

# The Beacon

**St. John's-Renfield Church**

**Magazine No 390**

[www.sjrchurch.com](http://www.sjrchurch.com)

**2024**

**Feb**

**Mar**

**April**

**May**

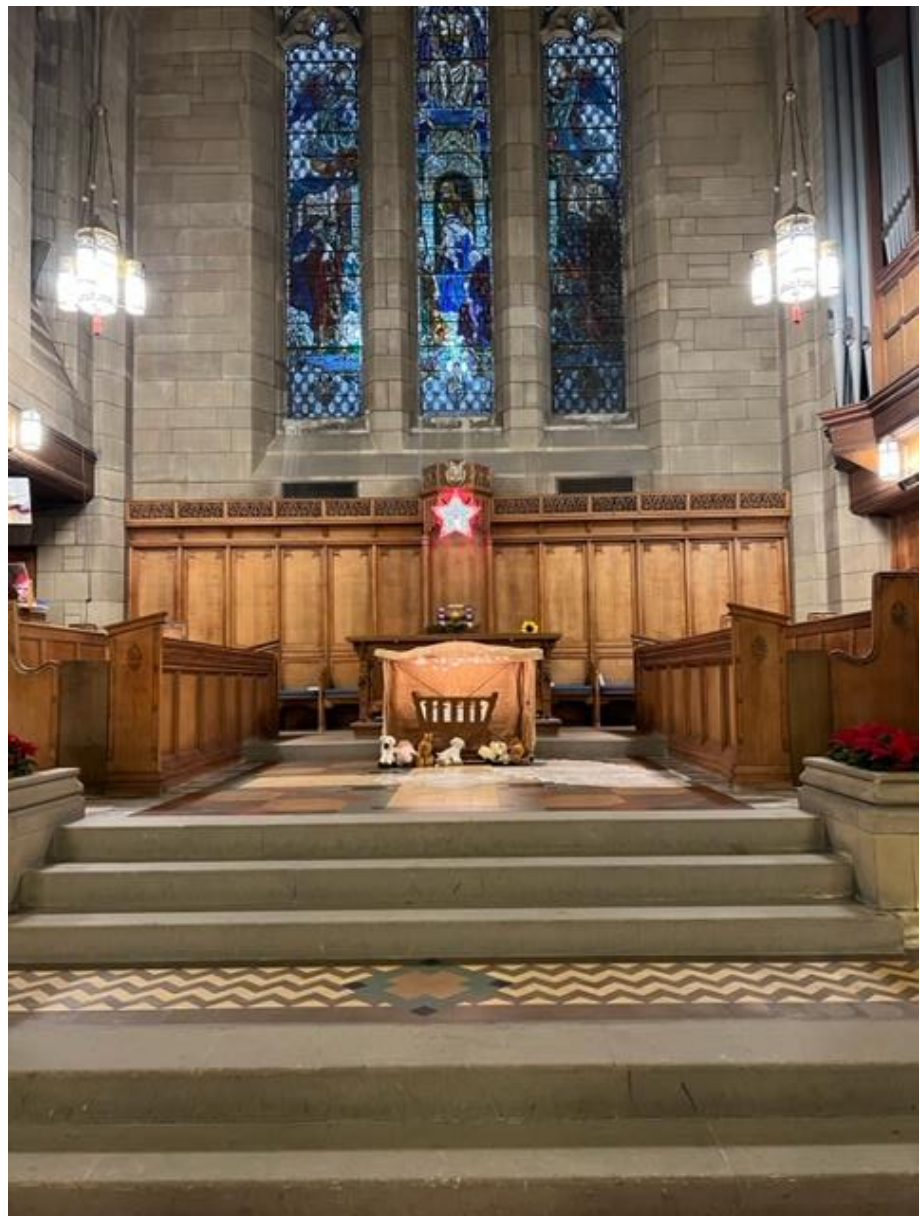
**June**

**Sept**

**Oct**

**Nov**

**Dec**



# Minister's Letter

This year Advent Sunday falls on 1 December: candles and calendars coincide for once. For some Advent is a matter of how many more sleeps till Santa comes, or how to apportion out the chocolates behind the windows in a way that doesn't require UN peace-keepers. For others it may be a time for shopping, wrapping, more shopping, posting, putting up the decorations, more shopping, attending the school concert, and so on.



I don't know whether, with the rising cost of living, people have quite as many Christmas parties, lunches and dinners, visits to the pantomime or concerts as used to be the case. (I do remember, some years ago, people discussing how many times they were due to have 'turkey and all the trimmings' before Christmas Day). Even if they have cut back, I suspect that most people will have some kind of celebratory events in the diaries during December. It is a dark month, and often cold and wet, so being with others and having fun is 'good for the soul'.

Back in the Sixth Century church folk also found participating in 'celebratory events' good for the soul in cold, wet, dark December. They partied for Christmas. They were 'ecumenical' and partied for Chanukah with their Jewish neighbours, and for any number of festivals with their pagan neighbours. The church authorities took a dim view of this (who said it's just the Presbyterians who don't like fun?) and introduced Advent to the Christian calendar. It was to be, like Lent, a time for reflection and abstinence before the great celebration of God's Incarnation at Christmas. Originally Advent

started on 11 November, but was later cut back to the fourth Sunday before Christmas.

I'm not sure that there is any way that church authorities today could realistically expect church folk to make December a time of 'reflection and abstinence'. It could be argued that being 'social' is good for our health and well-being, and helps us to mix with folk who are not church-goers. But maybe, as in Lent, over and above the busy-ness and the fun, we can make a special effort to read the Christmas story in the Bible, pray for those in need, and make a practical contribution – in cash or in kind – to such people locally or overseas.\*

Good wishes for Advent, Christmas and the New Year

Rev. Ian Johnson

\*Details of opportunities to support groups associated with St John's Renfield can be found in other parts of the Beacon

## **Pulpit Supply – December**

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Rev. Ian Johnson
- 8<sup>th</sup> – Rev. Gordon Kirkwood
- 15<sup>th</sup> – Rev. Ian Johnson
- 22<sup>nd</sup> – Rev. Ian Johnson
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Christingle – Rev. Ian Johnson
- 24<sup>th</sup> Watchnight – Rev. Tom Pollock
- 25<sup>th</sup> Christmas Day – Rev. Tom Pollock
- 29<sup>th</sup> Carol Service – Leadership Team



# PARISH RECORDS

## Funeral and Memorial Services

*“Nothing can separate us from the love of God”*

The funeral of Dr Jacob Afuakwah, formerly of Cleveden Road was held at Clydebank crematorium on Wednesday the 6th November.

## HAVE YOU HEARD THAT...?



### ... A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY - Carols at the Curlers - Wednesday 11 December 7-8pm

Our fellow church cluster member, Wellington, which by this date will have united with Kelvinbridge church to form a new congregation known as Glasgow West, has organised a carol service in the upstairs room of the *Curlers Rest* on Byres Road. This will be a great opportunity to join and celebrate Christmas with other members of our cluster.

\*\*\*\*\*

... Jim MacDonald raised an impressive £125 for church funds from his sale of CrossReach calendars.

\*\*\*\*\*

... our Christmas Gift Service will be on Sunday the 15th of December and once again we will be collecting gifts for *Glasgow the Caring City* Charity. The appeal this year is for toys and games suitable for preschool to age 12 children, please wrap your gift and label whether for boy /girl / both and suitable age range.

\*\*\*\*\*

... the Church Office will be closed from the 25<sup>th</sup> of December until the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January. It will reopen at the usual time of 9.30 a.m. on Friday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 2025.

\*\*\*\*\*

... The Mackintosh Christmas concert takes place in the Church on December 8th at 7pm. It would be great to see our congregation giving them our support, so please come along and enjoy some Christmas music. Tickets at the door.

\*\*\*\*\*

... Christmas kicks off with the **GLASGOW HOSPITALS' CHRISTMAS CONCERT** at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December at 7:30 pm. The concert is conducted by our own Alistair Digges, with many choir members from here at St John's-Renfield taking part. The Glasgow Chamber Orchestra provide the accompaniment, and with guest artists – Irish Singer/Songwriter Colm Keegan, Classical Accordionist Ryan Corbett, Broadcaster Sally Magnusson and the Junior Choir of the High School of Glasgow – this promises to be a night of fun for everyone!

Tickets from the box office – phone 0141 353 8000 or <https://tickets.glasgowlife.org.uk/33468/33470>

\*\*\*\*\*

... 2024 marks 50 years of eldership for Roddy Watt, Robin Hutchison and Jim MacDonald. They will be presented with Eldership Long Service Certificates on Sunday 1st December. A special cake will be served during post-service fellowship.

\*\*\*\*\*

...February 2025 is the next edition of *The Beacon*. Help us welcome in the spring by sending your contributions by Friday the 24<sup>th</sup> of January. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year everyone!



## You Write to the Editor



Dear Sir,

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to wish all my friends at St John's a very Happy Christmas and every good wish for next year.

I would also like to thank so much all who have sent me prayers, cards and messages.

With much love  
**Eleanor Murphy**

\*\*\*\*\*

Hi, I'd really appreciate it if you could share or donate to this GoFundMe campaign. *Donating my hair for charity!*

I will be donating my hair to The Little Princess Trust. An incredible organisation who provides free real hair wigs to children. I am also trying to raise a thousand pounds through GoFundMe. Read more here <https://gofund.me/6f16daf2>

Thanks so much  
**Harry Hitchcock**



### **SJR Welcome Team Door & Beadle Duties**

**December 2024 – 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>**

**Lead Elder:** Nick Calder/Helen Barclay with Marion Dowling and Andy McCrindle

**Beadles:** Fiona Robinson (1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>) John Allan (15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>)  
Shaun Digges (29<sup>th</sup>)

# Christmas Surplus Stall

It's that time again! Hard on the heels of the great fundraising success of the Bonanza it's the turn of the Christmas Surplus Stall. This is your opportunity to contribute items associated with Christmas.

They will be on sale in the Hall at Coffee Time on the dates below. (It goes without saying that items should be in saleable condition!).

Boxes to receive items will be at the Church Door. We are looking for decorations, books, music, crafts, baking, wrapping .... No prices – just monetary donations.

The dates are:

Sunday November 24<sup>th</sup> - Donations only

Sunday December 1<sup>st</sup> - Donations and Sale at Coffee Time

Sunday December 8<sup>th</sup> - Donations and Sale at Coffee Time

Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup> – Sales only at Coffee Time



Thanks to Liz and Jim MacDonald's suggestion, our chosen charity is the Red Cross in the Ukraine.

## Reader Rota - December

1<sup>st</sup> – Sarah Hamilton

8<sup>th</sup> – Jim MacDonald

15<sup>th</sup> – Wilma Murphy

22<sup>nd</sup> – Pat McGill

29<sup>th</sup> – Leadership Team

# BONANZA THANKS

Thank you for all your help at this year's Bonanza. The wonderful total of £6,069.85 was raised on the day! A breakdown by stall is on the noticeboards.

The leftovers have been taken to various charity shops, so others will also benefit from our efforts. Please pass on our thanks to all who helped in any way in your area.

It was great to see the halls so busy with people of all ages, from the community and beyond, as well as our own members. There was a real buzz and sense of community.

We also had huge support from local businesses and we would like to thank them through this article in The Beacon! Beauty by Elaine Rennie; Bliss Within; Café Source Too; Catani; Cleveden Deli; Cresswell and Co; GWR; Judy Fielding Dancing; Laura Calder Massage Therapist; Londis in Kelvindale Road; Posh Tarts; Seabird Centre and Spar in Cleveden Road – your support is much appreciated.

Thank you one and all!

The Bonanza Team





# Lodging House Mission Christmas Requests



The LHM Christmas newsletter tells us that they would love to provide a bag of goodies for their service users to enjoy over the festive period, to be included with their Christmas gift. Any of the following would be very gratefully received by them.

A box will be available for donations in the East Vestibule on Sunday, 8 December.

## Suggested Treats as part of Christmas Gift

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Juice (fizzy)                                   | Crisps            |
| Nuts  | Popcorn           |
| Sweets  | Bars of chocolate |
| Selection boxes                                 | Mincemeat Pies    |
| Cakes   |                   |
| Any festive treat that does not contain alcohol |                   |

Thank you.  
**Grace MacKay**

## Craft Group Changes



From the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2025 our Craft Group is moving to Tuesday afternoons. Everyone is very welcome to join us in the Small Hall from 2.00 to 3.30 p.m. for company and crafting. For more information contact Anne Bryden or the Church Office ([office@sjrchurch.com](mailto:office@sjrchurch.com)).

Please join us for

# ST. JOHN'S-RENFIELD CHURCH

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES



**SUNDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> – Annual Gift Service** - collecting gifts for Glasgow...The Caring City plus **Nine Lessons and Carols** led by our organist and Choirmaster Cameron Murdoch – 11 a.m.

**SUNDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> December – Morning Worship – 11 a.m.**

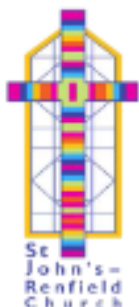
**MONDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> December – Christingle Service – 6.30 p.m.**

**TUESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> December – Watchnight Service - 11.30 pm.**

**WEDNESDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> December - Christmas Day  
Family Service – 10.30 am**

**SUNDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> December – Carol Service – 11.00 am.**

CHECK THE NEWS SECTION OF OUR WEBSITE [www.sjrchurch.com](http://www.sjrchurch.com)  
FOR MORE INFO



 @sjrchurch



@SJRCHURCH

Registered as a charity in Scotland Registration No.SC012920

## Girl Guiding Superstar

On Sunday 17th November our very own Eileen Wilson received her 40-year pin from Girlguiding Glasgow together with other Guiders who were receiving long service awards.

Eileen gained her original Warrant in early 1985 and since then she has given her service to St. John's-Renfield with the 25th Brownies and 25th Guides. She has had several stints as

District Commissioner and Division Commissioner over the years looking after Girlguiding units in Kelvinside District and Northern Division and since the review of divisions a name change to North West Division. During this time with the Brownies and Guides hundreds (thousands?) of girls here have been through the units involving Tuesday and Friday night meetings, outings, pack holidays,



camp, Thinking Days and Parades and, of course, any excuse for a party - all these taking place in the Brotherton Hall. They have also supported church events by running stalls at the Bonanza and any other events where they could help.

On behalf of everyone at St John's-Renfield we would like to send our sincere congratulations and best wishes to Eileen!

**Shirley Tassell - Retired Tawny Owl - 25th Brownies**

## Kelvindale Toddlers & Pudsey

Once again Kelvindale Toddlers supported the BBC Children in Need appeal. We had a spotty party on Thursday 15th November and sent all takings and donations to the appeal (£56). The photo shows some of our spotty decorations and Paddington Bear who came too since Pudsey Bear was rather busy elsewhere.



We meet in the large hall every Thursday morning (9.45-11.45); a friendly group of parents, grandparents, carers and children. Most of the children are under 3 but older children can come too in the school holidays. There are wheeled toys (sit in, sit on or push), a small climbing frame with a slide, a tunnel, a toy kitchen, many toy cars with a garage and a carpet with roads marked, a wooden brio train set, books and many other toys. There are small tables and chairs for the children at snack time and tea, coffee and biscuits for the grown-ups.

Everyone helps put the toys back in the cupboards in the Chalmers Room about 11.30 and we finish with a sing song accompanied by a selection of musical instruments. How many verses of “The Wheels on the Bus” or “Row, row, row your boat” can you remember?

A few of the “toddler” families joined us for Messy Church on Saturday 16th November and sent appreciative messages afterwards. They also appreciate greetings and help from the gardeners. The church premises are busy on Thursday mornings!

**Elsbeth Johnson**



# Pop-in Café



Join the Christmas fun at our  
community café!

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December**

**From 2- 3.30 pm**

**At the Large Hall, St. John's  
Renfield Church,**

**Beaconsfield Road, Kelvindale**



**Free Tea, Coffee, Cake**

**(served until 3pm)**

**No booking required**

**Bring the kids - everyone is  
welcome to join the fun & chat**

Contact us: [office@sjrchurch.com](mailto:office@sjrchurch.com) or call  
(0141) 334 0782 - [www.sjrchurch.com](http://www.sjrchurch.com)





# The Church of Scotland

MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## The Moderator's Challenge – Let Your Little Light Shine

Please find below a link to a resource which has been developed following my visit to Malawi in August this year:

[https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/128215/FAPLT-Let-Your-Little-Light-Shine-RESOURCE-V10.pdf](https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/128215/FAPLT-Let-Your-Little-Light-Shine-RESOURCE-V10.pdf)

On that visit I was able to see so much of the wonderful work carried out by our partners, the Church of Central Africa (CCAP), throughout the country. One thing which stood out for me was the hunger for education at all levels. The Church has a range of educational institutions and are providing such valuable learning for their students. This has made me keen to support one small part of this ambition to help build the people of God in Malawi.

I am commending to you the resource above, which you can find out more about on the Church of Scotland website: <https://churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/articles/moderators-challenge-to-light-up-learning-in-malawi> - it gives you the opportunity to join me in supporting the provision of solar power, through light libraries in CCAP Primary Schools and solar panels for the new PhD centre at Zomba Theological University.

My challenge to you is to help me to provide that much needed light to allow study in the hours of darkness in Malawi. I wonder how many light libraries we can achieve? A solar light costs just £10.

As well as direct transfer and cheques for any donations we have a donate button on the webpage: <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/connect/moderators-challenge> and also a QR code on the resource. This has all gone live today, and will continue accepting donations until the beginning of May 2025. So although this might fit well during Advent, there will still be an opportunity for you to participate throughout the first part of 2025. The Church of Scotland website will also have a downloadable PowerPoint presentation, poster and some art work within the next week.

With many thanks and every blessing,

**Rt Rev Dr Shaw J Paterson**  
**Moderator of the General Assembly**  
**Church of Scotland**



# Our New Mission Partner in Israel

Glasgow Presbytery have invited churches in Glasgow to consider adopting the **Rev. Muriel Pearson** as their Mission Partner. We have a personal link with Muriel since she was in the same class in Jordanhill School with Shirley Maxwell.

Our Kirk Session have agreed to this new endeavour. From time to time, we will receive a Partner Letter from Muriel and this will be distributed electronically to the congregation.

Muriel is based at St Andrew's Church in the heart of Tiberias, right by the Sea of Galilee. You can read Muriel's blog, "Stepping out of the boat" by opening [murielpearson.com](http://murielpearson.com)

We will be contacting Muriel to find out how, apart from our prayers, we can help her in her work.

To find out more about the work of the Church of Scotland in Galilee go to [standrewsgalilee.wordpress.com](http://standrewsgalilee.wordpress.com)

**M.Watt**

## Arranging Your Flowers in December

Marion Dowling  
Susan Finnigan  
Liz MacDonald





The Boys' Brigade  
5<sup>th</sup> Glasgow Company  
<http://5glasgow.boys-brigade.org.uk>  
[5thglasgow@boys-brigade.org.uk](mailto:5thglasgow@boys-brigade.org.uk)

follow us on social media



5THGLASGOWBB

## **Boys' Brigade News**

### **Anchor Boys & Junior Section**

November has seen the Anchor Boys and the Junior Section enjoy a series of routine evenings addressing activities to help meet the achievement programme.

A highlight was a visit from our Liaison Elder, Fiona Robinson, who was a great “hands on” visitor, helping with the making of empire biscuits which provided an experience leading to the achievement, “getting creative.”

We are now looking forward to our three December meetings where, you guessed it, Christmas activities will feature highly, including, for the Anchor Boys, the Battalion Christmas Colouring competition and our party on Tuesday 17th with our fingers crossed that a special guest manages to make a visit.

We will then have a break before returning for our spring session on 7th January 2025.

**Allan Watt and Aileen Morison (Officers-in- Charge)**

### **Company Section**

November was a busy month for Company Section which started with the Bonanza weekend where the Seniors and staff got in a lather with the Car Wash!

Our Senior boys "ran the show" on 15th November and did a great job at organising and leading our Friday night activities.

On the Partick District front, the Laser Quest competition took place in early November with Pte Lukas Carvalho winning silver in the Intermediate event. Well done to all the boys who participated.

As we go to press, the District competitions continue with Squad Drill in early December and Tenpin Bowling to follow in January 2025. Keep an eye on our social media feeds for the results!

December also sees the boys doing a spot of baking followed by our Christmas night out at VR Simulators on Gallowgate for a virtual reality Grand Prix racing night!

Please continue to keep up to date with our weekly activities on our social media feeds and please don't forget to 'like', 'share', and 'retweet' our posts if possible!

Going into the New Year please don't forget we have the return of the BB Quiz & Chippy Night to brighten up your January!! Saturday 18th January 2025 is the date to remember, in the Large Hall at 7.30pm. Tickets are on sale now, at £10 per person. Ticket enquiries should be directed to Allan Watt at the following email address: [allanwatt74@gmail.com](mailto:allanwatt74@gmail.com)

Finally, if you know of any boys from P7 upwards who would like to join us then please don't hesitate to get in touch. They will be made most welcome.

**STEDFAST**

# Quiz & Chippy Night

**SATURDAY 18TH JANUARY 2025  
7:30-10PM**

St. Johns' Renfield Large Hall

**Tickets £10, (inc. Chippy of your choice)**

Contact: [allanwatt74@gmail.com](mailto:allanwatt74@gmail.com)



*5th Glasgow  
Boys' Brigade*



follow us on social media

**5THGLASGOWBB**



You're Invited to  
Celebrate with Us!

# WINTER EVENTS

1.30pm, WEDNESDAY 4<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER

## Christmas Show

Capacity is limited so book through June/Angela

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2.30pm, THURSDAY 12<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER

## CHRISTMAS SERVICE of CAROLS & READINGS

With Mission Voices

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Closed 2pm 31<sup>st</sup> December –  
Reopening Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January



LHM, 35 East Campbell Street,  
Glasgow, G1 5DT





# Carols At the Curlers'

**CAROL SONGS | FELLOWSHIP | FUN**

Celebrate the spirit of Christmas and sing Carols with us at the Curlers. This event is jointly organised by churches in the Glasgow Westend. Gather with family and friends to enjoy the timeless melodies that echo the joy, warmth, and love of the season.

7.00-8.00 PM

**11**

DECEMBER '24

**Curlers Rest, 256-260 Byres Road, G12 8SH**

For info contact:  
[rsturrock@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:rsturrock@churchofscotland.org.uk)



# **LIFE AND WORK**

## **DECEMBER 2024**

### **Christmas**

How churches in the midst of conflict or danger are marking Christmas

Lynne McNeil learns about the growth of Christingle service  
Seasonal message from the Moderator

### **Time to Act**

As World AIDS Day approaches, Carol Finlay highlights the need for vigilance

### **Our Presbyteries**

Forth Valley and Clydesdale

### **Letter from the Holy Land**

The Rev Dr Stewart Gillan emphasises the need to keep the light shining, 'piercing the darkness together'.

### **A Trusted Friend**

Walter Scott and Anira Phipon Lepcha reflect on the life and legacy of Walter's great, great, great aunt, Mary Scott, a missionary in the Eastern Indian Himalayas.

### **Regulars**

Worship column by the Rev Roddy Hamilton

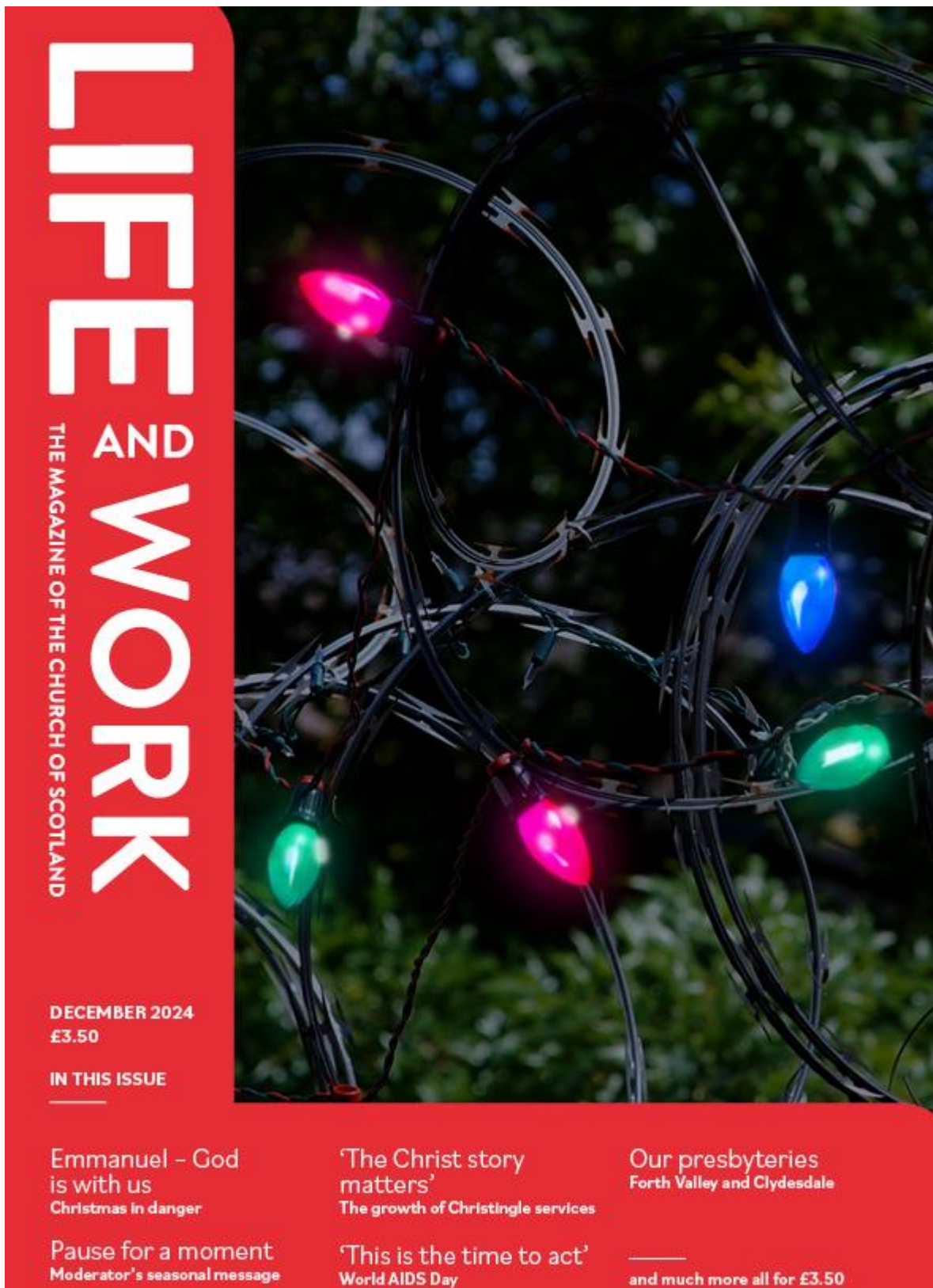
Reflection by the Rev Dr Richard Frazer

The Rev Ruth Kennedy on digital church

Bible study by the Rev Richard Baxter

My Church: Connie Anderson of Duror Church, North Argyll

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**LIFE AND WORK**  
THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

DECEMBER 2024  
£3.50

IN THIS ISSUE

Emmanuel – God is with us  
Christmas in danger

'The Christ story matters'  
The growth of Christingle services

Our presbyteries  
Forth Valley and Clydesdale

Pause for a moment  
Moderator's seasonal message

'This is the time to act'  
World AIDS Day

and much more all for £3.50

# WHAT'S ON DECEMBER 2024

Sunday 1st	Morning Worship – 11.00 a.m. Communion
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Worship – 11.00 a.m.
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Pop-In Café SJR Large Hall from 2.00 to 3.30 p.m.
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Gift Service plus Nine Lessons and Carols – 11 a.m.
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Morning Worship – 11.00 a.m.
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Christingle Service – 6.30 p.m.
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Watchnight Service – 11.30 p.m. Carols at Curlers – 7.00 to 8.00 p.m.
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Day Family Service – 10.30 a.m.
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>	Carol Service – 11 a.m.

Please note: Events are subject to change

# OFFICE BEARERS

## Minister – Position Vacant

Interim Moderator – Rev. Audrey Jamieson

### Leadership Team

Susan Finnigan, Fiona Robinson, Shirley  
Maxwell and Roderick Watt

### Editor of Beacon

Alan Christie

Material for the February 2025 Beacon is required by

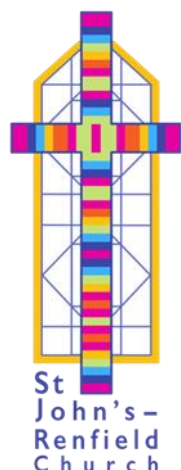
**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025 midnight**

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 9.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.

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