Carnwath, Carstairs and Forth Parish Church

Newsletter

July to September 2026 / Issue 15

Welcome to the first edition of our new church newsletter!

We're delighted to bring you this newsletter as a way of keeping everyone connected and sharing what's happening across our churches.

Inside, you'll find news, upcoming events, church activities and a few things to encourage and inspire us along the way. We hope it will be an easy way for everyone to keep up to date and feel part of our church family.

As our three churches begin this new chapter together, we look forward to sharing our worship, fellowship and faith with one another.

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Summer Fun Day - Saturday 29th August

On Saturday 29th August, a Church Fun Day was held in Ravenstruther Hall. It was a highly successful afternoon offering a great opportunity for people from Carnwath, Carstairs and Forth to come together for fun and fellowship. There was something for all ages to enjoy, with a variety of indoor and outdoor games creating plenty of laughter and friendly competition. There was also a time to relax, catch up with friends and enjoy a cup of tea and a picnic bag together.

We were very fortunate to have lovely weather, and it certainly felt as though God was smiling down on us. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon and can't wait for the next one. A special thank you to everyone who helped organise and support the event and made the day such a success.

Would You Rather with Harrison

1. Would you rather have the strength of Samson or the wisdom of Solomon?

I would choose the wisdom of Solomon. Samson's strength which is worldly can be used to destroy than build, but I believe Solomon's wisdom could give me the strength of ten Samsons, strength I could use for the glory of God and His kingdom.

2. Would you rather fight the giant Goliath like David or sleep in a den of lions like Daniel?

It depends. I may not enjoy throwing a stone on someone, even an enemy, so I would rather sleep in a den of lions like Daniel. That way I can trust God and His provision even more, and show the nations that even lions cannot destroy you when God is with you. Even in the lion's den, you are still safe in the arms of God.

3. Would you rather go to the moon or explore the depths of the ocean?

I would rather go to the moon. I think I would feel God's nearness up in the sky that He created, and I have always loved the moon. I would be scared to explore the depths of the ocean. It is dark, mysterious, and so much of it is still unexplored, while the moon has already been explored. Wise answer-isn't?

4. Would you rather lose your sense of taste or lose your sense of smell?

I would rather lose my sense of smell. I love food, and if I lost my sense of taste I would miss out on 90% of my favourite things in this life. Losing my sense of smell is fine. I shower every day, and I can always buy some expensive perfume so people still enjoy being near me.

5. Would you rather live 100 years in the future or 100 years in the past?

This one is easy for me. I would rather live a hundred years in the future, because I would love to keep preaching the gospel. I now have (limited) knowledge of the Word of God I did not have before, and in a hundred more years I could reach more people, learn from my mistakes, and live better instead of repeating them.

6. Would you rather hear one of Jesus' sermons or see one of His miracles?

I would rather hear one of Jesus' sermons. My faith does not rest on His miracles alone. For me, the Word of God matters more than any miracle, and I believe His death on the cross is the greatest miracle of all time, the only one I needed for my salvation. The way I should live now should shaped more by His sermons than by His miracles.

7. Would you rather have been at the birth of Jesus or been at the empty tomb?

I would love to have been at the empty tomb. By this time I have already seen His ministry, and since the resurrection is the foundation of the Christian faith, I would love to have been a witness there, able to tell the world that the Jesus who was born in the manger is now risen, and the tomb is empty and all in between He has done.

8. Would you rather be a shepherd in Bethlehem or a fisherman in Galilee?

I would love to be a fisherman in Galilee, in the hope that Jesus might choose me as one of His disciples and turn me from a fisher of fish into a fisher of people. Being a shepherd was hard work, and I know Jesus is the Good Shepherd, so that is enough for me.

9. Would you rather be able to ask one question to any person in the Bible or hear God speak directly to you for one minute?
You probably already know my answer. I would let God speak directly to me for one minute, because He alone is holy, righteous, and blameless. Everyone else in the Bible had some kind of flaw.

10. Would you rather have a congregation that sings very loudly but badly or beautifully but very quietly?
It seems like you are trying to tell me something here, Harrison, that you sing very badly but loudly. Lol. Well, I would rather have a congregation singing with joy and praising God without worrying about how beautiful their voices are, just shouting it out so everyone can hear they are rejoicing in Christ. I am happy to be counted among the loud, bad singers, because I am one of them.

11. Would you rather be given one day to explore the Garden of Eden or the streets of Jerusalem in Jesus' time?
By now you know how much I love Jesus, and I would count myself the most privileged person who ever lived if I could walk with Him on the streets of Jerusalem. One day I hope to go to Jerusalem and walk barefoot, so the ground and sand His feet touched two thousand years ago can touch me now too. And wherever Jesus is, there is the Garden of Eden, so I do not long for that place. I long to be in His presence.

12. Would you rather preach to 5,000 or lead a Bible study with 5 people who ask lots of difficult questions?
I love both but If I have to choose one, I would rather preach to five thousand people. I am always happy to answer questions, but I love to preach more than just satisfy people's curiosity sometime.

Getting to know Mary Weir, our Session Clerk

1. What is your role in our combined church of Carnwath, Carstairs and Forth Church of Scotland?
I am the Session Clerk for all three Churches.

2. Please tell us a bit about yourself
I have 2 sons, a daughter-in-law and 6 grandsons. When I left school at 15, I started work a few days later with a company called Gestetner which sold photocopiers/printers. I had various admin jobs and my last job was in Social Work where I was for 20 years until I retired.
I went to the Church of Scotland. as a child (Craigneuk & Belhaven) for 10 years and we moved to Wishaw where I attended the Methodist Church for 60 years. When I moved here, I then attended Carstairs Church.

3. What things give you hope for the future?
Having new people coming to church and wanting to become members.

4. Is there a passage from the Bible that has a special memory/ meaning for you?
Philippians Ch4 v 6-7. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

5. What are some of your favourite hymns?
Pass me nought O gentle Saviour; Jesus we enthrone You; O for a thousand tongues to sing; There is a Redeemer; God sent His son they called him Jesus.

Minister & Pastoral Support: *Rev Sumit Harrison (known as Harrison) Tel: 01555 668868*
Email: SHarrison@churchofscotland.co.uk
Session Clerk: *Mary Weir Tel: 07713 152601*

Remembering Chrissie Alexander

Chrissie was a very faithful member of Forth church who, until she was ill, very rarely missed church services. Although, unable to attend for the last two years, and although her eyesight was failing, she liked to receive the order of service each week and would faithfully read several times throughout the week. One of our elders commented that Chrissie was bright and cheerful every Sunday, instantly recognisable in her white cardigan, blouse and skirts.

Chrissie had a quiet, but deep faith throughout her life. She worked for the church being the Girl Guide Captain for many years, a Sunday School teacher, and a great supporter, especially with her baking, for the Boys Brigade.

Chrissie had a family she deeply loved; a son and daughter, 3 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren and she was very happy and content with their life, considered she had had a quiet life but a good one.

Church Logo Competition

We are looking to make up a Church logo to represent all three churches and we need your help…

Everyone is invited to design a logo!

Please explain you thinking behind the design and put your name and telephone number on the paper.

Designs to be submitted into either Carnwath, Carstairs or Forth Churches by Sunday 29th November. There will be a prize for the winner.

The Worship times of our three Churches

Carnwath, Carstairs and Forth Churches Worship Time						
Date	**Time**	**Carnwath – Leader**	**Time**	**Carstairs - Leader**	**Time**	**Forth - Leader**
25 Oct	11.30	Stephen Hunter	9.45	Rev Gardiner	11.30	Rev Gardiner
1 Nov	11.30	Rev Gardiner	9.45	Robert Allan	9.45	Rev Gardiner *Communion*
8 Nov	11.30	Rev Harrison - *Remembrance*	9.45	Rev Harrison – *Remembrance*	9.45	Christine Fraser – *Remembrance*
15 Nov	11.30	Rev Harrison	9.45	Stephen Hunter	9.45	Rev. Harrison
22 Nov	11.30	Rev Harrison	9.45	Rev Harrison	9.45	Carol McQuillan
29 Nov	11.30am – Joint Service at Carstairs Led by Rev Harrison – *1st Sunday in Advent*				9.45	Rev Harrison/ Christine Fraser
6 Dec	11.30	Rev Harrison *Communion*	11.30	Carol McQuillan	9.45	Rev Harrison
13 Dec	11.30	Iain Cochrane	11.30	Rev Harrison	9.45	Rev Harrison
20 Dec	11.30	Rev Harrison	11.30	Carol McQuillan	9.45	Rev Harrison
24 Dec	11.15pm – Joint Watchnight Service with Carnwath in Carstairs Church led by Rev Harrison				11.15pm	Watchnight Service led by Karen Nicol
25 Dec	10.30am Christmas Day – Joint service at Carstairs led by Rev Harrison					
27 Dec	11.30am – Joint service at Carstairs led by Rev Harrison				9.45	Rev Harrison

Getting to know our groups

There's lots happening in our Churches.
Everyone is welcome!

SUNDAY

Jigsaw

Jigsaw meets every Sunday morning, starting 10 minutes before the church service begins. Jigsaw welcomes children aged 3 to Primary 7, with fun and engaging activities to help them learn about faith. Jigsaw is an active, fun-filled session where children can enjoy arts and crafts, games and Bible stories in a friendly and welcoming environment. A creche is also available for younger children during the service, giving parents and carers the opportunity to attend worship.

MONDAY

Carstairs Knit and Natter 1.00 - 3.30pm

The group continues to welcome new members and meets every Monday from 1.00-3.30pm in Carstairs Community Centre. We knit, we natter and love to chatter!

The ladies share their love near and far by giving practical support to local and national causes. We have sent off bags of knitted baby and children`s garments to Ukraine via the Biggar Appeal. The University Hospital Wishaw continues to receive regular supplies of baby hats, jackets and blankets to their neonatal ward. At present bags are being filled with cosy knits for the wee ones at Perth Prison Service Families Visitors Centre.

Following a request, we designed and created bags for hospital Zimmer frames for Kello and Lady Home Hospitals, apparently they have become sought after accessories.

Knit and Natter also liaise with the Mission and Nurture Committee and hope to add to the Remembrance poppy display this year and also supply small knitted items to be shared around the community at Christmas.

For further information, please contact Ruth Campbell on 07726 3347255

Forth Knit and Natter 10.00am – 12noon

The group meets on a Monday from 10.00am-12noon in Forth small church hall. The group is open to both women and men, and new members are always very welcome. At the moment members are working on a variety of projects, some knitting, some sewing and others model making. There is also an opportunity for cards, dominoes and reading. The important thing is meeting up for good conversation, sharing much laughter, a cup of tea and biscuits and on a good day home baking. All are welcome to join, come along and enjoy the fun.

Carstairs Guild 1.30pm – 3.30pm (meet monthly)

On 20th September those who were able attended the Dedication Service in Church.

The ladies are looking forward to monthly meetings, held in Carstairs Community Centre at 1.30pm. The first meeting is on 21st October. You are welcome to come along and join us. For further information, please contact Christine Lothian on christine.lothian@hotmail.com.

Forth Guild 1.30 – 3.30pm (meet fortnightly)

Our first meeting was held on Monday 14th September at the new time of 1.30pm. Harrison was our speaker and all members thoroughly enjoyed his very interesting and amusing talk. All felt that the saw Harrison in a slightly different light and were amazed at all the things he had done in his young life. Unfortunately, there was not enough time for us to hear some of Harrison's favourite gospel music, so another time will have to be arranged.

The Guild has met again for a biscuit week and a very interesting talk on bee keeping with Stephen Hunter. All are welcome.

Bible Study 7.00pm

All are welcome to join the online Bible study. Zoom details are 872 212 1628. Password 008008

TUESDAY

Mainly Music **9.30 – 11.00am**
Meet in the large hall at Forth Church. This is a group for toddlers and their parents/carers.

Carnwath Guild **1.30 – 3pm (meet monthly)**
The group meet every month in Carnwath Town Hall at 1.30pm. If you are interested in coming along and joining us you will be very welcome. The first meeting was on 29th September – Our Carnwath slide show. On 13th October the speaker will be from CHAS. For further information, please contact Betty McLeod on 01555 840736.

Planet Earth Afternoon Club **3.00 – 4.30pm**
For children aged P3 to P7. Meet in the Forth Church large hall from 3 to 4.30pm. This group will re-start once work has been completed in the hall.

1st Carstairs Boys` Brigade

Anchor Boys	P1 to P3	6.30 – 7.30pm
Juniors	P4 to P7	7.30 – 9.00pm

The Company started back on Tuesday 1st September. They meet weekly in Carstairs Community Centre. Twelve boys have returned and a warm welcome awaits any new boys wishing to join. Over the weeks a planned theme takes place covering a wide range of interests. The boys have enjoyed a games night, adding to their BB knowledge, creating company logo magnets, animal safari activities and baking truffles! A beetle drive is also planned.
If you have a boy who would like to join in the fun, please contact Elizabeth Brown 01555 870787

Prayer & Praise **7pm**
All are welcome to join the online Prayer and Praise. Zoom details are 872 212 1628. Password 008008

WEDNESDAY

Forth Church Rainforest Café **10.00am – 3.00pm**
Is open for all every Wednesday in Forth Church Hall. We are also open every Sunday after the morning service.

THURSDAY

Star Girls: Shining the Light on Jesus – Carstairs **Meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month**
P1 – P3 **6.30 – 7.30pm**
P4 – S6 **6.30 – 8.00pm**
We are delighted that our new girls` group, called “Star Girls”, has made such a wonderful start, with 26 girls joining us on our opening evening. The group provides a warm welcoming place for girls from P1 to S6 to build friendships, enjoy crafts, games and activities and also to discover more about the Christian faith. Our current theme is “Jesus the Light”, using the picture of a lighthouse to explore what it means to follow Jesus and shine His light in our everyday lives. Inspired by Grace Darling, the girls will be thinking about courage, kindness and faith, as well as some of the “rocks” we can encounter in life, such as bullying. Most importantly we want them to discover that Jesus is our true light, guiding us through life and calling us to reflect His love to those around us.
Star Girls meets on the first and third Thursdays of the month at Carstairs Community Centre and we would love the congregations to remember our girls, leaders and helpers in prayer as exciting new ministry continues to grow. We would also be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to help with the group. If you feel you could offer some of your time, (once or twice a month), please speak to Rev Harrison, who can also help with the necessary PVG arrangements.
Every Blessing, Harrison

FRIDAY

Youth Rainforest Café **1pm onwards**
For High School pupils to meet in Forth large church hall.

COMING SOON

Forth Anchor Boys and Boys Brigade
The leaders are still working on setting up the company but preparation is going well. Updates to follow.

Clydesdale Foodbank

All three of our congregations have celebrated Harvest. A time when we give thanks for God's faithfulness and generosity but also a time when we think about others by sharing what we have. Once again, all our harvest donations were given to the Clydesdale Foodbank who support those in need throughout the Clydesdale area from Law to Leadhills, Carluke to Coalburn help is given.

Did you know that support can be given in many different ways? For most of us it is with a monetary or food donation but for some it is by giving of their time – helping with the admin, sorting out donations and stacking shelves, packing bags and of course delivering the food. All the help is much appreciated by the Foodbank and all the help is needed. It is our prayer that one day there will be no need for foodbanks but until then thank you so much for all your support.

Carnwath also collects for the Clydesdale Food bank on the final Sunday of every month.

More on the harvest services will be in the next newsletter.

Café News

The Rainforest Café at Forth Church is open on a Sunday from 10am (last orders 1.15pm) and every Wednesday from 10am till 3pm (last orders are taken at 2.15pm).
The café is open to everyone to sit in or takeaway lunches/snacks.

Thank you to our customers and volunteers for their patience and understanding as we have been using the small hall for the last few weeks due to a new floor being installed in the large hall. We look forward to getting back in the large hall soon.

Prayer Box

There is a prayer box in each Church for anyone who would appreciate prayer for themselves, a friend, a family member or a situation.

Please pop a note in the box and the prayer group will offer a prayer.

We would like to encourage more people to use this box

When your heart starts to worry,
and your mind just can't rest,
put your prayers down on paper
and let God do the rest

All requests are confidential.

Dates for Diaries

Date	What's on
To be confirmed	Church shop in Forth large church hall.
Sun 25/10/26 and Sun 15/11/26	**Blythewood Shoebox Appeal** • Forth Church – Shoeboxes will go to Blytheswood Shoebox Appeal. They should be returned by 25th October. • Carnwath Church – Shoeboxes will go to Samaritan's Purse Christmas Child Shoe Box Appeal. To be returned by 13th November. • Carstairs Church – Shoeboxes will go to Samaritan's Purse. Need returned week of 9 November. Dedication service 15th November
Tues 17/11/26	A memorial service for loved ones departed is on Tuesday 17th November at 1pm in Carnwath Town Hall. This short service is open to all.
Sun 22/11/26	Grotto, teas and Christmas lights switch on at Forth
Sat 28/11/26	Guild Christmas Fayre in Forth Church large hall from 10am – 12noon Carstairs Christmas Fayre at Carstairs Community Hall from 1– 3.30pm
Sat 12/12/26	Family Fun Afternoon at Forth Church large hall from 1.30 – 3.30pm
Sun 6/12/26 to Sun 13/12/26	Christmas Glow in Forth Church large hall. Times to be confirmed

Please keep an eye on our Facebook page, website, Church order of service and posters for more information on upcoming events.

Please let us know if you have anything you would like included in the October to December newsletter