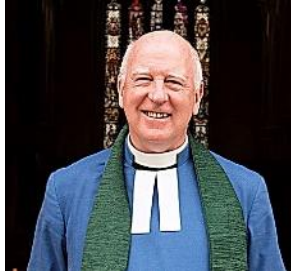


## The Minister

We are all living through a time when old customs and



systems are dissolving around us like sandcastles in the rising tide of new things.

We are happy to applaud the changes of the past with the enthusiasm of a revolutionary, but when we are faced with contemporary change, we are cautious and conservative. We intuitively recognise that change by its very nature is uncomfortable even divisive. Yet if we have no faith, no vision, no reason to believe in the future, we cannot fully possess it. How can we, if our eyes only look back, misty with the tears of nostalgia, rather than looking forward.

When Thomas Farriner (c. 1615 - 20 December 1670), baker to King Charles II, went to bed on 2 September 1666 all was well. He awoke at 1.00 am to discover that his house in Pudding Lane was on fire. He escaped the burning building, as did his wife, his daughter, and a servant but another maid, the first, but not the last victim of what came to

be known as the Great Fire of London, was not so fortunate. In the immediate aftermath of the Great Fire people only saw the terrible destruction the fire had wrought and the misery it had caused. It was only by degrees that it came to be seen that not only had the fire wiped out foul and plague-haunted hovels forever, but it had also actually prepared the way for the building of a greater and nobler city.

No one of us knows what the future holds, as tomorrow is always God's gift. I do know however that we must not worry, for worrying about what might happen never helps but only hinders. Rather we must go forward confidently in faith and in the quiet watches of the night we must allow God to calm our fears, heal our wounds and set the course we should follow, as we commit everything to him in prayer.

We all like sheep have at times, lost our way, and sometimes we are not even certain whether we are a sheep or a goat. Yet we should not despair if we have even a smidgen of faith.

Jesus assures us that in our Father's house we are all his children. There is nevertheless a world of difference between

the bairns! Could we ever confuse the apostle John with Peter? Have we ever read the Letter of James and thought that we were reading a Letter of Paul's? No. It is only hypocrites who are all tarred with the same brush. It is only the superficial Christian who cannot afford to be original.

If we bring everything before God in prayer, the good and the bad, the noble and the profane, if we examine our lives in the light of God, we slowly but surely dig out the dross and detritus that we have accumulated over our life, and so discover once again the living water that is Christ. We will have a note in our music, that was never heard before and some discovery of God that is very much our own. On this rock we will stand and stand firm through tempest, fire and storm, and come to witness the dawn of new and better days. Happy Easter.

Your locum Minister,  
Philip Majcher



## Session Clerk

### News from the Kirk Session

#### Easter 2023

Welcome to a new format to bring you news of St John's. We are really



grateful to Aileen Morrice for agreeing to take on the task of drawing this Newsletter together, and it will grow and develop over time. We hope to produce it 3 or 4 times a year and to distribute as many copies electronically as possible to keep costs down. Paper copies will be produced for anyone that needs it, using our own copier, which is proving both reliable and quite economic.

As I write this, it has been a beautiful spring day, the honey bees and bumble bees were very busy and tomorrow the wind and rain are forecast to return, so this is a fairly typical spring in Scotland.

St John's is busy too, with quite a few matters to mention. You will very probably be aware that there is now scaffolding up



the side of the Kirk as the work to repair the tired lead and weakened timbers around the Bartizan belfry are well under way. That will continue until June. This is being paid for by the Congregation using a significant part of the Heritage fund you helped to create.

After supporting us for 10 months as our Interim Moderator, Rev Maudeen MacDougall stood down at the end of March. We are extremely grateful to Maudeen for all her diligence and effort on our behalf over a very busy period when several additional Kirk Session meetings needed her presence as Moderator.

Rev Craig Dobney from Comrie takes over from the beginning of April, and we welcome Craig warmly.

The new, much enlarged, Presbytery of Perth (<https://www.perthpresbytery.org.uk/>) has met several times, and has already been very supportive of St John's by authorising the Trust for St John's to begin the task of fund raising for all the work the building will require to spire, roofs and stonework in the years to come. They have accepted that Perth's oldest building is in need of special care. Helpfully they have also been supportive of the Trust's efforts to prepare a Strategy for the future of the building. This

work will take some time, and there will be more to report to you later in the summer.

Presbytery is considering revisions to the Presbytery Mission Plan for the Perth & Kinross churches to meet the General Trustees assessment. We expect that the position for St John's being placed in Guardianship will remain the same, and that the linkage with St Leonard's being severed will still go ahead, but we wait to learn when this will happen. We have been enormously fortunate to have had Rev Philip Majcher as our Locum, giving us so much continuity and stability, and we hope this can continue.

The Kirk and the Trust is enormously grateful to Sir Mel Jameson, who was for many years our Lord Lieutenant and who chaired the Crisis meeting so effectively in November, for agreeing to head up their fundraising efforts. This work will be a crucial part of the Strategy for the future, and you can expect to see interesting and exciting things happening in the months to come as these ideas develop further. The support of the congregation will be truly vital if the work to keep the Kirk safe is to succeed.

Wishing you every blessing in this special season of Easter.

Bill Wilson, Session Clerk

## Opening Times

We aim to keep the doors of St John's open to the public from Monday 3rd April between 11.00am and 4.00pm dependent on church events and the availability of volunteers.

## Easter Service Dates

### Maundy Service

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 3.00pm  
In St Leonards in the Field

This service includes a short celebration of Holy Communion and will be followed by a time of fellowship in the hall.

### Tenebrae Service

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 7.00pm  
In St John's Kirk

### Easter Day Service

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 9.30am  
In St John's Kirk

The Kirk will be open on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April for Holy Week.

## Church Music Events

**St Salvador's Chapel Choir, University of St Andrews (dir, Claire Innes Hopkins)**  
Sat 13 May 2023, 1.00 pm

**Organ Recital – Alessandro Bianchi (Lugano, Italy)**  
Sat 1 July 2023, 1.00 pm

## Foodbank News

Thanks to all who continue to support the foodbank either in church or through the supermarket collection points. Although donations have held steady, demand has increased by 30% in the last year and we are now having to buy food and other basics to complete our parcels (we have fed over 8000 people since April '22 of which 30% are children under 16)

We are currently in need of **small packets of cereal, rice, instant meals like pot noodles, cup a soup, shower gel and small packs of laundry pods/powder.**

Any donations of these item in church or supermarket are gratefully received. Every little helps!!!



Anne Chatt  
Foodbank Representative  
<https://perthkinross.foodbank.org.uk/>

## Vision for Mission

The 1st. April heralded the introduction of higher energy bills, higher Council Tax and Water Bills, unwelcome news at the time of a cost-of- living crisis. Since New Year the Mission Committee has been highlighting the small ways, as Christians, we can show concern and support those in

need through the Foodbank and with Starter Packs.

Thanks to all who have deposited good in the boxes at the West Door.

After Easter the focus will be on  CrossReach & Christian Aid.  
<https://www.crossreach.org.uk/>  
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

## Communication

Website: <https://www.st-johns-kirk.co.uk/>

Online Services:

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=st+johns+kirk+perth](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=st+johns+kirk+perth)

Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnskirkperth/>

Music and Concerts:

<https://www.st-johns-kirk.co.uk/concerts-and-music>

## Contacts

### Locum Minister

Rev'd Philip Majcher  
01738 628378 or 07578 558978

### Session Clerk

Bill Wilson 01738 637743  
[clerk.stjohns@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.stjohns@gmail.com)

### Depute Session Clerk

Kay Morrison 01738 447123

### Treasurer

Lorna Ferguson 01738 632206

### Gift Aid Convenor

### Events Coordinator

Wilma Malcolm 01738 622807

### Roll Keeper

Aileen Morrice 01738 582137  
[rollkeeper.stjohns@gmail.com](mailto:rollkeeper.stjohns@gmail.com)



## Church of Scotland - Presbytery of Perth

To all church members

The new Presbytery starts at a time of many challenges for the Church of Scotland and our world.

In the midst of all the uncertainties we affirm the lasting truth, secure hope and dynamic relevance of

**“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever”**

It is not a case of “Why don’t they?” but “Why don’t we? Let us...” for all Christians are in the front-line representing Jesus.

The first of the five marks of mission from which all others follow is to proclaim the Good News of the kingdom. Overleaf in simple language is a summary of the Good News all Christians have to share. <sup>1</sup>

We deal with an active God, operational in Creation and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. He has promised to be at work in and through the lives of all Christians. As we head towards Easter, what a great dimension for our thinking and dynamic for our living: security, purpose, hope and power in and through Jesus!

Isn’t that an exciting thought with which we head up towards Easter in a new Presbytery with a fresh vision!

*Donna Hays*

**Rev Donna Hays – Presbytery Moderator**

<sup>1</sup> “God’s Invitation” was Commissioned as a user-friendly expression of the Christian faith and authorised by the General Assembly 1992, version has been adapted.

### God’s Invitation

God made the world and all its creatures with people made in His image

By breaking his laws people have broken contact with God and damaged God’s good world.  
This we see and sense in the world and in ourselves.

The Bible tells us the Good News that God still loves us and has shown this love uniquely in His Son, Jesus Christ. He lived among us and died on the cross to save us from our sin. But God raised Jesus from the dead!

In his love, this living Jesus invites us to turn from our sins and enter by faith into a restored relationship with God Who gives true life before and beyond death.

Then with the power of the Holy Spirit remaking us like Jesus we - with all Christians - worship God and enjoy his Friendship and are available for him to use in showing and sharing his love, justice and peace locally and globally until Jesus returns!

In Jesus’ name we gladly share with you God’s message for all people – **“You matter to God”** and invite you to accept his invitation.

