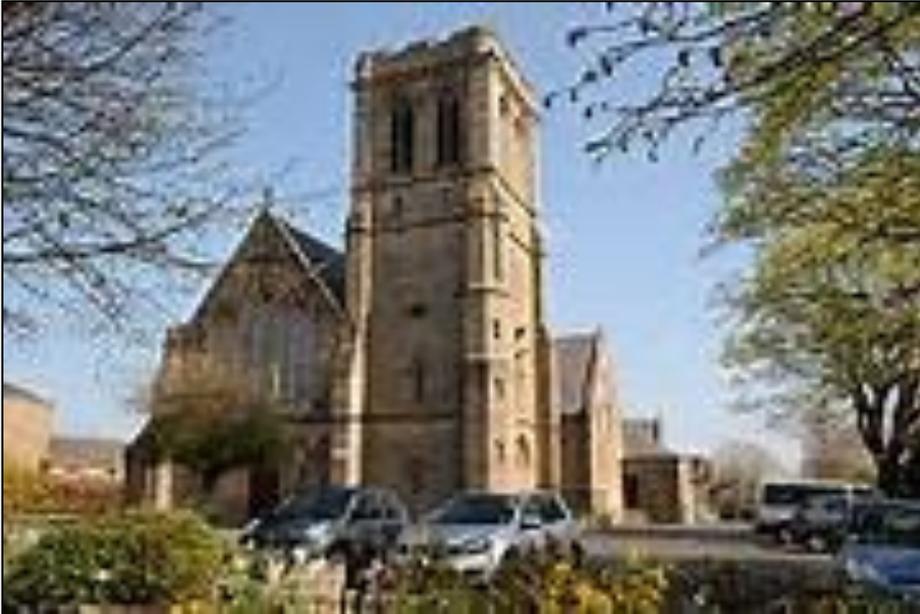


Link Magazine

Summer 2017
St Ninian's Stonehouse LEP



***A new chapter for the
community of St Ninian's
and Stonehouse***



Visit our web site www.st-ninians-stonehouse.org.uk

Just to say... it's difficult to write an introduction when I know you are all wanting to move on to the next page to read Stewart's first letter to you all!

However I just want to keep you here for a few minutes to thank you all for your encouragement regarding the printing costs. Plans are now underway to look at new contracts and printing machines and hopefully one day we can revert to using colour again.

We used to provide large print copies of the magazine so if you find it difficult to read this size of copy please let your distributor know or phone me Tel: 01698 793 489 and we can organise a large A4 copy of the magazine for you to read in the autumn.

We have discovered that some readers are in the habit of sharing their magazines or picking one up at the door of the church. If you would like a copy of the autumn issue of Link delivered to your home, please add your name to the list placed on the table in the vestibule.

Now that I have 'Link business' attended to, I will leave you to turn the page to enjoy reading the articles within the magazine.

Margaret McMeekin (Editor)

Date	Event (Please note this is only a selection of events happening. Please check the Hamilton Advertiser for updates or visit www.keepitstonehouse.co.uk/events.html for further community events)
Thursday 8th June <i>(And every second Thursday thereafter)</i>	Haven of Hope Cafe 10am until 2pm Thursday 22nd June, 6th July, 20th July, 3rd August, 17th August 31st August
Friday 9th June	Induction of Rev Stewart Cutler 7pm

Tuesday 5 th Sept	Coffee Morning re opens 10am – 11.30 am
------------------------------	---

Welcome to Stewart

It's a real joy to be writing to you as your new minister. It seems to have been such a long time between first sending off my application to the vacancy committee last year and being ordained and inducted on the 9th of June. Thanks to everyone for preparing to make my induction such a special occasion. We have already experienced your warm welcome and your hospitality now being shown to my family and friends is admirable. You have made quite an impression on them, and us, already!

We have settled in to the manse very quickly. It's a beautiful house and we feel very much at home in it already. Thank you to all of you for the work you have done to make it ready for our family to move into and for the cards and flowers. We appreciate it very much. We're looking forward to getting to know you all better.

So, who am I? Well, I spent the first few months of my life not far from here in Larkhall before moving to Carluke. My dad became a minister when I was 15 so we moved to the Holy Loch near Dunoon. I studied Sport at Langside College, then Community Education at Strathclyde University before going to work for Street Level, a church youth project in Carluke. I spent the next ten years working for the Church of Scotland as Youth Development Officer where I first encountered St Ninian's! I went on to be National Adviser in Adult Education and Section Head of Adult Ministries (Elders & Readers). After a couple of years with the NHS as Youth Health Development Officer then joined the URC as Children and Youth Development Officer. In the middle of all that I completed a Masters degree in Social Research before training for ministry with the Scottish United Reformed and Congregational College and the Scottish Episcopal Institute gaining a Diploma in Theology for Ministry.

My wife Avril is a mental health nurse, and we have three sons between us. I have two boys, Ben and Jack, who live mostly in Carluke with their mum. Avril's son, David, lives in Uddingston with his partner Pam. You'll no doubt

see them all around the place very often and if you're lucky you'll get to taste some of Pam's baking! We are excited to be expecting another addition to the family at the end of June when we'll be joined by an Irish Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier puppy called Aonghus (Angus).

I mentioned in one of the services the vacancy committee came to that I'm a big fan to the TV show The West Wing. It's a drama about the President and his staff and the challenges they face together. It strikes me as I begin my ministry that I am in no way the president! I know where the buck stops and I'll work hard with you and for you, but this whole church thing only works when we each play our full part in the life of our community. My job is to enable us all to do that through encouragement, identifying resources, helping to develop our skills and talents, to deepen our faith and to create opportunities for all of us to experience meaningful worship throughout the week.

I'm always struck by Jesus' words in John's Gospel when he tells us that he came to give us life in all its fullness. I'd like St Ninian's to be a place that continues to grow the reputation it already has. You're known as a place where everyone is welcome, where everyone is valued. I hope that everyone in Stonehouse will always feel that St Ninian's is their church, whatever their circumstances.

So, what's next? Well, that's the exciting bit! We get to step out onto a new road together and enter into whatever adventures come our way. I can't wait to see what God has in store for us as we journey together.

God bless!

Stewart



Alan's Words of Wisdom

The early Church began as a movement and the early Christians were known as the 'followers of the Way'. When Christianity came to Scotland it was via missions led by Columba, Ninian, Mungo and a stream of other Celtic monks. The Celtic Church in Scotland was young, vibrant and flexible and the mission was paramount. In succeeding centuries the Church got involved in politics and power games – to say nothing of religious wars. It evolved an institutional lifestyle, where rules, regulations, structures and influence dominated. In more recent centuries, even when folk tried to re-create the early church it usually gave rise to the establishment of yet more institutions.

Nowadays, across many denominations, there are people who have come to recognise that humility and vulnerability, openness and reconciliation were at the heart of Jesus' ministry. They recognise the Church must work to understand this world in which we are called to live the Kingdom, and engage in a mission that demonstrates God's love. Brave souls within the denominational structures have been giving leadership in this direction. It is also the task for us to be a local manifestation of a humane, sensitive Church, true to the mission of Ninian that first brought the Gospel to these parts.

The formation of St Ninian's LEP was a great example of discarding historic divisions and putting mission to the community at the heart of what the Local Ecumenical Partnership of St Ninian's stands for. As the profile of St Ninian's came together at the beginning of the vacancy, there emerged a picture of the community-orientated ministry that you had developed with Paul. As financial burdens cumulated during the vacancy and the cost of manse upgrading piled on to electrical safety priorities which were already piled on top of the colossal cost of replacing the defunct heating system, it became obvious that here were office-bearers who did not shirk leadership and who at times exercised costly leadership. In turn they were supported by a membership who rose to every challenge, backed their leaders and shared a vision of St Ninian's future in, with and for Stonehouse.

In this last year and a half it has been my privilege to get to know you better, to share your trust, and to walk with you for part of your pilgrimage. Here are friendships I shall always treasure, and here is discipleship that has depths and worth and beauty. Go well, friends; be for others the people I have come to value and cherish; and, in all the uncertainties the future holds, know that it is Christ's future into which you are called.

Alan (Interim Moderator)

Farewell from Eric



Home Thoughts from Abroad

(Well along the Road in
Strathaven!)



As I am writing my farewell note to all the folks at St Ninian's, I have to admit that I have been a bit distracted as I have been checking the Sunday Times Rich List to see where I came this year! My disappointment is palpable; as yet again, I don't appear to feature in any of the categories. I am not sure if this is personal slight on me or simply a typographical error yet again!

I had a look to see if there was anyone in the congregation who beat me to it this year and sadly I didn't seem to find anyone's name on the list. So not only is this a slight on all of us, I am convinced that it is now a conspiracy as well. Maybe next year?

It struck me as I was coming to terms with my disappointment, that as the years pass, society today seems to focus more on the material things in life and forgets or fails to appreciate the really important things in life. These are the things that often cost little but have true value and real meaning for us. And I came to realise that as I was looking back at our time together, that as a congregation all the folks at St Ninian's are so richly blessed with a love and warmth that is worth more than all the billions in the world. And what is so special is that this is a love and warmth that each of you give expecting nothing in return. And that is something which is truly priceless. You make the world a better place.

In summing up our time together, it has been an honour and a privilege to have been part of the journey of the congregation here at St Ninian's and our time together has been the highlight of my Ministry. It has been

the most fulfilling time I have spent as a Reader, as you have taken me to your hearts Sunday by Sunday and I have enjoyed every minute of our time together.

In saying farewell, it is really a happy/sad time for me personally, sad that I am leaving as I really will miss you all, but happy that you have got a new Minister coming to open the next chapter in the life of St Ninian's in Stonehouse.

I will always hold you close in my heart and wish God's blessing on the whole congregation for all that lies ahead for you as you embark on the next chapter in the life of St Ninian's. It has been an honour and a privilege to have been part of your journey. Thank you all.

Eric Hislop

(PS Let me know if you get the musical reference in the title.)

From Margaret Macgregor

Hi Folks,

Well here we are, summer magazine already, at least as I write this the sun is shining and we haven't seen rain for a few weeks, this is good news to those who are unable to get away and I hope it continues.

Well by the time you read this Stewart will have been with us for a few weeks and his Ordination and Induction service will take place on **Friday 9th June at 7pm in the church**, I hope you receive and read your magazine before this date as it would be nice to see you all on the night.

The service will also be advertised in the village.

As I said in the last magazine, I am looking forward to working with Stewart and it is our intention to hold social evenings to allow folks to get to know Stewart.

The dates for these nights will be advertised or members should receive an invitation.

We are sorry to say goodbye to Eric who has led us in worship most Sundays for the last 18 months, his support has been much appreciated by session and the congregation. He has made my job a lot easier with his willing and helpful manner; he just turns up every Sunday and gets on with things, no fuss or bother. We will be having a presentation for Eric on Sunday 21st May as this is his last Sunday with us but I hope he will come back and visit.

Alan Paterson our Interim Moderator will also be leaving us, and I personally have appreciated his help and guidance. It's been a rocky road at times with the heating and electric problems plus as we are now answerable to two denominations it's been a bit of a minefield, but we have worked together well and Alan is such a hive of information and always has a story to tell.

Sadly we have lost one of our faithful elders, Alison Kirkwood has moved away to Moffat and we wish her well in her new home. Alison's daughter Amy, now Amy Samson has also moved away but we wish her well in her married life and I hope both of them will visit when they can.

Thomas Smith better known as Tam passed away on Friday 5th May and our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends

I look forward to the way ahead for St Ninian's it may be a different road but one I hope we will travel together with God's love and guidance we will tread willingly and faithfully in and around this village.

God bless

Margaret

Session Clerk



Prayer and Reflection Group

As you know we pray for a street in the village each week, here is the list

04/06/17	Mainsacre Drive
11/06/17	Manse Road
18/06/17	McInnes Grove
25/06/17	McNiven Court
02/07/17	Millholm Gardens
09/07/17	Murray side
16/07/17	Newfield Gardens
23/07/17	Nursery Grove
30/07/17	Queen Street
06/08/17	Ramsraig Gardens
13/08/17	Rhymie Bank
20/08/17	Ringwell Gardens
27/08/17	Secauren Ave
03/09/17	Spinningdale
10/09/17	Todstable Gardens
17/09/17	Watt Court
24/09/17	Weavers Way



Still Point

Lord, I turn my thoughts to you
Within the whirlwind of my day
I stop, and think of you,
It's far too easy to forget you
In the business and bustle of the day,
as other pressures crowd and fill my mind.
And when I pause I find myself astonished
That whilst your closeness has been crowded out
Yet still, you have been there, your steady love surrounding me
Hello again Lord, It's good to reconnect with you
To take a breath and feel your powerful presence in this scene:
Enter into stillness and feel you standing by my side,
shoulder to shoulder in this time, this place
pouring out your love unceasingly.
Lord, thank you.
Thank you that you never leave me, even when
Especially when, perhaps,
My temporary amnesia forgets that you are there.

From Gavin the Treasurer

The monthly expenditure to run the Church continues to exceed our monthly income. Great care will need to be exercised going forward to ensure we are able to meet our financial commitments.

We have successfully raised the required finance to fund the installation of the new heating system to the Church and Halls and have set aside sufficient funds to cover the Contractors Retention Fee.

However, our fundraising will continue in order that we can install new windows at the front of the Church and meet our legal requirement to rewire the Church and halls by 2020.

As custodians of the Church it is our duty to ensure that the building meets all the regulations.

I am sure that most of you will know that I have recently resigned as Church Treasurer.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have supported me during my three years in office.

God Bless, Gavin. Treasurer



Recycle your empty Inkjet Cartridges

St. Ninian's in association with Empty Cartridge.co.uk are recycling your empty Inkjet Cartridges with all the proceeds going to church funds.

Please note that we no longer recycle **Epson, Kodak** or **HP363** Cartridges. We also do not recycle **Toner** Cartridges, **Mobile Phones** or **Batteries**.

Please place your empty Inkjet Cartridges in the boxes provided within the Church.

Cameron Weir

SUNDAY LUNCHESES

To those of you who come through to the hall each Sunday after the service a sincere thankyou. All the money raised goes to church funds. As you will have realized we have changed the Menu slightly and it would be helpful if we could get some feedback, we don't need names just your comments good (hopefully) or otherwise!!! or further suggestions. **Tear Off Slip Below**

MENU

Week 1 - Baked Potatoes/fillings & Cold Filled Rolls; Tea/Coffee & Biscuits

Week 2 - Pies/Sausage Rolls & Cold Filled Rolls; Tea/Coffee & Biscuits

Week 3 - Girls Brigade Soup & Crusty Bread; Tea/Coffee & Homebaking

Week 4 - Rolls with Bacon or Sausage & Cold Filled Rolls; Tea/Coffee & Biscuits

For folks who haven't joined us, the above is the monthly menu (maybe we can tempt you) Some folks only have tea & a biscuit and we also have chat & friendship FREE so PLEASE think about joining the Sunday lunch bunch. You will be made very welcome.

Can I also ask that anyone who would like to help out (1 Sunday every 2 months) just speak to me (Anne Law) for more details. Thank you again to everyone who gives up their time to helps, God Bless; you'll be rewarded in heaven (just hope that it's not too soon!!)

Sunday Lunches welcome your comments and suggestions.

Please return to Anne Law

THOUGHTS ONNEW BEGINNINGS

When we think of 'new beginnings' we tend to think of 'New Year' when many people make New Year Resolutions – and often don't keep them very long!

Easter , when we celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus, marks the beginning of the Church calendar.

Our children mark 'new beginnings' in their lives when they start school, move up to the Academy, move on to University or into the work place.

Recently I have experienced a 'new beginning' in my life. I'm beginning a phase of my life without my Husband of almost 46 years. Many others have been in the same situation and have given me a great deal of love, support and comfort. In doing this they are following Jesus' example of care and compassion when He comforted Martha and Mary after the death of their brother Lazarus.

I'd like to sincerely thank all who have comforted me with kind words, beautiful flowers and cards and of course a compassionate hug.

Thank you all.

Ann Woods



Coffee Morning

1977 -2017

It is now 40years since the start of the Coffee Morning. Mrs Gemmell is the only one left of that band of stewards who started this venture all those years ago. Mrs Richmond was a first customer and now a wonderful lady of 97years, still comes to visit when she is able.

We have had a rocky start this year weather wise, together with lack of heating, but we have struggled on and are now doing quite well in our comfortable warm hall.

During the last eight years we have been able to give over £40,000 to help with renewing and repairing church property. We find the work we do very worthwhile, but it is still thanks to our friends who come very week to enjoy tea, coffee and the very special friendship that exists in our hall each Tuesday morning.

We stop for our summer break on Tuesday 30th May 2017. We wish everyone a sunny and restful summer and look forward to meeting up again on Tuesday 5th September 2017 at 10am – 11.30am.

Peggy Anderson

The Guild

BE BOLD BE STRONG.

We had an entertaining evening with the Salvation Army in April. The sound was amazing and then it was coffee and cakes afterwards. Everyone enjoyed the night.

We have had a very interesting programme this year and are looking forward to starting fresh in October.

We are looking forward to going to Dundee in September for our annual day out and then on to the Royal George Hotel in Perth for high tea. If you haven't put your name down and want to go could you see Joyce Millar or myself please.

Thanks to all committee members for all your hard work throughout the session.

Have a lovely summer and looking forward to seeing you all in October.

Wilma Johnston



I would like to thank everyone for their kindness shown to me on the occasion of my 80th birthday.

I have been overwhelmed by gifts, flowers and cards. Your friendship means such a lot to me.

With my sincere thanks to everyone. Love Ann

Link Committee

*Including a special thank you
to all our distributors*

Just recently I had the pleasure of picking up the post from my doormat to discover a little gem that brightened up my day. A friendly note from Liz Ingram, one of our housebound readers, with these words written:

*Please accept this small gift towards
all the hard work that goes into the publication
and delivery of the church magazine.*

Liz Ingram

Never underestimate the power behind a little act of encouragement.

For your donation and taking the time to say thank you to everyone Liz; we on the Link committee are extremely grateful. We are sure our distributors will also be pleased to read your kind words chosen for them.

Fiona Watson will be taking over the delivery of the Link magazine in the Cannethan Street, District. We thank Fiona for so willingly agreeing to take this duty on and she will find she has particularly welcoming folks to deliver to when she goes calling in this part of Stonehouse.

Margaret Murray and I will be in the vestibule on Sunday 18th June to receive any donations for the Link Magazine.

If anyone would like to submit an article for the autumn issue of Link please send it by e-mail to margaretmcmeekekin@hotmail.co.uk or pass handwritten notes to myself by Sunday 6th August'17.



URC Synod Meeting at Tulliallan Police College

March 17th – 19th March 2017



Once again we attended the Residential Meeting from dinnertime on Friday until lunch on Sunday. It is a busy couple of days but there is time to catch up with old friends from further afield and to meet new people. On Saturday evening at about 9.00 p.m., after meetings, we had a lively Social Evening with a Quiz, interspaced with Ceilidh

dancing and some good singing. All helped with a glass or two of wine or spirits and some snacks.

Of course during the days there were reports from the various Synod Committees and presentation of accounts, but a focal point of this year's meeting was how best the Synod Office and Officers could help the local churches prepare for the challenges ahead. Within the last year we have been joined by a new Synod Moderator, Revd David Pickering and Synod Clerk, Mr Bill Robson. Our gain in calling Stewart Cutler to St Ninian's as minister means a loss of the Children and Youth Development



Officer. Revd Mitchell Bunting (Bungie) retires in June and Revd Jan Adamson retires as Field Officer for Local Mission and Development next year. Also at the meeting the Principal of the Scottish United Reformed and Congregational College announced his retirement which will take place later this year.

So what help do the churches of the Scottish Synod need? What will best support us in our witness for Christ? As we think you will all be aware, there are fewer ministers available to churches and there are fewer and fewer churches able to financially support themselves as a single charge with their own minister. We did not know where to start. Revd Lindsey

Sanderson of East Kilbride and Rutherglen churches, made a very good point when she asked what help or training would congregations need should all ministers suddenly become unavailable. What would we need to know, or learn, to enable us to keep being “Church” as we know it? It is an interesting exercise and perhaps we should all be thinking about it.

During the Women’s Union Report it was announced that there would no longer be a National Committee as it had been found impossible to fill the vacant posts on the Committee. Of course local churches will continue to have meetings as before.

There were four workshops on Saturday morning and we split up to cover them all. Anne attended one on Our Reformation 2017 which covered the Reformation of 1517 and Martin Luther’s standpoint; and one entitled Interfaith - Building Interfaith Relations and Safer Communities in Scotland which was taken by Chief Inspector Shaheen Baber. Jim went along to Holy Habits – everyday wear for regular disciples. A discussion on the 10 holy Habits we should strive to live up to. He also attended a Church and Society workshop on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Human Trafficking. Action of churches together in Scotland (acts) have produced some booklets on this and they are in the Vestibule.

As usual there was an interesting presentation by representatives from the Children and Young People Group. They had been discussing sex and relationships in the modern world. They pointed out that they are bombarded by difficult topics on T.V., in newspapers and magazines and therefore ought to be old enough to discuss such things from an earlier age than most of us thought right.

Well that was us for another year. Next year will be the first time Stewart Cutler will attend Synod meetings as a minister. We hope there will be pool of people anxious to attend with him. The Sunday morning communion service and the singing throughout the weekend are very uplifting, as are many of the talks and discussions. So give it some thought. Might you be prepared to attend next year, perhaps starting out with the one day meeting on Saturday 16th September?

There is an official report on the Meeting with photographs available at www.urcscotland.org.

Anne and Jim Cowan



HAVEN OF HOPE

Hi everyone - as you will now know the original Board members of the Hope Café are stepping down from their posts and Lisa is moving on to pastures new - but the good news is the Café is remaining in Stonehouse. The existing volunteers of the Hope Café are carrying on the amazing work that the Hope Café has achieved over the last few and will now be known as "Haven of Hope".

Our aim as you know is to stamp out stigma against mental health issues - allow people the opportunity to access help in dealing with their mental health journey but most of all to let people know that we can listen to them, talk to them but most importantly let them know they are not alone.

Haven of Hope will be on twice a month on a Thursday in St Ninians Church and we look forward so much to meeting you all - remember - We care, We Hope and We Listen.

The volunteers would all like to wish Lisa the very best in her new journey and thank her so much for all the hard work, support and help she has given to each and every one of us and we look forward to pouring Lisa a cup of coffee in the future when she pays us a visit.

Sandra Lindsay

Secretary - Haven of Hope

World Mission Kitega Community Centre Uganda.

Lent Challenge for Kitega Community Centre Uganda.

'Eat just plain rice and beans for five days to taste what it's like to fight hunger'

Thoughts from Sarah Jane on taking part in the Mean Bean Lent Challenge.

'The challenge went well, I'm not going to lie I was hungry at times, but the donations coming in for the centre really helped! The first thing I ate after the challenge finished was a punnet of strawberries and they tasted amazing! We have raised around £300 so far which is great. I'm so grateful to everyone who supported the cause.

The idea for the Mean Bean challenge came from Tearfund's challenge. I liked the idea of eating a typical diet from a developing country but wanted to raise money for Kitega community centre in Uganda to continue the link between the centre and St Ninian's church.

When we took our 3 children to visit the centre last July, we felt that they do such an important job in supporting the community and providing education for children with additional needs we didn't want to forget them. In particular we were trying to raise money for a boy called Brian who was involved in a motorbike accident on the way to school and money for hospital treatment was vital to treat his injuries.

I spent my childhood in Kenya so I do love rice and beans but eating nothing else all week was a real challenge! I thought the hardest part would be watching other people eating cake and chocolate but actually what I couldn't wait to do was to eat fruit again! I have really missed eating fresh food, you never realise how good strawberries and tangerines smell until you're not allowed them. I was certainly looking forward to having my first coffee with some chocolate as well though!

Thank you to everyone who supported this fund raising cause.

Please speak to Pete or Sarah Jane if you wish to learn more about how you can help with this project either through visiting, sharing resources or skills or donating.

World Mission Prayer Focus

God of all, God of the children of your world.

Help us to glimpse at the kingdom you say our children belong to.

Help us search for ways to ensure all children can come and share in the wonder of your world.

Let the children come and hear your story, let them hear about the love, the care, the hope that you so will for all people, especially children.

Let the children know that what is around them can change, will change with the love and compassion of those who want to serve through education, or providing food and support.

Lord, bless all the little children, especially those who are lonely and so in need of a caring loving hand.

Amen

Don't forget to save stamps from your post at home and in your workplace and pop them in the box in the vestibule.





Church Flowers

Summer Church Flower Rota



June		
4 th	June Russell	In Memoriam
11 th	Elizabeth Bridges, Betty Campbell, Anne MacLeod	All In Memoriam
18 th	Helen Leggate, Betty Biggar, May Twaddle, Helen Scully	All In Memoriam
25 th	Agnes Barr, Greta Struthers, Laura Wilson, Shona McMillan, The Davidson Family	All In Memoriam
2 nd July	Jean Grant	In Memoriam
9 th	Jean Stewart Norma Johnston, Mary Hamilton, Mary Lochhead	Wedding Anniversary All In Memoriam
16 th	May Boslem Margaret Mair	For Lucy In Memoriam
23 rd	The Macgregor Family	In Memoriam
30 th	Etta McGill, Eleanor Brown, M Patrick	All In Memoriam
6 th August		

13 th	Grace Allan	Gifted
20 th August	Anne Thompson, Mr Richmond	Both In Memoriam
27 th August	Sheila Hamilton, Christine Blackwood, The Plenderleith Family	All In Memoriam
3 rd September	Jean Grant	In Memoriam

Flower Arrangers and Distributors

June: Joyce & Bob Millar

792736

July: Ann Mair

793633

Margaret Meikle

791217

August: Ann & Douglas Thompson

792002

Church Register

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace.

Thomas Smith 5th May2017



Sorry adverts are not available on line