

The Chronicles of St John's Kirk of Perth

March
2024



Session Clerk

We were all very sorry to say goodbye to Philip & Linda Majcher at the end of December, and although I am not yet in a position to announce who our next Locum will be, we have been fortunate that Rev Philip Patterson has been able to give us regular Pulpit Supply and so a bit of stability. It has been lovely to welcome his family on occasion - his wife Claire, when she is not on duty as a surgeon in Ninewells, his son Alex (13), and daughter Bethany (10).



Like John Murdoch and Philip Majcher before him, Philip also has a background as a Military Chaplain, which he continues through his support for the Military Veterans Association.

Our conversations with the General Trustees (who own the Kirk) and with Perth Presbytery have placed particular emphasis on the importance of St John's playing a key part in the Christian Mission of the City Centre churches if it is to have a future as a place of worship. We are continuing to speak to our neighbours in St Matthews and the North Church about that, and we see that St John's is particularly well placed to deliver a clear Christian message to the many people who will be drawn to visit the Kirk by the new Museum.

The Fundraising Steering Group chaired by Sir Mel Jameson continues to plan how it will raise the funds we will need to carry out the work St John's needs. Donations from the Congregation and a range of individuals and organisations continue to come in, but what will really make the difference will be some successful applications from major funding bodies.



The Steering Group has agreed to prioritise the work on the Spire as Phase 1 of their effort, and in March we will be able to celebrate the return of the repaired and re-gilded Cockerel which will go on display inside the Kirk. This work has been generously funded by the Friends of St John's, with support from the Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust (PKHT), and the work has been carried out by specialists at Ratho Forge in Lothian. Until we can return the Cockerel to his main task of keeping watch over the City, we can enjoy him at close quarters, looking splendid in his new feathers. PKHT has organised a Gilding Masterclass by Ratho in the Kirk on 24th April, and details can be found on the Kirk website.

St John's will reopen its doors to visitors at the start of Holy Week, on Monday 25th March, and the new Perth Museum will open on Saturday 30th of March 2024. This will be a great celebration for Perth, when its former City Hall is transformed and has a new future. The Friends of St John's met on Valentine's Day with the team of Stewards who welcome our visitors, in order to hear a really interesting talk from Katy Jack, the Museums Manager on how the Museum will work with its neighbours. Katy is enthusiastic to build close collaboration with the Kirk and nearby businesses.

So, on 30th March the Kirk will be making sure its own doors are open and that our bells are ringing to help celebrate the transformation from an empty shell and then a building site to a major Visitor Attraction, that will also bring many more people to St John's.

We still need more Stewards, and even if you can only give us one two-hour session a month, Kay Morrison would be really pleased to hear from you. Stewarding is good fun and is a chance to meet interesting people from all over the world, as well as local folk who may not have stepped inside in the past. So do please get involved – we need your help.

Bill Wilson
Session Clerk

Recent Events

Young Artists at St. John's

At the start of 2023, it was decided to try to attract more young people to take an interest in St. John's Kirk, the oldest, and one of the most important buildings in the city. But how to engage their interest?

After a lot of thought and discussion, it was decided to hold a competition. The challenge: to design a new bookmark which could be sold or given to the many thousands of visitors the Kirk has the pleasure of welcoming every year, and which would remind them of the beauty of the building and the tranquillity within which is such an important part of the Kirk.

We wrote to all the high schools in Perth asking them to publicise the competition to their pupils. Donations for prize money were offered by members of the congregation and details of the competition were circulated to the schools and put on the Kirk website. The winner was to receive £150 and have their design professionally printed. The runner-up would win £100. Entries had to be in by the end of the summer term and eventually a winner and a runner up were selected.



First prize went to Zachary Scott, a pupil at Craigclowan School; runner-up was Julia Pojda from St. John's Academy. A huge WELL DONE! to both these talented artists.

The congregation at St. John's was delighted to welcome the two designers to the service on Sunday, 19th November where they were presented with their prizes by Jennifer Archibald, a member of the team who organised the competition. These bookmarks will be on sale in the Kirk when we reopen in the Spring of 2024.

Friends of St John's Kirk of Perth

The Cockerel is Back!



The cockerel is back, shining in its new coat of gold leaf, and mounted on a neat stand which will enable it to be displayed in the kirk until the time is right to replace it on its rightful place atop the spire. Then it can resume its 500 year long watching brief over the City of Perth, its people and St John's Kirk.

Ratho Byres Forge, where it was refurbished, has done a marvellous job - repairing the splits and dents in the cockerel, applying the gold leaf, and restoring the heavy 10 foot shaft on which it is mounted. They promised to have it back



well before Easter, and here it is.

Gilding Master Class

Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust, in conjunction with Ratho Byres Forge, is to hold a Master Class in gilding. This will be held in St John's Kirk on Wednesday April 24th in the afternoon. Participants will see a video film of the restoration of the cockerel, and will be able to gild a small item of their own - or perhaps a metal leaf supplied by Ratho. The course is designed for professionals in conservation, but others may attend. Enrolment costs £60, and can be booked though Eventbrite or the Museum Brochure.

Through a Glass Brightly

This booklet, which some of you may remember, edited by Jeremy Duncan has been out of print and unavailable for several years. And yet St John's has many excellent windows including several by the 20th century's leading stained glass artists, although not all are illustrated in Jeremy's book. Andrew Mitchell who runs the Perth based web and publishing business, Oakford Media, and who is a member of the Friends of St John's, has photographed all of the windows, and a new edition of the book will be ready later this year, and will be accompanied by information on the Kirk's website.

Museum - <https://perthmuseum.co.uk/>

The Museum opens on Easter Saturday, 30th of March, and there will be a great deal happening in Perth over that weekend. St John's will, of course, be open, and the carillon will be playing. As I write Dr. Cassells is working on an appropriate repertoire of music for the bells - traditional and modern, classical and Scottish. There is to be close collaboration between the Kirk and the Museum, with museum visitors actively encouraged to step across to St John's Kirk, where so many of the important events in Perth's history took place. As a result, we are expecting a substantial increase in the number of visitors. If anyone would like to help with the stewarding, please contact Kay Morrison at kay.morrison@btinternet.com



Photographic competition

It has been suggested that we should hold a photographic competition. It is early days yet, but there might be two sections - one for under 18s, and an Open category, and perhaps two separate competitions - one for pictures of the exterior of the kirk and a second one for pictures of the interior. There is quite a lot of work to be done to get this organised so it will be some time before the competition actually opens - but you can get started with taking photographs.

Membership

The constitution of the Friends of St John's Kirk of Perth sets out its status as separate from the St John's congregation and the Trust for St John's, although it is closely linked to them. It is registered separately with OSCR (The Office of the Scottish Charities Register), and has a different charity number (SC0 47919) from the congregation. Its aims are listed rather formally in the constitution, and they are:

1. To provide a Christian mission for the thousands of visitors to St. John's Kirk every year.
2. To ensure that the sacred environment that has existed in St John's Kirk for over 800 years is appropriately maintained.
3. To enhance the public's experience of Scotland's architectural, cultural, religious and artistic heritage that is exemplified in St. John's Kirk of Perth.
4. To advance the knowledge of the history of St. John's Kirk, and the people and communities associated with it.

Membership is open to all who subscribe to the aims, and costs £10 for an individual and £15 for a couple. A 'Friends' leaflet is available at the West door of the kirk, and contains an application form.

Dr John Hulbert,
Chairman,
Friends of St John's Kirk of Perth SCIO.
Registered charity. No SC 047919

Fund Raising

Carillon CD 'The Bells of Perth'

A CD featuring the musical bells of St John's Kirk is now available.

It features a variety of tunes played by carillonneur Dr Ian Cassells on the Kirk's 63 bells. As part of a digital heritage project, it is the first time since the seventies that Perth's largest musical instrument has been recorded. University music and audio engineering students and staff at UHI Perth used their skills to produce the digital recording. More information is also available on the [website](#)

Anyone wishing to purchase this CD should send an email to thekirkwebsite@gmail.com

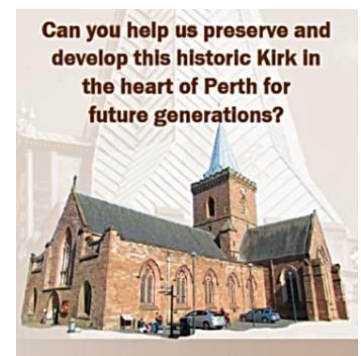
Save St John's Kirk

A £4 million appeal was launched to save Perth's oldest and key historic building - St John's Kirk of Perth

900-year-old Kirk where John Knox sparked the reformation is in crisis

£4 million restoration bill looms for Perth's most historic building

The Kirk of Kings threatened by soaring costs



To make a donation, please visit the appeal website <https://www.st-johns-kirk.co.uk/appeal>

Foodbank News

Thank you all for your continued support, all donations much appreciated. Things are changing at the Foodbank. Due to circumstances beyond our control we are having to leave Cutlog Vennel. We are hopeful that we have found new premises & can move in end of April/beginning of May. In the meantime, PKC are kindly allowing us to distribute parcels from Pullar House & Giraffe are allowing us to share their Friarton road storage site for which we are thankful. Thanks again for your support.

We are currently in need of the following;

Long life juice
Instant mash potato
Cooking sauces
Small boxes of cereal
Adult toothbrushes
Shampoo
Toilet rolls

Any donations of these items in church or supermarket are gratefully received.

Every little helps!!!

perthkinross.foodbank.org.uk/



Anne Chatt
Foodbank Representative

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Did you know you can purchase a single issue of Life and Work?

Simply visit www.lifeandwork.org/subscribe and choose between a print or digital edition.

Though firmly rooted in the affairs of the Kirk, it also aims to cover a broad range of subjects of interest to church-goers across the spectrum, from international affairs and British political and social issues to science, ethics, and the arts.

Each monthly issue includes a forum for views on current social and moral issues; a monthly meditation and regular articles on the spiritual side of life; reviews of the latest books, videos, and Christian resources; and regular features on the Church worldwide.

Mission

Water Aid – Lenten Appeal



Clean water-decent toilets good hygiene. With these three essentials, people can unlock their potential and break free from poverty, changing their lives for good. During Lent the Mission Committee is urging you to fill 'Jars of Grace' (empty jars) with loose change. Please bring the filled jars to the Kirk by

Sunday 7 April 2024. <https://www.wateraid.org/uk/>



Fairtrade

Fairtrade works with farmers and workers so they can improve their living standards, invest in their communities and businesses, and protect our shared environment.

<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/>



Christian Aid

Christian Aid exists to create a world where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty.

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>



Blythswood

Blythswood is a Christian charity, with a mission to transform lives through the impact of education, community action and gospel activities.



CrossReach

<https://www.crossreach.org.uk/>



In Christ's name we seek to support people to achieve the highest quality of life they are capable of at any given time.

CrossReach's work is wide ranging and enhances lives, changes lives and saves lives. The services cover:

- 1 Older People's Services-Care Homes, Dementia/Care Homes and Respite care.
- 2 Adult services-Counselling, Substance Abuse, Prisons.
- 3 Children and Family Services-Residential Care, Family Therapy, Perinatal Counselling

Perth Action of Churches (PACT)

PACT is an ecumenical body with representatives from over 20 churches and Christian communities from Perth and the surrounding area. Probably our most high profile activities are those where we worship together, with our Annual Christmas Carol Service, Good Friday Walk of Witness in the City Centre and our Easter Dawn Service at Quarrymill.



Visit the website for more information - <https://www.pact-perth.org.uk/>

Marj Wylie

Church Family

Death of Members

Jo Hunter	November 2023
Elaine Stoddart	November 2023
Robert McFarlane	December 2023



Church Districts

The communication roll has now been restructured in a way that makes it easier for us to communicate with our members and keep them up to date with current affairs/events. The easiest way to do this is by email, website, Facebook and other social media.

If you have changed your email address or would like to provide one, then please email the [Roll Keeper](#).

Throughout the year, if for any reason you require an Elder or the Minister to contact you, then please email the Roll Keeper at rollkeeper.stjohns@gmail.com or call 01738 582137 and this will be arranged for you.

If you are not able to join us each week but would like to make a contribution, you can do this on our JustGiving website st-johns-kirk.co.uk/support-donations to make a one off payment or set up monthly contributions.

Church Officer

We had great pleasure in welcoming Charlie Mutch to the role of our new Church Officer. He took up the position on Sunday 21 January 2024. Charlie brings a lot of skills and knowledge to the Kirk.

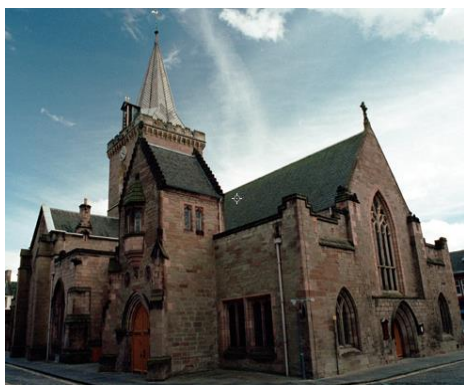


Regretfully we have received notice of our Assistant Church Officer's forthcoming resignation in March/April. We now find ourselves in a position of having to recruit to fill his shoes, not an easy job! Word of mouth is one of the best avenues of recruitment, if you know of anyone who may be interested in this position then please email personnelstj@gmail.com.

Working to a contracted 15 hours a week although hours are required to be flexible to meet the Kirk's busy environment with many services, concerts and events taking place throughout the year.

If you wish to find out more about the position, please email personnelstj@gmail.com or visit the website <https://www.st-johns-kirk.co.uk/about-4>

Opening Times



We very much look forward to opening the doors again to our numerous visitors. This will start w/c 25 March 2024.

St John's is the city church and therefore as part of our mission to the community it is important that we continue to welcome all who wish to come in. We are looking forward to a vast increase when the new museum opens in the spring of 2024.

If you would be interested in becoming a Kirk Steward, then please contact Kay Morrison kay.morrison@btinternet.com

Guided Tours

If there is anyone who would like to be involved in helping with guided tours of the Kirk for pre-booked groups, please get in touch with Marjory Howat on 01738 626520 or marjoryhowat@gmail.com



Service Dates in St John's Kirk

Sunday Services	Every	Sunday	9.30am
Morning Service is held on every Sunday throughout the year at 9:30am with the first Sunday of each month being occasions when the sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated during morning worship.			
Wednesday Service	Every	Wednesday	1.00pm
Easter Services	Walk of Witness		
	Good Friday	29 March 2024	10.30am
	Tenebrae		
Festival of the Arts Service	Good Friday	29 March 2024	7.00pm
	Sunday	31 March 2024	9.30am
	Sunday	26 May 2024	11.00am
Greek Orthodox Services	Saturday	16 March 2024	11.00am
	Saturday	20 April 2024	11.00am
	Saturday	18 May 2024	11.00am
	Saturday	15 June 2024	11.00am
	Saturday	20 July 2024	11.00am
Black Watch Commemorative Service	Saturday	22 June 2024	TBC
Royal School of Church Music	Saturday	13 April 2024	4.00pm
Masonic Service	Sunday	14 April 2024	2.30pm



In order to enable as many people as possible to share in worship, there is a ramp at the south door for wheelchair and pedestrian access; an audio induction loop system is in operation and large print hymn books are available at the door.



Readers

If any member of the Congregation would like to join the rota to read the lessons on Sunday mornings in the Kirk, please get in touch with Gordon Hynd, either in the choir or via email; ghynd13@yahoo.co.uk. Numbers on the current rota are such that you would only read once every four months or so. He looks forward to hearing from anyone interested.

Events in St Johns Kirk

Caledonian Winds	Sunday	17 March 2024	3.00pm	F
* Resol String Quartet	Sunday	24 March 2024	3.00pm	H
Organ and Cello Recital – Simon Leach (Canongate Kirk Edinburgh) and Kim Vaughan	Saturday	6 April 2024	1.00pm	F
Perth Choral Society	Sunday	7 April 2024	7.30pm	H
Chansons	Saturday	20 April 2024	7.30pm	
		Tickets here http://www.chansons.co.uk/		
* Sopranaria	Saturday	4 May 2024	1.00pm	F
Perth Festival of the Arts <i>Visit the website for a full programme</i> https://www.perthfestival.co.uk/		22 May 2024 – 1 June 2024		H
Tenebrae – A Prayer for Deliverance	Friday	24 May 2024	7.30pm	H
Scottish Chamber Orchestra Chorus	Saturday	8 June 2024	7.30pm	T

* *Denotes events promoted by Perth Chamber Music but taking place at customary St John's Music times (NB: these require paid admissions)*

F = Free Admission

T = Tickets at the Door

H = Horsecross

Check out our [website](https://www.st-johns-kirk.co.uk/events-and-calendar) for further upcoming events in the Church, some are even free!
<https://www.st-johns-kirk.co.uk/events-and-calendar>

St John's Kirk of Perth hosts many concerts – Choral Works, Orchestras and Chamber Ensembles. Within the St John's Kirk of Perth Music Series, Organ recitals are held monthly throughout the winter. During Perth Festival of the Arts held in May each year, local schools give lunchtime concerts. Perth Youth Orchestra play at the Annual Festival Service.



Communication

Visit the Website	st-johns-kirk.co.uk/
Online Services	youtube.com/results?search_query=st+johns+kirk+perth
Follow us on Facebook	facebook.com/stjohnskirkperth/ facebook
Music and Concerts:	st-johns-kirk.co.uk/concerts-and-music
3D Inside St John's	st-johns-kirk.co.uk/flythrough

Contacts

Minister (Pulpit Supply)	Revd. Philip Patterson	
Interim Moderator	Revd. Craig Dobney	cdobney@churchofscotland.org.uk
Session Clerk	Bill Wilson	07958 447858 clerk.stjohns@gmail.com
Depute Session Clerk	Kay Morrison	01738 447123
Treasurer	Lorna Ferguson	01738 632206
Gift Aid Convenor	Wilma Malcolm	01738 622807 st-johns-kirk.co.uk/support-donations cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/donate/
Events Coordinator	Wilma Malcolm	01738 622807 st-johns-kirk.co.uk/venue-hire
Roll Keeper	Aileen Morrice	01738 582137 rollkeeper.stjohns@gmail.com
Friends of St John's	Website	
Church of Scotland	Website	Contact Form 0131 225 5722
Perth Presbytery	Website	perth@churchofscotland.org.uk 07596 868064

Final Thought

Dear Friends,

We are now at the end of Winter approaching that wonderful time of year, Spring when lambs are born, daffodils flourish and that bitter- sweet time of Easter and Holy Week come upon us with the awful crucifixion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to be followed by the joyful celebration of his resurrection giving us hope and optimism for the future whatever it brings.

Margaret and I now live in Longforan near Dundee but we are continuing as members of St. John's Kirk and recently on cold, crisp but glorious Sunday mornings we have enjoyed our travels through the Carse with the silvery river on one side and the gently rolling hills on the other and as we approach Perth, the majestic sight of Kinnoull hill with its tower and of the lovely old home of Bill Wilson, our Session Clerk, gleaming in the morning sunshine. It makes one really appreciate the wonders of God's Creation.

I wish you all a very happy Easter when it comes and may God bless you all and I hope and pray that God gives his wisdom to all decision makers about the future of our beautiful Kirk.

Yours aye

Hamish Steele (Kirk Elder)

