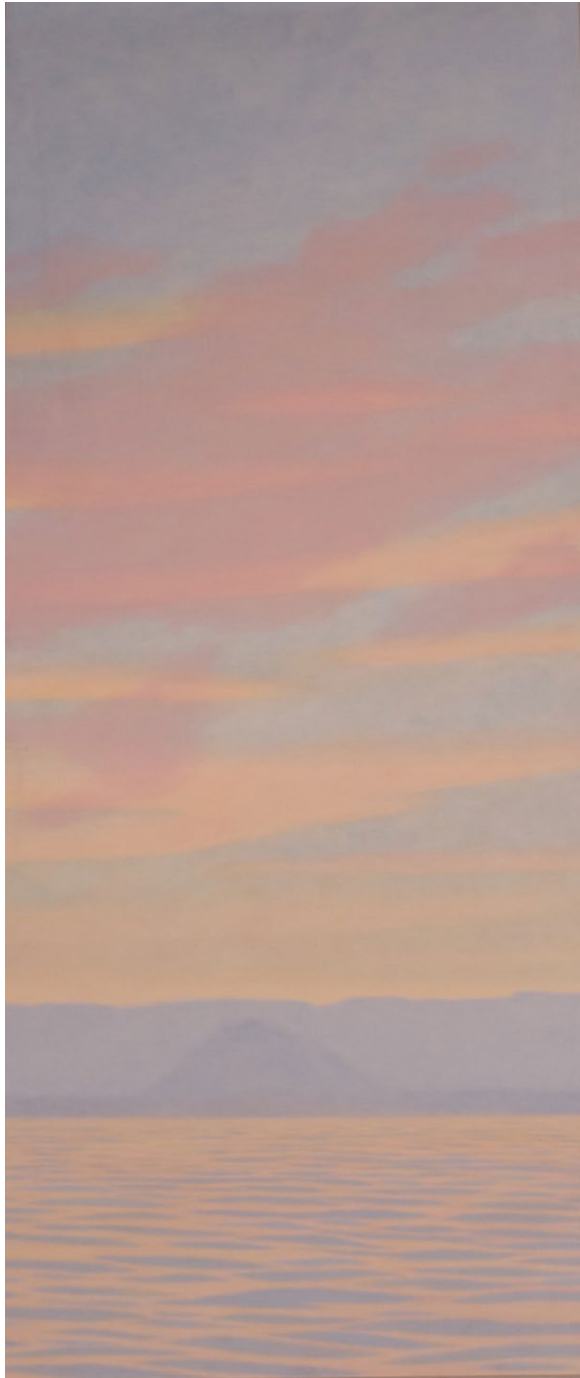


Stockbridge Church

bridging
the gap



The Bridge

Stockbridge
Parish Church
Newsletter

Saxe Coburg Street,
Edinburgh

www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk

January 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

Locum Minister	Rev John Munro, 0131 446 9363 revjohnmunro@hotmail.com
Session Clerk (Joint)	Ben Bond, 07910 770572 sessionclerk@stockbridgechurch.org.uk
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Church Administrator	Hannah Morris, 0131 332 0122 admin@stockbridgechurch.org.uk
Church Officer	Colin Clark, 07510 242018 churchofficer@stockbridgechurch.org.uk

The church office core hours are Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 10-3pm.
On Tuesday and Thursday 10-1pm, the Church Administrator will be working from Number 7, 7 Raeburn Place. From 1pm to 3pm on these days, the Church Administrator will return to the church office.

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).

Letter from our Locum

Minister, Rev John Munro



People have been asking what I was doing in Paris for 5 weeks over Christmas - so I'll tell you. A few years ago, when the Scot's Kirk in Paris lost their full-time minister, the interim moderator, Rev. Laurence Twaddle in Geneva, who is well-known to some in this congregation with long memories, set about organising several recently retired ministers to act as locums for a period of one or two months at a time. I was one of them. My recent trip to Paris was my 'stint' for the year, following on from the two months I was in Paris in 2023. I lived in the congregation's manse which is in the 9th arrondissement, quite close to Montmartre and about 15 minutes by Metro to the church itself located in the Rue Bayard in what is known as the golden mile close to the Champs Elysee. Services are held every Sunday at 11am which is late enough to allow the congregation to travel to the centre of Paris as many of them live some distance away. For example, three members live in Normandy, one in Aix en Provence, and several more in the suburban parts of Paris which can take up to an hour to reach the city centre.

The Kirk began life on the present site in 1885 and was made up of (mostly) Scots who had moved to Paris with French based companies or as members of the diplomatic service based in the British Embassy. Some such people are still members of the Scot's Kirk but just like in Scotland the number of members has been in steady decline. This means that a small group of dedicated office bearers and members keep the church going with attendance on a Sunday often not reaching double figures. Of course, there are always tourists, many from the USA, and this can swell the ranks of the faithful on a Sunday but sadly can have no long -term effect.

Its most famous minister was Donald Caskie, whose book, "The Tartan Pimpernel", describes the work he did during World War 2 in France organising escape routes for downed pilots or soldiers cut adrift from their regiment. His book was first published in 1957 is still in print today and has sold over a million copies. When Caskie returned to Scotland, he ministered for a time in Skelmorlie before retiring and staying in the Royal Scot's Club in Edinburgh where I met him as a student in the 1970s. When he died, he was buried in Bowmore, Islay, which is where he had been born.

The story of the Scot's Kirk apart, on my days off I was given the opportunity to visit some of the well-known tourist attractions such as the Louvre, and Versailles, and on this occasion Malmaison on the outskirts of Paris, which is where the Empress Josephine, former wife of Napoleon, enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle. However, on this trip I was determined to visit the rebuilt Notre Dame de Paris and I was not disappointed. Interestingly, some people are not happy with the outcome following the fire that nearly destroyed it on 15th April, 2019. The trouble is that inside it looks as good as new! Parisians who have been used to walls and ceilings darkened by years of smoke from candles find it too bright. But it is magnificent, and a tribute to all those crafts people who worked tirelessly together to restore that which was nearly lost. There's a parable in that somewhere.

Rev John Munro

The Future

The Kirk Session has appointed two of its members to liaise with our Locum John and discuss with him about what role he might play in the church going forward.

In parallel, the Joint Session Clerks and Be Morris met with Presbytery Representatives and are working to clarify various options associated with implementing the Presbytery Plan.

John has been with the congregation now as the locum minister for over three years but so far no definite decisions about the future have been made.

An update to congregation on these meetings is planned in the next few weeks.

Ben and Kerr, Joint Session Clerks

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Presbytery Plan Update

Since the last issue of The Bridge, we have continued to engage with Broughton St Mary's Church and to get to know each other better. More than half a dozen folk from our church attended a very happy Christmas Open House at the Manse of the Minister of Broughton St Mary's on 7th December, billed as a means for us to get to know each other informally. I also attended Broughton St Mary's Bicentenary Service on 12th December, which was naturally a joyous occasion attended by - among others - the Moderator of the General Assembly and the Lord Provost of Edinburgh.



Broughton St Mary's have made us aware that they are thinking of us possibly joining a wider parish grouping, not just with them but also with the New Town Church (formerly St Andrew's and St George's West). What that would mean in terms of future union(s) is still to be determined. The pace is slow, for good and understandable reasons, including the fact that the New Town Church is just completing the appointment of a new Minister. We are also in a positive dialogue with the Presbytery Deployment Group for the central district. Most recently, Kerr, Be and I had a constructive meeting with them on 15th January.

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

sessionclerk@stockbridgechurch.org.uk, [0791 077 0572](tel:07910770572)



Congregational News

Our thoughts and prayers are with their family and friends after the recent deaths of **Cathy Grozier** and **John Graham**.

Church Fund-Raising:

The carol singing in Raeburn Place on 15th December, when we sang with others from Stockbridge and Comely Bank Churches Together, raised £53.58 for **Bethany Christian Trust**. Many thanks to all who took part.

We raised £285.40 for **Fresh Start's "Cookers for Christmas"** appeal in our recent retiring collections during Advent.

We also raised £164.00 at our Watch Night Service for **Bethany Christian Trust**.

Kirk Fellowship Group

The Fellowship Group continues to meet weekly on zoom on Tuesdays at 7pm. Currently we are discussing the Acts of the Apostles. If you are interested in joining us for informal Bible study with our friendly and supportive group please speak to Chris Morison or Ben Bond.

Craft group

The craft group continues to meet as normal on the last Tuesday of each month in our usual venue of No. 7 from 2pm till 4pm. Bring your current project and enjoy a chat with us and a cup of tea or coffee.

Judith Walker

Celebrating Age Project (CAP)

CAP continues despite small numbers and we are looking forward to hearing Liz McLaren on 5th February on 'Anecdotes from the Wards' followed by Clea Friend (cellist) on 5 March speaking on 'How Music Enhances Health and Well-being'. Hopefully she will play for us as well. On April 2nd Rhoda Mackenzie will talk on 'Istanbul'. If any of these appeal to anyone who is not a member please feel free to come as a 'one off'. You will be made very welcome. All at 2.00pm in the Session Room.

Violet Hogg

Vacancy for Church Treasurer

Our current Church Treasurer (Kerr McLaren) plans to stand down as Treasurer and we are looking for someone willing to take on this role. The Treasurer role need not be filled by an Elder or Member of the Kirk Session or Congregation though responsibility for the Church's finances rests with the Kirk Session. The role does not require someone with formal finance training and so is open to anyone with the commitment and sufficient financial familiarity.

Kerr has been doing the role for 5 years and with the introduction of the Xero accounting system and the employment of an Administrator who does the fundamental book-keeping the Treasurer role is no longer as onerous as it has been in the past. Our annual accounts are prepared by an excellent external service provider who can also provide advice as needed. Kerr has put together an outline of what the role requires and will be happy to talk to anyone who may be interested, or who knows of someone who may be interested.

Please contact him at treasurer@stockbridgechurch.org.uk or call/text him on 07818 3453 129.

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 Easter edition, is **Sunday 23rd March, 2025.**

Stockbridge Music Hub



Upcoming events at the Stockbridge Music Hub at the church:

Dates for your diaries;

Sunday 2nd February - 6pm Las Tauras - an authentic Argentine tango band

Friday 7th February - NOTE TIME **1.30pm** TMI Friday presents Fraser Fifield on low whistle with guitarist and double bass player

Saturday 22nd February - Saturday 1st March 'Discover The Ring'

A festival of events about Richard Wagner's epic Ring Cycle. Talks, performances and screenings of the opera are presented by some of the world leading names in the field. You can choose to attend some or all of the events. All details can be found via the link on www.musichub.uk

Friday 7th March - 1pm TMI Friday presents a Flute, Viola and Harp trio

Friday 4th April - 1pm TMI Friday presents cello and piano duo - with Clea Friend and Anna Michels.

Clea Friend

Stockbridge Music Hub
in collaboration with Stockbridge Church

Fraser Fifield

Friday 7th February
1.30pm

Stockbridge Church, 7b Saxe Coburg St, EH3 5BN

Suggested donation £5/£10
www.musichub.uk

Amati

Stockbridge Music Hub
in collaboration with Stockbridge Church

DISCOVER THE RING

22nd February-1st March



**With Susan Bullock, Michael Downes,
Lionel Friend, Laura Margaret Smith,
Barry Millington, Sir John Tomlinson
and Keith Warner**

For full programme and tickets:
www.musichub.uk

Supported by the Wagner Society of Scotland



Church of Scotland General Assembly

Saturday, 17 May to Thursday, 22 May, 2025
(Excluding Sunday)



Can you help with stewarding at the General Assembly?

Stewards have a vital role at the General Assembly to ensure the safety and comfort of those attending. Stewards provide a friendly welcome to the Assembly Halls, ensure the security of proceedings by checking passes, are alert to security threats and disturbances and have a responsibility to ensure the safe evacuation of the Assembly Hall if this is required.

Individual shifts last for three hours and volunteers can select the day or days upon which they would seek to help.

For more details please contact Sandy Gemmill, Chief Steward

assemblystewards@churchofscotland.org.uk



**Inverleith St Serf's
Church
280 Ferry Road**

Sunday 2 February 6.30pm

**Through the Eye of a Needle:
Exploring the Bible in the Poetry of
Seamus Heaney**

**A talk by Alison Jack, Professor of Bible and
Literature, New College, Edinburgh**

All welcome

Scottish Charity No: SC015442

Stockbridge Church

STOCKBRIDGE PARISH CHURCH

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admin@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.