

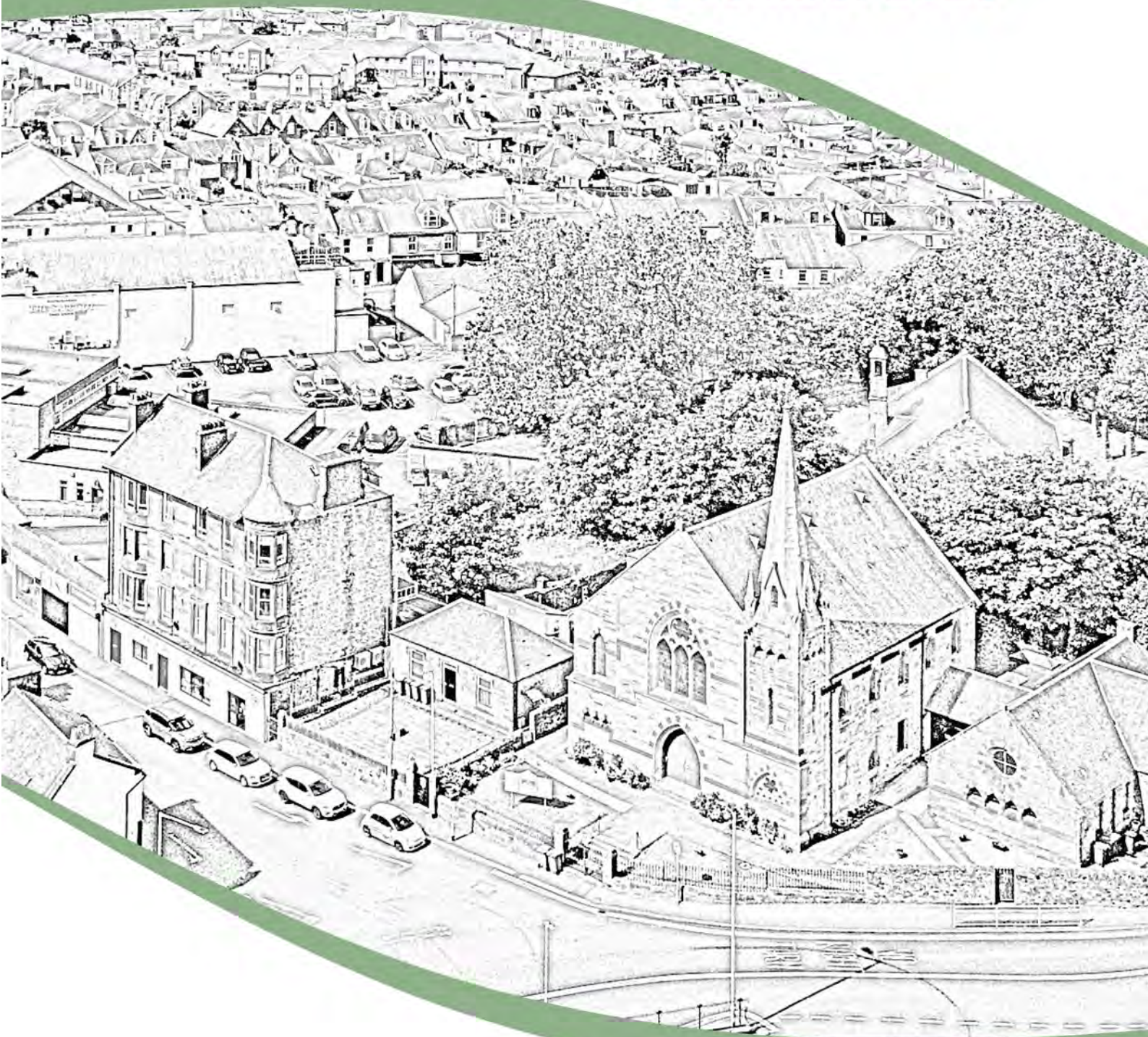


Ardrossan & Saltcoats

KirkgateMessenger

PARISH CHURCH

December 2025



Chapelwell Street,
Saltcoats KA21 5EB
Registered Scottish Charity: SC023003

www.kirkgatechurch.org.uk

Message from our Minister

Dear Friends,

A Christmas Message to the Kirkgate Family

As we draw near to Christmas and prepare to step into a new year, our hearts turn first to gratitude. We thank God for His sustaining grace throughout this year, for His strength in our weakness, His peace in our uncertainties, and His light guiding us through every season. Advent reminds us to pause, reflect, and look deeply into the mirror of God's grace. In Christ, the true Light, we see both who we are and who, by His mercy, we are becoming.

This year, as we have looked into that mirror together, we have discovered again the beauty of God's love shining within our community. And as we stand before the cradle of Christ, we remember with joy that God's grace does not simply comfort us, it forms us, shapes us, and sends us forth to serve.



***A Milestone of Grace
Five Years Together***

For
Unto
us a
CHILD
is born
Unto us a **Son**
is given, and the
Government shall be
Upon His shoulders,
and His Name shall be called,
Wonderful **Counselor**,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace!
Isaiah 9:6



At the writing of this final piece for 2025, we have just celebrated five years of working together in ministry. Let me take this moment to say thank you to the whole Kirkgate family. These five years have been full of learning, growing, worshipping, laughing, praying, and journeying side by side. You have welcomed me, supported me, encouraged me, and partnered with me in ways that I hold with deep gratitude. Christmas Blessings and a Grace-Filled New Year

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, may we each find renewed hope in the One who came near, took on flesh, and dwelt among us. May His peace fill your homes, His joy strengthen your hearts, and His love overflow into the year ahead.

From my heart to yours, and on behalf of my family and the ministry team, I wish you all a blessed Christmas and a joyful New Year. May the light of Christ continue to shine brightly through our life together at Kirkgate.

With deep gratitude and every blessing,

Your friend and minister, Nigel Chikanya

Rev Tichaona Nigel Chikanya

Tel: 01294 683379 Mobile: 07566 278132

Email: NChikanya@churchofscotland.org.uk



Message from our Minister - cont'd

Together we have reached many milestones, and each one reflects the heart and commitment of this congregation. Allow me to express a word of thanks:

- **To the Kirk Session** – thank you for your steady leadership, your wisdom, and your willingness to guide our church with grace and integrity.
- **To our Church & Community Team** – your amazing work keeps us connected to those around us and reminds us that the church exists for others.
- **To our Property Team** – thank you for caring for our buildings and grounds, and especially for keeping the manse well-maintained. Your quiet work speaks loudly.
- **To the Communication Team** – your dedication ensures that we remain informed, connected, and moving in the same direction.
- **To Fundraising & Social** – you keep us entertained, laughing, and gathering; and your faithful work has raised so much for our local, national, and international ministries and mission outreaches.
- **To the Finance Team** – thank you for your careful stewardship and diligence with what has been entrusted to your hands.
- **To our Safeguarding Convenors** – your vigilance and care ensure that Kirkgate remains a safe place for all.
- **To our Sunday School Team** – thank you for your faithful dedication to our children. Your care, creativity, and commitment help them grow in faith, and your vigilance ensures they are safe and well-nurtured each week. Well done, and thank you for all you do.
- **To the Prayer Group** – thank you for continually lifting the needs of our church and world before God. Your ministry sustains us in unseen ways.
- **To the Pastoral Care Team** – thank you for your unseen work of visiting or telephoning those in our midst in need of support.
- **To the Craft Team** – the ministry you offer alongside the Pastoral Team is beyond words. You bring comfort, warmth, and beauty to many.
- **The Flower Team** – thank you for the beautiful weekly flowers gifted to adorn the sanctuary and to those involved in the distribution to those in need.
- **To the Guild** – your impact stretches far beyond our borders, blessing lives near and far.
- **To the Country Dancing Group** – you help keep us active, joyful, and richly connected.
- **And to all members of Kirkgate** – especially those who **gather in person and online Sunday by Sunday**, serving, worshipping, and supporting the life of this church. You continue to make a difference. Let me take this opportunity to thank you for a wonderful five years. You have made ministry possible, because without you... it is not a church.



Rev Katrona Templeton, OLM

On Tuesday 18th November presbytery met at 6.45pm in the session house of St Marnock's Parish Church, Kilmarnock. No objections were raised regarding the life and witness of Mrs Katrona Templeton and presbytery proceeded into church for the service. Various speakers talked about Katrona's great passion for inclusion of all kinds in our churches. There were some members of the deaf church in Kilmarnock who signed the hymns which had been carefully chosen by Katrona herself.

After the ordination we were all invited into the hall for refreshments. Kirkgate was well represented with about 14 of our own congregation attending. We look forward to Katrona working with us again.

Mary Stewart, Presbytery Elder



Rev David Donaldson (Preacher), Rev Jill Clancy,
Rev Katrona Templeton, and
Mrs Gillian Lynn (Moderator)



Hospitality time



Colin Templeton, Rev Katrona Templeton
and their daughters Morgan and Freya.

Church Register

FUNERALS:

"In my Father's house are many mansions"

2/12/25 Mrs Solveig McCulloch, Caledonia Road,
Saltcoats



From the Editor

As we take a break from printing in December and January I ask that you retain this copy of the magazine for reference to any events or special services over the Festive season. Postage donations are now due, and a renewal slip has been included with the postal copies. It costs just £1 per edition (£9/year) to get it posted out to you. Speak to myself or Stuart if you'd like to be added to the list.



Please feel free to email us at elizabeth.mcmahon@talktalk.net or stuart@md93.co.uk or send a written copy if you don't use a computer.

Elizabeth McMahon, Editor

Christmas Messages

The Communication team wish to thank the congregation and friends for their lovely comments and praise on the production of 'The Messenger'. We appreciate all your articles which go along way to making it what it is, so please continue to send anything you think appropriate for inclusion in future editions.

Many thanks to all who have donated to the Christmas Greetings on pages 12, 13 & 14. The final total of donations is still to be finalised but it will go a long way to helping us keep the magazine free to print.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and a healthy 2026.

Kirk Session

The Kirk Session met on Thursday 6 November for ordinary business. Here's a summary of some of the many items that were discussed.

Firstly, feedback was given on the recent fire drill. The church had been evacuated in around 1 min 30 seconds, but there were bottlenecks at the front door which everyone was using, and some folk were delayed by taking personal belongs. Additional klaxons have now been purchased and located throughout our premises.

The new noticeboard has been installed and looking good. Thanks were extended to Margaret Cassidy for her time as property convenor and to Mary Stewart and Jean Rainey who have offered to undertake the Property Convenor's duties following Margaret's departure from the role.

It was also noted that Evelyn Green had intimated her desire to step down as Pastoral Care Convenor,

and thanks were extended to her. However, we're delighted to report that since the Kirk Session meeting, Susan Gill has agreed to become our new Pastoral Care Convenor and Ruth McMartin will take on secretarial duties. Many thanks to both of them.

Nigel shared information about Katrona's ordination in Kilmarnock St Marnocks on Tuesday 18 November, and that Presbytery had assigned her as OLM to ourselves here in Kirkgate. There's more information on this elsewhere in the magazine. Nigel himself will be in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA, on study leave from 5-16 January 2026.

Finally, it is hoped to have an elders' retreat day sometime in February, for a time of fellowship and learning. The next Kirk Session meeting will be held on Thursday 29 January at 2.00pm.



Prayer Page

Contributed by Alison Buick

LOVING

Gracious God, you call us to love you with all our hearts and minds and soul. You challenge us to love our neighbours as ourselves. You tell us through Christ that the whole law is summed up in one single commandment: to love. It all sounds so easy but we know in reality it is very difficult. Too often we love only ourselves, our every thought for our own welfare, our own ends and our own pleasures. Too often we reserve our love for the exclusive few - our families, our closest friends, our fellowship. Too often we are forgetful of others, indifferent to them and even hostile.

Gracious God, forgive the feebleness of our love.

We are careless in what we say and self-centred in the way we think, even prone to take offence, bearing grievances and harbouring resentment, even distorting and deceiving in order to get our way or to avoid truths we would rather ignore. All too easily our love is destroyed instead of holding fast through difficulties, we automatically find ourselves believing the worst, feeling ourselves betrayed, giving up on love instead of working to nurture it.

Lord of all, It is hard to love, especially when love is thrown back in our faces, or when those we are faced by seem unlovely or when love is costly and demanding. We confess we wonder at times whether love is the right way at all. A pleasant but foolish fantasy.

You have shown us the way of love. That which came to our world despite rejection, that reaches out to us in all our unloveliness and was willing to pay the highest price and make the ultimate sacrifice. Through that love you offer life not only to us but to all people.

So now, we pray, take the little love we have, nurture, deepen and expand it until we learn what love really means, until your love flows through our hearts until love is all in all.

AMEN



HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS



John Stewart, 07561 340886, is happy to collect any donations and deliver to the Foodbank HQ in Ardrossan.

If you would like to contribute some items for the foodbank at any time, there is always a collection box in the hallway at the church.

Many thanks to all who have contributed already. We would be delighted to receive any further donations especially of non-perishable food or toiletries. There is always a big demand for long-life milk. All donations welcome – even just one item from this list when you do your shopping will make a difference.

The Foodbank also request the urgent need for strong large carrier bags

Food

UHT milk

Tinned meat (Hotdogs, Meatballs etc.)

Tinned fish

Tinned fruit

Sponge/Rice puddings

Coffee (small jars)

Long-life juice

Pasta sauce

Tinned veg (potatoes, carrots, green beans, tomatoes)

Tinned meals (Spaghetti, Chilli, Chicken or Veg curries)

Tinned soup

Jam and Spreads

Non-food items

Shower gel

Shampoo/conditioner

Deodorant

Toilet rolls

Washing up liquid

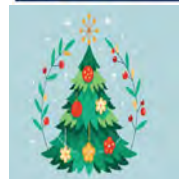
Laundry detergent pods

Craft Group

The Craft Group have had a sad end to the year with the passing of Solveig McCulloch. Solveig had been a part of the group since it's formation as Kirkgate Craft Team at the union in 2014. Apart from the holidays we've all spent our Tuesday afternoons together, making cards, talking about every subject imaginable and supporting each other in happy and sad times. Solveig was a big part of the group and her beautiful cards will have been sent and received far and wide. We will all miss her.

What a great success the Christmas Fair was with an amazing total raised. The Craft Group sold lots of Christmas cards but we still have a few cards and gift wallets in the hall vestibule if you need any last minute ones!!

By the time you read this we will also have staged another beautiful and successful Christmas Tree Festival entitled 'Christmas Around the World' followed by the busy Shoppers Carol Service at 3.00pm. Many thanks to all who decorated a tree and to all who helped in any way. Thinking caps on for next year!!



Don't forget there is always a selection of cards, in all categories in the hallway to purchase at any time.

As this is the last Messenger of 2025, we thank all of you for your support during the year and wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



Thanks to Chris Steidle Jr. (See Genesis 5:27) 02-22-2005
SINCE THE 900 PLUS BIRTHDAY CAKE CANDLES NEARLY TORCHED THE PLACE LAST YEAR, WE DECIDED TO GO WITH A CARD THIS TIME

Treasurer's Report

Balances - as at 20 November 2025 were as follows:

General Account	-	£23,893
Fabric Account	-	£14,799

The amount collected by standing order, cheques and plate collection for the period of October was as follows:

Standing Orders -	- £3,429
Plate -	- £1,727 Average - £432

The Kitchen Fund received a marvellous boost with the proceeds of the Craft Fair of £500. Many thanks to the Craft Group again. Also thanks to those who have contributed directly to the Kitchen Fund. Hopefully the renovation of the kitchen will be done in early 2026. I have applied to seven different possible grant sources. As you would expect grant funding is difficult to obtain just now, especially for churches in these uncertain times, but I am hopeful that one of them will come through. If worst comes to worst grant-wise we are in a position to do the work but any future fabric projects in the next few years would involve drawing down some of the money we have lodged with the Church in Edinburgh.

Yet again our congregation showed their generosity with a terrific collection of £320 for the Poppy Scotland Appeal.

We had another successful Christmas Fair when the magnificent sum of £3,590 was raised – my thanks to all involved and for the tremendous effort to make it happen.

I will conclude with my usual appeal for those in the congregation who are not currently on the Gift Aid scheme to consider this option. The financial benefits to the congregation are very significant at no extra cost to the giver. If you would like details of giving via envelopes or Standing Order please let me know. To gain the financial benefits of Gift Aid it is necessary for givers to use envelopes or Standing Order – we have to be able to prove the giving, if required. Please see Moira Cooper for envelopes and me for Standing Order details.

Thank you - John Stewart, Treasurer

Used Stamps - World Mission

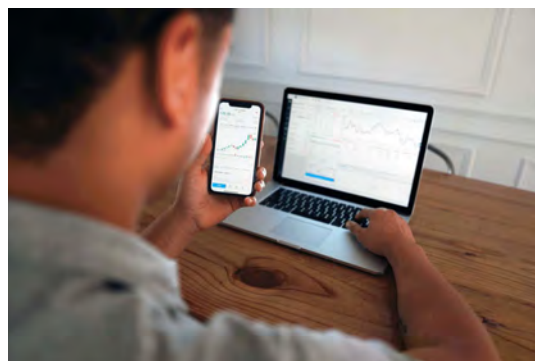
As you know we have been collecting used stamps for World Mission at the Church of Scotland for many years. Sadly it seems that the Church is discontinuing this facility from February 2026. This is very unfortunate as a great deal of money has been raised by this method.



However we will continue to collect stamps – please let me have your Christmas stamps as early in January as you can and I will send them off to World Mission before the closing date of February.

After that the stamps will be sent to Marie Curie, another excellent cause, so please keep collecting your used stamps!

John Stewart



Legacy Giving 'Lasting Generosity'

As I am sure you are aware many charities receive a large percentage of their overall funding through gifts in wills.

The Church of Scotland feels that many churches, including ours, do not sufficiently encourage this form of giving. I am fully aware that for some people this is quite a sensitive issue so I am simply bringing it to your attention. The Church of Scotland wish to encourage legacy giving either to the national Church or your own local church. Any gift in a will can be targeted at a specific area of church work eg: Fabric. The Church have produced a leaflet entitled 'Lasting Generosity' which I would be happy to obtain for you if you are interested or you could email stewardship@churchofscotland.org.uk for further details.

John Stewart, Treasurer

Kirkgate Diary:

REGULAR WEEKLY MEETINGS

Sunday, 10.45 am:	Morning Worship Sunday School/Creche
Tuesday, 1.00-4.00pm:	Craft Team
Wednesday, 11am-12 noon & 7.00-8.00pm:	Bible Study
Thursday, 10.30am:	Midweek Service
Thursday, 2.30 & 7.30pm:	Country Dance Club (alternate weeks)
Friday, 12.30-2.00pm:	Care & Share Lunch

DECEMBER

Sunday 7th: 10.45am
Morning Worship - **2nd in Advent**

Wednesday 10th:
Both Bible Studies finish
7.30pm
RSCDS Branch meeting

Friday 12th: 12.30pm
CHANA - Care & Share Christmas Party

Sunday 14th: 10.45am
Morning Worship - **3rd in Advent**

Monday 15th: 2.00pm
The Guild - Carols and Readings

Sunday 21st: 10.45am
Morning Worship - **4th in Advent**
Children's Nativity Play

Thursday 25th: 10.30am
Short Service for Christmas Day

Friday 26th: 12.30-2.00pm
CHANA lunch as normal

Sunday 28th: 10.45am
Morning Worship
Tea/coffee fellowship after morning service

Wednesday 31st: 2.00pm
Hogmanay Musical Memories



JANUARY 2026

Thursday 1st: NO MIDWEEK SERVICE

Friday 2nd: 12.30-2.00pm
CHANA lunch as normal

Sunday 4th: 10.45am
Morning Worship for the New Year

Thursday 8th: 10.30am
Midweek Service
12 Noon
Pastoral Care Steering Committee
2.30pm
Country Dance Club Resumes

Monday 12th: 10.30am
Pastoral Care Committee Meeting

Wednesday 14th: Both at 11.00am & 7.00pm
Bible Study Resumes

Sunday 25th: 10.45am
Morning Worship
Material required for 'The Messenger'

Wednesday 28th: 2.00pm
Musical Memories

Thursday 29th: 10.30am
Midweek Service
2.00pm
Kirk Session

FEBRUARY

Sunday 1st: 10.45am
Morning Worship - Sacrament of Holy Communion

Tuesday 3rd: 1.00pm
Craft Team Resumes

Thursday 5th: 10.30am
Midweek Service - Sacrament of Holy Communion

Monday 9th: 2.00pm
The Guild Resumes - Helen Kerr: 'Guild Theme'

Thursday 15th: 7.30pm
Country Dancing Club



Letters of Appreciation

Thank you for the beautiful roses given to me on Remembrance Sunday. I nearly didn't go to church that morning - too sad a day.

I set off, stopped by police at the cenotaph and had to park almost at the sea front. "Ran" to Kirkgate. The hymns and Nigel's words were so right for me that morning. I was meant to be there. Then Eunice gave me the roses. xx

Isobel Passway



Thank you so much for the lovely flowers and cards my brother Robert and sister-in-law Mary and myself received from the church on our recent sad bereavement. Thanks also to the pastoral team, all your messages were very much appreciated.

On a happier note - thank you so much to everyone for the flowers and cards I received on my recent 'big' birthday they were very much appreciated.

Elizabeth (Betty) McCracken

Thank you to all in Kirkgate for the beautiful flowers received after Brian's recent hip replacement surgery. Lovely to be remembered and the beautiful alstroemeria and roses were much enjoyed ... a real boost during his recovery and rehab.

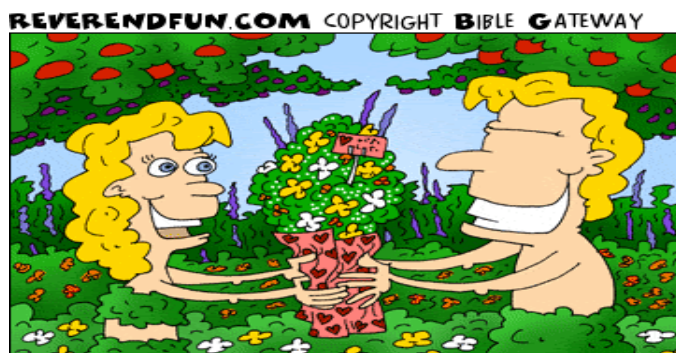
Evelyn & Brian Green

A huge thanks to everyone at Kirkgate for the flowers and messages of concern after my recent health issue.

Elizabeth McMahon

Thank you for all the lovely cards and flowers I received upon the sad loss of my brother they were very much appreciated.

Margaret Cassidy



OH ADAM ... I'VE ALWAYS WANTED FLOWERS

Musical Memories



Musical memories will be on as usual on Wednesday December 31st (yes Hogmanay) a lot of extra Scottish music will be included in the programme. Just hope some of our regulars can come along to sing them.

Could as many of the congregation as possible join us at Caledonia Care Home on **Saturday 13th December at 2.00pm** to spread some Christmas cheer. It would be good to know numbers for this so I would appreciate if you can put your name down in the hallway or message me.

Dates for 2025 - 2026

South Beach House: 2.00pm

Wednesday December 10th

Wednesday December 24th - still to be confirmed

Wednesday January 7th & 21st 2026

Wednesday February 4th & 18th 2026

Kirkgate Church Hall: 2.00pm

Wednesday December 31st

Wednesday January 28th 2026

Wednesday February 25th 2026

Caledonia Care Home: 2.00pm

Saturday December 13th - numbers required

Thank you, Mary xx

Saltcoats Christmas Carnival 2025

A very big thank you to all those who volunteered and made the Carnival a big success. Some photos are on page 16.

The church was very busy from 1.00pm till about 4.30pm with both grottos and the sanctuary full all the time, thankfully the bad weather and rain did not keep parents and children in.

A happy atmosphere was felt throughout the church all afternoon but this would not have been without the helpers so thank you again.

John, Margaret and

Saltcoats Carnival Committee Volunteers

Fundraising 2025-26

Another successful Christmas Fair organised by the Fundraising team with help from a large number of people. Our thanks go to all of you. If you haven't already heard, the magnificent sum of £3,590 has been raised. Our thanks go to John Stewart for all his help.



Our next event will be a Burns Supper on Friday 13th February 2026. The participants have all now been booked and we can look forward to a very entertaining evening from some very talented people. There hasn't been a Burns Supper for a number of years and we plan to limit the numbers to about 60. Ticket prices will be announced once we have costed out the catering and all other costs and will be on sale in the New Year.

Can I take this opportunity to thank the fundraising committee (on your behalf) for all their hard work over the past year and hope for your continued support in the New Year.

Phyllis Armstrong

2026

Friday February 13th: Burns Supper - Tickets on sale in the New Year



Kirkgate Pastoral Care



The Church is wherever God's people are seeking to reach out and touch folk wherever they are.....

A well deserved word of thanks to Evelyn Green who is stepping down from her post as Pastoral Care Convenor, however she will continue to work with the steering group. We congratulate Susan Gill and Ruth McMartin for volunteering to take up the post.

PASTORAL CARE CONTACTS

The Pastoral Team are working very hard behind the scenes. Please keep the team up-to-date with information about people who need pastoral care or support at this difficult time for everyone. Please don't assume they already know - they would rather hear several times over than not at all.

The main contacts for Pastoral Care are:

Mrs Susan Gill, (07884 957389)
Mrs Ruth McMartin (01294 602942)
Mrs Evelyn Green (07737225943)
Mrs Moira Cooper, (01294 468851)
Mrs Jean Hay, (01294 469986) and
Mrs Jennifer Fox (01294 465947).

For flower recipients please contact co-ordinator:
Mrs Morag Forsyth (01294 463762)

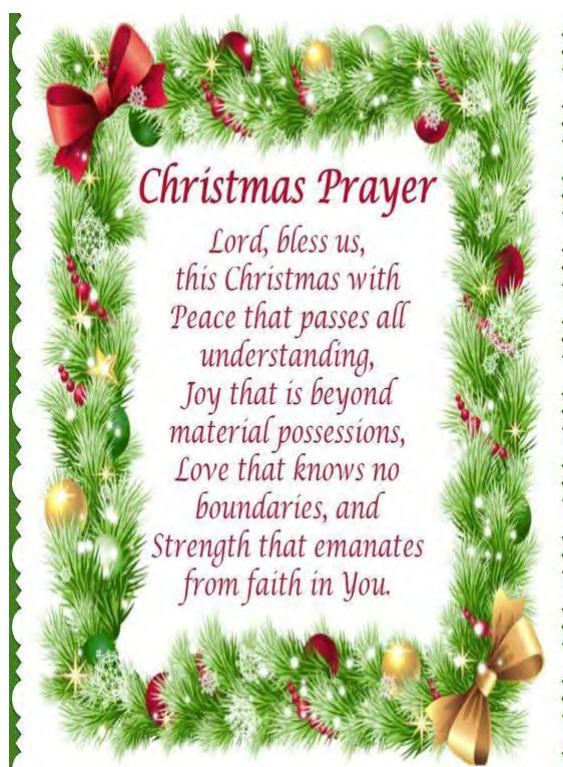
Prayer Shawl Ministry



If anybody is interested in starting a Prayer Shawl Ministry, or would like a shawl to give to somebody, please speak to me on a Sunday morning or phone 07884 957 389 or email gillsusan529@gmail.com

Please note my new email address.

Susan Gill



Remembrance November 2025

The beautiful poppy displays inside and outside along with the church lit red for Remembrance gained many remarks from the public and our thanks go to all who made this possible.

As the treasurer said in his report our collection raised £320 for Poppy Scotland.



The aerial shot is courtesy of Alan Pettigrew

poppy
scotland



Care & Share



Our love and condolences go out to Solveig's family. Solveig was a faithful volunteer from way back when the Lunch Club was first established. Following her diagnosis she reluctantly had to step back from cooking duties. But she stayed in touch and was always interested to hear how things were going. Last Christmas she wanted to be involved with the annual party and I asked her if she would wrap some of the gifts. She wrapped ALL of them beautifully in a couple of days! Thank you Solveig for all your dedicated service to the Friday Lunch Club. We miss you very much.



As you are reading this, the final touches are being put in place for the party. Update and photos in the next magazine.

At the time of writing, we are intending to open for lunches on Boxing Day and 2nd January. Some who attend the lunch club regularly have said they would like it to be open on those days. So if you find yourself at a loose end with lots of leftovers please come along and have some festive fun.

All that remains is for us to wish you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

With love, blessings and grateful thanks for everything.
All the Best for 2026

**Pam and all at Chana
Friday Lunch Club xx**



Argyle Community Shop

It's the last few days to get your lucky tickets for Angela's raffle. The prize draw will take place on 8th December. See Pam if you would like tickets: £1/strip. There are loads of amazing prizes.



The Shop remains busy, as always, with new members signing up every week. 60-70 people are shopping each week for essentials. In the run-up to Christmas we will have some festive treats available. We usually manage to procure some selection boxes for the children too.

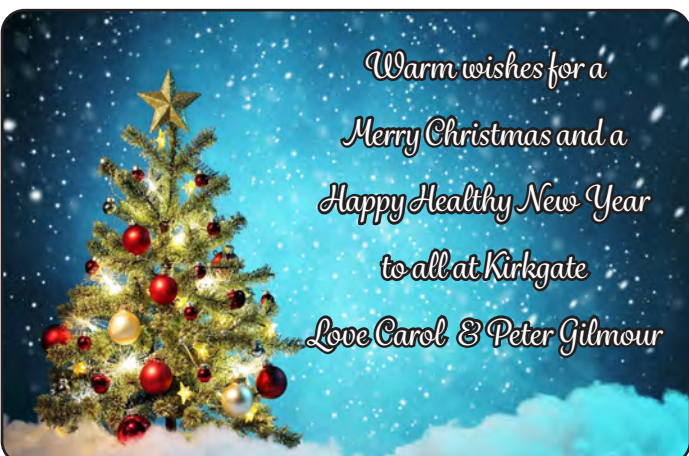
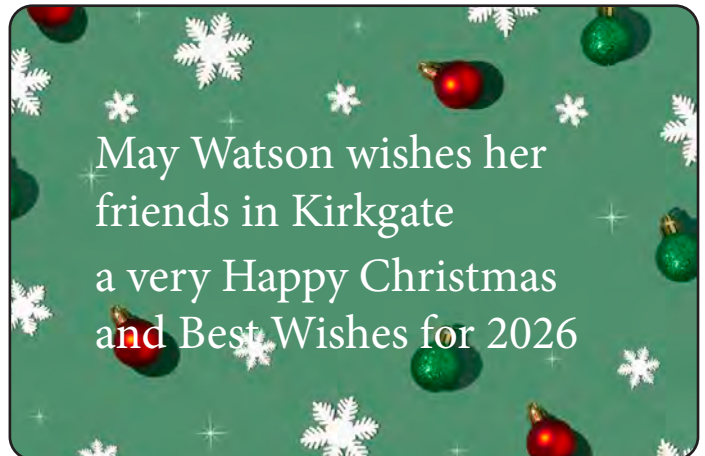
The Shop will be open on Tuesday 23rd December instead of Wednesday 24th. It will re-open on Wednesday 7th January. Emergency facilities will be available for those in critical need.

Finally, Merry Christmas to everyone. We hope you have a lovely time and Best Wishes for 2026

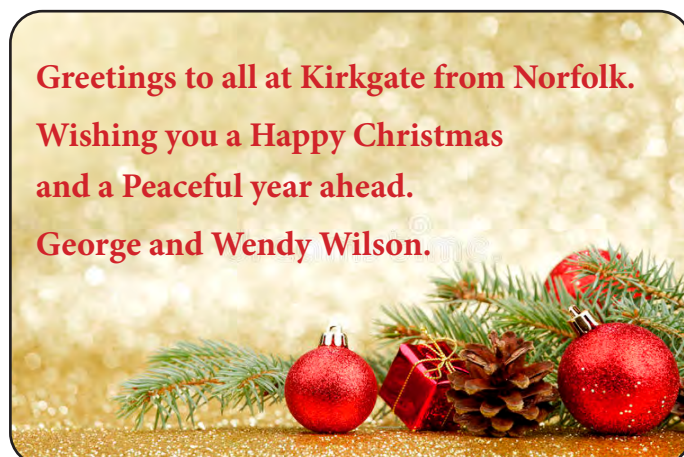
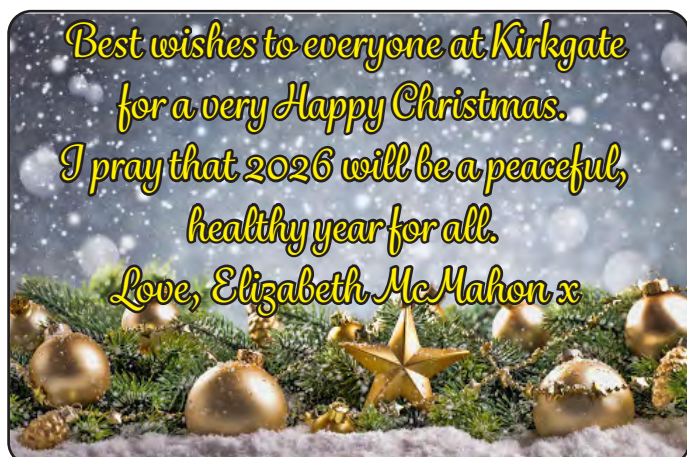
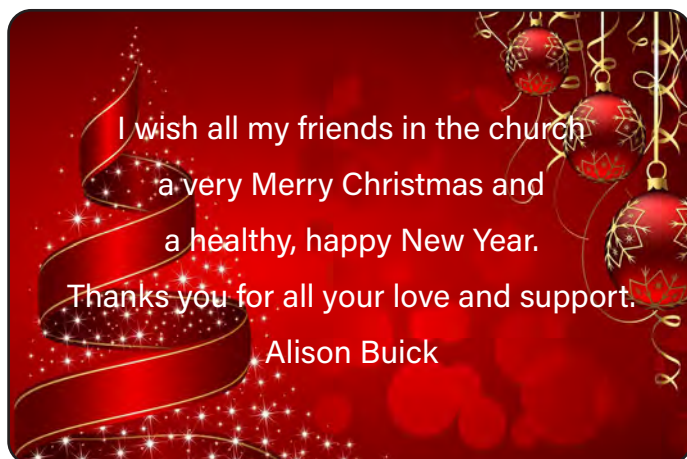
From all at the Argyle Community Shop



Christmas Greetings



Christmas Greetings



Christmas Greetings



"Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house,
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
And on goes the story about Christmas Eve
And the jolly old man in whom we believe.

Have you even wondered how Santa came to be?
So important to Christmas and to you and to me?
Well, it all began a long time ago
The night before Christ to earth was to go.

All prepared to make Christ's birth well
announced,
With angels and music and
anthems pronounced.
But alas, all had forgotten in
the final rush
How to make Christ's birthday
remembered to us.

The kingdom was searched for the most
excellent plan
That would help us remember Gods gift to
man.
A saintly old fellow, so jolly and gay
Came up with the best plan that was offered that
day.

He said; Send a fellow each year at this time
Who would help people be happy and comfort their
minds;
He could help man remember that God loves us so
By bringing presents to both friend and foe.

"He would show by example that true love and joy
Come only when shared with each girl and each
boy."
Heaven decided that Santa's plan would be just
right,
And Santa was asked to play the part that very first
night.

So from the first Christmas right down to today,
When one heard the bells jingling and saw the big
sleigh,
They knew it was Santa making his way
To remind the world of the love Jesus gave.

So, this night before Christmas when you hear Santa
come,
Remember he's doing it for the love of Gods Son.
Remember that he teaches as did Christ of old
That to give of ones self is more precious than
gold.

Author Unknown



CourageousChristianFather.com

"To Remind the World of the Love Jesus Gave"

Reflection from Rt Rev Rosie Frew, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

We have a shrub in our garden which I know as Bride's Blossom. In the summer it has beautiful white flowers. In the autumn it sheds some of its long cane-like branches. Last year these branches inspired our Christmas craft project - star decorations made from lengths of cane wrapped in twine and twinkly lights. It became quite a production line as we made them for family, neighbours and friends.



Star For December's Reflection

In Matthew's Gospel we read of the star pointing the way to Jesus, the new-born King. A guiding light shining in the darkness, leading the Magi to Jesus, the Light of the World.

In Philippians 2:15 Paul writes that we are to 'shine like stars in the sky.' We are to be God's lights shining in our world. Stars lighting up the darkness with faith, love, joy and compassion; lighting up the darkness by seeking justice, peace and understanding. Stars pointing the way to Jesus.

Yet, often we wonder, 'What can I do? What difference can I make?' Well, imagine it's dark. Now, think of the difference a little light can make, be it a torch beam lighting up a dark night or a candle flame illuminating a dark room. Think of how much darker it seems when you switch off the torch or blow out the candle. A little light is a lot of light, a little light can make a lot of difference. A kind word; a helpful act; a bit of time; an invitation to church; a warm welcome; a thoughtful gift; just noticing someone. A star pointing the way to Jesus.

At this time of year the darkness in our villages, towns and cities is transformed by the twinkling lights on Christmas trees and festive decorations. Lots of little lights that make such a difference.

If we all shine like stars, think of the difference we could make.



Church of Scotland - General Assembly

Friday 15 May to Monday 18 May 2026

Can you help with stewarding at the General Assembly?

Stewards have a vital role at the General Assembly to ensure the safety and comfort of those attending. Stewards provide a friendly welcome to the Assembly Halls, ensure the security of proceedings by checking passes, are alert to security threats and disturbances and have a responsibility to ensure the safe evacuation of the Assembly Hall if required.

Individual shifts last for three hours and volunteers can select the day or days upon which they would seek to help. A reasonably high level of fitness is required.

For more details please contact Neil Proven, Chief Steward
assemblystewards@churchofscotland.org.uk

Connect with Kirkgate

In addition to meeting in person for our Sunday (10.45am) and short midweek Thursday (10.30am) services you can also find us online.



Website:

www.kirkgatechurch.org.uk

Contains our Sunday service, intimations, magazine, church history, contact details.



Facebook:

www.facebook.com/Kirkgatechurch

A link to our Sunday Service is usually published around 10.30am on Sunday mornings on Facebook. Also regular posts about our other events and Sunday School activities, along with other Church of Scotland news.



Podcast:

An audio version of our Sunday service is usually available shortly afterwards on Spotify, Apple Music and other podcast providers. Search for Kirkgate Church.



YouTube:

www.youtube.com/@kirkgatechurch

[@kirkgatechurch](https://www.youtube.com/@kirkgatechurch)

Watch live or catch up later with all our live broadcasts and some special events (available on request for funerals and weddings). A recording of the Sunday Service will usually be available by mid-afternoon on the Sunday in the event of the livestream failing. Subscribe to our channel for free to get updates on the latest content. Thanks to the 180 subscribers we now have.



Email:

We send a monthly email with a link to a digital version of this magazine to our members and friends for whom we have an email address. Contact messenger@kirkgatechurch.org.uk to be added to our mailing list.

Online Fundraising

A wee reminder that if you make any purchases online as we approach the end of the year, then please consider signing up with easyfundraising.org.uk and making 'Ardrossan & Saltcoats Kirkgate Parish Church' your chosen cause. We now have 19 supporters who have raised a total of £158.70 to date at no extra cost to themselves.



**Raise regular donations
for Ardrossan and
Saltcoats Kirkgate Pa...
with your weekly food
shop!**



How to get involved

- 1 Download the easyfundraising app
- 2 Choose us as your cause
- 3 See retailers donate whenever you shop

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ardrossanandsaltcoatskirkgate



SCAN ME
for website

Gift Service

Thanks to everyone who generously donated gifts in aid of the Night Before Christmas Campaign on Sunday 30 November. A photo of the presents is shown opposite.



Christmas Carnival

Thanks to all our volunteers and to everyone who came along to visit Santa and watch the magician in the church.



Christmas Fair

As intimated elsewhere, our sincere thanks to everyone who supported our Christmas Fair on Saturday 29 November and made it such a success. Here's a selection of photos from the day.



Thursday Service

We continue to enjoy the Thursday services and would be delighted to see you all there sometime during advent.

Our social time after the service is enjoyed by all who attend.

Please note that there will be a short service on Thursday 25th at 10.30am for Christmas Day but there will not be a service on Thursday 1st January.

The Thursday Group

Prayer Group

This advent may everyone have a safe and peaceful time especially if you are travelling to meet up with family and friends - enjoy the fun at this exciting time.

Please pray for those not just in our world, but our own community who find themselves struggling to cope with the many issues they face today it can be very hard especially at Christmas.

Margaret Cassidy

Country Dance Club

We continue to enjoy our dancing on a Thursday afternoon or evening.

Since the summer we have been working through the dances in this year's RSCDS book of new dances. It is always good to try new dances and have enjoyed most of the new ones.

After our Christmas and New Year break we will start again on Thursday 8th January at 2.30 pm. If you used to dance or would like to try Scottish Country Dancing do get in touch, you can be sure of a welcome.

Elizabeth Howie

01294 467881



Property Report

Church

We continue finalising the annual checks throughout the church and halls.

We had a small leak in the roof but that has been dealt with.

The kitchen renovation is to begin 2nd week in January and we look forward to seeing how lovely it will be when it is completed.

Manse

On-going annual checks have been completed

Can I take this opportunity to say thanks to all who have helped me with the property duties over my time as convenor. I feel it is time to step down and happy to hand over the reins into the capable hands of Jean Rainey and Mary Stewart who have volunteered to take this job onboard.

Margaret Cassidy

The Guild

Our meetings have all been well supported and we have enjoyed hearing about the life of Frances Gay who writes in the Sunday Post and in real life is a local resident.

Next we had Sheila Chalmers speaking about the RNLI and giving a small demonstration on flower arranging to complement her talk.



To close the session for the year Susan Gill has prepared Carols and Readings which we will hold on Monday 15th December followed by mince pies and a donation to a charity to be decided instead of a 'Secret Santa'.

We have no meetings in January but start back on Monday 9th February when Helen Kerr's topic will be on the guild theme 'Let us Build a House - Living Stones'.

From all in the Guild we wish you a very Happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you all again in 2026.



Church Rotas

SUNDAY DOOR DUTY & COUNTING ROTA			
7 Dec	M. Cooper	G. Armstrong	P. Armstrong
14 Dec	E. McInnes	D. MacLeod	E. Howie
21 Dec	J. Rainey	P. Martin	L. McDougall
28 Dec	J. Stewart	B. McCracken	B. McWilliam
2026			
4 Jan	M. Cooper	L. McDougall	E. Green
11 Jan	E. McInnes	M. Hunter	F. Liddell
18 Jan	J. Rainey	G. Armstrong	P. Armstrong
25 Jan	J. Stewart	D. MacLeod	E. Howie
1 Feb	M. Cooper	P. Martin	S. Gill
8 Feb	E. McInnes	B. McCracken	B. McWilliam



CHURCH FLOWERS VACANT DATE:, 2 MARCH 2026		
	DONATED BY	DELIVERY
7 Dec	E. Frew	E. Breakenridge
14 Dec	A. Aitken	M. Cassidy
21 Dec	POINSETTIAS	No Delivery
28 Dec	POINSETTIAS	No Delivery
2026		
4 Jan	C. Baillie	C. Ewing
11 Jan	A. Hynd	D. MacLeod
18 Jan	C. Ewing	M. Hunter
25 Jan	M. Cassidy	E. Green
1 Feb	A. Wilkie	M. Cooper
8 Feb	J. Rainey	E. McInnes



Should you wish to contribute flowers for the sanctuary, please speak to Chrissie Baillie, Tel: 01294 463903.

Should you be unable to do your delivery of Sunday flowers, please contact someone else on the team and try to do a swap to avoid the distribution team having to find someone last minute after the service. Contact Elizabeth McMahon 01294 464428 should you wish to volunteer to deliver the flowers or should you wish to retire from this duty as the list is being updated for 2026.

Pastoral Team member Morag Forsyth, Tel: 01294 463762, is co-ordinating the names of recipients for flowers and will keep Agnes Wilkie and her distribution team informed of those in need.

MONTHLY TEA ROTA	
	Organiser
21 Dec	Elizabeth Howie

Please note that the monthly tea will be suspended in the new year while the kitchen refurbishment takes place, but be assured it will start again as soon as possible.

It is a very popular time of fellowship after morning worship which we all enjoy.

The Christmas Tree

The Christmas tree tradition has roots that reach deep into human history, intertwining pagan customs with Christian symbolism. Its origins can be traced to ancient civilizations that revered evergreen trees as symbols of eternal life and resilience during the dark winter months.

In many pre-Christian European cultures, evergreen boughs were brought indoors during the winter solstice as a reminder that spring would return.

The Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, particularly in Germany, played a crucial role in popularizing the Christmas tree symbolizing Christ as the light of the world. There are several legends about its beginnings, including one about Martin Luther being inspired by the sight of stars twinkling through evergreen trees. By the 18th century, the custom of decorating trees had spread throughout Germany and parts of Eastern Europe.

The tradition was popularized in England in the mid-19th century by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, who were of German descent. An illustration of the royal family gathered around a decorated Christmas tree was published in 1848, sparking widespread adoption of the custom in Britain and America.

As the custom spread, it was increasingly associated with the celebration of Christ's birth. The tree's triangular shape was seen as symbolic of the Holy Trinity. Decorations took on Christian meanings: the star or angel at the top representing the Star of Bethlehem or the angels who announced Christ's birth, while baubles symbolized the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Psychologically the Christmas tree tradition speaks to our deep-seated need for hope and renewal during the darkest time of the year. It serves as a communal focal point, bringing families and communities together in shared ritual and celebration.



Christmas Quiz Answers

HIDDEN MUSICALS

Priscilla Queen of the Desert
Annie Get Your Gun
Aspects of Love
Beauty and the Beast
The Bodyguard
Call Me Madam
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
Carousel
Fiddler on the Roof
Jesus Christ Superstar
Les Misérables
The Lion King
Oklahoma
Phantom of the Opera
Oliver
The Rocky Horror Show
Seven Brides for Seven Brothers
The Sound of Music
South Pacific
Sunset Boulevard
Grease

ANAGRAMS OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Harmonica
Keyboard
Accordion
Trumpet
Tambourine
Saxophone
Mandolin
Electric Guitar
Bagpipes
Trombone
Clarinet
Bongo Drum
Bass Guitar
Recorder
Xylophone
Didgeridoo
Maracas
Harpichord
Grand Piano
Pan Pipes



MUSICALS
Elizabeth McMahon, Saltcoats
Congratulations



ANAGRAMS
Vivien Bruce, Ardrossan
Congratulations



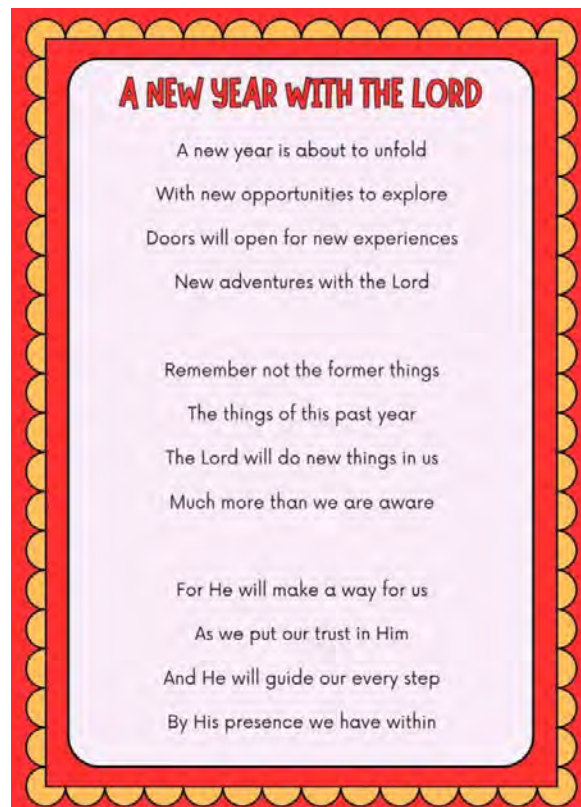
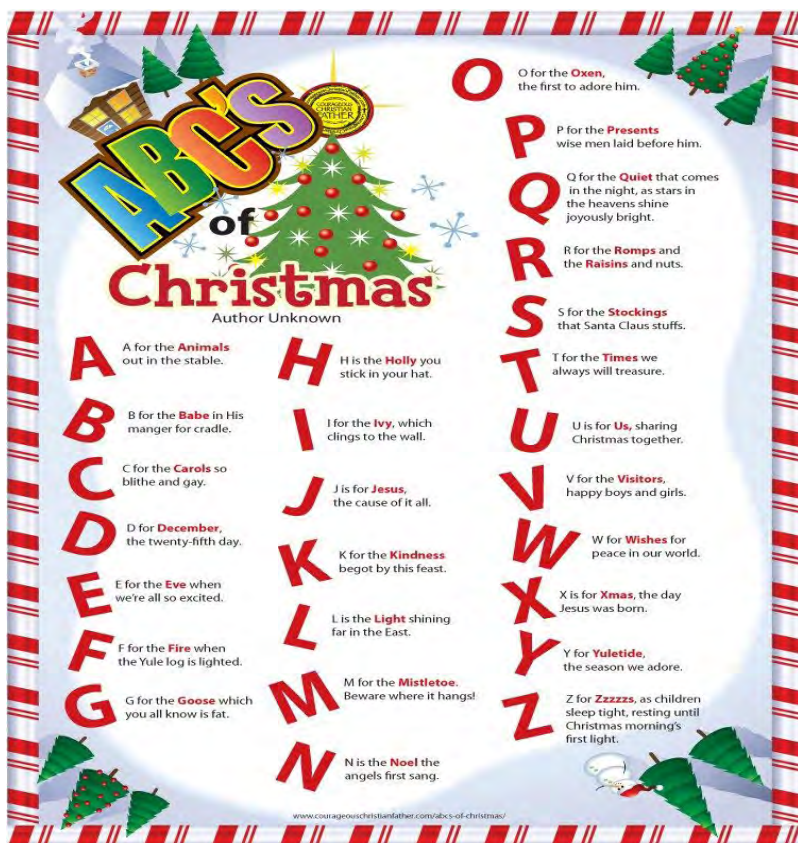
HAMPER
Helen Hainey, Ardrossan
Congratulations



TIGER'S BIRTHDAY - 14th January
Oliver Stewart, Saltcoats
Congratulations



Thanks to Elizabeth Howie for compiling the quizzes with a twist this year.
Thanks to Chrissie Baillie & Kathy Coulter who organised and donated the hamper.
Thanks to Lynda McDougall for donating 'Tiger' for a 'Guess his Birthday' draw.



by M.S. Lowndes

For your Amusement



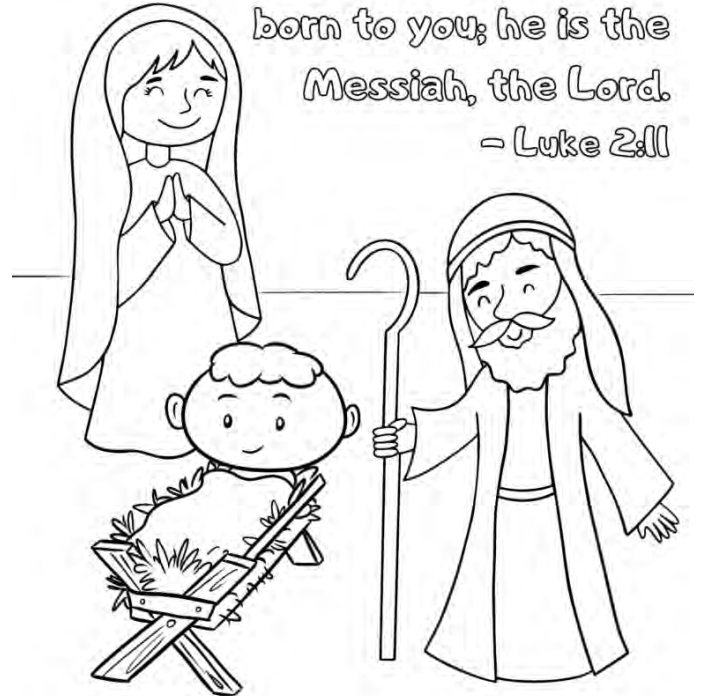
Can you spot the 10 differences?



www.shepherdsfriendly.co.uk



Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.
- Luke 2:11



Christmas Bauble Maze

Can you work your way through the Christmas bauble to get to the present?



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O HOLY NIGHT

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

ANGEL
ANIMALS
BABY
BETHLEHEM
DONKEY
FRANKINCENSE

GIFTS
GOLD
JESUS
JOSEPH
MANGER
MARY

MYRRH
PEACE
SAVIOR
SHEPHERD
STAR
WISE MEN



Who's Who in Kirkgate

Church Address: Chapelwell Street, Saltcoats KA21 5EB. Tel: 01294 472001

POSITION	NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	EMAIL
Minister	Rev Nigel Chikanya	10 Seafeld Drive, Ardrossan KA22 8NU	Tel: 01294 683379 Mob: 07566 278132	NChikanya@churchofscotland.org.uk
Session Clerk	Vivien Bruce	57 Dockers Gardens, Ardrossan KA22 8GB	01294 605113	sessionclerk@kirkgatechurch.org.uk
Deputy Session Clerk	Mima McSwan	23 Springvale Court Saltcoats KA21 5LY	01294 602410	

POSITION	NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
Pastoral Care	See magazine article for various contact details		
Organist, Rollkeeper, Data Protection, Website	Stuart McMahon	93 Montfode Drive, Ardrossan KA22 7PH	07588 665191
Treasurer	John Stewart	5 High Road, Saltcoats	01294 464526
Gift Aid Convenor	George Armstrong	46 Whitlees Court, Ardrossan KA22 7PD	01294 466867
Freewill Offering Envelopes	Moira Cooper	1A Bridgepark, Ardrossan KA22 8BQ	01294 468851
Property Convenors	Jean Rainey	12A Caledonia Road, Saltcoats KA21 5AE	01294 464933
	Mary Stewart	5 High Road, Saltcoats KA21 5RX	01294 464526
Safeguarding Convenors	Christine Ewing	210 Glasgow Street, Ardrossan KA22 8JS	01294 601700
	Elizabeth Howie	93 Argyle Road, Saltcoats KA21 5NE	01294 467881
Magazine Editor	Elizabeth McMahon	8 Kennedy Road, Saltcoats KA21 5NJ	01294 464428
Flower Convenor	Chrissie Baillie	40 Gladstone Road, Saltcoats KA21 5LD	01294 463903
The Guild	Elizabeth McMahon	8 Kennedy Road, Saltcoats KA21 5NJ	01294 464428
Prayer Group	Margaret Cassidy	3 Eglinton Street, Saltcoats KA21 5DE	01294 605535
Craft Team	Jean Hay	18 West Doura Avenue, Saltcoats KA21 5NS	01294 469986
Country Dancing	Elizabeth Howie	93 Argyle Road, Saltcoats KA21 5NE	01294 467881

Kirk Session Committees

PASTORAL CARE:

Co-ordinators*: Mrs Susan Gill*

Miss Alison Buick	Mrs Barbara McWilliam
Mrs Moira Cooper*	Mrs Jean Rainey
Mrs Jennifer Fox*	Mrs Morag Forsyth
Mrs Evelyn Green	(telephone contact elder)
Mrs Maureen Hunter	Co-opted:
Mrs Fiona Liddell	Jean Hay*
Mrs Elizabeth McCracken	Anne Aitken
Mrs Eunice McInnes	Phyllis Armstrong
Mrs Ruth McMartin*	Christine Ewing

PROPERTY:

Convenors: Jean Rainey & Mary Stewart

Mrs Vivien Bruce	Mrs Pamela Martin
Mrs Jennifer Fox	Mrs Maureen Hunter
Mr John O'Hare	Mrs Margaret O'Hare

COMMUNICATION:

Co-ordinator: Mr Stuart McMahon

Vivien Bruce. Co-opted: Mrs Elizabeth McMahon

CHURCH & COMMUNITY:

Convener: Mr Andrew Bruce

Mrs Margaret Cassidy	Co-opted:
Mrs Pamela Martin	Mr David MacLeod
Mrs Mary Stewart	Ms Fiona Wright

FUNDRAISING & SOCIAL:

Mrs Eunice McInnes, Mrs Evelyn Green
Mrs Jean Rainey, Mrs Fiona Liddell

Co-opted:

Mrs Phyllis Armstrong, Mrs Jean Hay
Mrs Carol Gilmour, Mrs Allison O'Neill
Miss Elizabeth Breakenridge

FINANCE:

Convener: Mr John Stewart

Mrs Moira Cooper
Mrs Jean Rainey

Co-opted: Mr George Armstrong

Church Website: www.kirkgatechurch.org.uk



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