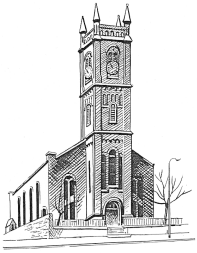
Stobswell Trinity Church of Scotland



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March 2026 ***KEEPING IN TOUCH*** *No 010*

A letter from the Rev. Dr. Jean Kirkwood

Dear friends,

During the season of Lent, we place a large wooden cross at the front of the church sanctuary. It stands there for all who come for worship to see, as a reminder of what we are doing during Lent, which is travelling toward Good Friday and Jesus' crucifixion. This large cross is draped with a purple cloth which is the liturgical colour for the season of Lent, the colour of Jesus' cloak which was won by a soldier in a game of luck as they played at the foot of the cross, while Jesus hung naked and dying. Along with the purple cloth, we also have 7 candles which sit on the communion table. We blow out one candle on each of the 6 Sundays of Lent while the one in the middle is known as the Christ candle and remains lit throughout. The loss of light each week signifies the struggles, troubles and evil in the world, all of which Jesus took upon himself on the cross. The remaining candle speaks of the hope which can never be extinguished even in the worst of times.

On Good Friday, the purple cloth on the cross in the sanctuary is exchanged for a black one, reminding us that the sky turned dark for three hours between midday and 3 o'clock, the time when Jesus let out a loud cry and died. As the apostle Paul put it,

"*Christ, our Passover Lamb has been sacrificed.*" (1Corinthians 5:7). On Easter Sunday, the black cloth is changed for a white cloth, which is the liturgical colour for Easter. The candles are all lit once again. The church is decorated with flowers, the hymns are full of alleluias, and we share in Holy Communion, as we celebrate alongside Christians all over the world that the tomb is empty. Jesus has been raised to life, and one day, we will be raised with him.

Each year, we tell the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We do this not only with words, but also with songs, candles, coloured cloth, palm branches, crosses, bread and wine, flowers and Easter eggs rolled down a grassy slope. Each of them helps, in their own particular way, to tell of God's love for the world shown through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. May each of us find our own particular way to share that story with others, and through our words and actions bring light and hope into our corner of the world.

Wishing you a blessed Easter!

Your minister,
Jean

Dates for your Diary

Sunday 15th March (11.00 am) Mothering Sunday
Sunday 29th March (11.00 am) Palm Sunday
Thursday 2nd April (7.00 pm) Maundy Thursday (with Communion)
Friday 3rd April (7.00 pm) Good Friday
Sunday 5th April (11.00 am) Easter Sunday (with Communion)
Sunday 26th April (11.00 am) Communion
Sunday 10th to Saturday 17th May Christian Aid week
Sunday 24th May (11.00 am) Pentecost Sunday
Sunday 31st May (11.00 am) Sunday School Prize-giving
Sunday 7th June Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association (11.00 am) Presentation of Awards
Sunday 28th June (11.00 am) Communion

THE LADIES CIRCLE

All meetings on Monday evenings at 7.00pm

2 March	Alison and Friends: Singing group.
16 March	Strength & Balance: *Agnes Smith & Irene Duthie*
30 March	From Lochee to Buckingham Palace: *Alex Garty*
13 April	Blood Bikes: *Alex Garty*
27 April	Huntington's Disease. Impact on Families: *Sarah Mitchell*
11 May	Annual General Meeting and Meal

THE FRIENDSHIP GROUP

All meetings on Wednesday afternoons at 2.00pm

Our last meeting will be on 4th March when we will be joined by The Dundee Gaelic Choir. Please come along and enjoy the singing.

Our next meeting will be in September.

THE GOOD AS NEW SHOP –

Volunteers required

Many hands make light work!

Are you able to give a few hours to help in the Good as New Shop to raise funds for the Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association?

If you want more information then please speak with May Johnston and she will let you know about this friendly shop that is full of bargains.

PLANT SALE 2026



Our Plant Sale this year will take place on **Saturday 23rd May** between 10 am and noon with all proceeds going to **Christian Aid.** As usual, a list of bedding plants available for sale will be issued around mid-April with pre-ordering advised to ensure you get what you want.
Weather permitting, the sale will be outside and there will also be teas and coffees in the hall.

I know that there will be bedding plants for sale in the supermarkets well before our Plant Sale but, don't be fooled by a few sunny days – just remember that there can still be some late overnight frosts in May so, don't be tempted!!



This will be the 35th time I have helped to organise our **Church Plant Sale**. The first was on 2nd June 1990 when it was part of the **Stobswell Gala Day** held at Morgan Academy and, allowing for a year off for Covid, we have continued annually ever since.
I look forward to seeing you on 23rd May.
Doug Sievwright

CHRISTIAN AID QUIZ

The theme of this year's quiz is all about sports and games. Copies will be available in April at £1 each. As usual, it will be a bit challenging but also good fun with a prize for the winner.

Please take extra copies for friends, family and work colleagues etc to help us raise as much as possible
Thanks,
Doug Sievwright

Two items from our Organist, Frances Menter

Choir: We would love to see more of the congregation taking the (rather steep!) stairs up to the organ loft on a Sunday morning! There are several seats still available! We practice for about 20 minutes before the service, starting at 10.15 a.m. You don't have to be there every Sunday and you certainly don't have to be a Pavarotti or a Katherine Jenkins…just be able to sing in tune. If you would like to join the choir, just come along any Sunday at 10.15 and join in the fun!

Dundee Gaelic Choir: Dundee Gaelic Choir plans to travel to Dundee's Twin Town - Orléans, France - to take part in the city's annual Joan of Arc celebrations.

Known locally as the Fêtes de Jeanne d'Arc, the festival has been celebrated for nearly 600 years. Each year, the city of Orléans comes alive with concerts, parades, and ceremonies that honour Joan of Arc's role in liberating the city in 1429, while also commemorating the end of WWII. The highlight of our visit will be a joint concert on Thursday 7th May with our host choir, Choeur Orléans Val de Loire. 2026 is a year of milestones… It marks the 80th anniversary of the Dundee–Orléans Twinning Association and the 60th anniversary of our choir — making this trip a truly special way to celebrate our history. The Orléans choir has specifically asked for a Scottish choir to take part in next year's celebrations. Part of the experience will be a cultural and language exchange, giving us the opportunity to sing in our partners' 'language. Many of our congregation have very generously supported this venture by taking part in our fundraising 'Scottish place names' quiz and I am delighted to let you know that you have contributed just under £100 to our cause! We are extremely grateful for your support and may I remind you that the closing date for submitting your entries is 11th March, so please hand your completed copies to me or to Anne Bennett by Sunday 8th March. Also, at the time of writing, I can let you know that we have already reached our target for match funding from Creative Scotland, thanks, in part, to your generosity.

ANOTHER ITEM OFF THE EDITOR'S BUCKET LIST

In 1955/56 I lived in London with my husband as there was no work for joiners in Dundee at that time. I worked in an Advertising Agency based in Berkeley Square (where the nightingales sing). I had a truly wonderful wage of £6 per week; my wage in Dundee had been £3 per week. We returned to Dundee when The Dundee City Council decided to start building housing schemes on the outskirts of the city.

I wanted to revisit London to see the new buildings and I knew it had to be soon because of old age creeping up on me. There was a reduced price for flights from Riverside Airport with Loganair on Tuesday 16th December so tickets were booked for my son, my grand-daughter and me.

Up at 5am, at the airport at 6am and we boarded a Dinky toy-sized, two propeller aeroplane and took off at 7am. It was very cold and the plane and runway had to be de-iced before we could board. I set off the security alarm and had to be swabbed to see if I was carrying drugs. (Negative report.) The engines on the plane were a bit noisy but we soon got used to it. Tea or coffee with a Tunnock's caramel wafer or a Walker's shortbread biscuit were the offer of refreshments. We landed at Heathrow Airport at 9am and joined commuters on the underground railway and our destination was Hyde Park Corner, right in the centre of London, where we waited two minutes for a blue-line tourist bus and we sat upstairs. Tickets for the bus had been already booked online as this was a cheaper option. The temperature was a mild 11c and we were well wrapped up. I sat and giggled and could not believe my eyes. It was like being in a TV travelogue with the lovely pale-coloured painted buildings gliding by. There were new buildings that I had never seen before and curved glass windows everywhere. Regent Street had their Christmas Angels decorations strung across the street and large hotels were very festive with decorations around their front entrances. The liveried doormen welcomed guests with a lift of their top hats. It was all marvellously theatrical.

When the bus stopped at Selfridge's department store we got off and went to look at their Christmas story-telling displays in all of their large street windows. The wicked queen from the story of Snow-white was looking at her malevolent moving reflection in a mirror and she had a red apple nearby.

Giuseppe had left his workshop and a half-made Pinocchio was sitting on the workbench with lots of wood shavings on the floor. The Beauty

and the Beast window had a china display with large chandeliers all lit up. Mrs Potts and Lumiere were there along with some other characters. Best of all were the small children with their noses to the glass windows staring at the displays with wonderment on their faces. We went inside the store and admired revolving mirrored large balls turning in rays of light. This display was hung in their central staircase (now elevators). We went up a side lane off Regent Street and found an old English Pub that was starting to serve lunch. The interior was covered with 1950's 60's posters and they were playing 1950's-60's music. My grand-daughter asked why I knew all the words of the tunes. I was back to being in my early 20's and the tunes were from my Top Ten. And the smile on my face was growing larger. After lunch, we rejoined another blue-line tour bus and we went across to the south side of the River Thames via London Bridge and noticed that the Tower Bridge was open to let shipping through. We continued along the South bank and looked across the Thames to see the Houses of Parliament, but we could not see the top floors of The Shard because of low clouds. By the time we reached Tower Bridge the road was open again to traffic and as we travelled over, I thought of the thousands who run the London Marathon and crossed this beautifully painted bridge.

I was entranced by the new tall buildings and how clean everywhere was.

We stopped at an Underground Station and boarded a train back to Heathrow. The journey was about 35 minutes. We were body scanned before we were allowed into Terminal 2 and we had a quick look at the shops but I decided I did not need a fabulously expensive handbag. We were again scanned at the Loganair departure gate and after a short wait we took off back to Dundee at 6.pm. I enjoyed my Tunnock's caramel wafer and promptly fell asleep. I was wakened up when we were over St Andrews for the landing flight down the River Tay and Riverside Airport.

I arrived home at 8.30pm and I still had a great big smile on my face.

It had been like a fairy-tale.

So? Where to next?

Loganair also fly to the Shetland Islands, so does anyone fancy a day trip to the far North?

Before old age creeps up on you, please let me know what is written on your Bucket List.

Norma Watson

The snowdrops in the church garden were wonderful to see with their promise that spring was coming again. The poem below was sent in by a church member.

How uplifting to discover the first snowdrops of the year.
Through frosty days, rain, wind and snow, like magic they appear,
Heralding in a sense of hope, a breath of early spring.
Bringing smiles and cheer our way when songbirds cease to sing.
Through the earth they bravely bloom, brightening up a wintry day,
Showing that Mother Nature is never far away.

Pamela Ramage
The Friendship Book, February 2026.

The Bride Wore Wellies

Many of you will remember the Industrial Chaplain, Rev Erik Cramb (and his beloved football team Partick Thistle Nil). He lived in what is now the Stobswell Trinity Manse.

There was an article in the Courier Magazine about him and his new book, '*The Bride Wore Wellies'*, towards the end of last year. It is well worth getting hold of a copy.

I was expecting an entertaining read, which indeed it was, but it was also very thought provoking and made me rethink about life, religion and economics.

It is not just an autobiography but his interpretation of bible stories and his considered opinion on doctrine. It is interspersed with his stories about life particularly on the west coast. As you travel with him from Glasgow to Dundee vis Jamaica you will hear some bible stories that you've never heard before (to quote an old song). (I had to look up Mephibosheth but he is real.)

He finishes with the phrase 'if I should die tomorrow, I know my life's been worthwhile'. My life is richer for having meeting Erik and yours will be too, even if you only meet him through this book.

So, why did the bride wear wellies? You will have to read the book to find out.

Allan Grady

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

We have all noticed our domestic bills increasing over the last two years, particularly Gas and Electricity. Hopefully, we have all had an increase in our wages or pensions to help pay for them. Well, the Church is no different but without an increase in our income. Our Gas and Electricity bills for 2025 came to £14,500. Our December Gas account, with the extra Church Services, was £3,800.

But we also have other increases in our expenditure.

Our office, computer/website, and printing costs have risen by £1,600 to ££3,435. By viewing our Sunday service online housebound members can now feel part of the congregation, but it comes at a cost.

The organ costs, including maintenance, have gone up by£1,200 to £6,570.

Council Tax for the manse continues to rise year on year. As does the cost for boiler maintenance, buildings insurance, etc. Everything you have to pay more for at home, so does the Church.

Expenditure on the Church maintenance is actually down on 2024, but we are predicting a substantial increase this year with remedial work urgently needed on the stain glass windows.

Our biggest item of expenditure is the "Giving to Growth Contribution" that we make to the Church of Scotland. This is to support the work of the Church. For 2026 it is £45,618, a reduction of £352 on our Contribution for 2025. This is based on our total income and our number of members in the congregation.

Our accounts for 2025 are not yet finalised, but it would appear our deficit for the year will be about £20,000.

We are aware that we have a substantial balance in the bank, but we must try to balance our income and expenditure. If you have not yet increased your donations over the last two years, please consider the above and try to improve our situation. If you are a taxpayer, please speak with George Whyte and sign up for Gift Aid. This increases your donation by 25% at no cost to yourself.

Thank You,

Ian Stewart (Interim Treasurer)
Ian Main (Convener)

CHRISTIAN AID

Christian Aid Week is from 10th to 16 May. The focus this year is on global work and Kenya where Christian Aid partners are working with urban communities to create gardens in small spaces. These urban gardens empower families to push back against property.

Donation envelopes will be distributed on Sundays 3rd and 10th May, to be returned by Sunday 24th May. Cash only please – no cheques. (This will help reduce our bank charges). Remember to complete the attached form if you pay Income Tax and wish to Gift Aid your donation.

Thank you for your support.

Doris Smith, Convener

THE STOBBIE RAMBLERS

The Stobbie Ramblers meet on the first Saturday and middle Wednesday of each month. The Saturday rambles end with lunch and the Wednesday ones with coffee.

We had a walk in Craigmill Den prior to our Christmas lunch in the Station Hotel in Carnoustie.

On a frosty January morning we explored the downtown riverside and found sculptures we had missed on previous occasions.

Our February trip to Perth had to be cancelled because of the rain but we hope to do it in March,

As well as our usual trips, this year we are planning longer ones to Dublin and the Burrell Collection in Glasgow.

The walks are not too strenuous. You are every welcome to join us even if it is just for the meal afterwards.

We also have a monthly magazine that is enjoyed by several armchair ramblers.

Allan Grady

SMARTIE CHALLENGE

What a fantastic year we had in 2025 when we raised **£1,426** for the **St Columba RTC Christian Girls' College** in Sialkot, Pakistan. This is a charity which is supported by the Church of Scotland and other organisations worldwide.

You all know how it works by now – we leave tubes of Smarties at the front door of the Church – you take a tube of Smarties – you eat the Smarties – you fill the empty tube with money and bring it back to the Church. What could be easier?

Thank you for your support.

Doug Sievwright

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL has been very busy with crafts and bible stories using the Minister's weekly sermons. We are thankful for the white board that George Greig sourced for the church. We are using it every week for bible stories, searching for information, and it is handy for drawing.

Big thanks to the property team for the new coat hooks in the back vestibule. They are great for small coats.

Linda Young
Superintendent

THE PROPERTY TEAM has been working hard within the building and the garden has now a great show of snowdrops. Did you know there are 2,500 different varieties of snowdrops?

But there is also a great show of weeds!

Anyone wishing to come along and help to remove these weeds, even for a short time, will be made most welcome.

Linda Young
Convener

Your ***PROPERTY TEAM***
always make sure that they recycle all the waste that we generate.

Below is a word search with a note of all items that may be recycled.

E	**C**	**R**	**E**	**B**	**M**	**I**	**T**	**S**	**E**	**S**	**S**
S	**I**	**S**	**M**	**Q**	**E**	**E**	**E**	**S**	**C**	**R**	**L**
E	**T**	**T**	**A**	**Z**	**S**	**L**	**B**	**A**	**S**	**E**	**A**
U	**S**	**E**	**V**	**X**	**I**	**L**	**R**	**L**	**U**	**P**	**C**
G	**A**	**V**	**E**	**T**	**O**	**D**	**C**	**G**	**S**	**A**	**I**
O	**L**	**V**	**X**	**L**	**B**	**L**	**Z**	**E**	**D**	**P**	**M**
L	**P**	**E**	**C**	**O**	**O**	**S**	**R**	**D**	**J**	**S**	**E**
A	**T**	**F**	**A**	**T**	**T**	**Y**	**H**	**C**	**Y**	**W**	**H**
T	**N**	**R**	**H**	**Z**	**T**	**J**	**M**	**O**	**A**	**E**	**C**
A	**D**	**I**	**B**	**P**	**L**	**A**	**T**	**M**	**E**	**N**	**M**
C	**N**	**I**	**H**	**D**	**E**	**R**	**S**	**F**	**B**	**S**	**S**
G	**J**	**L**	**B**	**C**	**S**	**S**	**C**	**I**	**M**	**O**	**C**

BOTTLES
CANS
CARDBOARD
CATALOGUES
CHEMICALS
CHINA
CLOTHING
COMICS
GLASS
JARS
NEWSPAPERS
PLASTIC
SHOES
STEEL
TEXTILES
TIMBER
TOYS
TYRES