# LINK MAGAZINE



ST NINIAN'S STONEHOUSE

### Trees, lights, candles and tinsel.

I love Christmas. It's the most hygge time of the year.

Hygge (pronounced hue-guh) is a Danish word used when acknowledging a feeling or moment, whether alone or with friends, at home or out, ordinary or extraordinary as cosy, charming or special. We discovered it when Dr Jack Dyce came to help us think about what the Nordic world could teach us about being church and being a community together.

Carols & Candles, where we help the community of Stonehouse come together to switch on the Christmas lights, is a very hygge event, as is Night Church, with the dark church lit by candles and soft lights and the Christian Aid Sing A Song for Christmas where we join together to sing and have fun and give much needed help to those around the world who most need it.

We often think of the stable where Jesus was born as being hygge; the warm glow of candles and starlight with the animals gathered around the manger with Mary and Joseph. It's a scene that has featured on millions of Christmas cards and even on the front of this edition of the LINK Magazine. It's an image that invites us into a warm and loving family scene. But when we take a step back from that cosy picture and think about our own experience of animals and stables and childbirth it all gets a lot less cosy and a bit more risky and smelly and frightening.

Jesus was born in what we could only charitably describe as 'temporary accommodation' in a country occupied by a military superpower, the Romans. Soon after his birth he and his family had to run away to Egypt to escape the murderous King Herod. Jesus and his family spent the first years of his life as a refugee, an asylum seeker. That's something we should seriously reflect on in our current political and social climate. We have just commemorated the 100th anniversary of the end of The Great War. It was the war that was meant to end all wars. Of course it didn't, and soon the rise of prejudice and fear led to division and more war. We must learn the lessons of history or risk falling headlong into making the same tragic mistakes again.

Each time Christmas comes around I find the idea that God would want to enter into the mess and chaos of human life more and more astonishing... and I'm more and more grateful that He did because for most of us life isn't always straightforward. It has its ups and downs, those highs and lows that make up all of our lives.

As I look forward to my second Christmas here in Stonehouse I'm grateful to feel a welcomed part of this community. It's a privilege to journey with you through life and to be invited to spend moments with you at some of the most difficult and the most joyful times.

Our theme this year has been 'Living Well Together'. Providing some space for those who find Christmas more difficult due to loss or bereavement is important, so I'd like to invite you to our Light in the Darkness service at 3pm on the 9th of December. Please invite your family, friends and neighbours if you think this service could offer some comfort and support to them.

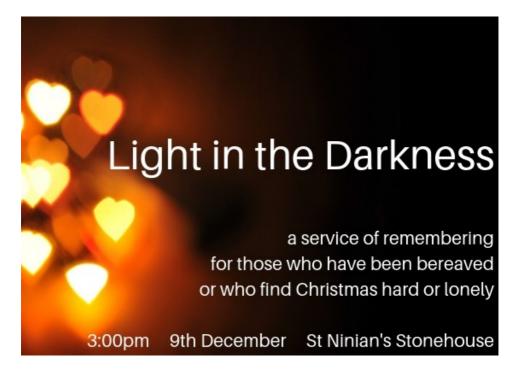
Being able to celebrate Christmas at our range of services and events throughout December is a wonderful gift and I hope you will join us. (There's a list of everything happening in the centre pages)

From Santa's Grotto at our Christmas Cafe, Night Church, the Nativity Service, Light in the Darkness, Santa's Bedtime Story or the Family Service and Watchnight on Christmas Eve, there's something for everyone at St Ninian's this Christmas. We've even been able to create more wheelchair spaces and an area of more comfortable seating for those who can't manage the pews!

But more than all of that, the gift of 'God with us' is something that I hope you will be able to take some time to reflect on and find hope in.

I wish you a peaceful Christmas and blessing for the New Year.

#### **Stewart**



For many people Christmas can be a difficult time. We miss loved ones who are either no longer with us or who are far away.

Light in the Darkness is a very special service where we will share a chance to remember those closest t our hearts and their part in our lives.

There will be times of words and times of silence.

There will be music but we will not sing.

There will practical things for us to do and symbols for us to share.

There will be a time to remember friends and to remember family.

We will share this space with those we have loved and continue to love.

Please join us and, in particular, invite those you know who might gain comfort.

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5)

### prayer and reflection

Monday & Thursday
9.15am to 10am
in the Church

In our busy lives we often forget to slow down.

To be still.

To make time for prayer.

We follow a short liturgy, read, listen, and enjoy exploring scripture and praying for others.

All are welcome ~ come along and share in this time together.

"Then you will call to me. You will come and pray to me and I will answer you." (Jeremiah 29:12)

#### Hi Folks

Well here we are, looking forward to celebrating another important date in our Christian calendar and I'm left wondering what on earth happened to the rest of the year.

We have been fortunate to welcome four new elders to session and I am looking forward to working with Margaret Hannay, Bill Storrie, and May Fairlie.

Sadly some of our faithful members, and friends in the village, have passed away and our thoughts and prayers are with the families of Liz Ingram, Andy McLean, Jim Buchanan, Jack Ritchie, Robert Miller, Rita Fordyce, John McLean, Christina Rodger, George Wilson, Wm McAulay. This puts some pressure on Stewart as minister of our church and I hope you will hold him in your prayers as well.

You should all receive a leaflet with our Christmas programme in the near future, there are many activities going on in the church and folks are welcome to join in, so if you haven't been for a wee while why not come along and enjoy the fellowship, don't be shy our door is always open.

At one of our prayer meetings the following quote was read and it kind of stood out for me so I thought I would share it.

#### Clarence Jordan wrote:

"Jesus has been so zealously worshipped, his deity so vehemently affirmed, his halo so brightly illumined and his cross so beautifully polished that in the minds of many he no longer exists as a man. By thus glorifying him we more effectively rid ourselves of him than did those who tried to do so by crudely crucifying him."

At this time when we celebrate his birth let us try and remember he was, and still is, with us in times of sadness and in times of joy.

As most of you know, we pray for a street in the village each week and, although some of you can't join us at prayers on Monday and Thursday mornings at 9.15am, you can still pray with us. A list of streets and dates are below.

18.11.18	Todlaaw Way	
25.11.18	Hawkwood Way	
2.12.18	Glenburn Avenue	
9.12.18	Muirhead	
16.12.18	Brankston Avenue	
23.12.18	Marleyhill Avenue	
30.12.18	Merrick Drive	
6.1.19	Sutherland Avenue	
13.1.19	Udston Avenue	
20.1.19	Glen View	
27.1.19	Avon View	
3.2.19	Udstonmill Road	
10.02.19	Sorbie Drive	
17.02.19	Kane Place	
24.02.19	Brodie Place	
3.3.19	Roger Court	
17.3.19	Dick Court	
24.3.19	Crofthill Court	

I would like to wish you all a Peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year, for those who find this time of year difficult, May God's blessing be upon you.

God bless you all in 2019.

### Margaret (Session Clerk)

### **Church Flowers**

Flower Arrangers and Helpers December 2018

Ann Anderson and Margaret Hannay



Thank you to everyone who donated flowers in December and throughout the year.

Dec	2nd	Helen Spence Margaret Macgreror Mary Mackay	All in Memoriam
	9th	C Kennedy May Boslem Kate Stewart	All in Memoriam
	16th	George Burns	Anniversary
	23rd	M Pate	In Memoriam
	30th	Twaddle Family	Gifted

The flower list for 2019 will be in the church vestibule on 2nd December for anyone who wishes to put flowers in the church in 2019.

For more information, please contact Ann Anderson on 01698 792124

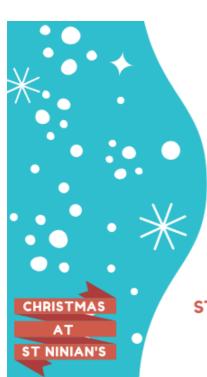
### help decorate the Church for Christmas

on Wednesday 12th December 2018
1pm to 4pm and 7pm onwards

You don't need to be able to do flowers ~ just come along and enjoy the company and, of course, the mince pies and shortbread. Any greenery welcome. All help appreciated, both ladies and gentlemen!

For more information contact: Ann Anderson on 01698 792124

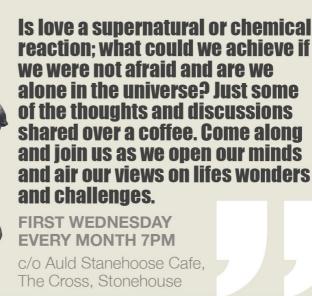




SWITCHING ON THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS WITH

# CAROLS & CANDLES

STONEHOUSE COMMUNITY GARDEN SUNDAY 2ND DEC 4:30PM LIGHTS SWITCH ON AT 5:30PM



THE PHILOSOPHERS CAFÉ STONEHOUSE

### From The Link Committee

We would like to thank and pay tribute to Margaret Cranston and Pearl Foster for their many years of work and commitment to the magazine. We are talking of thirty five years and over of devoted service.

Both started in the days when the pages were typed, collated manually then divided into bundles for the distributors. They then had districts to which they delivered 'The Link'. Both, of course, are also long serving elders in St Ninian's.

Unfortunately, we are sorry to report that neither is enjoying very good health at this time and we wish them all the best in their recovery. Thank you both most sincerely.

Our thanks also go to Moira Kirkwood for helping us out short-term.

To keep everyone updated, in the recent past we have welcomed the following distributors: Joan & Dickson Gemmell, Anne Horne, Anne Law, Elizabeth Roy, and Fiona Watson.

Thank you everyone for all your commitment in 2018 and for the year ahead.

### On behalf of the Link committee Margaret Murray

### **Call for Articles for the Spring edition**

I hope you have been enjoying Link this year as much as I have enjoyed being the editor. If you have any good news stories to share or would like to contribute an article or reflection please email them to me at <code>linkmag.editor@gmail.com.</code> Alternatively please pass any articles to Stewart. Stories are always welcome! Deadline details will be announced in church. Thank you.

Wishing you all every blessing for Christmas and the year to come.

#### Avril

### **Pondering it Over**

Waiting for a baby is a time of great preparation, anxiety and anticipation, with so much to think about and so much to put into place. But generally it is considered a very special time for the parents to be, specially the first time round. We all know the Christmas story well, but we can't begin to imagine what it must have been like for Mary and Joseph, expecting their first baby in very extraordinary circumstances.

Whenever I reread the story of Jesus' birth, as told in the gospel of Luke, there is one verse that particularly stands out for me as a mother. Following a visit from the shepherds, very soon after the baby's birth, Luke 2.19 says, 'But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.' This is such a timeless statement, and one that I think any mother can relate to. It is only natural to hold dear the special things people say about a new baby in the family.

Indeed all sorts of things were said about Jesus, and some of them a very long time before his birth, which was foretold by the prophets. Advent is a good time to reflect on these, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Saviour. I

Isaiah 9.6 tells us, 'For to us a child is born... And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace'.

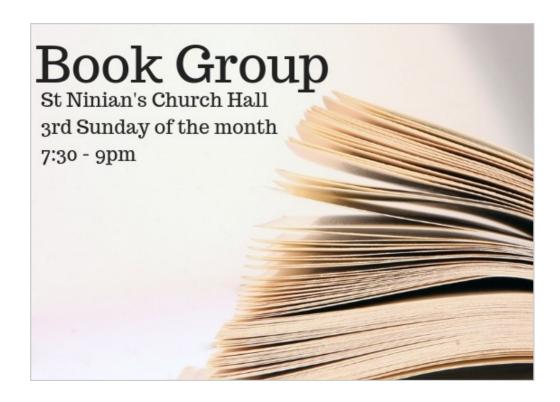
Micah 5.2 says, 'But you, Bethlehem... though you are small... out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel'. Even before Jesus' conception, Mary was told by an angel that "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High... He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; his kingdom will never end" (Luke 1.32-33).

It is common these days for mothers to keep a record or diary throughout the pregnancy and first year of their baby's life. I wonder at the sorts of things Mary could have put in hers, had there been an equivalent two millenniums ago. There was the angel's visit, when she surrendered to God's will. Then there was her time communing with her cousin Elizabeth, who was also expecting a miracle baby.

This was followed by a long and exhausting journey to Bethlehem, and then the birth itself in squalid conditions. How could she forget the baby's first visitors, shepherds who declared they had heard the news of the birth from angels. And later, the Magi, who foresaw Jesus' birth and followed his star, perhaps for years, so they could worship him. Mary certainly had some astonishing experiences during her pregnancy and afterwards. But then, Jesus was no ordinary baby.

We too can ponder, like Mary, over the coming of Jesus, as we revisit the nativity story this Christmas, holding dear the significance of the event, and the peace and joy it brings into our lives.

#### **Kathryn Epps**



### **Coffee Mornings**

The time seems to have gone so quickly since we commenced coffee mornings in September!

The Coffee Ladies Team wish to thank everyone who faithfully come on Tuesday mornings and have been delighted to welcome new friends too

The last coffee morning of this season is approaching us quickly and will be on Tuesday 27th November 2018. At this time of the year, it has been customary for the last day to be a 'Free Day' as a thanks to all for continued loyal support. We start back on Tuesday 5th February 2019.

Many thanks again to gentlemen who assist by setting out tables and clearing them away again.

As this will be the last 'Link' before the end of this year, and before Christmas, we wish everyone all the blessings this season brings and may the Lord grant us all in this community, and beyond, his loving care in the year to come.

### **Elizabeth Bridges**



#### ST NINIAN'S STONEHOUSE

The LAST coffee morning of the year will be on Tuesday 27th November 2018.

10.00am to 11.30am in the Church Hall



# Sing a Song

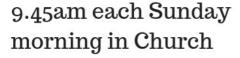
# Sunday 16th December 6:30pm

### St Ninian's Stonehouse

### Featuring

Stonehouse Male Voice Choir, Stonehouse Primary, Newfield Primary, Guides & Girls' Brigade, St Ninian's Choir, Stonehouse Pipe Band, TABS and a visit from Santa!

### **Church Choir**



We are blessed to have Lynsey Hamilton and Lindsay McIntyre to teach, conduct, and accompany us. Both are incredibly gifted.

Over the next few weeks we will be busy rehearsing two pieces which we will be performing at the annual Christian Aid 'sing-a-long' in December.

It would be lovely to welcome some new members to our choir. You don't even need to be able to read music!

If you'd like to find out more, please speak to Yvonne Hamilton.



### Thank you!

I would like to thank everyone who came to my aid when I had the nasty fall in Argyle Street and also to all family and friends who have supported me since then. **Catherine McPherson** 

On behalf of the finance committee, thank you to everyone who donated through 'coin in a box'. If anyone is interested in collecting coins using this method, boxes can be found in the vestibule in the bookcase near the front door of the church. Thank you. Pat Thornton

I would like to sincerely thank everyone for the support, flowers, cards, and also to Stewart for his service following George's death. Your care is very much appreciated. **Linda Wilson** 

A big thank you to everyone who has continued to drop off their stamps in the box in the vestibule of the church. Over the summer months I have sent two lots of stamps to the World Mission in Edinburgh. They always reply with an update of what the stamps are being used for in the current year. This is probably the time of year when you receive the most mail so keep collecting your used stamps and, if you are working, maybe you could collect from there too!

Have a lovely Christmas everyone! Norma Johnston

### **Sunday Lunches**

In the last issue of 'Link' I put in an article regarding Sunday lunches. It was a bit disappointing that nobody made any comment to me regarding Sunday lunches or nobody felt able to volunteer to help out SIX Sundays per YEAR, or even just occasionally. So I hope if I can jog your memory (or your conscience) I might get some feedback. Basically, during summer each group made their own decision about what was on the menu but now we are back on regular menu ... What's your view?

Yours 'hopefully' Anne Law



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### From Bill ... unfortunately time for some harsh truths!

Through both the Finance Committee and The Board I have been voicing my concerns regarding our precarious financial position over the past few months. As we approach the end of 2018 I think it is fair to say that we will be struggling to fulfil our Ministries & Mission obligations, specifically to URC Synod. Costs continue to increase within a falling revenue environment. Given current trends I do not see this changing anytime soon. Thought has to be given as to how we can increase revenue.

Our day to day expenses exceed our income by just over £11,000 and that does not include the fact that our Ministries & Mission payments are behind. A sobering thought as we head towards the end of the year. Hopefully our fund raising efforts over the next two months will see us through but we do need to consider this position urgently as we move forward... our Church is financially under pressure!!!

Please consider how you might be able to help through increased giving, supporting fundraising or setting up a monthly standing order.

I am pleased to say that, with the assistance of the *Coffee Morning Ladies*, we are enjoying the benefits provided by our new windows. They not only look great but they are also keeping in the heat, something which again will benefit us in the future. Safe to say, given my comments above, any further building work will need to be met through grant application as every other penny must be routed via the main account for the time being.

Enjoy your Christmas and New Year festivities whatever you have planned.

God Bless Bill (Treasurer)

#### The Guild

We have had a really good start to the new session with new ladies joining us for the first time and we all enjoyed listening to Rev Paul Grant and Taylor Fashions gave us the entertainment in October.

Monday 12th November is our Guest night and The Easter Egg Group provided us with entertainment for the evening and on Monday 10th December is our ever popular Christmas Dinner. We are taking names just now so if you would like to attend please see either myself or Joyce Millar. If you can't make any of the evenings this year we start back on Monday 14th January 2019 with a visit from The Boys Brigade which we are looking forward to.

If you need a lift down to the Church please see a committee member and we can organise it for you.

See you all again soon.

#### Wilma



### **Craft Night Poppies**

A massive thank you to everyone at the craft night who helped make poppies for the church's Remembrance display. They looked beautiful inside and outside the church and all the hard work is much appreciated.



1st Sunday of the Month (Oct - Apr) 7:30 - 9:00pm drop in for as long as you want St Ninian's Stonehouse

> Night Church is a candlelit oasis of calm in a busy and noisy world. Sometimes there are interactive stations or pieces of art to help you to reflect and think or you can just sit quietly in the beautiful surroundings

> > stay for a few minutes or for the whole time

towards the end, at 8:45pm, there will be a short service to close which you can join in with or not it's up to you

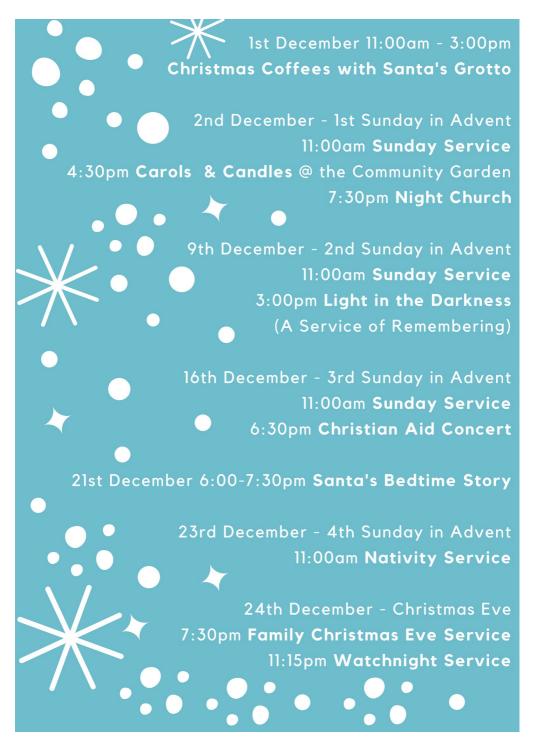
church for people who don't do church... and for those who do.



# THERE'S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AT ST NINIAN'S

SANTA'S GROTTO, CAROLS & CANDLES,
SANTA'S BEDTIME STORY, CHRISTIAN AID CONCERT
NATIVITY SERVICE, LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS,
WATCHNIGHT SERVICE

FACEBOOK.COM/STNINIANSCHURCHSTONEHOUSE



#### **Church Diaries**

It's that time of the year again and our little church diary is now available from me, ANNE LAW. The price is still the same as in previous years at £1.50 or four for £5.00.

If you haven't purchased one before they're a handy size for a pocket or handbag with details of all church office bearers. Excellent stocking fillers! Speak to me any Sunday at church or contact me on 01698 793591 for more details. All proceeds from their sale goes into church funds.

### **Church Offering Envelopes**

During the months of November and December I will be distributing the Freewill Offering envelopes. Each set of envelopes costs £5 and, unfortunately, lots of people who receive them don't use them. So, in an effort to save some money, I have decided to trim the lists. Lots of people will not see any difference but some folks will notice they have been issued with a different number. Some may not receive envelopes at all.

### If you only use a few envelopes each year would you consider taking out a standing order?

If you have any queries regarding this, please feel free to speak to me, or contact me on the number above when I hope I can answer any questions.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas with every good wish for the New Year.

#### **Anne Law**



### **GIRLS BRIGADE**

EVERY TUESDAY
ST NINIAN'S CHURCH HALL
STONEHOUSE

Explorers (P1-P3): 3pm to 4.30pm Juniors (P4-P7): 5.30pm to 7pm Brigaders (S1-S6): 7.30pm to 9pm

### **Boys Brigade**

WEDNESDAYS, CHURCH HALL, ST NINIAN'S, STONEHOUSE



Anchor Boys (5-8 yrs): 6pm to 7pm Junior Section (8-11yrs): 6.45pm to 8.15pm Company Section (11-18yrs): 7.45pm to 9.15pm The Hope Cafe Lanarkshire would like to thank St Ninian's for support in hosting the cafe in 2018. We meet every second Thursday. Here we promote positive mental health and wellbeing and provide a space where people can come together to enjoy food, meet old friends, and make new ones. Where people can pick up some mental health self-help resources, take part in the reading group or book in for a complementary therapy. Hope Cafe is a place where it's okay to talk about how you might feel whether up or down.

It's been a busy year and a massive thanks goes out to all our volunteers and customers for supporting this project. We couldn't do it without you!

Over the last few months we have been working with Stigma Free Lanarkshire which is a programme funded by NHS Lanarkshire and See Me Scotland to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination. The Hope Cafe committee have participated in SuicideTalk training, will soon be taking part in a mental health awareness workshop, and in December will explore the emotional impact of stigma. We hope to offer similar opportunities to the wider community as well as having lots of other ideas for 2019!

#### An Invitation

At The Hope Cafe we are committed to challenging stigma wherever we find it and will be signing the Stigma Free Lanarkshire pledge at our Christmas party on 13th December at 1pm. Food and entertainment will be provided at no cost. An invitation is extended to you all.

If you're looking for a volunteering opportunity and would like to find out more please come along and have a chat. Any time you can give would be genuinely appreciated.

To everyone who has supported The Hope Cafe this year ~ we thank you!

Bob Millar
Chair of the Committee



The Cafe is dependent on the goodwill of our volunteers & customers. Would you like to volunteer with us?

Please contact: Bob Millar The Hope Cafe is a friendly, welcoming and supportive environment for everyone. Come along and rest for a while, chat, and enjoy some of the homemade soup and baking. There is also free access to self-help resources, reiki, aromatherapy, massage, hypnotherapy, the reading group, relaxation sessions, informal peer support, all known to be good for your well-being.

A non-religious charity, the cafe is open every second Thursday from 10am to 2pm in St Ninian's Church Hall

### **Greetings from Uganda**

#### Our Fourth Month

October has been a busy month for us. The work here at the centre has continued, with Sarah-Jane involved in assessing new children as well as those children who have been struggling to attend the centre.

We have also initiated a key-working scheme to try to ensure that all children have a key worker who is able to take a special interest in their well-being and development. We have set up a daily enrichment program for the centre children so that those who do not take part in the vocational activities in the afternoon can take part in other activities such as crafts, games, music etc. These have been a great success!



Our own children are becoming more settled every month and are learning more Luganda phrases. It is a great joy to see them playing and being friends with children with disabilities.

They have the ability to just accept the other children exactly as they are. We have made friends with another Muzungu (white) family in Kampala who also have 3 children and in the middle of October we were able to spend a couple of days with them in a local hotel. This was great and we all enjoyed having a few days to relax, swim and play some games.

Although Kampala is only around 40km away, it is a 2-hour journey on a packed local bus to get there. We have become experts at sitting on 3 seats between us! It's not a journey you want to undertake if your stomach is not feeling quite right! This month we have all remained well and we are thankful for that. We continue to enjoy the warm sunshine every day especially when seeing the overnight Autumn temperatures in Scotland...

#### The Ramsays





### Is your computer up to 5 years old? Are you thinking of replacing it?

**We** use some of the parts to keep the church's computer running.

Call Brian Gwyn-Davis on 01698 791006

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Every Thursday, 1.30pm & 3.30pm Stonehouse Lifestyle Centre, Udston Mill Road, Stonehouse

For more information contact Chris on: 01698 884537



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### Children's Dance Classes

Ballet and Modern Dance ~ from age 21/2 yrs

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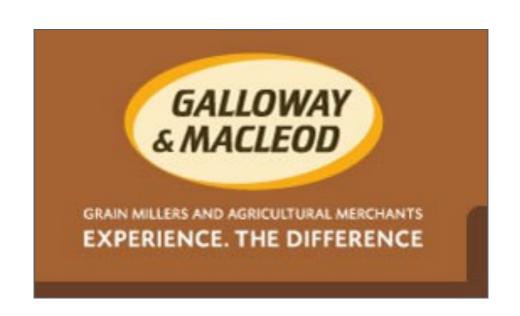
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The Community website of Stonehouse, South Lanarkshire



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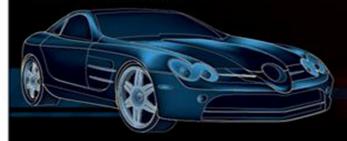
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