Menstrie Parish Church of Scotland

NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2026

Note from the Manse

It is early August, the school holidays are drawing to a close and I am sitting at the desk pondering Psalm 133, the text for this coming Sunday. The Psalm starts "*How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!*"

I always remember the holidays being when our family got together and did things together – Mum & Dad, siblings, Aunts and Uncles, Cousins – all of us in a damp tent somewhere in Scotland, England or Wales, but laughing, playing games, eating too much. Happy to be living together.

Then I look at the news, people shot and killed at a food festival in the USA, a car driven into a crowd in Germany, Ukraine & Russia still in conflict, The USA and Iran still firing missiles at each other.

We have spent a few weeks in church looking at Scripture and why we should read and meditate on the contents of God's word, could it be to remind us of what could be if we all just were a little more tolerant. But then again Menstrie Parish Church had a lovely afternoon in July when we sat in the Manse garden sharing fellowship and barbeque, so some of us still know how to live in unity.

Scripture also tells us to pray constantly and the world is certainly in need of prayer,
A small period of time each day, read scripture, think about what you have read, then pray for God to help you put His word into action.

In between considering scripture and BBQ's we have been working on the next phase of bringing the congregations of Alva and Menstrie together into Hillfoots West Parish Church. Following the congregational vote in June, Perth Presbytery agreed that the two churches should be united in February 2027 when Revd Jim McNeil retires. There is a short article on the next steps later in this Newsletter but if you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask, there are 'stupid questions' and they are the ones you don't ask.

Enjoy the summer, spend time where you can with family and friends, for it is "good and pleasant, when God's people live together in unity!"

As always – every blessing
Mike, Fe, Archie & Sam.

Hillfoots West – current progress (Aug 2026)

Following the congregational and Kirk Session votes in June 2026 – the presbytery of Perth confirmed that the Parishes of Alva and Menstrie would enter into a union in February 2027 when Revd Jim McNeil retires.

A small steering group of the ministers and session clerks of both churches, deputy session clerk of Alva and treasurer of Menstrie, have been meeting to try and steer the best path through all the changes required and attempting to ensure that all the procedures are updated correctly and we don't miss anything.

However, we will miss somethings so please be gentle and if you think there is something we should be thinking about please mention it to one of the steering group or to an elder.

A joint Kirk Session meeting has been arranged for August 22nd where we hope to look at how to select a Session clerk and deputy Session clerk for the new united charge, start discussions on how we could best set up the united kirk session, such as numbers, working groups, length of service, how to select who serves. All of which will be agreed by the elders for this is an area which is solely the responsibility of the Kirk Sessions.

We will also be asking the current working groups to start talking to each other so we can be as prepared as we can be before February comes along.

One area which has been brought forward, so we can test and adjust as required whilst there are still two ministers around, is worship.

So as of 13th September 2026 Alva Parish Church will meet for worship at 10 AM and Menstrie Parish Church will meet for worship at 11:30 AM. The same worship team will lead the service in each church. There will have to be exceptions to this such as Remembrance Sunday but details for these different days will be publicised nearer the time.

So; progress is being made to bring the union into reality in the best shape we can, as more information is available it will be intimated, but as always questions are always acceptable.

Blessings
Mike

Celebration of 80 years of Christian Aid UK

To help celebrate 80 years since the founding of Christian Aid, Menstrie Parish Church planted a fruit tree in the grounds of Menstrie Primary School.

The message is an old one - Give me an apple and I eat for one meal, give me an apple tree and I eat for many years. With the Damson Tree added to the small Orchard in the school grounds, hopefully the pupils will be learning about how to help feed the world for many years.

Photo shows the Minister of Menstrie Parish Church, Chair of Menstrie Community Council, Depute Head teacher Menstrie Primary School and pupils from Menstrie Primary School.

100th Birthday Celebration

Congratulations

Over 45 family, friends and Church members attended to celebrate the 100th birthday of Mrs Jenny Anderson in the Church Hall after the morning service recently.
Also present was the Depute Lord Provost, Mrs Jane McTaggart. Mrs Sheila Bulloch, Depute Lord Lieutenant and Mrs Eileen Turnbull Chairperson Menstrie Community Council.
The hall was beautifully decorated and much admired by everyone.
A delicious Afternoon tea was prepared & served by the Outreach Group from donations received.

Thanks

Many thanks to all the members of Menstrie Parish Church for their contribution and attendance at the 100th birthday for Jenny Anderson. The hall was decorated superbly and the afternoon tea was fantastic, Jenny enjoyed seeing old friends and really appreciated the efforts of everyone.

Thank you from the Anderson family.

Finance Report

With the decision taken to move into Union with Alva Parish Church there is considerable preparation to be undertaken to create, maintain and manage the new combined church accounts for Hillfoots West.

The two finance teams from both Churches have held sharing meetings for quite some time and have now met together on Tuesday 4th August to discuss and take forward all that needs to be done to ensure the financial unification proceeds safely and correctly.

Our income mainly derives from 3 main sources- Members' giving; Fundraising; and Letting income. It is members' giving that is the largest source. This year we have also recently benefitted from a generous Legacy of £3000.

It is already clear that financial savings can be made with the new union. For us here in Menstrie this is a positive step as it was proving ever harder to achieve a balanced budget without having to dip into reserves held in Edinburgh. The deficit encountered in 2025 is testament to this. We will need to access our reserves this year to ensure we have our Church and Hall kept in first class condition.

Almost £1500 has just been spent to have the damaged plasterwork on the Church Roof just above

the Font repaired. External slating on the Church still needs to be assessed and repaired. Improvements to the condition of the grounds around the buildings are also essential.

I must again thank all of our members who regularly give financially to the Church for your support and generosity. It is this that will ensure we continue to have a place of worship in the village.

Jim McAlpine

Easter Journey

Once again. We welcomed pupils from Menstrie Primary School to experience the Easter story in a meaningful way. An enjoyable morning for children and adults alike.

Gala Day

We again organised the tea stall at the Gala Day. The Gala was fairly busy and it was nice to see the Community supporting the event. We were blessed with the weather this year. We raised £415 for Church funds and a further £485 from the sale of cake & candy. A very successful afternoon which was enjoyed by all. Thanks to all who donated so generously, helped on the day or came along for a cuppa & cake.

Manse BBQ

On the 11th July, on a sunny day we were invited to a BBQ in the Manse garden. The food was plentiful and enjoyed by all.

Thanks to Mike and Fe for the hospitality and thanks to all who helped. This was a great community event.

Christian Aid Soup Lunch

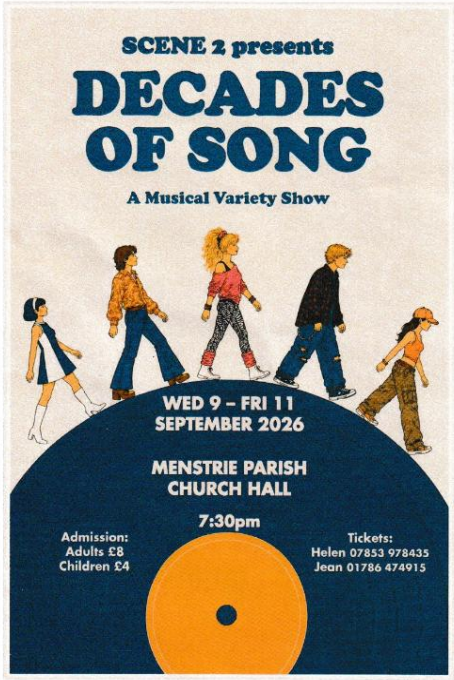
We had our annual soup lunch for Christian Aid on Sunday the 7th of June.

Thanks to the generosity of our members the sum of £380 was raised and once Christian Aid have claimed back the tax this figure will rise to £425. Once again a big thank you to all those who contributed and to all those who set up the rooms and prepared and served the soup.

It was a time of great fellowship where we could show, in our own way, that we wanted to help those in the world who are not as fortunate as we are.

Scene 2

Once again Scene 2 are presenting their show in the church hall. Do come along for an enjoyable evening of Decades of Song.



The Flower Diary

The flower diary is now open for all those who wish to contribute to the flower arrangements on a certain Sunday.
Please contact Nancy Stewart or Heather Bain.

A WEE THANK YOU from Menstrie United Free Church

Thank you for your support for the third year of Coffee, Cake and Chat. Those six weeks were a lovely time of fellowship as we welcomed people from Menstrie Parish and our sister church in Sauchie along with other visitors and friends. A special thank you for the very generous donations which came to £300. We have divided this between The Leprosy Mission and Tearfund's Venezuela Earthquake Appeal.

With Best wishes,

Mary Hamilton

Soup lunches

We will be holding a Soup lunch after morning service on;

Sunday 6th September when we will be joined by members of Alva Parish Church,

and

Sunday 6th December in aid of Poppy Scotland.

Please come along and join us for soup, a cuppa and a chat with friend.

Guild

Meetings are held on the last Monday of the month at 2.30 pm in Rooms 2/3 (except December).

The new session starts on Monday 28th September when we are holding an Afternoon Tea and a Quiz.

We have a talk by Mary Bain-Lockhart who was our trainee OLM in October.

As the November meeting is on St Andrew's day we are having Scottish entertainment.

In December we go to Smugglers for our Christmas Lunch.

We start 2027 with our popular Burns Supper.

We are hosting a Musical evening on 22nd February.

(See further on in this newsletter for details.)

Our March meeting will be a talk and update on our project Bibles for Bairns.

On Saturday 24th April we are holding a Coffee morning with a cake & candy stall from 10 am -12 noon in rooms 2/3. This is in aid of our project "Bibles for Bairns" and also Church funds. Tickets on sale in March from any committee member. We hope you can support this event.

The AGM with musical entertainment is on Monday 26th April .

We think it is an interesting and varied syllabus hopefully to be enjoyed by all.

We look forward to welcoming back our members and new members would be made most welcome.

Blairlogie S.W.I Start back after the summer:

Monday 14th. September@ 7 pm in Rooms 2/3 of Menstrie Parish Church.

We meet on the 2nd Monday of the Month from September until May 2027.

We enjoy having a speaker or demonstration on our nights, followed by a cuppa with home baking, and we also have a small raffle.

Members and visitors are most welcome.

Ray Mcleod.

Guild Open Evening

The Guild are holding an open evening on Tuesday 22nd February at 7.30 in the Church. Delaney's Ceilidh Band are coming to entertain. All welcome to what should be a most enjoyable musical evening. Refreshments will be served in the church hall.
Donations received will be going to various charities.
Please make a note of the date.

Teas after Church Service on Sundays

Please pop into Rooms 2/3 after the morning service for a cuppa, biscuit and a chat.

The rota is on the noticeboard outside Room 1.

Tea in 2

T in 2 is held every Wednesday morning from 10.30 am to 11.30 am in Rooms 2/3.
Please come along and join us for a cuppa and a chat. Meet up with friends.
The rota is on the noticeboard outside room 1.

The Gate

We continue to support the Gate Food bank in Alloa. Donations of dried goods (tins, packets or boxes) can be left in the Church vestibule or at the front of the Church below PowerPoint. If you prefer, monetary donations are most acceptable and can be given to Ian Watson. The Volunteers at the Gate can then purchase fresh produce.

Delivery is made after the last Sunday of each month.(except December). Thank you for your continued support.

The Bible Study group

This is resuming on Thursday 20th August, meeting at 7.30 pm in Room 1 in the church. We have decided to continue with our study on the book of Romans at Session 6. There are 5 weeks left and after that we will start The Bible Trek material.

We would be very pleased to welcome others to enjoy the study and fellowship with us and of course coffee and biscuits.

If you need any more information please contact Fiona Kane (07713161975) or Sandra Small (01259 761249)

Quiz Night

A date for your diary. Keep the date free

We are again holding a Quiz night in the Church Hall on: Friday 30th October at 7.30 pm

Quizmaster - Ricky Cassidy

Bring your own refreshments

Tickets (£5.00)per person will be on sale in October and can be purchased from Janette, Annette or Laura. Teams of no more than 6 persons please.

Parish Bereavements

Funerals

Kenneth McVey	30th March 26
May Cameron	21st May 26
Ann Lyle	22nd May 26
Ronald Cox	3rd July 26
Marion McDonald	13th Aug 26

Condolences are sent to all the families.

John 14:2 NIV
"My father's house has many rooms: if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?"

May Cameron 1925 -2026

Thanks

Jamie and I would like to thank Rev Mike, members of the Session and the Congregation for the many cards, gifts and flowers we received at the time of Kenneth's passing. We have been overwhelmed by the love and kindness shown to us. I would also like to thank you all for the card from the congregation and the beautiful flowers from the Church. Jamie and I appreciate your kindness so much.

Lilian

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Noreen and her daughter Joan would like to thank everyone for the cards, flowers and messages of sympathy received and kindness shown when Ron died. It was greatly appreciated.

Noreen Cox

Christmas Fayre

We are pleased to hold our annual Christmas Fayre in November. Keep a note of the date – Saturday 30th November from 10.00 am to 1 pm in the Church Hall.
There will be the usual stalls, Various Crafts, Cake & Candy, Adult tombola, Guess the Whisky, Raffle and many more.
Refreshments will be served in Rooms 2/3.
Tickets priced at £4.00 will be on sale in October and can be purchased from any elder or just pay at the door. Entry for primary school children is free.
Any donations can be handed in between 3 pm & 4 pm on Friday afternoon the 29th or on at 9 am on Saturday morning. We look forward to welcoming you.

To Welcome You in Church

August

23rd Heather Bain, Laura Christie

30th Susan Delaney, Janette Hunter

September

6th Mike Hamilton, Julie Lucas

13th Jim McAlpine, Calum McLeod

20th Richard Paterson, Sandra Small

27th Jim Young, Annette Young

October

4th Graham Hunter, Jill Ross

11th Heather Bain, Laura Christie

18th Susan Delaney. Janette Hunter

25th Mike Hamiton, Julie Lucas

November

1st Jim McAlpine, Calum McLeod

8th Richard Paterson, Sandra Small

15th Jim Young, Annette Young

22nd Graham Hunter, Jill Ross

29th Heather Bain, Laura Christie

December

6th Susan Delaney, Janette Hunter

13th Mike Hamilton, Julie Lucas

20th Jim McAlpine, Calum McLeod

27th Richard Paterson, Sandra Small

January 2027

3rd Jim Young, Annette Young

10th Graham Hunter, Jill Ross

17th Heather Bain, Laura Christie

24th Susan Delaney, Janette Hunter

31st Mike Hamiton, Julie Lucas

February

7th Mike Hamiton, Julie Lucas

14th Richard Paterson, Sandra Small

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