October/November 2025 Issue 171

The Link



The magazine for the linked congregations and communities of the West Kirk of Calder and Polbeth Harwood.

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Dear Friends



We have been living in Scotland now for almost 18 years, and I don't think I've ever experienced such a long and lovely summer as we've had this year! I even think that for a week or 2 the weather was better here than it was in South Africa – and that's not something that happens often! I hope that the sunshine charged all our batteries to 100%, to get us through the winter… But do you know what one of my favourite things about living in Scotland is? It's that when the *sun* doesn't give us warmth, *people* do. We light fires, switch the heating on, and spend time together. When the sun takes a wee rest, the warmth doesn't disappear, it just comes from another source – it's provided through the love that people share with each other. And that is exactly what God wants us to do – he wants us to share his warmth with those around us – through an embrace, a kind smile, a friendly chat. And if we all strive to do that this winter, it might be cold outside, but never where we are…

And on that note, I would like to announce **Meet Me @ The Manse,** a time to come meet with me. I will be available at the manse every Tuesday between 2 and 3pm, for anyone who would like to pop in and have a wee chat about absolutely anything. You are of course welcome to come see me at any other time, or arrange with me to come see you at your house too. But on Tuesday afternoons, with the exception of when I'm conducting a funeral, I'll be around for a catch up, to answer questions, or to just enjoy a cuppa with you. Looking forward to seeing you soon!

God bless, Nanda

Sowing in the Field of the Spirit

If the Spirit is the source of our life, let the Spirit also direct our course (Galatians 5:25, NEB)

A story I was told a number of years ago……

She had just moved into a new house. Well, perhaps it would be more accurate to say she had just moved into a new garden. For it was the ground surrounding the house that had drawn her to put in a bid. She was no housewife, nor did she aspire to be.

Among the things she enjoyed most in life were the feel of soil, the growth of seedlings, the abundance of butterflies, the vibrant colours of tulips, roses, petunias and chrysanthemums.

She was a gardener. Her garden was the most important thing in her life, she would have told you. She was not a stupid woman. She had a good head on her shoulders, was not one given to introspection. So, she was not aware of the other garden she had planted. What we might call the spiritual garden. There too, the products of her steady labour took root, blossomed and produced fruit.

There was self-control.

When she woke one morning to find that someone had yet again stuffed beer cans into the front hedge.

There was gentleness.

In the way that she spoke to the birds as if they were her best friends.

There was fidelity.

For it would not have occurred to her to go away in the summer when hanging baskets require daily watering.

There was goodness.

In her unselfish handing out of strawberries, lettuces and plums to the neighbours.

There was kindness.

In her willingness to let the little girl from across the road ply her with questions for want of a playmate of her own age.

There was patience.

As she waited for growth, and the right time to harvest.

There was peace.

Anyone in her company discovered that. She listened with the same sort of attentiveness that she gave an ailing plant. She didn't hurry you. She didn't judge you.

There was joy.

In the faces of the residents of the nursing home to whom she took bunches of daffodils in the spring and bunches of sweet peas in the summer.

There was love.

Above all, there was love. Not just for her garden, which she would have called her chief love. But also for the lonely girl, the neighbours with their stressful lifestyle, the frail elderly folk, even for the vandals who couldn't see that there was beauty in her garden which ought to remain unspoiled.

I love this story.

In Galatians 5:22-23, the Apostle Paul outlines nine characteristics known as the "Fruits of the Spirit." Here is the verse in the New International Version (NIV): **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."** These fruits represent qualities that believers should strive to embody in their daily lives.

So let us never tire of doing good, for if we do not slacken our efforts we shall in due time reap our harvest. Let us work for the good of all. Let us show our faith in action to others.

Rev Alison Quilter

Sheltering God

Psalm 91:1 NIV

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

Imagine you are on a mini-vacation. Picture yourself sitting on a beautiful white sandy beach with the warm sun hitting down on you and the crystal blue ocean waves lapping slowly into the small secluded cove you have discovered. You dip your toes into the sea and feel the perfect temperature of the water. All is right with the world, and you are feeling sheltered completely from the busyness and trials of life.

Dwelling in the shelter of the Most High is a lot like enjoying the shelter of your little cove. At any time of the day, we have the opportunity to commune with a loving God, who can provide us with the shelter we need from anything we face. We can commune with Him through prayer and also through Bible reading. The book of psalms is filled with ‘sheltering’ verses!

I encourage you to rest in the shadow of God, our Saviour. Spend time with Him, blether with Him and allow Him to be your cover of shelter today!

Prayer

Dear God, that You that we I can be at peace, knowing that you are my shelter. Help me to rest. Help me to make time for communion with You daily! Amen.

School Chaplaincy: What does it involve?

Did you know?..... As well as preaching, pastoral work and committee involvement, Nanda is heavily committed to school chaplaincy within our communities at nursery, primary and secondary levels.

NURSERY UNITS. Nanda visits the units at Parkhead and Bellsquarry primary schools as well as Polbeth Nursery twice a year for both morning and afternoon sessions to maximise contact with all children.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS. Nanda is involved in some school assemblies and has a session in each class once during the school year talking about a variety of topics which have been agreed upon by teaching staff and herself.

Harvest Thanksgiving services are held within the schools themselves. However, at Christmas, Easter and end of summer term the children come to church – Parkhead Primary to West Kirk and Bellsquarry Primary to Polbeth Harwood. Along with some congregation members, the minister also attends concerts and fundraiser events organised by these schools.

WEST CALDER HIGH SCHOOL. Nanda has an excellent working relationship with senior staff at the school and attends / conducts assemblies regularly at the school often focussed on the different form years.

As the West Kirk does not have capacity for total pupil numbers, between the occasions of services for Christmas and Easter most pupil years have the opportunity to attend a service within the church building.
As with the primary schools, Nanda attends concerts and fundraisers organised by the school.
There have also been occasions following a local tragic or traumatic occurrence when she has made herself available to provide counselling and support.
The school brass band usually participate in the Evening of Christmas Music at West Kirk. Over the last two years, the school has been involved with Nanda in recording the local Act of Remembrance at West Calder war memorial, relaying the service not only to classes at the high school but also to all their feeder primary schools.

Holiday Club 2025

I just wanted to give you an update on this summer's holiday club, "Landlubbers", which seems such a long time ago now, but such a huge success on every level!

On the whole the weather was very kind to us, which meant we could hold our games outside, four out of the five days of the club. Fresh air is good for the soul, and it allowed the children to run around and burn of some of their energy!

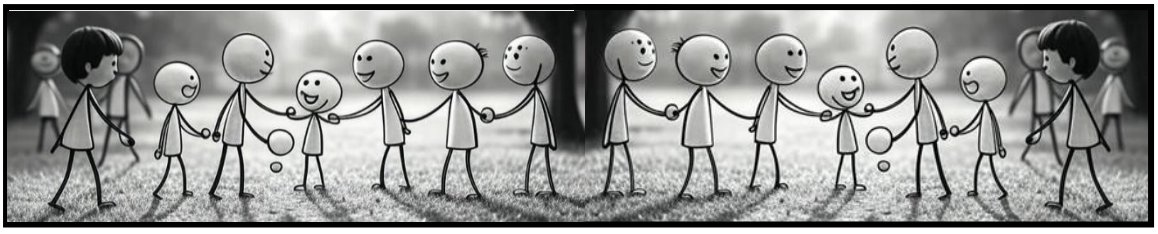
We had seventy five children join us on our paradise island, which was Polbeth Harwood Church. The groups of children and our amazing team of volunteers blended so well, making for a great team! You can check out our photo posters in Polbeth Harwood café area and the West Kirk hall to see just some of our wonderful adventures. Or check out some photos on the church website.

Date for your diary: Next year's holiday club will run week commencing August 3rd 2026. "God willing".

It takes a large team of people to run our club safely, and we are always keen to welcome new helpers. With that in mind we'd like to invite you to consider a new kind of adventure: joining the team.

Your help would be invaluable. Advance notice is helpful, as we need to ensure all safeguarding paperwork is completed well in advance of the start date of the club.

If you are interested or you need more information:
Please speak to Eleanor Davidson at Polbeth Harwood Church or
Jean Pringle / Lorna Graham at the West Kirk.





Our amazing team plus a few camera shy adults hiding in the back!

****

Some Holy Wit! From Rev James A Simpson

When a Highlander was asked to what he attributed his long life, he replied, 'Regular breathing. Once you have stopped breathing, you've had it'.

**

A father used to sing hymns to his children to send them to sleep until one night he overheard his four year-old son whisper to his younger sister, 'If you pretend you're asleep, he'll stop'.

**

A bishop was astonished to hear little Mary say that a person must be brave these days to go to church. 'Why do you say that?' asked the bishop. 'Well I heard my uncle tell my aunt last Sunday that there was a canon in the pulpit, that the choir murdered the anthem, and that the organist drowned the choir.'

I grew up attending Polbeth Harwood Church around 2007-2010 under the ministry of Rev David Albon and attended the Jam Club, Sandra Dixon being the main Sunday school teacher at the time. When I was around 12, we moved to the far side of Livingston and stopped attending church altogether, but I always felt some sort of sentimentality with Christianity and the Church. When I was around 14, some friends, knowing that I'd had some previous connection with a church, invited me to join the youth group at Ladywell Baptist Church. It was there that I responded to the gospel as the gift of God's grace, through the Lord Jesus, reached my heart. I attended and served there for about 4 years or so. I truly consider much of that congregation to be my family, my godly mothers, fathers & grandparents in the faith.

In 2017 an opportunity came up for me to move to South Yorkshire and do an internship at an independent evangelical church which I took and resolved to stay for a year before returning to Scotland. The Lord had greater plans. It's now been 7 and half years and I'm still serving at Rotherham Evangelical Church and training for the ministry. I lead our congregational worship most weeks, and preach a few times a term as well as regular preaching at other churches, mainly in Yorkshire and Derbyshire, but all over the country. In recent years, I met my wife Miriam and we were married in November 2023.

I simply wanted to send you a message, expressing my heartfilled thanks and gratitude. Thanks to Polbeth for investing in a Sunday school for two children (for most of my time there anyway!). Thank you to Sandra Dixon and countless others for their efforts over the years, caring for the children and young people the Lord directs their way. No doubt the congregation will have changed significantly since I was last there, and many may not even know me! But let me encourage you, *make much of the Lord Jesus and the good news of the gospel of salvation - his perfect life, his atoning death and his glorious resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God the Father.* Press on investing and caring for the people in front of you because like my own situation, you may not be the ones to see the fruit of your efforts, it may come in later years as the Lord brings all those things together; every bible reading, every song, every sermon matters!

Grace & Peace,

Ewan (Aitken) Wilson

🎄 ✨ Polbeth Harwood Church Christmas Fayre ✨ 🎄

🗓️ **Date:** Saturday, 29th November 2025
🕑 **Time:** 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

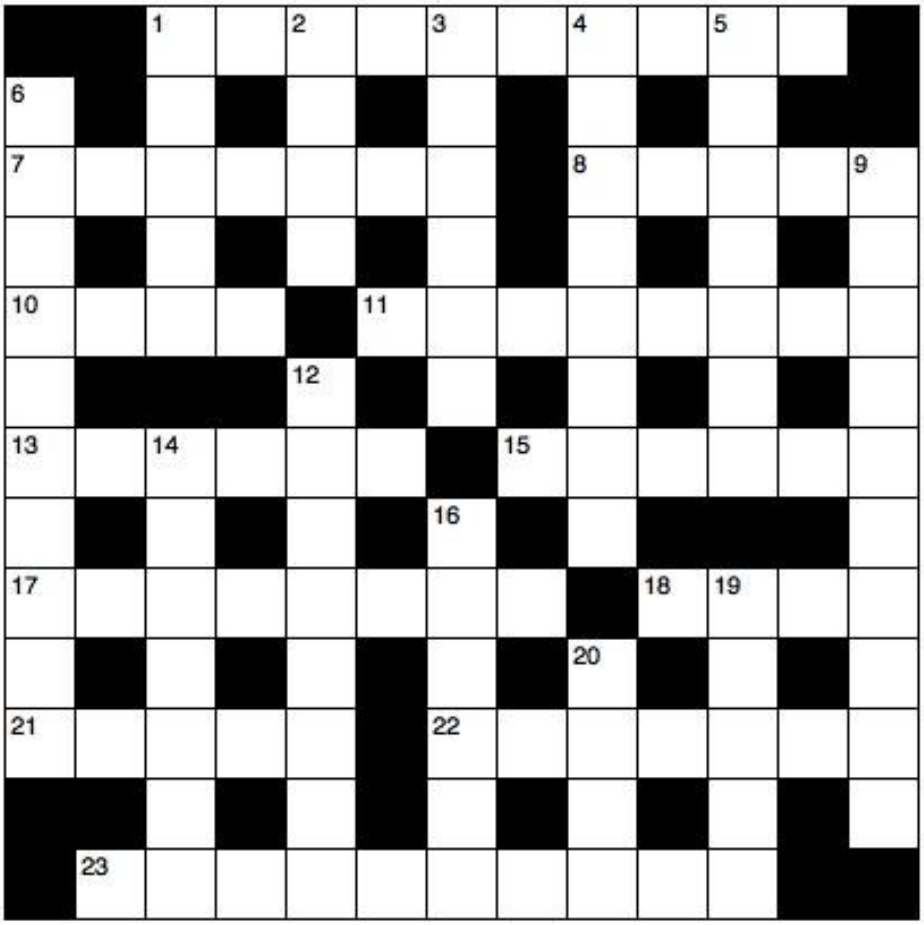
Join us for an afternoon full of **festive fun** and **Christmas cheer** for the whole family! 🎅 🎁

🎁 What's On:

- 🎨 Craft Stalls – perfect for unique Christmas gifts
- 🎟️ Tombola & Raffle – try your luck and win big!
- 🎅 Visit from Santa – don't forget your wish list!
- 🎁 Lucky Dip – surprises just for the kids
- 🎯 Fun & Games – for all ages
- 🍰 Homemade Cakes
- ☕ Tea & Coffee – warm up and relax

Bring your family and friends and kick off the festive season in style!

Everyone welcome – see you there! 🌟



Across

1. He was replaced as king of Judah by his uncle Mattaniah (2 Kings 24:17) (10)

7. ‘Let us fix our eyes on Jesus... who for the joy set before him — the cross’ (Hebrews 12:2) (7)

8. Relieved (5)

10. Impetuous (Acts 19:36) (4)

11. Surprised and alarmed (Luke 24:37) (8)

13. ‘It is — for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter the kingdom of God’ (Mark 10:25) (6)

15. Directions for the conduct of a church service (6)

17. One of the acts of the sinful nature (Galatians 5:19) (8)

18 and 20 Down. ‘She began to wet his — with her tears. Then she wiped them with her — ’ (Luke 7:38) (4,4)

21. ‘We will all be changed, in a flash, in the twinkling of an — , — the last trumpet’ (1 Corinthians 15:51–52) (3,2)

22.‘But he replied, “Lord, I am — — go with you to prison and to death”’ (Luke 22:33) (5,2)
23. Third person of the Trinity (2 Corinthians 13:14) (4,6)

Down

1. He betrayed Jesus (Matthew 27:3) (5)
2. Paul’s assurance to the Philippian jailer: ‘Don’t — yourself! We are all here!’ (Acts 16:28) (4)
3. ‘Fear God and keep his commandments, for this — the whole — of man’ (Ecclesiastes 12:13) (2,4)
4. The sort of giver God loves (2 Corinthians 9:7) (8)
5. Sun rail (anag.) (7)
6. Naboth, the ill-fated vineyard owner, was one (1 Kings 21:1) (10)
9. Paul said of young widows, ‘When their sensual desires overcome their — to Christ, they want to marry’ (1 Timothy 5:11) (10)
12. This was how Joseph of Arimathea practised his discipleship ‘because he feared the Jews’ (John 19:38) (8)
14. Mop ruse (anag.) (7)
16. Foment (Philippians 1:17) (4,2)
19. Where Joseph and Mary escaped to with the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:14) (5)
20. See 18 Across

Answers to issue 170

ACROSS: 1, Amazed. 4, Others. 8, Peter. 9, Zebedee. 10, Accuser. 11, Endue. 12, Scripture. 17, Shrub. 19, Abashed. 21, Foolish. 22, Upset. 23, Loathe. 24, Lesser.

DOWN: 1, Appeal. 2, Attacks. 3, Earns. 5, Tableau. 6, Ended. 7, Shekel. 9, Zarephath. 13, Rubbish. 14, Ephesus. 15, Useful. 16, Editor. 18, Rhoda. 20, Abuse.

18th West Lothian (West Calder) Scout Group

August 2025

Leader Briefing

West Calder : A Year in the Life

Earlier this year we successfully applied for funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to run this project.

The Project aims to gather an archive of images and interviews, created by our members, that tells the story of life in West Calder and the surrounding area over a year.



Members taking part in the project have the opportunity to be trained in using camera equipment and image software; they will learn how to interview local people and carry out interviews; and create their own 'zine'.

The funding can be used to run workshops; support section programmes (e.g. the Beaver section are planning a stop-motion project around this); as well as visits (e.g. to the Heritage Centre in Livingston, or a workshop day at the Stills Gallery in Edinburgh).

Parents and carers will be asked if they want to volunteer to help manage the project or suggest people who could be interviewed e.g. local shop owners and workers; members of local community groups; care home residents etc.

The National Lottery

COMMUNITY FUND

The project is a good opportunity to promote the Group in the village.



18th West Lothian (West Calder) Scout Group

💻 🎤 Musings from the West Kirk Audio Visual Corner 📺

Many of you are aware that there has been an ongoing project over the past 18 months to improve and update the Audio Visual (AV) technology in the West Kirk to meet the needs of 21st century technology and Online Ministry.
With the help of volunteers from the Property Team, AV Team and friends outwith the congregation, Colin Dempster took the lead role in initiating and supporting the installation of the necessary technology and wifi. This has involved many many hours of researching, planning, purchasing, problem solving and burrowing under the depths of the West Kirk to neatly install the necessary hidden cabling.
The former desk was no longer able to accommodate the new systems and cabling box so was removed a year ago. The new desk was designed, built in sections & installed in early Summer. There is still a lengthy ongoing " To Do List" but it is shortening gradually 😉..... so Colin tells us 😄
The new desk is there for all to see and the AV Team on duty are happy to let anyone see the handiwork once the Sunday service and Livestream is finished.

So what does it take to be Sunday Service ready?

- Volunteers busily prepare the PowerPoint Slides for every Sunday Service in the days and evenings before a Sunday and prior to Funeral Services.
- A Duty Rota is organised through a WhatsApp Poll for every month.

- Team members arrive early Sunday (8.45am) to check all equipment is functioning, ensuring the audio links for PowerPoint slides are playing and the Wifi is connected etc.
- The preacher arrives with notes to assist us to know the order of service. We need to read through them, **please accept that we may not be free to chat at this time as you pass. We will endeavour to smile and say hello.**
- **When we are Livestreaming - we start streaming 5 - 10 minutes before the actual Church Service begins and finish a couple of minutes after the organist has played the last musical note, we still have images to play to our Online Congregation before finally stopping streaming.**
- PLEASE RESPECT THE TEAM CANNOT ENGAGE IN ANY COMMUNICATION ONCE WE ARE 'LIVE ON AIR' as we need to remain focussed to the job in hand.
- New volunteers to add to the current team are welcome - please speak to Nanda who will pass on your name to us. The more we have trained up the more evenly the rota can be shared out.

The Online Ministry is reaching out to all in our local community who are unable to attend services for many different reasons at times, but also watched nationally and internationally linking in friends of the congregation. On average 35 - 47 views are recorded each service, with 111 views noted for the Nativity Service last Christmas. Testing the water to Livestream the Watchnight Service (with dimmed lighting) successfully reached out to 52 homes sharing the special time with visiting family and reaching out to those feeling isolated and alone. It is planned to add the Watchnight Service to the December planner this year again.

Kind regards from the West Kirk AV Team

The Bridge  **'16 to 25+ year olds'**

'The Bridge' for young folk aged 16 to 25+ years old is held quarterly. A get together and a blether, sharing a meal or light snack and exploring our faith and discuss things that matter to you as young folk in 21stC. If you are interested please get in touch with Alison or Nanda and bring a friend along too!

We meet in Polbeth Harwood Church Café Area on a **Wednesday at 7pm.** Our next scheduled meeting will be on **Wednesday 8th October** where we will be helping to fill shoeboxes for the Blythswood appeal. A worthwhile cause see link for more information https://blythswood.org/shoeboxappeal/ We will be fortified by some goodies. Check the whatsapp group for details.

The Bridge let's stay connected! Look forward to seeing you there!

Nanda, Sandra and Alison



The Quiet Service

The next quiet service in Polbeth Harwood will be held on **Wednesday 8th October at 3:30pm** in the 'quiet room'. All are welcome to this short service followed by tea, coffee, biscuits and a 'blether'. Entry via the Ramp Door.

Anyone who would like to come and needs assistance with transport should call Sandra Dixon on 07855861223.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Sandra and Alison

West Kirk Flower Mission Work

Thank you to all who have kindly donated money towards the Flower Ministry in 2025. It has been a creative and colourful year, despite the challenges of not having the supply of beautiful blooms in the shops from the European Markets as we had pre Brexit era.

As the Coordinator of the Flower Ministry alongside Nanda we give prayerful thanks that the delivery of the flowers gifted so generously each week brings much happiness and overwhelming thoughts of being cared about when maybe life circumstances are testing and leaving people feeling unloved and in a dark place.
Flowers can bring a message of congratulations in happy times like Special Birthdays, Anniversaries and Graduation success. Equally, they bring a message of care in times of recovery from ill health, and in the moments around terminal care and nearing life's earthly journey - the scent of the flowers and colours can bring reflective calm and support to the person and their families to know we are thinking of them all. In times of sorrow flowers bring the unspoken words from our hearts to those feeling loss and loneliness, to know that others are on hand to listen and help when wanted in the days and months ahead.

The Flower Diary dates for 2026 will be available in early December in the Flower Folder kept in the Vestibule - please select the date nearest to when you would like to donate money. PLEASE can you put your monetary donation in a sealed envelope marked for the attention of RHODA - FLOWER FUND with the Date for Flowers to be arranged for and Donors Name. Either hand the envelope to Rhoda or place it in the Collection Plate AT LEAST 2 WEEKS BEFORE the arrangement is due.

Name Suggestions to receive flowers can be given to Nanda or Rhoda in the first instance. Elders are also encouraged to pass on names that have been mentioned to them in their District Visits. The plan for recipients is

confirmed by a Thursday each week. It is useful to have a list of pending names and they will be distributed when flowers are available (occasionally flowers will be left in the Church on a Sunday if there is a funeral pending in the coming week and the family have asked for Church Flowers to remain.)

To enhance the Livestream view at the Lectern you will have noticed that there is a Seasonal arrangement made up of artificial flowers on or beside the Organ. It is much appreciated by the Online Congregation as part of their weekly worship.

If you feel motivated or called to make a small donation to the work of the Flower Ministry but unable to support funding a full donation to cover a whole arrangement the Flower Fund is happy to accept all small monetary donations in a sealed envelope (addressed to Rhoda) via the Collection Plate. This money will support the ministry costs of the flowers when we have Sundays without donations and flowers for the Livestream arrangements.

Thanks to the creative gifts of the arrangers - Alison McNaught, Morag Stott, Evelyn Paterson & Rhoda Lawton.
Thanks to the diligence of the Flower Deliverers - Alison Baxter, Margaret Brock, Petri Jacobs, Isobel McChesney & Morag Stott (& Jean Pringle who intermittently helps out when team members unavailable)
Thanks also to Mark Smith for accepting the photos supplied to put onto the West Kirk Facebook page weekly. It is amazing how many followers in the local Community and beyond like the flowers and message that accompanies the photos.

May the Lord continue to Bless this work in His Service. 🌼 🌷

♙ ♥ Blythswood Care Shoebox Appeal 2025 ♥ ♙

Let's reach out a hand of friendship to send a little Love, Joy and Hope in a Shoebox to those who have very little in life to give comfort, warmth, self-belief and strength.
The charity will be delivering to Albania AL Bulgaria BG Hungary HU Kosovo XKMoldova MD România RO Serbia RS & Ukraine UA.

Blythswood has a new Director, a new Logo and an updated Essentials List and Instructions for wrapping hinged lidded shoeboxes and Liquid Volumes recommendations, so please read the Leaflets carefully. PLEASE NOTE THAT NO BABY BOXES (under 3 years of age) or NEW KNITTED GOODS apart from HAT, SCARF & GLOVES can be accepted, i.e. NO KNITTED TOYS. These restrictions are laid down by Customs who will discard any boxes found to contain such items - hence the strict checking of boxes prior to reaching customs.

With current costs of living, inflation and rising prices, many may feel they can't complete filling a whole shoebox this year. The local approach would be - please hand in what you feel you can donate from the list in the leaflet, and we will fill boxes with the donations supplied.

The Bridge Group have offered to help make up boxes & check completed boxes at their **next meeting on 8th Oct 7pm at Polbeth Harwood Church Hall. IF YOU HAVE YOUR DONATIONS or BOXES COMPLETED BY SUN 5th OCT - PLEASE BRING IT TO EITHER CHURCH** so they can get make a great start to having boxes completed, statistically counted packaged ready for uplift the last week in Oct.

THE FINAL DATE FOR HANDING IN DONATIONS & BOXES IS 26th Oct.
Ready wrapped Shoe Boxes are available at both Church Vestibules each Sunday priced £1.50.

If it is easier for people to make a monetary donation you can either do this online - follow the instructions on the leaflet or put the donation in a sealed envelope marked for Rhoda - Blythswood Donation (place it in your collection plate). In turn we will use the gift towards buying items we need to complete making up boxes or help put towards transportation costs - it now costs £7000 to transport the containers abroad.

The Charity does receive Feedback from those of us who Coordinate the Shoebox Appeal locally. I will report back that several people feel

- that the extension of the Essentials List has put people off wishing to fill a box due to the pressure to complete the Essentials list with Underwear, Socks and Tights - these items they feel should be on the suggested list.
- the recommendation of 200mls for liquid such as Shampoo, shower Gel etc is not popular as many companies manufacture 250 - 300mls size bottles.
- the traditional red and green logo of the past was synonymous with the Charity and its Festive Outreach.
- the dropping of the word Care after Blythswood is a backwards step in losing a major ethos of the project.

Thanks to Eleanor Davidson for supporting the coordination at Polbeth Harwood Church, Doffie Slattery from Limefield United Free Church & Lynn Corbett at Dedridge Health Centre. To those who have wrapped boxes ready for sale your wrapping skills are much appreciated.

The least boxes made up are for MEN, TEENAGE BOYS and ELDERLY WOMEN.
🎁 ❤️ Let's make a difference to someone's Christmas Day 🎄 🥹
Kind regards
Rhoda

PASTORAL CARE OUTING

An outing has been arranged to visit

Five Sisters Zoo

on Friday 7th November.

People from both churches are invited to join us.

The group plan to leave by car from the grounds of West Kirk at 11am. However, anyone wishing to come along can be collected from their home beforehand – just let us know and we will arrange that.

A wheelchair is also available if anyone has need of one.

The Zoo serves lunches and snacks, and we can use our time wandering round, looking at the variety of animals.

Prices: Concessions £18.95 each

For a group of minimum 10 people, the cost would be £12.95 per person. For this, the group must be pre-booked before the visit and an invoice will be given.

Please contact Beryl Henderson for further information – or any other member of the Pastoral Care Group

Phone 01506 379230

Or 07500 277201

MERCY SHIPS 2025

The global Mercy was in dry dock for six weeks in July at Cadiz in Spain for a service before returning to Sub-Saharan Africa and is working in Siera Leone until June 2026, with Africa Mercy working in Madagascar until the end of this year.

Two year old Selina smiles bravely, even though she's often in pain. Hidden under her t-shirt, Selina has a 6cm umbilical hernia that has been growing since birth. Her mum says 'When we go out, I use a bandage to cover the hernia, to stop people from mocking her.' Born in Siera Leone, no hospital could give this little girl the surgery she needed.

Thankfully, Selina was given free surgery on board the Global Mercy. With the risks of an untreated hernia out of the way, she is now free from pain and full of giggles and joy again.

All the doctors and nurses are volunteers living and working on board ship providing surgical care and training in the poorest nations free of charge. All donations large and small are greatly appreciated.

I will collect donations on Sunday 16th November so they can reach them for Christmas.

Thanks, Lilias

PRISONERS WEEK 2025: Crossroads. What next?

November is the month of remembrance and each year, in the third week of November, congregations are invited to remember all those in prison, those who work with them and those who have been offended by the actions of others. This year's theme is CROSSROADS. WHAT NEXT? inviting us to think about the different decisions that are being taken in our own lives, those of the church, those of our Government and judicial system and those faced by prisoners as they come out of prison.

For many in prison, their time inside can lead to a Crossroads in their lives. Do they change direction? Reconsider where they are wanting to go? Do they stick to the familiar trails, or venture down an unknown path? Attending the Sycamore Tree course run by Prison Fellowship Scotland has led to some people choosing to attend church on release, to follow the road less travelled.

Our Criminal Justice System is also at Crossroads. Faced with stubbornly high prison numbers (in fact, we have the highest imprisonment rate in Western Europe), and a system that seems to be broken, what is the right path for the policy makers to take? Do they stick to the familiar trails, or venture down an unknown path, looking for alternatives to custody which focus on rehabilitation rather than retribution.

This year's Prisoners Week theme invites us all to consider our paths in relation to these issues. We are standing at the Crossroads – what is the right way to turn? Where is Jesus leading? How can we show compassion to those who have offended as Jesus has shown to each one of us?

You can find out more by going to the Prisoners Week Scotland website:

www.prisonersweek.org.uk

or why not watch the Launch Service from Letham St Marks on Sunday November 16th at 4pm? Or come and have a chat with me…

Rev Sheena Orr, Trustee of Prisoners Week Scotland.



October 25

Sunday	5th	Morning Worship Bible Class	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood West Kirk	09.30 11.15 09.30
Tuesday	7th	Meet Me @ The Manse	Manse	14.00 - 15.00
Wednesday	8th	Wednesday Warblers Quiet Service The Bridge	West Kirk Hall Polbeth Harwood Polbeth Harwood	11.30 15.30 19.00
Thursday	9th	Beyond Kirk Walls services	Dickson Court Burngrange Home	13.45 15.00
Sunday	12th	Harvest Thanksgiving Session meeting	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood Polbeth Harwood	09.30 11.15 12.30
Tuesday	14th	Meet Me @ The Manse	Manse	14.00 - 15.00
Sunday	19th	Morning Worship	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.30 11.15
Sunday	26th	Morning Worship	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.30 11.15
Sunday	26th	United Festival of Light service	East Calder Church	19.00
Tuesday	28th	Meet Me @ The Manse	Manse	14.00 - 15.00
Friday	31st	Youth Group		19.00



November 25

Sunday	2nd	Morning Worship Bible Class	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood West Kirk	09.30 11.15 09.30
Tuesday	4th	Meet Me @ The Manse	Manse	14.00 - 15.00
Thursday	6th	Session meeting	West Kirk	19.00
Friday	7th	Pastoral Care Outing	West Kirk grounds	11.00
Sunday	9th	United Remembrance service Community Service	West Kirk War Memorial	09.30 11.00
Tuesday	11th	Schools Remembrance Meet Me @ The Manse	West Calder War Memorial Manse	11.00 14.00 - 15.00
Wednesday	12th	Wednesday Warblers	West Kirk	11.30
Thursday	13th	Beyond Kirk Walls Services	Dickson Court Burngrange Home	13.45 15.00
Sunday	16th	Morning Worship	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.30 11.15
Tuesday	18th	Meet Me @ The Manse	Manse	14.00 - 15.00
Sunday	23rd	Prisoners' Week Morning Worship	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.30 11.15
Tuesday	25th	Meet Me @ The Manse	Manse	14.00 - 15.00
Friday	28th	Youth Group		19.00
Saturday	29th	Christmas Fayre	Polbeth Harwood	14.00
Sunday	30th	Morning Worship	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.30 11.15

Parish Record



Deaths

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

To all who have lost a loved one we extend our sincere sympathies and prayers.

3rd August – Evelyn Cowie, Woodlands Care Home, Livingston

29th August – Roger Beamond, Murieston Gardens, Livingston

5th September – Margaret Greenhorn, Parkhead Crescent, West Calder

Living God,
There is so much suffering in this world of ours,
so much pain, sorrow and evil.
It is hard sometimes to reconcile all this
with it being your world too.
Teach us that, though we cannot always see it,
you are there, sharing in our anguish.
Help us to sense your presence and
remind us again of all you have done,
giving us strength to face each day.
Amen.

Nick Fawcett