

Your Parish



Newsletter



November 2025

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Dear Friends,

The Manse, November 2025

I write this letter soon after returning home from the annual Remembrance Sunday Service. Our church sanctuary was beautifully adorned with knitted poppies, and we welcomed members of the British Legion, the Community Choir, Uniformed organisations and one of the East Lothian Depute Lord Lieutenant's – Sir Hew Dalrymple.

What a privilege it was to lead that service!

We remembered that remembering is something we all need to do. Everywhere we look are memories that trigger thoughts in us, places and events that move us, especially as we gather to remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in times of war and conflict.

We also remembered that we have not yet, as the human race, learnt what it truly means for nations to live at peace, but we aspire to follow Jesus' example for it is he who commends the "Peacemakers".

In our own small way we can live as such peacemakers – amongst our own family and friends and even with the people we work with.

The end of October also brought another anniversary to our minds – that of the 1st Anniversary since we formed "Cockenzie and Port Seton Parish Church" and, again, it's been a pure privilege to share this last year with you and I want to thank you for that.

As we move on, though, from anniversary services and the season of Remembrance we now move into another season of remembering with our approach to Advent and Christmas.

It is during that time that we again draw to mind - remember - the gift of a child who was to us all the very Saviour of the World.

There will be many opportunities during the coming weeks to mark this and I encourage you to come along and share in our special services where we draw to mind the graciousness of our God who gives so freely to us of his love.

"O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord"

With every blessing and best wishes for this time of the year.

Your friend and Minister,

Robin

Our Minister

Rev Robin N Allison

Braemar Villa, 2 Links Road, Port Seton

01875 812225

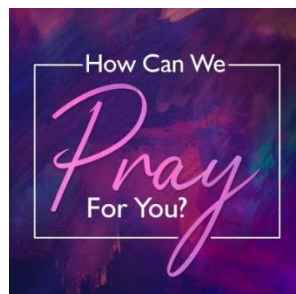
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Every Tuesday evening at, 7pm our prayer group meets. During this time, we offer up our prayers to God, including those asked for by people using our Prayer Request Cards.

Do you know someone, maybe it's yourself, who needs a prayer? Is there a situation you are aware of that need's God's hand to intervene?

Prayer Request Cards are available in the Church, or on the reception desk at the Community Centre. We encourage you to make use of these.

In turn, we promise to offer your prayers to God and will treat anything you confide to us in absolute confidence.



Session Section

It had been a long summer when the Session last met in September, with us all aware of the number of losses amongst us. The support for each other in our church has been palpable – and credit is due to all those who stepped in to keep our ship steady and moving forward in the past difficult months.

Our meeting started with a tribute to Ian Bulloch, a long-standing elder who will be much missed, after 46 years of service given to his church. Rev Allison had written to thank the Session for their support and understanding after the death of his wife, and confirmed his pending return to work, with ongoing support as needed from Rev Gordon and Mrs Steele for a while.

Committees reported on their ongoing work, much of which will be shared elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Miss Jean Johnston had indicated her retirement from the Session after 27 years of service as a faithful Elder. She would retain her *emeritus* status as a lifelong elder, and with a church 'Anniversary service' planned at the end of October, it was agreed to include a public thanks and presentation of flowers for those Elders who had retired from the Session in the previous year – Miss J Johnston and Mrs J Hobbs.

The proposal to have a 'Day of Giving' along with the Anniversary service as a practical act of re-commitment was approved, funds raised to be used particularly towards the new AV system about to be installed and essential rewiring. This would be the first 'Day of Giving' of the united congregation. Given that our finances for the year were projecting a £30,000 deficit, it was considered that the Day of Giving income be used for church purposes only.

The session recognised a need to make the congregation more aware of the charitable giving from the Thrift Shop funds raised in the church's name. As the regular fund-raising branch of our united church, 33% of profit raised was set aside to be donated to other charities.

We agreed to invite members of the congregation to suggest places which could benefit from our financial outreach. You may have noticed that this has been requested in recent intimations. Please do take up this opportunity...

The Session will have met again just before this Newsletter comes to you, and we will be glad to have our minister back at the helm of this, our ship... But we will all appreciate your support and prayers in the busy-ness of the coming year, and we assure you of our support and prayers in return

Mary Gordon, Joint Session Clerk

Funerals

Mrs Agnes Naples (Nanna) - died 26th May 2025 - funeral 23rd June 2025

Mrs Jean Whyte - died 10th June 2025 - funeral 25th June 2025

Mr Peter Johnstone - died 24th June 2025 - funeral 25th July 2025

Mrs Sheila Watters - died 29th June 2025 - funeral 28th July 2025

Mrs Margaret Thomson - died 30th June 2025 - funeral 4th August 2025

Mrs Julia Allison - died 20th July 2025 - funeral 7th August 2025

Mr Robert Dickson - died 8th August 2025 - funeral 1st September 2025

Mr Ian Bulloch - died 18th August 2025 - funeral on 2nd September 2025

Mr James Hamilton - died 23rd August 2025 - funeral 16th September 2025

Mr Stevenson Ross - died 16th September 2025 - funeral on 7th October 2025

Mrs Margaret Ross (Maggie) - died 18th September 2025 - funeral on 13th October 2025

Stepping Stones

Bereavement Support

from Cockenzie and Port Seton Parish Church

Stepping Stones



*A Local Bereavement
Support Programme*

Helping you at a difficult time

The *Stepping Stones* bereavement-support drop-in sessions in the Port Seton Community Centre have been running for over a year now. Numbers have been small, but the value of the sharing has clearly been important to those who've come along.

One lady who'd been coming since the sessions began, had clearly benefitted from the sharing we facilitate. Living alone after her husband died, she has a good family and understands herself well enough. But she had no one with whom to talk things through and check out the normality of her grief. In October, she thanked us for what we'd done for her and told us she was ready to go forward and trust her own resources. "I've learned a lot from our time together," she told us.

"It's been so good that you've been here." That sums up what *Stepping Stones* can offer: a gentle, supportive sharing; learning from one another; finding out what's normal; being listened to – especially when folk have stopped asking how you are; being reassured; growing in confidence.

Do you know of anyone who would benefit from what *Stepping Stones* offers? Might you benefit yourself? And remember, that before and after Christmas, and at the beginning of a new year, things can often be more difficult if you're living with loss.

The drop-in sessions take place on the second Tuesday of every month, in the **Port Seton Community Centre**, from **7pm to 8.30pm**. Our future dates are **9th December 2025, 13th January, 10th February, 10th March, 14th April 2026**.

Please publicise this as widely as possible. Further information is available from **steppingstones.mail@gmail.com**, or from **Tom Gordon** at **01875 812262**.

Ministry of Flowers

The donations of money to the Flower Fund and the giving of flowers by members and friends of the Church are greatly appreciated. Receiving flowers from the Church Family is a great support to those who are ill or who have been bereaved and also brings joy to those celebrating special birthdays and anniversaries.

If you wish to donate money to the Flower Fund or give flowers to decorate the Sanctuary on a Sunday please speak to Hilary Mack or Catherine Lyon. Some of you may wish to provide and arrange your own flowers but please let Hilary or Catherine know.

There is also a diary available for you to select a specific Sunday to provide the flowers for the Sanctuary in memory of loved ones. The 2026 diary will be available at the beginning of December for you to select your preferred date.

If you have any questions about the provision of flowers please speak to Hilary, Catherine or any member of the Pastoral Care Team.

Lyn Marshall and Elizabeth Malcolm.



Delivery of Flowers

We desperately need volunteers to deliver flowers on a Sunday. If you feel able to help please give your name to Lyn Marshall or Elizabeth Malcolm.

Safeguarding

The work to ensure a safe church for all carries on with those people needing a full PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) is almost completed.

There are currently two people sharing the job of Safeguarding Coordinator. Linda Bradley and Christine Maclean. Either or both are around at church most Sundays to answer any queries you might have.

Changes to the legislation earlier in the year has brought more people into the catchment for being checked. It means that people serving on committees or regarded as having influence on church matters need to be checked. Sometimes it will mean a full PVG check and for other posts a Basic Disclosure will suffice. Either of the coordinators would be able to advise you which is required.

We are always available to help you through this process and glad to help make it as smooth as possible.

Full PVG checks are currently paid for the Scottish Government whilst Basic Disclosures are the responsibility of the individual. The Kirk Session has agreed to fund these payments (£25 per person): this seems fair as people volunteering give of their time and skills and the Kirk Session agreed it was appropriate to pay for these Basic Disclosures on behalf of those needing them to continue to volunteer for the church.

A reminder to all that the responsibility of keeping children and vulnerable people safe does not lie with any individual - all of us need to be vigilant and if we see something that makes us uncomfortable or causes us to feel something is not quite as it should be, then please talk to one of the coordinators. If any further action was to be needed, then they would help you through it.

Help to keep the church safe for all.

Christine and Linda, Safeguarding coordinators

The following Tribute was delivered by Rev Tom Gordon, Interim Moderator in memory of Ian Bulloch at the Kirk Session on 17th September 2025

Ian Bulloch, Elder at Cockenzie and Port Seton Parish Church, died on 18th August 2025, aged 78.

Born in Glasgow on 22nd February 1947, Ian's family lived in the Knightswood area of the city. Family and faith were integral to Ian's upbringing. Sunday School and Church life for him and his brother, Derek, and the involvement of his parents, grandparents and other family with Knightswood Baptist Church, gave Ian the core of a Christian faith which was to be a sustaining feature of his years of witness and service.

Time in St David's Church of Scotland reinforced his personal faith. Marriage to Janice in 1970, and the arrival of Sheila, Moira and Fiona, continued the importance of a loving family. Involvement with St George's Tron and training in the Bible Training Institute led Ian and Janice to missionary work in Ethiopia, with Ian's accountancy qualifications utilised in the service of the Sudan Interior Mission. A return to Scotland brought the family to Longniddry, and Ian was soon employed as an accountant with Capital Copiers, a role he filled with distinction and diligence until his retirement.

Christian Service mattered to Ian Bulloch. He was a respected, popular and faithful Elder in this congregation, joining the Kirk Session in June 1979. Over 46 years, he served in many roles, more recently as Congregational Treasurer, worship leader, preacher, member of the *Stepping Stones* bereavement support team, and Presbytery Elder. He gave his expertise to Committees of the former Lothian Presbytery over many years, including serving as Moderator, a role he carried out with typical sensitivity, humility and presence.

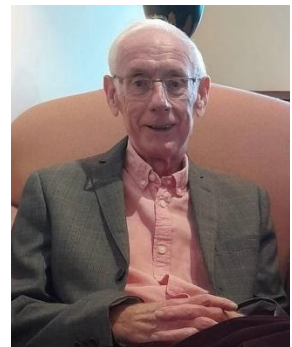
Ian's recent ill-health saw no diminishing of his friendships, commitment to family, concern for this congregation, prayerfulness and strength of faith. He was regularly at both the 10am and 11am services with Janice. His pawky sense of humour and wry grin continued to endear him to his friends and left us all with an even greater admiration at his fortitude. He died as he would have wished: at home, in the presence of his loving family; at home, in the faithful arms of his Lord and Saviour.

Norman Barr reminded us at Ian's service that, in his youth, his friend was called "wee Ian". But at the memorial service on 2nd September, we gave thanks for a man who was big in faith, big in our respect, big in his Christian witness and service, big in his love for his family, and big in our memories. Ian will be much missed.

And at this time of loss, our prayers are with his wife Janice, his family, Sheila and Amanda, Moira and Colin, Fiona and Scott, and two loved and loving granddaughters – whom Ian adored – Sophie and Megan, so that they, and all who mourn, will know God's blessing, comfort and peace.

Rev Tom Gordon

Janice and family would like to thank everyone for the love and support shown during Ian's illness and in our loss. We were overwhelmed by the many cards and flowers sent to the family. Thanks also to all who attended Ian's funeral and Thanksgiving Service. We have been touched by the generosity shown through the collection made on the day - £1,000 which was topped up through our JustGiving page in his memory. £1,315 has been donated to Cancer Research UK.





Through the pages of this newsletter, I wanted to thank you for your kindness and support to both me and to my family in recent months since Julia's passing in July.

It's hard to describe the effect losing her has had on us as a family. We miss her every day. She helped us and she inspired us and we were moved by how resilient she was during her illness.

We live with fond memories, transformed by having known and loved her. You were wonderful with her during that time, and you continue to support us even now.

I want to thank Tom Gordon and Marilyn Steele in particular, along with our worship leaders for "stepping up" during my absence.

As I look around Church on a Sunday morning, I see many of you who have also known grief, some in very recent times too. We journey together. *With love and thanks, Robin*



Isabel Stirling wishes to thank everyone for flowers cards and phone calls she received on the death of her mum Maggie Ross. She would also like to thank the ladies of the church for the lovely tea they put on after the thanksgiving service in the church. It was kind of you all to give up time and make this possible. Also to thank Marilyn Steele for the lovely service she gave both at crematorium and also at the memorial service in the church, which was well attended. It was much appreciated.



I am extremely grateful for all the love, support, prayers and best wishes I received before and after my surgery. Also, for the love and prayers when my son in law passed away. Many thanks to you all. *Irene Watson*



Margaret Bellany would like to thank the Church for the flowers, cards, visits and phone calls she received during her recent illnesses. They were all very much appreciated.

Property Report

Over the summer there have been various repairs carried out to the buildings. The kitchen roof, gutters and woodwork have been repaired with light bulbs in the Church and the rear Fire Escape replaced.

However, the major piece of work carried out was an electrical safety check to the Church and Hall which we are legally required to carry out every 5 years. The report confirmed what the Property Committee thought, that the wiring in the Church which was last replaced in 1975 was not fit for purpose and needs to be replaced urgently. The hall was re-wired in 2018, but some relatively minor issues were found which need addressing. Costs will be obtained shortly, especially for the Church re-wiring but it will be quite a complex procedure as a Building Warrant will be required and that will likely take some time. Historic Scotland will also become involved as well, due to the building being a Grade A Listed Building.

Coupled with the above we are investigating if the heating in the Church can be replaced to something more economic and at the same time can better use of the space at the front of the sanctuary be better used.

These are all large pieces of work and professional assistance will be required. A Property Subgroup has been set up to drive these projects forward and when appropriate proposals will be brought before the Congregation.

The new AV system has been installed in the hall and, hopefully, it will also be installed in the Church before the start of the Advent Season.

John Murdoch, Property Convenor

Finance report

At the time of writing, the sum raised at our Gift Day is **£6992**. This is a wonderful amount, and grateful thanks are extended to everyone who gave so generously. When the Gift Aid claim is submitted, this figure will rise to over £8000 – a fantastic amount indeed!

It shows the value of Gift Aid, when the government contributes 25% of giving at no cost to you (provided you are an Income Taxpayer, which nearly everyone is nowadays).

Looking ahead to next year, if you are able, please consider if you can increase your regular giving to the church. We all know the effects of inflation, and the church is affected by that, e.g. in energy bills and other costs.

In conclusion, thank you to everyone for your contributions over the year – they literally keep the church functioning!

Colin Sutherland. Treasurer

Friday Drop In Cafe

The Friday Drop In continues to be well supported by the Community. We were entertained on the 7th of November by John Edmond. A great time was had by all singing along to popular songs from the 60s,70s,80, and 90s as well as some Scottish favourites. The next Drop In date is the 5th December when we will be entertained by Alex Hodgson.



The dates for 2026 are:
February 6th - Glenkinchie
March 13th - Eddie Raven
April. 10th - John Edmond
May 1st. - Alex Hodgson
June 5th – Kingsley

Please come along and enjoy the music and the chat over tea/ coffee and tasty treats. A warm welcome awaits.

Join us this Christmas

Sunday 14th December

11a.m Service of Readings and Carols

Sunday 21st December

**11a.m All-Age Family Service
(followed by Lunch in the hall)**

Wednesday 24th December (Christmas Eve)

6.30pm Family Christmas Eve Service

**11.30pm Watchnight Service
(with singing from 11.15pm)**

Thursday 25th December (Christmas Day)

**10.30am Short Christmas Family Day Service
with Rev Tom Gordon**





Kids Kirk is back! The 2025/26 session started in October following Paul through his travels from Jerusalem to Damascus. Our theme is Take Away which was written by Scripture Union and adapted by Sheila. Each month we will chart Paul's adventures and his walk with Jesus and the early church. We have had small numbers over the past couple of months, but we have contact with 20 families in the village.

We are planning a Christmas event on the **Saturday 13th December**, to share the good news of the Birth of our Saviour. The boys and girls are excited! The team are also excited, but are very small! If you feel you can help in any way, please get in touch with Sheila or Amanda - all help will be welcome.

We will be running a family time from 12.15pm on the 13th December to share in the excitement and fun and feasting of a Christmas at **Kids Kirk**. Please come along to support the children AND the team.

Please contact Sheila to request further information.

KidsKirkLeaders@outlook.com or text - 07980 059 974.

God Bless, *Sheila, Amanda, and team*



Our creative crafters have made stars, bells and angels to decorate the village over Christmas.

Look out for them take one home – post your pictures on our Facebook page





Christmas

WORD SEARCH

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

Silent Night
Miracle
Savior
Three Kings

Gold
Nativity
Angels
Star

Rejoice
Faith
Baby Jesus
Shepherd

OUR WORSHIP

**Rev Robin Allison will conduct worship.
unless otherwise stated.**



Sunday 30th November – 1st in Advent

10.00am All-Age Worship – Anne Sutherland

11.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 7th December – 2nd in Advent

10.00am All-Age Worship – Tom Gordon

11.00am Morning Worship – with Sacrament of Holy Communion

Sunday 14th December – 3rd in Advent

10.00am All-Age Worship – Amanda Johnston

11.00am Morning Worship – Lessons and Carols

See page 13 for our Christmas Services

Sunday 28th December – Last Sunday of the year

NO 10.00am Service

11.00am Morning Worship – Marilyn Steele

Sunday 4th January 2026 – First Sunday of the New Year

NO 10.00am Service

11.00am Morning Worship – Rev Tom Gordon

Sunday 11th January

10.00am All-Age Worship – Sandra Stewart

11.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 18th January

10.00am All-Age Worship – George Smith

11.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 25th January

10.00am All-Age Worship – Rev Robin Allison

11.00am Morning Worship



Church Calendar

Sunday

10:00am - All-age Worship (in Hall, led by the worship team)

11.00am - Morning Worship

Monday

6.00-8.30pm - Beavers and Cubs

Tuesday

10.00am - Walking Group

2.00-3.30pm – Chest, Heart and Stroke Group (every second week)

6.00-7.30pm – Brownies

7.00pm - Prayer Meeting (on zoom)

8.00-10pm - AA Group

Wednesday

10.30am - Crafters (1st Wednesday of month)

1.30-3.00pm - Indoor Curling (1st and Last of month)

1.30-3.00pm - Get Together (2nd of month)

10.00am – 12noon – Coffee and Chat (4th Wednesday of month)

5.00-6.15pm – Rainbows

7.15pm - The Guild (2nd of month)

Thursday

6.30-8.00pm - Brownies

Friday

10.30-12noon - Keep Fit Class

10.00am-2.00pm - AA Group

2.00-4.00pm Drop-In (1st Friday of the month)

7.00pm-9.00pm - Scouts

Saturday

10.00am-12 noon - Kids Kirk (3rd Saturday of month) (Sept-June)



Contact us:

CPSParishChurch@outlook.com



facebook.com/cockenzieandportsetonparishchurch



instagram.com/cps_parish_church



www.cockenzieandportsetonparishchurch.co.uk



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Cockenzie and Port Seton Parish Church (Church of Scotland)
Scottish Charity SC004630