

# St John's News

The Newsletter of St John's Church of Scotland, Carluke

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**MAY 2024**



# Celebration of marriage

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On Sunday 22nd September at 2 pm, we are planning to hold a service to celebrate marriage. Marriages that have taken place in St John's and also in other places.

We hope to hold a short service in the Church acknowledging commitment already made and asking God's blessing and guidance going forward.

This will be followed by afternoon tea in the hall.

We look forward to an afternoon of reminiscences. Everyone is welcome so please come along and bring family and friends with you. For catering purposes please e-mail [battisonwest@aol.com](mailto:battisonwest@aol.com) to register.

**Jean Battison**

## Decoration of the sanctuary



We are blessed as a congregation with the beautiful way in which our church is decorated each week. We also decorate our church in special ways at different times in the Christian calendar. This photo was taken on Easter Sunday.

Often flowers are donated in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a special anniversary. These flowers add beauty to our sanctuary each week and are then given as gifts to members of our congregation.

If you would like to donate flowers then please add your name to the flower calendar in the vestibule or email me at [battisonwest@aol.com](mailto:battisonwest@aol.com) **Jean Battison**

# Pastoral letter

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**Dear Beloved friends and family of St. John's,**

As we journey through the month of May and anticipate the blossoming of summer, a season of transition and renewal, I am filled with deep gratitude for each of you and your unique contributions to our vibrant church family at St. John's. Your individual roles, big or small, are not just invaluable; they are the very heart of our congregation.

Amidst this season of growth and renewal, we find ourselves eagerly working through the Presbytery Mission Planning. This process is not just a series of strategic discussions and decisions; it's a roadmap that will shape the future direction of our congregation and Cluster. While we may feel a mix of emotions - anticipation, curiosity, and perhaps even some anxiety about what it may mean - I encourage us to ground ourselves in the bedrock of our faith. Scripture reminds us time and again of God's faithfulness and provision. In Jeremiah 29:11, we read, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Whatever the future brings, we trust that God will guide us toward a hopeful and purpose-filled future filled with God's blessings and grace.

In the meantime, let us continue to be a beacon of light and love in our community. Our mission to spread the Gospel and serve those in need remains unchanged, regardless of the planning outcome. Let us look for opportunities to embody Christ's love in tangible ways, reaching out to our neighbours with compassion and grace. I invite us to fervently pray for our congregation, one another, and the Presbytery Mission Planning process. Prayer is not just a routine but a powerful tool that unites us as a community, aligns our hearts with God's will, and plays a significant role in the discernment and decision-making of this planning process. Our prayers are not in vain; they are a direct line of communication with God, shaping our future.

As we journey forward, remember that we do not walk alone. God is not just with us; God guides, comforts, and empowers us every step of the way. Together, as a united and supportive community, let us press onward with faith, knowing that the best is yet to come and that we are secure in God's loving hands. Our unity and support for one another are not just words; they are the pillars that uphold our faith and strengthen our community. Let us continue to lean on each other to encourage and uplift one another as we navigate through this season of growth and change.

I want to welcome all our long-standing members, friends, and new members of our congregation and the broader community to our upcoming services and events, including our regular Sunday (11:00 am) and Thursday (10:30 am) services; our upcoming Get-together (Stated Annual Meeting) on Tuesday, 4 June; Holy Communion on Sunday, 2 June; Bible study meetings; and our united summer services.

With love and blessings,

**Rev. Dr Elijah Obinna**

*Minister*

## **Joint Kirk Session Gathering**

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Earlier this month, all four Kirk Sessions from St John's, St Andrew's, Kirkton and Law met together in our hall to hear from some of the groups who undertake missional work on our behalf. There were more than 60 people at the event and everyone was encouraged by how much we had in common and what a positive feeling there was amongst those present about the future shape of the church in Carluke and Law.

It is hoped that another gathering of the Kirk Sessions will take place after the summer.

In the meantime the cluster group (representatives of the four congregations) will continue to meet and begin to consider how to move things forward.

# The church in Carluke & Law

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Over the past year or so discussions have been ongoing about the future shape of the church in Carluke and Law. These discussions came about as a result of a decision of the General Assembly to recognise the need for change, considering, the reducing size of congregations and the lack of new ministers.

The discussions in Carluke and Law also recognised the many ways in which the churches have worked together over the years through joint services and joint missional work including Street level, Choices, Carluke Listeners, the Foodbank the summer holiday club and Christian Aid week.

St John's are already in a deferred union with St Andrew's and we expect that union to take place at some point in the near future following the retiral of Rev Helen Jamieson on 31<sup>st</sup> August. That will be the first step in this process.

The four congregations have met frequently and following the agreement of all four Kirk Sessions it is proposed that one united congregation will be established for Carluke and Law. The new congregation will use the building that is currently used by Kirkton as their place of worship. Law will be retained for missional activity and it is anticipated that in due course the buildings owned by St John's and St Andrew's will be sold. The congregation will be served by two Ministers of Word and Sacrament operating as a team alongside a part time children and families worker.

This position was recently agreed by Presbytery and the full Presbytery Mission Plan has now been sent to the relevant departments for approval.

This has been a difficult decision for the Kirk Session but it has long been the view of St John's that one united congregation is the best way forward to fulfil God's mission in our community.

Ultimately this will be subject to a congregational vote but we hope that the congregation will agree to the decision of the Kirk Session and look forward to what this united congregation can do for God's mission in Carluke and Law.

# Time for fellowship

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The time for fellowship has been a great success every Sunday morning where we can all catch up. Enjoying a wee cup of tea and a big blether with all our friends at church.

It is with great thanks that I have the special help from all my teams who are there when needed to serve tea and coffee every week. I would also like to thank Ian and all who help put tables up and take them away after we are finished. Also when possible the Boys Brigade put tables up on a Friday night if the hall is not being used on the Saturday.

Over the past year we have given donations to:

St Andrews Hospice £200, Scotland's Air Ambulance £150, Lanarkshire Cancer Care £100, Education Nigeria £600, St Johns Boys Brigade £200, St Johns Flower Circle £100 and purchased new communion covers £33

We are always looking for more helpers on Sundays and you would only be required to attend every 6<sup>th</sup> Week. If you wish to volunteer please speak to Moira Braynion or call on 01555 750915.

**Moira Braynion**

# Thursday Service

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Did you know that every Thursday there is a short service in the church at 10.30?

This service is always well attended and you can be sure of a warm welcome. Some folk have brought their grandchildren along too and that always makes us all smile!

The service lasts no more than 30 minutes and there is tea and coffee both before and after the service thanks to our great Kettle's On team.

If you have moved to the area or haven't managed to church for a while or even if you are just curious about what it is all about why not come along? We would love to see you.

## *gift aid it*

Like everyone, the Church's finances have been affected by recent events (COVID and the energy crisis). Members giving's have been steady in recent years but not returned to pre COVID levels. A saving factor in our income has been our Gift Aid recovered from the taxman and this has basically kept us afloat over the past 2 years.

**If you are a taxpayer and don't already use Gift Aid then please consider doing so since we can recover a bonus of 20p for every pound you give at no extra cost to you. Speak to any elder and they will pass on your details and we can set that up for you.**

Our heating costs are a major factor in our expenditure and these have doubled in the past year which puts a considerable strain on our resources. The maintenance of the Church and manse are considerable ongoing costs to us.

The next few years will present considerable challenges to us but together we can work our way through to a brighter future . **Jack Battison (Finance Convenor)**

### **Jesus loves me ..... for older folks**

1. Jesus loves me, this I know,  
Though my hair is white as snow.  
Though my sight is growing dim,  
still He bids me trust in Him.

2. Though my steps are oh, so slow,  
With my hand in His I'll go  
On through life, let come what may,  
He'll be there to lead the way.

3. Though I am no longer young,  
I have much which He's begun.  
Let me serve Christ with a smile,  
go with others the extra mile

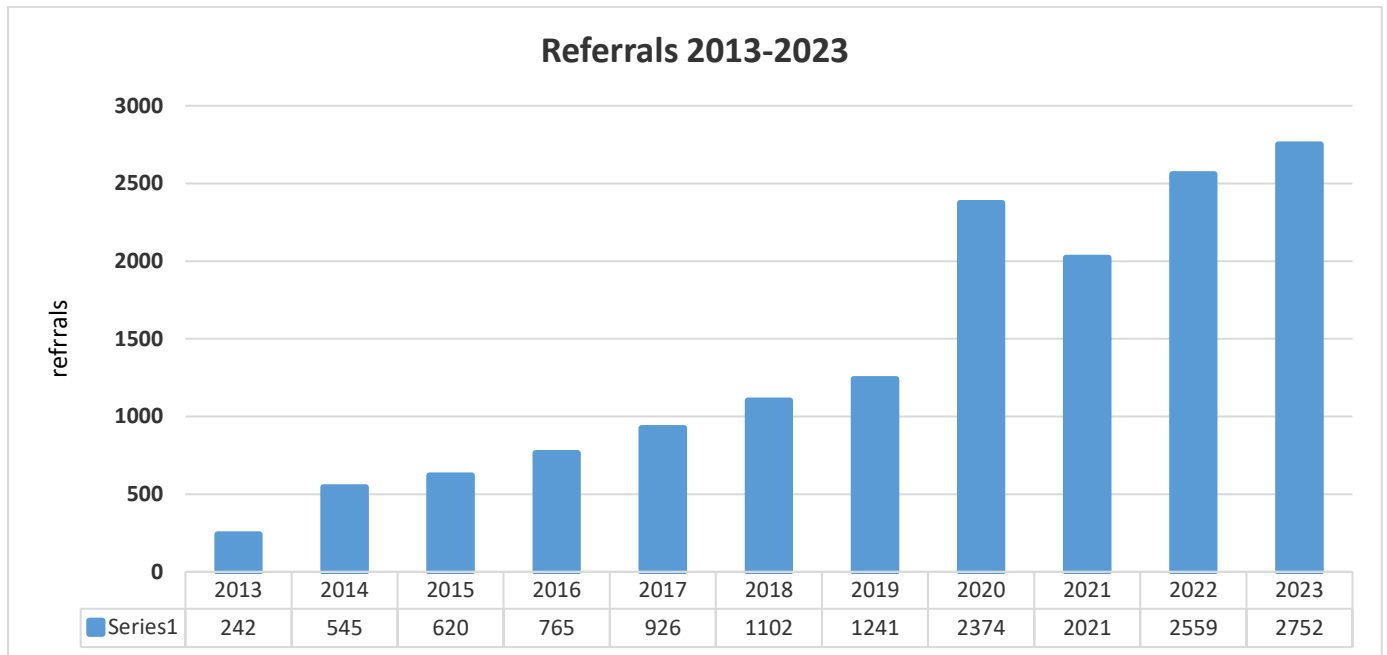
4. When the nights are dark and long,  
in my heart He puts a song.  
Telling me in words so clear,  
"Have no fear, for I am near."

5. When my work on earth is done,  
and life's victories have been won.  
He will take me home above  
then I'll understand His love.

6. I love Jesus, does He know?  
Have I ever told Him so?  
Jesus loves to hear me say,  
that I love Him every day.

# Clydesdale Food Bank

**Clydesdale Food Bank** has been working since March 2013 to bring relief to those unable to buy food for themselves or their families. During that time, the demand has increased tenfold.



The initial problem was the repercussions of the financial crash of 2008 which made life worse for those in poverty. Demand increased steadily till 2019. In 2020 the pandemic had a dramatic effect and now the rapid rise in the cost of living and the energy crisis are still causing serious issues.

As the name suggests, we cover all of Clydesdale, an area of approximately 500 square miles, spanning from Law to Elvanfoot, Coalburn to Dolphinton. All requests must come by referral from an outside agency like Social Work, Citizens Advice, Money Matters, Health service, schools, churches or some partner charities. Food packs are then delivered to the client's home with enough food to last from 10-14 days.

The pack includes tins, dried foods, personal and household hygiene items but also fresh food. Supplies come from donations in special collections, or from the donation points in numerous supermarkets around Clydesdale. For the first few years, these physical donations were sufficient to cover the needs. Financial



donations were used to meet other operating costs such as rent, insurance, telephone etc. Sadly, this is no longer the case and in 2023 the food bank spent £138,230 (£86,647 in 2022) on food alone just to make sure there was enough in stock to meet demand. This was coupled with a drop in income from £159,013 in 2022 to £136,248 in 2023. This is of great concern as our reserves have now fallen to under the threshold of 6 months operating costs. Having said that, the trustees are enormously grateful to the community for their continued support at a time when everyone is being affected by rising costs.

The trustees are actively seeking grant funding and have also embarked on a fundraising campaign at markets and events throughout Clydesdale. All of this requires volunteers to help outside our normal working hours - an hour or so can make a difference.

On a personal note, I have been chairperson of Clydesdale Food Bank since it started in 2013 and since 2020 I have been full time coordinator. It is time for me to pull back and let the rest of our very capable team take over the day-to-day running. I feel pretty proud of this team and what this organisation has achieved and I have every confidence that it will continue to meet the inevitable challenges as they arise. Our dream of the food bank not being needed does not look any nearer to fulfilment at present but it will continue to ease the pressure on the lives of those we serve. I intend to withdraw from everyday involvement at the end of May but I will continue as a trustee meantime, providing background support. We have added a couple of long standing volunteers to the trustees and they and the other trustees have been working out a sensible division of roles going forward. Please keep them and the whole organisation in your prayers and continue to support the food bank in any way you can – with physical or financial donations or by volunteering your time and your talents.

Liz Barthram

# 3 minute reflection on gardens

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I really like to spend time gardening. As I realise this topic may not instantly inspire too many people, I am going to take on the task of convincing you why gardening is a good thing by using three words: Physical, Peace and Philosophy.

## **First up is physical.**

I like to work in a garden. I have owned two houses now, and each time I have moved in, my back garden could easily have been the setting for a movie about the Battle of the Somme. I was greeted each time by a sea of mud. Perhaps more by need rather than want, I started to work in my garden. And I have found it can be great fun.

I don't think there is anything better than going through the process from design concept to reality to make a wasted space into a garden. I love to lay slabs in patterns, I have laid bases for huts, I have built low walls and bedding boxes, I have painted fences. Maybe the attraction might be to using power tools? I don't really know, but my mantra has been '*How hard can it be? Let's give it a go and find out.*'

I don't pretend to have green fingers, and I do like plants that grow on their own. I don't pretend to be an expert – I am just an enthusiastic experimenter. I use one easy rule when buying a plant – how much does it cost? As then I can judge how much I am willing to lose!

## **My second word was Peace.**

The great thing about a garden is that you don't have to work in it all the time. There is always opportunity to down tools and relax in that space. During Covid I felt very blessed to be outside in the garden with a bit of peace. Gardens *are* peaceful. But you don't need to sit and watch the grass grow, as gardens are also always very active. I like to listen for my resident blackbird in full song, or to spot if the fearless wee robin is around. This is a very nice way to spend an hour for sure.

## **My third and final word was Philosophy.**

Gardens can teach you lessons and when sitting at peace in a garden there is time for thinking. However, the philosophy I want to share for the moment is simply this: when it comes to gardening – and potentially also for our life or faith journeys - you get out what you put in. And on that basis, why not give it our best shot?

Wishing you many happy hours in the garden!

**Moira Elliott**

## Summer services and activities

Over the summer we share in joint services with some of our other local churches

30/06/24	United Summer Service - Kirkton
07/07/24	United Summer Service – St. Andrew’s
14/07/24	United Summer Service – St. Andrew’s
21/07/24	United Summer Service – URC Church
28/07/24	United Summer Service – Law Parish Church
04/08/24	United Summer Service – St. John’s - Holiday Club Sunday
11/08/24	United Summer Service – Kirkton

# Holiday Club



Every year the churches in Carluke hold a holiday club for primary age children.

This year it will again be in St John’s hall from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> July to Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> August.

It runs from 10.15am – 12.30pm each day.

Please let friends and family know. We are always looking for helpers too!

## Dates for your diary

We have a great deal of things going on over the coming months and we hope that you will be able to join us for some or all of them.

<b>Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June at 11am</b>	Holy Communion
<b>Church information evening 4<sup>th</sup> June</b>	A chance to find out more about the proposed Union and hear more about the work ongoing within the congregation and wider area.
<b>Gala Day Café, 8<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Join us anytime from 10am – 1.30pm for hot filled rolls, salads, home baking whilst watching the Gala Day procession. Proceeds used for work in Malawi.
<b>Afternoon Tea, 15<sup>th</sup> June St Andrew's Church</b>	Join Guild members and friends to share in an Afternoon Tea and learn more about the work of the Guild. Email <a href="mailto:karenmgillon@aol.com">karenmgillon@aol.com</a>
<b>All age service, 16<sup>th</sup> June at 11am All are welcome</b>	The service will celebrate the contribution of our young people to the life of our church.
<b>Church Day out, Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August</b>	Join us on our church day out. It is a day for people of all ages and will end sharing a fish supper in the church hall when we return.
<b>Soup and sweet Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August</b>	The return of our popular Soup and Sweet lunches. Helpers always needed.
<b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September at 11am</b>	Holy Communion
<b>Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September at 11am</b>	Joint Guild and Boys' Brigade dedication service. Join us for this intergenerational service of dedication.
<b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September</b>	Calling anyone who was married in St John's or in other places and would like to join us to celebrate their marriage with a special service and a celebration tea afterwards. If you would like to come email <a href="mailto:battisonwest@aol.com">battisonwest@aol.com</a>
<b>Soup and sweet Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September</b>	Another opportunity to come along to this popular community lunch.

# Community Christmas Lunch

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This annual event was held in our church halls on Christmas day and we had an amazing day.

We had 64 guests including 16 children and there was a wonderful atmosphere. Santa's visit was a definite highlight.

All our guests were from the local community and they enjoyed a 4 course meal. Some guests attended as they would otherwise have spent the day alone, some due to ill health or financial difficulties. Many were referred from organisations such as social services and the Food Bank.

We are very fortunate to be supported every year by a number of local businesses. Many thanks to Ramsay's of Carluke, Tesco, McDonalds in the community fund, Howieson of Newmains, Carluke golf club catering, Richland minibuses, Choices charity shop as well as many donations from individuals.

This year we also needed to purchase a new oven for our church kitchen. Following a fundraising appeal we raised the funds needed within 6 days with the support of the local community as well as church members.

Finally a huge thank you to the army of volunteers who helped both on the day and with setting up / clearing up. Without all of you the event would not take place. Special mention has to go to Thelma and Bill.

This event is always a lot of hard work however it is worth all the effort to see God's love in action within our community. We can do so much good when we all work together in God's name.

If you would be interested in helping us in any way with the lunch this year, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

**Gillian Forrest**

# Prayer soup and sweet Saturday

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On Saturday the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2024. We held our first ever Prayer, Soup and Sweet Event at St John's Church..

The day began with a short prayer service in the sanctuary followed by prayers led by members of our congregation. Then we all enjoyed some soup, sweet and a wee cuppa before heading out on a Community Prayer Walk in the sun. The event ended with closing remarks from Colin Smith from Calvary Church, who reminded us of the importance of prayer as we go about our daily lives

Prayer cards were available on the day and are still available if anyone wishes specific prayers for an individual or situation. These prayers will be collected by our Worship & Prayer Team and prayed over in confidence.

**Over £800 was raised from the Soup and Sweet event.**

**This money was donated to the Falkirk and District Association of Mental Health (in memory of our beloved organist Fiona Hobson).**

Thanks to all those who helped on the day, all those who came along to support the day and also a big thank you to the Flower Circle for the beautiful floral displays which enhanced the Church Sanctuary. Reports from the day were very positive with everyone we talked to enjoying the day and appreciating the church being open.

*God bless, the Worship and Prayer Team*

## **Sunday evening Praise Service**

On the last Sunday of each month (except June and July) we hold an evening Praise service at 7pm in the church.

This is a chance to try new forms of worship and learn new songs and hymns as we praise God together. Why not come along one evening?

# Malawi Support

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At last year's Gala Day café, funds were raised (almost £1000) to support various projects in Malawi. In August I had the privilege of visiting the area through my work and had the chance to see firsthand what was needed and how the money raised could best be used.

Money was given to Guilds to help purchase bibles. Most people don't have a bible and being able to have a bible in your own language is a great help to someone's spiritual growth. We were also able to help concrete a floor in a new church with a congregation of over 3000 people. Can you imagine worshiping in a congregation that size? It would be amazing.

Ekwendeni hospital was able to purchase essential drugs such as painkillers, inhalers, insulin and the like thanks to some money going there. In addition, members of our congregation collected bandages, paracetamol, towels, sheets and blankets which were sent via the Banana Box Trust to the hospital.



One of the biggest challenges facing Malawi is climate change. This picture shows the recent devastation flooding has caused last month when torrential rain swept through the country. Homes, crops and livelihoods were washed away. Money was given to help plant trees that will help improve soil and in time mitigate, in some small way, against the impact of

climate change and save people facing these horrendous floods every year.

As you can see money goes a long way in Malawi and we are again holding a café on Gala Day from 10am – 1.30pm. There will be hot rolls, salads and home baking so come along with friends and family and help raise money to support some of the poorest people in the world.

Every pound counts. If you can help or would like to donate money or home baking please email [karenmgillon@aol.com](mailto:karenmgillon@aol.com)

**Karen Gillon**

# Soup and sweet lunches

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Monthly? Will that work? Will folks get fed up with them?

These are just a couple of the questions I was asked when we embarked on our monthly soup and sweet lunches.

I think the answer is “Yes it works” and “No people have not got fed up with them” YET.

Since August 2023 we have given away over £4,000 to various charities, including: The Beatson Cancer Care, Boys Brigade band, Education Nigeria, Food Bank, Street Level and Kit for Kids We also held a Souper Sunday for the HIV programme. And just a couple of weeks ago we joined with the worship and prayer team for a joint event, our Prayers, Soup and Sweet Saturday.

The money raised has been great but I think the best thing has been the friendships developed while setting up and the happiness of the people who come to enjoy eating. We seem to have provided a gathering place for people to meet and friendships to develop.

We receive great comments and are always getting asked “When is the next one” So a great big thanks to all who help make these days special, all who donate soup and sweets and to all who help set up and serve then clear up. It is hard work but enjoyable and very worthwhile.

**Jennifer Paisley**

## Youth activities

There are a number of things for children and young people in our church.

### Youth Church

There are fifteen children who attend youth church regularly and the leaders tailor the teaching, games and crafts to suit the wide age range of those who attend. New children are always welcome and we hope you might think about bringing your children or grandchildren along and joining us.

Currently, we are looking at the life of Moses over a ten-week program.



Children and leaders greatly enjoy their time of learning together and we always have lots of fun, laughter, questioning and the chance to grow together in our faith. Please pray that seeds of faith are sown in these precious young minds.

## **Boys' Brigade**

We have had a steady increase in our numbers across Anchor and Junior sections over the past session which is encouraging for the officers.

The boys have enjoyed games, crafts and bible knowledge. The Junior section took part in a few Battalion competitions and were winners in the Quiz and Scripture Knowledge. At Christmas the boys and officers enjoyed a trip to ten pin bowling and had a great time. Senior boys have taken part in bible knowledge with Rev Dr Obinna and cooking with Mrs Sloan.

The boys have gained a number of badges this session with one boy receiving his Presidents Badge.

Overall this has been a very successful session and we welcome anyone wishing to join our company.

Jackie Henderson, Captain

## **VIBE**

Street Level in partnership with Clydesdale Christian Youth Trust and local churches are hosting a monthly event called Vibe on the third Sunday of the month from 6.30pm-8pm.

Vibe is for local young people in S1-S6 to come together with their peers to make friends in a safe space and explore some big questions around life and faith. One of the thoughts behind Vibe was local churches may have smaller youth groups but this is an opportunity for them to come together and meet likeminded young people in their local community.

Initially the group was focused around getting to know each other and included time for a short reflection and discussion on a topic, for example, prayer, communicating with God and your identity in Christ.

Young people who have attended are continuing to build relationships with each other and are having fun together learning more about God. Feedback from young

people and volunteers involved has been very positive which has been really encouraging to hear.

We hope that Vibe will continue to grow and we thank you for your ongoing support, donations and prayers with this new venture.

The next meeting is on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June at 6.30pm

## St John's Guild

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We have a good Guild in St Johns with ages ranging from mid-forties to some lovely ladies in their 90's. One will soon be 99 years young!

Over the last year we have had a variety of speakers, some really serious subjects to singing entertainers, we've had a florist selling Christmas arrangements to days of silly Scottish rhymes. and we had a Christmas address and an Easter address from visiting ministers. We also had a Christmas lunch and an Easter lunch at the Golf club, both were very enjoyable. We held a daffodil tea with a visiting choir from Cambusnethan North church, raising £620 for Marie Curie that day and all enjoyed ourselves

Over the past three years the Guild, along with Guilds across Scotland have supported 6 project partners. To date £425, 321.76 has been raised by Guilds across Scotland since 2021 for the projects.

Although officially stopped for summer we have a few things still happening:

A mini bus going to "The Big Sing" in Edinburgh and of course the summer trip for members and friends on 25<sup>th</sup> May. That will be an enjoyable day away. We have a joint Afternoon Tea in St Andrew's Church on 15<sup>th</sup> June at 1.30pm and people would be very welcome to join us.

We start back in October and if you are looking for an afternoon of fellowship and fun then join us in the large hall at 1.30pm on Wednesday afternoons

# CHOICES (Churches Helping Others in Christian Evangelical Service)

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The shop began 30 years ago . St. John's was celebrating its 150th anniversary and the ladies of the Guild felt called to do something to help the community.

At that time Ravenscraig Steelworks was closing which had a knock on effect on our town. Driven by its first manager Anne Forrest and her supporting team it opened its first shop in February 1993.

The other Churches also saw the need and quickly joined in with their help. Soon a team of around 80 volunteers were doing their bit to help those in need. Volunteers came from the local churches...St John's, St Andrew's, Kirkton, URC, St Athanasius & Law as well as many with no church connection but a desire to help.

It has been well supported by the town with donations and has given much appreciated help to those in need or just looking for a reasonably priced item which was no longer needed by someone else.

Over the past 31 years an amazing total of £1.1 million has been raised. After running costs and shop improvements, over £700,000 has been donated to local, national & international causes. Notably among these have been Christian Aid, Clydesdale Food Bank, St Andrews Hospice and Carluke Gala Day. We were also able to support various Disaster Appeals over the years.

However the biggest beneficiary has been the local Churches Project with £572,000 going to support youth work in the town through Street Level.

We now have a Facebook page to help publicise events and advise of special sales and opening hours.

All of this would not have been possible without the hard work of the staff, the support of the town in physical and monetary donations and our many clients from far and wide.

We are always looking for new staff and if you feel you want to be involved in this project please get in touch with the shop. It can be for as few or as many hours as you can spare.

We look forward, with your help, to continuing our work in the future.

Your local CHOICES Team

# Carluke Listeners

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## Background

In 2010, the Church of Scotland in Carluke conducted a Mission Audit of the town with a view to finding out how the church could serve the community. As a result of this Mission Audit, offering a 'listening ministry' was agreed as one of the Mission Priorities.

A program of Listening Training began and in 2013, when the Rev Elizabeth Clelland, an experienced listener and listening tutor, agreed to act as our supervisor, a 'listening service' was rolled out.

Currently in Carluke there are 8 trained, supervised listeners gathered from St Andrew's, Kirkton, St John's and Carstairs churches.

Listening in Carluke is a Christian ministry. All our listeners are faithful Christians. Christians aim to follow the example of Christ and throughout his life Jesus was an amazing listener giving people he met his undivided attention. He sat at the well and listened to the woman from Samaria. He spent an evening with Nicodemus listening to his questions. Even on the cross he heard his mother's pain and offered John as a new son.

## What is Listening

Sometimes we have a need to talk over what is on our mind, tell our story, tell someone how we are feeling. At those times, we need to know that the person, who listens to us, won't judge us or criticise us; won't try to correct us or give us advice; won't interrupt us or take over and tell their own story. Instead that they will value and respect us; give us full attention; empower us to reach our own decisions and of course treat everything we say in strict confidence.

That is listening.

Listeners are often asked about the difference between a 'conversation' and 'active listening'.

A conversation involves taking turns at talking and listening and as this happens the focus changes from person to person

During listening, the listener sets aside their own agenda and focuses entirely on speaker – their words, their body language, their silences and even their tears.

The listener does not offer advice but leads the speaker to make their own decisions. When you are listening, you are actively trying to hear something,

you are putting effort into hearing and understanding what the speaker is saying, experiencing and feeling.

Here is a quote from Stephen R Covey (1932 – 2012)

*'Most people do not listen with the intent to understand. They listen with the intent to reply'*

So instead of concentrating on, and thinking about, what the person is saying, most people are already thinking about and planning their reply. Two dialogues are going on at the same time – one being spoken and one being prepared in the other persons head. Not much listening going on there!

Safety is a priority

All listeners are trained, supervised and assessed on a regular basis

A governance group is in place to monitor protocols, procedures and practices

All listeners have completed Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

### **What we currently offer**

Face to Face listening sessions in a safe, confidential space within St John's Church building. Drop-in sessions are available every Thursday morning between 10.00am and 11.30am. Appointments can be arranged at other times. Face to face sessions at Street Level during the family session organised by the Youth, Family and Community Learning team on Mondays between 4.00pm and 5.30pm

Telephone listening sessions, Zoom video listening sessions

In exceptional circumstances a 'Listening at Home Service' is available

Some of our listeners have registered with Listen Well Scotland and listen to pupils at Carluke High School each week

### **To find our more:**

Email [Carlukelisteners@outlook.com](mailto:Carlukelisteners@outlook.com)

Phone or text 07434 843518

# Christian Aid

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The churches in Carluke and Law have been supporting Christian Aid in various ways for over 40 years. In past years this has involved door to door and street collections and as well as the ever popular Christian Aid café where you are guaranteed a warm welcome and calorie free cakes!

Looking back over the records it is unbelievable that a total of **£246,052.66** has been raised to support the work of Christian Aid over the past 25 years with **£32,041.48** being raised by the congregation of St John's.

The café was again held this year from 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> May with the day organised by St John's raising **£1347.05** and the whole week total this year reaching an incredible **£8411.15**. Thanks to everyone who has made this possible over the years and this year in particular. Your donations have truly changed lives.

If anyone would like to donate to Christian Aid please go on to [caweek.org](http://caweek.org)  
**Shona Keay**

# UNICEF Jar of Grace appeal

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Since Christmas many of you in St. John's along with folk in Kirkton and St. Andrew's have been putting coins into a Jar of Grace before meals to raise funds to help UNICEF support children caught up in emergency situations in our world, whether because of conflict or a natural disaster.

I am delighted to tell you that **£1108.38** has been sent to UNICEF and this amount will have increased by around **£170** because so many of you were able to complete a Gift Aid form.

So thank you all for your generosity – and thank you also to anyone who has popped loose change into the piggy bank in Choices and so helped our community shop to donate £150 to the Jar of Grace appeal! **Chris Shanks**

# The church in photos

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# LUPUS CHARITY COFFEE MORNING

SATURDAY 5<sup>th</sup>  
OCTOBER 2024  
ST JOHNS  
CHURCH HALL  
CARLUKE  
10AM - 1.00PM

HOME BAKING  
HOT FILLED  
ROLLS  
STALLS  
PLEASE COME  
ALONG AND  
SUPPORT US



GALA DAY Café 8<sup>th</sup> June

10am – 2pm

Filled rolls, salads, home  
baking

Tea and coffee

Take away available

Proceeds to projects in  
Malawi



## Soup and sweet lunches

10.30am – 1.30pm

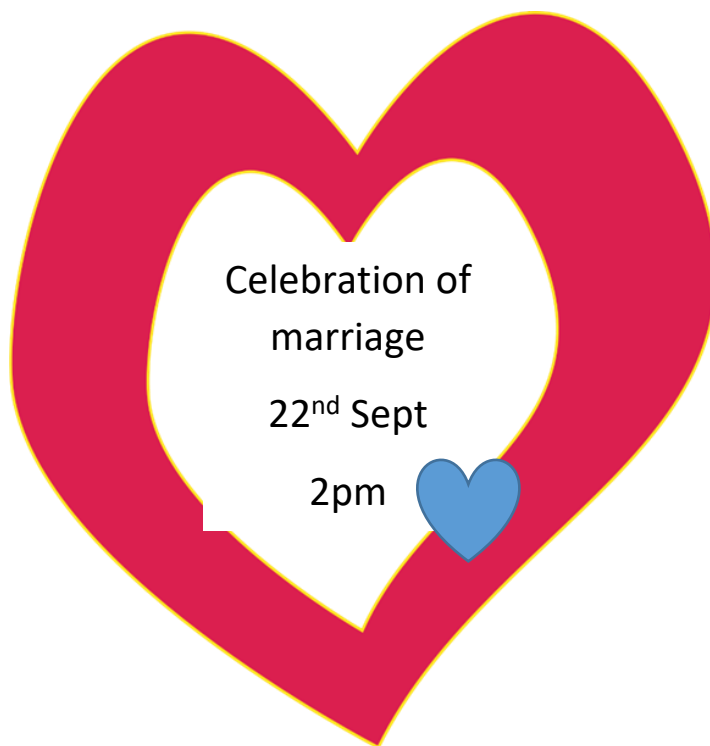
Last Saturday of the month

31<sup>st</sup> August

28<sup>th</sup> September

26<sup>th</sup> October

30<sup>th</sup> November



If you would like to sign up to receive our regular email updates about things that are happening in and around the church then please email [editor@carluke-stjohns.org.uk](mailto:editor@carluke-stjohns.org.uk) and we will add you to our mailing list.