

# The Link—Autumn 2025

The Church of Scotland Parish of  
Ardoch and Blackford Parish Church



**Part of the Sunday morning livestream team at Ardoch**

## **Our Normal Sunday Timetable**

Ardoch: Service and Live stream 10:00am

Blackford: Prayer 11:00am; Service 11:30am

For variations on the last Sunday of each month, see back page.

Scottish Charity Number SC000139

[ardochparishchurch.org](http://ardochparishchurch.org) | [blackfordparishchurch.org](http://blackfordparishchurch.org)  
[facebook.com/ardochandblackfordparishchurch](https://facebook.com/ardochandblackfordparishchurch)

# Office Bearers in Ardoch and Blackford Parish Church

Minister:	Rev. Mairi Perkins, 01786 880948 The Manse, Feddal Road, Braco, FK15 9RE <a href="mailto:mperkins@churchofscotland.org.uk">mperkins@churchofscotland.org.uk</a>
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## Sleeping Giant: A call to the church to awake and arise

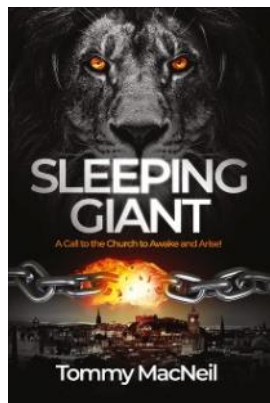
If you were in our service on Sunday 10th August, you would have heard Mairi speak about the influence of Rev Tommy MacNeil and his book based on the experience of the parish church in Stornoway where he is minister. Copies of the book were on offer to take away that day and more were ordered. Will you join us to discuss it in September? Speak to Mairi or quietly order a copy on [Amazon](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1851826000) or elsewhere and see where it takes us as a church.

To give you a bit of a flavour of the book, here's some of what Martin Fair wrote in his foreword. (Martin was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland when he came with his wife, Elaine, to lead worship in Ardoch to mark the 240th anniversary of the church in April 2021.)

*Tommy's writing is both a wake up call to the Church and a wonderful encouragement that God's not finished with Scotland yet!*

*I'd happily recommend it to professors, preachers and the faithful people who take their place in our pews Sunday by Sunday.*

*Tommy's writing makes clear his love for Scripture, his love for the Spirit, and his insistence that reliance upon both is necessary if there is to be any hope of revival in the days ahead.*



## Dear Friends,

I am sure that you will agree with me that we are experiencing the most glorious summer and it's not finished yet. Creation in all God's glory cannot restrain itself and it is such a powerful witness to us of the mightiness of God. It stands as a silent witness, a reminder of how God intended His world to be.



I want to say a massive thank you to Sandy, to all our Elders and to our congregations for their hard work and support to make so many events over these summer months possible as we bring Christ into the hearts and minds of many people.

But I believe Christ is asking us to do so much more. At a time when the Church of Scotland is struggling and hurting, I believe Christ is saying, "It doesn't have to be this way." Put your faith in God; bring it all to His feet and pray that He does something exciting with us. I believe Christ is saying that this is our time to turn our church around and make it the church He always knew it could be, should be and will be.

Two weeks ago I preached on revival because I believe God has laid it on my heart and I want Him to lay it on your heart. I presented Tommy MacNeil's book, *Sleeping Giant*, all about revival in Lewis. God's Spirit worked there and He can work here. That Sunday I challenged and prayed that God would lay it on the hearts of 10 people to join me in reading the book in their own time over the next month and then we will come together again in September and see how the Spirit has moved us. I prayed to God for 10 people but "No!" he said. "Mairi, I will give you 20!" And still people are asking for a copy to join the discussion. God is good. Praise the Lord.

God wants revival in our church. I want revival in our church. The question is simple ....Do You ?

May God's blessing be upon each and every one of you and that you carry the Spirit in your hearts.

**Rev Mairi**

We print and distribute around 130 copies of *The Link* across our parish. PDF copies are also available to download on the home pages of our websites. Our addresses are on the front cover. Blue underlined text then becomes a hyperlink to click or tap to go straight to the websites we're referring to for further information.

## Kirk Session Report

As summer turns to autumn, we have much to look forward to over the coming months.



There are 19 serving elders and our minister Mairi in the Kirk Session team. Jim Dawson, an active elder for 62 years, is now an “emeritus elder” and Jim Laurie, an elder for 67 years, has moved away from the area to be closer to his family. We thank them both most sincerely for their incredible number of years of service to the church. In May we sadly lost Moira Hanslip, one of our church stalwarts. Moira was an elder of Blackford Church for many years and the church Cradle Roll keeper and organist. We give thanks for her life and service to our Lord.

The Kirk Session is delighted to report that Mr Andrew Sinclair is our new Treasurer and will take up this role from Drew Muir within the next few weeks. We extend our sincere thanks to Drew for all his hard work and diligence as Treasurer and particularly through the more recent demands of the Union. We send our best wishes to Andrew and to Drew. Andrew’s email address is [andrewsinclair@sinclair-partnership.co.uk](mailto:andrewsinclair@sinclair-partnership.co.uk)



After many viewing appointments and correspondence, the Kirk Session can now confirm that the search for a new manse has been successfully accomplished! It is anticipated that the legal documentation on the new manse will be completed by the end of September. The existing manse is currently up for sale. The Kirk Session expresses their grateful thanks to Liz Paterson for her hard work and commitment in this matter.

The Stated Annual Meeting was held in Blackford Church on Sunday 29th June and was attended by 43 members of the congregation of Ardoch and Blackford Parish Church.

In the last edition of the Link, we reported on progress being made to engage fully in the *Five Marks of Mission* endorsed by the Church of Scotland. A special Kirk Session Team Get Together Day is being organised so that we can dedicate this time towards finalising and implementing our mission plans as we move forward.

Another important initiative that the team will be considering over the coming months is our participation in the Church of Scotland Stewardship programme, *Bearing Fruit* which entails carrying out a financial health check review to help identify potential opportunities for growth.

And great news just received in the last few days is that Lyndsey Thomas has successfully completed her Makaton Tutor Training, the costs of which were funded by the Presbytery Mission Fund. The Kirk Session and congregation extend our warmest congratulations to Lyndsey for all her hard work in achieving this status as a licensed Makaton Tutor.

And more exciting news! It has been confirmed that the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Right Rev Rosie Frew, will be visiting Blackford Church on Thursday 2nd October. The afternoon event will include the 90th Anniversary celebration of the Ardoch Guild and a presentation by Mairi, as the Presbytery project lead, on the work being done to help those with learning difficulties and autism. There will also be a very special Makaton "Sing and Sign" session led by Lyndsey Thomas and an opportunity to meet our Moderator. More details are in the Guild report later in The Link, but everyone is invited to come along on the 2nd October for this special event.

The Kirk Session is here to serve. To help us do this as best as possible, we would encourage dialogue and ideas from all members of our congregation on any matters or suggestions that you feel our Kirk Session team should review. Thank you for your support.

**Sandy Marshall, Session Clerk**

Due to an error by our bank when asked to close the old account, they closed the Ardoch and Blackford Parish Church account that was just set up for our Union. They are not able to reopen that account, so we need to pass on new details for anyone who needs them.



Do you do online banking to make one off or regular donations?  
Have you sent instructions to your bank to set up a regular payment?

The new account details effective from the 7th of August 2025 are:

**Account Name:** Ardoch and Blackford Parish, Church of Scotland

**Sort Code:** 80 - 22 - 60

**Account number:** 28398863

Donations and gifts by cash, cheque or contactless card or phone payments are not affected.

## Blackford Church Sunday School

This has been on a pause over the past few months but this will be back in place for primary aged children over the coming weeks. We are always on the lookout for people who can give some time to help with teaching the young ones so if you feel you would like to be involved with this, please call Laura on 682243. It would be great to have a group amongst whom we could share this important activity.

New volunteers need to successfully complete a Church of Scotland volunteer application and this includes a satisfactory check with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme.

## Blackford Community Lunches

Since Easter we've had an April lunch and then a lunch during Blackford Gala Week. As we write we've just met the new Headteacher at Blackford Primary School, Mrs Laura Fowler, and it looks like "the last Friday of the month" continues to work well for everyone. We'll not be up and running for August, but we'll have lunch at 1pm on the following dates. Booking will be through the church, the Village Shop or directly with Gordon or Jane by the Wednesday evening.



**26th September | 31st October | 28th November**

## Blackford Primary School Assemblies

Our Easter assembly at Blackford was a bit of a sprint through the events and background to Holy Week. It was great to be joined on our Easter Journey by parents and other church members.

Without a mid-term assembly it was straight to the end of term and five stones to pick up as we looked up to Goliath and ahead to the summer holidays and holiday club.

- Don't be put off by the size of the problem
- Keep asking and wondering
- Be yourself
- Choose who you listen to
- Remember whose you are



Can you also find those points in 1st Samuel chapter 17? Scottish Government guidance for using Bible stories in schools instructs us to "ensure that the 'message' in the story is a focus." Which of these stones is the message which made David a little bolder than others?

We look forward to welcoming the school back over for assemblies marking Harvest (10th October) and Remembrance (7th November).

## Blackford Fundraising

This summer has been a quiet time for fundraising although some smaller regular activities such as Music Club sessions and the Flower Show coffee afternoon bring in some donations. Our plans for the next few months are to have one fundraiser per month.

In September we will hold the Macmillan Cancer Support Coffee Morning on Saturday 20th from 10-12 at the church. This will be a village-wide event to raise money for this important cause – bakers, helpers and visitors more than welcome.

In October we have our Music Fest over the course of Thursday 23rd to Sunday 26th. We will have the Music Club Session on Thursday night, a Jam Session on Friday night, a concert on Saturday night and Afternoon Tea with music on the Sunday.

In November, we will have a St Andrew's Quiz night on Thursday 27th and in December, we have our Christmas Social and Christmas Fair (dates tbc).

For more information on any of these, keep in touch with us on Facebook (follow *Ardoch and Blackford Parish Church* or posts in the *Blackford Cares Group*) or keep an eye out for posters around the village. We look forward to welcoming you to these events and working together to support, love and care in our village.

**Laura Peacock and Sandy Marshall.**

## Blackford Music Club

The club continues its monthly sessions during the year and *normally* meets on the last Thursday evening of the month in the Blackford Church from 8pm. The sessions are always relaxed and informal with different genres of music and songs to enjoy. Everyone is welcome to come along and join in or listen!



Music Club dates:

August 28th

September 25th

October 23rd

November 27th (After the Quiz Night)

December 18th

**Our church policies and work practices** for areas such as Privacy, Data Protection, Bribery and Procurement, have been worked through by our Kirk Session and are available to view in ring binders like this in the Ardoch Vestry and the Blackford Session Room or through the link at the bottom of the [Blackford website homepage](#).



## Ardoch IT Report

The Ardoch IT Team has enjoyed a well deserved rest from duties during August, when services have been held in Blackford Church. As always, we are still looking for more volunteers. If you would like to help – please let Christine or Sue know.

The Guild Annual Gathering will not be live-streamed in the Church Hall this year as the event is taking place in Perth North Church on 13th September. It is hoped that all interested will attend in person. Contact Heather to reserve a place as seats are limited.

Christine and Sue attended a Website seminar in Perth Riverside Church, where we were given tips on making our website easily accessible, welcoming, informative, etc. You may have noticed that one of the suggestions which has been tried, was to use the 'What3words' function to locate the Church in Ardoch. Our chosen words are [joints.foal.spud](https://www.what3words.com/joints.foal.spud) which is one three metre square near our main door. There are, of course, quite a number of other squares and combinations that could be used as each three metre square in our grounds (and around the world) is uniquely identified from all others by a three word combination. Personally, I like a map!!! And of course there still is a map on our *Who We Are* webpage and elsewhere on our site which can be found at [ardochparishchurch.org](https://www.ardochparishchurch.org)



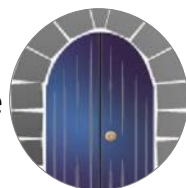
The team was on duty for the summer end of term school service and as always it was such an enjoyable service and well attended. Watch the website for details of any upcoming school services. The school staff put such a lot of effort into these occasions and the children are all very enthusiastic.

Meanwhile, many thanks to Christine for keeping the website updated, and to Gordon for preparing The Link and in a format that is easily readable on the screen.

## Ardoch IT Team

## Ardoch Foodbank

The congregation continues to be conscious to support the Blue Door Foodbank at Auchterarder Parish Church. At the end of each month a hamper full of provisions are delivered to the foodbank. Foodbank Co-ordinator, Jackie Mahoney, and her team of volunteers are very grateful for all the regular donations and thank the church members most sincerely. "Food donation reminds us that abundance is best enjoyed when it is shared with those in need."



## Blackford Holiday Club

This summer, we took up the new SU Scotland Holiday Club and shared [A Tale of Two Kings](#) with almost 30 of the young people from our area. Some were “ever-constants.” Others attended around parents’ work commitments or their own return to school. We even had some who just turned up for Thursday evening’s Sausage Sizzle.

And speaking of sausages, Squire Sausage—now *Sir* Sausage in the service of the King of Kings—was one of our hosts in the great hall of our medieval Blackford Castle. Together we met David as he was anointed king and Sheila’s heart shaped biscuits were snacks to remind us that God looks at the heart. Shona’s rock buns were the ideal snack for Tuesday’s encounter with Goliath who David knew he could beat with Almighty God on his side. Despite being in a cave on Wednesday, David didn’t cave in, being obedient to God’s timing rather than following his friends’ prompting. On Thursday King David needed to recognise his need for God’s washing clean when a bold (yet sheepish) prophet came to challenge his sinful behaviour. On Friday we were back in Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus the second King that David has “signposted” for us.

During the week we made catapults with your bottle tops and stringed instruments with your plastic punnets; sang countless songs and wrote our own Psalms; played many games and explored the Bible finding David in 1st and 2nd Samuel, his words in Psalms 23, 51 and 150, then Jesus in Zechariah, Mark, Luke and 1st John. Why not ask one of the team for their highlights of the week? It’s Adam, Amelia, Ben, Gordon, Jane, John, Laura, Mairi, Marjorie and Robin.

We’d love to do in-service day holiday clubs on Thurs 13th Nov and Wed 11th Feb, but we’d need a bigger team. Talk to Gordon before the end of September so we can arrange your accreditation.

As a footnote, we don’t go to the land of make-believe with beanstalks for Goliath. Search “[world’s tallest man](#)” on the [BBC website](#) and compare his height to Goliath in [1st Samuel 17:4](#).

## A Tale of Two Kings



## Quiet Revival

This phrase has become part of our culture since a Bible Society survey conducted by YouGov, was published around Easter. Anecdotal evidence of spiritual awakening through growing depth of enquiry and discipleship is reported in Christian and secular gatherings, media and social media.

The most often reported finding is drawn from number two below, but the ten key findings of the report are illustrated in these quotes.

1. Having a Christian faith is again being normalised and is arguably even culturally attractive.
2. Young adults (aged 18-24 and known as Generation Z) are finding their way into church in remarkable numbers.
3. This is a growing Church, interested in belonging, believing and practising.
4. The idea that Britons are to some extent Christian 'by default' is rapidly diminishing.
5. Our youngest group (18-24) is showing above average engagement in spiritual practice.
6. Churchgoers show the lowest reports of feeling frequently anxious and depressed.
7. Churchgoers are more likely to desire social change and to engage in social activism activities.
8. Young Christians report finding the Bible more challenging than older Christians.
9. We see openness even among non-churchgoers towards Christianity and the Bible.
10. The tide of faith is coming in again, and the Church needs to adjust to a new and strangely hopeful reality.

To read the report just search "[Quiet Revival](#)" on google or the more environmentally friendly [ecosia.org](https://www.ecosia.org). The report will be on the Bible Society website but you'll also notice all manner of discussions, reflections and action points from all manner of perspectives.

Scan the QR code to listen to the *News Agents* podcast *What's going on with young people and God?* by Emily Maitlis who starts with her own experience of being in a Billy Graham stadium event in the 1980s. It is also available to watch on [YouTube](#).



## The Quiet Revival and the Bible

Bible reading and confidence in its relevance and authority are growing overall, said the report, but there's a clear need for more discipleship around Scripture. Around a third of churchgoers say they lack confidence in navigating or understanding the Bible and speaking about it with others. Among young Christians, rates of Bible reading, Bible confidence and interest in learning more are high – but they're also far more likely than older Christians to say the media and British culture often shake their faith in the Bible and report they have less confidence in the Bible than they used to. They're also the age group to report they find learning about the Bible to be challenging.

The *Church of Scotland Learning* resource is a website laden with modules of different length and design to equip and encourage us in following Jesus with faith and courage.

There are learning resources here for everyone and an opportunity to grow together. Head here first to register—it's free—then dig around for what catches your attention: [churchofscotland.org.uk/learning](https://churchofscotland.org.uk/learning)



The **Unpacking the Bible** module is likely to be our next series at our Blackford Bible Study. It's written and presented to deepen our knowledge and understanding of the Bible and will help us reflect on our own spiritual journey.

The material is hosted by Fiona Stewart, a Christian writer and broadcaster who can be heard on BBC Radio Scotland's Thought for Today (so she can say things succinctly) and Very Rev Colin Sinclair a retired minister and former Moderator. Through their discussions, presentations and questions they're trying to provide "some of those 'oh, I see' moments" and encourage us to make more connections across God's Word.



We'll not start this series until after our discussions on the *Sleeping Giant* book, but speak to Gordon if you want to know a bit more about it. You can also access and use the material on your own through the *Church of Scotland Learning* website.

Our previous Blackford Bible Study series is still available to view as five sessions on the Old Testament book of Esther from Amy Orr-Ewing. You'll find them on [blackfordparishchurch.org/bible-study](https://blackfordparishchurch.org/bible-study)



## Our Flower Rotas

Thanks to all those who serve us, and subsequently our communities, in this way led by Jenny Kemp and Helen Laing.

Date	Ardoch Flowers	Blackford Flowers
31st Aug	n/a	Helen Laing
7th Sept	Gillian Scott	Laura Peacock
14th Sept	Fiona Lyle	Jessie Wilson
21st Sept	Phyllis Macleod	Karen Shaw
28th Sept	Judi McCoill	n/a
5th Oct	Jim Dawson	Robert Miller
12th Oct	Lilian Ayre	Jane Roy
19th Oct	Maureen James	Jean Robertson
26th Oct	n/a	Helen Laing
2nd Nov	Guild	Fiona Smeaton
9th Nov	Sheila MacGregor	Remembrance poppies
16th Nov	Irene Robertson	Helen Laing
23rd Nov	Sheila MacGregor	Rita Marshall
30th Nov	Jenny Kemp	n/a



## What we are aiming to be and do as a church



**Tell - Enthusiastic Communities:** To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom and witness to Christ's saving, forgiving, reconciling love for all people



**Teach - Nurturing Communities:** To teach, baptise, and nurture new believers and build welcoming, transforming communities of faith



**Tend - Serving Communities:** to respond to human need by loving service and stand in solidarity with the poor & needy



**Transform - Witnessing Communities:** To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence, injustice and oppression of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation



**Treasure - Worshipping Communities:** To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and protect, care for, sustain and renew the life of the earth

Should our weekly service Bible Readers be unable to find a replacement, please contact Christine Souter for Ardoch on [csouterbraco@aol.com](mailto:csouterbraco@aol.com) or 07767 380011 or Karen Shaw for Blackford on 682684, 07505 081873 or [kshaw05@yahoo.com](mailto:kshaw05@yahoo.com).



Date	Ardoch   Blackford
31st Aug	Lyndsey Thomas (United service in Blackford)
7th Sept	Michael Boxer   Richard Bolton
14th Sept	Charles Robertson   Sandy Marshall
21st Sept	Liz Paterson   Laura Peacock
28th Sept	Ardoch Guild (United service in Ardoch)
5th Oct	Pat Duncan   Thelma McNaught
12th Oct	Sally Young   John and Ben McNaught
19th Oct	Irene Robertson   Jeannette Barr
26th Oct	Lyndsey Thomas (United service in Blackford)
2nd Nov	Dorothy Johnston   Jane Roy
9th Nov	Peter Scott   Bruce Tarbet
16th Nov	Ann Gordon   Gordon Roy
23rd Nov	Maureen James   Karen Shaw
30th Nov	Lyndsey Thomas (United service in Ardoch)

Charles Robertson led the Service of Commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day in 1945 at Braco War memorial assisted by Lorna Taylor, Ian Taylor and Gerry McEwan, Co-ordinator of the local British Legion. Councillor Keith Allan representing Perth and Kinross Council attended along with many members of our local community.



## Ardoch Fundraising Team

It's hard to believe summer is closing in on us and autumn is looming but the efforts of the Fundraising Team so far this year has already exceeded total funds raised in 2024, which is amazing! Below shows events and monies raised so far, with one final fundraiser in the calendar for 2025—The Quiz Night, which has proved a fun night in recent years. Therefore the date for your diary is **Saturday 11th October** in Ardoch Church Hall with details to follow nearer the time.

Let's recap since Spring Link.

Heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported The Big Brekkie on Saturday 10th May in Ardoch Church Hall, not forgetting Ardoch's Youth Team whose hard work helped make it such a success. The Big Brekkie and the church retiring collection on the Sunday raised a total of £435 for Christian Aid.



***Heartfelt thanks to everyone  
for supporting the  
BIG BREKKIE  
& Retiring offering***

Our Silent Auction with Cheese and Nibbles Supper held on 17th May was an enjoyable night with just under 50 folk attending, enjoying the supper and bidding on the 64 Lots. £1,441.79 was raised for church funds.

Then on to the Duck Race on 22nd June. Well! It could have been a complete washout and disaster due to the horrendous weather, but we salvaged the race and afternoon by reconvening to the church hall where we compromised by pulling the plastic ducks from a huge bag; that way we went through all the race categories, ranging from under 4s, boys and girls to female and male adult races. Ten races in total. The plant stall and meal deal stall practically sold out and a grand total raised was £937.84. A great effort by everyone.

When shopping online, please join the 17 shoppers who have registered with [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://easyfundraising.org.uk) and raised almost £1,200 from the online stores with no extra cost or great effort. It really does help and is a painless way to raise church funds.

Once again, a huge thank you to our church community for always greatly supporting all fundraisers we organise along with kindly donating to our Special Retiring Collections throughout the year.

Grateful thanks from the Fundraising Team.

**Maureen, Fundraising Team Co-ordinator**

**Prayers are the stairs we must climb every day,  
If we want to reach God, there is no other way.  
For we learn to know God when we meet Him in prayer,  
and ask Him to lighten our burden of care.  
So start in the morning, climb those stairs steep,  
climb ever upward til you close your eyes in sleep.  
For prayers are truly the stairs that lead to the Lord,  
and to meet Him in prayer is the climber's reward.**

**Helen Steiner Rice**

(Read by Jacqui Crawford at our prayer gathering one Sunday)

### **Blackford Hot Chocolate**

This past few months are a busy part of our year with secondary pupils. After a good number of them joined us up the hill on Easter morning—and for the promised bacon rolls after—they became cooks and servers a few weeks later for the Christian Aid Big Brekkie. Like Ardoch's event the previous week, weather was good enough for outdoor breakfasts. The morning raised £376.08 some of which went directly to Christian Aid for them to claim Gift Aid.



We had two car loads out for the Gala Week Car Treasure Hunt, with one well placed in the top three. Finally, it was great to have Adam, Amelia, Ben and John working as yellow T-shirts on the summer holiday club, helping with group discussions, sound and projection, games and the many other tasks that make up a holiday club.

We look forward to starting the new session on Friday 12th September when we'll welcome new P7s to our regular, monthly sessions.

**Are you on email? Do we have your address?**

Can we keep in touch with you this way?  
Please email our Session Clerk (address on page 2)  
or talk to us one Sunday morning.



## Ardoch Youth Report

After a few changes Hot Chocolate is back on the last Friday of the month when numbers vary from 3 to 12. These sessions leave us all uplifted and with so much hope. Our youngsters never fail to surprise us with their thoughts and their willingness to help whether it's the Big Brekkie or the Duck Race. Sessions include time to chat to friends, time working together for games or crafts and we finish with Hot Chocolate and conversation. We're working towards a service being led by our youngsters. The group worked together to create the Easter Story on the Cross using colour: Dark Friday, Still Saturday and onto Joyous Sunday.



Going forward we are hoping to become a more *intergenerational* group rather than solely focussing on the 'youth.' Don't worry, we will not be losing the Hot Choc Club and we are hoping to resurrect the monthly Sunshine After School Club. Changes to the national laws on Safeguarding are giving us headaches. We aim to bring mission to all, using new and different ways *together*, encompassing both congregations. Come along one Friday evening and join the discussion. I'm confident you will go away surprised by the youngsters' conversations.

## News from Muthill Parish Church

The Bridge newsletter came in just as we're editing The Link. Here's some news from the congregation at Muthill with whom we are due to link.



- Iain Paton continues as their Interim Moderator. He and Marjorie are leading a group to '[Advent in Austria](#)' from 1st-8th December which is open to anyone. Brochures are available in our buildings.
- The SU Group for P4-7 in Muthill Primary School restarts in their church hall on Mondays after school.
- Plans are being formulated to hold an Alpha course over the winter for enquirers and others who wish to explore again the tenets of their faith.
- They will be hosting a Harvest Service in the Glenartney Church, right, at 3pm on Sunday 12th Oct. There's also a service at 3pm on 14th Sept.



## Ardoch Guild

The Guild strategy for years 2024-27 is *Let us Build a house*. This year the theme is *Living Stones*. Put simply, God is the architect and planner, Jesus the cornerstone and foundation, and we are the Living Stones, the building material, all bound together by the Holy Spirit.

Each one of us is necessary in this construction.

Some are specially shaped to fulfil a distinct purpose, but each one relies on the strength and support of those around us.



We are fast approaching celebrating 90 years of Ardoch Guild. Firstly, with our Rededication Service and Birthday Lunch at our joint service on Sunday 28th September. Then, at our first meeting at 1.45pm on Thursday 2nd October in Blackford Church, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Rt Rev Rosie Frew, will visit us to hear about the past 90 years of the Guild in Ardoch. So, memories longer than mine and any stories or anecdotes would be much appreciated, as soon as possible please. It was my Mum, Anna Dawson, who sent out the invites for the 60th Birthday! I will make a cloutie dumpling for this occasion.

After tea the Rev Mairi will present her Presbytery Project *Same God, Different Boats*, followed by an interactive session with Lyndsay Thomas leading us in *Sing and Sign* to finish at 4.45pm.

Before all that busyness, we have the national Guild Annual Gathering, being held in Perth North Church on Saturday 13th September. If anyone wants to go let me know. We will not be live streaming this event or providing lunch as we have in past years, because it is so local.

As always we would love to welcome any member of the community to any of our talks which you may find interesting; membership is not essential. Please speak to any of the committee for more details.

### Session 2025-2026 Office Bearers

President: Heather McDonald, 01786 880556  
Treasurer: Dorothy Johnston, 01764 661043  
Committee: (all 01786 numbers), Pat Duncan, 880877;  
Maureen James, 880338; Fiona Lyle, 889631;  
Ann Speirs, 880300, Anne Walker, 880709



### Our Session 2025 Syllabus

Oct 2nd      Rev. Mairi Perkins  
Nov 6th      Jean Blair  
Nov 13th     Whist Night  
Dec 4th      Christmas Party

My Presbytery Project  
Tales of a Tourist Guide

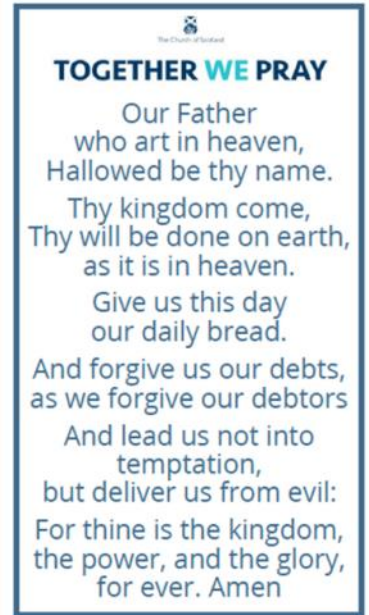
## Together we pray

These six-panelled prayer cards (right) are available in both our buildings. Look out for them on the pews.

As it says on the card, "Please use this now to pray or take it with you" as it offers words and ideas to shape our conversations with God at any time.

We gather in Blackford Church to pray together 30 minutes before our services. Karen Shaw leads us off then some pray out loud, others silently.

Please consider joining with others in the presence of Almighty God, our Father.



Please use this now to pray or to take it with you.

Ardoch and Blackford  
Parish Church of Scotland  
Charity Number SC000139  
Rev. Mairi Perkins 01786 880948  
[mperkins@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:mperkins@churchofscotland.org.uk)

## Blackford Jigsaw Club

On the first Monday of each month, our Jigsaw Club meets in the church hall from 7-9 pm to chat and puzzle together. It is a very informal group of people who enjoy each other's company and have a passion for jigsaws. It is also an opportunity to swap jigsaws with each other so that you always have something on the go. Refreshments are provided. If you would like to come, *just come* or call Laura on 682243 for more info.



## Use of the Blackford church building for community events

We want our church to be at the heart of our community and so we always welcome community groups to use our hall. We have a variety of groups that already do that such as Bell Ringers, Blackford Sings, Historical Society, Flower Show events, Fiddle Group and Gala (right). If you would like to use the hall, church or kitchen for a community event, please contact Laura on 682243 to discuss and plan ahead.



## A musical Christmas evening

Christian song-writers, Keith and Kristen Getty are bringing their '*Home for Christmas*' concert to the Armadillo, Glasgow on Wednesday 17th December. This joyful celebration of the Christmas story blends timeless carols with a touch of Celtic and Nashville for an unforgettable evening of music, worship, and the wonder of Christmas along with special guests New Scottish Arts and Celtic Worship whose videos and music we have also used in our worship services.

Tickets are available from [Ticketmaster.co.uk](https://www.ticketmaster.co.uk) —just be sure to register with *Easy Fundraising* or *Give as you live* first as Ticketmaster is one of the sites what would give to our church in the light of your purchase. [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) or [giveasyoulive.com](https://www.giveasyoulive.com)

For more of the faith journey of Keith and Kristyn Getty, have a look in the BBC website for the [Songs of Praise episode from 3rd August](#). It includes how he came to write *In Christ alone* with Stuart Townend.



## A Pentecost birthday party

Sunday 8th June was Pentecost Sunday. In Blackford we launched Gala Week by welcoming Blackford Gala Queens, Isla Leisk (2024) and Lucy Reid (2025) with their families. Having read our Bible readings, they cut the birthday cake amidst the debris of a popcorn machine and a stomp rocket that helped us look at the transforming power of the Holy Spirit who worked through the disciples.

Pentecost is often referred to as "the birthday of the church" when over 3,000 people who accepted the message of salvation and forgiveness, were "baptised and added to their number that day." ([Acts 2:41](#))



## Makaton

I am delighted to report that I have now completed my Makaton Tutor training and have been invited by the Makaton Charity to apply for my Makaton Tutor License. It has been six months of intense work. The Makaton Charity has high expectations and is rigorous in ensuring that all its tutors have in depth knowledge of the signs and symbols and can share this knowledge with others in a consistent way.

We will be celebrating [Makaton International Awareness Day](#) at the end of August – the actual date is 28<sup>th</sup> August, but we will be marking it with a fun day of activities on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August. Why not join us in Blackford Church for one or more of our activities?



Sing and Sign meets on the second Thursday of each month, 7.30–9.00pm in Blackford Church from 11<sup>th</sup> September.



I'll be meeting with Mairi and Sandy very soon to discuss how we make the best use of my Makaton Tutor license and support people with additional communication needs to access church and hear about God.

**Lyndsey Thomas**

### How's the print size?

Most people read The Link in an A5 size which fits nicely inside a Bible.

If you'd prefer the larger version printed to A4 size, then please mention it to Gordon or to one of our elders.

## **Ardoch Pastoral Care (Outreach Team)**

The new season of Community Lunches is about to start on the last Friday of the month, apart from December which is a week earlier on the 19th. This is a time when all members of the community particularly new residents are welcomed to share food, fun and fellowship together. Dates are:

26th September | 31st October | 28th November | 19th December

The team continues to provide pastoral care in the parish with house and hospital visits, providing transport to and from appointments and supporting the bereaved and housebound. The wheelchair lending service is always available to the community when the need arises. There are two available.

Contact details: Charles 880947, Heather 880556.

## **The Hub – Warm Space and Social Club**

This club is funded by Perth and Kinross Council and meets weekly throughout the winter. This will be our fourth year running this club. We have approximately 20-25 people who come along to our meetings each week with equal amounts of men and women attending. The atmosphere is very friendly and welcoming.

In October we meet in Ardoch Church Hall on Tuesday afternoons from 1-3pm with tea, coffee, biscuits and activities on offer.

From Tuesday 4th November until the 31st March 2026 we will meet from 10-3pm. A light lunch of soup, sandwiches and home baking will be provided with afternoon activities to follow. All are welcome!

The club is run by volunteers and we are always grateful to anyone who feels they are able to help out on a regular basis – even one Tuesday per month would be of great benefit to keep the club running smoothly. If you feel that you might like to volunteer please contact Pat Duncan who will be able to discuss options on 01786 880877 or 07799 100050.

## **Blythwood Shoeboxes and blankets**

Both congregations will be collecting items for Eastern Europe with wrapped boxes available to fill or other boxes to drop off individual items, Toothbrushes and toothpaste, hats and scarves, gloves, soap, underwear, socks, tights, small toys e.g. cars, dolls, balls and sweets with best before date of March 2026, but not chocolate.

Squares to make up blankets should be 30 stitches and 60 rows.

Get in touch if you would like to help [Blythwood](#) in this way.

**Shona Stewart (01764 682221) & Ann Spiers (01786 880957)**



## **Life is full of surprises...**

One moment everything feels perfect, and in the next, everything can change. That's why it's important to live each day, with love, peace, and gratitude. We don't know what tomorrow will bring, so we must learn to let go of anger and hold on to what really matters.

Love with all your heart, express your feelings, show people you care. Life is too short to hide love or take people for granted. Tell your loved ones you appreciate them. Hug them, laugh with them. Make memories that will stay for ever.

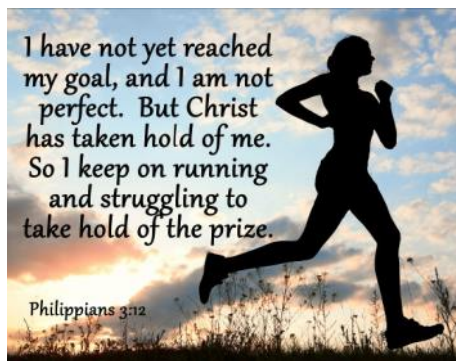
Don't waste time trying to please everyone. Not everyone will like you and that's okay. Focus on those who truly care for you, who support and love you.

Enjoy the little things, smile often, be kind. Life is precious. We don't know how much time we have, but we do get to choose how we spend it.

So, live with kindness, love deeply, forgive quickly, let go of grudges. Celebrate the people who bring joy to your life.

Because, in the end, it's not about how many days we live, but how well we live the days we are given.

**Charles Robertson**



## **Braco Art Class**

The Art Group meets all year round on a Wednesday from 2 till 4pm in the Church Hall. Currently we have up to 14 members working on a range of media and ranging from relative beginners to experienced artists. The atmosphere is very relaxed with members supporting each other.



Work produced includes landscapes, seascapes, portraits, still life as well as more abstract images. We have two art related outings every year as well as a Christmas Lunch funded by our weekly fee of £2.

We're always keen to welcome new members and beginners are particularly welcome. We can provide beginners with some basic materials initially until they decide if art is for them.

For more information, contact Mike Cordner on 07913 714220.

# CHRISTIAN NEWS

Over the summer services and emails we highlighted some of the Christians standing out in our news, media and culture. They included



- Michelle Agyemang, the goalscoring “Super-sub” from the England women’s European champion football team who speaks of her faith on [Instagram](#), on BBC Breakfast and on her [#BallersinGod](#) socks.
- Maro Itoje, captain of the victorious British and Irish Lions rugby team whose pre-tour plans and interviews (for example on the [BBC website](#)) included how he’d maintain a personal and group pattern of regular prayer and Bible study while touring Australia.
- Rachael Maskell MP, whose Christian values meant she would not compromise standing up for the poor and vulnerable, even though it has led to being [suspended from the Labour Party](#) after opposing the Welfare Reform Bill.

To hear more of this sort of news, and the challenges faced by oppressed Christians around the world, head to [premierchristian.news](#) and sign up by clicking on News by email.

NEWS BY EMAIL

**Thrive ‘25** looks to build workplace faith for Christians in less prominent roles by inspiring, equipping and connecting Christians to live out the gospel through our work. Our closest event is on Thursday evening 18th of September in Dundee but four other options are available. Details are at [thrivescotland.org](#) or on the leaflets in our church buildings.



## Braco Pins and Needles Group

The new session of this weekly village group has now started in the church hall on Mondays from 2-4 pm. This is a friendly welcoming group who share crafting ideas, have refreshments and much chat. Julie Whyte (Co-ordinator) can be contacted on 07518 191377.

## Our autumn service pattern

*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another ([Hebrews 10:24-25](#))*

### Sundays in September, October and November\*

Ardoch and livestreamed through websites 10:00am Service  
Blackford 11:00am Prayer and 11:30am Service

### \*United services on the last Sunday of those months

28th September 10:00am Service in Ardoch & livestream  
26th October 9:30am Prayer & 10:00am Service in Blackford  
30th November 10:00am Service in Ardoch & livestream

### Specific Sunday services during this period

12th October Harvest Services in both church buildings  
2nd November Communion Services in both church buildings  
9th November Remembrance Services in both church buildings  
War Memorial services at 11:00am (Braco)  
and 12:30pm (Blackford)

## Our cover photo

Here's part of the team who bring us the livestream service every week that we have a service in the Ardoch sanctuary.

Sally Young, Maureen James, Ann Gordon, Christine Souter, Sue Crie (plus Peter Scott, Joyce Wighton and Fiona Lyle who were not on duty when we took this photo) don't just operate the cameras, sound and vision mix for what comes out through our websites and on the YouTube channel. They also manage the projection and sound in the sanctuary for those who are gathering to worship there.



If you'd like to see how it's all done and possibly help out for Sunday services or school assemblies please speak to Christine or Sue.

### The next dates for The Link are as follows:

Issue	Articles in by	Copies come out
Advent 2025 (Adv Sun 30/11)	23rd November	30th November
Easter 2026 (Easter Day 5/4)	15th March	22nd March
Autumn 2026	16th August (tbc)	19th August (tbc)
Editor: Gordon Roy, 01764 682356, <a href="mailto:gordon.roy@outlook.com">gordon.roy@outlook.com</a>		