

THE MAGAZINE  
OF  
NEW LAIGH KIRK  
Church of Scotland  
KILMARNOCK

Scottish Charity No.:SC031334

December 2025



"A caring welcoming church at the heart of Kilmarnock reaching out to all"

*Minister: Rev. David S Cameron, 1 Holmes Farm Road, Kilmarnock (525416)*

*Session Clerk: Mr Derek I'Anson*

*Depute Clerk: Mrs Margaret Patterson*

*Community and Families: Amy Tanner*

## **CHURCH CALENDAR**

### **SUNDAY**

11.00 a.m.

11.00 a.m.

#### **MORNING WORSHIP**

Ignite Children's Church (Age 4 --Primary 7)

Trekkers (11-17 years)

*Contact: Amy Tanner (07980 665432)*

### **MONDAY**

7.15 p.m.

Guild (every second Monday)

*Contact: Lesley Wright (523039) or Elspeth Dale (01292 541240)*

7.30 p.m.

Highlights (Mondays as per syllabus)

*Contact: Eileen Murphy (543488)*

### **TUESDAY**

10.00 - 11.00 a.m. Little Seeds (Babies - 4 year olds)

*Contact: Amy Tanner (07980 665432)*

7.00 p.m.

Session Meeting (Dates as arranged)

*Contact: Mr Derek I'Anson (07989 473142)*

### **WEDNESDAY**

6.00 to 7.15 p.m. Rainbows

*Contact: Sheena Baillie (07749 617204)*

6.00 to 7.30 p.m. Brownies:

*Contact: Fiona Malcolm (07903 212703)*

7.45 to 9.15 p.m. Guides

*Contact: Mary Dunlop (07519 124548)*

### **THURSDAY**

7.00 p.m.

Vestry

*Contact: Rev. David S Cameron (525416) /*

*Mr Derek I'Anson (07989 473142)*

### **FRIDAY**

6.00 to 7.00 p.m. Boys' Brigade Anchor Boys (5 to 8 years)

St. Marnock's Halls

*Contact: Mr Stewart Chapman (07745162694)*

7.15 to 9.00 p.m. Boys' Brigade Junior Section (8+ to 11 years)

St. Marnock's Halls

*Contact: Elaine Park (533464)*

7.00 to 9.30 p.m. Boys' Brigade Company Section (11+ to 18 years)

New Laigh Kirk Hall *Contact: Mr David McDonald (544037)*

Safeguarding Coordinator: Ian Anderson

Safeguarding Panel Members: John Dale, Bill Sherry and Ellen Stewart



New Laigh Kirk Manse  
December 2025

Hello folks,

Every year, we're treated to a new wave of Christmas adverts—mini films that tug at our hearts, make us laugh, or tempt us to spend. What really makes something a 'Christmas advert'? Does it need to mention Christmas at all, or is it enough to show twinkling lights, snowflakes, and someone discovering the true meaning of the season? By that measure, almost anything can qualify.

No-one does Christmas like M & S - of course there are other supermarket chains challenging for that recognition as brands compete to capture the elusive Christmas Spirit. There's always a lonely old man, a lost toy, or a moment of redemption set to a slowed-down pop song. The storylines may differ, but the message is the same: love, kindness, generosity—and of course, buy something. These adverts are popular. They're warm, inoffensive, and reassuring. They remind us to value family, to forgive, and to believe in something bigger than ourselves. Yet as moving as these messages can be, they're often stripped of the very person whose birth defines Christmas. The Christmas Spirit of modern advertising can make us cry—but it won't change our lives. What the world needs isn't another sentimental slogan. It needs Christ.

The real Christmas story isn't glossy or convenient. It's about God choosing humility over grandeur, entering the world not as a powerful ruler, but as a vulnerable child. It's about love that takes on our fragility and brokenness, so that we might be made whole.



Jesus didn't come to sell a feeling. He came to show us a way of living: love your enemies, forgive those who hurt you, care for your neighbour, and give of yourself freely. That's not a marketing message—it's a calling.

There's a story about a wee boy who made a ceramic gift for his mum. Running to show it to her, he tripped, and it shattered. His father tried to comfort him—"Don't cry, it doesn't matter." But his mother knelt down, gathered the pieces, and said softly, "Oh, it does matter." And she wept with her son. That's the heart of Christmas: not pretending things aren't broken, but finding love in the midst of our breaking.

We stumble, fail, and fall short—but the wonder of Emmanuel, 'God with us,' is that we fall into forgiving arms. Christmas invites us to stop pretending perfection and to live in hope: the hope of grace, of second chances, of restoration.

Now is the time to move in a new and better direction. However far we've wandered, there is always hope with God. Our confidence doesn't come from our fleeting faith or our festive feelings, but from God's steadfast love for us.

So this year, when the adverts roll and the jingle bells play, don't settle for sentimentality. Let's make Christmas real—not with spending, but with living. Let our lives say, "I will live love. I will share love. I will do what is right."

When people notice something different in us and ask what we have that they don't, the answer isn't a product or a feeling. The answer is Christ—our hope, our peace, our joy, and our love.

**Wishing you the peace and joy of this Christmas Season,**

*David*





## Notes from the Session Clerk

### Save the Date SUNDAY 11<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2026

On Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2001 our Minister, Rev. David Cameron, BD had his Ordination and Induction to the Laigh West High Kirk, as the Kirk was called at that time, a huge moment for David and Laura.

Next year, on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> January, we celebrate 25 years with David as our Minister!

We plan to make this day a special occasion for David and Laura and following the morning church service, we are organising a buffet lunch (and perhaps a little entertainment) in the John Finnie Street halls, to which all congregational members are invited.

This is of course free but requires to be a **ticketed event** in order to establish numbers for catering purposes. Tickets can be obtained from Margaret Patterson, Elspeth Dale or myself and are available **from 30<sup>th</sup> November**.

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On Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October a number of Long Service Certificates were presented to Elders who were ordained over 30 years ago: Alan Gregor, Brian Laurens, Charles Sim, Margaret Taylor, and Lesley Wright.

A special certificate was presented to Donald MacLean who has served 61 years as an Elder – and still going strong!

Derek I'Anson

### Thought for the Day

Having a loved one close by is the best medicine.



## Random Acts of Kindness for the environment

During November, my workplace was recognising World Kindness Day, which was held on 14<sup>th</sup> November. We had different types of activities, that recognised kindness in the team or setting where we worked, from saying thank you to our colleagues or playing “kindness bingo”. One of the other activities was to encourage individuals to complete a random act of kindness. Acts of kindness is something we do exceptionally well in NLK, and I am seeing the same acts of kindness and sharing across our eco work.

Over the past few weeks, I have had the pleasure of random acts of thoughtful kindness, with members sharing ideas in relation to the work of the eco group. I have been given a brilliant book (see right) to read on environmentally friendly cleaning materials, and inside were pages from a magazine with green climate friendly hints and tips.



Some of these have made their way into our eco congregational flyer that is included as a 4 page



section for you to pull out and keep in the middle of this magazine. The idea of the flyer came from a member who wasn't on social media and didn't know how they, as an individual, could contribute to the eco plan within NLK. I hope that everyone reading it, will find some of the ideas useful and feel able to participate and support our eco work as a result.

I have been stopped in the church on a Sunday to give me batteries, or for someone to tell me what they are doing in their garden. People are also starting to ask about widening our recycling in the church and sharing ideas of what we can take in – there will be more of this in the next magazine once I finalise the recycling calendar!

I love these random acts of eco-kindness; it's brilliant to hear of the ideas that are coming forward and for everyone's enthusiasm and participation.



Our journey towards our gold award has begun in earnest and there are lots of activities planned for the coming months. We have introduced domestic battery recycling, so please bring any undamaged but dead batteries to the sanctuary and place in the non-flammable box beside the tea tables. Please do not add damaged or

leaking batteries – these must be disposed of differently and cannot be recycled or placed in domestic waste.

We have had another successful community litter pick, when, despite the drizzly weather, members of





the congregation and our BB Company still ventured out and helped to tidy up our town centre. One of the volunteers even managed a spot of outreach work with a family asking what she was doing and why; turns out this was one of our Little Seed families, so we hope to see them around NLK in future.



A funding bid has been submitted to support increasing bio-diversity; both in and around the church and town centre. Hopefully we will be awarded some additional money for the church yard and local community gardens.

The Fellowship of Churches Harvest service was themed around land and sea to celebrate creation.

The flyer shares some ideas for you to do at home and in and around the church buildings, to help reduce the impact of climate change. I hope that you find it helpful, with ideas which can be carried out all year round.

For some more festive specific tips, have a look for plastic free crackers, for example. This reduces what goes to landfill, with all spent crackers being added to paper recycling. Gift wrap and tags can be purchased using recycled paper for presents.

Another big consideration is reducing food waste. Buy what you need and use your leftovers (a fave in my family is Boxing Day pie using up all the leftovers!). Cut down on plastics if you can.

We are also hoping to have some Fair-Trade Christmas decorations available this year – please keep an eye on our social media for details. In a world where we can be anything, be kind. Kind to ourselves, our neighbours, work colleagues, friends, but also to our world. God made it very special; let's do our bit to keep it that way.

Elaine Paton



## **THANK YOU**

I would like to thank all the volunteers who help with the tea and coffee on a Sunday morning.

Without your help we wouldn't have this time of friendship and fellowship.

I very much appreciate your help and I know members of the congregation are thankful too.

If anyone else would like to help out on a rota basis please speak to me at church.

Very many thanks.

Anne Kidd

## HIGHLIGHTS

We had a great turn out at our opening evening, welcoming back existing and previous members, and welcoming some ladies for the first time. It was wonderful to have you all with us.

We started the session off with a 'Ready Steady Cook' evening, with Chris Walker, Food Services Manager at East Ayrshire Council.

Our wonderful volunteers, Lilian, Kirstie, Margaret and Anne made up the 2 teams – the green peppers and the red tomatoes. Both teams were presented with the same ingredients, which one team turned into a Cajun chicken dish, with their opponents opting to make a chicken stir fry.



After some great entertainment during the cooking, the time then came to judge the dishes our cooks had prepared, and each team invited ladies from the audience to sample their dish. Voting was very close, but the red tomatoes won by the narrowest of margins. A huge well done to both teams and grateful thanks to our volunteers, who ended up doing more than they had bargained for! Ladies – you were wonderful!



As the ladies were cooking, Chris not only helped them out, but shared cooking tips with us all. He also demonstrated how to make a chicken fricassée, using only leftovers. We all had a taste afterwards, and it really was delicious – simple but effective, and a great way of saving money and reducing food waste, tying in nicely with our Eco-congregation efforts.

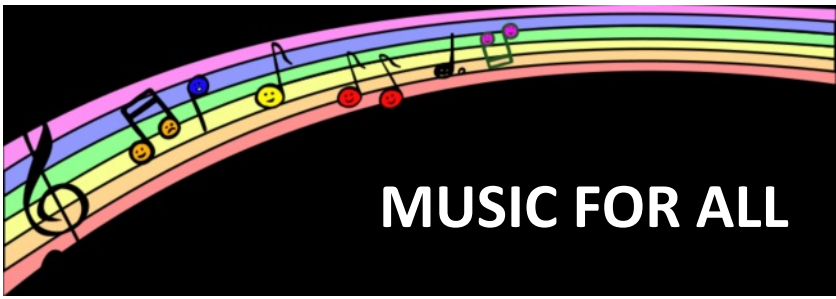
On 1<sup>st</sup> December, 30 of our ladies are going to enjoy a Christmas dinner in a private room at CentreStage, followed by a showing of the film 'Love Actually'. We are all very much looking forward to our night out, which should start the festive season off well.

Our January evening will be a 50p auction in aid of Ayrshire Cancer Support, so please do come along and join us.

If you are a member of the Highlights, and are not in our WhatsApp group, please contact me with your mobile number and I will be delighted to add you. If you do not use WhatsApp, please let me have your email address so that we can keep in touch.

New members are always welcome, and for more information on the Highlights, please contact me on 543488 or 07887 541651, or any of the committee.

Eileen Murphy, Chairperson



In recent months we have been fortunate to host a variety of excellent concerts at NLK.

These have included a Robert Burns World Federation Event - a performance of The Jolly Beggars, by members of Dalry Burns Club.

The large and talented cast included our very own Alex Findlay (pictured left).





We also hosted “KAOS in the Kirk” with the singers from Kilburn Amateur Operatic Society providing a splendid night’s entertainment.





## Amy - Community and Families

Hello everyone!

It's so exciting that we're now on the run down to Christmas! What a fast year it's been so far and we at New Laigh Kirk have managed to fit in so many events in the last few months!

Our Ignite and Trekkers Afternoon Tea was an incredible success! On Saturday, November 1st, our Ignite and Trekkers youth groups hosted an afternoon tea in our church halls, to help raise funds for the groups, as well as Christian Aid. After a donation to Christian Aid, we managed to raise over £500! I want to personally thank Fiona Dawson and Sally Lang, who organised all the food for the afternoon tea, Andrew Bryson and Oliver Barclay for performing and entertaining guests throughout the afternoon, and to all our amazing volunteers who gave up their time to help run the event, for without this magnificent team, events like our afternoon tea would not be such a success - thank you!



**Afternoon Tea**



It's been an exciting few months as our 'Church Unplugged' services have come to life, bringing our community together in a more relaxed and vibrant new expression of faith and fellowship. Our first 'Church Unplugged' service in September brought together local churches for a new style of worship where we also celebrated talents from different praise bands. The 'Church Unplugged' services will run once a month from 6:30pm-7:30pm and welcomes anyone and everyone- the whole family, so bring your mums, dads, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends and invite everyone you can to have hearts inspired and faith ignited! Come and be apart of our family of worship.

The next 'Church Unplugged' services will be: November 23rd, December 14th, February 1st, 6:30pm-7:30pm in our church. All are welcome!

A red poster for 'Church Unplugged'. The title 'CHURCH UNPLUGGED' is in large, green, outlined capital letters. Below it, 'A Family Of Worship' is written in a white cursive script. The text 'Come along and join us for an evening of worship, faith, fun and friendship! Our Church Unplugged sessions are family focused and all are welcome to join in and participate!' is in white. Below this, the event details are listed in white: 'WHEN: SUNDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER', 'WHERE: NEW LAIGH KIRK CHURCH', and 'TIME: 6:30PM-7:30PM'. In the bottom right corner, there is a white graphic of a two-prong electrical plug with a cord, emitting small white lines to represent sparks or energy.

**CHURCH  
UNPLUGGED**

*A Family Of Worship*

Come along and join us for an evening of  
worship, faith, fun and friendship!  
Our Church Unplugged sessions are family  
focused and all are welcome to join in and  
participate!

**WHEN:  
SUNDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**

**WHERE:  
NEW LAIGH KIRK CHURCH**

**TIME:  
6:30PM-7:30PM**



# Little SEEDS



NLK Toddler Group  
Tuesdays  
10am-11am  
New Laigh Kirk halls  
35 John Finnie Street

Planting seeds for the future







The graphic features a background image of hands holding open Bibles. The word "BIBLE" is written in large, bold, black capital letters with a red and blue glitch effect. Below it, the word "Tea" is written in a purple cursive font. The text "Explore life-changing truths and meaningful connections in our Bible Study sessions!" is centered below the title. There are three event details in rounded rectangular boxes: "DATE 16<sup>th</sup> November", "TIME 6:30pm-8pm", and "LOCATION NLK Halls 35 John Finnie Street". A separate box says "AGES 11-18 WELCOME". At the bottom, contact information is provided: a phone number "07980665432" and an email address "amy\_bh@hotmail.co.uk". The graphic is decorated with blue and red dotted patterns on the sides.

**BIBLE**  
*Tea*

Explore life-changing truths and meaningful connections in our Bible Study sessions!

**DATE** 16<sup>th</sup> November

**TIME** 6:30pm-8pm

**LOCATION** NLK Halls  
35 John Finnie Street

**AGES 11-18 WELCOME**

📞 07980665432    ✉️ amy\_bh@hotmail.co.uk

Bible Tea is also still thriving as once a month we invite teenagers, aged 11-18, to come along to our church hall's youth room and explore the Bible in new and engaging ways. At Bible Tea, our goal has always been simple: to create a space where young people can encounter God in a real way, ask honest questions, dive deeper into their understanding of faith and build lasting friendships.

As we look to the future, our prayer is to keep growing — not just in numbers, but in faith, unity, and love. We're excited for what God has in store for our Bible Tea group, and we welcome any young person who's searching for belonging, purpose, and joy. For more information about Bible Tea, please contact me at: [amy\\_bh@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:amy_bh@hotmail.co.uk)

Little Seeds continues to thrive and we delight in the giggles that fill the room and love the little hands that clap along to the rhythms. From first words to first steps, every class at Little Seeds is a celebration of discovery. Beyond the music and play, our sessions have created

friendships that last well beyond the baby years. Watching our little learners grow each week is the most rewarding part of what we do and we're excited to welcome even more families into our Little Seeds group. Little Seeds runs every Tuesday, from 10am-11am and welcomes all families with little ones aged 0-4.

Last, but not least, I'm excited to share with you that our new venture for families with younger children, Sunday Fundays, are in full swing! Our first Sunday Funday in August brought in over 25 families to enjoy a summer themed afternoon that included a small buffet, interactive and engaging activities and, of course, a bouncy castle for the kids. Our second Sunday Funday, held in October, focused on an autumnal theme and offered various seasonal friendly activities, including a Bible focused scavenger hunt. Our next Sunday Funday will be held on January 18th, 12 noon -2pm in our church halls on John Finnie Street. Families of all ages are welcome to come along and join in the fun, as we build a community of faith together!

I hope everyone has a very happy and healthy Christmas and New Year!

Thank you,

Amy.





**FREE!**

**NEW LAIGH KIRK  
PRESENTS...**

# **SUNDAY FUNDAY**

## **SUNDAY**

**18th January  
12pm-2pm**

**• GAMES • CRAFTS • SMALL  
BUFFET • KARAOKE DANCE  
PARTY • AND MORE •**

**NLK Halls  
35 John Finnie Street**

## Open Doors during Advent



New Laigh Kirk is open on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 12noon to 2.00pm, but will be opening on Tuesdays and Thursdays also during Advent. The church will be open for those who want to come for a period of solitude or reflection, to see the stained glass windows from the inside or to find out some of the history of the church and town.

As some of our more elderly volunteers have decided to retire, we urgently require some more volunteers during the winter, especially on Wednesdays, to welcome the visitors, so if you could spare a couple of hours every month to six weeks, we would be delighted to hear from you. There will be the opportunity to volunteer on different days as volunteers are contacted in advance with suggested dates and shifts are arranged to suit people's commitments. This is an ideal opportunity to meet different people as you do not necessarily have to be on duty with the same people every month. We would be grateful if you could spare the time to help at a couple of sessions occasionally if you are unable to help on a monthly rota. Craig will open and close the church for you.

If you would like to be included in the rota, please speak to Helen Colman, E: [helenmcolman@gmail.com](mailto:helenmcolman@gmail.com). Remember that the more volunteers that there are, the less often you will be on duty!

Helen Colman

# Eco Congregation Action Flyer

Living Sustainably at Home and in Church. Inspired by  
Climate Justice and Faith-Based Stewardship

## At Home – Everyday Actions for a Greener Life



### Energy & Waste

Switch to LED lighting and unplug devices when not in use.  
Reduce heating use by layering clothing and using draft excluders.  
Recycle properly and compost food waste.  
Avoid single-use plastics—opt for reusable containers and bags.  
Wash laundry in full loads and dry outdoors to reduce use of tumble driers.



### Shopping & Consumption

Buy local and seasonal produce to reduce carbon footprint.  
Reduce food waste by buying what you need.  
Use leftovers or donate to foodbanks.  
Choose Fairtrade and ethically sourced goods.  
Repair, reuse, and repurpose before replacing items.



### Travel & Mobility

Walk, cycle, or use public transport whenever possible.  
Car share for church events or community activities.  
Attend virtual meetings if available.  
Fly less—consider local holidays.





### Nature & Biodiversity

Plant pollinator-friendly flowers in gardens or window boxes.

Use peat free compost (Western Road site provides compost free of charge!).

Support local conservation efforts and wildlife charities.

Reduce lawn mowing frequency to encourage biodiversity.

### Recycle

Increase recycling with domestic arrangements for plastic/cans/glass/paper/food.

Recycle electronics, cables, phones, chargers via approved outlets e.g. Western Road facilities.

Watch out for our NLK recycling calendar for 2026.

### Eco-friendly Home Cleaning Tips

Reduce use of plastics in general e.g. bars of soap rather than bottles of liquid soap.

Use eco-friendly cleaning products or make your own e.g. sodium carbonate and vinegar to deep clean washing machine; eco-friendly washing up liquid and vinegar for windows.





## Around the Church – Faith in Action



### Worship & Teaching

Include climate prayers and reflections in services.  
Host Creation-themed sermons and Bible studies.  
Celebrate Season of Creation and Climate Sunday.



### Church Buildings

Conduct an energy audit and switch to renewable suppliers.  
Improve energy efficiency in lighting and heating (as part of sanctuary renovation).  
Use eco-friendly cleaning products and reduce water waste.  
Maximize building use to improve energy efficiencies.  
Use of virtual meetings where appropriate to reduce travel and heating.



### Recycle

Use recycling facilities in sanctuary and halls.  
Watch out for new calendar of recycling activities across 2026!  
Old cables, unwanted chargers  
Medicine foil blisters  
Unwanted spectacles



### Church Grounds

Create a wildlife garden or bee-friendly space.  
Install bird boxes or bug hotels.  
Host community clean-up days or tree planting events. .





### 👉 Community Engagement

Partner with local schools or groups for green projects.  
Share resources on sustainable living and climate justice.  
Join in Eco Congregation activities and initiatives.  
Support EACHa and other local Food Banks.

### 🏆 Eco Congregation Awards

Work towards Gold Eco Church Awards through Eco-Congregation Scotland.  
Use the Eco Survey to assess progress and set goals.  
Support local, national and international action on climate change:  
Local collaboration through Fellowship of Churches.  
Ayrshire Climate Hub partnership.  
Supporting Christian Aid activities across the world.  
Toilet twinning to improve sanitation in areas of need.







In the the first half of the session, the 4th/5th Kilmarnock Boys Brigade have been busy with lots of different events and activities:

The boys were involved in the NLK Community Litter pick around the Howard Park, and also manned a Poppy Scotland stall at Tesco, raising £418 for that worthwhile cause.



The Company and Senior sections both paraded at the Cenotaph for Remembrance Sunday, as well as providing the colour party at the New Laigh Kirk Remembrance Day service. The Junior Section attended the Remembrance Day service at St. Marnock's.

Thanks to everyone who came along and supported the BB's coffee morning at the Howard Centre in November, with a special thank-you to anyone who donated baking or items for the stalls.

The boys have also been out collecting round the doors for Boys Brigade Flag Week to help raise money for our own funds, so thanks to everyone who donated to that too.

We have entered all the National Competitions and have been travelling around the country competing in all the events: U14 5-a-side football, FIFA football, Masterteam quiz, table tennis and chess and at the time of writing we are still in all of them!

Together with the East Ayrshire Battalion we had a great day paint balling and getting muddy at the Scottish Assault Course just outside Galston. A group of the boys participated in an archery afternoon at the Mission Halls that was run by 3rd Galston BB.



All new boys are welcome - please see the details on the inside cover of the magazine.



## Church Flowers

As we come near the end of another year, we would like to say thank you to a lot of people, who have given of their time, talent and money to keep our church supplied with flowers. These flowers have then gone to express our concern for other people----- sometimes it is in times of gladness, sometimes sorrow and otherwise just to say we are still thinking about you.

This ministry of flowers cannot be done without those who buy and arrange the flowers, go and deliver them, or give a donation to help provide the flowers. We want to tell them that their contribution is immense, and those who receive the flowers are so grateful to be remembered.

We are all getting another year older!! There are some who have been giving of their time for many years and now are not able to carry out these duties. To them we say a big THANK YOU for everything they have done over these years.

So now we want to ask again for anyone who can give their time and talent to either arrange or deliver flowers. Even if you can only do it once a year, we will be happy to have your help.  
Please contact either:

Janice Grant [01563/542202] or  
Sheena Macpherson [01563/524660]

or even speak to us as we take out the flowers on a Sunday morning.

We wish everyone all the blessings of the Christmas season!!

Sheena MacPherson





## The Guild

On Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August the Guild Coffee Morning took place from 10am till noon. There was a good turnout and, as ever, all those who attended were very generous, helping us to raise £1050 which will contribute towards the Guild projects. Many people commented on the lovely atmosphere in the hall, which was good to hear. I think folks were glad to be getting back into the swing of things after the summer break.

The first actual meeting of our new session was on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> September and our minister David spoke on the topic of 'Living Stones', our theme for this year, before leading us in the service of Holy Communion. Although Communion is always a special occasion, I find our Guild service very moving and uplifting, especially the 'peace'. Members shook hands with those around them but David, Elspeth and I went round everyone. It was lovely! Before we had our cuppa, we took a photo of us all together behind the Guild tables (see below).



You might have seen it on the church Facebook page. I sent it off to the National Guild office as we had been asked to let them know what we were doing to celebrate Guild Week. It then appeared on the Guild

Facebook page and in the autumn newsletter online. They must have recognised David as they mentioned that he is chairman of the board of trustees! Anyway, they commented that it was a very fitting way to celebrate Guild Week – and it was!

On 29<sup>th</sup> September we had a speaker from Helping Hands, which is a local charity. For a small annual fee anyone who is elderly or vulnerable can register with them. You can then call upon them for help in the home with many tasks such as changing a light bulb, turning a mattress, putting up curtains, cleaning the insides of windows. We were given so many leaflets that I put some in church and I know that many people in the congregation had already made use of their services.



At our meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> October we were delighted to welcome a group of young people to tell us about their experience of attending 'Magnitude', a Scripture Union camp which took place at Lendrickmuir near Perth in the summer time. Matthew, Logan and Amelia Wallace from our own church were there with Amelia's friend Cara and her dad Ross from St

Kentigern's. Angela Wallace came along too, with Cara's mum, Anne. Logan started off by telling us about the day to day activities and the speakers. Matthew spoke about the worship, especially the music, and played piano for Amelia as lead singer with Cara on the beatbox and Ross on guitar as they shared some of their favourite songs. They answered the many questions from guild members – it was wonderful to see how natural and yet how confident they were. The mums did fill in details about travel, eating, camping and washing! The young folk

gave us great hope for the future as they spoke so enthusiastically about their experiences and the fact that they were part of a group of 2000 youngsters brought together by their interest in the Christian faith. They chatted to members as we had tea and showed us lots of photos. They even helped to tidy up!

On 27<sup>th</sup> October we had a speaker from the charity Sense Scotland, which originally helped deaf/blind people, although they now help those with even more complex needs. The main focus of the talk was Mecoco Candles, the products being made by people with complex disabilities in a workshop in Dalry. They all have helpers and do what they can to help and this gives them a sense of purpose and self respect. And a lot of enjoyment! The products are all well-produced and ethically sourced. There were lots of candles, wax melts and burners for sale and they did a roaring trade. The guild ladies had brought their purses!

On 29<sup>th</sup> October, two of our members went to the first meeting of the new Ayrshire Guilds Together, which was held in St Nicholas' Church in Prestwick. There was a good turnout and the speaker was Alison Burnett from Arran, who had visited Malawi with other national guild members. We saw pictures of Rev Gloria who visited us last year and heard about the fruit trees and fields provided by money from the Guild Big Sings. They were involved in celebrations of 150 years of the presbytery of Livingstonia, with much singing and dancing. Alison is our next speaker so all the ladies will get to hear about the trip first hand.

After that we look forward to Dalrymple Ukelele Band, which will be an open meeting with the offering going to the next Malawi project – the fitting out of a maternity unit in the area we support, so that women do not need to walk miles when in labour and have decent facilities close by.

Then on 8<sup>th</sup> December we are going to the Fenwick Hotel for Christmas Dinner. Looking forward to it! Happy Christmas from the Guild!

Lesley Wright.





I find it hard to imagine Donald Trump as an answer to prayer! However, as I write this, the hostages taken by Hamas who remain alive, and some of the bodies of those who died have been returned to Israel and hundreds of Palestinians who were imprisoned in Israel have been sent back to Gaza. We have prayed for peace – and this is by no means ‘peace’, but it is

a start, a hopeful sign and it would seem to have been brought about by the intervention of the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump. When we listen to the words that spout from his mouth, it seems incredible that he has achieved that position, not once but twice, and incredible that he should become a peacemaker, despite his great self-belief. It brings to mind the saying, “Fools rush in where angels fear to tread” and if his actions bring about positive steps towards peace, then surely we should thank God for it!

However, perhaps we should not be so surprised to see him as an instrument of God. We only have to think back to our well known bible stories and the characters portrayed there, to see that God does not use ‘saints’ to bring his plans to fruition. Moses, who led his people out of exile and gave us the Ten Commandments, had originally fled the country after murdering someone. Jacob, who took on the name Israel, and was one of the founding fathers of the Jewish people, cheated his brother Esau out of his birthright. Joseph’s brothers, who left him for dead and sold into slavery in Egypt, are the men who founded the twelve tribes of Israel. In the New Testament we only have to think of the Apostle Paul, whom we first see as a persecutor of early Christians, holding the jackets of those who stoned the first martyr, Stephen, to death.

It would seem that God sees the whole person - yes, with all their faults and failings but with all their strengths, talents and possibilities

too. It was when these characters encountered God in person that their lives were turned around. Certainly, hearing God's voice from a burning bush or having a vision of Jesus on the road to Damascus would make most of us take notice! However, we know that much less dramatic encounters with God can change the least of us and make us fit to play our small part in the divine plan.

We continue to meet in prayer online on the first Wednesday of the month at a time of our minister David's choosing, to fit in with his other commitments, usually 6.30pm. Inspire also meets at 11am on the second Wednesday of the month in the session room for a time of quiet prayer and reflection. All are welcome to take part in either or both of these. Just ask if you need more information.

Meanwhile, here are some suggestions for your own prayer times:

- Pray for the continuing situation in Israel and Gaza, that moves towards a lasting peace may strengthen and move forward.
- Pray for all the war zones that we forget when they drop out of our news headlines – Ukraine, Yemen, Sudan etc., etc.
- Pray for the people of Jamaica who were hit by the catastrophic hurricane.
- Pray for the regeneration of our town, both physically and spiritually.
- Pray for our youth worker, Amy, as she drives forward her new initiative with children, young people and families – Little Seeds, Church Unplugged and Bible Teas. And pray for all those who get involved.
- Pray that all the church activities in the lead up to Christmas will awaken afresh in us the wonder and excitement of the coming of Christ into our world

And as we pray for others, may God make us answers to someone's heartfelt prayer!

Happy Christmas!

Lesley Wright.

## **Just For Today**

I will exercise my soul in three ways:

- I will do a good turn and not get found out; if anybody knows of it, it will not count.
- I will do at least two things I don't want to do – just for exercise.
- I will not show anyone that my feelings are hurt; they may be hurt, but today I will not show it.



## **YOGA**

There is a Yoga class in the Church Halls on a Thursday Night from 7:30 p.m. until 9 p.m.

This class will run weekly from Thursday 31 July.

The class has space for new members to join, it's run on a drop in, pay as you go basis and costs £7 a class..

All are welcome.

For more details please contact Fiona on [fionadhayes@hotmail.com](mailto:fionadhayes@hotmail.com)

Fiona Hayes

**The Pastoral Care Group  
invites you to a**

**CHRISTMAS AFTERNOON TEA**

**Thursday 11 December, 2 - 4 p.m.  
at New Laigh Kirk Halls.**



**Enjoy a Drama Club performance  
and traditional carol singing.**

**To book a place, contact  
Sheena MacPherson at 01563-524660  
or Barbara Graham at 01563-522108.**



East Ayrshire Churches Homelessness Action  
Scottish Charity SC52257

*Is this not the kind of fasting I have chosen? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter? Isaiah 58: 6-7*

East Ayrshire Churches Homelessness Action held its Annual General Meeting in October. This is the one day in the year when all strands of the charity report on progress over the past year, and it's the opportunity to reflect on how far we have come over the years.



The new hub

Steph McCutcheon, our Network and Service manager, spoke of the move from the John Finnie Street hub, to the new hub across the road in John Dickie Street. John Finnie Street served us well, and was the foundation for the new building. John Dickie Street has been designed in part by those who will use the space, a place designed for belonging as well as for function.

He reported on remarkable figures of growth over the past three years. For example, between 2023 to 2025 the number of individuals supported by EACH Recovery rose from 297 to 598, and is projected to exceed 1000 by March 2026, more than trebling in two years.



Early in 2026, the Community Friends drop-in will move over to the new hub, bringing all our work together under one roof. Steph reminded us all that we are more than a charity, we are a community movement built on 20 years of faith, persistence and care.

Our Community Friends drop-in continues to grow in numbers. Regularly we run out of seats within twenty minutes of opening. On a recent Wednesday we had 76 in for lunch, with increasing numbers enjoying cooked breakfast on Mondays and Fridays. Some of the rise may be due to our chef Michael's innovative menu, but even more, Community Friends is about a warm welcome, a safe space and listening ears.



Michael in the kitchen



Staff member John  
enjoying Michael's stovies

One of our regulars said that the only difference between the drop-in and a restaurant is that in the restaurant there's a bill! We do it with love and a smile.

The facilities in the new hub will allow us to open the drop-in on five days a week, rather than three. There will also be a Wednesday evening Recovery Café.

We could always use new volunteers! There's a job for everyone. If you are interested please give Michael or Janice a ring.

Our Chair, Rev David Cameron, quoted Isaiah chapter 58:

*'Is this not the kind of fasting I have chosen – to loose the chains of injustice, to share your food with the hungry, to provide the poor wanderer with shelter?'*

The prophet Isaiah is saying that religion without compassion is hollow. True worship begins in the streets, the cafes, the hubs, the hostels, where love takes shape in action. 'Each Person Matters', not a project or a problem, but a neighbour or a friend.

Isaiah says that when we live this way, *'Our light will break forth like the dawn.'*

That's what's happening in our town. The light is breaking through in unmistakable ways.

Isaiah ends with a promise:

*'You will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.'*

What a name for a people, what a calling for a community.

Our Christmas lunch for those who attend Community Friends will be held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December, in the downstairs hall. Michael is pulling out all the stops to make this a special day for the men and women we support, probably the only Christmas dinner for many this year. We will also provide hot food on 26<sup>th</sup> December and 2<sup>nd</sup> January, for those who might find the Christmas season a very lonely time.

The Christmas gift service will take place in our church on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December. As ever, your gifts are very much appreciated. Please remember that we provide gifts for all ages, from birth to age 18, and gifts for the very young and for older teenagers will be especially welcome.

Thanks to you all for your support, your donations and your prayers. Further information on our website [www.eacha.org.uk](http://www.eacha.org.uk), or from our staff.

We wish you a happy Christmas, and a peaceful New Year.

Michael Smith 07484 432790  
Lyndsey Higgins 07944 355140

### **Men's Club**

Just a reminder that the Men's Club meets periodically for coffee and chat and we welcome new members at any time.

Don't wait to be asked, just let Ken Stewart or me know and we will add you to the mailing list.

Although I still retain a telephone landline, my answering machine is not working should you try to leave a message, therefore it is best to call me on my mobile:

07989 473142

Derek I'Anson



## **Michael's Easy Peasy Mini Mince Pies**

Michael Smith :

I first stumbled across the EACHa organisation when I attended the Each Recovery Matters hub for support and guidance. After being pointed in the right direction, I was able to start my own recovery journey. Things came full circle when I began volunteering at the Community Friends drop-in, which led to my current position as Project Coordinator. I'm grateful every day for this role, as it allows me to give back and provide support for others by dishing out some of the best scran in Ayrshire!

As the festive season approaches I thought this year I would step out my comfort zone and share one of the very first things I learned to make at catering college almost 30 years ago.

### **Michael's Easy Peasy Mini Mince Pies**

I absolutely love mince pies, but I'm really not a fan of the shop bought ones, they are too big and too sweet for my taste and just all the wrong texture. These Easy Peasy Mini Mince Pies are much smaller and made with a simple, savoury pastry, which I think perfectly compliments the sweetness of the mincemeat.

### **Mincemeat cheat**

You can of course make your own mincemeat, but for speed and simplicity I have used shop bought mincemeat in these mince pies. My favourite brand is Marks and Spencer's Classic Mincemeat. I just love it and use it every year, so much so that I'm not sure I can I can bring myself to make my own mincemeat – as it just wouldn't taste the same (unless of course Marks and Spencer's want to give me their recipe...??)

## **The perfect pastry for mince pies...**

As I mentioned above, I make these mince pies with a very simple, classic savoury pastry which only has three ingredients: flour, butter and water. I love the rich buttery, flaky, melt in the mouth texture that you get – so much better than the stodgy over-sweet pastry you get on shop bought ones. I think the mincemeat has enough sweetness not to need extra sugar in the pastry, but if you have a sweeter tooth than me, try adding 100g of sugar to the pastry mixture just after you have rubbed the butter and sugar together

### **....made the old fashioned way**

I always rub the butter into the flour by hand. It's really very easy and I actually enjoy doing it – it makes it feel proper somehow and of course my kids absolutely adore this part and do it with great glee and gusto (while I shout “keep the flour in the bowl!!”). Seriously, if my kids can rub together butter and flour, anyone can do it! But you can of course make the pastry in a food processor, if you prefer. Just pop the flour and the cubed butter in your processor and pulse until it resembles breadcrumbs, then add the water drop by drop and pulse until it starts to come together, then take the pastry out of the processor and roll it into a ball by hand. Either way, It is essential for this recipe that the pastry is that it's rolled out thinly – so thin you can almost see through it! Easy Peasy Mini Mince Pies



Nothing beats homemade mince pies! These star topped mini mince pies are super easy to make and utterly delicious. Ideal for making with kids (but grownups love them too!) They also freeze beautifully, meaning you can have homemade mince pies whenever you want.



## Recipe

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

Servings 24 mince pies

## Equipment

- 2 cupcake trays (each with 12 holes)
- Baking paper (or the butter wrapper will do)
- Mixing bowl
- Wooden spoon
- Rolling pin
- Circle shaped cutter, 8cm / 3inch diameter (mine is fluted, but you can use a normal one if you prefer)
- Star shaped cutter, 7cm / 2½inch from point to point
- Pastry brush
- Wire cooling rack (or improvise with your grill rack or a roasting rack)
- Sieve
- Cake tin for storing your mince pies when they've cooled down (if there are any left!)

## Ingredients (Metric)

- 350 g plain flour (US - all purpose flour) plus extra for dusting
- 175 g cold butter cut into 1cm / ½inch cubes (plus extra for greasing)
- A little cold water (roughly 6-8 tablespoons)
- 250 g mincemeat (I use Marks and Spencer Classic Mincemeat)
- A little milk
- 3 tablespoons icing sugar

## Instructions

1. Grease the holes of 2 cupcake trays (24 holes in total), using a little butter on some baking paper. Preheat your oven to 220C / 200C fan.
2. Place the flour in the bowl (you can sieve it if you like, but I never bother) and add the cubes of cold butter. Rub the butter and flour between your fingers (as if you are trying to rub the flour into the butter) until it resembles breadcrumbs. (See Note 1.)
3. Stir in a tablespoon of cold water and stir into the butter/flour mixture thoroughly. Add another tablespoon of cold water and stir in thoroughly. Repeat this process until the mixture just starts to come together. I usually find this happens after about 6-8 tablespoons but it does vary. Don't add too much water!
4. As soon as your pastry starts coming together, stop adding water and use your hands to squish the pastry together into a ball.
5. Sprinkle your work surface with a little flour and pop your ball of pastry on top. Roll your pastry out as thin as it will go. (It might be easier, depending on the size of your work surface, to split the pastry into 2 balls and do them 1 at a time.)

6. Using a circle shaped cutter, cut out 24 circles and place them into the greased holes of you cupcake trays.
7. Put 1 teaspoonful of mincemeat in the centre of each circle.
8. Squish together the pastry, roll it into a ball and roll out thinly again. This time cut out 24 stars, using your star shaped cutter, Place each star on top of the mincemeat, roughly in the centre (this is a bit hit and miss with children!) and press down slightly so the star sticks.
9. Using a pastry brush, brush over a little milk. (Not strictly necessary, but it makes the mince pies go a more golden colour.)
10. Put the mince pies in your preheated oven for 15-20 minutes, until the mincemeat is bubbling and the pastry is golden on top.
11. Take your mince pies out of the cupcake tin and place them on a wire rack to cool – I find it easiest to lever the mince pies out with a dessert spoon – take care not to burn yourself as they will be super-hot!
12. While the mince pies are still warm, put a couple of tablespoons of icing sugar into a sieve and dust the icing sugar over the mince pies. (You can use an icing sugar dredger if you prefer.)
13. The mince pies can be eaten warm or cold, on their own or with cream or custard.
14. When the mince pies are completely cool they can be stored in a cake tin, or other air tight container... that is if there are any left!

Michael Smith

Project Co-Ordinator EACHA

**Fellowship of**  
**Kilmarnock Churches**

# **Carols at the Cross**

**Saturday 20 December**  
**11 a.m. - 12 noon**



**Sing favourite carols with the**  
**Salvation Army in the town centre.**

**Warm up with hot drinks**  
**at New Laigh Kirk at noon!**

# Church Register

## Funerals

6 Oct 2025	Janie McCormack (M)	18 Moorfield Ave, Kilmarnock
20 Oct 2025	Alex Stewart	45a Gibson St, Kilmarnock

### Our Deepest Sympathy

By Kelly Roper

To send our deepest sympathy  
Just doesn't seem like enough.  
We know how your grief must burden you,  
How this time must be so rough.  
But try to believe in your heart of hearts,  
That your pain won't last forever,  
That sadness will lighten a little each day,  
and you'll eventually feel much better.  
When that day comes, your memories  
Will focus on the good, not the bad.  
Instead of feeling burdened by tears,  
You'll cherish the happy times you had.





## Advent and Christmas Services at New Laigh Kirk

11.00am Each Sunday Advent Worship

7 Dec 7.00pm Christmas Memorial Service

14 Dec 7.00pm Church Unplugged: Christmas

18 Dec 7.00pm Carols by Candlelight

20 Dec 11.00am Carols at the Cross King St.

21 Dec 11.00am Christmas Nativity Service

21 Dec 6.30pm Christingle Service

Christmas Eve 11.00pm Carol Singing

11.30pm Watchnight Service

Christmas Day 11.00am Family Service

<http://www.nlk.church/>

Now when Jesus was born in  
Bethlehem of Judaea in the days  
of Herod the king, there is he  
came to Jerusalem, King star in the east,  
that is born in his worship him.  
and are come to worship him.

Matthew 2:1-2