

# Tidings

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September 2025

### **MINISTER**

Rev Ross Blackman BSc MBA BD(Hons)  
Parish Halls, Strathmore Road, Hamilton ML3 6AQ ☎ 01698 640185

### **SESSION CLERK**

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### **CHURCH OFFICER**

Mr Colin Davidson

### **ROLL KEEPER**

Mr Colin Gibson



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Dear friends,

### “Commitment”

As you likely well know, I never take party politics into the pulpit, however some subjects are naturally political by virtue of their social impact and theological implications. We could cite many examples, but we have some stunning examples of that in our own time on an international scale. One such example is in Ukraine

Along with several nations formerly part of the USSR, Ukraine came to special attention after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the pausing of the Cold War. Concessions and commitments were given around the extent of NATO and regarding the armament of nations, as well as suggestions as to the consequences that might be attracted by aggression in the region. We now see vacillation from several governments, including our own, regarding future plans. Needless to say, it seems virtually impossible to get a comprehensive picture from our media channels. Depending on what source you use, the picture is entirely contradictory and it seems safer to acknowledge that there is some varying degree of fault on every side, as each pursues their own interest. Past commitments are wavering.

Fundamentally, we see something of the vagaries of human commitment. We might literally thank the heavens that the commitment we see from God is not like that of humankind. We have a God who promises to extend his grace to us in this life and eternally in the one to come (John 14:6, 23). His undertaking included, not only a “very good” creation but a “new creation” through the finished work of Christ, which itself demonstrated the ultimate commitment for our good (Gen.1:31; 2Cor.5:17-20).

As Christians, we’re also left to ponder our own commitment to God, in reciprocation to his love. Do we demonstrate this in our devotion to God in prayer and meditating on scripture; in our faithfulness to testifying of how much Christ means to us (Matt.22:36-40; 28:18-20)? Do we demonstrate our commitment to each other, as Children of God, in our support of his church – which includes our time, talents, and attendance upon his word? Does our duty and commitment overcome even our occasional discomfort that inevitably occurs in our relationships with each other?

The world exhibits some terrible examples regarding commitment and relationships, often leading to conflict and war. In this area, the church of Christ ought to be leading the vanguard. Therefore, it falls to each of us, individually and collectively to take up a different battle and along with the Apostle Paul and the hymnwriter John Monsell, “fight the good fight” (1Tim.6:11-12), in commitment together.

Your Minister and friend,

*Ross.*



## What's On

### September

Sunday 7	10.45am	Morning Worship
Tuesday 9	7.00pm	Meeting of the Kirk Session & Wider Session
Sunday 14	10.45am	Sacrament of Holy Communion
	3.00pm	Sacrament of Holy Communion (at Hamilton West Campus)
Sunday 21	10.45am	Morning Worship - Boys' Brigade Dedication
Sunday 28	10.45am	Morning Worship



### October

Sunday 5	10.45am	Morning Worship - Harvest
Sunday 12	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 19	10.45am	Morning Worship
Saturday 25	2.00pm	Link Committee Afternoon Tea
Sunday 26	10.45am	Morning Worship - BB Founders' Day Service



### November

Saturday 1	10.00am	Elders'/Committee & Teams Conference
	3.00pm	Bereavement Service
Sunday 2	10.45am	Morning Worship - Bible Sunday
Friday 7	6.30pm	Escape Room - more details to follow
Sunday 9	10.45am	Morning Worship - Service of Remembrance
Tuesday 11	7.00pm	Meeting of Kirk Session & Wider Session
Sunday 16	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 23	10.45am	Sacrament of Holy Communion
	3.00pm	Sacrament of Holy Communion (at Hamilton West Campus)
Sunday 30	10.45am	Morning Worship - First Sunday in Advent





This autumn, Drama Kirk are delighted to be running workshops at the Recharge+ conference on September 6. Intended to inspire everyone in ministry, from parish ministers to youth leaders and more, this conference is unique in Scotland at providing an opportunity to meet with others and experience several workshops exploring different ideas for church life.

This year's conference includes sessions on digital ministry and on transformative conversations. Bob Hartman, author of the Rhyiming Bible, is the special guest and we are especially delighted to be part of an event with him, given our recordings of various sections of the Rhyiming Bible for use in schools and churches.

We will be running two workshops, one called '**Drama in Worship: Keep it Simple!**' where we'll draw on our recent experience of "The Simplest Nativity Ever" by Angela Yardy in 2024 and "Passion Play in a Day" for Easter 2025. We'll talk about what preparation is needed to pull something together on the day and demonstrate how it can be done.

Our second workshop '**Bringing the Gospel to Life: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly**' will draw more on our dramatized studies and our experience over the years showing that embodying characters from scripture deepens participants' faith and understanding of scripture. Like our studies, we'll run some drama games, perform some sketches and provide an opportunity to explore a passage of scripture in more depth.

Tickets are available now, you can find them here - [RechargePLUS Conference | The Church of Scotland](#)

*Liz Blackman*



### **Fellowship and Special Events Group**

By the time this gets into print two items will have taken place. On 6 August there was an organ recital in the West Campus and on 10 August there was a commemorative service of the opening of the West Parish Church of Scotland, followed by the showing of slides and tea, coffee and cake in the halls.

On 6th and 7th September will be the annual Doors Open days. The Old Parish Church will be open on the 6th from 10.30 am until 4.00 pm and on Sunday 7th from 12.30pm until 4.00pm. Tours of the Church and Grounds will be available as will be showing of various banners, some in the Church and others in the North Hall. Tea etc will be available in the Session Room following the tours. I should point out that the tours are not restricted to visitors. We are sure there are members of the Church who have not seen any other part of the building beyond the Sanctuary and would like to see other parts of it, so please feel free to drop in within the times mentioned above. There is no charge for the tours. The buildings of the West Campus will also be open on the same dates and times again for show to all who wish to see round those buildings and teas etc will be supplied.

On Friday 19 September there will be a concert by the local Rock Choir, the net proceeds from which will be donated to the charity Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS). Tickets are available from the church office at a cost of £5 or alternatively pay at the door on the night. The doors will open at 7.00 pm and the concert will start at 7.30 pm and finish about 9.00 pm, being followed by refreshments in the halls. Your support for this event will be very much appreciated.

Hope to see some of you there.

*Yvonne Adamson and Iain McLean*



## Choir

Prior to the start of the new session in September, Choir enjoyed their annual dinner evening at the end of August in the Avonbridge Hotel.

Our mid week meetings begin on Wednesday 3 September at 7pm and a warm welcome is waiting for anyone in the Congregation who would like to join us.

The choir planners are now ready for collection covering material through to 23 November.

As we start the new Church Year, I have been giving some serious thought to the purpose of weekly organ preludes to worship, prior to the start of the Service. We have a welcoming congregation, but the start of the service has become intertwined with “Musak” and difficult to know where our worship begins, including even the entry of Choir.

Through the wonderful “answers all questions” I looked at the definition of “Preludes to Worship” in Google and discovered

“THE PRELUDE is the first act of worship – sets the tone for what is to follow –

inviting worshippers to gather, to transition from their busy lives into a sacred place of communion with God and each other”.

Quiet conversation indicates good fellowship and concern for others, but we live in a busy noisy fast world where Musak is heard in every aspect of life.

In choosing my music each week, I am trying to set the tone for the service. It is uplifting to take “time out” on a Sunday morning, in the peace of the Sanctuary, to calm hearts for these few minutes before the Service starts and come close to God as he speaks to us.

Thanks to Alastair Van der Meer for supporting worship at the organ in August. Alastair continues to further his love of music and is developing his organ skills.

A warm welcome to the soprano section of the choir for Emma Culross who has successfully completed her school career with excellent results and now moves to university. We are delighted to have you join us.



*Helen C Simpson*

Organist

## Old Kirk Reflections

Not long after the longest day each year, my Mum will declare “the nights are starting to draw in”!!

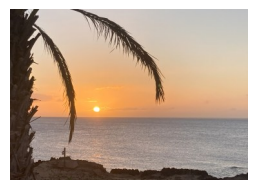
We all like the sunshine, a nice bright day and long light evenings. This year we’ve been lucky enough to have had a fair bit of sunshine and bright days over the Summer months. We feel better when the sun is shining and people have a smile on their face. Sometimes however, these smiles can be deceiving. Not everyone smiling is enjoying their own personal light and might be experiencing darkness. Things might not be going so well. We might have worries about all manner of things.

No matter what is causing our own particular darkness, we know we can always turn to Jesus. He tells us in John 8:12 “\*\*\*I am the light of the world.\* \*Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life\*\*.”\* This is a promise of transformation and hope that holds true even in our darkest moments.

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

*Douglas*



## Gardening Group

As some of you may be aware, a wee gardening group was formed a few short months ago. This group came together after some comments about the kerb appeal of the church grounds were raised. In the time we have been working together we have started with maintenance of the grounds at the West, and are looking to introduce some more colour out there. At the Old, the pots at the main entrance of the church have been filled with plants that have bloomed and provided us with a fantastic array of colour across the summer months.



While we are heading towards autumn, the colours may fade and some of the plants may disappear across the darker, colder months. This doesn't mean the gardening group has stopped! We will continue to work through autumn and winter to keep the grounds clear, and ready them for next spring. I would like to give thanks to those who have supported us, with donations of pots, plants and bulbs that have allowed us to achieve the colourful display that can be seen outside the church on a Sunday morning.

Finally, a big thanks to my 'super' wee group, and to everyone that has helped us in achieving what we have in the last few months!

*Colin Davidson*



## Country Dance Group

The West Country Dance Group will resume for the new session on Tuesday 7 October at 7.30pm at the West Campus.

New members and old (current members) will be made most welcome. We walk through the dances before putting them to music and it's amazing how the steps all come back (although not always in the correct order).

The Scottish Country Dance Society has a phrase 'Fun, Fitness and Friendship' which is what we are all about. So anyone interested in keeping fit this winter please come along and join us on a Tuesday evening and enjoy a night of reels, jigs and strathspeys (and laughter).

*Jennifer Gibson*



## Finance and Gift Aid

Do you shop online? Do you know you can raise money for the church at no cost to yourself by signing up to [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk)? So far over £1,000 has been raised for church funds by members signing up, the retailer makes the donation when you purchase something you would be buying anyway.

You may have noticed little yellow 'banks' at the doors of the church. These are part of our Harvest thanksgiving. You can take one home and throughout the year put your odd coppers into it and then return it to the church when full and pick up an empty one. The total collected throughout the year will then be distributed to the charity or charities chosen for that year to receive our Harvest offerings. In the past this has been local charities such as the Drop in Centre or Hyzone.

*Marilyn Henderson*

Treasurer



## Boys' Brigade

Both the 1st and 2nd finished last session with very well attended Parents' Evenings. Both companies had quizzes and games, with a good bit of competition between the young people and the parents.

At the final 2nd Hamilton Parents' Evening, the presentations were as follows:

- Best Recruit – Pte Fraser Marshall
- Perfect attendance – Pte Cooper Allan
- Best Squad – Squad 1, Sgt Fraser Henderson
- Boys' Best Boy – Sgt Euan Henderson
- Best Boy – Sgt Rory Peters

### Joint promotions

- Moving up from Anchors to Juniors we have: Jacob, Ryan, Wyllie, Jamie (Wed) and Brodie (Thurs)
- Kyle Blackman moves from the Juniors to the Company Section
- Congratulations to our three King's Men: Rory Peters, Euan Henderson and Fraser Henderson. Sadly, we also have to say farewell to Rory, Euan and Fraser as they move on to pastures new. We wish them well at university and they know they are welcome back any time!

The 1st Hamilton rounded off last session with a bowling competition at Cosmic Bowl, which was a great success with the winners being:

- Anchors - Cenzi Hilston
- Juniors - Joe Thompson
- Company - Stuart Davidson
- Officers - Craig Horne

I would like to take this opportunity to again thank Graham Horne and John Stewart for their dedicated service as they stand down as respective Captains of the 1st Hamilton and 2nd Hamilton. Thankfully they aren't going far as they will continue to serve in the new 1st/2nd Company as Officers.

As we move forward together in this new session as the 1st/2nd Hamilton, please follow the Facebook page for information on start back dates, times and other events: [www.facebook.com/1st2ndhamiltonbb](http://www.facebook.com/1st2ndhamiltonbb)

*David Gibson*

Captain





Sadly the summer holidays are coming to an end, with the sun and seaside behind us, it means it's time for our new session to kick off with the Anchors.

If you have boys in P1-P3, come along on a Wednesday evening between 5:30-6:30pm and join in a fun filled program of stories, crafts and games while making new friends.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to say a massive Congratulations to our young leader Colin who recently completed his KGVI training course. We are super proud of him and are looking forward to sharing the new ideas that I'm sure the course has helped develop.

Session starts on Wednesday 20 August 2025 at 5:30pm. If you require any more information, please contact either myself or the church office.

***Alan Young***

Officer-in-charge (Wednesday)  
(07841518651)



### **Saffronhall Singers**

Our Monday rehearsals resumed in January in our new accommodation at Gilmour and Whitehill Parish Church in Burnbank and I am pleased to report we have settled in well. Getting used to the different acoustics took a few weeks, but we had no problem adapting to the coffee facilities! We are now working on some new pieces while continuing to revise our existing repertoire.

Our Carols by Candlelight in December was well received by all who attended and we were able to donate £700 to Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis, a condition affecting one of our former members. (This year we made a donation to the church from our own funds). Special thanks are due to Margaret Green, who was a great help to us in the afternoon as we set up for the refreshments and to the team who served everyone after the concert. We hope to continue to deliver Carols by Candlelight and the proposed date is Friday 5 December, but this year, we have handed over the organising and catering to other groups within the church.

Sadly, in March, we heard the sad news that Christine Muir, one of our former members, had lost her battle with pulmonary fibrosis. She had retired from the choir at the start of the session, having been an enthusiastic participant for several years. More recently, we lost another former member of our group – May Andrew – mum to Helen and Alison who also sing with us. Again, May was a regular attender and participant, who loved to sing. Both Christine and May will be sadly missed by friends and family.

Before putting our music away for the summer months, we enjoyed an evening of fellowship and fine food at Hamilton Golf Club, a new venue for us, and it proved to be a very successful evening.

Our new session will begin on Monday 15 September, 7 30pm in Gilmour and Whitehill Parish Church, when we look forward to welcoming everyone back. New members would also be very welcome! We begin immediately to prepare for a return visit to Auchlochan on the afternoon of Saturday 4 October .



***Campbell Barr***



Mrs I Marshall  
Hamilton: Old Parish Church of Scotland



Aurelia,  
Alta Verapaz region  
of Guatemala

14 July 2025

Dear Irene,

Thank you so much for your incredible support, prayers and generosity this Christian Aid Week. Together, Hamilton: Old Parish Church of Scotland has raised £668.70 to help families around the world transform their own lives.

Your generous gift will help women like Aurelia in Guatemala. When Aurelia discovered the work of our partner, Congcoop, she put herself forward to attend the specialist agricultural training on offer, along with 22 members of nearby communities.

By working with Congcoop, Aurelia's gained the skills and knowledge to cultivate native seeds that are better suited to the changing climate. She's producing her own organic fertiliser, creating nurseries, constructing rainwater collection systems, and making nutritious food and medicine for her chickens. Congcoop also provided Aurelia with seeds and tools.

Together, we can be more like Aurelia, and put the unstoppable power of hope into action, because a brighter, fairer future is possible.

Thank you, Hamilton: Old Parish Church of Scotland for your life changing gift. It gives us hope that, together, we can help more families push back against poverty.

With heartfelt thanks,

Your Christian Aid Week Team

PS Thank you for letting us know how much money you raised by sending your Form A. We'll be in touch to thank you for any further funds you raise online, for example through JustGiving.

### Scottish Bible Society



Many activities are taking place over the Summer months for children - our own Holiday Club in our Church for a week in July into start of August before the young folk return to school.

Also taking place is the Magnitude festival at Lendrick Muir in July where thousands of young people come to worship, pray, sing, and read the Bible together. We hope that God's message of love and grace will change young lives. The work of the Bible Society continues in many countries around the World. Please keep workers in your prayers especially in countries where there are wars and unrest.

*Muriel Eadie*





## Holiday Club Heroes

What an amazing week the children had with our "Holiday Club Heroes". Great fun was had by all with "Flash" fitness, crafts and games, singing and dancing and our daily bible story. The holiday club was well attended by 64 children over the course of the week. Most of the children stayed for the afternoon and enjoyed films, cartoons and games.

A big thank you to everyone involved in making our "Holiday Club Heroes" such a huge success and in particular to our very enthusiastic children and their parents and carers for supporting the holiday club.



## Flower Rota

Date	Main	Rose Bowl	Delivery
07/09/25	Mrs N McLean		Mrs H Troop
14/09/25	Mrs A Davidson		Mrs A Davidson
21/09/25	Flower Fund		Mr C Davidson
28/09/25	Mrs D Foster		Mrs D Foster
05/10/25	Mrs H Blair		Mrs H Blair
12/10/25	Flower Fund		Mr K Brown
19/10/25	Flower Fund		Mrs H Brown
26/10/25	Flower Fund		Mrs M Latimer
02/11/25	Mrs K Hunter		Mrs K Hunter
09/11/25	Mrs A Davidson		Miss G Davidson
16/11/25	Flower Fund		Mrs S Samson
23/11/25	Mrs H Simpson	Mrs H McGreevy	Mrs H Simpson
30/11/25	Mr M Macintyre		Mrs S Craig
07/12/25	Mrs A Whitehill		Mrs S Gosling
14/12/25	Mrs M Henderson	Mrs N Barr	Mrs M Henderson

Thank you to everyone who gifts flowers, contributes to the flower fund and helps with delivery. This is very much appreciated. Dates throughout the year are still available and contributions to the flower fund always welcomed. If any dates are unsuitable and you are unable to organise a swap please contact Colin Davidson either via the office or on 07305 055924.

*Andrea*



My thanks to Ross and the other friends from the Old who visited, sent cards and messages after my recent spell in Hairmyres hospital.

I am on the mend, and making a slow but steady return and look forward to being back among you in the near future.

David Young

Helen and Stewart would like to thank everyone for the prayers ,cards and kind words received after the passing of Helen's mum May Andrew on 13th July 2025.

We would also like to thank Ross for his support and guidance in helping us plan the funeral and also for conducting the beautiful, personal service in South Lanarkshire Crematorium.

We so appreciated your love and support throughout and it gave us great comfort in a sad and difficult time.



***Entered into Eternal Life.***

*"I am the Resurrection and the Life"*

*God of grace and peace, in your Son Jesus Christ*

*You have given us new birth into a living hope.*

*Strengthen us now to live in the power of the resurrection*

*and keep us united with our loved one*

*from whom in death we are not divided;*

*for you live and reign forever and ever. Amen*

*6 April 2025*

*Mrs Lily Dick*

*20 April 2025*

*Mr John Brodie*

*27 April 2025*

*Mrs Anne Jardine*

*29 April 2025*

*Mr James Colquhoun*

*6 May 2025*

*Mrs May Pollock*

*17 May 2025*

*Mrs Dolina Kay*

*19 May 2025*

*Ms Mary Anne Montague*

*26 May 2025*

*Mrs Margaret Little*

*12 June 2025*

*Mrs Isabel Kippen*

*5 July 2025*

*Mrs Margaret Brady*

*13 July 2025*

*Mrs May Andrew*

*13 July 2025*

*Mrs Eileen Symington*

*15 July 2025*

*Mrs Louise Brownlie*

*20 July 2025*

*Mrs Cicely Ogg*

*22 July 2025*

*Mrs Mary Leggate*





### PRAYER

Heavenly Father,  
we acknowledge you as our incredible creator and maker.

As the Children of God  
we confess that we neither faithfully follow the example of Christ  
nor the leadings of our conscience and the prodding of the Holy Spirit.

But we do know by faith that we love you  
and that love is manifest in action.

Help us to live up to our commitments  
to you and to your church,  
that in all things Christ might be honoured  
and you might be glorified,  
now and forever.

Amen.

