



# St. Matthew's Church, Perth

## e-Newsletter No. 82

### September 2024

#### Letter from the Manse

Friends, as the chill begins to creep in each morning, it's a great time to reflect back on the summer. I wonder, what were the highlights of your summer? And yes, before you ask, we did have a summer and we even had some days and part-days of sunshine – I've got a tan that only makes me look less peely-wally by other people's standards to prove it!

This summer, some of my highlights have involved watching Calum develop. The wee boy who would tentatively jump into the swimming pool, now launches himself in like a cannonball! He learned to ride his bike without stabilisers and is now terrifying his mother with his 'tricks' at the skate park. I've enjoyed quality time with family, I've read some books that were not for work and I've loved the work I have been doing. There has been a different pace of life or, at least, a different type of busy-ness and it has been great. We've got to know our neighbours a little better as we've all been outdoors more. I've also appreciated opportunities to get to know folk at church better too. I have learned a lot this summer.



At church, there have been a variety of highlights. I have gained lots of insight by talking with the artists who were displaying their work at the Summer Gallery. Our amazing volunteers have offered a warm welcome and refreshments to all who've stepped into the church. Our Prayer Space created by Maggie has been treasured by both visitors and members of the congregation alike, showing the need for a quiet, reflective space to simply be. The music evenings have expanded my musical knowledge and appreciation but they also created a pause in the week to rest awhile. I have participated in the most fascinating discussions with the wonderful folk who have come along to the *Faith Natters* sessions – I think I have learned more than anyone else! I loved being part of the Pride parade and festival and sharing our Pride service, which was incredibly moving. Thank you, Joseph, for your powerful testimony. Time and time again, we have shown that St Matthew's is a place of welcome and affirmation. Visitors have been

welcomed and my heart is full as I now witness many taking their place of belonging in our church family. It has been a great summer.

Calum started school the other week and, for us as a family, it now feels that summer is over. We're back into the old clothes and porridge routine and I think we were probably needing it. We maybe need it at church too. But let's not be so hasty as to lose all we've appreciated and enjoyed over the summer. Perhaps there are opportunities to recognise what we need to sustain us through the normal flow of business. If you found something life-giving during the summer, can it be continued or adapted as we approach a new season? Or is there space to bring in something new to scratch that itch?

This is your church: this is our church. If you have ideas that you would like to develop, ways in which you think we can improve what we do, or you'd like to share what you really appreciate about St Matthew's Church as it is, let's have a chat over a coffee. May God go with you as you step into a new season ripe with possibilities.

With blessings,

Your Minister,

**Fiona**

*I saw a stranger today.  
I put food for him in the eating-place  
And drink in the drinking-place  
And music in the listening-place.  
In the Holy name of the Trinity  
He blessed myself and my family.  
And the lark said in her warble  
Often, often, often  
Goes Christ in the stranger's guise..  
— The Celtic Rune of Hospitality*

## Kirk Session Update

## 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**

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.

### Midweek Musings

Wednesday at 9 a.m. Zoom at

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89813870441...>

Meeting ID: **898 1387 0441** Passcode: **077305**

A short time of reflection and discussion led by various church members - open to all—please feel free to join us!

John Dewar reminds us that the **badminton club** recommences for the new session on **Thursday 5th September between 7.30 pm and 10.00 pm**. All ages and abilities are welcome at any time between these hours. Any enquiries can be made to John on 01738 631350 or 07774438647.



The next **Boys' Breakfast Blether** will be held in Wetherspoons (next door to the church on Tay Street) on **Wednesday 11th September at 10a.m.** As always, new attendees will be very welcome.

**A big thank you** from Liz Barrett to everyone who has donated carrier bags over the past months; they have proved invaluable at the Moncreiffe Food Share hub. Please keep bringing them in—more are always needed, and can be left in the foyer of the church.

While Janet Martin says: “Thank you to everyone who has kindly supplied me with jars. My shed is now pretty full, so I don't require any more jars at present. I shall put out an alert if my stock depletes.”



The summer has been quiet for Kirk Session meetings – but a lot has been happening. Many Session members have been very involved in running the Summer Gallery and Festival, (including the music events) which of course this year also saw our Prayer Space being available at the same time.

During the summer, there's been quite a lot of activity on the church building. The heating system has had an overhaul and that should mean that the heating is more responsive – not too cold in places as some people have felt and not too hot as others have felt! And hopefully, it will use less energy at a time when energy prices are rising.

The other good news about the building is that the General Trustees (the property-holding arm of the Church of Scotland) have awarded us a grant of £170,000 and a loan of £30,000 which we will repay by claiming back the VAT on the work. This has enabled us to appoint a contractor to undertake the necessary repairs on the outside of the church and halls. We're waiting for the start date to be confirmed but it will be soon. The date and the works plans will be announced during Church Family News.

The next Session meeting is on **Monday 16 September at 7.30p.m.** and there will be a full report in the next newsletter.

*Raymond Young, Session Clerk*

**GUILD NEWS** On Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September, the Guild will be holding its Annual Gathering in the Assembly Hall on the Mound in Edinburgh; this is open to all Guild members; tickets are available through the Guild office in Edinburgh.

Guild Week will be marked in St Matthews with a special Dedication service during morning worship on Sunday 15th September.

The Guild meets on Monday afternoons at 2 pm in the Sanctuary, and our first meeting on 16th September will be an informal get together, introducing the new syllabus. On 30th September our Minister Rev Fiona Bullock will be the speaker. Another date for our diaries is Monday 21st October when there will be a Mini Gathering of our Guilds Together in Dunblane Cathedral. All members are welcome there.

Our Guild is open to all, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back for an interesting session of meetings. *Lorna Morrison,*

**St Matthew's Walkers** Malcolm Thom will be leading our walk on Sat. 7th Sept. around Quarrymill, Scone Den and Gannochy, followed by lunch. Meet at Broxden at 9.30a.m. and let Malcolm know if you intend to come along. (Phone 07411 938008 )

## The summer gallery and musical evenings

*Tom Morrison writes:*

At the time of writing this we are into the final week of this year's events. We have enjoyed a wide variety of artists and crafts together with the innovation this year of musical evenings.


This event has brought a substantial amount of income to the church as well as visitors from the 4 corners of the world. I would like to thank all those who contributed their time and effort to make it a success once again.

*And Fiona Bruce adds:* I'm delighted to report that the plant Sale raised over £400 for church funds. Thanks must go to the growers and all those who bought plants. I hope they have flourished!


### And still to come in September

*An evening with*  
**Polish Scouting & Guiding Association**  
**Monday 2nd September 7pm**  
St. Matthew's Church,  
Tay Street, Perth. PH15LQ  
Entry by donation with proceeds to Scouts & Guides

**about the organisation**  
**music & song . . . brief history**  
**activities . . . refreshments**



**ZWIĄZEK  
HARCERSTWA  
POLSKIEGO**



*Finale to our Summer Gallery music evenings*  
**ALL WELCOME**

### Doors Open Days

**Saturday 14th & Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September**

As has happened for the past few years, the church will take part in this national event and will be open 10am-4pm on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> and 1-4pm on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September.

There is a coffee morning 10-12 noon on the Saturday but the church is looking for guides and people to make teas and coffees after that on Saturday 12-4pm and Sunday 1-4pm.

If you can help open our church at these times please contact Fiona Bruce on [FMBruce6@googlemail.com](mailto:FMBruce6@googlemail.com) or 07787 103531.

### You are loved

The message preached at our Pride service on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." This is the commandment given by the God-man, who chose to prioritise those who were kept on the margins by a society that favoured others. Jesus wasn't interested in appeasing the great and the good by public, political actions that would show him to be like them. He was thoroughly invested in being with those who had been cast aside and simply loving them.

As Christians, as disciples or followers of Christ, this is what we are called to do: love one another. Jesus did not say, 'love those who are the same as you.' He didn't say, 'work out who you should be seen to love for political gain.' He didn't say, 'only love those whose lives you can understand or make sense of.' He said, 'love one another as I have loved you.' You have known my unconditional love – now share that with others.

But friends, in order to love others as Jesus loves us, we have to accept that Jesus can and does love us. We don't have any hoops to jump through – we are loved as we are. It can be very hard to understand that someone else can love us if we don't love ourselves. So friends, I encourage you to take better care of yourselves. You matter. It matters to me that you are here- not just at church today, in the building or online, but that you are here in the world. You make the world a better place by simply being you. You are loved but can you please take the first step by loving yourself? By acknowledging that you are loveable and incredible and a bright light in this existence. You are worthy of good things and good people and most of all, love.

In order to love ourselves, we must be authentically ourselves. Anyone who has worn a mask created out of a desire to fit in knows how costly it is to do so. In pretending to be someone else, we lose ourselves and with it, all that is life-giving in our days. Be yourself enough to love yourself unconditionally. Then let your light shine for others to see. Allow others to fall in love with the best version of yourself and to see God radiating through you.

Please don't hide away any longer. We need you as you are. There is a place for you in this church as you are – please make yourself at home.

So this weekend of Perthshire Pride, I say to all of you: Be Yourself. Love yourself. Know that you are loved. And love one another. It really is as simple as that. Now go and do it...Amen.



## Janet's Jottings

### Team work

In June I was chatting to my neighbour's 7 yr old grandson Elliot, who had just returned from his school sports day brandishing a medal for winning a race. Elliot was keen to find out if I had ever won any races. "Yes", I replied, "I got a first in the 3-legged race." He looked at me quizzically and said, "Don't be silly, Janet, people only have 2 legs!". Apparently, this race is no longer included in many school sports - probably for Health & Safety reasons.

I explained that in my primary school, the 3-legged race was taken very seriously. For weeks ahead people would be seeking out an appropriate partner to run with. We were all keen to match up with someone who was roughly the same height and leg length to enable a matching stride. The various runners aided by a selection of ties (purloined from fathers, often reluctant to part with them), rope, crepe bandages, or perhaps an elasticated S-belt (remember those?), or a bit of binder twine. There would be practice runs at playtime, or in the local park in the evenings. Disappointment was palpable when someone nabbed the person you had identified as perfect partner. There were never enough pals of the same shape and size to pair up, often leading to a badly matched tall and short person hobbling along together. Inevitably, there were grazed knees, bruised ankles and squabbling over the right length of stride, tightness of the tie, or the right speed until folks got into their rhythm. However, we all did our best and after a few tentative steps, one would get into stride with one's partner and suddenly, arms round shoulders, legs tied together, you would almost fly along towards the finishing ribbon. Such joyous satisfaction arose from the joint effort.

In Ecclesiastes 4: 9-10 we are told that "Two are better than one because they have a better return for their labour. If either of them falls down, one can help the other up." Don't panic, I am not about to suggest we all start practising the 3-legged race in the Kirk! However, it is a good reminder that when we work together, we achieve more. No matter what shape or size we are, we all have something to give.

In Ephesians 4:16 "From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work". If you often feel that you are not the right shape, size, age or have the ability to take part in something in our church, then just remember that God delights in unity among his people and there will always be someone there to travel the way with you - not necessarily with your legs tied together!

Janet Martin



### Andrew's prayer

Let us pray  
Dear Father God,  
Autumn is a lovely  
season - misty, colourful  
and bright.  
The fruit is ripe and  
juicy. The squirrels in  
the woods collect nuts  
to feed them through  
the winter.  
Dew sparkles like  
diamonds on early  
morning cobwebs Amen

### SUNDAY FLOWERS

Each Sunday, our worship is enhanced by beautiful flower displays, for which grateful thanks are due to our Flower Convener Norma Wright. The flowers are donated, week by week, by individual members of the congregation, (see the back page of this newsletter), and are delivered after the service to members who may be coping with illness, bereavement, or who may have a particular reason to be celebrating special birthdays or anniversaries. We are very grateful to those who donate at least once a year; there are still a few dates (including September 22nd) without donors; if you would like to contribute towards the cost of flowers for that Sunday, or for any others, please speak to Norma on a Sunday morning.



## Who's in the pews? (or who's there on the chairs?)

This month we introduce you to three more of our members:

### Evelyn McLaren

**Where were you born/brought up?** St Andrews. I was born in Craigton Park; not on a park bench, though! There was a maternity hospital there in the 1950s.

**What is/or was your occupation?** I retired in 2022 after working for the GA (now called AVIVA), I was there for over 45 years, first in the Finance Dept and then ended up in the Staff Pensions.

**What brought you to St Matthew's?** I joined St Matthew's in 1964 when my family moved to Perth. My husband Tommy & I were married here in 1979 and our children Julie and Sam were both baptised here.

**Are you involved in any groups/or volunteering at St Matthew's or anywhere else?** I volunteer in the Sunday coffee team & the Arts Café and other events when I can. I am also the Gift Aid Convenor. This is an important role which allows us to claim back 25% of members contributions from the Government. It is a great benefit to our church finances. If you are a Tax payer and have not yet signed up for Gift Aid please see me – I usually sit in the back right hand corner of the church on Sundays.

**Tell us about any hobbies you enjoy?** I enjoy going to the gym, looking after my grandchildren Niamh & Cormac, reading, socialising with friends and going for long walks with our spaniel Cody.

**What is the most surprising thing about you that we might not yet know?** I was born at 11.50 pm on Hogmanay. Had I been born 10 minutes later I would have been a year younger than I am now!



### Andy and Frances Turnbull



**Where were you born/brought up?** Andy – I was born and brought up in Edinburgh; Frances – I was born and brought up in Perth.

**What is/or was your occupation?** Frances: I was an Additional Support Needs Teacher. Andy: I was a Social Worker with P&K. We are both retired now.

**What brought you to St Matthew's?** Frances: Both my parents (Christian & Lambert Smith) were actively involved with the Wilson Church and it joined with St Matthew's in 1965. Andy and I met at St Andrew's University and were married in St Matthew's by Rev George McBride in 1977.

**Are you involved in any groups/or volunteering at St Matthew's or anywhere else?** Frances: I used to help with the Junior Church. I now help on the kitchen cleaning rota, also with Sunday coffee and other catering events. Andy: I am the current Safeguarding Co-ordinator, I also help to arrange musical events and attend the boys' breakfast when I remember and my diary permits – currently lost!

**Tell us about any hobbies you enjoy?** Andy: I play wind instruments and so enjoy playing classical, folk & Big Band Music and attending concerts. I also enjoy playing tennis. Frances: I sing in a choir, do Pilates, and enjoy baking, sewing, knitting & reading. I am also delving into my family history and attempting to renew my piano skills and practicing French.

Together we help care for our grandchildren, enjoy a bit of walking (sometimes uphill!), and keeping up with French friends in Mardie through the Town Twinning Scheme.

**What is the most surprising thing about you that we might not yet know?** We met on a blind date in St Andrews. We enjoy watching Newtonmore play shinty.

## Perth: St. Matthew's Church Sunday worship at 11 a.m.

Address: Tay Street, Perth, PH1 5LQ

Church Tel: 01738 636757

Minister: Rev. Fiona C Bullock

Tel: 01738 570241

[fbullock@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:fbullock@churchofscotland.org.uk)

Session Clerk: Raymond Young

[rky@btinternet.com](mailto:rky@btinternet.com)

[Clerk@perthstmatthews.org.uk](mailto:Clerk@perthstmatthews.org.uk)

Church Office: Beverly Skene

[office@perthstmatthews.org.uk](mailto:office@perthstmatthews.org.uk)

Newsletter Editor: Marjorie Clark

[Marjorie.clark@btinternet.com](mailto:Marjorie.clark@btinternet.com)

Treasurer: John Dewar

[Dewar34@hotmail.com](mailto:Dewar34@hotmail.com)

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### CHURCH FLOWERS

Sept.	Donated by	Delivered by
1st	Eileen Montgomery	Fiona Bruce
8th	Alison Sweeney	John and Helen Dewar
15th	Fiona Bruce	Alison Sweeney
22nd	<i>Vacant</i>	Frances Turnbull
29th	Evelyn McLaren	Janet Martin

The next issue of the newsletter is due out on at the end of September. All contributions by **Sun. 22nd September** please to the editor: [Marjorie.clark@btinternet.com](mailto:Marjorie.clark@btinternet.com)

If you do not already receive this newsletter electronically and would like to receive future issues via email, please send your email address to the editor, and you will be added to our distribution list.

## Sunday morning rotas for September

### Welcome Teams

- 1st Muirton (Janet Martin)
- 8th Perth City (John Dewar)
- 15th Perth South (Malcolm Thom)
- 22nd Oakbank (Donald Stewart)
- 29th Burghmuir (Isobel Sinclair)

### Beadle Duty

- 1st Raymond Young
- 8th Tom Morrison
- 15th Bill Chalmers
- 22nd Andy Turnbull
- 29th Malcolm Thom

### READERS

- 1st Marjorie Clark
- 8th Edie O'Brien
- 15th Alison Sweeney
- 22nd Roy Nicoll
- 29th Barbara Quigley

### TEA/COFFEE TEAMS

- 1st Isobel Sinclair
- 8th Joyce Thom
- 15th Wendy Burnett
- 22nd Frances Turnbull
- 29th Marjorie Clark



### AV Desk

- 1st Nicola Macnee and John Paton
- 8th John Paton and Kylie Murray
- 15th Raymond Young and Pete Barrett
- 22nd Alastair Byers and Nicola Macnee
- 29th John Paton and Andrew Davis