



Kilbarchan Parish Church

Your local church magazine

Dear Friends,

Last month, some of us gathered in gardens, open fields or at the coast, wearing our special eclipse glasses or carrying a colander, eager to witness the grandeur of the solar eclipse. We waited. We waited in quiet anticipation, hoping for a glimpse of the moon's gentle embrace of the sun. Yet, as the hour arrived, it was clear the grey clouds weren't for shifting. Instead, they veiled the sky and obscured the celestial wonder above us. Apparently, there won't be another total eclipse visible in the UK for 64 years.

It is easy to feel a sense of disappointment when a moment we longed to see is hidden from view. Yet, even in our disappointment, there is a quiet, profound lesson for our faith. Though the clouds blocked our sight, the eclipse still occurred. The sun and moon continued their grand, silent dance exactly as ordained, undisturbed by the grey clouds drifting through our atmosphere. Darkness fell over the earth, reminding us of the majesty at work just beyond our vision.

So often, our lives mirror this cloudy sky. We long for clarity, for brilliant signs of grace and clarity, and for visible proof of hope. Yet, grief, worry, and uncertainty frequently shroud our view. In those dim moments, the cloud cover does not mean the light has vanished, nor does it mean God's order has failed. It simply means our vision is temporary, while the heavens remain 'steadfast and sure while the billows roll'.

May we take heart knowing that what is unseen is no less real. Faith does not require a clear sky; it asks only that we trust the light is still there, faithful and enduring, waiting just beyond the clouds.

In peace,

Your friend, Stephen

Cuppa at the Kirk

Cuppa at the Kirk continues every Tuesday from 2pm-3.30 pm, through to 8th December.



Please give it a try. Everyone who comes, enjoys the chat and the catch-up with folks, and sometimes even a cake!

All are welcome - not just Church folks - and it's free!!

Our sincere thanks once again to all our volunteers, and to everyone who comes along.

Arlene & all the Team at Cuppa.

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Kilbarchan Parish Church



kilbarchankirk.org

Facebook - facebook.com/kilbarchankirk

YouTube - search for Kilbarchan Kirk

Church Roll



Deaths

Irene McMinn Date of death – 22nd May *

Catriona McGugan Date of death - 10th September *

Note. * indicates church member

Roll

The Roll of Kilbarchan Parish Church stands at 310 and 17 Adherents. Please remember to notify Fulton Dunn, the roll keeper, of any changes to address, phone number or email in order to maintain up to date information. Contact details  or email KPC.rollkeeper@gmail.com.

Baptisms

14TH September Myla Berenice McLaughlin
infant daughter of Jodie and Steven



Scottish Country Dance class

We resume on 8 September, meeting on Tuesday evenings, 7.30 to 9.30pm in the church hall and will run through to Christmas, finishing with a party night.

All of the current members are looking forward with great enthusiasm to meeting up again, getting back on the dance floor to enjoy a great fun night of activity and music.

Anyone interested, experienced or new dancer, will be made most welcome.



Kirk Session Report

We hope that since reading our last magazine you have managed to enjoy some of the lovely weather we have had this summer and are now looking forward to returning to, or joining some of our Church groups where you will be made very welcome.



It was good to share worship with our friends from Howwood at the four joint services and to welcome Rev Mhairi Breingan to lead our worship on two Sundays – this allowed Stephen to have some well-earned time off for a couple of weeks.

At the session meeting in June, we were pleased to hear that following the purchase of the defibrillator, twelve elders had attended a heartstart course in the Church Hall led by Morag Thow. More courses will be held in the Old Library Centre over the next few months with details being publicised in the Advertizer. Please contact them directly if you would like to take part in one of these courses which cover a range of emergency procedures as well as the use of a defibrillator.

We also heard about a youth conference which had been organised by Clyde Presbytery. Stephen attended this and heard of the projects which were in place in a few other congregations. It is expected that there will be a further event, and we hope it will provide some ideas which we could develop in Kilbarchan.

Amongst other business, we were pleased to learn that a small team are working to coordinate Art Off the Square in August, and we agreed to have another soup lunch in aid of Mary's Meals following the Harvest Service.

Kirk Session Report (continued)

During the last few months, there has been a significant amount of work carried out in the church and halls as well as some external repairs and painting. Session are extremely grateful to the property team for organising this and also to the volunteers for their work decorating and cleaning.

Sadly, once again, more of our members are suffering the sorrow of recent bereavement and we ask that you remember all the families known to you in your prayers.

Christine and Helen

Messy Church

Messy Church is back for a new session of fun and friendship on Saturday 19 September from 4 - 6 pm in the church halls.



Messy Church is a church in its own right and it provides something for families who may have no experience of church. Across the UK there are over 3000 Messy Church groups, and they all have a mix of children and adults who do attend church and others for whom coming to our halls is their only experience of church. Our format of registration, welcome and short introduction to the Bible theme followed by a variety of craft activities before watching a short film then sharing a simple meal together works well in our halls and is only made possible by the enthusiasm of the Messy team.

If you have been before we welcome you back and if you haven't why not come and see what it's all about. Just remember to bring an adult with you, they can join the fun too!

Margaret Gibb

Christian Aid Week 2026



Fundraising

In addition to the usual envelope and on-line donations which we received, our fundraising efforts were boosted by a collection after worship in Howwood Parish Church, a very successful Soup Lunch and a “70k in May” challenge (see below).

A total of just over £6,000 was raised which, with almost £1,200 in recoverable Gift Aid, means that Christian Aid will receive **£7,200** to support their work amongst some of the poorest communities in the world.

Given all the current pressures on family budgets, this is a wonderful, caring response to a humanitarian crisis.

Grateful thanks go to all who supported this year’s activities, whether as volunteers or by donating.

70K in May challenge

Our original plan had been to walk the Borders Abbeys Way (a circular route of 109km or 68 miles, linking 4 Border abbeys), using a base in Galashiels to tackle the various stages. For various reasons this proved too difficult to organise, so we decided instead simply to log all the miles we walked during May and make a contribution to Christian Aid based on the distance we travelled.

We surprised even ourselves by clocking up **133 miles/214 km** !

Much of this was local – to church, Greens, along the cycle track, but we both took part in a walk round the Whitelees wind farm with the Hillwalking Group and Alasdair managed to “Bag a Ben” by climbing Ben Lomond on a bright but extremely windy day.

In the end we did manage a short break in Galashiels and visited all four of the abbeys, journeying there by car but exploring the localities too.

70K in May challenge (continued)

Many of the congregation may have visited **Melrose** Abbey, the largest and grandest of the four, famous as reputedly being the resting place of the heart of Robert the Bruce. Others are perhaps less well-known.

Kelso Abbey stands close to the town centre at a busy road junction. Unfortunately it was closed to visitors due to concerns about the stability of the structure. Remedial work has since been completed and the abbey is again open to the public.

Jedburgh is large and imposing on a high spot above the town, which is very low-key but attractive.

Dryburgh was our favourite, set in wonderful grounds beside a wide bend in the river Tweed. This is the resting place of Sir Walter Scott and Earl Haig, and many areas of the former abbey are accessible to the public. See the photograph below.



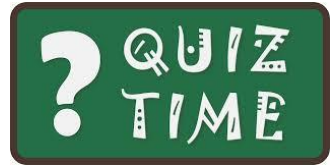
All four abbeys suffered much damage and destruction in the 14th century during the Scottish Wars of Independence. Being so close to the English border they were ready targets. Their demise was completed during the Reformation.

We can thoroughly recommend a visit to any or all of these locations, set in a beautiful part of Scotland, which is largely overlooked by tourists.

Alasdair and Morag Law

Children's puzzles

Bible mountaineering



In the Bible, many people met with God high up on a mountain and some people still do that today. Can you match the name of the six Bible mountains with the significant event that happened there? (*You can find the answers in the Bible verses*).

Mountain names		
Carmel	Nebo	Olives
Ararat	Moriah	Sinai

1. The mountain where the ark landed with Noah, his family, and all the animals (*Genesis 8 v 4*)
2. The mountain where Abraham took his son Isaac (*Genesis 22 v 2*)
3. The mountain where Moses received the ten commandments. (*Exodus 19 v 1 & 2*)
4. The mountain where Moses saw the promised land (*Deuteronomy 32 v 49*)
5. The mountain where Elijah called a great contest and saw God defeat the prophets of Baal. (*1 Kings 18 v 19*)
6. The mountain where Jesus went up into heaven, and the place where He will return to us again. (*Acts 1 v 6 – 12*)



Children's puzzles (continued)

How well do you know Psalm 23?

Put the correct words in the blank spaces. (We've used the Good News Bible translation. You can find a copy on the church pews)

1. The Lord is my -----, I have ----- I need.
2. He lets me rest in ----- of ----- and leads me to ----- of -----
-----.
3. He gives me new ----- . He guides me in the -----, as he has -----

4. Even though I go through the deepest ----- I will not be ----- Lord,
for You are ----- . Your shepherd's ----- and ----- protect me.
5. You prepare a ----- for me, where all my ----- can see me; you
welcome me as an ----- and fill my ----- to the -----.
6. I know that your ----- and ----- will be with me -----; and your
house will be my ----- as ----- as I -----.

[Answers on page 15]

Safeguarding

We continue to work to ensure that our Church is a safe place for children and vulnerable adults.

At present we have several volunteers and Trustees who require to redo their training. When suitable courses are available, I shall contact those requiring to update training and so, with this rotation, everyone who deals with our young people are kept aware of what is expected of them and what to do to make sure everyone is in a safe space.

Elizabeth Dunn (coordinator)

Midweek Fellowship

The Midweek Fellowship will start back on Wednesday 9th September. We meet in the small hall at 10.30 for tea, coffee and chat and then at about 11am there is a short informal act of worship.

All will be made most welcome so if you haven't been before come along and give it a try.



Fairtrade News

The Fairtrade team are hosting a Rainbow Turtle Stall on Sunday 20th September, in the church hall after the service.

Fairtrade is a global promise that helps farmers and workers in poorer countries get a fair price for the things they grow and make, like cocoa for chocolate, bananas, and cotton for clothes. It ensures workers are treated safely, bans child labour, and gives extra money to build local schools and wells.

The theme for Fairtrade Fortnight 2026 is **"Do it Fair"** with a core focus on **"for People, for Planet and for Fair Pay."**

The campaign runs from Monday, September 21 to Sunday, October 4, 2026.

Maira Stark



Mary's Meals update



Erin Pratley, Chief Programmes Officer, shares some of the highlights of their research, which demonstrates the impact their work had on children in 2025, thanks to generous supporters like you.

She tells us: **“Hunger levels decreased by almost half – from 88% to 48% when the meal was introduced. Teachers reported that only 12% of children were able to focus on lessons before the meal. This increased to 97% after the meal. We also surveyed pupils, and 94% said they could concentrate well in school after the meal.”**

The impact of our work

Your regular gifts help us serve **over 400,883,000 nutritious school meals in 2025** in more than 6,400 schools across 16 countries around the world.

Hunger levels at school

Across our programmes, **at least 76% of children** reported that they used to worry about hunger at school. **This dropped to 10%** once they started receiving meals.

School pass rate

The average pass rate across schools where children now receive our meals [in Malawi](#) **increased from 72%** before the school feeding programme **to 80% after its introduction**.

Playing with friends

Only 12% of learners [in Ethiopia](#) said they played with friends at school every day before the school feeding programme. After meals were introduced, **this increased to 58%** - showing school meals reduce social barriers and bring children together.

Below is an extract from the latest newsletter from the Foodbank, highlighting the experiences of one single mum.

“Emma (not her real name) never thought she would need a foodbank. She has never told anyone that she did. Until now.

She works full-time for the NHS and is raising three children on her own. She is someone who always coped, managed, found a way. After leaving an abusive relationship, Emma found herself starting again, with almost nothing. Then, when child maintenance payments stopped, the fragile balance she had been holding together collapsed. *‘I lost my house. I had lost everything and was starting from scratch – on my own with three children. I needed petrol just to get to work but I was having to choose between that and food for my kids. I just kept thinking – I cannot believe I am having to borrow money for food. ‘*

Emma came to Renfrewshire Foodbank. She did not know what to expect. She left with bags of food, fresh fruit and veg, sanitary products, toothpaste, toothbrushes and toilet paper. Things she had not thought to ask for. Our expert advisers were there too and helped her start fighting for the child maintenance money she was owed.

‘It felt humiliating, walking in. But it really, really helped me. Everyone was so lovely. It meant I had petrol in my car and I could get to work. It felt like I was living a bit of a normal life again. My children never knew – they just knew they were fed.

You never know what is going to happen in your life.

I lost my house, I lost everything. It could happen to anyone. It could happen to you’ “

A message from Graham McKay



On Sunday September 6th I will be participating in the Sir Chris Charity Cycling Event and cycling 37 miles / 62 kms in Aid of Pancreatic Cancer UK. I will be cycling in memory of my late Grandma "Lizzie" McKay and my great friend and well-kent face and much-loved member of Kilbarchan Parish Church, Myra Grant.

If you wish to support me, you can do so by following the link below;

https://www.justgiving.com/page/graham-mckay-tour-de-4-2026?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL

Thank you, Graham

Blythswood Care Christmas Shoe Box Appeal 2026



Following such a wonderful response last year, Rosie Thirde will be collecting filled shoe boxes again, with Kilmacolm Parish Church, for this very worthwhile cause. Many of the shoe boxes are distributed to Eastern Europe, with the bulk going to Ukraine.

Leaflets should be in church from mid-September and filled boxes will be collected on the last Sunday in October. Money donations are also accepted to offset the cost of transportation. More details will be given via the church intimations in due course.

Thank you in advance for your continued support.

Eco Congregation

Over the Summer, The Church Eco Group was asked by Kilbarchan Smile to compose an Eco Poem for display in the Noticeboard in the Heritage Garden during a week in July and here is the poem we submitted:

A Greener Tomorrow

*In homes where laughter gently flows,
And garden blooms in quiet rows,
We hold the power, small yet bright,
To guard the earth, our shared delight.*

*Turn off the lights when day is near,
Save water drops, so crystal clear.
Recycle, mend, and wisely choose,
For every seed we plant, we use.*

*Walk with care on paths we tread,
Let kindness grow where once was dread.
Embrace the breeze, the sun, the rain,
Protect the blue and green terrain.*

*Our hands together, firm and true,
Can shape a world both fresh and new.
In simple acts, the future's spun—
A greener earth for everyone*



Eco Congregation (continued)

We have a meeting of the Eco Group and all the Green Champions scheduled for the end of August when we plan to finalise our programme of activities for the next Session. The range and scope of what we are able to deliver is very dependent on support from the whole congregation and the wider village. Anyone one who would like to become more involved or who has ideas to help raise awareness of Climate Change and the ways we can reduce our Carbon Footprint, should speak to isobar Arnott, Moira Stark or Colin Campbell.

Watch this space for further information about our plans.

The Eco Group

Thank You

Since the birth of our beautiful granddaughter, Maggie, folk in the congregation have been absolutely lovely sharing in our joy and giving beautiful gifts for Maggie. Emma and Ali have been overwhelmed by the kind thoughts and gifts from so many people. Thank you so much to everyone who has been so generous. She's a wee smasher.

Linda and Alan Vaughan



Children's Quiz



Answers: Bible mountaineering

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Ararat | 2. Moriah |
| 3. Sinai | 4. Nebo |
| 5. Carmel | 6. Olives |

Answers. Psalm 23. (Good News Bible translation)

1. The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need.
2. He lets me rest in fields of green grass and leads me to quiet pools of fresh water.
3. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths, as he has promised.
4. Even though I go through the deepest darkness I will not be afraid Lord, for You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff protect me.
5. You prepare a banquet for me, where all my enemies can see me; you welcome me as an honoured guest and fill my cup to the brim.
6. I know that your goodness and love will be with me all my life; and your house will be my home as long as I live.

Hillwalking Group

This quarter the hillwalking club has enjoyed two Munro walks, a Graham, two lower altitude hillwalks and a weekend away in Braemar.

In June, three walkers set off to climb Buachaille Etive Mor. We bagged the southern Munro, Stob na Bròige, in mist and rain before the wind threatened to blow us off the ridge, so we decided against the second Munro and retreated to the safety of the Lairig Gartain. We dried out with coffee and cake at the Green Welly Stop in Tyndrum.

June's lower hills were Capelaw Hill & Harbour Hill in the Pentlands. Eight walkers started from the Castlelow Car Park to complete a circular route over the 454m and 421m summits. The weather was quite windy but dry, in some ways a perfect day for hill walking.

Later the same month, four of us spent a weekend in the newly refurbished Braemar Hostel. We bagged seven Munros over the weekend, on both sides of the A93, close to the Glen Shee ski centre.

July's plan had been the (in)famous Aonach Eagach ridge in Glencoe. Instead, three climbed Sgòrr nam Fiannaidh via a less daunting route, from its bealach with the Pap of Glencoe - yet again in the mist. The following day, Andy and Moira Stark climbed the second Munro, Meall Dearg, from the north - this time in sunshine with excellent views of the ridge.

See the photograph later in this issue.



Hillwalking Group (continued)

July's lower altitude walk started from Auchinstarry Quarry near Croy. Despite a damp start to the day, five of us enjoyed our walk east along the Forth & Clyde canal towpath, then up and west over Croy Hill and Bar Hill to Twechar, before following the canal back to Auchinstarry. The 10.5km (6.5 miles) route passed Roman hillfort remains along the Antonine Wall. We all enjoyed the chat, plus tea, coffee and cakes at Auchinstarry at the end.

August's walk was up Ben Venue, in the Trossachs. Five of us ascended by good hill paths in warm, muggy weather with occasional showers, to be rewarded by beautiful views from the trig point at 727m before mist shrouded the true summit at 729m. The day was rounded off with excellent coffee and cake in Aberfoyle.

Our upcoming plans are:

- 12th Sept: Carn Maig Munros, Glen Lyon or Langcraigs, Kilpatricks
- 10th Oct: Loch Leven Heritage Trail
- 14th Nov: Loch Katrine walk

For the September and October walks we will meet at the Steeple at 8am, November at 9am. Any new members would be very welcome on these or any subsequent trips.

Eilidh Henderson, with thanks to Andy Stark, Catherine Horn and David Baillie

Kirk Session Benevolent Fund/Hospitality Fund

Thank you to the congregation for being so generous and donating to the special offering at the June Communion. This enables the fund to help charitable causes.

The Benevolent fund stands at £1,028.28

The elders also generously contribute to the Hospitality Fund at Session meetings. This fund is used to support the church in expenses for cards and plants to special birthdays in the congregation and general expenses for special events.

This fund has £451.23.

Alan Fulton



Tots Club

We resume on 31st August and expect to have a full quota of tots and their accompanying adults. The club runs from 9.15-11.30am every Monday. The cost remains at £1 per adult. We were able to give £600 to church funds after last session. Please pop along any Monday morning and join us for coffee and enjoy seeing all the tots.



Elizabeth, Fulton, Alison, Ian, Christine, Cathy, Helen, Margaret, Fiona, Rosie, Rosemary, Anne, Jenifer, Malcolm and Colin.

Howwood Guild

The Howwood Church Guild 2026/2027 session will commence on Monday the 5th October 2026 at 2.00pm. in the Church hall.

Our opening meeting will be taken by the Rev. Ian Miller. We look forward to seeing our Kilbarchan members again and any members of Kilbarchan are most welcome also.

Joan Whyte

Fund-raising news

Art Off The Square has just taken place and hopefully has been a great success. Thanks are due to the small committee who have organised the show along with George, and also to everyone who helped with distributing posters, with hanging the art and of course with the tearoom, always an important part of the show!

Fiddlers' Rally. We are delighted to be welcoming a fiddlers' rally after many years, on Saturday evening 10th October, at 7.30pm in the church. please add the date to your diary and bring along family and friends. Tickets are £10 which includes a light supper in the hall and will be on sale from mid-September.



The Christmas Fayre will take place on Saturday morning 5th December and we hope you will support this with donations and come along.

We have also arranged a concert by the Paisley Rock Choir on Friday 19th February 2027.

Burns' Supper. This will take place on Saturday 30th January 2027.

Contributions to the magazine

Contributions are welcomed from any member of the congregation on subjects likely to be of interest to our readers. Ideally, they should be no more than 400 words long and a suitable photograph may be included.

Inclusion of articles in the magazine will be at the discretion of the publications team.

Submissions should be made to Alasdair Law, preferably by email to alasdair.law@yahoo.com

West Church organ sounds again after 11 years

In December 2015 the last service took place in Kilbarchan West Church, making the wonderful 1904 William Hill & Sons organ redundant. A new home was eventually identified in the Marienkirche in Prenzlau, Germany. The organ was dismantled in Kilbarchan in November 2018, but rebuilding of the organ wasn't completed until early in 2026.

An article in the Spring issue gave an update on the progress of the rebuild and described the “**Hill Festival**” planned for May of this year. Here is Tom's account of that event.

The service of dedication was on the Thursday morning, when a large congregation worshipped, with the opening music played on the small chamber organ, changing to the restored Hill organ after the act of dedication. This included the choir singing 'Consider the Lillies', which I wrote for the centenary celebrations of the Kilbarchan West building in 2001; I played the organ part on the instrument for which it was written. The evening recital was in 3 parts, starting with organ duets played by Hannes Ludwig, organist at Prenzlau, and Martin Rost, from Stralsund. This was followed by 2 recitals, by Gunter Kennel from Berlin, and Thomas Trotter, City organist, Birmingham. The 900 strong audience were entertained by some fabulous playing. At midday on Friday, it was my turn to demonstrate the organ. That evening Jonathan Scott from Manchester, another international organist, played a programme of his own arrangements of popular orchestral pieces; the standard of playing was absolutely brilliant, and again the audience numbered over 900.

West Church organ sounds again after 11 years

On Saturday afternoon we saw the new film documenting the process of the restoration (including some footage of myself). John Maidment from Australia then spoke about Hill organs, and Chris Bragg, (St Andrews University) who is heavily involved in trying to save some of the best Scottish organs in the present climate of church closures, delivered an excellent lecture on the current difficulties, explaining the historical background. Finally, Hannes Ludwig introduced (in German) his book on the Hill company and organs. The 'Last night of the Proms' on Saturday night saw a packed Marienkirche hear a performance of music by Vierne, Liszt and Elgar, with a choir of over 140, 2 organs and orchestra. Another brilliant event.

On Sunday morning Chris Bragg played an 'Organ Matinee', and on Sunday afternoon the festival concluded with a service of Choral Evensong, led by The English Choir Berlin; the service was in German, but the music was all sung in English. This rounded off what had been a triumphant 4 days, with large amounts of press coverage and featuring on German TV news. The organ sounds wonderful in the resonant acoustic of its new home.

Tom Ferguson

A vlog about Prenzlau and the organ, made by Jonathan and Tom Scott, can be viewed using the QR code or the link below:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUggMb4aX30>

Tom Ferguson at the Hill organ in Prenzlau (p.22)



Andy and Moira Stark on the Aonach Eagach (p.17)



Worship Programme

Sunday 6 th September	11.15am	Morning Worship
Sunday 13 th September	11.15am	Morning Worship
Sunday 20 th September	11.15am	Morning Worship
Sunday 27 th September	11.15am	Morning Worship
Sunday 4 th October	11.15am	Morning Worship – Harvest Thanksgiving
Sunday 11 th October	11.15am	Morning Worship
Sunday 18 th October	11.15am	Morning Worship
Sunday 25 th October	11.15am	Morning Worship Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
Sunday 1 st November	11.15am	Morning Worship
Sunday 8 th November	10.50am	Morning Worship for Remembrance Sunday
Sunday 15 th November	11.15am	Morning Worship
Sunday 22 nd November	11.15am	Morning Worship
Sunday 29 th November	11.15am 3pm	Morning Worship Service of Remembrance for loved ones
Sunday 5 th December	11.15am	Morning Worship

*The service for Remembrance Sunday is at 10.50am. This will be followed by a short act of Remembrance at the War Memorial

USEFUL CHURCH CONTACTS

Minister

Rev. Stephen Smith



Session Clerk

Mrs. Christine Erwin



Assistant Session Clerk

Miss Helen Robertson

