

## St Matthews News

No. 87 March 2025



### Rev. Fiona reflects

Friends, on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, it was a real privilege and delight to celebrate Founders' Day and Thinking Day with our uniformed organisations during our worship. It was amazing to have this time together with representatives of our Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers encouraging each other in our common goal of helping other people and doing our best. We changed our perspectives in different ways – standing up; sitting down; doing actions; and having the sanctuary in a different layout. I participated in the laying up of an old Boy Scout flag for the first time too. More than anything else, I had fun leading the service. I hope we have many more opportunities to join together with the incredible young people and dedicated leaders of our uniformed organisations. We hope that they felt as blessed during this time together as we did.

The stories we shared were about love and care: how we should love everyone, even those with whom we disagree; and help anyone, no matter our differences. From the service, I want to share with you what it means to be a good neighbour. A good neighbour is honest, reliable and can be trusted. A good neighbour is loyal. A good neighbour is helpful and friendly. A good neighbour faces challenge, has courage in all difficulties and learns from their experiences. A good neighbour is a good friend and part of a world-wide family. A good neighbour has self-respect, respect for others and takes care of the world around them. These descriptions blended together the Scout and Guide Laws with the notion of being a good neighbour, just like the Samaritan in the parable we know as The Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37. It doesn't matter if we are Christian or not; if we're doubters, believers or somewhere in between; or if we're following the Scout or the Guide Laws, we're all called to be good neighbours.



As the worldwide movement of Christ's followers, the Church, and a worldwide movement of Scouts and Guides, we can achieve much more when we work together. So we're really on a big mission together – to help as many people as we can by doing good deeds or acts of random kindness, no matter whether they are friends or strangers or even enemies. Let's make kindness and friendship our super-powers and let's be the super-heroes that our world needs right now. Superhero poses everyone! (or failing that, let's get the kettle on to energise us!)

Every blessing, your Minister, Fiona

### CHURCH NEWS

#### Zoom and You Tube Links for Sunday morning services

Click the following link, and when asked, provide your name then join the meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82349848787...>

**OR "Join a meeting"** on ZOOM providing the following: **meeting id = 823 4984 8787** then provide the **password = 296100** It is also possible to join these services by phone—tel. **0131 460 1196**, and when asked, key in the above meeting id, and follow the instructions. We also have an easy-to-remember link to take you directly to the St Matthew's church YouTube home page as follows:

[youtube.com/@stmatthewsp Perth](https://youtube.com/@stmatthewsp Perth)

OR [youtube.com/@stmatthewsp Perth/streams](https://youtube.com/@stmatthewsp Perth/streams) where services can be watched at the time most convenient to yourselves.

## Guild News Lorna Morrison, Convener

Guild meetings on Monday 10th March when we have Kate White from Branklyn Gardens. On Monday 24th March our Project partner for this year is the church's social work



department CrossReach, who are asking us to support Playful Beginnings, helpful play areas where vulnerable children and their parents will get help when it is needed. We have a speaker coming to tell us more about this and they will benefit from some of the money raised by our Coffee Morning last month.

Thank you all for supporting our Coffee Morning, the final total was £760.



On 7th April we have our AGM, when Norma Wright, one of our committee members, will demonstrate her skills in flower arranging.

## Flower Rota

Date	Donor	Delivery
Mar 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Alison Ford	Fiona Bruce
Mar 9 <sup>th</sup>	Helen Dewar	Evelyn McLaren
Mar 16 <sup>th</sup>	Alastair & Carolyn Byers	A & F Turnbull
Mar 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Fiona Bruce	Janet Martin
Mar 30 <sup>th</sup>	Betty Lindores	Marjorie Clark

**World Day of Prayer:** this year' service is being held on Friday March 7th at 11a.m. at the Salvation Army building in South Street, Perth, to which all are welcome. This year, the service has been prepared by the World Day of Prayer Committee in the Cook Island and is based on Psalm 139 - "I make you wonderful". Come and be part of a wave of prayer that day which will sweep round the world! Refreshments will be shared after the service.

## Kirk Session update - from our Session Clerk, Raymond Young

The Kirk Session met on 20 February – mostly updates on developments that have been underway for some time. Like the growing relationship between the three city centre Church of Scotland congregations – St John's Kirk, the North Church and ourselves, having been asked by the Presbytery to develop a City Centre Mission Plan. A small group from each church has been investigating what are the needs within the city centre, how are they being met and what could we add to what is going on? The group has been meeting with other groups within the city, including the newly opened Y which provides a range of Christian based activities for young people. More and more our outward focus is likely to involve working in partnership with others. Many folks in our congregation are already involved with groups like PACT, Street Pastors, the foodbank and others. A positive future!

But the Session is concerned about how we continue to support the Mission Plan and the activities within our building – like the Warm Spaces which have been an important part of providing a place of hospitality and a sanctuary during the winter. Last month I explained about the challenges we face about managing our finances. While work is going on to ensure that our building is wind and watertight (you can't miss the

scaffolding!) another challenge is ensuring that we keep the building that way. As both a part of the Church of Scotland and a charity, there is quite a bit of administration to undertake – this is mainly the role of the Session Clerk. I agreed to this for two years and those will be up soon. So, we are looking for a new Session Clerk or a team that can do this work for the next two years. You may have some of the skills needed. You don't have to be an elder or even a member. Here is the Job Description! There's no application form – a word with Rev Fiona or me may be able to help and put you together with others to keep the admin going!



### **Perth: St Matthew's Church Session Clerk Draft Job Description**

We are looking for someone to carry out the duties of Session Clerk for two years from Easter 2025 to Easter 2027.

The postholder does not need to be an Elder but will need to become a Trustee of the charity of St Matthew's Church.

Most of the work involves close working with the Minister and may be partly a support role for her. The work is predominately computer based; digital records have been built up and will be handed over. There is no pay!

Duties will be:

1. Kirk Session meetings
  - a. To work with the Minister on the preparation of the agenda for the Kirk Session (which meets about 4 times a year), and on preparation of the agenda for the Session Executive (which will meet about 4 times a year)
  - b. To collate the papers from the Teams to be issued with the agendas for Session and Executive.
  - c. To attend the Executive and Session meetings.
  - d. To maintain the Sederunt book
  - e. To prepare the draft minutes for approval by the minister and then circulated to the Executive/Kirk Session
  - f. To maintain the minute book; issue extracts when required.
2. Stated Annual Meeting (SAM) of the congregation (recently held as part of worship)
  - a. To work with the minister on the SAM agenda and presentations.
  - b. To prepare the draft minutes of the SAM
3. Administration
  - a. To act as the administration link/post box with the Presbytery and 121– correspondence (mainly electronic)
  - b. To be responsible for all Records of the congregation (the roll is maintained by Carolyn Byers)
  - c. To maintain a directory of elders (both Trustee and non- Trustee elders), key office bearers and Team leaders
  - d. To deal with the readings of Edicts to the congregation (about 2 per year!)
  - e. To submit the Annual Statistical Return to the Presbytery in January
  - f. To submit the Records of the congregation annually to the Presbytery for attestation in March
  - g. To oversee the preparation of the Annual Report to go with the accounts prepared by the Treasurer in March
4. Miscellaneous
  - a. Welcome visiting preachers at morning worship at the start of the service.
  - b. To attend when necessary (by invitation or when appropriate) meetings of Teams

## WARM SPACES

These are continuing in the church **1.30-4.30pm on a Wednesday and Friday afternoon.**

We try hard to provide a selection of activities which suit all tastes- as you can see from the undernoted programme.

In February we enjoyed a variety of activities and talks. Michael Ellacott again wowed everyone with his music and Nicola gave us a very informative and practical talk on seed sowing and how to save ourselves money with saving our own seeds!

We were fascinated to hear of the history of the Glasgow tenement and, in particular, the Govan tenement and how Raymond and his team managed to drastically increase the % of inside bathrooms in Govan tenements over a very short period of time.

We also had a Beetle Drive and a Quiz and Janette showed us how to crochet.

A wide and varied selection of activities indeed! Thanks to all organisers and helpers who give of their time. As well as being able to chat and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and home baking, there is an activities programme in March as follows:

5 March	Plaques of Perth (Marjorie)
14 March	My Life in Journalism (Ninian)
19 March	Music with Andy T & friends
21 March	Carpet Bowls (Tom)
26 March	Film (The Kiterunner)
28 March	A Tanzanian project (Dawn Gillies)

Please note that there are no Warm Spaces on 7 or 12 March due to Sanctuary bookings.

**Come along and enjoy a warmth of space and company in the winter months!**

Any queries to: Fiona Bruce [FMBruce6@googlemail.com](mailto:FMBruce6@googlemail.com)

### Who's in the pews?

#### Tom & Lorna Morrison



#### **Where were you born/brought up?**

**Tom** - Glasgow, near Kelvingrove Art Gallery/ Museum.

**Lorna** - Born in Dundee. I attended Harris Academy. In 1966 I moved to Aberdeen where my children were born. Then to near Strathaven and then Bearsden.

#### **What is/or was your occupation?**

**Tom** - I Worked for the local authority. First in Civil Engineering and then in Health & Safety finally doing Safety Consultancy.

**Lorna** – I was a Medical Secretary in the Neurosurgical Unit at DRI. Then in Stonehouse Hospital, in Lanarkshire. Finally, as PA to the Professor of Human Nutrition at Glasgow Uni.

#### **What brought you to St Matthew's?**

Having been brought up in the church it was a case of finding a church in Perth that satisfied us both. After trying other churches St. Matthew's became our home. We have been members of St. Matthew's for about 12 years.

#### **Are you involved in any groups/or volunteering at St Matthew's or anywhere else?**

**Tom** - For over 35 years I have been an Elder, Stewardship Convenor, Refurbishment project, Fundraiser, event organiser, Fabric support and organiser of the Summer Art Gallery. I am about to become the Vice President of The Fair City Probus Club.

**Lorna** - I have been a member & committee member of the Guild for many years and am currently the convener of St Matthews Guild. I am also on a door duty team and Sunday Morning tea rota. I also help at the Summer Gallery and other events when I can.

**Tell us about any hobbies you enjoy?**

**Tom** - Early years I sailed, taking part in dinghy racing, followed by yachting, past President of Glasgow Highland Club which brought me into Scottish Country Dancing. Photography, DIY (at home and in the church), bowling and I love taking to the air - I take every opportunity to get up there. I have flown in gliders, helicopters, hot air balloons, and a memorable flight with Bill Montgomery over Fife.

**Lorna** - I was a very enthusiastic member of Embroiderers Guild for about 20 years and I also enjoy photography.

**What is the most surprising thing about you that we might not yet know?**

**Tom** - I am a fan of the America's Cup sailing race. On my travels I watched the event in San Francisco and New Zealand was thrilled to be given a chance to sail and helm an America's Cup Yacht.

**Lorna** - My claim to fame is that I was lead stitcher on one of the panels of the Great Tapestry of Scotland.

St Matthew's **Walking group** is off to the Hermitage at Dunkeld this coming Saturday (March 1st), on the Braan Walk, a 4.5 mile walk led by Marjorie. If you'd like to join us, please let Marjorie know (marjorie.clark@btinternet.com). We meet in the upper part of the Broxden Park and Ride, at 9.30a.m., then share cars to the start of the walk; we adjourn to a local cafe for lunch after the walk. Our walking group meets on the first Saturday of each month, and April's walk (on April 5th) will be led by Fiona Bruce, Alan and Andrew Davies and will be around 4 miles on level ground in the Invergowrie area. Please contact Fiona (fmbruce6@googlemail.com) if you'd like to know more; new walkers are always welcome.

### Light Shining in Darkness

Last month Christian Aid and the Friends of St Andrews Jerusalem and Tiberias hosted a presentation at St Matthews by Rev Dr Stuart Gillan, Minister of St Andrews, during which he talked about the current situation in the Middle East, the Church of Scotland's presence, and how the Church's partners work together for a just peace.

The Head of Christian Aid Scotland, Val Brown, led the following prayer taken from Christian Aid Just Peace resources:



***Pray not for Arab or Jew, for Palestinian or Israeli, but pray rather for ourselves that we might not divide them in our prayers but keep them together in our hearts.***

***When races fight, peace be among us. When neighbours argue, peace be among us. When nations disagree, peace be among us.***

***Where people struggle for justice, let justice prevail. Where Christ's disciples follow, let peace be our way.***

***Amen***

Further information and resources available at [caid.org.uk/justpeace](http://caid.org.uk/justpeace)



Andrew Davies says:

I have received a post from Down's Syndrome Scotland which I've forwarded to the St Matthew's Facebook page.

This says that research from the Scottish Learning Disabilities Observatory shows that young adults with a learning disability are 9x more likely to die prematurely from preventable, avoidable causes. And the most common cause of death recorded on these death certificates was "Down's Syndrome".

But, as the CEO of Down's Syndrome Scotland points out, "Down's Syndrome is not an illness, its not a disease, it's a genetic condition which cannot kill you."

The life expectancy of people with DS has increased exponentially but it "remains the case that people with DS are still dying 28 years younger than the general population, with most of these deaths being avoidable and preventable".

So- Andrew asks you to please share his Facebook post and call out this inequality and injustice.

## How do we pray?

Daily prayer and bible reading is a great discipline to have in Christian lives. When we join the Church of Scotland by Profession of Faith, we promise to be faithful in reading the Bible and in prayer. Many people do not know where to start. If that's you, don't worry, help is at hand.

**Lectio 365** is a daily devotional that you can download onto your phone, if you have a smartphone. It's free to download and can be used on iPhones or Android phones.

It's based on the 24-7 prayer movement, described as 'an international, interdenominational movement of prayer, mission and justice; a non-stop prayer meeting that has continued for every minute of this century so far, in over half the countries on Earth'. So, when we use Lectio 365, we are joining so many other people in prayer across the world.

### Do I need any specialist knowledge?

No, the App gives you everything and makes it easy to pray throughout the day.

### What's on the App?

There are devotionals for the morning, midday and evening, mirroring how Jesus and his disciples took regular time out to pray. You can use any or all of them each day, or whenever you want.

### Is this the only App available for prayer?

No. There are many more free prayer Apps available. This is simply one of them. There is also a large variety of devotional books available.

Maggie Roderick

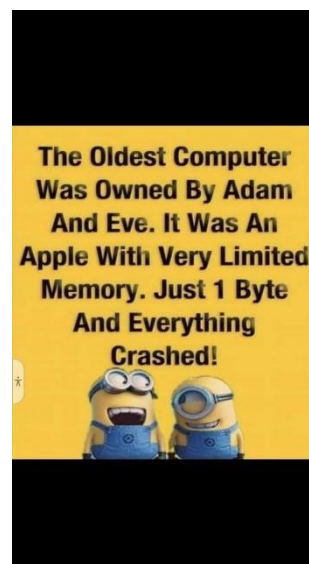
## Hello Down Under!

We send birthday greetings to Gordon Webster, who will be 96 on 4<sup>th</sup> March. Gordon, lives in Western Australia, but originates from Perthshire. He visited with us here in St Matthew's in 2019 and enjoyed our fellowship so much that he faithfully watches our services every week online. He keeps very active and has just returned from visiting family in New Zealand. 'Slainte Mhah' Gordon - Lang may ye'r lum reek!



## Prayer from Andrew

Let us pray Dear Lord Jesus  
We are never too young For Pains.  
This is our garden, our God,  
Our Church, love, Faith, joy and  
Peace and rains in the wind because  
we love Spring with lots of Fun and  
laughter also snow drops are blooming  
like the actual snow.  
With Peace, love and everything  
of hopeful. Amen.



## Janet's Jottings

### The Seeds of Growth

If you haven't managed to our 'Warm Spaces' (Wed & Fri afternoons), then do try to come along. We have had some very entertaining events as well as good chat & fellowship.

One of my favourites, was a talk by one of our members Nicola McNee, who is a gardener by profession. She came to tell us all about seed sowing and preparation. Being a keen gardener myself, I was looking forward to it and was not disappointed. Nicola showed us several different seeds, some of which were commercially grown and others that she had gathered from plants herself.

I learned a lot about the peculiarities of various seeds and the different conditions they each require to germinate. Nicola was so cheerful, positive and informative, that it seemed the plants would be encouraged to sprout up there and then in front of our very eyes!

Her enthusiasm knows no bounds and I am convinced that some folks who may never have grown a seed before, will have gone off to try their hand at nurturing them into a plant for the very first time.

It was a natural reminder of the parable of the Mustard seed. In *Matthew 13:31-21* we read that "the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, when it grows, it becomes a tree, so that the birds flock to perch in its branches." At times we all feel inadequate about 'sowing the seeds' of our faith and maybe also feel that is something that should be left to the 'professionals', whether that be a member of the clergy or just someone theological. Nicola showed us, we don't all need to have a degree in horticulture to help a seed to grow. Therefore, we don't need to have a degree in theology to 'grow love'.

Perhaps we might be inspired to think about ways we can help sow some seeds of faith by doing small things. Could you look out for new faces at church and welcome them to sit beside you, invite a friend to church, or to an event like Warm Spaces? Maybe hand a prayer card to someone you feel may be struggling, or one of the seeded cards (both available in the café area) to give them some hope? Or you could join in one of the new teams and volunteer to help the seeds of St Matthew's grow in abundance?

During Nicola's demonstration, she also reminded us that just occasionally seeds won't germinate. Reasons for this may be not enough heat, light or water, or perhaps even an overabundance of any, or all of those. She encouraged us not to be defeated, but to modify the conditions appropriately and keep on trying until green shoots appear. It is like that with God.

He gives us the seeds of love along with the ability to nurture even the smallest beginnings into big things. We won't always get it right the first time, but we shouldn't give up trying. Let us endeavour to serve Him humbly and sow seeds of His love. We are assured that the very smallest acts of kindness will reap plentiful rewards.



**The Boys' Breakfast Blether** meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 10 a.m. in Wetherspoons next door to the church—all (males) welcome.

## Boys Breakfast Blether prepare for the Summer Burger Fest

The Boys Breakfast Blether clubbed together to purchase an Electric Griddle in preparation for the Vintage Car Rally Day on the 7<sup>th</sup> June. This follows last year when we hired a unit to prepare the burgers and proved that the electric grill was the road to go down. You can now look forward to Burgers served by the Boys of the Breakfast Blether. The unit is there to be used by all church groups.

Tom Morrison For Boys Breakfast Blether



### Sunday Morning Rotas for March

March Rota	Welcome	Beadle	Readers	Tea / Coffee	AV Desk
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Bridgend: Alastair Byers	Tom Morrison	Roy Nicoll	Marjorie Clark	Raymond Young Peter Barrett
9 <sup>th</sup>	Gannochy: Wendy Burnett	Bill Chalmers	Nicola Macnee	Isobel Sinclair	Nicola Macnee John Paton
16 <sup>th</sup>	Muirton: Janet Martin	Andy Turnbull	Lorna Morrison	Joyce Thom	Alastair Byers Raymond Young
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Perth City: John Dewar	Malcolm Thom	Alison Sweeney	Wendy Burnett	Peter Barrett Alastair Byers
30 <sup>th</sup>	Perth South: Malcolm Thom	Raymond Young	Raymond Young	Frances Turnbull	John Paton Andrew Davies

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### Contact Details

#### Perth St. Matthew's Church Sunday worship at 11.00a.m.

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The next issue of St. Matthews News is due out on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March. All contributions by Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March please to the Editor [David.roderick2@btinternet.com](mailto:David.roderick2@btinternet.com)