



St Columba's Scottish Episcopal Church

AUTUMN 2025



The Season of Autumn and Harvest Festival

Harvest festivals are traditional celebrations that give thanks for the successful gathering of crops. They are typically held in the autumn and often involve church services, community gatherings and the sharing of food. The festivals have roots in pagan traditions and the Old English word "haerfest" meaning autumn.

Giving Thanks:

Harvest festivals are a time to express gratitude for the food produced by the land.

Timing:

Harvest Festivals are usually celebrated around the time of the Harvest Moon, which is the full moon closest to the autumn equinox.

Historical Context:

Historically, these festivals were crucial for communities that relied on agriculture for survival, ensuring they had enough food to get through the winter.

Traditions:

Common practices include decorating churches and homes with seasonal produce, singing harvest songs and preparing special communal meals.

Modern Celebrations:

While still widely observed in churches and schools, there has been a significant shift to include awareness and support for those facing food insecurity around the world.

St Columba's Choir



Our choir continues to serve St Columba's faithfully throughout the church year, observing the times and seasons of the year, raising their voices to supply our Sung Eucharist with varied Mass Settings, Anthems, Canticles and Carols.

We recently re-introduced evening choir practice in the church itself, on the last Thursday of the month, which means more time for learning music both old and new. We also practice at 10:15 on Sunday before Sung Eucharist at 11:00.

The choir has new members and those who have sung in St Columba's for many years. There is a warm welcome for anyone who may wish to join us, even to just try out the experience. If you sing in parts or just love singing in church, do come along. Should you wish more information please speak to either myself or any choir member.

The Organ

Our Harrison & Harrison organ (installed 1881) still provides St Columba's with sacred music. Research suggests it may be the oldest working Harrison organ in Scotland, so we have a responsibility to look after the instrument and keep it in playable condition. No small task may I say, as many churches are turning to the digital age for their church music. It's nice to think that our organ will still be sounding as we approach St Columba's 150th Jubilee next year and beyond.

Colleen Anderson: Director of Music

A note from the editor

Hi. I'm Robin Spencer. I ran an International Research Consultancy for 25 years, producing over 500 policy reports for the EU, Government Departments at Westminster, regional and local government as well as for a very diverse range of companies, from global giants like Rolls-Royce to medium sized local business, writing market strategies from tins of paint to nuclear powered engines for submarines. I have never edited a church magazine before, but it sounded like a challenge I couldn't refuse.

I have agreed to edit and produce a magazine for St Columba's Episcopal Church in Largs. After discussions with Mark Goodman, who retired from the position of Rector in July of this year, we agreed that I would produce two quarterly magazines (Autumn and Winter issues). In addition, there is always the opportunity to produce a double sided A4 'Colour Supplement' to disseminate urgent or important information that arises between each quarterly issue. If the information required in the magazine is provided punctually and in a user-friendly format, I would be very happy to continue as editor, if you'll have me.

I would like to thank Mark and all the vestry members for their support in producing this issue, as well as Scott McGregor of Largs Printers for his invaluable knowledge and practical advice in producing a magazine that is pleasing to read. I hope you like the new magazine format and welcome any view on what content you like as well as how the format could be improved.

Robin Spencer, Editor

How to contact me

Letters	Holehouse Farm Holehouse Road, Largs, KA30 8RL
Email:	robin@shropshirelavender.co.uk
Social Media	Whatsapp message me direct (robin Spencer on the mobile number below)
Telephone	07818 – 035789
Text	07818 – 035789

What's on in this issue

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What's on in future issues

The next magazine will be the winter issue, with a focus on Christmas as well as social issues related to the three coldest, darkest months of the year, with the winter solstice marking the end of darkness and the beginning of longer, brighter, warmer days and hopefully drier too. **Please email me a photo** of your special winter past, with a brief explanation of what it means to you. A selection will be included in the winter issue, with a prize for the editor's favourite.

On page 4 you'll find 'Poet's corner', where I have printed a short poem I wrote. It's no masterpiece, and I don't anticipate a call to be Poet Laureate, but I tried to convey some meaningful thoughts.

It's your turn to put pen to paper. Send me your poems, they will be far better than mine, and the best ones will be published in poet's corner.

Your church mag needs you!

People of St Columba's Church. This is your magazine for your benefit. I would love to hear from you with short articles, personal stories, or just letters to the editor. I will treat all with strict confidence.

The optimum way to send me information is by email (so I can simply cut & paste). If you have no access to a computer, just post me a letter (see opposite for my contact details).

THE RECTOR'S FAREWELL

Fond farewell to Mark and Gwen Goodman



Sunday July 6th Mark Goodman conducted his last service at St Columba's Episcopal Church, after which there was a farewell lunch in the marquee.

Mark has a degree in political & religious thought. His career has been varied, including antiquarian books, drama, criminal rehabilitation and chaplain at several schools. He was rector at St Leonards in Dalkeith before arriving at St Columba's in Largs at Eastertime in 2022, where he worked tirelessly guiding the church out of the pandemic restrictions, finding ways to grow the congregation and taking leading roles in many of the church's activities, including childrens' holiday clubs, car boot sales and extra curricula religious events.

Mark and Gwen also generously held an open house evening every year just before Christmas, which was a wonderful opportunity for many church members to meet up in the warmth of a crackling fire (on TV) and the Goodman's excellent hospitality to socialise and strengthen friendships. Every one in church will always remember Mark's geniality, sincerity and warm personality.

In Mark's words (rector not saint) - ***"St Columba's church has been wonderful, with all the ups and downs we have had in the last year – so loving, so caring, so supportive. I have loved my time in Largs, living here has been the best thing!"***

We all wish Mark and Gwen a very happy retirement in their new home in Dunbar.

Looking to the future

Bishop Nick and the Dean of the Diocese, the Very Reverend Reuben Preston, visited St Columba's Vestry on 30th July to initiate the Vacancy Procedure. The Dean explained his role as we look for a new Priest, and the work he and the Bishop will do to ensure we get the best match from those applying. He also gave the go-ahead for us to draft the Congregational and Rector's profiles and advised that the decision to appoint an Interim Pastor can be expected in due course.

In the interim period, the church services will be conducted by lay worship leaders as well as the Reverend Martin Sofield as a locum.

Abused Mother's Holiday

AFIA Holiday Brings Joy and Healing

By Hilary Moran



The Mothers' Union, with coordination by Hilary, recently organised an "Away From It All" (AFIA) holiday for 10 mums and 15 children affected by domestic abuse. The group travelled from Glasgow with Janice, leader of the Daisy Project, which supports families through abuse recovery.

Arriving at the Field Study Centre on Cumbrae, with backpacks and nerves, the group quickly bonded through team building and nature activities. Children explored marine life, built watertight shelters, and created bird and memory boxes. Evenings were spent around the campfire toasting marshmallows before settling into cosy en-suite accommodation.

This holiday brought comfort, community, and a renewed sense of hope -: *"Such a wonderful three days — great company and lots of laughs."* *"Thank you from all my heart. You are angels... I'm now 100% sure I'm still human."*

Update on church property

By Chris Evans

For those of you who regularly attend our church services, you will already know that various building works on the church, hall and Rectory have been progressing since Storm Eowyn hit us in January. This update is therefore primarily for those of you who have been unable to either see or hear about what has been happening to our various church properties since then.

Church – despite our proximity to the prevailing SW winds, the church roof only received minor damage, but two of our small stained-glass windows suffered extensive damage, as did the large circular “dove” window at the top of the west wall. All three windows have been removed for detailed professional refurbishment and in the meantime, their spaces have been boarded up. All this work, both on the roof and the windows, has been covered by our insurance policy.



Hall – our hall roof was very badly damaged and one of the skylights was blown away. A local builder was quickly on the scene to install temporary plastic sheeting on the entire roof and this has minimised water damage internally. As the temporary roof covering is now some eight months old, there has been a certain amount of water ingress, but we have tried to minimise the damage, primarily to ensure the wooden floor is not ruined. A Surveyor has been appointed (by the insurance company) to oversee the refurbishment of the roof and internal works, which is all covered by our insurance policy.

As our last Car Boot Sale is on Saturday, 23rd August, scaffolding around the hall will go up the following week to start replacing the roof. At the



same time, we will be installing 20 solar PV panels and insulating the ceiling. Once the roof is secure, the internal work can start – stripping out old plasterwork and rewiring the hall completely. In addition, we will be upgrading all toilets and the lighting throughout.

Finally, the Rectory and hall garage only suffered minor roof damage, which has been repaired.

POETS CORNER

A man walked by, behind him a few
From whence he came, I never knew
But his gait was slow
And his smile was wide
And he beckoned me over to join his side

So I walked with him along the track
He always looked forwards, and never back
And spoke of love
and forgiveness too
Yes, even my enemies, now that can't be true

My friend's voice was soft, so kind and yet strong
For three years we walked, it didn't seem long
He suddenly stopped, and quietly said
By this time next week I know I'll be dead

The tears flowed fast, right where we stood
For his words pierced my heart
As he knew they would
Anon

The wee item of news

Job vacancy	Coffee volunteers
Experience	none required: on-job training
Hours	½ hour occasional Sundays
Pay	I love your sense of humour
Apply	Jennifer FitzGibbon

Favourite places in Scotland

In the next edition of our church magazine, I plan to dedicate a section to places in Scotland that members of the congregation have visited (in the last 10 years) and found particularly special, for whatever reason.

So please email me photos of your favourite place in Scotland, plus a brief description of where it is and why it is so meaningful to you.

I will select some to go in the magazine and will award a prize to the one I find most appealing, and will probably visit one day in the near future.

The best place I've visited (in Scotland)

There are so many wonderful places to visit in Scotland, that it was very hard to say which is my favourite, but there is one location that Joanna and I found particularly special and very moving.



That place is Machrie Moor, on the west side of the island of Arran, about 1km south of the hamlet of Machrie.

It is a neolithic site of great antiquity and majesty. After a pleasant 2km walk up a gentle slope from the car park on the coast road, you arrive at a plateau, about 5km in size, stretching out to hills on three sides, with an appealing stone path winding westwards back to the sea.



The walker is certainly very well rewarded. Before one lie the remains of a magical assortment of stone circles, standing stones, burial cairns and cists, as well as hut circles, all dating back to between 3500BC and 1500 BC.

A strange silence hovers over the landscape, and we could almost feel the spirits of the neolithic folk who once lived here long ago or just visited Machrie Moor to participate in the pagan, religious activities that took place, thousands of years before Christ walked on earth.



Archaeologists have also discovered extensive field systems, which with the fruits of the sea available just half an hour's walk away, would have made this a delightful place to live, raise a family and say thanks to their gods for the joy and bountiful goodness of Machrie Moor.

A message from Mark & Gwen

To all at St. Columba's

The days since Gwen and I left St. Columba's seem to have flown by. We are still surrounded by boxes but beginning to make sense of it all. We now have all your cards and kind gifts where we can see them! We need to thank you all for the wonderful farewell you gave us on our last Sunday. It was utterly memorable and joyous, if a little difficult at times. I'm not sure where we would be just now but for the support and love we received from you all. So thank you all; for the all too few years, love, support and friendship we received. I know that St. Columba's will be very much part of our future as it is a joyous part of our past. Be assured of our prayers for what comes next, be prepared for the blessings and joy that will come. With our love, Mark and Gwen

WOT IS – TAIZE?

The Taize community was founded in France in 1944 by Brother Roger Schutz as a response to the horrors of WW2. It welcomes young adults from diverse Christian backgrounds and is based in Saone-et-Loire in Burgundy. The community is an important pilgrimage site and attracts over 100,000 young people each year for bible study, prayers, communal work and shared reflection.

Central to its contemplative atmosphere are simple meditative chants that support prayer and silence. The liturgy of a Taize service is simple: repetitive chants, contemplation, bible passages. Sunday@4 will follow the Taize liturgy: it will be a time of candle-lit calmness, spiritual reflection and preparation for the week to come as we pray, sing the chants and contemplate bible passages.

From the Treasurer

Through the congregation's generosity, we have raised these sums for the following charities:

Christian Aid - £227.82

Bishop's Lenten Appeal
(Refuweegee) - £140.00

For more information on responsibilities, see the notice board in the church entrance.

Life at St Columba's

Director of Music

Colleen Anderson 07967 114624

Property Convenor

Mark Yeomans 01475 520296

Fundraising Committee

Hilary Moran 01475 686213

Protection of Vulnerable Groups

Victoria Johnston

(appointed by Vestry approved by the Bishop)

Mother's Union

Hilary Moran 01475 686213

Church Hall Convenor

Linda Young 01475 686241

Joan Hutton (flowers) 01475 672927

Sidesmen

Alice Macdonald 07833 120400

Christian Aid

Alice Macdonald 07833 120400

Reps on inter-church Christian Aid Committee

Intercessions Rota

Frances Robertson 01475 686947

Altar Servers

Alice Macdonald 07833 120400

Readers Rota

Gib FitzGibbon 01294 823992

Coffee Rota

Jennifer FitzGibbon 01294-823992

Baptism, Wedding, Funeral, Confession by arrangement with the Rector

Largs Churches Together

Alice Macdonald 07833 120400

Press Officer

Hilary Moran 01475 686213

Health and Safety Officer

Alice Macdonald 07833 120400

Pastoral Visitors in the congregation

Rector (to be appointed), Alice Macdonald, Linda Whitby and Armored Allen

FUTURE SERVICES AND CHURCH NOTICES

Weekly Services

Sunday

8.00 am Holy Communion

11.00 am Sung Eucharist

4.00 pm Sunday@4

Note – Sunday@5 is now Sunday@4 at 4.00pm on the first Sunday of each month, in order to accommodate family commitments.

Wednesday

10.00 am Holy Communion

September

7th September Sunday@4 Taize

October

5th October Harvest Festival, lunch afterwards

26th October AGM and soup

November

2nd November Sunday@4 Taize

9th November Remembrance Sunday

23rd November Christ the King service

30th November First Sunday of Advent

The Memorial Garden



A huge vote of thanks to Mark Yeomans and his valiant teams of helpers, who have worked both diligently and regularly throughout the summer months to weed and replant the memorial garden in front of the church. I think you'll agree it is already looking fantastic!

The Scottish Episcopal Church



The Scottish Episcopal Church is a self-governing province of the world-wide Anglican Communion.

This is a family of over 70 million Christians in more than 160 countries. Our nearest relations are the Church of England, the Church of Wales and the Church of Ireland. Through the Porvoo agreement we are also in full communion with many other branches of the Church.

St. Columba's in Largs, is one of over 60 Episcopal congregations that work and worship within the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway. We are part of Ayrshire Region and our neighbours include congregations in Ardrossan, Dalry, Troon, Kilmarnock, Prestwick, Ayr and Maybole.

The area covered by St. Columba's includes Largs, Skelmorlie, Fairlie and West Kilbride and ecumenically we play a very active part in Largs and District Churches together. We welcome all regardless of any defining characteristic that may otherwise be used as the basis for discrimination.

Church Rotas

If you would like to join one of the church rotas (Readers Rota, Intercessions Rota, Sidesman Rota or the Coffee Rota), please contact :

Readers Rota – Gib FitzGibbon 01294 823992

Intercessions – Frances Robertson 01475 686947

Sidesmen – Alice Macdonald 07833 120400

Coffee - Jennifer FitzGibbon 01294 823992

Email – i2fg@aol.com

St. Columba's Episcopal Church

Aubrey Crescent, Largs

Rector: Waiting new appointment
St. Columba's Rectory, Largs, KA30 8PR
Telephone – to be advised

The Vestry

The vestry members are elected by the congregation to work with the Rector for the administration of the church. It meets in January, March, September, November and as required.

Chair – Rector
Secretary – Ray Young
Treasurer – Chris Evans
Lay Representative – Gib Fitzgibbon
Alternate Lay Rep– Hilary Moran
Rector's Warden – Linda Young
People's Warden – Alice Macdonald
Property Convenor – Mark Yeomans
Members - Linda Whitby, Jane McCance
Scottish Charity Number – SC004796



Reverend Martin Sofield, locum Rector

The church magazine is printed and published by St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Aubrey Crescent, Largs, KA30 8PR. The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Rector or the Vestry. If you know of anyone who cannot access the online version at <https://largs-church.co.uk/magazines> or collect it from church, we can arrange for a copy to be sent to them.

Vestry Meeting - Snippets

- The photocopier remains in the Rectory the keys for which are hanging in the office
- Hilary Moran is helping James Willetts produce a video for Rector applicants and prepared a PowerPoint "Flavour of Largs"
- Chris Evans is seeking quotes for installing solar panels on the church hall roof

Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway

49 Cochrane Street, Glasgow G1 1HL
0141 221 5720

Diocesan website:

<http://glasgow.anglican.org>

Key contacts

Bishop

The Right Reverend Dr Nick Bundock
bishop@glasgow.anglican.org

Bishop's Personal Assistant

Alexis Costigan
alexis@glasgow.anglican.org

Enquiries regarding property matters

usual days Monday to Wednesday
Janet Chalmers
janet@glasgow.anglican.org

Enquires regarding Finance

usual days
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
Iolanthe Stack
iolanthe@glasgow.anglican.org

Diocesan Secretary & Treasurer

Susan Burr
diocesansecretary@glasgow.anglican.org

Director of Diocesan Operations

Kim Schmulian
usual days
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
da@glasgow.anglican.org

Summer fundraising

The following amounts have been raised by members of the congregation for St Columba's.

April	£587.79	Car boot sale
May	£726.72	Car boot sale
July	£1,223.87	Car boot sale