

CAIRNGRYFFE PARISH CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2025



**YOU ARE WARMLY INVITED TO OUR
CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION
ON SUNDAY 2nd NOVEMBER 2025 at 11.00am.**

Cairngryffe Parish Church: *Charity Number – SC 017001*

From our Interim Moderator

Dear members and friends in Cairngryffe Church,

Using Our Gifts and Talents for the Good of Others

As Christians, we believe that every gift and talent we possess is a blessing from God, given not only for our personal fulfilment but for the service of others and the building up of His Kingdom. Scripture reminds us in **1 Peter 4:10**:

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

God, in His wisdom, created each of us uniquely. Some are gifted with words, others with compassion, leadership, creativity, or hands skilled in labor. These gifts are not accidental—they are intentional tools placed in our hands to reflect God's love and bring hope, healing, and light to the world.

When we use our talents for the benefit of others, we imitate Christ, who came not to be served, but to serve. He healed the sick, taught the ignorant, comforted the broken, and gave His life for humanity. In the same way, our talents are most meaningful when they are shared generously and humbly.

Moreover, using our gifts for others is an act of worship. It is a way of saying “thank you” to God, acknowledging that our abilities are not from us alone but from Him. When we give of ourselves, we also grow spiritually—learning empathy, patience, and sacrificial love.

Let us remember the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14–30), where the master entrusted his servants with various amounts. The ones who invested and used what they were given were praised, while the one who hid his talent out of fear was rebuked. The message is clear: our gifts are meant to be put to use, not buried in self-doubt or selfishness.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for the gifts You have placed in me. Help me to recognize them, to grow them, and to use them not for my glory, but for the good of others and for Your purpose. Teach me to be generous, humble, and faithful in serving those around me. Amen.

Rev. Louise Mackay

Interim Moderator

Although we do not have our own minister our church is always available for family life events: baptisms, weddings and funerals; as Interim Moderator Rev Louise Mackay ensures that a minister is available when we need one.

News from the Session

Time flies, and we are already in October. This is when we come up to one of our busier times of year in the church calendar. On the 19th October we welcome the Rev Bill Buchan to lead us in worship for our Harvest Thanksgiving. The service will be followed by a lunch in the church.

Communion will be held on the 2nd November; our Interim Moderator Rev Louise Mackay will celebrate Communion with us. On Remembrance Sunday 9th November we welcome back Alan Grant to lead our worship. On Armistices' Day, Tuesday 11th November the church will be open 10.30- 12.00 for anyone who wants to visit for a time of quiet reflection.

Our Worship Team will be leading most of our services in the run up to Christmas. Advent Services start on the 30th of November and throughout Advent the church will gradually become more decorated as we build up to our Celebrations of Christmas.

This year has already seen a number of events. The 80th Anniversary of VE Day was celebrated on the 10th of May with a special service see Tootsie's story.

Often on Remembrance Sunday we tend to concentrate our thoughts on those who died during the Great War but this year many of us will remember family and friends who were involved in World War 2.

This year we have welcomed a number of visitors to our church both at Sunday Worship and to see our church. In June we welcomed staff from the Salvation Army and had a very enjoyable time with them. In September we were open on both the Saturday and Sunday of Doors Open Days. Our beautiful stained glass was much appreciated by the visitors, as this year's theme for Doors Open Days was windows on the past doors to the future. It is always a great pleasure to share time with our visitors.

A big thank you is also due for your generosity; our Christian Aid Donation in May was £436.

We very much depend on your generosity and support to keep our church active and open. The Church of Scotland's Mission Planning process looks at how we function as a church, while Sunday worship remains important, we are also expected to have other outreach activities such as our Saturday all age events, and link into our local communities. Please continue to support all of our activities.

Rosmairi J Galloway

Session Clerk.

Presbytery Mission Planning Process Update

Locally, the Kirk Session and congregation of Symington church voted for the dissolution of the congregation, this taking place on 29th June 2025 with the church being closed on that date. The manse in Symington, in which we hold a 50% share, is to be sold, with our share of the proceeds going to the General Fabric Fund for our use for fabric purposes. On 31st August votes were held at both Cairngryffe and Libberton and Quothquan to sever our linkage and on the same date L & Q, Biggar and Blackmount voted to form a union. At the time of writing, the date for the Service of Union has still to be determined. We welcome those members of both Libberton and Quothquan and Symington Churches who have started to join us in Sunday worship.

Progress on our own proposed union with Douglas Valley and Upper Clyde has been delayed by the ill health of Rev Dr Nikki MacDonald, minister at Upper Clyde, a meeting with members of the P&IC took place on 6th October at which some proposals on the way forward were presented. Further meetings with Douglas Valley, Upper Clyde and representatives from Presbytery will take place in the near future.

Once the Basis of Union has been agreed a congregational vote will be held to approve the plan.

INFORMATION

Interim Moderator: Rev Louise Mackay, Minister of Lanark, St Nicholas'

Tel: 01555 661936

Session Clerk: Dr Rosmairi Galloway, Pepperknowes, Carmichael, Biggar
ML12 6PH

Mobile: 07733446567

Prayer Promoter: Liz Hiddleston Tel; 018999 221664

Visit Our Website: www.cairngryffekirk.org.uk **Webmaster:** Jim Watt

A digital copy of the Newsletter is available on our website.

Presbytery Report

At the meeting of Presbytery on 6th September Rev Derek Gunn was thanked for his services as Moderator and his successor, Rev Scott Burton was inducted as Moderator for the 2025-26 session.

The Planning and Implementation Committee (P&IC) continue to work to progress the Presbytery Plan. Several unions have taken place resulting in the closure of a number of buildings, with these, along with a number of manses, being put up for sale by the General Trustees. In several cases the sitting minister of one of the legacy congregations has been accepted by the other congregations and has been introduced as the minister of the united charge. Where the united charge has resulted in a vacancy, permission to call has been granted on the basis of a reviewable charge, this being the presumed norm from now on. In some other areas there have been changes made to the Presbytery Plan due to local circumstances or congregations having difficulty in coming to agreement.

For local information see **Presbytery Mission Planning Process Update**

A training course for those interested in conducting funerals was proposed, however, due to a lack of interest it has been postponed until next year.

The next Presbytery meeting is on 25th October.

Jim Watt,

Presbytery Elder

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED

Mrs Flora Bennie, formerly of Cygnetbank, Hyndfordbridge. Mrs Bennie funeral was held in the church on 6th June 2025 before she was laid to rest beside her late husband Matt in the cemetery. Mrs Bennie was known to many as an accomplished pianist who played for the Scottish Country Dance Society for many years as well as running the Bed & Breakfast at Cygnetbank. She moved to Lesmahagow in her later years to be nearer her daughter Fiona and family. We extend our sympathy to Fiona and family.

Mr James Smith, Carmichael. Jim's funeral was held in the church on 19th of June. Jim was born in Carmichael, went to Carmichael Primary School and lived and worked for most of his adult life in Carmichael. He trained as a joiner, but most of his working life was in agriculture. Jim leaves his wife Margaret, children Margaret, Iain and Robert. We extend our sympathy to Margaret and family.

The family would like to thank everybody who generously contributed to the collection for Alzheimer Scotland, a total of £486 was raised.

Mr Richard Carmichael of Carmichael, passed away in early July a private family funeral took place. Mr Carmichael and his family moved from New Zealand to Carmichael Estate over 40years ago and was well known locally. He leaves his wife Patricia, and children Andrew, Marama and Sarah. We extend our sympathy to his wife Patricia and family.

ORGANISATIONS

GUILD:



Meetings are held in Thankerton Bowling Club at 2.00pm

The first meeting took place on Wednesday 8th October, Favourite Poem/Reading was the topic for the meeting.

The next Guild Meetings are:

Wednesday 12th November Crafts

Wednesday 10th December Christmas Celebration

For further information about the Guild please contact Secretary Elizabeth Forbes on 01555 640018/078892649

EVERYOUNG

The Everyoung Group meets in Thankerton Bowling Club at 2pm on Thursdays with a speaker, tea and a blether.

The first meeting took place on 9th October when David Henry from Blackshouse gave a very interesting talk about The Search for my Napoleonic Ancestor and the Battle of Waterloo.

Dates October 2025- April 2026.

October 2025

23rd – Stewart Houston (Biggar) - More tales from the Courts

November 2025

13th – Mary Gilbert (Pettinain) – A Photographic Safari

27th – Margaret Steele (Thankerton) - Guide Dogs

December 2025

4th Dec - Christmas Lunch (12.30 for 1.00pm) – The Caddyshack at Carnwath Golf Club

January 2026

8th – John Wilcox (Carluke) – Scottish Gold

22nd – Alan & Emma Gardiner (Elsrickle) – Scottish music selections.

February 2026

12th – Alan Grant (Law) - Mining - Now You See It: Now You Don't

26th– Donald Harley (Carmichael) - Underwater Adventures in the Indo Pacific – Exploring the Coral Triangle.

March 2026

12th – Rosmairi, Jessie & Charlie read Linmill Stories (in Scots)

26th – Laura Barclay (Carluke) – The History of R&W Scott, Carluke

April 2026

9th – Fiona Marshall Smith (Carmichael) – Wing Commander ‘Hiram’ Marshall Smith DFC

23rd – Liz Clelland (Carluke) - The Camino de Santiago Trail

Contact Charlie Todd for further details on 01899 308327

CAIRNGRYFFE CUPPA, CRAFT & CHAT

Bring along a craft project you are working on and enjoy a couple of hours crafting and chatting.

Saturdays 22nd November 2025, 17th January 2026 and 21st February 2026,
1-3pm in the church.

Contact Rosmairi Galloway for further details on 07733 446567

The Light Within

In dazzling luminosity
reflecting God's triumphant Light;
embroidering Life's rich tapestry
with Autumn's brilliant, honeyed threads
of bronze and golden majesty.



In Time, God will reveal the Truth
of why we, too, must shed our leaves
- to our minds, inexplicable;
but God provides enlightenment
through mystery and parable.

For Seeds of Faith will germinate
within the Garden of the Soul;
hidden from sight beneath the snow,
in Springtime, we will see the Light
and Seeds of Love will start to grow.

Freda Stobo

Tootsie's Story



On Sunday, 11th May, at Cairngryffe (Carmichael) Kirk we commemorated the 80th Anniversary of V.E. Day and dedicated a new gravestone to commemorate the lives of a father and daughter. The daughter was Ann Scott Williamson, known as 'Bunty', who was born in Rigside in 1940 and who, after many years in Heathhall, Dumfries chose to be buried here in Carmichael Cemetery in 2017.

Bunty was the only child of Adam Williamson, known to everyone in Carmichael as 'Tootsie' Williamson and his wife Jane Collins from Ravenstruther. 'Tootsie' himself had been born in **Thankerton** on 1st March 1915. He was brought up by his grandmother, Granny Williamson, at Blackbog, near Warrenhill Farm, attending Covington Primary School until her sudden death in August 1927 when she was run down by a doctor's car, at which point the 12-year-old Adam was 'taken in' by his cousins, Tammy and Annie Johnston, at Roadman's Cottage, Carmichael, about 100 yards from Cairngryffe Kirk.

Tootsie started at Carmichael Primary on 23rd August 1927, under the legendary Mr Davy Megahy, and in those days he would have left school 2 years later, aged 14. He grew up to be a likeable, energetic, slightly wild teenager, who like many young men of his generation particularly enjoyed his motor bike. Our own graveyard extension played a regular, if unusual and irreverent, part in his life, since he liked nothing better on a Saturday evening, when the pubs closed, than to deliberately speed along Hyndford Road as he left Lanark, attracting the attention of the concealed police car. Chased out past the Loch and Winston Barracks, with no traffic lights on HFB, a right turn, then a left into Devonside Road. Pulling sufficiently ahead of them he would then turn into the graveyard and lay down the motorbike and himself behind the gravestones. Being conveniently located at the crossroads the police were nonplussed as to where he had gone and he was never caught.

In the late 30s he married Jane Collins from Ravenstruther and settled in Rigside where he worked, like his step-dad, as a Council Roadman, but by the time Bunty was born in 1940, Tootsie had already answered the call and enlisted in the local regiment, the Cameronians. After training he was posted initially to the 12th Battalion who in turn were posted to the Faroe Islands in



May 1942 for a year but were then disbanded and used as drafts to the Royal West Kents and the Essex Regiment.

Tootsie was posted to the 5th Battalion, Essex Regiment in the British 8th Army (the Desert Rats) in the Italian Campaign where he was killed on 22nd December 1943 at the Battle of Moro River on Italy's east coast, almost exactly opposite Rome on the west coast. He was laid to rest among fellow Scottish, Canadian and Indian troops who had also taken part in the battle, in the Moro River Canadian War Cemetery. With the loss of their breadwinner, Jane moved first to Lanark, then Ayr and then Dumfries where she was matron of children's homes. In time Bunty was to marry Anthony Watt, son of a Dumfries Provost.

Returning for a moment to Tootsie's foster-parents, the Johnstons of Roadman's Cottage. Tammy Johnston died in 1953 and Granny Johnston moved first to Butler's Cottage and then to Eastgate where she was the Todd family's immediate neighbour throughout my boyhood years. So, I heard about Tootsie not only from my dad but also from his foster mum over 60 years ago. My dad said that the word which came back from Italy about his death was that, pinned down by heavy fire from a German Spandau machine gun, Tootsie eventually cracked, but he didn't turn and run, instead like a true Cameronian he picked up a Bren gun and singlehandedly charged the German gun position.

Bunty barely knew her father yet she never forgot him and chose, instead of being buried in her adopted town of Dumfries, to come home to Carmichael to lie within sight of the War Memorial where Tootsie is remembered.

Unfortunately, her son didn't make arrangements for a gravestone so I am indebted to Cairngryffe Kirk Session and Andrew Ironside for jointly providing and lettering the one we dedicated today. Thanks, are also due to our Session Clerk Rosmairi Galloway for making the wreaths which contain, like the Cameronian badge, 10 thistles and to Fiona Marshall Smith, daughter of Wing Commander Forgrave 'Hiram' Marshall Smith DFC, for laying the wreath at our War Memorial.

As we remember Bunty, who lies here, and her dad, 28-year-old Adam 'Tootsie' Williamson who was buried 82 years ago at Moro River Cemetery in Italy, I'll close with a quote from John Maxwell Edmonds (1875-1958), 'When You Go Home, Tell Them of Us and Say, For Your Tomorrow, We Gave Our Today'.

Charlie Todd.

CHARITIES



CHRISTIAN AID

We raised an incredible £436 for Christian Aid in May 2025. A big THANK YOU to all who helped, by donating their time, baking and money to this very worthwhile cause.

For more information about Christian Aid visit www.christianaid.org.uk

Christian Aid also run an annual book sale in Edinburgh, if you have any books that you would like to donate, please box them up and we will gather them up February – March 2026.

CHURCH of SCOTLAND STAMP APPEAL

Please collect any stamps that you get in the mail, the stamps should be left with a good margin of paper around them so that they are not damaged. A Collection Box will be available in the church December 2025 – January 2026.

Money raised from the sale of the stamps in 2025-2026 supports the work of the Al Ahli Hospital (Christian Hospital) in Northern Gaza.

For more information visit www.churchofscotland.org.uk/stamps

CLYDESDALE FOODBANK

Donations of non-perishable food and money for this local charity will be collected at the church during November.

For more information about the foodbank visit www.clydesdalefoodbank.org.uk

Sunday Worship in our neighbouring cluster churches

Douglas Valley: Douglas St Brides Church, Sundays at 10am

Rigside Community Hall, Sundays at 11.30am

On Souper Sundays; Lunch after 10am service at Douglas on Sundays 26th October and 16th November.

A Christmas Lunch will take place on 7th December 2025.

Upper Clyde in the church at Abington, Sundays at 10.30am.

Cairngryffe Worship November – December 2025

Sundays at 11.00am.

| Sunday | | Worship Leader |
|----------|--------------------|-------------------|
| November | | |
| 02 11 25 | Communion | Rev Louise Mackay |
| 09 11 25 | Remembrance Sunday | Alan Grant |
| 16 11 25 | | Alan Grant |
| 23 11 25 | | Rosmairi Galloway |
| 30 11 25 | Advent 1 | Suzanne Campbell |
| December | | |
| 07 12 25 | Advent 2 | Rosmairi Galloway |
| 14 12 25 | Advent 3 | Denham Macdougall |
| 21 12 25 | Advent 4 | Rodger Lindsay |
| 28 12 25 | End of Year | Suzanne Campbell |

Armistices' Day, Tuesday 11th November the church will be open 10.30- 12.00 for anyone who wants to visit for a time of quiet reflection.

Advent Afternoon of Carols, Crafts and Cake for Christmas.

In the church 1-3pm Saturday 6th December 2025.

This is an event for all ages and families, everybody welcome.

Dates and Times of special Christmas Services will be available in early December please see our website.

CAIRNGRYFFE Session Meeting Monday 3rd November 2025 7.30pm in the Church.

Details correct at time of publication, but may change depending on circumstances. Please check our website for any changes.