll leave encouraged and refreshed.

Bring your appetite, bring a friend, and bring your heart ready to praise. We can't wait to sing, smile, and grow together!

Event Details:
Sunday 8th March
18:30-20:00
Strathaven Church Hall

All are welcome — we'd love to see you there!



PREACHING ROTA

As always, the rota may need to be altered but at least it gives an indication of who's scheduled for where. A special thank you to Valerie, Robin, Norman and Julie for assisting.

If anyone would like to assist by concluding a service (announcing offering, leading offering prayer and intimating closing hymn followed by blessing) or opening a service (this will be at Glassford and Strathaven involving up to and including children's address) then please volunteer to the minister who will provide appropriate resources.

	Chapelton	Strathaven	Glassford
1 st March	Valerie	Norman	Shaw
8 th March	Shaw (<i>Comm</i>)	Shaw (<i>Comm</i>)	Norman
15 th March	Julie	Julie	Valerie
22 nd March	Shaw	Norman	Shaw
29 th March	Shaw (<i>Palm</i>)	Shaw (<i>Palm</i>)	Julie (<i>Palm</i>)
5 th April	Norman (<i>Easter</i>)	Shaw (<i>Easter</i>)	Shaw (<i>Easter</i>)
12 th April	Shaw	Shaw	Robin
19 th April	Shaw	Norman	Shaw
26 th April	Robin	Shaw	Valerie

LECTIONARY READINGS

March

March 1, 2026	Genesis 12:1-4a ; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17 Or Matthew 17:1-9
March 8, 2026	Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42
March 15, 2026	1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41
March 22, 2026	Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45
March 29, 2026	Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Matthew 21:1-11; Isaiah 50:4-9a Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 26:14-27:66; Or Matthew 27:11-54

April

April 5 – Easter Sunday	TBC
April 12, 2026	Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31
April 19, 2026	Acts 2:14a, 36-41; Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; 1 Peter 1:17-23; Luke 24:13-35
April 26, 2026	Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2:19-25 ; John 10:1-10

MAUNDY MONEY

Every Maundy Thursday, the Monarch distributes special Maundy money in a service (dating back to 600AD) which commemorates Jesus washing the feet of the Apostles at the Last Supper.

This is an opportunity for the King to thank individuals for their outstanding Christian service and for making a difference to the lives of people in their local communities.

We are delighted that Ruby Davidson, our Session Clerk, has been chosen as a recipient this year.

Ruby writes: "*What a surprise when I received a letter from the Royal Almonry Office stating that I had been nominated to be a Maundy recipient and asking if I would accept it!*
The service will be held in St Asaph Cathedral, Wales on 2 April and I will be accompanied by Norrie. The precise number of recipients is equal to the King's age so 77 men and 77 women have been chosen to receive the Maundy Gifts. I feel deeply honoured to have been nominated and was delighted to accept."

STRATHAVEN FLOWER CALENDAR

March

1st Mrs R. Hastings
8th Mrs A. Grady (*Communion*)
15th Mrs M. Mears
22nd Mrs M. Geraghty
29th Mrs M. Gillies (*Palm Sunday*)

April

5th Mrs J. Robertson (*Easter Sunday*)
12th Mrs M. Chandler
19th Dr C. McPhail
26th Mrs M. McAuley



May

3rd Mrs B. Smith
10th Mrs L. Mishra
17th Mrs E. Morley
24th Mrs M. Latimer
31st Mrs L. Baird (*Trinity*)

Anne Grady (tel. 07799638380 / 523285 & Lilly McConnell (tel. 520989)

GLASSFORD FLOWER CALENDAR

March

1st Mrs M. Lindsay
8th Mrs J. Ballantyne
15th Mr R. Scott
22nd Mrs M. Smith
29th Mrs J. Weir (*Palm Sunday*)

April

5th Mrs A. Milwain (*Easter Sunday*)
12th Mrs H. Kerr
19th Mrs R. Andrew
26th Mrs M. McDonald



May

3rd Mrs C. Frame
10th Mrs S. Moore (*Communion*)
17th Mrs R. Redpath
24th Mrs R. Stewart
31st Mrs M. Edwards (*Trinity*)

J Meikle (tel. 520941) & R Andrew (tel. 521662)

CHAPELTON FLOWER CALENDAR

March

1st Mr J. Paterson
8th Mrs L. Wallace (*Communion*)
15th Mrs B. Williams
22nd Mrs J. Goldie
29th Mrs L. Menzies (*Palm Sunday*)



April

5th Miss P. Gilchrist (*Easter Sunday*)
12th Mrs E. Somerville
19th Mr J. Frew
26th Mrs E. Steel (Strathaven)

May

3rd Mrs A. Wallace
10th Miss M. Thomson
17th Mrs E. Kennedy
24th Mrs V. Mclean
31st Mrs V. Allan (*Trinity*)

Mary Frew (tel. 300268) & Val Allen (075 785 06102)

OFFERINGS

The Sunday offering (collection) is being taken during the service in all three buildings.

We are conscious that many have switched to direct giving which has proved to be invaluable particularly over the last few years. Therefore, simply let the offering bag pass you by on a Sunday. Thank you to everyone for your continuing support.

Offering: In addition to bank transfer, electronic offerings can be made using the link <https://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/donate/?cong=171167> or via the QR code



STATED ANNUAL MEETING

Following last year's success of having our annual meeting on a Sunday following worship, this year's meeting will be held on Sunday 8th March over a cup of tea or coffee in the large hall.

We especially encourage members from the villages to join those already in Strathaven for the meeting which will start at 12.15pm.

The main purpose of the meeting is to receive the accounts which will be available via the website a few days in advance (copies can also be picked up on the 8th).

PRESBYTERY MISSION PLANNING UPDATE

At our last Kirk Session meeting we were delighted to learn that our request for the church halls at Glassford be permitted to remain open during the period when the community halls are to be refurbished has been granted – initially on a three-monthly renewable basis.

However, with that good news comes the confirmation that all our attempts to amend, seek a review or appeal the Presbytery Plan in terms of the church building itself have been unsuccessful. This means that Glassford Church is scheduled to close by the end of June 2026 (eighteen months later than first proposed). Conversations are taking place with the congregation at Glassford to plan special services and/or events to mark the life and witness of the Glassford Church over the last 200 years.

The Chapelton Church building is subject to a review before 2027.

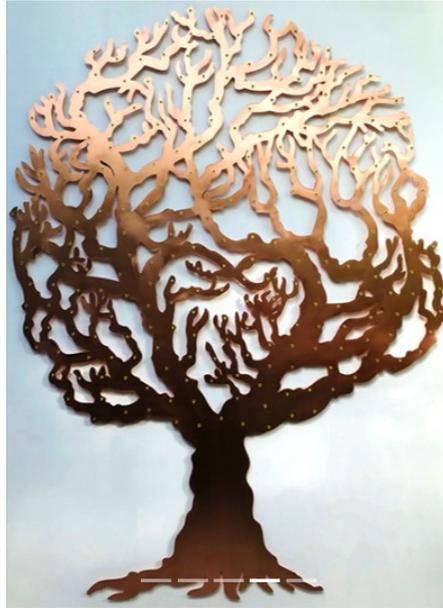
In terms of ministerial allocation, the proposed 0.75 of full-time equivalent remains unchanged. However, the General Assembly of 2025 approved a deliverance that any congregation which can meet the costs of their ministry in full can continue to have a full ministry. This Trinity does but we must continually address our stewardship to ensure it continues in the future.

Holy Week Services

Subject to confirmation, this year's Holy Week services will be at the following locations at 7.00pm:

Monday - Avendale Church
Tuesday - Trinity (Chapelton Church)
Wednesday - Evangelical Church
Thursday - Trinity (Glassford Church)
Friday - Trinity (Strathaven Church)





A MEMORY TREE FOR OUR CHURCH

The Kirk Session has agreed to install a **Memory Tree** inside our Strathaven church building, offering a new and meaningful way for us to remember loved ones.

By way of explanation, a Memory Tree allows families to add a plaque in memory of a loved one and can often be seen in places such as hospices or neonatal units, where reflection, remembrance, and hope are especially important. The tree provides a gentle, dignified focus for remembrance, enabling us to honour lives lived while remaining rooted in our shared faith.

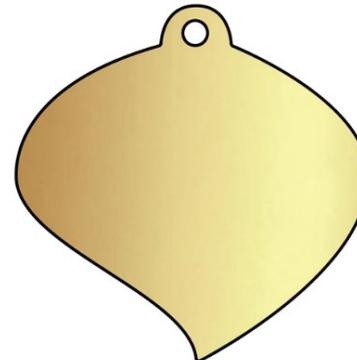
The Memory Tree, will be approximately **1.6 metres tall** and will be installed on the **back wall inside the sanctuary**. Crafted from metal, with **copper leaves**, the tree has been designed to be both beautiful and discreet, blending sensitively with the church interior while offering a lasting tribute.

Families and individuals will be able to commemorate a loved one by adding a **copper leaf**, engraved with a short inscription. Each leaf costs **£50.00**, which includes the engraving, and will then be added permanently to the tree

The Memory Tree is intended to be a focus of quiet reflection—somewhere to pause, remember, give thanks, and commend those we love into God's care. It also reflects our church's desire to offer pastoral support and a sense of continuity between past, present, and future generations of our congregation.

Should you wish to order a leaf, **please complete the order form enclosed with this magazine and return it to the office. Engraving guidelines are attached to the order form.**

We hope this addition will become a valued and comforting part of our church life in the years to come.



CURVED LEAF

**CHILDREN, FAMILY AND YOUTH WORKER -
JULIE ROBERTSON**

Well, what a start to the year it has been! Lots going on and lots of planning behind the scenes.

Firstly - I must apologise that I set the first meeting for the summer holiday club during the school break. My apologies! A new date will be advised in due course.

Besides holiday club there are a few plans under way for summer so please do keep checking back for more information.

Before we get there, however, Easter is fast approaching! We will have some family and congregational events on Palm Sunday which is 29th March after the service in Strathaven so please do pop along to these if you can.

We will have Messy church on the second Friday of the month and Thursday club continues as always on a Thursday 3-4pm.

I am looking to launch the after school club in Chapelton and am looking for a couple of volunteers - with or willing to apply for PVG - on a Monday 3-4pm.

I am looking to start a pilot between Easter and the summer holidays so please let me know if you would be able to assist.

I attended the Leading Your Church Into Growth conference with Shaw and Ruby in February and found the course to be informative and practical.

I know Shaw will share more details of this over the course but it was well worth attending and I look forward to implementing much of what we discussed.

Till next time – Blessings!

Julie

Dates for your diary:

AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS:

Thursday After School runs in Glassford from 15.00-16.00 during Term Time.

We will be off 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd April for school holidays and annual leave.



MESSY CHURCH:

Messy Church meets monthly in CHAPELTON on the second Friday of the month on a Friday evening.

We will next meet on Friday 13th March. We meet from 17:30-19:30 and include a light meal. If you would like to volunteer to join our Messy Church team, please let me know.

TODDLER GROUPS:

Toddler groups run term time as follows:

Monday – Strathaven 10-11.30.

Wednesday - Chapelton 10-11.30.

Toddlers will be off 6th, 8th, 13th and 15th April.

Holiday club will run on Mondays (6th and 13th) from 10am-12pm. If you can volunteer, please let Julie know.

If you are able to make some toast and juice or help put out some toys then please get in touch. If you have pre-school kids and you just want to come along and eat said toast and get a coffee, please feel free as I would love to see you.

PALM SUNDAY EVENTS:

More information will be published via intimations, slides and Facebook.

Trinity Toasties on Palm Sunday – cheese toasties being served in the large hall after the Strathaven service! More information on the weekly intimation sheet.



The Sunday school in the Strathaven building are continuing to look at the books of the New Testament and have been taking part in lots of fun activities to help explore the important messages.

During the month of March, we will add some more books of the Bible to our bookshelf display, do something nice for Mother's Day and start to think about the Easter story.

Thank you all for your continued support, as always,

Sunday School Team

How colourful is your garden? Hand it in to the office or at c
Happy colouring!



t church and we will brighten up the April magazine!



GUILD

The World Day of Prayer is being held in Avendale Church this year on Friday 6th March at 2.00 pm and all are welcome to attend.

Our second last meeting for the session is on Tuesday 10th March when we look forward to hearing from James Fraser who will talk to us about one of the Guild projects – Operation Hope Egypt.

On the 24th we will have a musical activity and this will be followed by the annual business meeting. This is your opportunity to help the committee in planning for the next session starting in September and we look forward to hearing your ideas for future meetings. This is also your opportunity to join the committee and take forward plans for next session. Help is specifically requested to operate the hymn machine during meetings and if you are interested in assisting with this please speak to Ishbel Anderson who can show you what is involved.

An outing to Peebles is planned for Tuesday 12th May with an accessible coach leaving Strathaven from Station Road at 10.30 am and then leaving Peebles at 4.00 pm. Cost for the coach is £10 which is non-refundable - you choose where you have lunch as there are several eating places along the High Street where there are also several shops! The coach outing is open to everyone and not just Guild members. To book a seat on the coach please contact Morag McKay by March 24 with the payment of £10.

If you would like to attend any of our meetings please come along – we will be delighted to see you. We meet in the large hall in Strathaven at 2.00 pm. The Avondale Community Bus is available to transport anyone who requires it – Marjorie Lamb organises this and you can call her on 07872 050305 to book a seat. If you would like further details on any of the Guild activities please speak to Elizabeth McGowan (President), Morag McKay (Treasurer) or Ishbel Anderson (Secretary).

THE KNITTED BIBLE EXHIBITION

The Knitted Bible is a unique and inspiring exhibition, featuring beautifully crafted knitted scenes that bring familiar Bible stories to life in a creative and engaging way for all ages. Blackhall St Columba's will be displaying the Knitted Bible in their sanctuary in March. Further details can be seen on the St George's United Reformed Church website <http://www.blackhallstcolumba.org.uk/> This is only the second time that the exhibit will have been in Scotland, and they are keen to encourage visitors from near and far to attend. This special display offers a wonderful opportunity for fellowship, reflection, and outreach within the wider community, and all are warmly invited to come and experience it.

The Knitted Bible Exhibition

BLACKHALL ST COLUMBA'S INVITES YOU TO VIEW
OVER 30 EXHIBITS OF STORIES FROM
GENESIS TO REVELATION

LEAVE AT LEAST AN HOUR TO
VIEW THE WHOLE DISPLAY
CREATED BY
ST GEORGE'S
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



FRIDAY 13 TH MARCH	10-12.30PM/1.30-4PM/6-9PM
SATURDAY 14 TH MARCH	10-1PM/2-5PM
SUNDAY 15 TH MARCH	2-5PM
MONDAY 16 TH MARCH	10-12.30PM/1.30-4PM/6-9PM
TUESDAY 17 TH MARCH	1.30-4PM/6-9PM
WEDNESDAY 18 TH MARCH	10-12.30PM/1.30-4PM/6-9PM
THURSDAY 19 TH MARCH	1.30-4PM/6-9PM
FRIDAY 20 TH MARCH	10-12.30PM

CRAFT ACTIVITIES ON SATURDAY & SUNDAY



ADMISSION FREE - DONATIONS WELCOME - REFRESHMENTS

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2026

"I Will Give You Rest: Come"
(Matthew 11:28-30)



On **Friday, 6th March 2026**, congregations across Scotland will join Christians around the world in observing the **World Day of Prayer**—an international, ecumenical movement rooted in shared worship, reflection, and action.

The World Day of Prayer is traditionally held on the first Friday of March and is celebrated in over 170 countries. While services take place locally in churches and community spaces, participants are united globally through a common service, prayers, and theme.

Prepared by Women of Nigeria

The **2026 World Day of Prayer service has been prepared by Christian women from Nigeria**. Through scripture readings, prayers, stories, and music, they invite the worldwide Church to reflect on the theme:

"I will give you rest: Come"
(Matthew 11:28-30)

This invitation from Jesus speaks powerfully into the realities of modern life—weariness, anxiety, and the many burdens people carry. Drawing on their own faith and experience, the Nigerian women encourage us to consider how Christ's promise of rest offers hope, renewal, and strength, even in the midst of challenge.

Prayer, Learning, and Action

Within the Church of Scotland, the World Day of Prayer has long been valued as an opportunity to engage with the wider, global Church. It encourages **informed prayer**—learning about the lives and concerns of Christians in other parts of the world—and **prayerful action**, responding in faith to issues of justice, peace, and compassion.

Local World Day of Prayer services also offer a meaningful chance for **ecumenical fellowship**, bringing together people from different Christian traditions within our communities.

An Open Invitation

Although the movement is led by women, **World Day of Prayer is for everyone**—women and men, young and old. It is a reminder of our shared calling as God's people and of the unity we find in Christ.

As we look ahead to World Day of Prayer 2026, may we hear anew Christ's invitation to "come," to lay our burdens before God, and to find the rest that renews us for worship, service, and witness in the world.

MISSION CONFERENCE

As mentioned in last month's magazine a few of us attended a conference entitled 'Leading your Church into Growth' in early February. Having attended lots of conferences over my ministry, this was one of the best! The three days had a prayer as a focus and we were encouraged to take it with us our parishes:

*God of mission,
Who alone brings growth to your Church,
Send your Holy Spirit to give
Vision to our planning,
Wisdom to our actions,
Joy to our worship,
And power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers,
In spiritual commitment to you,
And in service to our local community'
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

There is much to consider about how we grow our church and how we do mission, and this will be shared with the Kirk Session in due course. However, I thought the congregation might like to see some quotes I noted down over the three days – words of encouragement for when we try something new... and food for thought!

- When you encounter defeat you must not feel defeated.
- Failure is not fatal but not doing, is!
- Being authentic is more important than that which is holy, good or righteous. (Andrew Root)
- If you are not leading your church into growth, where are you leading it? (Rt Rev Philip North)
- Churches reported that the biggest challenge they faced was a lack of volunteers (CofE, Youth and Children Growth Research, 2022)
- The parable of the sower is a good picture of a culture of invitation. *The seeds are our invitations. If you wanted to see your church grow by 20% over the next two years how many invites do you need to scatter?*
- 31% of non-church goers say they would attend if invited by a friend or family member.
- Once we invite someone, what kind of church will they experience? Invitation and welcome are two halves of a whole.
- If you have two children in church on a Sunday, that's average across the country.
- Young people need food, faith and fun.

Continued on page 17...

- And, of course, growth, mission, reaching out and welcoming in are the responsibility of all of us not just those we would normally view as the leaders!
- 52% of people who became a Christian in the last five years said this was partly due to the warmth of a Christian community or the hospitality of Christians... 69% said it was partly due to the need for help with a pastoral issue of some sort. *(2025 Finding Jesus Report)*
- The way we live our lives can impact and influence others: *29% of respondents said one of the factors which prompted them to begin exploring Christianity was a Christian speaking to them about their faith, 29% said it was seeing the impact of Christian faith on someone they knew and 26% said it was the actions of a Christian. (2025 Finding Jesus Report)*
- In terms of building your church: Rome wasn't built in a day... but the first bit was!
- There are many things that hold us back: our nerves; the fear of saying something wrong; fear of causing offence; thinking faith is a private matter; and fear of rejection or no response. These are all very normal feelings, but the more we build our confidence, the more we find our voice and the people who are open to conversations about faith.
- How we treat others and care for those around us is so important. We don't care because we want to win converts, but because we want to love our neighbor and to demonstrate God's abundant love to and for them.
- "There is an old adage: ready set, go. And I know its predicated on the importance of preparation. But I think its backward. You'll never be ready. You'll never be set. Sometimes you just need to go for it. The sequence of faith is this: Go. Set. Ready." (Mark Batterson)

A fabulous take away from the conference was the following - when talking to someone about a church activity say: I'm going, its going to be good, why don't you come with me!

Very Rev Dr Shaw J Paterson



CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Just a reminder that Annabel from Citizens Advice Bureau is in the vestry every Tuesday from 10:00am – 1:00pm. Please book an appointment with Annabel on 07592 995152



MEMORY CLUB

MEMORY CLUB:

The March meeting dates for the Memory Club are Wednesday 11th March and Wednesday 25th March both at 1.30pm to 3.15pm.

On 11th March we are going to do an Easter craft and quizz and on 25th March we welcome back the Ukeladies.

HEART FOR ART:

The March meeting dates for the Heart for Art group are Wednesday 4th March and Wednesday 18th March both at 1pm to 3pm.

Lynda Horn



FAMILY QUIZ NIGHT **IN TRINITY CHURCH, LETHAME ROAD,** **STRATHAVEN** **ON THURSDAY 19th MARCH 2026 AT 6.30** **PM**

Come along and try to beat our team who competed in the Boys' Brigade National "Masterteam" competition in 2025.

There are 10 rounds each with 10 questions and are the ones that were asked of our team in the National Competition in November 2025.

Cost is £5 per person inclusive of tea/coffee/soft drink and home baking with all proceeds going towards camp funds for our Boys' Brigade Company.

Donations of prizes for our "Tombola" and home baking are most welcome.





**HEALTH HELP
INTERNATIONAL**

**STRATHAVEN FRIENDS OF HEALTH
HELP INTERNATIONAL**

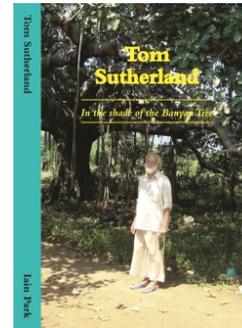
The rains have arrived in Zambia and crops are growing again and families will soon have a harvest, although the rain has been so heavy in places that flooding has occurred and villages have been cut off.

In the picture you can see chairs made by Robbie are being unloaded at Nanga school. But just look at the countryside everywhere has turned green; it is a very welcome sight.

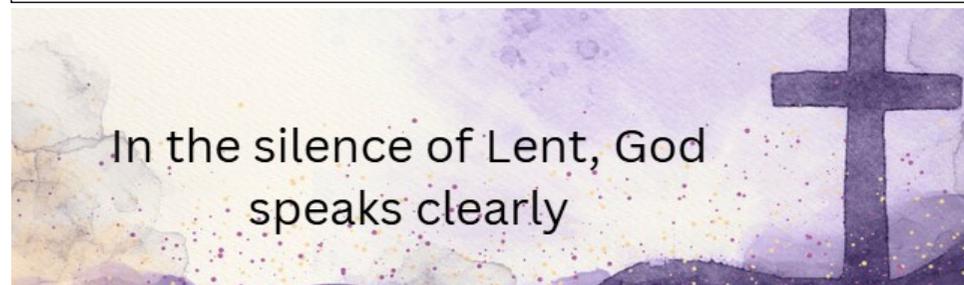


In India Tom Sutherland is visiting various projects that he established several years ago when he was working there. Here he is visiting a patient at the hospital where Shibu works as a bystander.

Tom's life story is told in the book, "In the Shade of the Banyan Tree" by Iain Park. Copies are still available if you would like to learn more of this amazing man.



Kath Russell



Strathaven Fairtrade

The Fairtrade stall will be available after the service on the first Sunday of every month. We hope to offer a range of your favourite fairtrade sweets and groceries and thank you all once again for your support for the poorest and most vulnerable producers throughout the world.

Maureen and Nancy

REMINDER! New Connections has now gone digital!

If you would like to receive the magazine via email rather than hard copy, please would you pop a message to Ruth at the office on **strathaventrinity@gmail.com** with your name, who your elder is and your preferred email address.

LIVE STREAMING

Our Strathaven services are live-streamed (and available as a recording later).

It is only the chancel area and first two pews that are in sight of the camera. Parents, in particular, should be aware that if they do not wish their child to be visible 'on-line' then they should ensure that that they sit a couple of pews from the front.

It is particularly pleasing to note that our services are viewed online approximately 120 times (on average) each week.

However, we would value some additional volunteers to assist and then a rota can be established. Please get in touch if you wish any further information about what is involved or speak to one of the 'team' on a Sunday.

LOAVES AND FISHES

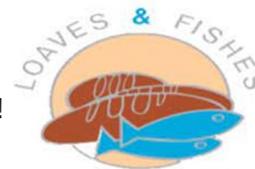
As you know we have been supporting Loaves and Fishes Foodbank for some time now and they are extremely thankful for all that they receive from us.

As times are getting harder for many people Loaves and Fishes are facing a crisis with not enough food to support the needs of many.

If you can, please bring an item of food to church on a Sunday morning or drop off at office when it is open.

Any dried or tinned foods and toiletries would be suitable and would make a huge difference to the work of the charity.

Together we can make a difference!



ST. MARGARETS CHAPEL GUILD

In November I was pleased to attend the annual service and AGM of the St Margaret's Chapel Guild in Edinburgh Castle on behalf of the current Moderator of the Church of Scotland. St Margaret's Chapel, built in the early 12th by King David in honour of his mother, stands within the Castle and is a consecrated building that is still used for services.

St Margaret's Chapel Guild was established in 1942 and is a Scottish charity which maintains the interior of the Chapel and its fixtures and fittings. Guild members place flower arrangements by the altar every week throughout the year. The charity also promotes the knowledge and understanding of the life and works of St Margaret of Scotland and raises money through in-Chapel donations which it distributes to organisations who work in her spirit. The Minister of the Canongate Kirk, Revd Neil Gardner, is President of the Guild and conducts services in the Chapel at the AGM which is held on or near St Margaret's Day – 16th November - each year.

What I learned that day was that the Guild's membership is made up entirely of people who are called Margaret, either as their first or middle name. For those who have the name Margaret, or a derivation of it (eg Maggie, Meghan, Daisy, Margaritte, Meg, etc) this may be of interest to you. To find out more check out their website: <https://www.stmargaretschapel.com>"

Shaw

TRINITY MEN'S COFFEE GROUP

There is a men's group that meets in the Rankin Room (upstairs in the hall) on Wednesday mornings between 10.30 am until 12 noon for coffee/tea, biscuits and a chat. Come and go for part or all of the time, as suits you.

LADIES KEEP FIT

Class meets regularly on **Mondays** in the small downstairs hall of our Strathaven buildings, from **7-8pm**. Exercises are designed to maintain fitness, so not dynamic. We do a lot of laughing so the hour goes quickly. All to the beat of some great 60s music classics.

Cillia McLeary

WHEELIE BINS

We have been advised that the bin lorries will no longer empty our wheelie bins unless the lid is able to close.

In Strathaven - the church wheelie bin is the black bin located in the manse garden. This bin is of sufficient size for normal activities. However, if you are having a function/party/event that generates more rubbish than usual please arrange to take it to the amenity site for disposal. Please do not stack the bin with the lid open or leave on the ground adjacent as birds and foxes make quite a mess.

CAR PARKING

Please be considerate of our neighbours when parking for church events! Please ensure you park responsibly and be careful not to block anyone's access.

This applies for Sunday services, funerals, weddings and weekday activities in the halls.

At busy times parking is a premium and so please only use the car park off Crawford Street when attending the church or halls - there have been several instances lately when the car park has been full prior to anyone arriving for a church/hall event! Therefore, do not be afraid to ask if others who are parking in the car park are attending something in our premises and, if not, encourage them to park elsewhere.

KIDS KLUB

Kids Klub meets on those Sundays when the Sunday School is "on holiday". Children wishing to participate should go into Church as normal for the children's address then make their way to the large hall where there will be board games for them to enjoy during the remainder of the service.

It would be great if we could have a few more helpers (we need two per session) – the role is supervisory and there is no requirement to plan activities. Now is a good time to contact me so that PVG forms can be completed. There is no regular commitment for Kids Klub – just operating on a "now and again" basis. I will put together a rota, depending on who is available.

Claire Campbell (01357 520191)



BIGGER PICTURE for Academy Learners ...

Mondays and Fridays at Lunch Time



Academy students are welcome to come along to the large hall for a hot chocolate and biscuits (and a Toastie, if they wish) while eating their lunch, or watching cartoons on the big screen. Please let as many as possible know about the hall being open – it's a dry and warm place to have lunch.



We still need volunteers to help make toasties and/or hot chocolate and simply 'be there'. For more information please speak to Cillia Mcleary.



WHO?

Minister:	Rev Dr Shaw Paterson	spaterson@churchofscotland.org.uk 01357 520019
Pastoral Assistant	Rev Norman McKee	normanmckee946@btinternet.com 01698 827358
Session Clerk:	Ruby Davidson	rubydavidson96@yahoo.com 07809 128038
Church Secretary:	Ruth Ward-Cox Mon-Thurs 9:15-11:45	strathaventrinity@gmail.com 01357 529316
Sunday School:	Pamela Walker	TSundaySchool@outlook.com
Youth Worker:	Julie Robertson	jrobertson@churchofscotland.org.uk 07544 249324
Treasurer:	David Lipowski	david.lipowski@gmail.com
Presbytery Elder:	Scott Bennie	01357 521 661



CHURCH OFFICE

The church office hours are term time Monday to Thursday 09:15—11:45. The email address is strathaventrinity@gmail.com



Lifts to Church

If anyone requires a lift to Church, please contact

Kath Russell
07916 171830

NEW CONNECTIONS

EDITORIAL

Lent



'Lent ushers in a springtime of renewal, just as green shoots sprout and snowdrops blossom.' (Walk with Me, A Journey of Prayer for Lent 2025).

I find that I enjoy the Lenten season as much as, if not more than, Advent! I'm not sure I'm meant to 'enjoy' Lent as it echoes the 40 days of temptation Jesus spent in the desert, but I do!

It's lovely to pause and reflect, a time of 'prayer, fasting and almsgiving.'

There are no rules- it's our own time on our own pilgrimage. The Curé D'Ars, an 18th century French priest asked an old farmer what he did in prayer. The farmer replied, 'Nothing. I look at Him and He

looks at me!' Prayer is what we want it to be. The fasting gives me a chance to pause activities which have maybe become a little demanding of time and energy, be it eating, drinking, phone time, puzzle time, TV....the list is endless. But I find it relaxing to just say 'NO' and my stomach, eyes, brain ... all give a sigh of relief!

Almsgiving is similarly broad and individualized - money, time, talents are all there to be given in this season of Lent.

'The ancient disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving are further steps at our disposal, fortifying our bodies and strengthening our spirits for this Lenten pilgrimage.' And always ahead is the glorious Easter resurrection!

May our Lenten pilgrimages be whatever we want them to be.

Take care
Maureen

**Final date for inclusion in our
April edition of New Connections is :-
Monday 23rd March 2026**