

The Chronicles

of St John's Kirk of Perth

July 2025



St John's Kirk of Perth : Charity Number SC017132

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Minister

Dear Friends

When I was in Caithness I remember Donald MacKay, Prof. of Communication, University of Keele, illustrating the link between Science and Faith : “Imagine coming up to traffic lights and wondering about the size/strength of the bulb and the shade of red - all interesting individual questions. But if you don’t stop, you’ve missed the point... and smash!!”



That came back to me as I looked round St John’s : the beautiful windows displaying aspects of Christ’s life, the tapestry of Jesus on the cross next to the war memorials, the carvings on the west side of the Knox Chapel, “The Rising Son - all interesting individual pieces of art/architecture. But if folk don’t see the overall message of God’s loving action in Jesus, they’ve missed the point!

When young people are told information they are inclined to say “So what?” They look for relevance for their life, their world. The great thing about St John’s is that it is not just historical or architectural information - to look on it that way is to miss the point!

In St John’s building we have a great resource which illustrates God’s loving action, e.g. the cross reminding us of historical evidence, with the communion table extending God’s invitation to everyone to experience a living relationship with Him. We have the great privilege and responsibility of helping people see the meaning of the illustrations so that they don’t miss the point of life!



As we come up to the 900th year of Christian witness on St John’s site, in a world where the speed of change is accelerating, we affirm that “Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever”, the source of secure identity, personal stability and dynamic hope.

Faith is personal, but it is not private. St John’s is named after John the Baptist, who in his day challenged the corruption and disintegration of family life, and pointed to Jesus. St John’s has a history of close link with the community, e.g. St Johnstone football club. As good stewards of God’s grace we are to be Jesus’ pacesetters in the community, with our time, finance and influence available to Him

Jesus encouraged questions! Over the summer we plan to look at some issues Christians find hard to deal with in interface with non-Christians. If anyone has suggestions about an issue do let me know ...I’m happy to try to help either in a service if appropriate or personally.

If you are wondering about becoming a Christian, making a profession of faith or transferring membership to St John's do let me know : you will be most welcome!

Resources

Monthly resources are mentioned in the notices. In case people missed a Sunday and for those who are housebound here are some of them :

Books

"The Jesus Story Book Bible" Sally Lloyd-Jones, An ideal gift for children, with illustrations appealing to young children who can learn meaning from its script as they grow.

"Mere Christianity" C.S.Lewis. Classic thoughtful presentation of the Christian faith.

"Hitchhiker's Guide to the Bible" Colin Sinclair, former General Assembly Moderator. It provides a clear succinct outline of each book of the Bible.

"But is it real?" Amy Orr-Ewing. Answers 10 common objections to the Christian faith.

"The Bible Speaks Today" is a series of commentaries on each book of the Bible.

Websites

www.faraday.cam.ac.uk : helpful consideration of issues of science and religion

www.suscotland.org.uk : an overview of work with young folk, e.g. providing residential holidays where faith, fun, fellowship come together in an activity setting.

www.bibleproject/overview : brilliant cartoon based video summary of each Bible book.

www.opendoorsuk.org : up to date information on global persecution of Christians.

www.solas-cpc/shortanswers ; 4 minute video answers to common questions.

www.starttostir.com : how to break the ice and chat with friends about Jesus.

www.christianheritageedinburgh.org.uk "What has Christianity ever done for Scotland?" The question is answered in short video clips with reference to Science, Education, Healthcare, Modern Democracy, The Arts, Human Rights.

Time for Reflection

Starting in July on the first Wednesday of every month at noon there will be a short time for reflection at the war memorials inside St John's. This may be particularly helpful to ex-service personnel and their families. Please pass this information to anyone you know.



Flitwatch!

If you see a furniture van pull up at an empty house near you, do make your new neighbours welcome, e.g. asking if there is anything they need - e.g. bin bags! - or information which would be helpful. Esp. if they are new to the area extend to them an invitation to come with you to worship. There are "welcome to your new home" cards in the vestry.



Prayerful good wishes

Rev Sandy Gunn - sandygunn@btinternet.com - 01738443216

Session Clerk

My Dear Friends,

It has been a long time since I last wrote to you in my role as Session Clerk, and I return to this post with a deep sense of both gratitude and responsibility.

I would like to begin by expressing my heartfelt thanks to my predecessor Bill Wilson for the truly wonderful service he has given—and continues to give—to St. John's Kirk. His dedication as Session Clerk and Property Convener is a testament to his faith and commitment, and I know I speak for many when I say that he will be a very hard act to follow. We owe him a great deal.



As I take up the mantle once more, I am aware that this time around, the role will be somewhat different. We are embracing a more collaborative approach, seeking to work together as a team, drawing on the many talents within our Kirk family. I want to thank every single person who has already stepped forward with wisdom, guidance, and tireless hard work. Your support means more than words can fully express.

Yet, I must also make a plea—from the heart. There is so much to do, and we need every hand and every gift. If you feel called to help, in any way, no matter how small it may seem, please let me know. Tell me what gifts and talents you have. Whether it's a listening ear, a gift for hospitality, an eye for detail, or simply a willing heart—we need you. The strength of our Kirk lies in our shared service, inspired by love and rooted in faith.

I want you to know how deeply I love St. John's Kirk and this Kirk family. It is a privilege to serve you, and I will do so to the very best of my ability. I cannot do it alone, and I am thankful beyond measure for the support and guidance of the Reverend Sandy Gunn. His wisdom and encouragement have already been invaluable to me, and I will continue to lean on that guidance as we move forward.

Above all, I place my trust in God. It is in His strength and guidance that I will find the courage and clarity to serve. May all we do be for His glory, and may His Spirit lead us in the days ahead.

With love and blessings,

Margaret Steele
Session Clerk
St. John's Kirk

Save St John's Kirk – Update

Musical Chairs and Fundraising Progress

Just before Easter, John Kinloch sadly had to resign from all his roles in the Kirk and Trust to prioritise his own health and caring for his family. John has done so much for the Kirk, and you will find a longer tribute to him below.

John has been crucial in leading our fundraising efforts as our Property Convener, and his necessary standing down from this role came at a key juncture for our fundraising target of £2.3M. It was therefore agreed that it was essential for Bill Wilson to take on that role as the only other elder with a detailed knowledge of what the project involved. To do so he had to step down from being the Clerk.

Fortunately, Margaret Steele has agreed to become the Session Clerk once again, initially for 3 months, to allow this to happen.

Margaret's email address will now be sessionclerk.stjohns@gmail.com

Bill's email address will now be fabric.stjohns@gmail.com

At the end of June we were able to report to our Stated Annual Meeting that:

- at the end of December 2024 the General Trustees agreed to permit us to raise £2.3M
- At the start of February, the Government announced that the Listed Places of Worship scheme that allows places of worship to reclaim VAT would be limited to £25,000 for each claimant, only until March 2026. This raised the target required for our Project to £2.8M
- In February we applied to the NLHF for £625,000. On 26th June we received the written confirmation that they had approved our application, split into 2 phases: a Development Phase for £147,326 to prepare detailed plans, to be submitted in October as part of a further Application for funding for the Delivery Phase of £477,674, which if approved will allow contractors to be appointed to begin work on site in May 2026.
- A number of other funding applications will now be completed, including one to Historic Environment Scotland, also for £625,000 which had to be submitted by 30th June.
- The Appeals Committee will be considering how and when to approach the Congregation and wider Community for their support.

We would like to pay tribute to our professional Fundraiser, Louisa Evans for successfully guiding our NLHF application through a very challenging and competitive funding environment to achieve this success. Much remains to be done but we have made it across some major hurdles and remain optimistic.

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



Stewardship

Stewardship

Gifts in wills transform the lives of our local churches and communities. Leaving a legacy can be a way of thanking God for all the blessings you have received in your lifetime and are a wonderful expression of support for the ongoing life of the church community for future generations. If we look around St John's Kirk, we can see that through countless gifts in wills, donors have built and maintained our beautiful church building and also sustained the ongoing mission of God through the church in our local community. Christian stewardship is a way of living in which we recognise that everything belongs to God. It is the way we look at the world when we become a disciple of Jesus Christ. At its heart is the recognition that all that we have and all that we are is a gift from God. Stewardship is a recurring item on the Kirk Session Agenda and we have now agreed the St John's Kirk Legacy Policy which you will find below:

St John's Kirk Legacy Policy

At St John's Kirk, we welcome all gifts in Wills, however large or small, and we promise to use your gift to make a difference. Our legacy policy is to use gifts to help fund significant development projects, whether mission, staff, equipment or buildings.

Since needs change over the years, we encourage you to leave a gift in your Will for the general purposes of the congregation rather than for a restricted purpose. We will discuss possible uses of your gift with your executors when the time comes, bearing in mind your known areas of interest in the church and the church's priorities at the time.

You can be confident that your gift will be used to make a real difference to our future mission and ministry.

We will acknowledge gifts in whatever way the donor and/or his/her executors feel most appropriate. If preferred, we can make sure that gifts remain anonymous.

If you would like to talk to someone in confidence about the sorts of purposes your gift might fund, and how you would like your gift to be acknowledged, please contact: Jo Young at info.stjohns.kirk@gmail.com

If you would like to make a gift to our church in memoriam, please discuss this with us too. It can be a wonderful and appropriate way to remember a loved one.

Next Step

Your Will is a legal document, so it is vital to have it drafted or updated by someone who is legally qualified. Should you wish to make a gift to St John's Kirk the details which you will need such as charity number can be found on the bottom of every page in this Chronicle.

Stewardship - Offerings

Although we will be continuing to have the collection plate during our services, there are other ways of making your offering. This can be done by regular standing order payments, and importantly the value of regular giving like this can be increased by 25% at no cost to you, please contact Wilma Malcolm for a Gift Aid form.

The Goodbox donation point in the Kirk is very easy to use by tapping with a bank card and helps with occasional donations, the amount of which can be amended on the screen. It is a very easy way for your friends and family to show their appreciation of the beautiful place where you worship.

The support of individuals and groups is vital in enabling us to keep this historic building and its life and work open to the public, and serving its community.



Donate Online

We offer the facility to receive your donation online, using [JustGiving](https://www.justgiving.com/page/stjohnskirk-1695666491286?utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=page%2Fstjohnskirk-1695666491286&utm_source=copyLink&utm_campaign=pdf-share). Please click the link below to make a one-off payment or a regular monthly donation.

https://www.justgiving.com/page/stjohnskirk-1695666491286?utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=page%2Fstjohnskirk-1695666491286&utm_source=copyLink&utm_campaign=pdf-share

Retiring Session Clerk – Bill Wilson

I have had the privilege of working in fairly close proximity to Bill during his time as Session Clerk, all 7.5 years.

Many people, obviously, do not appreciate the amount of work that it takes to manage the workings of a church such as St John's Kirk of Perth. Especially at this precise moment.

But believe me the work is intense. So much so that sometimes the prime reason that we are all here for, the work in the name of God, can be pushed to one side. That is something that Bill, who is a committed Christian, has never done.

We can all become tied up with finance, fabric, maintenance, Council disagreements, presbytery demands, streaming, etc, and Bill has had to put up with them all but his commitment to his church and to his religion has never been in question. Personally, I do not know how he has achieved it, but he has and has done it meticulously.

As the demands of the present Project have become ever greater, and with the fact of John Kinloch having to stand down, a decision had to be made. Without this project going ahead St John's would undoubtedly slowly but surely, cease to exist in the form that we know it today. No one person could carry on at the rate that Bill has done and he has wisely made the decision to stand down as Session Clerk to enable him to concentrate on the project.

We shall miss his calm measured approach to things but this now seems to be the right time for Bill to travel forward into another venture.

We are all going to miss having him as our Session Clerk and welcome Margaret into this leadership position, all be it with a bit of a different agenda, but today, of course we shall miss him. I personally shall miss him a lot.

Kay Morrison
Depute Session Clerk
St. John's Kirk



Retiring Elder - John Kinloch



Many of you will now know that John Kinloch has sadly had to stand down from all the positions that he held for St John's due to concerns about his health. After a remarkably short period when he was unable to worship with us on Sundays, we have been delighted to see him back with us and he has even come back to singing in the Choir, but rightly feels he needs to prioritise his family and his health.

What few will know is just how much John has done for St John's over many years. John is so highly regarded wherever he has applied his time and talents, and part of the reason is his great sense of humour. Any group that has John participating will quickly be relaxed and laughing. In 2001 when he was the Presbytery Elder for another church, he was asked by Presbytery to represent them on the Trust. What a blessing to us this proved to be because when John takes on a job he never does so half-heartedly. John brought to the Trust his experience of serving his own farming community on the Scottish Land Court. He also served Presbytery as Convener of their Planning Committee, a challenging role even then.

By 2006 the Trust had asked John to become their chairman, which put him in a pivotal role to work with Michael Thomson and David Ogston on the very successful Vision for the Future project. This raised £2.3M to upgrade the interior of the Kirk, adding toilets, offices and new seating in 2010/11. Charlie Fraser Trust Secretary, remembers the many hours that John and Michael spent in his offices planning how to sell their Vision to funders and publicise their plans.

Following the success of the Vision for the Future, John became a member of the Kirk, and a member of Session. In 2017 he agreed to become the Property Convener and very soon found himself once more taking on major fundraising, when he discovered that the spire was leaking badly. John's experience, persistency and diplomacy has been crucial in making the progress we have. Persistency has been one of John's most valuable characteristics as we faced the scepticism of so many essential organisations that held gateway permission roles. Overcoming those took 7 years.

Getting to the stage where we have the support of the General Trustees in December 2024 enabled us to apply to our first gateway funder, the National Lottery Heritage Fund. John's guiding hand in developing the application to NLHF, who have just approved our application for up to £625,000 owes so much to his knowledge and judgement.

Truly John Kinloch has done so much for St John's, well beyond those mentioned here, and he, Jeanette and their daughter Karen have brought us so many blessings.

Thank you, John. Your wisdom will be sorely missed, and we wish you and all your family many blessings.

Death of Members

Sandra Waite	March 2025
Sheena Bonthron	April 2025
Donald Graham	June 2025



Opening Times

The summer opening of St John's to visitors commenced on Monday 31 March 2025 and will close on the 30 September 2025. The hours are from 11.00am to 4.00pm. Each year we welcome hundreds of visitors from all over the world, all with their own stories to tell.

We need more Kirk stewards to ensure that we carry on with this valuable service.

We are always on the lookout for volunteers to join us. Would you like to take part by giving us a couple of hours of your time per week?



If so, please do not hesitate to get in contact with the Roll Keeper at rollkeeper.stjohns@gmail.com
Kay Morrison

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
01738 626520
or email marjoryhowat@gmail.com

Friends of St John's Kirk of Perth

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of St John's Kirk of Perth will take place in the Knox Chapel at St John's, at 5.30pm, on Wednesday 30 July 2025 – refreshments from 5.00pm.

Andrew Mitchell – Chairman

Friends of St John's Kirk of Perth SCIO.
Registered charity. No SC 047919

Foodbank

We rely on the support of our local community for food donations, volunteering and finances. We want to make sure that no one in our local community has to go hungry, but we need your help to make this happen. Your gift of financial support, time, business partnership and food can make a real difference.

<https://perthkinross.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/>

Demand remains high and our stock room is beginning to look rather depleted again. We are currently in need of the following;

Jars of jam
Tinned tomatoes
Tinned fruit
Tinned main meals
Custard
Rice pudding
UHT milk or Long life
Diluting juice
Small jars of coffee
Nappies size 6 & 7
Shaving foam

You can donate any of these items in the Kirk or at supermarkets.

Any donations of these items are gratefully received.

Every little helps!!!

perthkinross.foodbank.org.uk/

Anne Chatt
 Foodbank Representative

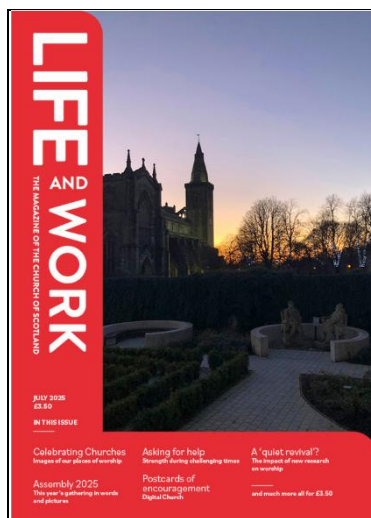


Please continue to support us, all donations are much appreciated.

Life and Work

[Life and Work](https://www.lifeandwork.org/) is the magazine of the Church of Scotland. In a history spanning over 140 years, it has established itself as the voice of the Church of Scotland. There is also a **free monthly newsletter** available on the website

<https://www.lifeandwork.org/features/features/view/755-life-and-work-newsletter>



By purchasing Life and Work you keep up-to-date with all the latest news on the Church in Scotland and throughout the world, and help to support the Church's work.

From just £2.99 for an electronic copy or £9 for a three-month print subscription at www.lifeandwork.org/subscribe or speak to your church's promoter.

Gift subscriptions are available. New elders and communicants are eligible for three free issues. www.lifeandwork.org www.facebook.com/lifeandwork

Twitter: @cofslifeandwork

Instagram: @cofslifeandwork

Mission



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



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

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



<perthkinross.foodbank.org.uk/>

CROSS REACH

Care you can put your faith in

CrossReach's work is wide ranging and enhances lives, changes lives and saves lives. - <https://www.crossreach.org.uk/>

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 & Family Services-Residential Care, Family Therapy, Perinatal Counselling



PACT has run 'Starter Packs' for 20 years. In this age of reusing and recycling, Starter Packs accepts donations of crockery, pots, towels and bed linen for new Tenants. Our box for donations will be beside the Foodbank box at the West Door.

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

Church Roll - Members

If you have moved house then please inform us as soon as possible. If you have changed your email address or would like to provide one, then please email the Roll Keeper at rollkeeper.stjohns@gmail.com

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 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.

Service Dates in St John's Kirk

Sunday Services	Every	Sunday	10.00am
Morning Service is held on every Sunday throughout the year at 10:00am with Holy Communion being celebrated on the first Sunday of each month.			
<i>Please be aware that live streaming will be taking place during most services which means you may appear in the broadcast. If you do not wish to be recorded or appear in the stream, please speak to one of the welcoming Elders who will advise on the best place to sit.</i>			
Wednesday Service	Every	Wednesday	1.00pm
Bible Study	First Thursday of the Month		2.00pm
	Starting 4 September 2025 for 1 hour		
Greek Orthodox Services (April to August)	Saturday	19 July 2025	11.00am
	Saturday	23 August 2025	11.00am
	Saturday	20 September 2025	11.00am
	Saturday	18 October 2025	11.00am
	Saturday	22 November 2025	11.00am
Service of Appreciation of the Emergency Services	Sunday	14 September 2025	10.00am

More information regarding services is available on the website st-johns-kirk.co.uk/

An Anniversary Coming Up?

If you would like to have a short service of thanksgiving for 40, 50, 60 or 70 years marriage contact Rev. Sandy Gunn. It could be for just a couple, the family or including friends.

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.



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.



Events in St Johns Kirk

Perth Youth Orchestra	Sunday	24 August 2025	7.30pm	T
Chansons Chamber Choir - Jubilate	Saturday	13 September 2025	7.30pm	P
Dunedin Consort	Saturday	27 September 2025	7.30pm	H
Perth Chamber Music	Tuesday	14 October 2025	7.30pm	H
Songs of Praise - TBC	August/September			

F = Free P = Perthshire Box Office 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.

Events in St Matthews



16 July: Eileen Waterston and wind ensemble from Perth Symphony Orchestra returns with a varied programme of music - and instruments!

23 July: We welcome the Camarata Orchestra from Perth with a light classical programme

30 July: the Odd Alliance plays folk music and song from Scotland, England, Ireland, France and beyond on a range of instruments including hurdy-gurdy, small pipes, guitar, clarinet and whistles

6 August: we welcome the return of the Highland Notes who will entertain us once more with a wide range of enjoyable songs from across the years

13 August: Perth Barbershop Singers. Music and entertainment once more from Perth's own popular close-harmony male voice choir.

15 August: Last Orders – Your local rock tribute band.

<https://www.perthstmatthews.org.uk/> - <https://www.perthstmatthews.org.uk/newsletter-3/>

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/
Music and Concerts:	st-johns-kirk.co.uk/concerts-and-music
3D Inside St John's	st-johns-kirk.co.uk/flythrough

Contacts

Locum Minister	Revd. Sandy Gunn	01738 443216 sandygunn@btinternet.com
Interim Moderator	Revd. Craig Dobney	cdobney@churchofscotland.org.uk
Session Clerk	Margaret Steele	sessionclerk.stjohns@gmail.com
Depute Session Clerk	Kay Morrison	01738 447123
Church Secretary	Marion Lornie	
Treasurer	Lorna Ferguson	01738 632206
Gift Aid Convenor	Wilma Malcolm	01738 622807 st-johns-kirk.co.uk/support-donations cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/donate/
Director of Music	Howard Duthie	
Church Officer	Charlie Mutch Douglas Pringle	01738 633192
Church Elders x 14	If you need an Elder to contact you, please email or phone	01738 633192 rollkeeper.stjohns@gmail.com
Events Coordinator	Wilma Malcolm	01738 622807 st-johns-kirk.co.uk/venue-hire
Flower Convenor	Eleanor Crichton	
Roll Keeper	Aileen Morrice	rollkeeper.stjohns@gmail.com
Web Administrator	Margaret Steele	thekirkwebsite@gmail.com
Friends of St John's	Andrew Mitchell	info@friendsofstjohnskirkperth.org.uk https://www.st-johns-kirk.co.uk/friends/
Church of Scotland	https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/	0131 2255722
Perth Presbytery	https://www.perthpresbytery.org.uk/ https://www.perthpresbytery.org.uk/useful-links	07596 868064

Final Thoughts

ABC Tour



Are you like me when you're on holiday, see an open church door (even when it's just ajar) and have to go in to have a look around. Sometimes it's a planned visit on an ABC tour (Another Blessed Church/Cathedral) but it doesn't matter whether you're visiting Santiago de Compostela or a wee country kirk, there is always a sense of peace & calm. In today's world, this is something we all need. Next time you visit a church or cathedral, sit down for a few minutes and let the peace & calm envelop you.



Anne Chatt
Kirk Elder

Prayer !

On the first month there were some 150 prayer requests on the prayer tree. This shows that many come to St John's for spiritual rather than curiosity reasons. People meet to pray on Wednesdays after the tea and coffee following the Wednesday service, and include praying for requests on the leaves!



If you have any articles that would be of interest to our congregation then please email them to rollkeeper.stjohns@gmail.com. The next edition of the Chronicles will be due out in November 2025.