

THE BRIDGE

Alpha Course To Start In January
Congregational Prayer
No Place Like Home
Kirk and Community News

Muthill Parish Church
HARVEST EDITION 2025



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Holy Communion

Our next service of Holy Communion will be held on Sunday 23rd November, when our preacher will be Rev. Alex Mitchell. The service will start at the normal time of 10.30am. Please put this date in your diary.

There Is No Place Like Home

This well-known idiom which expresses that home is the most comfortable, secure and welcoming place with a feeling of belonging which cannot be found elsewhere always rings true with



me when I return from a short break away. The phrase was popularised by Dorothy's iconic line in the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*, where she clicks her ruby slippers to return to Kansas. We never think our homes are perfect but there is something so special about returning home after a time away. You relax and feel a sense of peace, knowing that you are safe and secure and this is added to when your friends ask about

your holiday and add to your sense of belonging.

Having said that, I had a great break in the Outer Hebrides. It was my first



time visiting the outer western isles of our country and I was so impressed with the rugged rocky beauty, the scattered crofts and their history. Further, you could not but be impressed by the presence of nature in the form of multitudes of sheep everywhere and, of an evening, being confronted by a mighty stag with their followers sauntering across the single track

roads. It certainly made me once again appreciate the unspoilt peaceful environment of our country and how important it is that we preserve it. Visiting also at the beginning of autumn, the different hues of brown seen across the countryside against the changing deep blues and greens of the sea also made a profound impression. Of course, we also experienced the wind that can be powerful in these parts but it all added to an adventurous

atmosphere, which was only intensified by the warm welcome of the people who always found time to add to your delight.

It is undoubtedly a different quieter form of life living on islands whose separation you are clearly reminded of by a two hour ferry trip and it made me reflect on what it is to belong in our different communities. A sense of belonging is important for most people, Indeed, I was again reminded of this on my first night back home when I watched the BBC documentary on Ozzie Osbourne and his desire to spend his final days back home in England. This sense of belonging too is an important part of being in a church family and highlights the importance of welcome and support. I hope, as is expanded elsewhere in this edition of our magazine, we will find ways of making our welcome and support in Muthill Parish Church special and endearing.

Sandy Hutchison

New Archbishop of Canterbury

A portrait of Dame Sarah Mulally, a woman with short blonde hair and glasses, wearing a dark jacket and a patterned scarf. She is smiling and standing in front of a brick wall.

Dame Sarah Mulally has been appointed as the new 106th Archbishop of Canterbury and such will be spiritual leader of 85 million Anglican Christians worldwide. She was once a nurse specialising in cancer care practising primarily in South London where she also began her study for ministry for the Church of England. She is currently the first female Anglican Bishop of London, a role she took up in 2018. Previously to that she was Chief Nursing Officer of England from 1999-2004. She was ordained as a priest in 2002 and started her ministry in the Diocese of Southwark serving various London churches, and later as Canon of Salisbury Cathedral until 2015 when she was consecrated Bishop of Crediton in Devon. She, therefore comes with strong experience and leadership skills. We wish her well as she seeks to develop new trust across the Anglican Communion.

Annual Memorial Service

This year's annual Memorial Service to honour and celebrate the lives of loved ones that we have lost will be held in the church on **Sunday 2nd November starting at 3pm**. As happened last year, this event will be followed by afternoon tea for all those attending.

This is a very special service of remembrance organised by the Pastoral Care Team and comprising readings, poems, songs and a short reflection by Rev Iain Paton all focused on remembrance and peace of mind. It also includes a solemn moment of silence, placing tags on the church prayer tree and symbolic lighting of candles. Last year, we were fortunate in achieving a good attendance and it is hoped that this can be reciprocated this coming November. It is an occasion when it is good to bring along friends that you may know have suffered loss or who simply want to use the occasion to remember past losses of people that were important in their lives. We also try to compose the service in a way which hopefully is meaningful for anyone whether Christian or not.



**Muthill Parish Church
Annual Memorial Service
Sunday 2nd November at
3pm**

- A special celebration to honour and reflect on loved ones we miss
- Come along with friends
Everyone is welcome
- Afternoon Tea will be served after the service

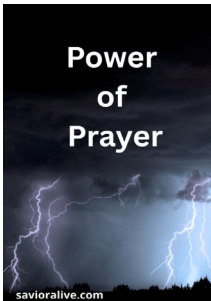


Congregational Prayer

As individual Christians most of us have experienced the power of prayer in our lives. Not all prayers are answered in the way we want as God's will is always the deciding factor and that means He answers our prayers in His way and time. As one commentator put it succinctly, "Prayer does not change God but it changes he/she who prays".

Is congregational prayer different from private prayer? For me, congregational prayer feels very different as does intercessory prayer for you by another person, but they all have their place in worship and are important in our relationship with God. There is much evidence that prayer is heard and answered when the church as a whole prays as a united body. Many people too feel supported by public and intercessory prayer as they feel inadequate in their own prayer life. Perhaps they are conscious that they are not that diligent in their prayer life or simply that they feel they cannot express their needs in a coherent way. Certainly, in my own prayer

life, sometimes I feel much more coherent and at other times I ramble and am a bit confused. Of course, it is easy to forget how well God knows and understands each one of us and that what is important is not how we converse with God but rather the fact that we are trying to converse and build that special deep relationship which through perseverance brings reassurance and a feeling of deep love to face the world that we encounter. In Muthill Parish Church over recent times, we have added to the normal prayers of adoration, confession and for others that take place during our worship services by the provision of a prayer team who seeks to provide an additional resource for private prayer after our Sunday morning services. For anyone who attends a worship service this can be accessed by joining the prayer team after the morning service in a quiet place in the church sanctuary or by placing a prayer request in the prayer box on the Welcome Desk at the rear of the church sanctuary. For many in the Church of Scotland who have been so accustomed to the minister covering all public prayer, there can be nervousness in putting yourself forward for individual prayer. However, it is wrong to have such feelings as this additional resource is



both confidential and reassuring, and, is seen as an important part of our pastoral care of the church family. We are a praying church and should use every opportunity to pray to God for our church family, church mission and our world.

Many will also have noted that there is a prayer tree currently sited to the right of the Pulpit at the chancel end of our sanctuary. This tree was inaugurated at last year's Memorial Service and is adorned with tags to honour and pray for loved ones who have died, but the tree is there to be used privately for any special prayer to God. It is planned that the tree will shortly be sited in a more accessible position so that any worshipper can place their own prayer tag on the tree. This will be monitored by the prayer team.

At a recent meeting of the Pastoral Care Team, it was also heartening to hear that the Prayer Team is further considering organising a regular prayer gathering. This is likely to be monthly and of an early weekday evening and it will include some simple messages on praying. There is also a prayer link in Whatsapp currently used jointly by one or two people in the congregation and it is hoped that this can be further expanded to those in the congregation who are interested in joining in regular church prayer for those known to be in particular need within the church family and for wider issues of concern to our mission within Muthill.

And when you are quiet at home and need assistance with prayer, if you have access to a smart phone, why not try the App, **Lectio 365**, which provides beautiful daily devotions which can be accessed morning, noon and night with short readings and prayers to read or hear. I have found spending a few minutes with the assistance of this App very worthwhile in providing focus for my day ahead.



I am not in the prayer team and the views expressed here are personal but it comes from someone for whom prayer is important and I remain eager to see our church becoming more involved and comfortable with the role of prayer in our church

family life. By the way, it needs no particular skills or eloquence to become part of the prayer team after church worship or to occasionally join them in support. We all have something to contribute in developing our conversation with God as a church.

Words and Actions

JESUS HAD MANY FRIENDS - AND HE OFTEN WENT WALKING WITH THEM.



ONCE, ON A JOURNEY, JESUS CALLED AT THE HOME OF MARTHA AND MARY



MARTHA WAS VERY PLEASED TO MEET WITH JESUS, AND SHE MADE HIM WELCOME



MARY WAS VERY EXCITED TOO AND WANTED TO LISTEN TO EVERYTHING JESUS HAD TO SAY



BUT MARTHA, WAS NOT VERY IMPRESSED WITH MARY! SHE THOUGHT HER SISTER SHOULD BE HARD AT WORK, NOT SITTING AROUND - JUST LISTENING



LORD, DON'T YOU CARE THAT MARY HAS LEFT ME TO DO ALL THE WORK BY MYSELF?!



MARTHA, YOU ARE WORRIED AND TROUBLED OVER SO MANY THINGS



JESUS TOLD MARTHA THAT THERE ARE FAR MORE IMPORTANT THINGS IN LIFE THAN JUST FUSSING OVER A CLEAN HOUSE!



PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING WE CAN LEARN, LIKE MARTHA, IS TO MAKE TIME TO LISTEN TO JESUS.



See Luke 10.38-42

Craft Fair

Sunday 2nd November,
2025

After Morning
Service

In aid of Christian
Aid and local
charities

Christmas cards,
Coasters, Tidy Scissors,
Christmas Novelties and
much more

Bring your pennies, cash
and card payments
accepted.

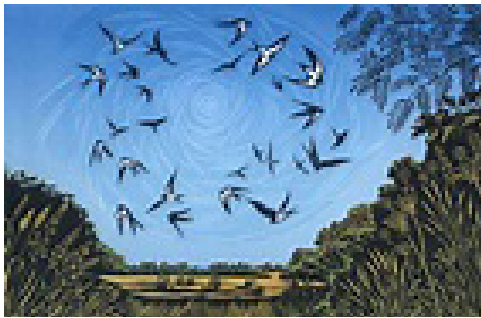


God in the Sciences

This article is written by Dr Ruth Bancewicz, who is based at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

Wonder and Worship

“I was travelling, and out early in the morning: at first there was a vast fog; but, by the time that I was seven or eight miles from home towards the coast, the sun broke out into a delicate warm day. We were then on a large heath or common, and I could discern, as the mist began to break away, great numbers of swallows (*hirundines rusticae*) clustering on the stunted shrubs and bushes, as if they had roosted there all night. As soon as the air became clear and pleasant they all were on the wing at once; and, by a placid and easy flight, proceeded on southward towards the sea”.



How many church leaders today have time to enjoy their surroundings?

Gilbert White was an Anglican minister who became famous for his observations about the flora and fauna of his parish. His letters about the local wildlife through the seasons were so beautifully written that they are still in print today, more than 200 years after they were first published as *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selbourne*.

White is a great example of someone who saw science and faith in harmony. He writes that he hopes his readers will be inspired to “pay a more ready attention to the wonders of the Creation”. His stories are often so vivid that he gets away with packing in quite a bit of scientific detail, painting a more accurate picture of the wonderful events he observed as he travelled around the countryside. White’s book is one of the classics of nature writing, and there’s even an apocryphal story online that this is one of the most printed books in the country, after the Bible and Shakespeare.

White may have been one of those people with a capacity for endless activity, or perhaps he took rather more care over natural history than his vocation. Either way, I do think that anyone - from the parish minister to the youngest member of the congregation - could learn from his appreciation of creation. It is well worth spending ten minutes every now and again staring into a bush, pond or

tree - especially in winter when it's easy to hurry indoors and put the kettle on. Experiencing wildlife first-hand is wonderful fuel for our worship of God and care for His creation. As Psalm 111 says, "Great are the works of the Lord; they are pondered by all who delight in them" (NIV).

*(White's book can be downloaded for free at <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1408>)

Glen Artney Harvest Festival



Our annual worship service at Glen Artney Church on 12th October celebrating harvest was led by our Worship Convener, Elaine Wallace, and as always she gave a powerful message. Members of the singing group sang a couple of songs and Helen-May, Elizabeth B and Sandy H also took part. As always, the setting of the little church adds so much to this special service, and this year, we were further blessed with amazing blue skies and the countryside was looking stunning in its autumn colours.

The church, as always, was beautifully decorated with harvest items provided by the Drummond Estate including a prize squash grown by Michael Aldridge, Factor. It is always good to celebrate such an occasion with folk from other churches in the area. Not sure about the last picture - at first I thought they were all getting ready to demonstrate the Dashing White Sergeant, but I am told they were just preparing to welcome worshippers!



God in the Arts

The Revd Michael Burgess surveys works of sacred art that can be found in various museums...you can see the image by googling the title of the painting and the artist.

'He gave us eyes to see them': Zubarán's 'Jacob and his twelve sons'

In the Old Testament the story of Jacob is a vivid saga of struggle and conflict:

Jacob vies with his brother Esau, he has a difficult time with Laban, there are tensions in his family, and finally he wrestles with a divine stranger. And yet in the book of Genesis his days end with promises from God: he will be blessed with descendants, a land, fruitfulness and the assurance of God's presence with him. He is given a new name and a new destiny as 'Israel.' We sense all this struggle and blessing in a remarkable series of thirteen paintings, **'Jacob and his twelve sons'** by the Spanish artist, **Francisco Zubarán**.



They hang in the dining room of Auckland Castle at Bishop Auckland. Bishop Auckland grew as a thriving market town and then in the industrial age became the

centre of the Durham coal industry. It was also the site for the prince bishop of Durham's palace. In the medieval period the bishop was as powerful as the monarch of the land, with an army that rivalled the king's own forces. Auckland Castle became the country seat for the prince bishops, and in the 18th century Bishop Richard Trevor made the palace more Gothic and imposing than ever before. To mark the 1753 Act that allowed Jews to be naturalised in England, he purchased the portraits of Jacob and his sons by Zubarán for £124.

Zubarán normally painted monks and saints, and this particular series was meant for the colonies. But they were seized by pirates and then sold to a London merchant. The one depicting Benjamin was bought by Lord Ancaster, and so Bishop Trevor was only able to buy twelve. He commissioned Arthur

Pond, a jobbing painter, to make an exact copy of Benjamin to complete his set. The series of canvases, each eight feet tall, was in the news recently when there was a possibility they might be sold. They were saved by a Trust, now dedicated to developing the site of the Castle, which includes not just the dining room, where the paintings hang, but a very fine chapel of St Peter, a throne room, and beautiful gardens.

Jacob and his sons are each painted against the daylight sky, and each has its individual characteristics. Judah for instance is clad in a brown and gold garment with a gold circlet crowning his head as the ancestor of King David and Joseph, the husband of Mary. Gad is a strong soldier. Jacob, the father of these twelve sons, is a bearded old man, bowed down with the weight, not just of his years of struggle, but perhaps also the burden of destiny laid on his shoulders as both a blessing and a responsibility. For in the Old Testament, we learn that God often chooses the ones overlooked by the world: the young boy David above his more likely brothers, Isaac above Ishmael, and in the saga behind these impressive paintings of Zubarán, Jacob, the second born son, but here blessed as the father of God's people.

END



Dear Editor,
Christian Aid

I plan to retire as Christian Aid Coordinator at the end of this year so am looking for someone or a small team of people to take over. I feel that, after many years, it is time for fresh ideas and enthusiasm, so I look forward to hearing from anyone interested in taking over this work.

It would be a shame if the church stopped supporting this valuable organisation so please think about taking over.

Thank you,
Alison Hockly



Alpha – Who can you invite?

Great news! Following the Church Study Day on Mission on May 17th and more recently our Kirk

Session's consideration of the outcomes from that day, one of the key initiatives to be launched in 2026 will be an Alpha course.

It will be free and will follow the course that was used last year by over two million enquirers. The experience is open to everyone, no matter their background or beliefs as well as anyone already associated with Muthill Parish Church. Alpha is a simple place to meet new people, find out the basics and share thoughts. The course which will be run over 11 sessions will unpack and explore a big different question about the Christian faith together. Each of the 11 sessions will be led by a local team and built around three things:

- Meeting new people over dinner
- Watching a talk
- Sharing your thoughts

Among the topics to be covered are:

Who is Jesus?

Why did Jesus die?

How can I have faith?

Why and how do I pray?

Why and how should I read the Bible?

How does God guide us?

What about the Church?

Alpha Course

Unpack the basics of the Christian Faith together. No pressure. No judgment. Just open discussion over some good food. That's it. Just come along and see what you think

Starting in January 2026

11 weekly sessions plus an away day with booklets and an App to follow up each session

Anyone interested in learning about questions and life and faith will be welcome.

There will be a build-up of promotion over the autumn seeking congregational support in running the sessions and providing food as well as prayer for all those participating.



Our Mission Statement

The Kirk Session has agreed to consider revising our church mission statement to make it more engaging. There was a feeling expressed at the Church Study Day in May that it was perhaps a little too passive. The mission statement expresses why we exist as a church and what our overall objective is.

The Kirk Session would like to involve the wider congregation in this exercise and will welcome suggestions and new drafts from anyone in the congregation. They should be submitted preferably anonymously to the Session Clerk, not later than 30th November, 2025, after which they will be considered by the Kirk Session. If and when a revised statement is accepted it will be intimated in the next available edition of The Bridge.

Sudoku

2		5				8		
			6	5	3			
9							6	
			4		6			1
3								4
7			2		9			
	2							9
			5	7	4			
		4				6		5

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Kirk And Community News



Presbytery Plan

Since the last edition of the magazine an important meeting with two representatives of Perth Presbytery has taken place with Muthill Kirk Session, and following that, there was further consideration of our way forward in a separate meeting of the Kirk Session. Although the Presbytery Plan has formally been approved, knowing that there were still questions on our future path as Muthill Parish Church, Presbytery agreed to further consult with us to enable us to reflect further on the various options that Presbytery considered still open to us. These include linking with Ardoch and Blackford united congregation as set out in the approved Presbytery Plan, and to which Muthill Kirk Session to had already given tentative approval, but also alternative possibilities of re-opening negotiations with Presbytery on the possibility of linking with the proposed Crieff cluster or with mid Strathearn. Decisions of this nature are never easy as it involves considering the many uncertainties of the future. After much reflection on the pros and cons of the various options, the Kirk Session has decided to stick with its original decision to move down a path of linkage with Ardoch and Blackford but on a deferred timescale. Muthill's experience of a linkage in the past had been warm and successful and members were anxious to ensure that this experience will also be achieved in any proposed link with Ardoch and Blackford, if it is to proceed. Presbytery has been informed of the Kirk Session's views and we now await further communication from Presbytery.

The Manse

Until the future of our church proposed linkage is clarified, the manse in Station Road remains as part of our assets as a congregation. It is currently maintained by Muthill Parish Church and is let out on a tenancy basis authorised by the central church. This will remain its

status for the time being. The rental for the property has been reviewed and will be increased from November.

Bi-centenary of the Church

The bi-centenary of the laying of the foundation stone of Muthill Parish Church will be celebrated in March 2026, whilst the opening of the building for worship will be further celebrated two years later in 2028.



We are pleased to confirm that the present Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Right Reverend Rosie Frew, will attend a commemorative service in Muthill Parish Church on Sunday 22nd March, 2026. On the Sunday

previous to this, 15th March, representatives of the Lodge of St John, Muthill, which had been represented at the laying of the foundation stone in 1826 will also be welcomed to our morning service.



Further Building Works

At the last Kirk Session meeting on 26th August, our Property Convener, Graham Donaldson confirmed that a Building Control application had been filed for the proposed development of an expanded kitchen, storage area and additional toilets in and around the Bruce Hall. Plans for the proposed development are displayed on the noticeboards in the Bruce Hall. This project will also need approval of Presbytery and there will be further reports on progress as and when the authorities inform us.

The Kirk Session has further approved that plans be drawn up for a staged programme of upgrading the following areas:

1. Vestibule entrance and Lobby area including staircases

Kirk And Community News

2. North Lounge
3. Vestry Toilet

It is hoped that Priority 1 will be completed before the bi-centenary celebrations planned for March 2026.



Church Finances

Copies of the OSCR accounts for the church have been available from the Church Information Desk since the annual presentation of accounts to the congregation before the summer. At the last Kirk Session Meeting it was further approved that various of our bank accounts should be merged to avoid bank charges which are being introduced later this year. The Kirk Session has also given approval to some more of our funds being placed in long term investment and to our use of internet banking for payment of various expenses.



Our Mission

Following receipt of a full written report from the Kirk Study Day on Mission held in May, the Kirk Session held a special meeting to consider its various outcomes and to decide on appropriate action. There was much meat in the many outcomes reported and the following action has been agreed and will be implemented:

- On worship there will be a reconstituted worship team aimed at providing more all-age worship, improved praise coordination and leadership
- An Alpha course will be planned over the autumn period and implemented in early 2026
- Greater prominence will be given to prayer in our church life and the role of the prayer team will be expanded

- There will be further consultation on youth activities with local churches and Presbytery and a survey will be conducted with other local organisations and community leaders on needs of families and youth in the village
- Further consideration to be given to the vehicle of children's outreach such as Messy Church or a possible a new praise event with a possible village children's party to engage with parents
- The Pastoral Care Team will be reconfigured to enable greater support to families and younger people in the church family, beyond its current remit of visiting the housebound and the elderly
- The Eldership will be made more visible to the congregation and an effort will be made to put workable succession planning in place for all key posts in the church
- Consideration will be given to ways and means of ensuring that the church has good relations with all organisations in the village including possibly organising a village event
- The Mission Statement of the church which appears on most of our key publications will be reviewed.

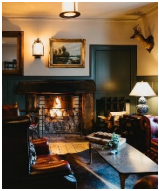
Monday Club visit the Commercial



With our local Commercial Inn now offering breakfast (all day) lunch (11-2pm) and fish and chips on Friday evenings (5-8pm) at great prices, it is good to see another hostelry in the village making a new mark. You can either have your meal in the café or use the take-away service.

The Monday Club went along to have a lunch outing recently and as can be seen from the photo they are very happy enjoying the local fare. There is a pre-order number of 07979 656994.

Kirk And Community News



Round the corner, the team at the Coorie Inn also deserve congratulations as they continue to win awards for their Scottish gastronomic delights. It is open Wednesdays to Sundays from 9am/11am-11pm or 12am depending on the day.

Community Notice from Muthill Community Council

We convey this important message from our Muthill Community Council

Know where to turn: Reporting Concerns in our Area

At this time of year, with the darker nights creeping in and the days growing shorter, it's more important than ever that we look out for one another and help keep our community safe and welcoming. We are sharing a routine reminder to support everyone in knowing how to report concerns and how to access help when needed.

If you witness any incident that may be considered antisocial, such as vandalism, disruptive behaviour, or anything else that causes you concern, we encourage you to report them through the appropriate channels. These reports are essential, as police, community and housing services rely on clear corroborated evidence to act.

How to report:

- Should you feel unsafe, you should be contacting Police Scotland on 101 or 999 in an emergency, as these are criminal matters. You can also contact with Police Scotland using the online contact form- Contact Us form/ Police Scotland
- Antisocial behaviour can be reported at any time of the day, quickly and easily by calling the 24 hour voicemail service on 01738476173 or emailing SCT@pkc.gov.uk
- Locality Housing team can be contacted around concerns on areas around tenant's homes, assisting anti-social behaviour and they also provide advice regarding neighbour and environmental

complaints. The South Locality team can be contacted on 01738476000 or via email SouthAreaTeam@pkc.gov.uk

As the nights draw in, let's continue to look out for one another and make sure that everyone feels safe in and around our village

Film Night

Our new session of films with St James got off to a good start in September with a larger attendance and as always great food and discussion. At first I was not so keen on the idea that the title of the film is not announced beforehand, but there is no doubt that you come to each film without any preconceived opinions and with great discussion afterwards, you learn a lot from others in terms of interpretation. It always provides a stimulating evening and we hope that more will take this opportunity for great fellowship and entertainment. Our next two sessions are 10th November and 8th December starting at 7pm in our church sanctuary. The whole list of film night dates is available from the Church Information Desk. Sessions usually finish just after 9pm.

Muthill Sportive



Congratulations go to Muthill Village Trust on another very successful Muthill Sportive held on 30th August. Whilst the community event of Music in the Park was sadly cancelled due to an adverse weather warning, Sportive succeeded in running the cycle event with the number of participants exceeding 190 this year. Starting and finishing at the Muthill Parish Church, it

created quite a buzz with great food as usual provided by helpers from the village. The funds from this event go to the Village Trust which continues to seek funds and approvals for completion of the cycle path to Crieff.

Kirk And Community News

Mens Group



After a summer of garden coffee gatherings, the Men's Group is once again back in operation on Wednesday mornings in the north lounge of the church, sharing experiences and lots of banter. It is good to see numbers holding up and based on that one or two outings are planned over the coming months. The photo above is of our outing to Doune Castle and the Scottish Antique Centre also in Doune area. Later in November a small group will also be going to Pitlochry Festival Theatre. There is also a new leaflet about the group available from the church Information Desk which provides details of the group's aims and plans. New members are always more than welcome.

Wardside House Gains Top Award



Congratulations go to Wardside House, Home for the Elderly, which has recently been ranked number 1 in the Courier of the region's 21 homes ranked best by inspectors. The Care Inspectorate visits homes regularly and grades areas of operation using a scale from 6 (excellent) to 1 (unsatisfactory). Wardside House achieved 5.8 with officials praising the purpose built care home for its "sector-leading" support, leadership, staff and planning. The report reads: "We were impressed with the quality of management and leadership and their commitment to ensuring people achieved the best possible outcomes. There was a strong focus on continuous improvement, and this was visible at all levels and inspired staff to provide a quality service." Congratulations to everyone at Wardside House. Another feather in Muthill's cap!

Gilbert Speirs



Congratulations go again to Gilbert who is not only a wizard with our church sound system but over the summer he was also crowned for his achievements in kayak racing by winning the World Masters Marathon Championship in Gyor, Hungary. He is now British, European and World champion in his age class of over 70's. Also remember that Gilbert will be speaking to the

Guild meeting on Wednesday 22nd October starting at 2.30pm to which all are welcome.

MCTG AGM

By all accounts the first AGM of our Muthill Community Transport Group went swimmingly with over 40 people packing into the small village hall. Reports presented were all very positive in terms of achievements for the first year and likewise the finances are in good shape with the result that the annual membership fee is not being collected this coming year.



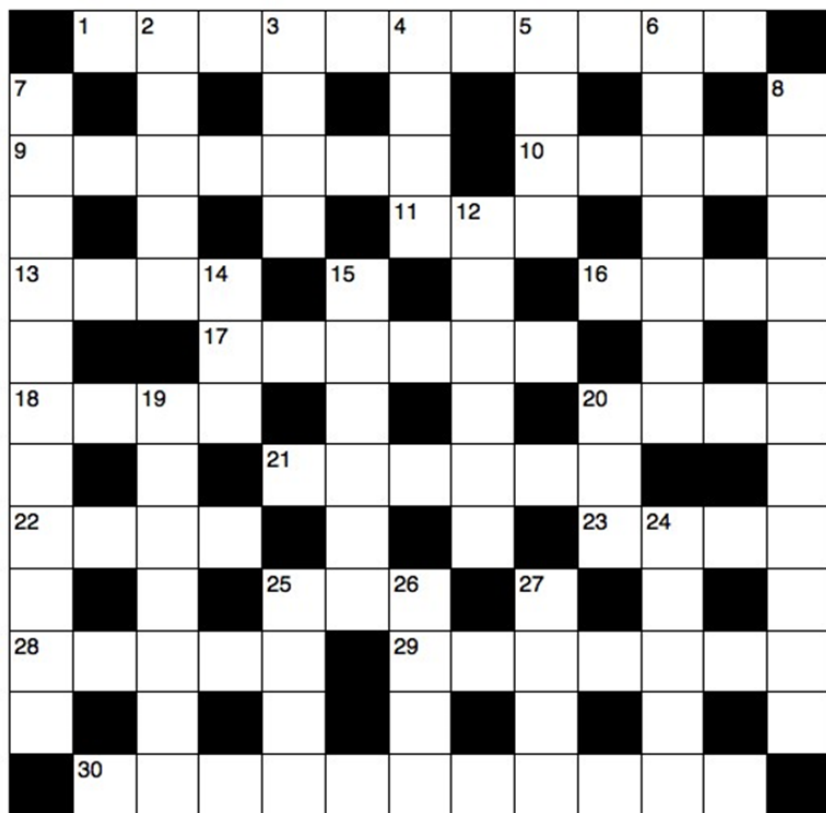
There continues to be a need for more drivers especially as MCTG is now providing an additional car service as well as a community bus service for hospital appointments. Social and shopping trips are published monthly in advance on community noticeboards and on Whatsapp.

It is also nice to see new trustees in the photo of their thank you lunch celebration for the first year, which was kindly organised at Isobel Barratt's

house on 10th October.

We wish them every success in the year ahead as MCTG is already a much appreciated asset in the village.

Crossword



Across

- 1 The sixth disciple (Matthew 10:3) (11)
 9 'And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the — — ' (Matthew 6:13) (4,3)
 10 Love intensely (Song of Songs 1:4) (5)
 11 From Mt Carmel to Jezreel, Elijah — all the way (1 Kings 18:46) (3)
 13 One of the Midianite leaders who was captured and killed after Gideon's victory in the valley near Moreh (Judges 7:25) (4)

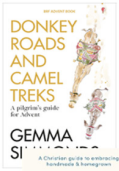
-
- 16 Metallic element (4)
17 At line (anag.) (6)
18 'Cursed is everyone who is — on a tree' (Galatians 3:13) (4)
20 Where Samson killed a thousand Philistines with a donkey's jawbone (Judges 15:14) (4)
21 He succeeded Moses (Deuteronomy 34:9) (6)
22 'When he saw him, he took — on him' (Luke 10:33) (4)
23 'For — is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction' (Matthew 7:13) (4)
25 'The god of this — has blinded the minds of unbelievers' (2 Corinthians 4:4) (3)
28 Fear or terror (Psalm 31:22) (5)
29 'We, who are many, are one body, for we all — of the one loaf' (1 Corinthians 10:17) (7)
30 Assyrian ruler assassinated by his sons while worshipping his god Nisroch (2 Kings 19:37) (11)

Down

- 2 'For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made — ' (1 Corinthians 15:22) (5)
3 'After supper he — the cup' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (4)
4 The request of a man of Macedonia in Paul's vision: 'Come — to Macedonia and help us' (Acts 16:9) (4)
5 He disobeyed his father Judah by refusing to impregnate his dead brother's wife (Genesis 38:9) (4)
6 I veto me (anag.) (7)
7 Fourth king of Judah (1 Kings 15:24) (11)
8 Priest of God Most High, who blessed Abram (Genesis 14:18) (11)
12 'I have made you — — for the Gentiles' (Acts 13:47) (1,5)
14 Implore (1 Samuel 15:25) (3)
15 'Out of the eater, something to eat; out of the — , something sweet' (Judges 14:14) (6)
19 'I am the most ignorant of men; I do — — a man's understanding' (Proverbs 30:2) (3,4)
20 'Sin shall not be your master, because you are not under — , but under grace' (Romans 6:14) (3)
24 Native of, say, Baghdad (5)
25 The last word in the Bible (Revelation 22:21) (4)
26 Heroic tale (4)
27 'Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you — ' (John 8:32) (4)

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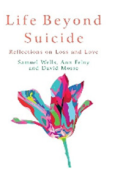
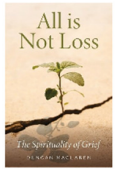
Book Reviews



Listening to the Music of the Soul - The Archbishop of York's Advent Book 2025

By Guli Francis-Dehqani, SPCK, £10.99

When it comes to inhabiting life fully, Mary is surely one of our greatest role models. 'My soul magnifies the Lord,' she sings in the Magnificat. Her spirited response to the Angel Gabriel's announcement that she is to bear the Son of God is rich in nuance, contradiction and paradox. These very characteristics inspire Bishop Guli to make connections



between the themes of Advent and her own experiences - and to invite us to do the same.

Bishop Guli's forced exile from her homeland has echoes of the flight into Egypt; the murder of her brother Bahram during the Iranian Revolution of the slaughter of the innocents. She writes intriguingly of how angels continue speaking to us today; how fear can prevent us from living well in the present; how pain and loss can be transformed by the power of beauty.

Deepening its resonance, each chapter is linked to a piece of music, prompting us to consider: what are the enduring melodies that sustain us as the vibrant stories of our lives unfold.

Donkey Roads and Camel Treks: A pilgrim's guide for Advent - BRF Advent Book 2025

By Gemma Simmonds, BRF, £9.99

The lectionary readings for Advent speak of making a straight path towards God, but many of us find our own route decidedly winding. Biblical characters in the story of the incarnation are called to set out on the road to discipleship using any means of carriage they can. This book

offers user-friendly encouragement (with the occasional spur onwards) to explore what helps and what hinders us in this journey to deeper encounter with the flesh and blood God whom we find in scripture, in our lived experience and in the least of His sisters and brothers.

The Jesus Storybook Bible Advent Activity Book

- 24 Guided Crafts, plus Games, Songs, Recipes, and More

By Sally Lloyd-Jones, Zondervan, £9.34

This is your guide to a complete and creative celebration of the holiday season, filled with crafts, games, recipes, songs, and activities for every day of Advent. *The Jesus Storybook Bible Advent Activity Book* highlights the significance of the Nativity and meaning of God's most precious gift. The book is a journey through the Bible stories in both the Old and New Testaments that lead to Christmas. It includes:

24 days of crafts along with songs, recipes, and activities to celebrate Advent, with easy-to-follow step-by-step instructions and colour photos
Variations on the activities to make them appropriate and accessible for all ages and families

A perforated insert with punch-out Jesse Tree ornaments that correspond with the stories of Advent

All supplies needed are commonly found around the house or easy to obtain.

This Christmas, start new holiday traditions with your family with The Jesus Storybook Bible Advent Activity Book, based on the bestselling *The Jesus Storybook Bible*, with over six million copies sold.

The Art of Scripture

Featuring Words of the King James Bible & 100 Paintings from National Gallery Collection

By The National Gallery, Lion Books, £19.99

A beautifully presented anthology of famous scenes and timeless wisdom from the King James Bible, featuring 100 masterpieces from the National Gallery, London

From the majesty of Genesis to the mystery of Revelation, the Bible contains some of the world's most powerful stories and sublime wisdom. It is also the inspiration for some of the greatest pictures ever painted.



Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, Moses and the exodus from Egypt, Samson betrayed by Delilah, David slaying Goliath, the beauty of Bathsheba, the wisdom of Solomon: these are among the dramatic scenes and memorable characters in the Old Testament, portrayed here by artists such as Poussin, Rembrandt and Rubens.

In the New Testament, the figure of Jesus takes centre stage, with his compelling parables and miracles depicted by artists such as Caravaggio, Duccio, El Greco, Raphael, Titian and Velazquez.

Together, these words and paintings convey a profound sense of the sacred. Both may go back many hundreds of years, and yet they still have the power to move and inspire us today.

A Season of Silence - Deep Listening in a Noisy World

By Joshua Rey, Canterbury Press. £12.99

In the midst of our noisy, fast-paced world, finding moments of stillness can seem impossible, and the idea of staying silent, perhaps even a little daunting. Yet, these moments are where true peace and spiritual depth reside.

A Season of Silence invites you to embark on a transformative journey through the practice of silent, listening prayer. Over 40 days, this book offers daily steps that will gradually and gently guide you into a richer and deeper experience of contemplative silence.

Each day offers a short reflection, a thought-provoking quotation from the Bible and other wisdom sources, and practical exercises to help you as you begin to cultivate a lifelong habit of contemplative silence. This isn't just about quieting external noise - it's about fostering an inner stillness that continues to resonate throughout your daily activities, bringing clarity, peace, and a profound sense of presence.

A Year to Slow Down - a Christian guide to embracing handmade & homegrown

By Rachel Bearn, Form, £14.99

Rachel Bearn shares her own experience of how reducing her pace helped her begin to heal from severe chronic illness and connect deeper with her faith. Over 12 months she shares the benefits of living slowly, quietly and in the present moment, dependent on God and God alone - as He always intended for us.



This is a practical guidebook that takes readers through the four seasons of the year, incorporating the festivals and celebrations that have punctuated the Christian calendar for generations and encouraging you to live seasonally and in the moment.

Life Beyond Suicide - Reflections on Loss and Love

**By Samuel Wells, Ann Feloy, and David Mosse, Canterbury Press
£16.99**

No loss is more difficult to comprehend than suicide. Its devastation extends far beyond immediate family and friends, touching entire communities and leaving deep emotional and spiritual wounds. Those left behind often struggle to find support, and the questions suicide raises - about faith, suffering, and meaning - can remain heartbreakingly unanswered. Bringing together voices from pastoral care, lived experience, and theology, *Life Beyond Suicide* offers a compassionate, practical resource for all affected by suicide, and for those who support them.

Part One explores suicide through three lenses: pastoral responses, the lived reality of suicide, and theological reflection on its complexities. Part Two shares deeply personal testimonies - from those bereaved by suicide and from survivors - alongside reflections by Samuel Wells. Part Three offers liturgies, prayers, and resources. Grounded in honesty, empathy, and hope, *Life Beyond Suicide* is a vital companion for anyone seeking understanding, healing, and a path toward life beyond loss.

Life Beyond Suicide is published in association with Olly's Future, a suicide awareness charity founded by Ann Feloy in memory of her son who died by suicide aged 22. A portion of the proceeds from sales of this book will be donated to the suicide prevention charity, Olly's Future.

All Is Not Loss - the Spirituality of Grief

By Duncan MacLaren, Canterbury Press, £12.99

Grief is not a rare visitor - it is a quiet companion, woven into the fabric of everyday life. From birth to death, loss shadows us, often just beneath the surface. In this deeply compassionate book, Duncan MacLaren explores the many faces of grief - not only bereavement, but also the quieter sorrows of parting, regret, failure, nostalgia, and shame.

With insight and sensitivity, he invites us to reconsider grief not as a sign of a broken world, but as a doorway to deeper connection, understanding, and spiritual growth. Ten chapters examine aspects of loss that are widely recognised: parting, regret, nostalgia, failure, bereavement, shame, ageing, dependence, mortality, and disenchantment.

Far from offering easy answers, *All is Not Loss* draws on the lived experiences of those who have been profoundly marked by loss - and yet have found their lives unexpectedly expanded. MacLaren offers a hopeful vision: that even in our pain, we may discover that all is not lost.

Beyond the Setting Sun - a story to help children understand feelings of grief

By Sarah J. Dodd. SPCK. £8.99

Here is a picture story book about bereavement to support young children, specifically those who have lost a parent. The waterholes of the African Savannah have dried up and there has not been enough to drink for some of the animals. Ekundayo, a young elephant, struggles to understand the loss of his mother, but the support of his family help and guide him through. Based on careful research about the stages of grief for young children, Sarah J Dodd sensitively portrays the response and actions of Ekundayo to help children express and share how they are feeling with those around them. Ekundayo's aunt and father provide words of understanding, reassurance and comfort, and the message that the love of Ekundayo's mother shines on, telling of a greater Love that they may not see but never goes away and is everywhere. At the end, Debbie Duncan also provides helpful advice for parents and carers as they consider how to talk about death and dying with young children.

If you are looking for a compassionate tool to help young children navigate the emotions of losing a parent, *Beyond the Setting Sun* offers a heartfelt story and practical guidance to make sense of grief with love and understanding.

Editor's Note

Please understand that all articles submitted have to be subject to possible adjustment to suit the balance of the magazine's content and its physical confines. If space does not permit, submissions will be considered for the next edition. All submissions will be acknowledged.

It is our Publishing Policy to publish factual clarifications or corrections in the next edition of the magazine.

The views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Kirk Session. Editorial comment and signed articles do not necessarily contain the official views of the Church of Scotland which can be laid down only by the General Assembly.

Sudoku Solution:

2	6	5	1	9	7	8	4	3
4	8	7	6	5	3	9	1	2
9	1	3	8	4	2	5	6	7
8	5	2	4	3	6	7	9	1
3	9	6	7	1	5	2	8	4
7	4	1	2	8	9	3	5	6
5	2	8	3	6	1	4	7	9
6	3	9	5	7	4	1	2	8
1	7	4	9	2	8	6	3	5

Crossword Solution:

ACROSS:

1. Bartholomew. 9, Evil one. 10, Adore. 11, Ran. 13, Oreb. 16, Zinc. 17, Entail. 18, Hung. 20, Lehi. 21, Joshua. 22, Pity. 23, Wide. 25, Age. 28, Alarm. 29, Partake. 30, Sennacherib.

DOWN :

2, Alive. 3, Took. 4, Over. 5, Onan. 6, Emotive. 7, Jehoshaphat. 8, Melchizedek. 12, A light. 14, Beg. 15, Strong. 19, Not have. 20, Law. 24, Iraqi. 25, Amen. 26, Epic. 27, Free.



Our Church Mission is to be a place of peace and welcome; a people growing in Christian faith and love and a presence at the heart and soul of the community.

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SC004984

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Crieff Medical Centre:

Blue Practice 01764652283

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PKC: 01738 475000

Church of Scotland:

Perth Pres. 01738451177

Central Off. 01312255722

Police:

Emergency 999

Non-Emergency 101

Action Fraud 101



Cover Photo and Graphics

Our cover photo for this edition is Harvest Display.

Thanks to Raffie for sourcing graphics for the magazine and helping in the production.

**Submission deadline For Bridge Next Edition
Friday 28 November, 2025**