

# THE BRIDGE

**A Fond Farewell**

**Keswick Convention 23**

**Do Buildings Really Matter?**

**A Fresh Start**

**LATE SUMMER EDITION 2023**



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## Kirk Register

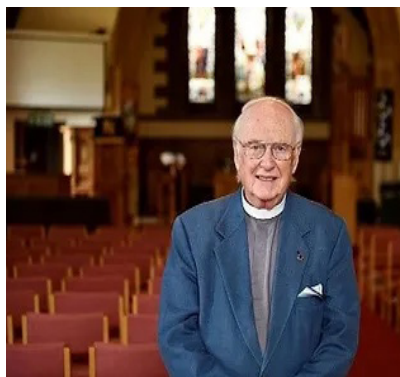
### Muthill Parish Church

#### Deaths:

Mrs Williamina (Ina) Ingram on 15/07/2023

Mrs Elizabeth (Betty) Graham on 16/07/2023

## Welcome Iain



This space in our magazine is normally reserved for a short message from our minister, in this case, our new interim Moderator, Iain Paton. This was duly supplied to me well in advance of deadlines and contained an uplifting message. Sadly, due to the intervention of a computer virus or mistaken /careless deletion on my part it was lost along with many other files on my lap top. Further, since this was painfully discovered whilst Iain had started his summer travels, it has not been possible to retrieve a replacement copy in time for this

publication. For this loss, I apologise to him and to our readers. We therefore more eagerly look forward to his wise contributions in future copies of the magazine.

What with the loss of Iain's message and the impending closure of Trinity Gask Church my thoughts turned to his last sermon on 30<sup>th</sup> July which focused on Jesus words : "Strive first for the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Mathew 6:33) – a text dealing with how gifts carry responsibilities.

God's love is incomprehensible. Such a gift sounds burdensome and yet, as Iain explained, it is not, for it comes unconditionally and also with encouragement, hope and countless blessings. As disciples we are further not alone. We have shared responsibility to strive for God's kingdom on earth. With the closure of Trinity Gask, we will be blessed with some members transferring to Muthill Parish Church - a gift, whilst coming out of sorrow, it is also one that comes with encouragement and hopefully untold blessings if we both strive for God's Kingdom together in new ways.



## A Fond Farewell

On Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2023 at 10.00am the congregation of Muthill Parish Church will join together with

members of our sister church, Trinity Gask, in a special service to mark the closure of Trinity Gask and Kinkell Church. It will be a sad fond farewell for the remaining members of the little Trinity Gask congregation as that beautiful white church building on the hill has a celebrated history and, with that, there are so many special memories for the members who still have it as their place of worship. It is further right that we mark this time by remembering particularly the Kirk Session and office bearers who have sustained the congregation until the end. They deserve thanks for their service and dedication.



The Kirk Session at Trinity Gask and Kinkell made the difficult decision to wind up the congregation following

decisions forced on the new Perth Presbytery by the Church of Scotland's General Assembly. Times are hard for the Church in Scotland with falling membership, shortage of ordained ministers and dwindling funds. The national Church has successfully faced many such difficult problems over its years of existence and, with God's guidance and good management, a way forward will be found in these current challenges to consolidate its position and to re-grow and strengthen its presence across the country. In Perthshire, this challenge will mean in the short term some closures, more unions, linkages and more team ministries but the need for a strong Christian presence and for the spreading of the word of God locally does not change.

Whilst we all deeply regret losing our linked sister charge of Trinity Gask and Kinkell with its fine historical building it is also important for all of us to remember at a time of such loss that the church at heart consists primarily of its people, not bricks and mortar. Members and adherents of Trinity Gask and Kinkell will receive a warm welcome in Muthill Parish Church as they are part of our wider linked

church family. We, therefore, hope that many, indeed most, will transfer across to work with us in preparing a different but hopefully re-energized future for the church in our area. As the popular saying made famous in “The Sound of Music” relates, “When God closes one door, He always opens a window”, and so, whilst we commiserate rightly with Trinity Gask and Kinkell at this sensitive time of closing, we pray that with God’s guidance we will be able to see a new window opening and that together we can create something new and relevant to today’s needs in the heart of Strathearn.

Editor

Postscript: The photo, on the opposite page, was kindly supplied by Jean Ann Scott Miller and is of Hamish McRae, on the bagpipes with his daughter Sophie. In the past Trinity Gask has always taken its music as an important part of its worship.

*Trinity Gask  
Parish Church*

*The Last Service*

*3rd September  
at 10 am.*

*Everyone invited*



Transport will be available –  
please add your name to the  
list in the Bruce Hall.

## Keswick Convention 23

### 2023 Keswick Convention

*The theme of Keswick Convention 2023 is Human.*

*On the first page of the Bible, God declares, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness” (Genesis 1:26). The Convention will explore what it means for humans to be in God’s image, how it is to be lived out, how it is challenged in contemporary debates, and how that sin-marred image is renewed in Christ, fully human and fully God.*

*But “Human” is not a subject to be discussed and examined at a distance. For one thing, as Calvin famously said, “It is certain that man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked upon God’s face, and then descends from contemplating Him to scrutinize himself.” So we’ll gaze afresh on the God revealed supremely in Jesus Christ*

*But Jesus is also fully human, so we’ll look to him, and delight in him, fully God and fully human.*

*And we’ll hear afresh the calling that God gives to humanity, to live out his new creation purposes in his world, as his image-bearers.*

*So, we pray at the 2023 Convention that the Lord will give us a fresh vision of himself, a fresh love for Jesus Christ, and will inspire and equip us with a new sense of vocation, to live as his image-bearers in his world.*



**This was the introduction to the Keswick Convention 2023.** This year, the Keswick Convention’s theme was ‘Human’. It was the 148<sup>th</sup> Convention meeting. My great grandparents used to attend as my family comes from the Lake District but I didn’t start attending until recently when Adrian and I started to take the boys about 8 years ago.

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The Convention runs over 3 weeks and is totally free, running by donation only. We are in the 25% of convention attenders who camp for a whole week. We always go during the first week which is affectionately known as ‘the Scottish week’ as English schools aren’t yet on their summer break. This is the first time we haven’t met up with Liz and Alex Mitchell, but we were delighted to bump into their grandson James who still loves to go with his friends.



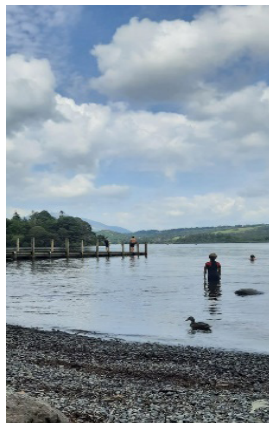
For those of you who aren’t familiar with the set-up, the Convention is run by **Keswick Ministries** (2023 Convention: Human - Keswick Ministries) who provide year-long opportunities for training for UK and overseas church leaders using the

newly refurbished Pencil Factory building, a fantastic resource bookable for church events.

The week begins with an age all service on the Saturday night, and by the following day, children and young people attend their groups both in the morning and the evening with a ‘late nite’ event for teenagers and young adults. Throughout the day there are prayer sessions and a range of seminars which you can attend. There is nothing quite like a group of thousands of fellow Christians singing their praises with a worship band (Emu in this case).

There are various venues eg Keswick Methodist Church which stream the major events for those who prefer smaller groups. In the evenings Adrian and I tend to go to Basecamp to join others sitting around tables and sipping coffee-this helps us to stay alert after a night under canvas. Basecamp includes a large bookshop called ‘10 of those’ run by an enthusiastic leader and a wide variety of representatives of different Mission groups.

Having attended the Convention over the years, we now look forward to meeting up with different UK wide friends, and we spend the afternoons with them, typically climbing one of the nearby mountains, cycling to nearby villages and jumping into Derwent Water after a boat cruise around

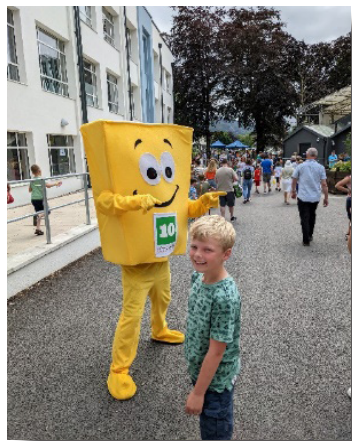


the lake. The setting within the Lake District is part of the attraction for us all, and it provides endless opportunities to enjoy God's amazing Creation. This year there was an added attraction of a daily fly-by with F16 fighter jets giving us a free display; both exhilarating and unnerving at the same time.

All of the main sessions and some of the seminars are shown on You Tube live and then recorded and can be accessed free. <https://www.youtube.com/user/keswickconvention>

The 'Human' theme was interwoven into bible readings and analysis and seminars giving us the confidence to confess our sins in the knowledge that we are chosen by God, Children of God and assured of everlasting life. The theme for next year will be 'Resurrection' and God willing, we will be

there again. We really missed being able to attend during the Pandemic and find it fuels our faith and supports what we hope will be a journey to faith for our boys. We would love to see you there!



*'My highlight was going to the lake to swim followed by eating crepes from the van. The groups were really really good'* **Joseph**

*'My highlights were finding I was fit enough to get up Skiddaw relatively quickly, playing Pitch and Putt with the boys and the Worship'* **Adrian**

*'My highlight was fellowship with friends in my home county'* **Becky**

*'My highlight was going to the 'late nite' sessions and jumping into the lake with friends'* **Thomas**

**Becky and Adrian and the Davidson family**



## Children Enjoy Learning



14<sup>th</sup> May 2017 was possibly the last Sunday School at Trinity Gask and Kinkell Parish Church. That year we held monthly joint church services where we held a Sunday School at Trinity Gask.

It was a surprisingly good day for May. The children that day were learning about Abraham whom God called at the age of 75 to leave Haran with his wife and belongings and travel to the land that God would give them. They had no children but God told him he would have many descendants, as many as the stars in the sky and the grains of sand on the seashore. As Abraham journeyed he camped in a tent.

Our wee Sunday School set up camp at Trinity Gask and cramped 9 into a 4 man tent to learn about Abraham and Sarah's adventures with God as they travelled with their tent.

Another great memory was at Pentecost when Klaus made popcorn during the service to illustrate the power of the Holy Spirit. The fragrance was delicious. I'm grateful to God that six years on these children are still part of a church family.



Liz Mitchell

## Called To Service In The Ministry

“Can God speak to me today?” “Does He have a plan for my life?”

“Can He guide me into it?”

These were the questions I asked God as a child.



Now as I look back over the years, I can answer all these questions with a resounding, ‘yes, He does and He can’. From a very early age, I just “knew” that one day I would serve God in some kind of Christian ministry. For years, I assumed that would be somewhere abroad, as a missionary, although, I kept all these thoughts and dreams strictly to myself.

At High School, there was, however, one rather remarkable development. One day, after the Latin Class, the teacher called me back and announced, without preamble, “Ann, I would like to teach you Greek”. To say I was stunned would be an understatement! I had no more desire to learn Greek, than I had to learn Hindustani! Latin was bad enough! The strange thing was, that over several weeks, I couldn’t get that strange “out of the blue “offer, out of my mind! What bothered me, was the persistent thought; “The New Testament was originally written in Greek, maybe this is God?” So, after six conflicted weeks I returned to the Latin Teacher to stun him by accepting his offer! This began eighteen months of staying behind after school for an hour, three days a week, as I struggled to get my head round Greek grammar. And hard work it was too. The significance of this interlude only became apparent much later.

After school came university, then several years of teaching English, which I regarded strictly as “an interim measure,” as I found my feet in the world of work, and waited for specific guidance - re *The Mission Field*.

Things however, seldom work out as neatly as you might hope! Nothing was clarifying re *The Mission Field*, but what did happen, was that I was invited

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(on two separate occasions actually) to serve as Travelling Secretary for Intervarsity Fellowship (now Universities and Colleges Christian Unions). The job involved working with student Christian Groups, training them how to plan programmes; lead Bible Study Groups and Prayer Meetings; set up Conferences and plan Evangelical events in Colleges and Universities.

The first time I was asked, I refused. When, however, I was approached again two years later, with the same invitation, I absolutely knew that “This was God calling me”.



There followed three incredibly enriching years of living with students in residencies or flats throughout Scotland; sharing with them and working alongside them in the planning and setting up of evangelical events; and worshipping with them on Sundays in whichever Churches attended by those with whom I happened to be living at the time. I felt I learned infinitely more

than I ever gave from these amazing young people. (Many of whom remain among my closest friends to this day).

Meanwhile, quietly, something new was beginning to take shape and grow in my heart. I began to get feedback from students who had left university, sharing how discouraging and difficult they found it, to serve as Christians in Churches in Scotland. “Why should it be so difficult?” they would ask. I knew only too well. I had experienced it often enough! No real fellowship; definitely no outreach; worship that often felt like the performance of a well-rehearsed routine; no one it seemed, ever being converted, or discovering a new depth and reality in their relationship with God. What had happened to the passion and committed relationships that characterised the early Christians in Acts?

What was taking shape in my heart, was a deep and passionate longing to see a revival of the Church in Scotland. I had found my mission field – not in some distant land, but right here in Scotland! This was where I felt called to serve and minister.

The next step clearly, was to get myself a theological qualification, so I

made an appointment to speak to a lecturer at New College in Edinburgh about the possibility of my completing the three-year BD course in two years, Since I already had a higher diploma in religious studies, which I hoped might exempt me from certain parts of the course. "It might", the lecturer explained, "there was one proviso, I had to have a knowledge of Greek".

There and then, it was as if a great light shone in that room, as I saw how amazingly God had foreseen and planned for this moment. I was, after all, on the path of His choosing. So, I began the next stage of my journey with God.

**Ann Ballentine**





## **A Big Thank You To Helen Stewart**

Helen Stewart served as an Elder at Muthill for 43 years and was the longest serving female Elder.

Her love for and commitment to our Lord and the church has been evident in the way she carried out her duties.

She was always willing to lend a hand, always taking her turn on door duty, and was a very caring elder who took her pastoral duties seriously, caring about and visiting the folk in her district. It wasn't a duty for her, she did it out of compassion – it was just Helen!

What can I say about Helen and the communion cloths! As I have said to Helen before, the manner in which she cared for these cloths so that they were in pristine condition for the service of communion could only be done through love. The time she spent cleaning and ironing these cloths will never be known but I know she did it as a service to her Lord.

Thank you, Helen, for your dedicated service as an Elder to Muthill Parish Church.

May you continue to have good health and may the Lord bless you and keep you.

We are also so sorry that you recently lost your beloved dog, Sara.

**Helen-May Bayne**

**Soup and Sandwich lunches resume**

**Wednesday 6th September 2023**

**Every week**

**Everyone Welcome**



## A Fresh Start

There is a story which comes from Japan.

One day an extraordinary rainbow spanned the sky with an arch of shining colour. It glowed so brilliantly against the clouds that everybody streamed out of their houses and gazed up into the sky. As they stood with upturned faces, a gentle rainbow –tinted rain fell upon them and, as it touched their faces, a strange transformation took place. The rain drew out of their faces vivid patches, the colour of their skins. Some were disfigured by ugly blotches, some by searing red scars, some by sickly yellow blob, some by vile black stains.



At the same time, word was spread abroad that Jesus was coming back to the world the

following week but He was coming only for those with clean faces.

Everywhere there was consternation and alarm.

When Sunday came, the churches were crowded, but there were no preachers in the pulpits. In desperation, people tried every method they could think of to make their faces clean. Special soap had no effect and scouring seemed only to make matters worse. The ugly blotches showed through the heaviest make-up. Even skin transplants did not work for the new skin immediately took on the colour of the old. As the days passed and the time of Jesus' coming drew nearer there was shame, anguish and despair everywhere.



The word spread abroad that Jesus was coming the next day! Behind the closed doors of their home, a husband and wife sat and looked at each other, despair in their eyes. His face was

marred by a flaming red stain... hers was disfigured by a blotch of bitter blue.

He spoke sadly: "It looks as though neither of us is going to be able to go

with Jesus tomorrow. I know that I have not been a good husband to you... but I never meant to hurt you. I do love you. I'd just like to say that I am sorry..."

Brokenly she whispered: "I drove you away... I am sorry too..." As she said this she began to cry. The slow tears ran down his cheeks also and as the tears fell away a strange thing began to take place... their faces were washed clean.

**Have YOU ever wished you could leave the past behind and make a fresh start?** The good news of Easter is that you can! Jesus is alive. Living! Living as truly as you yourself are! He himself has shown us the way...

**It is the way of saying sorry.**

*"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9)*

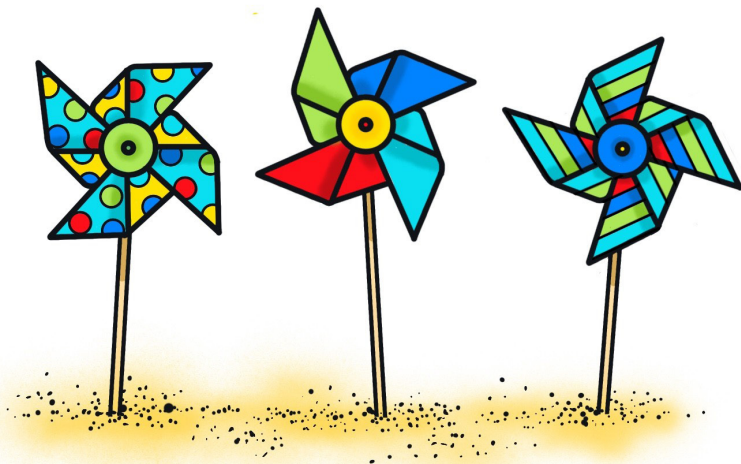
**It is the way of coming to Him**

*"He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for iniquities.. and with His stripes, we are healed" (Isaiah 53:3-6)*

**It is the way of receiving new life from Him**

*"When anyone is joined to Christ, he is a new being. The old is gone, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17)*

**Christians are not perfect – only forgiven! We all need the forgiveness and new life which only Christ can give.**



## He Gave Us Eyes To See Them

Michael Burgess continues his look at great works of Christian art and in this edition we feature his commentary on 'Herdsman with Cows by a River' by Albert Cuyp

'What is this life, if full of care, we have no time to stand and stare?'

Those words of W H Davies provide the theme for this year. The paintings chosen celebrate creation in all its wonder and diversity, and we are encouraged to take

time to look anew and so become aware of the author of that creation. But this month it is the other way around as we sense the animals looking at us in 'Herdsman with Cows by a River' painted in 1650 by the Dutch artist, Albert Cuyp.



It is a very ordinary scene of nature. Yet

there is a radiance and a tranquillity that strike us as we see the herd of cows standing in the still waters. Around them there is a lot of movement: birds fly in the sky, boats are sailing off into the sunset and two fishermen are busy at their work to the left of the canvas. But the cows and their herdsman are quiet and contented, relishing this moment of the day closing, and contemplating the world going by. And two of those cows seem to be looking out into our own world. In many of Albert Cuyp's paintings the sun bathes each scene in a golden light. Here the clouds are gathering in the sky as the sun sinks down in the west, but there is still a glowing calmness brought by the light of the sky above.

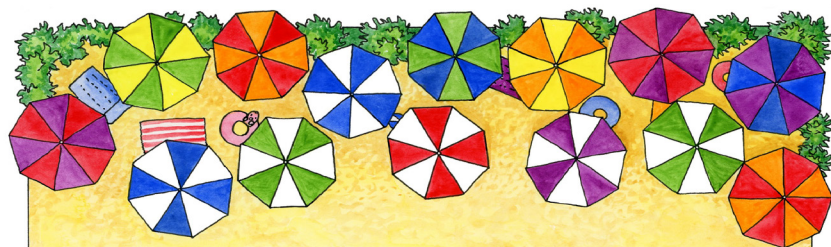
In the summer months we are probably planning or having holidays. Some holidays can be a frenetic rush, others are those occasions when we simply sit back and relax, letting what we see around us bring refreshment and renewal. It is the way we are encouraged to savour the joy and delight of Scripture in what is called *lectio divina*. Monastic teachers compared it to cows grazing in the



field. They pointed to four stages: Lectio – we take a bite of scripture; Meditatio – we chew on that word; Oratio – we savour its flavour and nourishment; and Contemplatio – we digest its goodness to feed body and soul.

The herd of cows in Albert Cuyyp's painting have spent the day doing just that – grazing and ruminating in the fields nearby. The herdsman has brought them to the river to relax in the water. Soon they will take the journey home to the farm and the safety of the cowshed. Tomorrow will bring them the opportunity to graze anew in the gift of another day. Walt Whitman wrote in one of his poems, 'I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contain'd, I stand and look at them long and long.' As we stand and look at the cows in this painting, perhaps we may realise that whether at work or on holiday, in Sunday worship or Bible reading at home, God can feed us through His world around and in His word in Scripture. As long as we take the time and the care to savour the delights that He offers us.

Michael Burgess



**Jesus said, "Come to me, everyone who is tired and burdened, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28**

## Suffering And The Image Of God

*This reflection is written by Dr Ruth M Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.*

During the cost-of-living crisis, Food Banks have become a necessity for many desperate families. When they are given food, people reveal a variety of emotions: from relief, happiness, and hope, to quiet sadness, resignation, and desperation.



Most often they display a mixture of several of these feelings at the same time.

I believe that our cries for answers at times like this, and our deep longing for things to be better, kinder, more just, less painful and chaotic, are a sign that we are made in the image of God. The Bible describes God creating men and women, instructing them to rule over the earth, and giving them the freedom to choose what they will do. The world God made was described as “very

good”, but human wrongdoing caused a rift between people and God, and also between us and the rest of creation.

From a scientist’s perspective, it seems that the *potential* for accidents, disease and death – for both animals and humans – may have been part of God’s very good creation, and there was a real threat of famine, albeit far rarer than in our current mismanaged version of creation? How would we have managed life in what Genesis describes as an un-subdued world if our relationship with God hadn’t broken down, and evil hadn’t been unleashed? Maybe painful experiences would have been experienced as challenges that brought us closer to each other and to God, rather than bringing us the experience of suffering (which I would define more particularly as involving distress, isolation and fear)? Of course, these are theoretical questions that no one can answer, but perhaps they are worth exploring.

God has already responded to suffering at a root level by taking it on Himself. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus broke the power of sin and death. We do not yet see the final results of those decisive actions – the end of suffering for all those who trust Him – but we can already feel their impact. For example, many people have experienced the wonderful effect, either in their own lives or by receiving kindness from others, which is described by these words: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:26).

Some of the people who receive food are, in the words of one community leader, “really desperate”, but yet they still trust God to meet their needs. My hope is that the worldwide Church will, with God’s help, be part of the answer to their prayers – demonstrating our true status as people made in the image of God.

Ruth Bancewicz

## **SU report**

### **Crieff Scripture Union Holiday Club**

#### **The Great Glen Green Welly Garden Show**

We were delighted that Bruce Lockhart, SU’s new Scottish National Holiday Club Organiser, brought and lead this holiday club to Crieff the first week of the school holidays. Team members were drawn from churches in Muthill, Crieff, Dundee, Abernethy, Dunfermline & St Madoes. About 30 enthusiastic children attended. Five of whom had a Muthill connection.

The children were divided into 5 teams with fierce competition to win team points from games, craft, bible knowledge, behaviour and building potting sheds. There was energetic worship, a messy challenge, potted sports and most importantly a Bible message and prayer. Over the five days we explored how humans have messed up the beautiful world God made for us by our sinful ways, but God sent Jesus to pay the penalty for our wrongdoing, so we could, if we believe in Him go and live with him in a beautiful new heaven. Yes, we covered from Genesis to Revelation and it was fabulous!

**Liz Mitchell**

### **Can You Help?**

Muthill Church is needing some help as the old stalwarts are getting older and unable to look after the needs of the building and surrounds as much as they used to do. We require to find someone in or around the village who has some spare time and is of a practical nature to keep our surrounds tidy and presentable.

We are extremely lucky to have our hedges trimmed and our Church cleaned in a very efficient manner but we need someone to take on the wee jobs that can sometimes get missed. This is not a voluntary post as remuneration will be offered.

If that person is you or if you know of anyone who could fit the bill, then contact Helen-May Bayne on 681415 and Willie Bell on 681362.

## Do Buildings Really Matter

Often, when I walk into Muthill Parish Church, my mind goes back to other, slightly different, places in which I have worshipped over the years. In my mid-teens we went out to Singapore as a family. Suddenly, from walking down to a cold Methodist Church in Rosyth each Sunday, most Sundays we were driving the length of Singapore Island to attend church at

the British Naval Base. That Church had open sides and ceiling fans did their best to keep the building and occupants cool. Each service ended with the hymn 'Eternal Father Strong to save' while we thought of 'those in peril on the sea'.



Back in Scotland, and during my nurse training, I was confirmed in the Congregational Church in Edinburgh. After training I went out to Zambia to work and remember celebrating Christmas

with carols under a large fig tree on the Main Street in Kabwe. Bricks and mortar are certainly not necessary to feel that one is near God.

Four years in Abu Dhabi followed during which I attended St. Andrews Church whenever possible and also met my future husband. We were married back in the UK in the United Reformed Church in Yorkshire, where I then lived, and then went out to Qatar.

Church buildings were not allowed in Qatar at that time but services were held surreptitiously in the English School's main hall. I remember on one occasion travelling to an Easter service with a large piece of wood on the top of our car. Another family arrived with another large piece of wood and a cross was assembled forthwith for our Easter service!

Kuala Lumpur followed in my 'trip around Churches of the world!' As we lived there for a few months we attended the C of E church in central KL, but our time there came to an abrupt halt with the sudden death of my beloved husband.

Membership of the United Reformed Church in Newport Pagnell followed upon my return to the UK but being an inveterate traveller, a few years later I was back in Abu Dhabi.



I worked for six years in Ruwais, an 'oil town' 240 miles from Abu Dhabi city. There was no church there but Ministers from the various Christian churches in Abu Dhabi came to the town every month or so to conduct services in private houses. My final years in Abu Dhabi were spent in the city itself and I was able to regularly attend

Friday services (Thursday and Friday were our weekend). The service I attended each week was held in an Egyptian Orthodox Church as the main Church building was being used by the Filipino community which had a larger congregation than we did. Those attending the services were from a variety of non-conformist Churches from the UK, USA, South Africa, Australasia, India and various other parts of the world. Shoes had to be removed before entering the highly decorated, incense laden Church but then things became more familiar. The service (low C of E) was conducted by the Church of England Minister and we were part of the diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf. After each service coffee was served in the garden of the manse which was also in the 'Christian Compound' and halfway through our chatting the call to prayer echoed from the mosque on the other side of the wall!

My return to the UK allowed me to return to the United Reformed Church for eleven years and now I am a member of Muthill Parish Church. So many different ways of celebrating God's Love and worshipping together but all equally wonderful and uplifting!

**Alison Hockly**





## Holiday Impressions

Helen-May's excellent talk at worship on 9<sup>th</sup> July reminiscing on holidays and her love of beaches sparked a thought in my own mind as to how I approach and remember my own holiday breaks. Over recent years they have been sparser and shorter but they always provide refreshment and time for reflection.



They are also by choice largely staycations, and I usually hope for ingredients such as good weather, the opportunity to engage with nature, the pleasure of eating-out and after so many years of living overseas, the opportunity to experience my homeland through the eyes of a tourist.

This year, Inveraray was our destination of choice because of the opportunity to enjoy part of Argyll that was largely unexplored by us. We also thought it was a good area for our dog to enjoy with hills, woodlands, rivers and

lochs to explore. In the event, it proved to be a great choice with plenty of the desired daily walks, a lovely base packed with sites of historical interest and great places to eat. The cottage too which we selected was also brilliantly located just down the loch with a magical view of the town both day and night and offering a peaceful setting in its own extensive grounds with beautiful vistas



out over Loch Fyne.

The contacts you make also contribute to the overall memories that you take away from a place. In the case of this holiday, I found the people friendly and the overall impression was definitely positive. We all want quality service which makes you feel special as a client visiting a new place and I am pleased to record that this was very much the case. Whether this

is influenced in any way by eagerness to impress because of the limited season that Inveraray has, I don't know, but they certainly convinced me that I should return.

I also had the opportunity to attend the local church where the minister proved to be entertaining, engaging and challenging. It was good to see



members of the congregation participating in readings and prayers. The service was also complimented by an excellent AV system. Although the congregation was small, elderly and suffering from amalgamation just as we are experiencing in Perthshire it also seemed alive as I was impressed to see that the

annual church sale taking place the week I was there had already raised over £4k.



I didn't go to the jail for fear of being detained, and perhaps missed one place of interest, but the Castle was memorable as was St. Conan's Kirk on Loch Awe which is one of the finest small churches I have ever visited.

So, I return refreshed and interested to reflect on how our own village and church compare in welcoming outsiders.

**Sandy Hutchison**



### Muthill Gala 2023

The Muthill Gala week which ran from 17-25th June had a mixture of very warm and not so good weather this year but it didn't spoil the enthusiasm. Starting with cinema by the Auchterarder Picture House the week was full of



different events ranging from Bowling, Whisky Tasting and Line Dancing to a Pudding Night and a Car Treasure Hunt. The highlight, as always, was the Sunday parade led by Pipers, with the village Princess in a smart open-topped sports car, followed by a family gathering and entertainment in Highlandman Park. Unfortunately, the rain came down most of the afternoon, but there was still a goodly attendance and much happiness all round. Thanks are due to the organisers Maureen Macgregor and Kathleen Sweeney and their small band of helpers who brilliantly did all the hard background work



of erecting and dismantling stalls, seats and tables. Muthill Parish Church had a biscuit decorating stall for children which proved a great attraction. There was also a prayer tree and some information on the church activities. Muthill House Group 2 were once again in charge and with wobbly tables, sweeties and icing everywhere including on the grass, and not forgetting the team's

wild hats, much fun was had by all.

## St James Concert

Friends at St James, and especially Annie Carver, who organised a fabulous midsummer concert on 24th June. Several of us from the Parish church attended.



It started with wine, soft drinks, sandwiches and canapes in the Millennium Park and then the assembled company walked across the road to St James Church for the concert performance. The artists were the Guildhall Singers, students from the renowned Guildhall School of Music and Drama in the Barbican, London. They entertained the audience with a beautiful selection of classical solos and duets concluding with all three performers singing more popular renditions of

'Perhaps' by John Denver, Danny Boy, Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair and finally The Skye Boat Song. It was truly a very special performance of international standard and certainly deserved the standing ovation given at the end.



The names of the singers- Ambrose Chiu, Harun Tekin and Cuan Durkin are each worth noting as they are likely to become well known in time.

It was also good to see Duncan, the Rector and his wife Catriona, settling in well and it is to be hoped that more combined events of this nature will be organised in future as we get to know each other better.

## Family Worker

The Session are examining the possibility of a part time family worker appointment. The future of the congregation depends on attracting more families and youth and without an incumbent minister, the Session have agreed that this option should be investigated. Other churches in the area are known to have made such appointments or are in process of trying to secure such support.



### Scarecrows Take Over The Village



This year the village excelled in displaying over 40 scarecrows for its traditional Scarecrow Fortnight. Adding to the colour of Muthill in Bloom's floral tubs and baskets the village looked resplendent with eye-catching sights round every corner and was a veritable display of community effort. Congratulations go to Susan Crawford with all her social media encouragement with great photos and to all who made the effort to prepare their scarecrows. Adjacent and below are some of this year's splendid crows.



### Other Village News

We are also pleased to welcome a new eating place in the village, the Coorie Inn replacing the Barley Bree. It is open from Wednesday to Saturday each week for bar lunches (12.00-15.00 hrs), restaurant dinner (18.00-21.00 hrs) and on Sundays Bar Lunch (12.00-15.00hrs) Restaurant lunch (12.00-18.30hrs). Reservations by telephone 07411807099 or 07980257765 or email [information@coorie-inn.com](mailto:information@coorie-inn.com).

Also good news for the Christmas season is that the village is to receive a dozen lamppost lights from Crieff so this year there will be more sparkle around the village in addition to the Christmas tree. Thanks go to Corrina Roberston, Katie Cepok and Davie Woods for working on this project.



## Finance And Property

The church finances continue to remain healthy and at the last meeting of the Kirk Session a further donation of £600 was approved for the work of the Scripture Union Regional Worker, Roy Osborne.

In regard to the church building, repair work to the electrical supply following the PAT inspection is underway and some maintenance work has been done on the manse. The manse is currently being rented out and both the house and garden are being well maintained. The Vision Committee continue to look at loft insulation in the church, improving the audio-visual system and a possible re-arrangement of the church layout to allow more flexibility of usage.

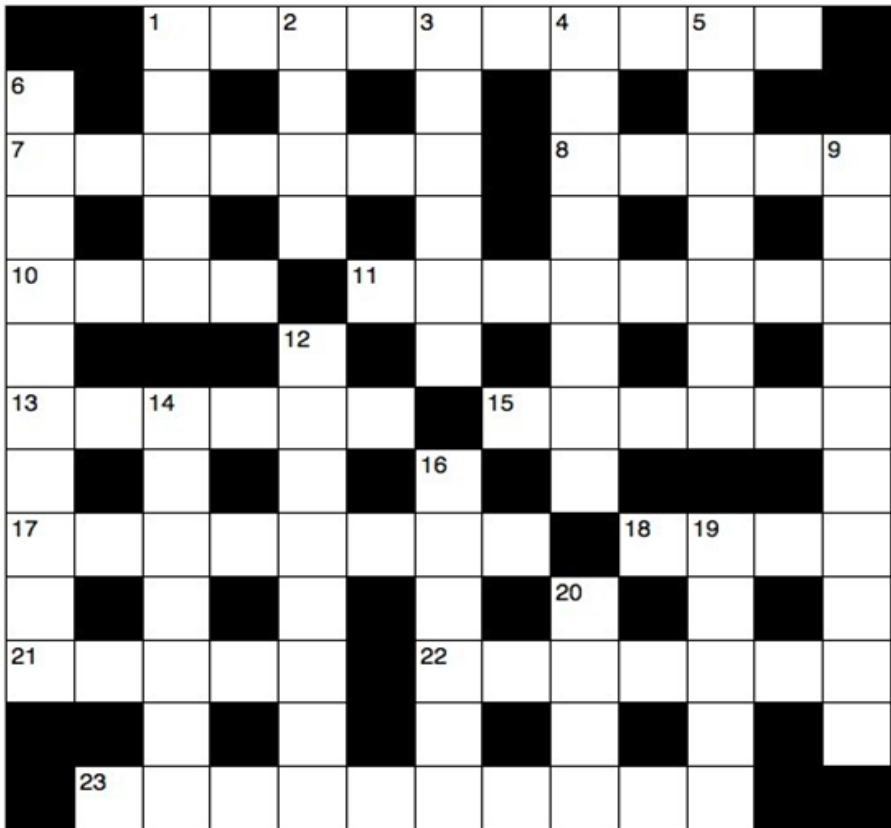
## Elder Appointments

Graham Donaldson has been reappointed as our Presbytery Elder for 2023/2024. With one or two Elders retiring or resigning from the Eldership new Elders are in the process of being appointed. The Elders from Trinity Gask and Kinkell Church will also be invited to join Muthill Kirk Session.

## Worship Services

With the closure of our linked charge of Trinity Gask and Kinkell the Kirk Session will be giving consideration to the time of worship on a Sunday and it may be that it will change to an earlier time. The wider congregation is to be consulted.

# Crossword



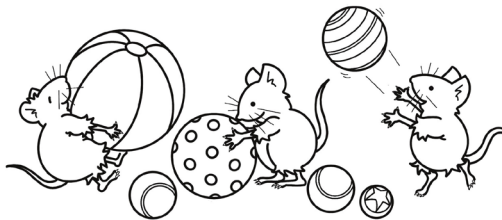
## Across

- 1 Relating to the Jewish day of rest (10)
- 7 Point of view (Matthew 22:17) (7)
- 8 20th-century Brethren philanthropist whose construction company became one of the UK's biggest, Sir John — (5)
- 10 Girl's name (4)
- 11 Peter was accused of being one in the courtyard of the high priest's

- 
- house (Luke 22:59) (8)
- 13 The fifth of the 'seven churches' (Revelation 3:1–6) (6)
- 15 'Now the famine was — in Samaria' (1 Kings 18:2) (6)
- 17 Banned by the seventh Commandment (Exodus 20:14) (8)
- 18 Insect most closely associated with itching (1 Samuel 24:14) (4)
- 21 Bantu tribe which gives its name to tiny landlocked country in Southern Africa (5)
- 22 Familiar material in churches that use an overhead projector (7)
- 23 Last book of the Bible (10)

### Down

- 1 The young David's favourite weapon (1 Samuel 17:40) (5)
- 2 'Your vats will — over with new wine' (Proverbs 3:10) (4)
- 3 Once yearly (Exodus 30:10) (6)
- 4 Milled it (anag.) (3-5)
- 5 Region north of Damascus of which Lysanias was tetrarch (Luke 3:1) (7)
- 6 Comes between Philippians and 1 Thessalonians (10)
- 9 Lake where the first disciples were called (Luke 5:1–11) (10)
- 12 Abusive outburst (8)
- 14 Are loud (anag.) (7)
- 16 Printing errors (6)
- 19 'Take my yoke upon you and — from me' (Matthew 11:29) (5)
- 20 Jacob's third son (Genesis 29:34) (4)



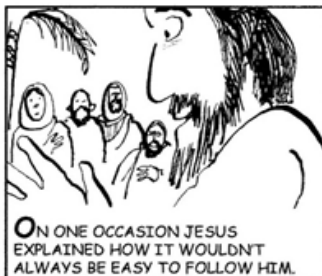
\*Solution on page 35

## Bible Parable

### The tale of the Tower Builder

BUILDING SITE FOR SALE

JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ON ONE OCCASION JESUS EXPLAINED HOW IT WOULDN'T ALWAYS BE EASY TO FOLLOW HIM.



JESUS BEGAN, IF ONE OF YOU PLANS TO BUILD A TOWER...

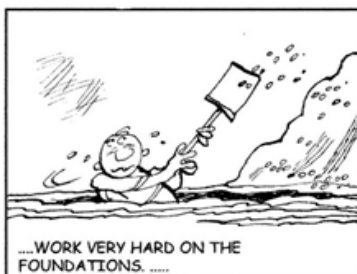
...YOU'LL FIRST NEED TO WORK HOW MUCH IT WILL COST.



IF YOU DON'T DO THE SUMS...



...YOU MIGHT MAKE A START, ....



....WORK VERY HARD ON THE FOUNDATIONS. ....



...THEN START TO LAY THE BRICKS,...



...BUT SUDDENLY RUN OUT OF MONEY!!

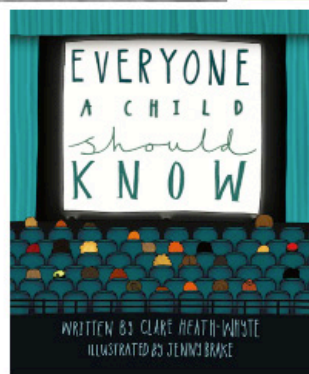
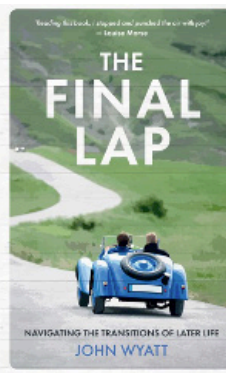
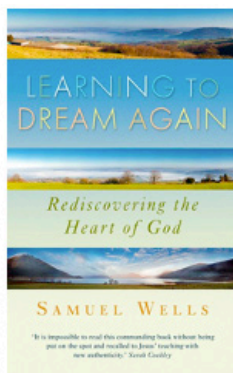
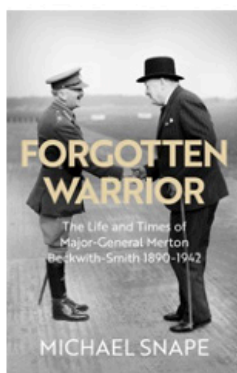
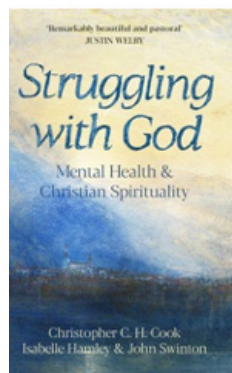


THEN PEOPLE WILL LAUGH AT YOU!



WE NEED TO REALISE THAT ALTHOUGH FOLLOWING JESUS IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO, IT'S ALSO A GREAT CHALLENGE.

## New Book Reviews



### Struggling with God – Mental Health & Christian Spirituality

By Christopher C H Cook, Isabelle Hamley, and John Swinton, SPCK, £14.99

This book gets to the heart of a predicament for many Christians: when it feels as if our mental health struggles are overwhelming - and our capacity for faith and hope and love is diminished - how is it possible to maintain, never mind nourish, our relationship with God? The truth is that Jesus helped people wrestling with mental health problems. Many familiar conditions, such as anxiety and depression, and more severe ones, including bipolar affective disorder and schizophrenia, are addressed by the authors here. They explore the impact such mental health disorders can have on individual Christians, Church and society. Each chapter includes biblical reflections, prayers, questions for individual/group study, and pointers to further reading. Overall, it presents a Christian vision of spiritual and mental wellbeing through prayerful struggling with God.





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## **Learning to Dream Again – Recovering the Heart of God**

**By Samuel Wells, Canterbury Press, £14.99**

In 36 short reflections, Sam Wells explores what influences and shapes the way that we live, love, think, read Scripture, feel and dream. He helps the reader to grapple with cultural forces and contemporary questions, and offers a way forward that is grounded in the reality of a suffering world, and yet is open to transformation by the life and joy of God.

## **The Final Lap – Navigating the Transitions of Later Life**

**By John Wyatt, 10Publishing, £6.99**

Life's a marathon, with many highs and lows along the way. As we approach retirement we transition into a new stage of our long race, presenting us with a range of possibilities and pitfalls to navigate.

John Wyatt gently invites Christians to think how they can approach the next stages of life well. He considers the move firstly from work to retirement, then independency to dependency, and finally from life to death as we approach the finishing line.

Whilst being honest about the struggles of each transition, *The Final Lap* lays out the wonderful opportunities God gives in every stage. And the better prepared we are to face each transition, the better we can face the challenges, and the more fully we can embrace the future with hope and joy.

## **Forgotten Warrior – the Life and Times of Major-General Merton Beckwith-Smith**

**By Michael Snape, SPCK, £19.99**

Major-General Beckwith-Smith DSO MC was the most senior English soldier to die in a Japanese prisoner of war camp during the Second World War. Yet until now he has been strangely forgotten by history. He commanded the British 18th Division during the catastrophic Fall of Singapore in February 1942. A highly respected and much decorated veteran of the First World War, he was captured along with tens of thousands of other soldiers - British, Indian, Australian, and Malay - who were then held prisoner on Singapore Island. Amidst hunger, disease and widespread despair in Changi, over the next six months he rallied the spirits of his soldiers, created a make-shift university and theatre, and helped to inspire a remarkable renewal of collective church life. At the same time, he improved conditions for hospital patients and encouraged sports and other recreations. While the fate of many of the men he led was to toil, and often die, on the infamous Burma Railway, Beckwith-Smith was exiled to Karenko Camp, Formosa (present-day Taiwan), where, mistreated and malnourished, he died of diphtheria and heart failure in November 1942.

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## **Unconventional – a Practical Guide to Women’s Ministry in the Local Church**

**By Sharon Dickens, 10 Publishing, £8.99**

How could you begin - and sustain - a women’s ministry that works in your local church setting? The author shares her experiences of starting a women’s ministry from scratch, with all its frustrations and joy, and urges you to learn from her mistakes and benefit from her extensive experience.

If there are a number of women in your church who would like to encourage each other in their faith, this book may well be a useful way to get a group started.

## **Everyone a Child Should Know**

**By Claire Heath-Whyte & Jenny Brake, 10Publishing, £9.99**

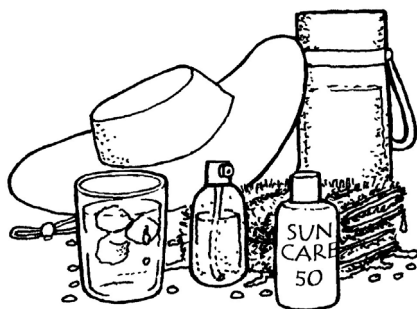
It’s never too early to introduce the next generation to some of the heroes of faith. In this book, children will meet 52 Christian men and women (one for each week of the year) from all walks of life who wanted to live for their friend Jesus. There are missionaries, martyrs, writers, reformers, politicians, and poets. Their stories are exciting and inspiring and will show children how anyone’s life can exemplify the command in *1 Corinthians 10:31*: “*whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*”

## **Cheeky Pandas: The Lost Voice – a story about kindness**

**By Pete James, SPCK, £7.99**

Children are invited to join the Cheeky Pandas, and have a fun, action-packed everyday adventure at their treehouse music studio. Rory plays hide and seek with CJ and Milo, but gets distracted when Lulu appears and is unable to speak. Rory helps Lulu to find her lost voice, searching the treehouse and the garden before ordering a surprise from the Pandaroo delivery. Will Lulu be able to sing Benji’s kindness song? Based on the free online animation, the book encourages children to think about what it means to show love by being kind to one another.

*Find out more about Cheeky Pandas® at <https://cheekypandas.com/>*



## Editor's Note

The next edition of the magazine will be our Autumn 2023 edition. The magazine will be published on Sunday 15th October, and so the deadline for submitting articles, intimations, letters etc. will be Friday 6th October. Please submit this to [macahiph@gmail.com](mailto:macahiph@gmail.com) or send to Sandy Hutchison, GreenBrae West, Pitkellony Street, Muthill PH5 2AF.

Please also 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.

## Wanted

We are in the process of updating the pictures of previous ministers to hang along with the many others already on display. The vestry also acts as the church office and so it must be welcoming as well as practical. At present it is limited on the admin side. Does anyone have a spare filing cabinet or something similar that they could donate? The cupboards are already full. Once we have the pictures ready for re-hanging it would also be great to have 2-3 persons to help organise the layout. Anyone interested?

## Useful Contacts

### Useful Local Telephone Numbers

|                               |             |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>NHS 24</b>                 | <b>111</b>  |
| <b>NHS Emergency</b>          | <b>999</b>  |
| <b>Hospitals:</b>             |             |
| Crieff Community Hospital     | 01764653173 |
| Perth Royal Infirmary         | 01738623311 |
| Ninewells Hospital, Dundee    | 01382660111 |
| <b>Crieff Medical Centre:</b> |             |
| Blue Practice                 | 01764652283 |
| Red Practice                  | 01764657060 |
| <b>Crieff Pharmacies:</b>     |             |
| Boots                         | 01764652310 |
| Davidsons                     | 01764652177 |
| Strathearn                    | 01764654876 |
| Torlum                        | 01764652727 |
| <b>Church Of Scotland:</b>    |             |
| Perth Presbytery              | 01738451177 |
| 121 George Street             | 01312255722 |
| <b>Police:</b>                |             |
| Emergency                     | <b>999</b>  |
| Non-Emergency                 | <b>101</b>  |
| Action Fraud Scotland         | <b>101</b>  |
| <b>Schools:</b>               |             |
| Crieff High School            | 01764657600 |
| Crieff Primary School         | 01764657888 |
| Morrison's Academy:           |             |
| General and Secondary         | 01764653885 |
| Primary                       | 01764657196 |
| Ardvreck School               | 01764653112 |
| <b>Veterinary Practice:</b>   |             |
| Crieff Vets                   | 01764652086 |

### Crossword Solution:

ACROSS:: 1, Sabbatical.

7, Opinion. 8, Laing. 10, Olga. 11, Galilean. 13, Sardis. 15, Severe. 17, Adultery. 18, Flea. 21, Swazi. 22, Acetate. 23, Revelation.

DOWN: 1, Sling. 2, Brim. 3, Annual. 4, Ill-timed. 5, Abilene. 6, Colossians. 9, Gennesaret. 12, Diatribe. 14, Roulade. 16, Errata. 19, Learn. 20, Levi.



## **The Mission Statements Of Our Linked Churches**

There are various definitions of a Mission Statement but in essence a Church Mission Statement is a broad statement, set out in clear and simple terms, which seeks to explain why we exist as a Church and what we hold dear in driving us forward

### **Muthill Parish Church**

aims to be

A place to find peace and welcome

A people growing in Christian faith and love

A presence at the heart and soul of the community

### **Trinity Gask and Kinkell Church**

aims to maintain our warm worship, close community and an open door

**Church Website:** [www.muthillparishchurch.co.uk](http://www.muthillparishchurch.co.uk)

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/muthillchurch>

**Email:** [muthillparish@outlook.com](mailto:muthillparish@outlook.com)

### **Magazine Graphics & Cover Photo**

Our cover picture theme this month is an aerial photography of Trinity Gask Church. Thanks to Raffie for providing the graphics for the magazine and helping in the production.”

Registered Scottish Charities

Muthill Parish Church - SC004984

Trinity Gask & Kinkell - SC000004