



St Matthews News

No. 86 February 2025

Rev. Fiona reflects

Friends, after a wonderful time of exploring, sharing and celebrating the Christmas story together, we stepped into a brand new year as a church family. Full of potential and possibilities, a new year represents a blank canvas that allows us to be the artists of 2025. That's true of church life as much as our own lives. On the first Sunday of the year, I sketched out my 2025 vision for St Matthew's and in this first newsletter of the year, I want to share this with you again.

In the coming weeks and months, we're going to explore together where we as the church family of St Matthew's are going, where we'd like to be, how we're going to get there and with whom we'll go on the journey. We're going to develop our new structure of Teams to inspire and encourage people to get involved with the work, worship and fellowship of the Church. Look out for more information about this in the next edition of the newsletter. The task belongs to all of us together, as we contribute our own personal ministries and gifts to the mission of St Matthew's.

As a church, we will look back in order to learn from the past and then move forward together productively. We will seek God's guidance every step of the way, so that mission and discipleship are our priorities with our business activities supporting them. We will choose to work and worship with our neighbours and explore ways of sharing the load. We will support Presbytery and our National Church, of which we are part, and engage with their resources, processes and encouragement.

We will be prepared to invest our time and resources in outreach to those who are in need and we will engage in a spirit of invitation – asking people along to our events, our Bible studies and our worship unashamedly to ensure that people know there is a place for them in our family of seekers, wonderers, sceptics, believers. We will talk about faith and gain confidence together in talking about what we believe and the questions and doubts we have. We will actively choose what to set down and what we want to begin. We will continue to open our doors, open our hearts and open our minds.

As we continue our journey into 2025, we do so together as a Church family and together with God. Friends, may we encourage and uphold one another. May we acknowledge our belonging and acceptance together. May we take care of one another, going the extra mile and sharing our burdens. May we offer abundant grace and love. May we seek God's vision for our church. May we always, always give thanks for one another. And may there always be coffee in your neither half-empty nor half-full but refillable cup (other beverages are available)! For God has called us here together and God is leading us onwards.

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

OR youtube.com/@stmatthewsp Perth/streams where services can be watched at the time most convenient to yourselves.

Guild News

The Guild Coffee Morning is on Saturday 8th February from 10-12 noon in the sanctuary. Tickets at £4 each are available from Guild members. There will be the usual home baking, a raffle, a stall selling your unwanted Christmas gifts, and a bookstall. Donations of baking, and your unwanted gifts will be welcome. Please come along and support the Guild and the Church of Scotland CrossReach charity which is our project for this year.



There will be two Guild meetings in February, on the 10th and 24th February.

Lorna Morrison, Convener

Church Flowers 2025

Norma Wright

I want to take a moment to thank everyone at St Matthews who contributes to the Church flowers on Sundays.

I also want to express my sincere gratitude to those of you who donate three or four times a year. (God loves a cheerful giver) I'm blessed.

There are a few spaces available: April 20th, August 10th, Sept 21st, December 14th.

A big thank you to Marjorie for distributing the flowers and to everyone who gives time to deliver the flowers every Sunday.

With sincere appreciation. Norma Wright

Flower Rota

Date	Donor	Delivery
Jan 5 th	Lorna Morrison	Marjorie Clark
Jan 12 th	Freda Stewart	Lesley Mackie
Jan 18 th	Eileen Montgomery	A & C Byers
Jan 26 th	May Selby	T & L Morrison
Feb 2 nd	Frances Turnbull	Janette Millar
Feb 9 th	Freda Stewart	Janet Martin
Feb 16 th	Roy & Marie Nicol	Nicola Macnee
Feb 23 rd	Ronnie Soreide	Alison Sweeney

World Day of Prayer on Friday 7th March 2025

This year, the service is being hosted by the Salvation Army Citadel in South Street at 11a.m. - all are welcome.

more general info here: <http://www.wdpScotland.org.uk/resources>

Kirk Session update - from our Session Clerk, Raymond Young

The Kirk Session met on 13 January – the first meeting of the year. The main (and almost the only issue) was how the finances of St Matthew's are to be managed following John Dewar's retirement from the role of Treasurer. John has looked after our finances for ten and a half years during which he has skilfully steered the finances through a lot of challenge and change - the refurbishment, Covid and the post Covid period; the latter has been a particularly difficult period. So, while we say thanks to John, we look forward to how we manage more change.

Three years ago, the new and larger Presbytery of Perth was established. One of the functions of the larger presbyteries was to help congregations in this changing world, with more regulations and complexities. So, we heard from Rhona Nicol, the Presbytery's Treasurer and Congregational Support officer who has been developing a financial management system along with a company that specialises in financial support for churches and charities. Some 50 congregations in the new Presbytery are using it or are in the process of implementing it. The Session decided unanimously to adopt it!

It is, of course, a computerised system and once the basic data is loaded should simplify day to day financial management. It will also allow us to spread the workload – not concentrating it in the one Treasurer. Yes - you where this report is going – we are looking for people to help and if you feel that this might interest you then please speak to Rev Fiona or to me. Remember the words of 1 Corinthians 12 on which Fiona reflected on Sunday 26 January – *'Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.'* And looking after our money is an important part of being the body of Christ.

Raymond Young

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.

So far Janet has led a Scottish Quiz, Norma has demonstrated "A Buttonhole for Burns", Raymond took us "Around the World in 80 Days" and we have enjoyed Carpet Bowls with Tom. 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 as follows:

29 th January	Starter Packs (Janette)
31 January	Film (The Chorus)
5 th February	A Craft Afternoon
7 th February	Seed Sowing & Saving (Nicola)
12 th February	Music from Michael Ellacott
14 th February	Beetle Drive
19 th February	A History of the Glasgow Tenement (Raymond)
21 st February	Quiz
26 th February	Commonwealth War Graves Commission (Dave Dykes)
28 th February	Carpet Bowls (Tom)

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

Any queries to: Fiona Bruce FMBruce6@googlemail.com

Announcement - from Joan Lackie

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who very kindly sent me lovely condolence cards on the death of my husband Mel. They were very much appreciated. Joan Lackie

Message from Eric Duff – Church Family

I would like to thank the congregation for the fantastic support given to both me and Liz. I had never been so ill in my life and that last illness nearly floored me. I know that prayers were given in Church and by many of the congregation. Fiona was also a fantastic help to me. We often talk about the "Church Family", for me this was demonstrated by so many, with best wishes, prayers and flowers for this I say THANK YOU ALL

Advent and Christmas Worship 2024

Over Advent and Christmas, we experienced a variety of styles of worship at St Matthew's. I loved every minute, because the services and reflections brought together valued regular attendees, family members and other members of our community and beyond to share in the reflection, joy and wonder of the Christmas story. Were any of these opportunities particularly meaningful or enjoyable for you? Here are some of the highlights:

- At our Time to Remember service, I was blown away by the number of people who came forward to light candles and add names to our Tree of Remembrance. It was truly special.
- Our Nativity service was a whirlwind of costumes, characters and laughter, as we shared the story of Christmas in our Alphabet Nativity. I think the wee shepherd/donkey stole the limelight when he crawled his way across the chancel with his shoes on his hands!
- The Advent reflections offered time to discuss the Christmas story and what it means to us.
- Soul Space created just that – a chance to simply be in the sacred space of the church.
- At our Christmas Eve service, Care for the Family's Christmas version of 'Would you rather...' gave rise to some fascinating discussions and there was great hilarity with each repair required on the paper chain we made to show our connection with one another.
- Christmas Day was a lovely gathering of church family, as we grounded ourselves in the real Christmas story.
- We rounded the year off with a thoughtful service from Rev. Maggie Roderick.



Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make these happen and a big thank you especially to those who stepped in at the last minute.

I look forward to more opportunities to discuss what we believe and to explore different ways of worship together in 2025. Do get in touch if you have any ideas or you would like to get involved in shaping our worship and reflection at St Matthew's.

Rev. Fiona

St. Andrews Jerusalem

On Thursday 13th February at 2p.m., St Matthew's Church is the venue for an event organised by Christian Aid and the Friends of St Andrew's Jerusalem. The minister of St Andrew's Church of Scotland in Jerusalem, Rev Stewart Gillan, will be speaking about the situation there and the role of the church; his talk is entitled "Light Shining in Darkness". Entry is free, and all are welcome. see poster next page

Dates for your Diary February 2025

A warm welcome across Perth and Kinross

WEEKLY FREE ACTIVITIES and TEA and BISCUITS
: Wednesday & Friday 1.30-4.30pm
At St Matthew's Church – All Welcome to our Warm Space!

5 February	A Craft Afternoon
7 February	Seed Sowing & Saving (Nicola)
12 February	Music from Michael
14 February	Beetle Drive
19 February	"A History of the Glasgow Tenement" (Raymond)
21 February	A Quiz
26 February	The CWGC (Dave Dykes)
28 February	Carpet Bowls (Tom)



www.pk.gov.uk/warmspaces

TAYSIDE BIG BAND

Join us for an evening of big band and swinging classics led by Andrew Mann.

With guest vocalist Mo Hannah.

WHERE • St Matthew Church, Tay Street, Perth

WHEN • Sunday 9th of February. 7:30pm Start

WHAT • £10 per person. Kids go Free



Follow us on Facebook @TaysideBigBand

Tickets also available from Andy Turnbull at Sunday services

ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH

GUILD COFFEE MORNING






£4PP

HOME BAKING RAFFLE STALLS

Saturday 8th February 10- 12 noon


St. Matthew's Church
Tay Street, Perth.

Tickets available on a Sunday or from Church office

Light Shining in Darkness

Christian Aid and
The Friends of St Andrew's Jerusalem & Tiberias
invite you to meet



Rev Dr Stewart Gillan
Mission Partner Jerusalem and Minister of
St Andrew's Church Jerusalem & Tiberias

Thursday 13th February 2025
2.00pm

St Matthew's Church, Tay Street, Perth, PH1 5LQ

Come and learn about

- the current situation
- the Church of Scotland's presence
- how the Church's partners work for a just peace.

Stewart's talk will be followed by refreshments and an opportunity for informal discussion.

All welcome! Admission free.
Donations to Christian Aid Middle East Crisis Appeal.

The event will be live-streamed – link is [here](#) or on www.friendsofstandrews.com

www.christianaid.org.uk sc0219150 www.standrewsjerusalem.org sc011353 www.friendsofstandrews.com sc011353

Thank you, John Dewar

After more than ten years in post, John Dewar stepped down as our Treasurer at the end of 2024. Well, I say stepped down, he is in fact still helping us – thank you, John! John has been a wonderful asset to the team at St Matthew's. In fact, he has done the job of Treasurer so well that we 'in the pews' understand little about what this vast role entails these days. We have put our trust in him and John has always delivered.

Although John has resigned from the role of Treasurer, he is not leaving us and will remain as an Elder of St Matthew's. You're still stuck with us, John. So this marks not an ending but rather the beginning of a new chapter both for John and Helen and for us as a congregation.

John has been an excellent Treasurer, but I realise that over the years, he has offered us other invaluable skills too and I hope he will continue to do so. John is the font of all knowledge when it



comes to the Who's Who of St Matthew's. If you come across the name of a member that doesn't ring a bell, ask John! John has been an anchor through many of the challenges we have encountered over the past few years and he has been a calm and measured voice in discussions and decision-making. I have very much appreciated this quality in him.

Thank you, John, for all your years of service. Thank you, Helen, for patiently supporting John to support our church as Treasurer. John was presented with a

£500 voucher for MacDonald Hotels and Helen was presented with a few gifts to help her relax. John and Helen, we appreciate you both and give thanks that you are part of our church family. We are now seeking a new Treasurer or a team to take on the various tasks that make up the role of Treasurer. If you feel God tapping you on the shoulder, or if someone else does, to suggest that you get involved, please speak to me or to Raymond Young, Session Clerk.

Rev. Fiona

Used Stamps for Church Charities

We have a box for collecting your used stamps in the café area at the church entrance. Please remember the rule about trimming them from the envelopes leaving around 2-3 mm of paper, do not soak them off. UK and foreign stamps separated into separate bundles will be helpful.

St Johns Kirk - Wednesday Services

There will be a short (20 minute) Service of Worship and Prayer held in St. John's Kirk each Wednesday at 1.00 pm, entry by the South door.

Tea /Coffee and biscuits and a chance to chat follow the Service, and everyone is welcome.

Loving God

As you bring light out of darkness, you bring calm after storms.

When we need you in our lives, you are there for us,
ever present, ever loving, ever comforting.

Let us remember your presence, your love and your comfort with gratitude
and share your love with others. In the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Janet's Jottings

Worshipping the word

That old saying 'The pen is mightier than the sword' has been coming to mind of late with Elon Musk expressing his opinions on everyone else's behaviour but his own. I find it quite worrying that some people believe that if something is written down, then it must be true. Elon Musk and Donald Trump who, because of their wealth and power, seem to think they have the right to exert influence over others. As my Dad would have said "Och, they're just full o' guff!". Their pontificating reminds me of an old Scots proverb "A fu' purse maks a haverin merchant". They are not alone. There are many who rely on social media platforms to tell others how to live their lives. Resorting to finding out what's happening in the world from Instagram, Facebook, X and other online sources. Even I dabble on Facebook - mostly to see photos and news of my friends and family.



Sharing news of course is nothing new. 'Social influencers' have been around for centuries. Remember Martin Luther who, by pinning up his 95 theses not only 'influenced' the minds of the folks of Wittenberg in the 1500s but caused the Protestant Reformation. His words spread round the world, maybe not as instantly as our present-day social media, but amazingly fast for the time, allowing Christians to choose a different way of worshipping and sharing their faith. A hundred years before, Caxton and Gutenberg were instrumental in bringing faith to the people by the invention of the printing press and making the written word accessible to the masses. Prior to that very few people could read and only the clergy had access to the written Holy word. Whatever was read by the Priest, monk or nun, was believed to be true by the listening faithful.

There are many who worship at the shrine of social media and the tide does not seem to be turning. Perhaps if we cannot beat them, then we join them? Not by disparaging others, pointing out their failings, or sharing only negative news, but by spreading the 'GOOD NEWS' of love and light into a world that is getting increasingly darker. The Bible tells us that words alone are not sufficient (James 2: 14-26), so we also need to physically act on our words. Doing is stronger than saying. So brighten up someone's life with some kind words, a smile, offering to take on a task, or giving support when they are needing it most. I started with an old Scots saying, so I shall leave you with another one that I feel sums it up "A man o' words, but no deeds, is like a gairden fu' o' weeds"

Sunday Morning Rotas for February

February Rota	Welcome	Beadle	Readers	Tea / Coffee	AV Desk
2 nd	Perth : John Dewar	Bill Chalmers	Anne Attridge	Isobel Sinclair	Nicola Macnee John Paton
9 th	Perth South: Malcolm Thom	Andy Turnbull	Barbara Quigley	Joyce Thom	John Paton Andrew Davies
16 th	Oakbank: Donald Stewart	Malcolm Thom	Fiona Bruce	Wendy Burnett	Raymond Young Peter Barrett
23 rd	Burghmuir: Isobel Sinclair	Raymond Toung	Joan Lackie	Frances Turnbull	Alastair Byers Nicola Macnee

Fiona Bruce & Andrew Davies (Mother & Son)



Where were you born/brought up?

Andrew – I was born in PRI and brought up in Perth. I went to Fairview School & Perth College.

Fiona – I was born in the (now demolished) Elsie Inglis hospital, Edinburgh and brought up there.

What is/or was your occupation?

Andrew – I work in Customer Service in the Café in the new Perth Museum

Fiona – I was a solicitor and then a lecturer at Perth College as well as being a 'domestic engineer'!

What brought you to St Matthew's? **Andrew** – My Mum! **Fiona** – My friend Janet!

Are you involved in any groups/volunteering at St Matthew's?

Andrew - Are you involved in any groups/or volunteering at St Matthew's or anywhere else? I love volunteering on the AV Team. I help to serve in the Arts café over the summer

Fiona – I was Session Clerk for 10 years and was also on the refurbishment group helping to raise the funds. I am an elder and have co-ordinated the 'Warm Spaces' events. I enjoy volunteering at various other events.

Tell us about any hobbies you enjoy?

Andrew – I love drama and singing. I was in 'Shrek' last year and I am in 'Encore', soon to be on at the Perth Concert Hall. I also enjoy the Walking Group – even though it is mostly 'Oldies'!

Fiona – I enjoy tennis, badminton and walking and I am part of St M's badminton & walking groups.

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

Andrew – I play the baritone tuba and have singing lessons from our organist Michael. We have great fun.

Fiona – I first met Janet Martin when I interviewed her for a job – away back in 1987!

Contact Details

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Sunday worship at 11.00a.m.

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The next issue of St. Matthews News is due out on Friday 28th February. All contributions by Monday 24th February please to the Editor David.roderick2@btinternet.com