

ST. NINIANS OLD PARISH CHURCH

PARISHIONER

AUTUMN 2026



Helpful Contacts

Minister

The Rev Gary J McIntyre

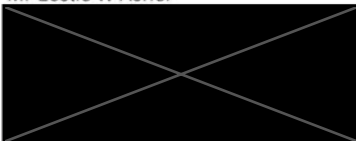


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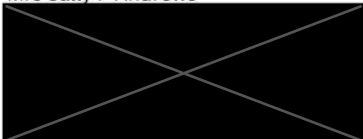
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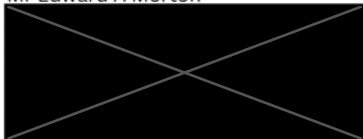
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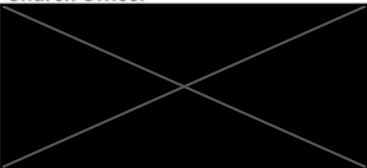
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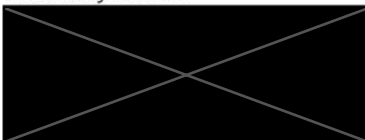
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Organist

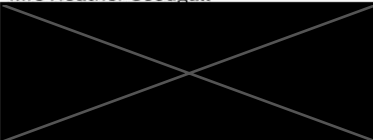
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Gift Aid & Freewill Offering Convener

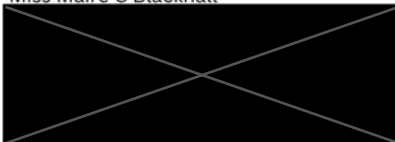
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From the Manse

Dear Friends,

There comes a time in every ministry when a new chapter begins, and so it is with mixed emotions that I write this final pastoral letter to you as your minister. After twenty-eight years at St Ninians Old Parish Church, I will leave in September to begin my ministry at St John's Renfield Church in Kelvindale, Glasgow.



As I look back over these years, my overwhelming feeling is one of profound gratitude. Thank you for the privilege you have given me of being your minister, for your friendship, your encouragement, your loyalty and your prayers. Together we have shared so much of life's journey, and it has been one of the greatest blessings of my life to walk alongside you.

When I came to St Ninians Old in 1998, I did so because I believed that God had called me here. Before that, He had called me to my first charge of Kingarth and Kilchattan Bay linked with the High Kirk of Rothesay. Now, after much prayer and careful discernment, I believe that same gracious God is calling me to St John's Renfield. There is real sadness in leaving a congregation and parish that I have come to love so deeply, but there is also peace in knowing that God's call always invites us to trust Him with the future.

Over almost three decades we have shared the joys and sorrows that are at the heart of every congregation. We have celebrated baptisms, welcomed new members, rejoiced at weddings, gathered around the Lord's Table, marked anniversaries and milestones, and stood together in times of grief as we committed loved ones into God's eternal care. Through all these experiences I have sought to bear witness to the love and faithfulness of Jesus Christ.

As I reflect on these years, many faces come before me. I think especially of the elders and members whose faithful service enriched the life of St Ninians Old for so many years and who are now in the nearer presence of God. Through quiet acts of devotion, generous service and steadfast faith, they helped to build the congregation we know today. Their witness continues to inspire us, and I thank God for each one of them. They will never be forgotten.

One of the greatest joys of my ministry at St Ninians Old has been serving not only the congregation but also the wider parish. I have always valued being the parish minister. Visiting homes, meeting people at every stage of life and sharing in the life of this community has brought immense fulfilment. I shall also miss my walks through the parish, not least at Swanswater, where there has often been space for quiet reflection and prayer. Those familiar paths have become part of my own spiritual journey, and they will always hold happy memories.

I have also greatly valued serving as part of the chaplaincy team at Borestone Primary School, St Ninians Primary School and the High School of Stirling. Spending time with pupils, staff and families has been a most rewarding aspect of my ministry. Watching young people grow in confidence and character, and sharing in assemblies, celebrations and moments of pastoral care, has continually reminded me of the importance of the Church's presence within the wider community. I shall miss those schools, and everyone connected with them.

The life of this congregation has always extended far beyond Sunday worship, and I have been continually encouraged by the dedication of so many people. Whether through the Tuesday Group, the Boys' Brigade, or the other organisations, committees and activities that sustain the life of the Church, countless individuals have given generously of their time, talents and resources. St Ninians Old has long been blessed with people who quietly serve Christ through serving others.

There have been many memorable moments throughout my ministry here. It was a particular joy to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of my ordination while serving at St Ninians Old and, in 2023, to mark the Silver Jubilee of my ministry in this congregation. Those occasions were made so special by your kindness and generosity, and I remain deeply touched by the warmth and affection you showed me.

No minister serves alone. Throughout these years I have been greatly supported and encouraged by those who have shared the work of ministry with me. I want especially to thank our Session Clerk, Leslie Asher, for faithful support and steadfast friendship; our Treasurer, Edward Morton, for his careful stewardship and dedication; and our Church Officer, Ernie Colthart, whose willing service is such a blessing to us all.

Our worship has also been enriched by music. Sunday by Sunday, Tony Baldwin has offered his gifts with remarkable faithfulness, sensitivity and excellence. His

music has helped lift our hearts to God, adding beauty and depth to our worship and to so many joyful and solemn occasions alike. I offer him my sincere thanks for all that he has contributed to the worshipping life of this congregation.

As you begin a period of vacancy, there will naturally be uncertainty. Yet I encourage you not to think of this simply as an ending but as the beginning of a new chapter in the life of St Ninians Old. This congregation has faithfully served Christ for generations, and its witness within this parish continues to matter greatly. The ministry of this Church has never depended upon one individual. It rests upon the faithfulness of God and upon His people seeking together to follow His will.

In the months ahead, the Presbytery will meet with the Kirk Session and engage in discussions with neighbouring congregations as it considers the future pattern of ministry. My sincere hope and prayer is that, in due course, permission will be granted for St Ninians Old to call a new minister who will lead you into the next chapter of your life together. Please pray for wisdom for all involved in these important conversations and pray also for the person whom God is already preparing to answer that call.

The words of the prophet Isaiah offer wonderful reassurance:

"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."
(Isaiah 41:10)

As ministers come and go, the One who remains is Jesus Christ, *"the same yesterday and today and for ever"* (Hebrews 13:8). He is the faithful Shepherd of His Church, and your confidence is ultimately in Him.

Hold on to these promises. Continue to worship faithfully, to care for one another and to serve the parish. Continue to be a church where Christ is known, His Gospel is proclaimed, and His love is lived out day by day.

Looking back, I thank God for every person He has brought into my life through St Ninians Old. Looking forward, I thank Him for all that He still has in store for this congregation. The best days of the Church are never simply behind us, because the Lord of the Church always goes before us.

If, over these twenty-eight years, I have been able to contribute in any way to the life and witness of St Ninians Old, it has been through the grace of God and through the faithful partnership of so many people. Whatever has been accomplished, to God alone be the glory!

Although my ministry among you is drawing to a close, you will always remain dear to me. I shall continue to remember you in my prayers with deep affection and thanksgiving. The friendships we have shared and the memories we have made together are treasures that I shall carry with me always. My family joins me in expressing sincere thanks for the kindness and support that have been shown over the years. Your friendship has meant more than you will ever know.

May God richly bless every member of this congregation, every family in this parish and all who worship and serve within St Ninians Old. May He guide you wisely through the months ahead, strengthen you in faith, fill you with hope and, in His perfect timing, lead you to the minister whom He has chosen for you.

"And now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."
(Ephesians 3:20–21)

With heartfelt thanks and every blessing,

Your friend and minister,

Gary

The Rev Gary J McIntyre

Services

Services are held on Sundays at 10:30am and are followed by a further time of fellowship in the Church or the Parish Halls (on the third Sunday of the month).

The Sunday Club meets during the school term.

The Prayer Group meets in the McMichael Chapel following the service on the last Sunday of the month.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated on Sunday 6th September at 10:30am.

Gary's final service as minister of the Church and Parish of St Ninians Old will be on Sunday 20th September at 10:30am. All will be welcome.

The Harvest Thanksgiving service will be held on Sunday 4th October and will be a family service. Once again, we will support the work of WaterAid. You will find an envelope in this edition of The Parishioner. Alternatively, you can donate to WaterAid online.

A Wee Note from Jake

"How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!" - Psalm 133:1

Just over a year ago, my family completed a frantic summer that included preparing to sell our home, packing, donating, or binning everything we owned, and completing a hearty batch of UK government forms and requirements, all while saying goodbye to friends, family, and a community we had built over the course of 15 years. We did it in order to follow God's call to something new, and as we boarded that plane, we did not know what we would find when we arrived at our destination. We could not be more pleased that, through all of that, we were led to Stirling and to the people of St Ninians Old Parish Church.



It is difficult to believe that my year of familiarisation has come to an end, but during this year we have felt welcomed and included, as we were immediately accepted and made a part of the community at St Ninians. By the time this wee note is published, I will have completed my final Sunday at St Ninians and will hopefully be "Minister Elect" in a new charge. However, please know that wherever our family goes, you will go with us in heart and mind. You provided a warm welcome and a caring community for my family as we made this transition into a new phase of life, and for that I will always be grateful.

As St Ninians now goes through a transition of its own, it is my hope and prayer that you continue to be a place of welcome as you care for one another and for all who come into your midst. Like my family a year ago, you also are stepping away from something familiar and comfortable. But within this community, may you continue to show one another the same care and love that you showed to me, so that you may always experience the truth of the Psalm above: "How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!"

Thank you again for all that you have done to help make Scotland a home for our family. I wish you every blessing as you move into the future together!

Sincerely yours

Jake



St.Ninians Old Parish Church

275th Anniversary



1751 - 2026

This year marks the 275th anniversary of the opening of St Ninians Old Parish Church, and we invite you to join us as we give thanks for God's faithfulness and celebrate this significant milestone in the life of our Church.

Songs of Praise

Our celebrations begin with a Songs of Praise service on **Sunday 6th September at 7.00pm**. We will be joined by friends from Holy Rude Viewfield and Park Church, together with members of other local congregations. The service will be followed by a time of fellowship and refreshments in the Parish Halls.

Flower Festival

The church will be beautifully decorated with floral displays throughout our anniversary weekend, **11th–13th September**. If you would like to donate flowers or create a floral arrangement, please speak to Elaine Walker. Elaine can be contacted on **07935 154067**.

The decorating will take place on **Friday 11th September**, and the church will be open to visitors on **Saturday 12th September from 11.00am to 3.00pm**.

Soup and Sandwich Lunch

A special anniversary Soup and Sandwich Lunch will be held on **Saturday 12th September from 12 noon until 1.30pm**. Everyone is warmly invited.

Service of Thanksgiving

The highlight of our anniversary celebrations will be our Service of Thanksgiving on **Sunday 13th September at 10.30am**. We are honoured that the guest preacher will be the **Right Reverend Gordon Kennedy, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland**.

We warmly invite members of the congregation, the wider parish, and the local community to join us for this special service as we celebrate our past, give thanks for the present, and look forward with hope to the future. Following the service, a special anniversary lunch will be held in the Parish Halls. Tickets for the lunch were available for purchase during August.

Supporting CrossReach

During the Flower Festival, and through the retiral collection following the Anniversary Service, there will be an opportunity to support the work of **CrossReach**, the social care arm of the Church of Scotland.

The following is taken from the CrossReach section of the Church of Scotland website:

"At CrossReach we offer loving care to people of all ages who are in need of a helping hand, supporting them to live life to the full whatever their circumstances.

We have been at the forefront of high-quality social care for over 155 years. During that time, we have worked hard to understand the needs of the people who turn to us for help and, together with them, have pioneered services that have changed thousands of lives for the better.

Today we are one of the largest care providers in Scotland, with experience across a broad range of services. We continue to grow, learn and improve, thanks to the incredible people we have the privilege to support, and to all those who support us."

Your generosity will help CrossReach continue its vital work, providing compassionate care and practical support to people and communities across Scotland.

Pulpit Fall

To mark the 275th anniversary of the opening of St Ninians Old Parish Church, the Tuesday Group has generously gifted a new pulpit fall which will be dedicated by the Rev Gary J McIntyre on Sunday 6th September. We are sincerely grateful for this thoughtful contribution and for helping us celebrate this important milestone in the history of our church.



A Prayer

Gracious God,

With thankful hearts we come before You, praising You for Your unfailing love and faithfulness. We thank You for the life and witness of St Ninians Old Parish Church, for all who have worshipped here through the generations, and for those whose faith helped shape this congregation and who now rejoice in Your nearer presence. Their witness continues to encourage us, and for this we give You thanks.

We thank You for the privilege of sharing in the work of the Gospel: for every act of kindness, every quiet service, every word of encouragement, every prayer offered, and every life touched by Your grace. In all that has been accomplished, we acknowledge that every good gift comes from You.

Lord God,

As we prepare to enter a new stage in the life of this congregation, help us to trust You with confidence. When change brings uncertainty, remind us that You are the same yesterday, today and for ever, and that Your purposes for Your Church never fail.

Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon the Kirk Session. Grant the elder's wisdom and discernment as they guide the congregation during the vacancy. Bless all who will carry additional responsibilities and uphold them with Your strength and peace.



We pray for the Interim Moderator, the Rev Iain Goring, and for those within the Presbytery who will help shape the future of this congregation. Give them wisdom, compassion and clarity, and in Your perfect time lead the person of Your choosing to become the next minister of St Ninians Old.

Loving God,

We remember all who are sick in body, mind or spirit, and all who are anxious, lonely or burdened. Surround them with Your healing presence, comfort them with Your love, and give them courage for each new day.

We remember those who mourn the loss of loved ones. May they know the comfort of Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, and the assurance that nothing can separate us from Your love in Him.

Bless the children and young people of our parish, our schools, and every organisation connected with this Church and community. May they grow in faith, wisdom and love, and know that they are precious in Your sight.

Strengthen this congregation to serve the parish with compassion and commitment. May St Ninians Old remain a place where the Gospel is faithfully proclaimed, where all are welcomed in Christ's name, and where lives are transformed by the power of Your Holy Spirit.

And now, as one chapter closes and another begins, we place our future into Your loving hands. Lead us forward in faith, trusting not in ourselves but in You, the great King and Head of the Church.

In Jesus' name, Amen



CEILIDH

CALLUM WYND

We are looking to hold another Church Ceilidh on Friday 27th November, dancing to the superb Steven Carcary Trio. The dance will run from 7.30 until 10.30. Steven's Trio played at our ceilidh in November 2025, and we all had a tremendous night dancing.

We have held two successful ceilidhs in the past year and are keen to see them continue.

However, for it to go ahead, we need to sell a minimum of 50 tickets. Tickets are £10 a ticket, with a family ticket being £30 (2 adults and 2 children).

If you would like tickets, please can you ensure they are purchased by the end of September at the latest, to ensure the costs can be covered.

We look forward to seeing you at the ceilidh in November.



Photo Gallery

MARION
JACKSON
Lake Bled,
Slovenia



BOYS BRIGADE

RUSSELL SUGDEN

The Boys Brigade Camp took place from Friday 3rd July until Sunday 5th July, in the midst of one of the longest, hottest, driest heatwaves in UK History.

The rain started on the drive out to the site at Portavadie and did not end until after we had returned to St Ninians Church Hall. Despite the inclement weather a good time was had by all, *“learning how to stay dry while camping in the rain”* was a lesson learned afresh and anew by all.



Many games of table tennis, pool and board games were played. Hopefully, next year we'll have better weather.

Craft Group

JANETTE PETERSON

The craft group will recommence on Thursday 27th August from 2 - 4 pm in the front room of the Parish Halls. We will meet on a fortnightly basis thereafter.

We are a friendly group who enjoy a good natter over a cuppa whilst working away on our own craft. We mostly undertake knitting, crochet and card making, however any new ideas would be most welcome. Do come along and join us - all are welcome.

Pastoral Care Group

GRACE McINTOSH

If you know of anyone who would benefit from telephone contact or a visit from a Pastoral Care Group member, please let me or the Minister know.

Social and Fundraising Committee

ALISON NEWMAN

The lunches will commence with the 275th Anniversary on Saturday 12th September. Our regular lunches will be on the following dates, 3rd October, 7th November and 5th December from noon until 1.30pm.

Come along and enjoy the fellowship and encourage others to join us.

Prayer Group

There is great power in Prayer. If you have a person or situation that you would like the Prayer Group to pray for, please make your requests known by:

🌿 Placing a tag on the tree in the McMichael chapel

📅 Placing a card in the box in the McMichael chapel

🖨️ Completing the online form <https://forms.gle/TuAjqoCdwy54E9RKA>

Sunday Club

We are looking forward to the new session in Sunday Club.

We will be learning about Noah and working on something very special for the flower festival.

Running up to Harvest Thanksgiving we will be looking at God's creation and learning how to take care of God's World.

We hope to welcome new families to our Sunday Club family. Sunday Club is for children from Nursery Class to Primary 7 and we meet during the service. Come and join us.

St.Ninians Old Parish Church

SUNDAY CLUB

Nursery Class to Primary 7

ALL WELCOME



Children attend the start of Church at 10:30am and leave during the service with Sunday Club Leaders.

Tuesday Group

MIRANDA MILLER

The Tuesday Group will resume on Tuesday 27th October at 2:00pm in the Parish Halls when we will be entertained by Scott Methven the late Queen's piper. Scott will give us an insight into his life as the monarch's piper. We are really looking forward to hearing all his stories. Everyone is welcome to this opening event.

We have decided on a later start to our session this year as September is very busy with the Church 275th anniversary.

The date of the Scots afternoon is Tuesday 1st December when we will be entertained by the Billy Ferguson ceilidh band. Tickets on sale nearer the time at £5.

The Christmas lunch will be held in Stirling Golf Club on 15th December, 12 noon for 12.30pm. Cost still to be confirmed. It is hoped to have a Burns supper with a difference on Tuesday 26th January. This is usually an evening event. A speaker for Tuesday 23rd February is still to be arranged. The AGM will be held in the

King Robert Hotel on Tuesday 30th March more details to follow.

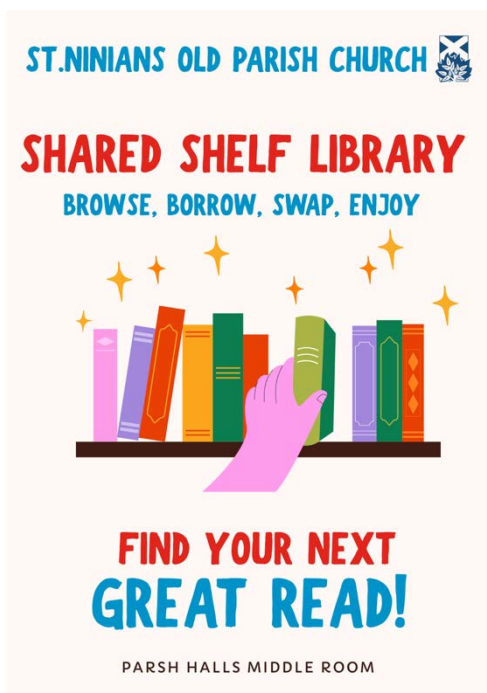
We start our new session without the Rev. Gary McIntyre who will be sadly missed but please continue to join us monthly as we need to carry on and support St.Ninians Old Parish Church.

Shared Shelf Library

Are you looking for your next great read? Why not peruse the shelves of our Shared Shelf Library. We have a wide selection of books, both fiction and non-fiction and a number of genres are available including, romance, thriller, crime, historical, childrens' literature and many more.

The Shared Shelf Library can be found in the Middle Hall of the Parish Halls. It is open during the Fellowship Teas in the Parish Halls and will be open during the Soup and Sandwich lunches in this coming year.

We will be looking to sell some of the stock during the Soup and Sandwich lunches too, with the proceeds going to Church Funds. Lookout for the table in the main hall.



Christian Aid

ELAINE WALKER

Thank you so much for your kind donations for Christian aid week in May. This year we raised £403.

There will be another chance to support this wonderful charity on Saturday October 24th when we host a coffee morning in the Parish Halls from 10.00am until 12 noon.

Anyone who would like to help on the morning or would be happy to bake for the event can speak to me at church any Sunday.



Stirling Kirks Together – All Age Friendship Lunches

Thanks to everyone who supported the Stirling Kirks Together Friendship Lunches in Park Church over the Summer.

A donation of £500 was made to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Venezuela Earthquake Appeal.



Blythswood

We will be collecting completed shoeboxes and individual items again this year, for the Blythswood Shoebox Appeal. Leaflets will be available in late September, and a full list of suitable items will be detailed in the leaflets.



Our most needed items are empty shoe boxes, ladies and gents' underwear, ladies and gents' hats and scarves and small toys/games, especially for adults.

Please note the only hand knitting they now accept is hats, scarves and gloves.

Photo Gallery

MARION JACKSON

Fruit Market,
Tangier



Walking Group

HELEN WYND

There are a few members of the congregation who like the idea of a walking group. This article is just to gauge if there is interest in a group.



If this is established, it could be a good way of reaching out to others in our parish to join us and an easy way for new members of the community to make friends.

Initially it would be good to know preferred days and morning or afternoon sessions - it could be that some walks are midweek and others are at the weekend depending on interest. Likewise, the frequency of the walks and their location will depend on the group members.

Please contact me if you are interested wyndhelen@gmail.com or text 07980460962.

Book Review – The Enchanted April by Elizabeth Von Arnim

AVRIL SCOTLAND

This is a light frothy confection of a book. It's one to be read in a comfy chair on a sunny day in the garden— but equally it would raise your spirits on a dull February day when you feel that Spring is never going to put in an appearance. It's a book that I return to when I'm feeling low— and re reading a book is not a thing I usually do, I'm more of the pre order mentality (an expensive character flaw).

The book was written by Elizabeth von Armin and released in 1922. Although she has a number of well-regarded books to her credit, this was by far her most successful- and lucrative - being the basis of a stage play, and being twice translated to film. She wrote it after a month spent in Spring in Liguria and she is credited with having put that beautiful village, Portofino, on the tourist map. Thank you Elizabeth! The time setting is that period just following World War 1: that time when women, who had never thought to work outside the home, found themselves called on to do their bit. Many enjoyed the sense of purpose and found themselves rudderless when the war ended and so did the jobs. Women of the middle classes and above often found themselves leading lives of stultifying boredom. It is from this stratum of society that the four totally disparate leading characters are drawn.



First we meet Lottie, wife of the tight fisted, upwardly mobile lawyer, Mellersh Wilkins. Hers is a loveless marriage. Her days follow a rigid and dull pattern, being expected to shop for, and provide, meals of high quality on a meagre budget. The only money that she has any control over, is a small clothing allowance, courtesy of her father. Mellersh, in his great wisdom has deemed that part of this should be garnered to provide a small nest egg. Thus, poor Lottie attends her infrequent social outings in clothes 'infested by thrift'.

Rose Arbuthnot's married life had started in a whirlwind of great happiness but a stillborn baby and the burden of unresolved grief following, has driven her and her husband Frederick, apart - victims of that era of putting on a brave face and bottling everything up. Rose fills her days, and her thoughts, with good works. She is endlessly busy raising money for and tending to the poor of the parish.

She is not kept short of money for, while when they married, Frederick had been respectably, if not lucratively well paid, by the British museum, he has branched out into a wildly successful literary career, writing about the mistresses of kings. The more racy and outrageous those lives had been, the better. And, naturally, Frederick needs to do a fair bit of research! Rose is hugely embarrassed by the source of her lavish income and shudders to think how the vicar would feel if he were ever to discover the origins of much of the money used to buy the boots of the poor.

These two protagonists meet when Lottie is on yet another foray into town to buy sole for Mellersh's dinner. It is February, and wet, dripping, grey days follow one another in seemingly endless procession. She lunches in her rather shabby club on dispiritingly tasteless food. She is musing over how miserable being good all the time makes you, as she idly flicks through the Times. Suddenly, her eye is caught by an advertisement— Do you like Sunshine and Wisteria? - rent my small medieval castle in Tuscany. Lottie is a lost cause. Visions of her £90 nest egg float before her. She spots Rose, also reading the Times and decides to approach her, being convinced Rose is reading the same advertisement. Although she has never spoken to Rose, she recognises her from Church. Mellersh is a devoted Church attender— where else would he find, under one roof, so many old ladies, who may not need his professional services now, but surely will in the near future. Lottie amazes herself as she blurts out a proposition that the two of them combine resources and rent the castle. Rose is startled but the idea takes root. After all, Lottie points out, Rose must have been very good for a very long time— she looks so very miserable. They approach the likeable Mr Briggs, owner of the castle but are dismayed to find the cost is £60! And he wants references! However, the irrepressible Lottie suggests another two guests, and so charmed is Mr Briggs by pretty Rose (like the mother he never knew, like his much-loved governess, and, thankfully neither) that references are waived. And so, Mrs Fisher enters the tale.

Mrs Fisher is a wealthy widow of long standing. Mrs Fisher is merely looking for a different, warmer, and cheap venue in which to continue the aspic set life she leads among her gloomy London rooms. She wants to wallow in her memories of when the great and the good of the London literary scene beat a path to her door. She name drops shamelessly and Lottie feels impelled to ask if she had known Keats. Mrs Fisher decides Lottie is slightly unhinged, one to watch, one who must be curbed and answers acidly that she had known neither Keats nor Shakespeare.

Completing the unlikely quartet is Lady Caroline Dester. Her life is most definitely not devoid of love and attention. So beautiful is she, both in appearance and disposition, that suitors are falling over one another to propose. Adored by family and friends, she knows she is fortunate— but she also knows that she can't carry on as she has been doing. She needs a time of quiet reflection in a place where no one of her acquaintance will find her.

Subterfuge is needed and some bending of truth; Rose is beset by guilt: Lottie worries that she cannot spend more than her paltry nest egg — it would take Mellersh days to expound on her foolishness: but soon the pair are off to San Salvatore. The journey is without event but the arrival by pony and trap, ever upwards causes them to fear for their lives. (I could write pages about strange, difficult to access houses I have rented, all on hill tops, all on one track roads, in Italy. I can empathise). But arrive they do— only to find Lady Caroline and Mrs Fisher already installed, each having arrived early to secure the best rooms. Of course, among four such ill-assorted women there are bound to be problems to be ironed out, this, and interactions with servants are a fine source of humour for the writer— and nothing can dent Lottie's joy at finding herself in a place of such beauty. She is under the spell of San Salvatore and its' gardens from the very first viewing. And here Elizabeth von Armin's delight in gardens comes shining through. Her descriptions of the wave after wave of flora is a treat for the imagination.

Readers may feel that Lottie's decision to invite Mellersh to join them would destroy this idyll— but no— Mellersh is all charm. He is delighted to find his mousy little wife's company is enjoyed by the charming Rose and the beautiful Lady Caroline. He is delighted that his wife has befriended the wealthy Mrs Fisher, surely an elderly woman of such wealth presents a multiplicity of opportunity for his professional talents. Lady Caroline had worried that he might be undone by her beauty— not a bit of it, he sees the possibilities that an introduction into her family would bring, aristocratic families can never have too many lawyers! His first encounter with the temperamental boiler as he tries to take his first bath, is the stuff of farce! Yes, Mellersh adds a lot in humour. He realises he possibly has not made the wrong choice of wife, the others enjoy her company, find her amusing and interesting. In fact, she is really rather beautiful. He becomes quite affectionate. The first week he tweaks her ear. The second week, he tweaks BOTH ears. Lottie wonders what will happen in week three when she has run out of ears!

Gradually San Salvatore works its magic on all four women. Yes, even Mrs Fisher succumbs and decides she's dwelt long enough in the past. There's a lot more life still to be lived. This is a book very much of its time and should be read as such, but it is interesting to ponder the lives women of that time lived, the better to appreciate the opportunities we have now. This is a book that celebrates the transformative power of nature, and of the value of time to relax and take stock. Above all it is a book that entertains, that brings a smile- and for that reason I commend it.

As a footnote, I had always had it in mind to write about this book. I had also always meant to ask Christine Dougall if she had read it. I knew she would love it if she hadn't and enjoy being reminded of it if she had. She was always generous in her praise. I got my timing wrong and that is a sadness. Christine, when I read this book, and I will, I'll remember you and the joy books brought you.

Proposed Book Club

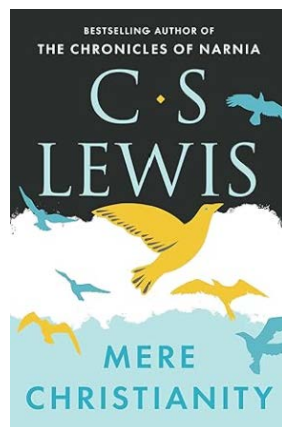
RUSSELL SUGDEN

I'd like to start a regular book club, with a broadly Christian theme. While Aquinas, Luther, Bonhoeffer et al are worthy of consideration, I doubt we'd have many takers for *Summa Theologica*.

Therefore, I was thinking it could start with *Mere Christianity* by CS Lewis. He's a well know mid 20thC writer, who writes in a vernacular style, and *Mere Christianity* is a compilation of radio talks given by him during WWII aimed at a broad audience, thus the chapters are short and self-contained.

It's available in all libraries, from Amazon and even in audiobook format. I'm proposing to tackle a chapter a week with a discussion for 60-90min one evening a week, and reach out to include Park, Holyrood and other Kirks in Stirling.

If you are interested in joining, please speak to me in Church



The Parish Register

Baptism – “In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”

19th July 2026

Ellis Carson

Marriage– “Jesus was at the wedding”

Saturday 4th July 2026

Kenneth Foggo and Lucy Young

56 Springwood Avenue, Stirling

Deaths – “I go to prepare a place for you”

31st May 2026

Mr Malcolm Webber

26 Alexander Drive

Bridge of Allan

17th July 2026

Mrs Ann Paterson

100 Glasgow Road

St Ninians

2nd June 2026

Mr Allan Barron

Annfield House

Stirling

25th July 2026

Miss Christine N Dougall

76 Coxithill Road

St Ninians (District 29)

5th June 2026

Mrs Anne Machray

23 Balquiderock

Stirling

8th August 2026

Mr George Shaw

79 Lamberton Avenue

Stirling (District 12)

13th June 2026

Mrs Elizabeth Robb

31E Rollock Street

Stirling (District 9)

We remember all who have been bereaved in our prayers

Collectively Yours

IAN CAIRNS

Answers to collective nouns quiz in last quarter's Parishioner.

What is the collective noun for each of these creatures?

1 A **MURDER** of Crows. Perhaps the most famous collective name and invoking the darkness of these birds.

2 An **EXALTATION** of Larks recognising their beautiful singing.

3 A **PARLIAMENT** of Owls as they are solemn and wise.

4 A **SHREWDNESS** of Apes which is a nod to their intelligence and cunning.

5 A **BUSINESS** of Ferrets as they are ever busy and seemingly purposeful.

6 A **MURMURATION** of Starlings describing their complicated, aerial patterns.

7 A **CONSPIRACY** of Lemurs as they always look as if they are plotting.

8 A **RHUMBA** of Rattlesnakes invoking their rhythmic, shuffling moves.

9 An **OBSTINACY** of Buffaloes as they are dour, stubborn and powerful.

10 A **BLOAT** of Hippopotami accurately describing a group of these huge animals lolling in the water.

11 A **CRASH** of Rhinoceroses describing the power and the force of their charge.

12 A **TOWER** of standing Giraffes, speaks for itself.

13 A **JOURNEY** of moving Giraffes asks where are these awkward creatures all going.

14 A **PRICKLE** of Porcupines. Need we say more.

15 A **QUIVER** of Cobras is a chilling term which evokes their ready to strike posture.

16 A **PANDEMONIUM** of Parrots captures the chaos and noise.

17 A **SCOURGE** of Mosquitoes and if you have been swarmed by them this name will ring true.

18 An **INTRUSION** of Cockroaches and this is exactly what they do to your home in warmer countries.

19 An **IMPLAUSIBILITY** of Gnus. Wildebeests, nervous, panicky and prone to sudden flight.

20 A **KALEIDOSCOPE** of Butterflies. Very apt for these colourful insects.

21 A **GAGGLE** of Geese. This is appropriately used for geese on the ground. A **SKEIN** is used when they are in flight.

22 A **SCOLD** of Jays reflects their harsh, scolding call.

23 A **MEMORY** of Elephants. An elephant never forgets.

24 A **CLOWDER** of Cats. This is an Olde English word.

25 A **LABOUR** of Moles acknowledges the hard work these underground creatures do.

26 A **CHARM** of Goldfinches is the delightful name for a flock of these colourful birds.

27 A **GLAZE** of Raccoons describes these cheeky, badly behaved animals.

28 An **UNKINDNESS** of Ravens reflects that, like crows, these birds are thought to have dark associations.

29 A **LOVELINESS** of ladybirds is the sweet term for these pretty insects which do so much good in the garden.

30 A **FLAMBOYANCE** of Flamingoes is especially apt for these bright pink, elegant birds.

ST.NINIANS OLD PARISH CHURCH

PARISHIONER

WINTER 2026



**The Winter Edition of the Parishioner
will be out in early December**

**Submission Date for Articles is:
Sunday 15th November**

Thank you

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