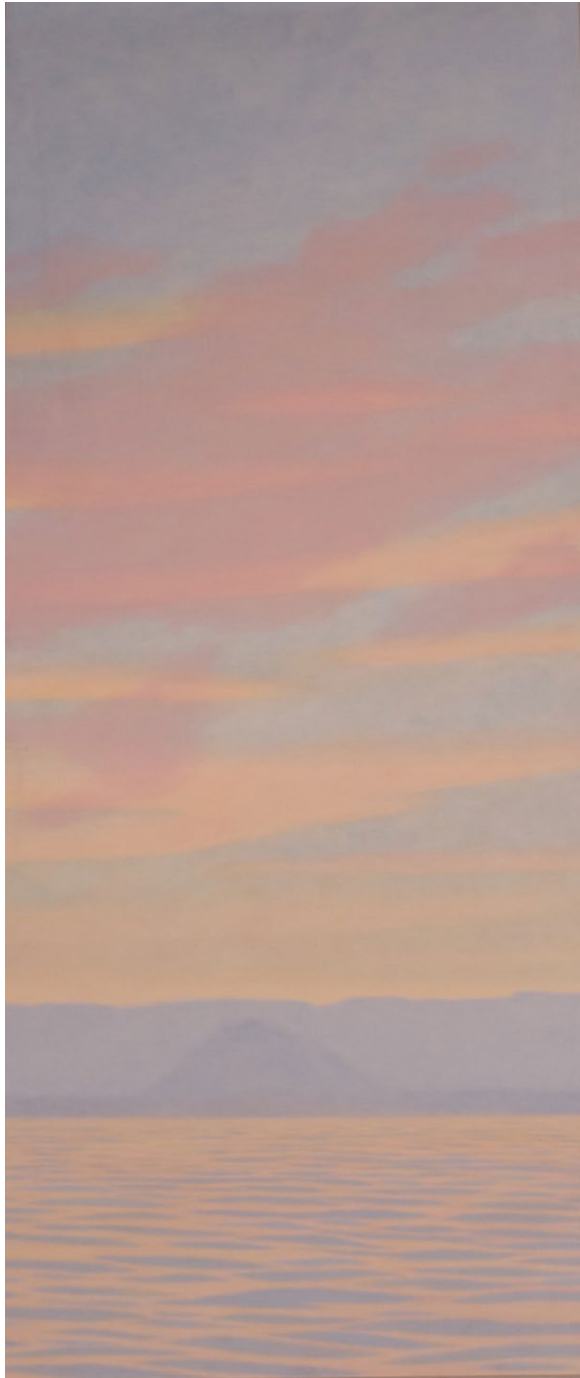


Stockbridge Church

bridging
the gap



The Bridge

Stockbridge
Parish Church
Newsletter

Saxe Coburg Street,
Edinburgh

www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk

Easter 2025

MISSION STATEMENT

Being aware of the love of God in our lives, we, the congregation of Stockbridge Parish Church, as part of the world church seek to meet together in worship; to demonstrate faith in God in our everyday lives; to reach out to others, showing God's love and compassion; and to raise awareness of matters of justice locally and globally.

CONTACT Us

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The church office core hours are Monday to Friday, 10-3 pm.

Our worship continues online, as well as in person, on Sunday at 11am. Watch live, or on demand, by visiting our website, Facebook, or YouTube channel (Stockbridge Parish Church).

Come and join us!

You will be very welcome

Letter from our Locum Minister, Rev John Munro

What are you doing this Easter?

Very soon now, on 20th April, it will again be Easter Sunday. What then does Easter mean to you and me at the end of the first quarter of the 21st century? To be realistic about things, for many of our family, friends, and neighbours Easter will be seen primarily as another opportunity to go somewhere on holiday. Recently, at a family gathering of sorts, at a funeral service in Caithness, I was reminded just how 'holiday orientated' people can be. My cousin and his wife had just returned from a holiday to Vietnam. Already they were planning their next jaunt, perhaps on a cruise liner to the Caribbean. Meanwhile parents and grandchildren had booked their plane seats for Disney World in Florida. And all of this knocks my Easter holidays in the 1950's into a 'cocked hat' when my family celebrated Easter by going to the town of Ayr on the west coast where we could go to the beach and huddle behind whatever wind-break was available. Mind you, this did not prevent the Munro family finding a church with an Easter Sunday Service to attend and later a grassy slope on which I could roll my hard-boiled Easter egg.

I don't want to sound like Rev. I.M. Jolly in an episode of 'Last Call' and complain about people who are taking the opportunity that Easter holidays afford to fly thousands of miles across the Atlantic in the hope of catching a glimpse of Donald Duck. In any case, if you are not particularly religious, why would the thought even cross your mind? (See what I did there.) Cries of 'smell the coffee' and 'get real!' The planet is already struggling so what difference would burning tons of jet fuel matter anyway? If we agree with that sentiment, we should take down the 'save the planet' banner that adorns the railings of our church because it does matter.

And we who share 98% of our DNA with chimpanzees matter too. As Christians we believe that is why Jesus came, and why he died, and why he rose again. To show us what being human really means and how we can play our part in making the world a better, less dangerous, more peaceful place. Like us he was fully human and lived a real life with all the challenges that entails, and in the end died a human if violent death. If in essence he was different from you and me, it was because of his God-given mission. His total belief that self-giving love deployed in the service of others was key to finding the meaning of life and building what he called the Kingdom of God. Of course, much of our understanding about who Jesus was developed over millennia of theological thought and a study of the Bible which helped to fill in the blanks in his life - how and where he was born, his special relationship with God, and the Christian hope of resurrection now and at the end. His teaching was passed on by his followers from

person to person, and in so doing, those who had witnessed his many sacrifices, found that words alone were not enough to describe the man or his mission. In any case they used stories as Jesus had done himself, and used metaphors where words alone were not enough to convey an ever - greater depth of meaning.

There are many Christians today who take all that is said of Jesus in the Bible quite literally, but in so doing miss out on so much more that can be gained by reading the scriptures in a non-literal way. Modern 'gospel' songs too, catchy as their tunes sometimes are, fail to penetrate the mystery of the faith being content to repeat the biblical cliches of a by-gone age. It breeds a simple faith, and a simple faith can simply be given up.

So, if you are not planning to fly to the other end of the earth and are not interested in Micky Mouse, then I hope to see you all on Easter Sunday at 11am at Stockbridge Parish Church where we can remember and give thanks for the life of Christ as we can and as we should.

A very Happy Easter to all of you.

John

(Rev. John Munro)

(Other services around Easter can be found on page 14 in this Easter Edition of The Bridge)

Kirk Fellowship Group

The group continues to meet on Zoom on at Tuesday evening at 7pm. Our Lent study was provided by the Diocese of Edinburgh on the theme 'Christ has no body now but yours'. After Easter we will resume our study of Acts.

If you are interested in joining us for informal Bible study with a friendly and supportive group speak to Ben or Chris.

Judith Walker

Malawi Coffee Morning meets at 10.30 – 12 midday on the first Friday of the month. All welcome!

Following the Presbytery Plan:

Since the last issue of The Bridge, we have continued to engage with Broughton St Mary's Church. We had a very positive afternoon "party" in the Young Room on 15th March, attended by folks from our church and Broughton St Mary's. This provided another opportunity for our two congregations to get to know each other.



Representatives from our Kirk Session have also continued to meet Broughton St Mary's Minister, the Rev Laurene Lafontaine and two members of their Session on a regular basis, most recently on 19th March. Progress is slow, for understandable reasons, but the dialogue remains positive and it is clear that the issues Broughton St Mary's are grappling with - for example, in terms of Mission - are very similar to ours.

We plan to arrange a meeting with representatives of the New Town Church (formerly St Andrew's and St George's West) in the near future, as a possible way forward could be for our church join a parish grouping with both them and Broughton St Mary's. As mentioned last time, what that would mean in terms of future linkages or unions is still to be determined.

We also remain in a positive dialogue with the Presbytery Deployment Group for the central district. Most recently, Kerr, Jimmie and I had a constructive meeting with them on 26th March.

We will, of course, endeavour to keep you informed of developments. If you have any questions or suggestions, please do speak to any member of the Kirk Session. We are here to work for everyone at Stockbridge!

Ben Bond, Joint Session Clerk

Congregational News

Our thoughts and prayers are with their family and friends after the recent deaths of Isobel Smith McKendrick and Norman Butter.

We welcomed the family and friends of Lucie and Joe Jeffrey to the baptism of their son Oran on 30th March, here pictured with Rev John Cowie.



Baby and Toddler

The Baby and Toddler group meets every Monday in term time between 10.00am and 11.30am. This is a Church run project which has been running for many years and helps us in our outreach efforts in the community. It is thriving and is good fun. At the moment we have a reduced rota of volunteers for this venture and would love to have some more people. The more volunteers the less often they are required. If you think you could help please have a chat with Anne Wallace, Carolyn Hutchinson or any of the volunteers.

Labyrinth

After a few years absence we are re-instating the Labyrinth in Holy Week. This is a chance to have some quiet time and walk with Jesus on his journey towards the Cross.

It will be open at the following times:

Tuesday 15 April 2.00pm – 5.00pm

Wednesday 16 April 4.00pm to 7.00pm.

We will be setting up the Labyrinth on Sunday 13 April after the Church service and would be grateful for any volunteers to help with this. And if anyone wants to help on the days we are open please let us know.

Anne Wallace, Judith Walker, Be Morris.



Delivering the Bridge

The Bridge is delivered to members and adherents living in the parish, some people pick up copies at the Church and the remainder have them sent out by mail. We have some more elders able to visit and deliver the Bridge and there will be some adjustments to the districts they cover. It will also allow us to visit and deliver to some of the congregation living just outside the parish.

Anne Wallace

Celebrating Age Project

The last of our winter meetings (those with a speaker) took place on 2nd April.

The first summer meeting is on May 7th, 2pm, when hopefully we can plan for some outings for the rest of the summer dates which are

June 4th

July 2nd

Aug 6th

Sep 3rd

ALL welcome!

Violet Hogg

Craft Group

The Craft Group meets from 2.00pm to 4.00pm on the last Tuesday of the month in Number 7, our premises at 7 Raeburn Place. Bring your current project and join us for an afternoon of chat and crafting.

We mainly work on our projects, but we also do some charity crafting.

In the last month we've knitted and donated some hats and mittens to refugees enduring the Edinburgh winter. We've also delivered a lot of baby garments, mainly knitted by Jean, to the Baby Bank operated by the Pregnancy Counselling and Care Charity.

Judith Walker



Christian Aid Week, 11th-17th May 2025

There will be more information in our next edition, but meantime, Fiona McNeillage has set us a challenge!

We will not be holding a bread and soup lunch this year, but instead we'll focus our efforts in identifying members of our congregation from early photos. So.....

Wanted! a photo of you in your younger days.

Why? To raise funds for Christian Aid.

"I thought it would be fun to guess who is who from photos from the past. There will be a fee to enter the competition and a prize for the winner. Don't be shy, please take part."

Please give your photo to Fiona, and she'll display them. A small prize will be given for the most correct identifications.

The Christian Aid Gathering

This year's Christian Aid Gathering was on February 25th. We were reminded that Christian Aid was founded 80 years ago in 1945 by British and Irish Churches to help refugees after World War 11.

Guatemala is the focus for Christian Aid week this year. Guatemala, a Central American Country south of Mexico, is home to volcanoes, rainforest and ancient Mayan sites. It is highly dependent on agriculture, particularly traditional crops such as coffee, sugar, bananas and cacao. Guatemala has a population of 14.9 million inhabitants, 43% are indigenous people with Mayan being the largest group. This group is exposed to land exploitation, aggression and discrimination.

The Programme Officer for Guatemala is Gerardo Calderon who is based in El Salvador and he spoke about Christian Aid's focus this Christian Aid week.

Alta Verapaz is in the North central part of Guatemala and has a strong tradition of cacao cultivation within the Myan Community. Climate change is affecting the growing and harvesting of the cacao crop resulting in hardship for the local communities. With the assistance of Christian Aid Alta Verapaz has formed a congregation of co-operatives to encourage agroecology using local resources and ancestral knowledge. Training sessions are held and the knowledge gained can be passed on to other members of the community. The use of home-made fertilisers improves crop output and diversity of crops increases income. Women have increased their knowledge of agroecology and this has benefited their family and their communities. One woman quoted "I'm not afraid climate change is going to happen, it already has."

Fiona McNeillage

A public consultation is being launched to safeguard the future of one of Scotland's most historic and iconic churches.

The Abbey Church of Dunfermline in Fife contains the bones of King Robert the Bruce and is known the world over, welcoming more than 40,000 visitors a year.

Part of 950-year-old Dunfermline Abbey, it is facing "significant challenges" with a repair bill of around £4 million expected over the next three to five years to ensure it remains wind and watertight.

Local church leaders estimate that a development plan to upgrade facilities in the building will cost a further £4 million.

An exhibition examining the role of the church in the local community and its history, is being held at Dunfermline Carnegie Library & Galleries from 22 March to 6 April.

There is an open invitation to attend a special event at the Abbey Church, famous as the royal mausoleum of Margaret (St Margaret), David I and Robert I (Robert the Bruce) , on 5 April to further discuss proposals on how to protect it for future generations.

Royal Botanic Garden

Most people living in the North of Edinburgh are familiar with the Royal Botanic Garden. It's a haven for many of us – a place to look at the wonderful plants, to walk, to bird watch, to sit and rest, to meet friends, to visit the shop and to enjoy refreshments. It's part of the lives of many of us, and it's part of our Parish.

After storm Éowyn hit us in January the damage in the garden was devastating, with massive trees uprooted or broken. Much work has been done to clear up, but the scars are still very visible.

An appeal to raise funds to clear the damage and restore order in the Edinburgh garden and the other three gardens, as well as planning ahead for future severe weather events, has already raised many thousands but more is needed.

We would like to respond to this appeal and propose taking a retiring offering throughout the month of April in aid of the Storm Damage Appeal. Payments may also be made into the Church bank account using the reference BOTANICS. Speak to the Treasurer or one of the Session if you need details of the account.

Kerr McLaren



Stockbridge Music Hub

The reviews of the **Wagner Week** were hugely positive. Here are a few

".....assuring you of my unbelievable gratitude for what you achieved last week. The whole week was a triumph as far as I and a great many other people I spoke to were concerned. Many, many thanks."

"What a treat for us all!"

Hugh Kerr wrote in the Edinburgh Music Review, *"I don't suppose there are any other churches anywhere in Britain or indeed anywhere else where a week is devoted to Wagner's Ring! But this is what is happening in Stockbridge this week due to the creative energy of Clea Friend, not only a fine cellist but a great community music organiser who has made her Stockbridge Music Hub one of the most successful community music initiatives in Scotland, if not in the whole UK."*

Forthcoming dates for your diary:

Friday April 4th TMI Friday - 1pm, will be The Lark Piano Trio performing Tchaikovsky

Saturday April 5th - 6pm Lorna Brooks and her band play new album

Friday April 18th - 1pm Clea Friend and Anna Michels will play Rachmaninov



Stockbridge Music Hub
in collaboration with Stockbridge Church



LORNA BROOKS

**Saturday
5th April
@ 6pm**

Stockbridge Church
7a Saxe Coburg St,
EH3 5BN

Tickets £15/£10 available on the door or via
www.musichub.uk

Stockbridge Music Hub
in collaboration with Stockbridge Church

**TMI Friday
*presents***

Clea Friend and Anna Michels



**Friday 18th April
1pm**

**Music by
Rachmaninov and Boulanger**

Stockbridge Church EH3 5BN
Suggested donation 10/£5
www.musichub.uk





Stockbridge
Church

HOLY WEEK 2025

JOIN US FOR HOLY WEEK!

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

13th April, Palm Sunday	11am
15th April, Labyrinth	2pm - 5pm
16th April, Labyrinth	4pm - 7pm
17th April, Maundy Thursday Communion	7pm
18th April, Gathering in 7 Raeburn Pl	12pm - 1pm
18th April, Good Friday	7pm
20th April, Easter Communion	11am

Holy Week is a time to remember the last week of Jesus's life, including his sacrifice and resurrection. It's a time for reflection and celebration of faith.

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Stockbridge Parish Church of Scotland, 7b Saxe Coburg Street, Edinburgh, EH3 5BN

Registered Scottish Charity No SC002499



A Prayer for Ukraine

**A prayer from Rt Rev Dr Shaw
Paterson, Moderator of the General
Assembly of the Church of Scotland.**



We note with grave concern the tension in the relationship between the various partner nations with respect to the ongoing support of Ukraine. We lament the continuing loss of life in Ukraine and call for a just and enduring end to the conflict. We pray for the end of war and the flourishing of peace amongst all nations and peoples:

Almighty God,
Your Son came to be the Saviour of the world
And the Prince of peace.
Give us grace to follow in his ways
And to fulfil our calling as peacemakers in his name.
May his Holy Spirit
So move in the hearts of all people
And among the nations of the world,
That the barriers of fear, suspicion and hatred
Which separate us may crumble and fall,
And the peoples of the world
Be united in justice and peace;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Your contributions for The Bridge are very welcome

Just email bridge@stockbridgechurch.org.uk, or leave in Bridge pigeonhole, or speak to Shona Cameron in church.

All contributions for the next issue should be e-mailed to Shona at above email address. If you do not have access to email, please phone her.

The deadline for the next Bridge, the May edition, is **Sunday 20th April, 2025.**

Stockbridge Church

STOCKBRIDGE PARISH CHURCH

7b Saxe Coburg Street Edinburgh EH3 5BN

0131 332 0122

www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk



Stockbridge Parish Church of Scotland, Edinburgh
Registered Scottish Charity, Charity No – SC002499

Enquiries about use of the church and halls are welcome, contact the church office, or *see our website*.