ST.NINIANS OLD PARISH CHURCH

PARISHIONER

WINTER 2024





Helpful Contacts

Minister The Rev Gary J McIntyre





Session Clerk Mr Leslie W Asher





Depute Session Clerk Mrs Sally P Andrews





Treasurer Mr Edward A Morton





Church Officer

Mr Aaron H Colthart



Organist Mr Antony Baldwin





Gift Aid Convener Mrs Heather Scougall





Roll Keeper/FWO Convener Mrs Alison Newman





Halls Booking Convener Mrs Lorraine Reid



From the Manse

Dear Friends,

One of the greatest passages of scripture is the opening verses of the first chapter of John's Gospel.

Unlike the start of Matthew's Gospel or Luke's, who begin by telling us the story of Jesus' birth, John provides us with a meditation upon the eternal significance of that wonderful event. He speaks of God as the one who gives life and light to the world, and proclaims;

"The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not put it out." John 1:5



In the world today there is much darkness, and the continuing conflict in the Middle East, the place where Christ, the Prince of Peace was born, is a cause of great concern, as are the many other conflicts around the globe.

In such a world, it would be easy for us to lose heart, and to believe that this is how things will be, and that they will not change, not now and not ever.

While I can fully understand such thinking, I believe John's words contain a magnificent truth that should not only give us hope at such a time as this, but inspire us to work to make the world a better and more just place, a place where the prophet Isaiah's vision will become a reality;

"They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more. Come, O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord." Isaiah 2:4-5

Light has a magnificent quality. Even the tiniest flicker of light can make a difference and help dispel the darkness.

God gave the world the greatest gift ever when he sent his Son at the first Christmas. In and through Jesus, God has shown us how much he loves us, and as one of the names given to the Christ child makes known, **Immanuel**, God is with us! He is with us at **all** times, even when we might think he is distant, and the flame of his love cannot be quenched by hatred, nor can the light he gives be overcome by darkness. Let us this Christmas and in the year to come, spread the love and light that came into the world when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and let us through our service as followers of Jesus, endeavour to make the world a place where peace prevails, and hope abounds.

"The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not put it out."

I send you my very best wishes for a joyful Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Every blessing,

Your friend and minister, Gary

Services

Sunday 1st December – First in Advent

10:30am Morning service with the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Sunday 8th December – Second in Advent

10:30am Morning Service – Gift service led by the Rev Kenneth Russell Mr McIntyre will be conducting the Communion service in the Allan Church in his capacity as Interim Moderator.

Sunday 15th December – Third in Advent

10:30am Morning Service

6:30pm A united Service of Lessons and Carols followed by tea, coffee, mulled wine, shortbread and mince pies in the Parish Halls.

Friday 20th December

10am St Ninians Primary School Christmas service in the Church

Sunday 22nd December – Fourth in Advent

10:30am Morning Service for all the family followed by tea, coffee, mulled wine, shortbread and mince pies in the Parish Halls

Tuesday 24th December – Christmas Eve

11:30pm Watchnight service with retiral collection for CHAS

Wednesday 25th December – Christmas Day

10:30am United service in Park Church led by the Rev Gary J McIntyre

Sunday 29th December – First after Christmas

10:30am – Seasonal worship

Carol Services

Monday 16th December 2pm Roselea Court Care Home 3:30pm Westerlands Care Home

Wednesday 18th December 2pm Eccles Court

Volunteers to help with singing carols will be very welcome!



Lessons and Carols





There will be a united service in the Old Parish on Sunday 15th December at 6:30pm when we will be joined by friends from neighbouring congregations. We are delighted that the Rt Rev Dr Shaw J Paterson, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, will be with us and give a short advent address. The service will be followed by a further time of fellowship in the Parish Halls. It is hoped that as many people as possible will join us for what will be a great opportunity to celebrate the birth of our Saviour and Lord.

Services in January and February 2025

There will be a service at 10:30am every Sunday in the Church.

The children of the Sunday Club meet in the Church for the first part of the service and then go to the Parish Halls for a programme of activities.

There will be a service in Eccles Court at 2pm on Wednesday 22nd January and 26th February.

On the last Sunday of the month from January onwards, there will be a further time of prayer. Those who wish to attend are invited to gather on the chancel at approximately 11:40am.

Bible Study

A joint Bible study with our friends in Holy Rude Viewfield and Park Church will be held in the Church of the Holy Rude on the following dates – Wednesday 12th March, Wednesday 19th March, Wednesday 26th March, and Tuesday 1st April. The studies begin at 7pm and last approximately an hour. You will be very welcome!



Kirk Session

We were all greatly saddened by the passing of David Walker on the 2nd of September. David was ordained to the office of the eldership on the 16th of November 1980 and in the years that followed, his loyalty and commitment to the Church was unfailing. He was a diligent district elder and served on the Finance and Property Committee for many years. David also rang the church bell and in 2018 he was appointed Church Officer. David was conscientious in discharging his duties and was always willing to help others. One who had a deep faith, David loved to be in the House of God, and it was there that a large gathering of people gathered to give thanks for his life.

The sympathy of the Kirk Session and congregation is with Dorothy and the family at this time.

The Kirk Session will meet in the Parish Halls at 7:30pm on Tuesday 21st January and Tuesday 18th March. Apologies for absence should be given to Sally Andrews, Depute Session Clerk.

The Kirk Session will have a joint meeting with the Kirk Sessions of Holy Rude Viewfield and Park Church in Park Church Hall on Wednesday 30th April 2025 at 7:30pm.



St Ninians Cemetery

REV GARY J MCINTYRE

Sadly, for safety reasons, access to the cemetery has been restricted for a

number of years, and this has meant people have not been able to visit the graves of loved ones who are buried there.

Following discussions with Stirling Council and St Ninians Community Council, and with the support of the Kirk Session, I would like to form a steering group of six or seven people who would meet to share ideas and discuss various options that are open to us.

The cemetery, which has within it the Tower and remains of the 12th century Church that was blown



up in 1746, has a rich history and it would be good to honour that history, and the memory of those buried there.

Doing what needs to be done in order for the cemetery to be open to visitors once again would take time and commitment, but I believe it would not only be worth it, it would be welcomed by many within the community and beyond.

If you would like to be part of the steering group or to find out more, I would be very pleased to hear from you!

Church Grounds



A sincere word of thanks is extended to the willing team of volunteers who helped maintain the grounds around the Church throughout the spring, summer and autumn.

Thanks to Jan and Dorothy, the volunteers enjoyed a lovely afternoon tea in the Parish Halls following their final tidy up in October.

A Christmas Prayer by Nick Fawcett

Gracious God, we say that it is more blessed to give than to receive but in practice we rarely give any indication of believing that.

We claim that Christmas is a time for giving as well as receiving, but our gifts are usually reserved for family and friends.

Gratefully, we remember at this time that your gift of Christ is so very different – good news for all, the Saviour of all, given to all.

God of grace, you have given us so much: teach us to give in turn. We pray for your world in all its need - those in lands racked by poverty, crushed by debt, overwhelmed by famine or natural disaster.

God of grace, you have given us so much: teach us to give in turn. We remember those who are persecuted, denied justice or falsely imprisoned.

God of grace, you have given us so much: teach us to give in turn. We remember those whose land is torn by hatred, scarred by violence, broken by war.

God of grace, you have given us so much: teach us to give in turn. We remember those afflicted by sickness, struggling with disability, or crushed by suffering.

God of grace, you have given us so much: teach us to give in turn. We remember those overcome by depression, bereavement or broken relationships, all for whom the present brings trouble and the future seems uncertain.

God of grace, you have given us so much: teach us to give in turn. Gracious God, at this time of giving and receiving reach out in love to your aching world.

Bring comfort in distress, courage in adversity, confidence in uncertainty and compassion in suffering.

Strengthen all those who work to build a fairer society and a more just world, and challenge each of us, who have so much to share from our plenty with those who have so little.

God of grace, you have given us so much: teach us to give in turn.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The 8th Stirling (St Ninians) Company of the Boys' Brigade DAVID ROSS

Over the weekend of the 1st to 3rd of November some of our Company Section boys attended a Battalion weekend at Barcarple Outdoor Centre run by the Abernethy Trust. Abernethy Trust are a Christian Organisation who offer outdoor adventure residential weekends to schools, youth groups and businesses.

Jamie, one of the boys who went on the trip had this to say about his time away:

"Our weekend at Barcaple was simply brilliant, we did brilliant activities from the ones on our feet like archery, obstacle courses to the ones we did off our feet like rock climbing and some did mountain biking and others did abseiling but the best part of Barcaple was that we got to work with other people from other companies and have fun. Barcaples is a place run by people of the Christian faith.

All food was provided for us and they were incredibly accommodating to any needs like



dietary requirements, room requirements and anything during the activities. During the Saturday night we got to have a bonfire with marshmallows, jokes and we learned a fire dance which was just fun and hilarious to do.

The absolutely best thing about our trip was the fact we got to interact with boys from other companies. It was nice to speak to and play games with people we wouldn't normally speak or play games with, but it was great working through our activities with them and will be great to do other stuff with them."

As a BB Company we try to get involved in many Battalion events across the session, to help boys understand they are part of something bigger than just what we do each week. Our next Battalion event is on Monday 18th November where we will meet for a night of fun, food and fellowship at Hollywood 10-Pin Bowling in Riverside.

8th Stirling Boys' Brigade meet each week in the Parish Halls.

- Anchors: Wednesday: 6:15pm to 7:30pm
- Juniors: Friday: 6:45pm to 8pm
- Company Section: Friday 8pm to 10pm

Social and Fundraising Committee ALISON NEWMAN

ST.NINIANS OLD PARISH CHURCH SOUP & SANDWICH LUNCHES



Soup and Sandwich lunches for the winter months are as follows:

- Saturday 7th December
- Saturday 11th January 2025
- Saturday 1st February 2025
- Saturday 1st March 2025

Between 12 noon and 1.30pm in the Parish Halls

Pastoral Care Group

GRACE MCINTOSH

If you know of anyone who would benefit from telephone contact or a visit from a Pastoral Care Group member, please let me or the Minister know.

What Christmas is Really About **By Kelly Roper**

It's about the birth of Frantic shoppers crowd the stores. Jesus. And his true divinity. Buying up bargains by It's about the birth of the score. Do they know the the Saviour. meaning of Christmas? humanity. It's difficult to tell for sure Christmas isn't a race to see How many gifts that you can buy. important, It's not about cooking a ham, Or about baking pumpkin pie. the It isn't about hanging season we hold so lights. Or visiting Santa at the dear. mall. So let's keep the focus on God No it really isn't about As we celebrate Any of those things at Christmas this year. all.

Who came to redeem So stop worrying about those sales, And getting caught up in distractions Let's focus on what's And be responsible for our actions. Jesus is the reason for

Sunday Club

We have enjoyed the start of the new session and have enjoyed many and various craft activities. Our display board in the Parish Halls is very busy displaying all our work.

In recent weeks we have prepared shoe boxes for the Blytheswood Care Shoebox appeal, made poppies on Remembrance Sunday and talked about when Jesus walked on water.

We are looking forward to Advent and Christmas and lots of fun craft activities.



Tuesday Group MIRANDA MILLER

Many thanks to all members who attended the opening afternoon tea and joined in with the recent quiz afternoon. A good time was had by all.

Still to come this session is the Scots' afternoon on the 26th November at 2.00pm. There will be live entertainment followed by tea, coffee and some Scottish delicacies.

There will be a sheet for names for the Christmas Lunch on 17th December please note the change of date. The venue is the Stirling Golf Club and a three-course lunch will be served at a cost of £23. A £5 deposit is required by the end of November. Lunch will be 12.00pm for 12.30pm.

The annual Burns supper will be celebrated on Tuesday 28th January at 7.00pm the Parish Halls. More details to follow.

The Rev. Gary J McIntyre will address the group on the 25th of February and the AGM will be held on the 25th March, venue still to be confirmed.

The Tuesday group committee send you all their very best wishes for a lovely Christmas.

The Prayer Group

The Prayer Group is always ready to pray, confidentially, for individuals as well as local, national and international issues of concern. The prayer request box has been moved to the vestibule window sill, with a supply of small cards and a pen. There will also be an anonymous and secure prayer request link on the church Facebook page and website.

Photo Gallery Church Open Day September 2024





Friendship Lunches

Thank you to all who support the Stirling Kirks Together Friendship lunches



either by helping to organise and run them or attending them.

Your support enabled £600 to be donated to two local organisations. Stirling Street Pastors and Food Train each received £300 to help with their work.

The Friendship Lunches are hosted on the second Wednesday of the month in Park Church Hall, Stirling from 12 noon to 1:30pm.

Water Aid



The sum of £1123.50 has been forwarded to WaterAid following the response of the congregation to our Harvest Appeal.

This is a wonderful sum of money which does not include money donated directly through the WaterAid website.

Thank you for your generosity and for supporting such a worthy cause.

Blythswood Care Shoebox Appeal

Thank you to everyone who donated items to the Blythswood Care Shoebox Appeal. This year 62 boxes are making their way to Eastern Europe from St.Ninians Old Parish Church. That is a wonderful number of boxes. Thank you also to those who contributed money, this goes towards the transport costs.



Christian Aid

ELAINE WALKER

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to our Christian Aid Coffee Morning. Be it by baking, helping on the day, or by coming along and giving so generously, we so appreciated your help.

It was a great time of fellowship, as all the Stirling churches worked together to support Christian Aid.



The wonderful amount of £1,188.50 was raised for this amazing charity.

What If...

Submitted by Margaret Lamont



Photo Gallery JONATHAN RICHARDS Knoydart



Prayer For January

Submitted by Pat MacMillan, Campbeltown.

PRAYER FOR JANUARY

Dear Lord of love, of light and life, Go with us through the year, Be close to us and those we love, Dispelling doubt and fear. Be near us in our troubled times, In sadness or distress, Please send a gentle, healing balm And quiet happiness

Be near to us as spring returns And lift our hearts anew. So as the earth awakes once more Our faith and joy renew. Be close to those who are in need And let their way be clear. Dear Lord of all our hopes and dreams Go with us through the year.

Red Rowans and Wild Honey

By BETSY WHYTE submitted by MARION JACKSON

This is an excerpt from Betsy White's interesting book about life on the road as a traveller in the Montrose/ Blairgowrie areas in the mid 1900s and is a sequel to Yellow on the Broom and Red Rowans and Wild Honey.

"All that anyone needs is the health to work to pay their way; a comfy bed; couthy friends; love; the gift of sight to fill our hearts, minds and souls with the unlimited, unending beauty of the world around us. To see the faces of loved ones and friends; people to laugh with, as lightsome as a summer day, and to cry with when sair sorrow comes. The gift of hearing the music of nature alone, never mind the abundance of music made by gifted men. The rapture of hearing a class of children singing "Silent Night" near Christmas time."

Photo Gallery MARION JACKSON

The Tinkers Loan





The Gospels

St. John's Gospel

This article for the winter edition of the Parishioner is based on The Gospel of St. John.

I have already covered The Gospels of Luke, Mark and Matthew, however, I may quote from the other three Gospels.

John's Gospel is sometimes labelled as the 'Spiritual Gospel'. John supplements the other accounts: he concentrates on the meaning of what took place! His Gospel is much less episodic.. He selects from Jesus 'many miracles certain 'signs' which show most clearly who he was.

He records mainly what Jesus said- especially about himself- in a style very different from Matthew, the other Gospel which concentrates on Jesus' sayings. He includes no parable-stories.

Whereas the other three focus mainly on Galilee, most of the events recorded in John take place in around Jerusalem at the various festivals. It is possible that Jesus adopted a different teaching style for the nation 's capital city and theological centre.

The great keynote of John's Gospel is love:' God so loved world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him...may have eternal life. John portrays Jesus as an unquenchable light, shining in the darkness: one who offers the gift of life.

John's story of Jesus is a Gospel of light and love. I am including an article from a 2007 calendar, Friday June 1st , it is from John's Gospel Chapter 14 Verse 27 and is quite beautiful . It further emphasises Jesus love for mankind.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

THE WRITER and HIS READERS

The author refers to himself simply as "the disciple whom Jesus loved". He is one of the Twelve and one of those closest to Jesus and to Peter. Everything points to him being The Brother of The Disciple James

Start Up Santa

Christmas Appeal 2024 - 7th November - 24th December

Start Up Santa is sleighing it this Christmas! From the North Pole to your front door, he's spreading the magic like a boss! Help him in his mission to make sure no one in need goes without this year. Times are tough, but your kindness can help Start Up Stirling to make a big difference.

"I am crying as I text this message, after speaking to you at the food bank and worrying about the extra costs coming up to Christmas. The hamper and dinners that you gave me were perfect and getting to pick some nice toys for the kids was great as I was looking in charity shops for second hand toys to give them."

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
Bag for	Packet	Tinned	Variety	UHT	Tinned
Life	Oatcakes	Meat	Cereal	Milk	Soup
Day 7 Tomato Soup	Day 8 Tin Pasta with meat	Day 9 Packet of Biscuits	Day 10 Tin of Fruit	Day 11 Mug Shot/ Cup A Soup	Day 12 Tinned Veg
Day 13	Day 14	Day 15	Day 16	Day 17	Day 18
Tin of	Cooking	Tinned	Meat	Tinned	Cereal
Beans	Sauce	Dessert	Paste	Fish	Bars
Day 19	Day 20	Day 21	Day 22	Day 23	Day 24
Tomato	Tinned	Flavoured	Jam or	Tinned	Toilet
Puree	Tomatoes	Noodles	Spread	Spaghetti	Roll

How you can help Start Up Santa to 'sleigh' Christmas this year:

Reverse Advent Calendar

Our perennial favourite! Each of the items on the 24 days on our Reverse Advent Calendar helps us to collect the essential food for our Crisis Food Support parcels throughout the cold Winter months, when we receive the contents of the calendar in the New Year.

Start Up Santa's Shopping List



One way to guarantee that you will be on Start Up Santa's Nice List is to leave a donation from Santa's shopping list at any of our supermarket donation station across the area, or we would be happy to see you at our Warehouse, should you have any bulk donations. Please give us a call on 01786 561027 in advance, so that we can welcome you when you arrive.

Photo Gallery CHRIS MACKAY

Whale watching



RECIPES



Gluten Free Mince Pies LORRAINE REID

This is a BBC Good Food recipe. The grated orange zest in the pastry adds a festive zing!

INGREDIENTS

125g unsalted butter chilled and diced200g gluten free flour1 tbsp icing sugargrated zest 1 orange200g gluten free mincemeat



For the crumble topping 25g ground almond 25g flaked almond pinch ground cinnamon 25g unsalted butter melted 25g soft light brown sugar

METHOD

STEP 1 To make the pastry, rub the butter into the flour until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add the icing sugar and orange zest. Spoon in 4 tbsp water, mixing with a knife until the dough starts to come together. Knead lightly, flatten into a disc, wrap in cling film and chill for at least 30 mins.

STEP 2 Heat oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. On a lightly floured work surface, roll the pastry out to a 2-3mm thickness. Using a 9-10cm fluted cutter, stamp out discs from the pastry. Re-roll any trimmings and stamp out more discs until the pastry is used up. Line two 8-hole muffin tins with the pastry discs, then fill each pastry shell with 1 heaped tsp mincemeat and spread out to smooth. Can be frozen, uncooked, in trays for up to 1 month.

STEP 3 Combine the crumble ingredients in a small bowl, then sprinkle a little over the top of each mince pie. Bake on the middle shelf of the oven for about 20 mins until the pastry is cooked and golden brown. Cool in the tins for 5 mins, then serve with brandy butter or crème fraîche.

The Parish Register

Deaths "I am the resurrection and the life"

22nd August 2024 Mrs Kate Renton



2nd September 2024 Mr David J Walker



19th October 2024 Mrs Rena Gardner



21st October 2024 The Rev Jim Landels



28th October 2024 Mrs Ann Mullane



30th October 2024 Mr David Stirling



31st October 2024 Mrs Elizabet Wyllie



Symbolism

CHRIS MACKAY

Is there a hidden Symbolism behind the Christmas song Twelve days of Christmas?

Do the gifts given on each day have an underlying message?

Day 1 A Partridge in a Pear Tree

The Partridge in a Pear tree represents Jesus, the Son of God, whose birthday we celebrate on the first day of Christmas. Is he being symbolically presented as a mother partridge, the only bird that will die to protect its young?

Day 2 Two Turtledoves

Do these twin birds represent the Old and New Testaments? The doves are the biblical roadmap available to everyone.

Day 3 Three French Hens

Are these birds representing Faith, Hope & Love or the Holy Trinity?

Day 4 Four Calling Birds

These four birds would appear to relate to the four Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke & John.

Day 5 Five Gold Rings

Do the Rings represent the first five books of the Old Testament, known as the Torah or the five books of Moses?

Day 6 Six Geese a-Laying

Is each egg a day in creation when God "hatched" or formed the world?

Day 7 Seven Swans a-Swimming

As swans are one of the most beautiful and graceful birds on earth, a perfect symbol for a spiritual gift. Do they represent the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit?

Day 8 Eight Maids-a-Milking

As Jesus came to save everyone from the lowest of the low to those with royal blood, the Maids where regarded as the lowest servants. Do they represent the Eight Beatitudes?

Day 9 Nine Ladies Dancing

Are these nine dancers representing the gifts known as the Fruits of the Spirit?

Day 10 Ten Lords a-leaping

As Lords were judges and in charge of the law, so does this represent the Ten Commandments?

Day 11 Eleven Pipers Playing

Are these the Eleven faithful disciples conveying the Gospel message?

Day 12 Twelve Drummers Drumming

Is the final gift directly related to the Catholic Church? The drummers being the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles Creed?

It would be nice to accept the Symbolisms as they encompass so much of the core beliefs of the Christian faith.

ST.NINIANS OLD PARISH CHURCH
PARISHIONER

SPRING 2025



The Spring Edition of the Parishioner will be out early March.

Submission Date for Articles is: Sunday 9th February Thank Y^{ou}

> St Ninians Old Parish Church Kirk Wynd Stirling FK7 9AY website: stniniansold.org.uk parishioner@stniniansold.org.uk Scottish Charity Number SCO16320