

Troon Church of Scotland

Newsletter
September 2025



SEPTEMBER

Worshipping God and serving the community in Troon



Harvest Festival Service Sunday 28 September 2025

in St Meddan's sanctuary at 10.30 am

Donations go to the Foodbank

South Ayrshire Foodbank

The foodbank started in 2012 at New Life Church, Prestwick. It grew very quickly and in 2013 a hub was opened in Troon Old Parish Church, staffed by members of all the town churches. We now cover the whole of South Ayrshire. There is a warehouse in Prestwick which gathers and organises donated foods to distribute to all the hubs.

The Troon hub is now in St Meddan's halls and is open Tuesday and Friday from 12.00 till 2.00pm.

Donations can be handed in at those times or when the church office is open – Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 10.00 and 1.00pm. We also have collections at Harvest Thanksgiving and every Communion Sunday. Foods require to be long-life in tins or packets. They are packed into boxes and bags to provide an emergency three-day supply. We also try to give toiletries and washing up liquid and detergent.

We thank you all for your continued support in helping us to help those in our community.

Joy Allan

Dear friends,

It seems no time at all since the Troon Church of Scotland came into being, and it seems even less so since I became your minister in May this year. When I first came to Troon in August 2022 to keep an eye on two congregations, I had no inkling that I would remain in this beautiful town, and I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know so many of you.



There has been such rapid change in the last three years, that it is rather tricky keeping abreast of all that is happening in our church family: it is my hope that this magazine allows us to take stock of what we are doing and gives us a chance to assess what we are still to achieve.

For all who are able to come along to church in person, our Sunday worship services remain very well attended, but we are very fortunate to have so many volunteers who enable us to livestream each week. The services that we hold in supported living accommodation across Troon continue to be popular, and are a great way for those unable to attend church to still be active in the congregation. Likewise, our thriving midweek services offer a shorter informal service and the chance to catch up over a cup of tea and a biscuit. We are engaging well with some of the young families through our very successful Messy Church, and the Story and Song sessions hosted in partnership with St Ninian's Episcopal Church. Yet we recognise that there are areas of engagement in the community that we need to focus on in the future, to ensure that all are welcomed into our community of faith.

In Psalm 122, we read a song of ascent, understood to have been sung by the Jewish people as they approached their place of worship centuries ago:

I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'

Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'May they prosper who love you.

Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers.'

For the sake of my relatives and friends I will say, 'Peace be within you.'

For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good.

As we continue to build on the very excellent work of the past three years, it is my prayer that we may welcome more people and for us all to sing of our joy to be part of a church community where dwells peace, security and a home for each of us.

Much love to you all.

Gilleán x

We pay tribute to three people who worked tirelessly for the church Their faith was fundamental to them and their lives touched many others as they lived out these lives in Christian service. The list of the ways they served the church is endless and only a few of these can be recorded here.



Susan Gray

One of thee first women elders in Portland in 1979, she believed strongly that churches were people not buildings. Many of you will still remember her readings of Sunday lessons .



Aileen Fraser

An elder for 40 years, she also served as Session Clerk. Raising funds for Dr Graham's Homes in Kalimpong, India was particularly important to her.



Fred Harrison

Seen here at the welcome desk of Messy Church , Fred was 92years young. Ordained to the eldership in 1977 he shopped for the elderly, worked on the property committee and wrote the book about the window in St Meddan's which is illustrated on the left



TOP Saturday Café

Troon Old Saturday Café had been going for many a year when we discovered it after Portland joined forces with Troon Old in 2023. Volunteer teams from Troon Old took it in turn to act as host and the proceeds went to charity. The coffee was excellent and the chat lively.

Various groups took over from time to time — Christian Aid, Boys' Brigade, Ayrshire Fiddle Orchestra, Kalimpong and the Friendship Group. The hall, which was the original church, has plenty of space and a really relaxed atmosphere.

New friendships were formed and we felt we “belonged” to the embryonic Troon Church of Scotland.

Avril McDonald





The Cafe is held in Troon Old Halls every Saturday from 10am till 12 noon. The cost per person is £2.50 for coffee/tea and cake. The proceeds are divided between Troon Church of Scotland and selected charities. All are welcome.

We also need some extra help to run the cafe. If you are able to spare an hour or two (usually one Saturday a month) please contact Catriona O'Dwyer on 07971393132 or pop in to the Café any Saturday.

Photo collages

Avril McDonald

The Guild

Guild starts on Tuesday 7th October 2025 @2pm in Pentland Hall. All are most welcome.

We meet every second Tuesday when we start with a short devotion followed by our speaker for the day. We have our syllabus complete for the session with a wide range of subjects. Please come along and join us in our Christian Fellowship and enjoy a cup of tea and a chat

Elizabeth McRae
Convener

The Connections Group

We meet from 2pm to 3pm on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Wednesday of the month in St Meddan's Moray Hall – a place to share fellowship with others. For more information, please talk to Yvonne Sim, David Kerr, Morag Hamill or Gillean.

Music

Choir

Rehearsals take place in St Meddan's sanctuary at 7.30pm. If you would like to come and sing hymns old and new then please come along and join us!

Kate Doak



Play the Organ

Not only are we seeing a reduction in the number of people entering the Ministry, we are also seeing a worrying reduction in people taking up the organ. In an attempt to address this, the Royal College of Organists has designated 2025 as National Play the Organ Year.

So why don't you have a go yourself, or maybe you know someone who might be interested? It's very rewarding to play -

Mozart called the organ the king of instruments" because of its versatility and power.

Anyone who would like to "have a go" is welcome to come up to the organ after any service.

Andrew McConnell

House Group/ Bible Study Groups.



What is a House Group?

For starters go for the obvious. It's a group of people who meet up in a house.

Right. Got that.

Secondly what are they doing there???

One of them leads a discussion.

Okay what sort of discussion?

It's all about faith. It's all about the bible. It's all about the things you've read and absorbed possibly for years.

Then suddenly the light is switched on and you say

Gosh I never thought of it that way before.

It's a Safe Place to think and believe and comment.

It's a refuge to find yourself in faith, and to think about God, and Life and how we should live our lives.

And it's with friends and with each other to support our journey of discovery.

(Maybe the best bit is the tea and biscuits and the chat at the end.....)

It's not for everyone but for those of us who find it.

We feel it's Good.

Barbie Short

If you would like more information please leave or send your details to the Church Office marked as 'House Group' and someone will get back to you.

Email : office@troonchurch.org.uk

Housegroup Hosts:

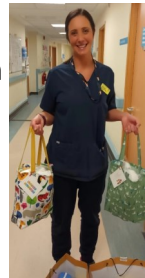
Anne Gardiner, Morag Hamill, George Mulvenny and Barbie Short



A Troon Church of Scotland Initiative

It has been a busy few weeks at Moses Basket. Generous donations of baby toiletries and the sewing skills of members of the congregation in the making of tote bags has meant we have been able to donate a good number of bags to various organisations: the Salvation Army, Babes and Toddlers, Muirhead Tenants and Residents Association, Women's Aid Ayr; Crosshouse Hospital Maternity Unit and NHS South Ayrshire Health Visiting Team.

The feedback has been very encouraging, especially so in a recent visit, when members of the Health Visiting Team said they were "over the moon" to be receiving the tote bags. What they told us made for very sad listening. Some of their clients are very young vulnerable girls who come from families with very little and who are struggling to cope. Even with various agencies involved there can still be gaps in support and they assured us that the tote bags fill a gap.



Kate Bowie,
Senior Charge
Midwife



Moses Basket is faith in action, an opportunity for us to show our Christian commitment to reach out to the community and lend a helping hand to young mums from families who are finding life hard. There will always be a need and so we would welcome, on an ongoing basis, toiletries for baby and mum and tote bags. We would also very much appreciate donations of money to help us to buy items that are low in stock e.g. we have a good supply of baby lotion but not many face cloths or sponges. Another welcome donation would be fabric (it doesn't have to be new) for our team of tote bag sewers.

Donations can be left in the vestibule of either church each Sunday.

Many thanks,

The Moses Basket team.



An ecumenical project supported by Troon Churches Together

Messy Church continues to thrive, meeting the first Friday of most months in St Meddan's Halls from 3.30pm to 5.30pm. All children - with their families- are welcome. We start with juice, tea, coffee, biscuits and time for a chat. Then we move into the sanctuary for a story - usually led by Rev Gilleen Richmond and songs. After that it is time for theme-related crafts and then dinner for everyone. There is no charge for Messy Church and no need to book. Anywhere between 25 and 50 children attend with their parents.

Our next dates are 3/10/25, 7/11/25, 16/11/25 (Wintertainment) and 5/12/25 (Christmas Party).

Whether it is your first visit or you've been coming for years we look forward to seeing you soon. It is very heartening to see so many young families engage with Church in this way.

Please visit our Facebook page to see what we get up to and for up-to-date information about events. Or email us at troonmessychurch@gmail.com for more information



**Watch out for
our movies**

**These are public events by
Messy Church Troon**

Junior Church

Junior church meets every Sunday in the halls. When you see us disappear after the second hymn we have a story, a craft and an activity if time allows.

We use the resource, Spill the Beans, which Gillean follows each week. We can have up to ten children each Sunday, aged from 4 to 12 years which can prove a challenge

Five leaders, Rosalind Bruce, Katy Godden, Carolyn Jamieson, Audrey Robertson and Jane Potts, and a group of helpers share a rota, so that each week there is one leader and a helper. We have recently been delighted to welcome two new volunteers.

We are indebted to all who help. One real joy has been that we have got to know each other better.

Working together we are a real team, and we gain as much from the children as they do from us.

Going Forward

We have advertised for a Children, Youth and Families worker who would be a very welcome dynamic addition to the pastoral team. The small numbers of children at church is a nationwide problem so we should nurture our children and make them an integral part of our church family.

Messy Church continues to thrive, making church a welcome and relevant place for children and families.

We currently do not provide for older children and teenagers in Troon Church of Scotland. We are encouraged however that some of our young people attend a local Youth fellowship and Bible study.

We are very conscious of the healthy state of the Girls' Brigade and the Boys' Brigade and of Gillean's involvement in schools. Gillean also runs a "Story and Song" for young children, making the presence of the church known in the community among young people.



We thank you for your support of our young people and our Junior Church team. If you would like to join us or find out more, we'd love to hear from you.

Contact Jane Potts on 07711943257.

Keep Fit

We are a very friendly group who meet on a Thursday morning at 9.30am till 10.30am in Pentland Hall in St Meddan's. Carol is in charge of the exercises which we all enjoy.

We resume after our Summer break on Thursday 4th September. New members are very welcome.

Rosalind Lawrence

Badminton Group

The Thursday Badminton Group resumes after the summer break in St Meddan's Pentland Hall on 21st August at 10.45am - 2.00 noon. New members welcome. Contact rlc@btinternet.com

Ray Campbell

Supported Living Outreach Programme

Belhaven House Nursing Home.

A short 30 minute worship service. Fortnightly Sunday afternoons.

Suncourt Care Home

"Messy Vintage" first Wednesdays in month at 2:30pm.

Sanderling View

Worship service third Wednesdays in month at 4pm

Sandhill Gardens

Coffee & Chat third Thursdays in month at 1pm

Volunteers from the congregation to support this outreach are very welcome to join us – please speak to Gilleen if you would like more information.

The Friendship Group

Our 2025-2026 session starts on Tuesday 7 October at 7.30pm with our dedication service in Portland conducted by Rev Gillean Richmond.

On Tuesday 11 November at 7.30 we will have a talk by Louise Robertson on the work of Alzheimer Scotland. Our Christmas Fair is on Saturday 15 November, the venue to be confirmed.

On Tuesday 9 December we welcome the return of Marcus for a musical evening.

New members will be most welcome to come along to these events.

Margaret Parkinson
Secretary

The Walking Group

We next meet on Thursday 25 September outside Portland Halls at 2 pm.

Reading Groups

During 2025, lead by Gillean, we have tackled a variety of books, reading and discussing a few chapters at a time. After the last one *Simply Christians: The Life and Message of the Blessed Martyrs of Tibhirine* by Thomas Georgeon and Françoise Vayne, we saw the 2010 film of the story 'Of Gods and Men'

A Superpowered Start to the New Session

1st Troon Girls' Brigade

Come along to
find out more!

Monday nights
6:30pm - 8:30pm
St. Meddans Halls

EXPLORERS

Primary 1 to
Primary 3

JUNIORS

Primary 4 to
Primary 7

BRIGADERS

S1 to S6



We're back!

1st Troon Girls' Brigade has just returned after the summer break, and we're excited to kick off another year of fun, friendship, and faith together.

This year our theme is **Superpowered**, exploring what makes each of us unique, the values that shape us, and how to use our own "superpowers" to make a difference in the world around us. Through games, crafts, activities, and discussions, the girls will be encouraged to discover their strengths and grow in confidence while having a great time with friends old and new.

 1st Troon Girls' Brigade

 girlsbrigadetroon@gmail.com

Girls' Brigade is open to all girls aged 5–18, and it's a fantastic way to build skills, meet new people, and be part of a supportive community. Whether your daughter is starting school, moving up to secondary, or just looking for something new to try, we'd love to welcome her along.

We meet every Monday evening at St Meddan's Halls in Troon, and there's always room for more superheroes-in-the-making to join us!

To find out more or register your interest, please contact James at

girlsbrigadetroon@gmail.com

James McArthur (*he/him*)

Leader in Charge

Christian Aid

In May we celebrated Christian Aid week, with a special emphasis on the people of Guatemala, struggling to cope with weather, crops, greedy lenders and reckless polluters.

With the help of many members we raised money from the Coffee Morning in Troon Old and a lunch in St Meddan's. Everyone pulled together including the Girls Brigade, to make as much money as possible, with donations of soup and home baking much appreciated. Tombola, book and home baking stalls and Kate's Eurovision cakes added greatly to the final total.

Several later donations gave a final total of £2470.50. Gift Aid will add to this but Edinburgh has not confirmed how much.

Thanks are due to all who contributed in any way including those who came to the events.

Barbie Short

Prayer Group and Prayer Tree

There is a prayer tree in the vestibule in each sanctuary. If you have a prayer request please hang it on the tree. The Prayer Group meets before the Sunday service at 10am.

Morag Hamil



Ministry of Flowers

The Ministry of Flowers will continue to provide for those in our congregation who would benefit from the uplifting effects of these gifts .

The Flowers will not be displayed in church as before but will be delivered our new group, *The Forget Me Nots*. Please let Gillean know of anyone who could be helped by such a gift in their lives. There are Flower Donation Boxes at the church front door for you to help with this thoughtful way of letting someone know they are not alone at difficult, happy or sad times in their lives. Any donation will much appreciated.

Together we can do this.

Elizabeth Fyfe

Fiona Hay

May Keir.



Our team of keen gardeners keep our flower beds and borders lovely

From the Session Clerks

Session Clerks get all the fun jobs to do...

Well, maybe not always “fun”, but the job certainly has its moments, and provides a unique perspective of congregational life. Here are just a few highlights of the past year.

Evolution

As a congregation, Troon Church of Scotland is a new-born. Born on the 1st of July 2024 and only just past our first birthday. It's easy to forget, and unthinkingly revert to the familiar norms of our respective legacy congregations. Together we have achieved so much in a short time; developing a truly shared culture will take effort for a bit longer. Our evolution continues.

Ministry Team, Part 1

For various reasons, Troon Church of Scotland will have a Ministry Team. Back last September, the congregation elected a group of 13 people – the Nominating Committee – to find two new ministers of equal standing, simultaneously. They worked extremely hard but could not make this untried idea work. They did however identify one suitable Minister for the congregation. Fast forward a few months and on the 8th of May 2025, the Rev Gillean Richmond was inducted as Minister of Word and Sacrament for Troon Church of Scotland. We are very grateful to the members of the Nominating Committee for all their hard work and equally grateful to Gillean for accepting our call.

Buildings

Perhaps the most unenviable task facing the Kirk Session has been the closure and selling of our Troon Old premises. This iconic building in its central location has long served the community of Troon, and it is encouraging to see a community group making a serious attempt to buy it and keep it as a community asset. We wish them success.

Under church law, the sales process is conducted by the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland. Meanwhile we, as a congregation, are responsible for looking after Troon Old premises until a sale is agreed. How long will this take? We cannot answer with any certainty, but we hope progress will be made by early next year.

On the domestic front, we continue to actively seek the best possible accommodation for our ministers – remember we are still allocated two ministers by Presbytery. A committee of the Kirk Session has worked very

hard and secured the purchase of a new-build house in Troon, as well as selling the former St Meddan's manse. Options for the remaining Portland and Troon Old manses are being studied with a view to renovate/sell.

Our objective is to have two manses suitable for two ministers and their families. This will take time.

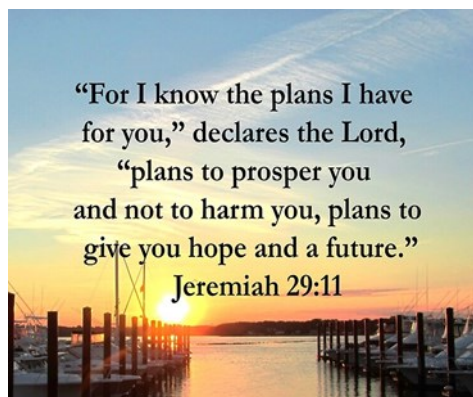
Ministry Team, Part 2

With Gillean now officially in post, we need to turn our attention to the rest of the Ministry Team. The shape of the team may have to be tweaked given the Nominating Committee's experience, and our evolving understanding of our Local Mission Plan. We still expect to recruit a second full-time minister to join Gillean, soon. We are also currently re-advertising for a Youth, Children and Families Worker and are hopeful that we will attract suitable applicants. Finally, Presbytery has appointed an OLM (Ordained Local Minister) to join the team but with the shortage of ministers and so many local vacant charges needing pulpit cover, our OLM continues to be deployed elsewhere. Watch this space.

Next Steps

Where do we go next? The Kirk Session is planning a Saturday conference about **Mission, Ministry and Worship**, in the coming weeks. These topics are the priority for the Kirk Session as we look to the future and, among other things, the conference will explore how we plan to complete our ministry team, the pattern of worship we wish to develop, and the properly resourced spaces we need to accommodate that worship.

We continue in hope and faith knowing that God has a plan for us.



“For I know the plans I have
for you,” declares the Lord,
“plans to prosper you
and not to harm you, plans to
give you hope and a future.”
Jeremiah 29:11



Troon Church of Scotland

Keeping in Touch



Our website

The best source of information is our website.

www.troonchurch.org.uk

YouTube

Sunday services are broadcast live on YouTube at 10.30 am.

www.youtube.com/@troonchurch (link on our website)

Social Media

Please join our Facebook page, Troon Church of Scotland and follow all the latest chats and notifications.

The newsletter

Articles / letters would be very helpful for future newsletters. Please send these to

magazine@troonchurch.org.uk

The local paper

Church events are reported monthly in the free paper **Troon Going Out**

The personal Approach

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask.

The Session Clerks, Brian and John, will be more than happy to listen.

Weekly Mailing List

We have a weekly mailing list to send out intimations and information by email. If you wish to have your email address added to the mailing list, please send an email to john.mcdonald@troonchurch.org.uk

Intimation Requests

Please email intimations to be displayed on-screen, printed in the weekly bulletin or posted online (website/FaceBook) to

news@troonchurch.org.uk before 9am on Tuesdays.

Contact Details

Minister:	Rev. Gillean Richmond grichmond@churchofscotland.org.uk
Session Clerks:	Brian Duncan and John Reid sessionclerk@troonchurch.org.uk
Depute Session Clerk:	Andy Fell Andy.Fell@troonchurch.org.uk
Treasurer:	Catriona McKellar treasurer@troonchurch.org.uk
Assistant Treasurer:	Catriona O'Dwyer catriona.odwyer@troonchurch.org.uk
Church Officers:	Ruaridh McKellar, Jim McEwan, Gordon McCulloch
Organist/Music:	Andrew McConnell, Kate Doak
Church Office:	office@troonchurch.org.uk
Hall Booking:	office@troonchurch.org.uk
Newsletter :	magazine@troonchurch.org.uk

Cover illustration

Painting of Troon by Ronnie Russell, with all three legacy churches, presented to Rev Gillean Richmond on her induction to the charge.



Troon Church of Scotland

troonchurch.org.uk

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