

balerno



the magazine and newsletter of Balerno Parish Church; for the Church and for the Community

Blether

FREE



2026 has seen the earliest cereal harvest across the UK in 20 years

Upper Dean Park farm ;
Thursday 13 August; wheat,
barley had been harvested earlier!



It's time to get serious about the future! Global warming is not the only challenge to our community

It is understandable there have been many column inches devoted to issues related to the planned union of the congregations of Currie Kirk and Balerno Parish Church which has until now appeared to be something of an elusive ambition. However, at a joint meeting of the Kirk Sessions on Monday 24th August, the first formal step was taken when an overwhelming majority of the church elders of both congregations voted in favour of the union going ahead. Whatever reservations might have been expressed in the past, it was clear that there was an acceptance of the need to integrate the work and mission of the two congregations.

The next formal step will take place in the course of the autumn when the members of both congregations will be given a chance to vote for or against the union going ahead. If both congregations vote in favour of the union at their separate meetings, then the proposal for union will go forward to be ratified by the presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian before the end of the year.

In some ways it is a bit like having the idea of planning a move to a new home. There is the point at which you try to plan everything, and then there is the point at which something

which seemed like a nice idea for the future suddenly becomes very real and the detail of how everything is going to work starts to become a bit more complicated than had perhaps originally been imagined.

It is evident that there has been some realisation of this as the Steering Group for the Union has been receiving a steady stream of responses from the community in the process of trying to establish priorities for the future and they hope that more will be forthcoming before their deadline for submission on 13th September.

There is no question that there is more than a degree of trepidation being felt at the prospect of the union because this is a step into the unknown. It has become evident that there are no recipes for success in this process as every congregation brings a different variety of ingredients to the table. The one thing that we can be confident about is that there is going to be change – whether you are a church member or simply a member of the community who makes use of the facilities of the two churches for exercise or for a morning refreshment. The challenge for those leading the union will be to maintain and grow the contribution of the churches to the sacred and secular lives of their communities. To extend the metaphor, the proof of this pudding will be in the eating.



Opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of Balerno Parish Church

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Meanwhile elsewhere in Balerno

News in brief from Balerno Community Council

The Community Council met on Thursday 6 August, after the July summer break.

Having reviewed progress, including a report on the public meeting on 9th July concerning the Local Place Plan, the Council agreed unanimously to adopt the draft Plan as presented by the Council's Working Group. They agreed also to forward it in due course to the City of Edinburgh Council subject to a minor amendment. City Councillors for the Pentland Hills Ward were formally notified of the adoption on 14 August as were the Community Councils which share boundaries with Balerno; those are Currie, Ratho, Kirtknewton, Carlops, West Linton and Penicuik. Reference copies of the Plan were also placed in the Balerno Library on 14 August. Comments on the Plan as adopted can be given to Balerno Community Council up 'til and including Saturday 12th September and those will be lodged by the Community Council with City of Edinburgh Council when the Plan is presented for registration. Legislation requires that a period of 28 days must elapse after the 14 August.

Meanwhile, other key issues affecting the village were also discussed. They included the weed problem across the village and, in particular, on roads and pavements. The Council agreed to pursue the matter further with relevant city councillors and officials and, in particular, they will request resources for the manual removal of weeds.

Council members expressed real concern at reports of threatening behaviour at car parks at Harlaw and Threipmuir reservoirs and agreed to pursue the matter through city councillors and Police Scotland.

The 13 members present also agreed to accept an offer by the Currie & Balerno News to provide a bench for the community and to look at options for placement with a site overlooking the Bavelaw Burn beside the Bavelaw Green Bridge being mentioned.

The Council heard that contractors are likely to be in contact on the provision of a replacement for the village gateway sign on the boundary with Currie which is not in good repair.

Other items discussed included the siting of a village Christmas Tree in Main Street and the Community Council is in discussions with other stakeholders as to how that might be achieved in 2026.

Under the heading of resilience, the Council discussed concerns about the risk of wildfire in and around the Pentland Hills; the matter is already the subject of urgent discussions within CEC and other organisations.

Members also agreed to respond positively to an invitation to be involved in talks concerning Community Wealth Investment and noted that talks involving Balerno Pathways Limited on the engineer sign-off on the Bavelaw Green Bridge are continuing slowly.

Preparation of a Good Neighbour Agreement between the Balerno Community Council and Ravelrig Quarry operators, Tarmac, is awaiting response from Tarmac's lawyers.

Finally, the meeting agreed that the 2025/26 Annual General Meeting should be held immediately before the November monthly meeting as it had been in 2025 for the 2024/25 annual report and accounts.

RMH

1826 - 2026

times of change



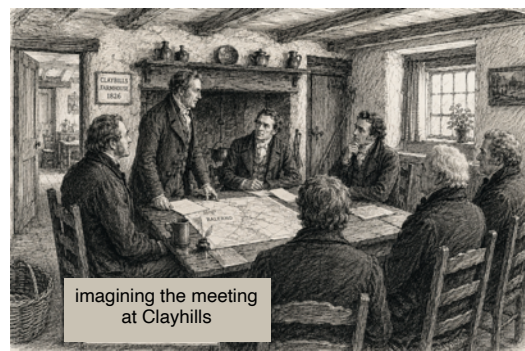
Clayhills Farm House probably looked like Ladycroft cottage, built in the 1840's.

Malleny House was built around 1650 although it incorporates elements from an earlier house. Apart from that there is little if anything in terms of built environment within the village which dates back to 1826 when Messrs John Melrose and William Stevenson met at Cayhills Farmhouse, and Balerno Parish Church was effectively founded.

It was two years later when the Church, now St Joseph's Hall was opened. In effect they were seceding, which was, if you like, the fashion at the time.

We do not know much more about who Melrose and Stevenson were. A John Melrose of Balerno died in 1828 aged 46, and a William Stevenson died in February 1827 aged 76. Both were buried at Currie Kirk yard.

There might well have been a link with the Mrs Melrose, of Ramslack, wife of John Melrose, weaver, who died tragically in a snow-storm at Westside Farm, while walking home from Peebles in April 1815, as reported apparently in the Edinburgh Annual Register on 20 April 1815. It may even be possible that the John Melrose at Clayhills was the widower, John Melrose the weaver from Ramslack.



Balerno's population is estimated to have been around 300 to 500 in 1826 Samuel Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of Scotland (published around 1846) recorded Balerno village centre as having a population of 303 around that year, but surrounding farms and mills would have made that figure higher.

The cost of building the new church and financing the project would have been huge. The estimated cost at the time is around £1340 - that's £180K if you apply retail price inflation. But we are told that it's £15M+ if you calculate the relative cost of financing the building project today using traditional materials. Add to that the cost of a stipend for a minister of say £80pa and the financial commitment would have been enormous. The small mill owners and the large tenant farmers might have had £100 to £300 pa while skilled artisans around £40 to £50pa. £100 in 1830 might be about £14800 today.

Since 1826 there has of course been great change. First of all the first church was built and opened in 1828, followed by the current church in the 1870's. Balerno's population has mushroomed from 300 to something over 8000. The railway has come and gone. The mills have multiplied and disappeared. One quarry remains out of the three which were operational in the mid 19thC. In the 19thC the name Ravelrig Quarry covered several workings, in the Ravelrig area. The distillery at Balerno opened in 1826 and then closed in 1830.

In 1826 of course Melrose and Stevenson and their colleagues decided the only way to go forward was to secede. As MacIver and Burt say in their book, *Balerno Parish Church 1826 - 2016*, 'they were ordinary folk, tenant farmers and labourers, village papermakers, tradesmen and shopkeepers; more accustomed to their everyday tools than to formal penmanship.'

They had asked the established church leaders for permission to set up a church in Balerno but had been met with complacency. Rather than facing a formal rejection or pursuing a difficult petition through the Edinburgh Presbytery, they decided to bypass the Presbytery and turned to the independent United Secession Church.

What if they had appealed to the Presbytery? MacIver and Burt suggest that the leaders of the Church in 1826 were complacent, 'preferring to have a safety valve of secession, rather than to risk offending powerful interests by agitating for creation of new parishes.'

Roy's Page towards the Union

Towards the Union of Currie Kirk and Balerno Parish Church



The parishes of Currie and Balerno were linked by the Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian as from 1st December 2024. The service of Linkage took place on Thursday 19 June 2025. This Linkage is a step on the way to a formal Union as in the Presbytery Mission Plan.

In a Linkage, each church retains its Kirk Session and separate charity number, etc. whereas in a Union the two become one, with one Kirk Session responsible for local leadership and oversight. In due course, Edinburgh: Balerno linked with Currie will become Edinburgh: Kirk of Currie and Balerno.

At the time of writing I cannot give precise dates for each of the next steps but I can describe the stages on the way.

1. The Draft basis and Plan of Union has been sent to the Presbytery Deployment Committee.
2. There will be a meeting of the joint Kirk Sessions of Currie and Balerno on August 24 in the Gibson Craig Hall at 7pm. Representatives of the Presbytery Deployment Committee will be on hand to describe the next steps towards Union and answer questions. After discussion each Session will take a vote on the Basis of Union as supervised by the Presbytery representatives.
3. There will then be separate Kirk Session Meetings and Congregational Meetings where elders and church members will vote on the Basis of Union. These are held in the presence of Presbytery representatives. Please look out for news of the dates and Pmes of these.
4. Following voting, the Deployment Committee will seek formal approval of the Union at an appropriate Presbytery meeting. Representatives from each congregation may attend that meeting if they so wish.

In parallel the Steering Group has, in addition to drafting the Basis of Union, been working on the preparation of a Programme for Action including a Vision Statement and Strategy for the united church. Please do complete and return the questionnaire which is currently out to consultation and has a deadline of 13 September.

I hope that this gives a helpful explanation of formalities and of what happens next.

Roy Henderson, Interim Minister

On-line worship leader courses

Presbytery of Edinburgh & West Lothian are inviting nominations for Elder and Member Worship Training Courses in 2026-27

Parish ministers are being invited to put forward nominations, initially for a five-part introductory course on leading worship. As in previous years an experienced team of ministers, preaching elders and a reader will deliver the course. Their task is to equip congregations with motivated and committed worship leaders to serve alongside their own ministers, deacons and readers.

The Level 1 introductory course aims "to deliver a candidate to the starting line", ready to work with their minister in their own particular setting. In all three levels of training for local worship leaders are on offer, delivered on-line via Zoom.

The scheme of courses can be completed within a year, or spread out over a longer period, as required. Participants' feedback over the years has been very positive, saying that the courses are enjoyable, informative and help to build confidence.

The next series will start in the autumn of this year, on the following dates:

Level 1 (Introduction to Worship-leading): five Wednesdays at 7.30pm on 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th September 2026.

Level 2 (The Church Year): five Wednesdays at 7.30pm on 28th October; 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th November 2026.

Level 3 (The Gospels and Acts): six Wednesdays at 7.30pm 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th February; 3rd and 10th March 2027.

Each session will be run in an open and encouraging way, with participants' practical contributions being welcomed. There will be lots of opportunity for friendly chat.

Speak to Roy asap if you are interested since nominations should be in by 28 August, who will then contact the organisers



There are few congregations remaining in the city which can boast that it still has a church choir. The fact that we still enjoy the enthusiasm of 15 voices – almost balanced over the parts – in leading praise in Sunday worship makes us an exceptional congregation. It should not be forgotten that the choir members have also been regular contributors to entertainments in St Joseph's, but the photograph illustrates that they enjoyed a convivial evening out during the summer and on this occasion they were not required to sing for their supper!

While it would be fair to say that there is a broad range of previous musical experience amongst the choir members, new members are always welcome without any need for an audition! We practice – yes we do! – on Thursday evenings through the winter months and all are welcome.

Imagining Balerno Parish Church in 1829



14th August 2026

Dear Blether Editor

In the June Edition of your esteemed publication, namely, "The Balerno Blether" a particular article caught my eye. I refer to the article about James Braidwood.

Some years ago I came to the same conclusion as the author of the article, that the East window of the church referred to James Braidwood the fire master.

Recently I had reason to refer to "Balerno Parish Church 1826 - 2016", which you of course edited.

In this book, on Page 17, James Braidwood is noted as having come to live in 1884 and had been a contributor to the congregation subscription since 1861.

James Braidwood, the fire master died in 1861 in a fire in Tooley St, London. Therefore there must be two James Braidwoods.

I would imagine that this observation might be reviewed by "RMH" in your next publication.

Kind regards

Malcolm

Malcolm HA Ogilvie Dip WSET
3 Harlaw March
Balerno
Midlothian EH14 7BJ

Dear Malcolm,

It is always good to get feedback on how we're doing.

The logic of your position is unassailable! We got it wrong; so, unreserved apologies, for this, we hope, rare failure in our research department's investigation. We will do better in future!

In the meantime however we wonder whether you might be able to assist this monthly publication by submitting articles of interest to our discerning readership?

With very best wishes - Ed

Letter to the Editor

A Welcome Station for Balerno

The former Balerno Police Station has been transformed into the new Welcome Station, and it opened its doors a few weeks ago. In turn it has since welcomed a new after-school club, *Simply Play*, which itself opened for business in August. It will be a long term tenant and will occupy about half of the building, during school termtime.



Kasia and Victoria are a really welcoming team at Balerno's new Welcome Station!

Balerno Village Trust acquired the Police Station in 2025 under the Community Right-to-Buy scheme. It aims to create a community hub and to add to Balerno's current offering of community space.

Victoria Ram is the Trust's Business Development Manager and is working with Kasia McGavigan, who deals with Marketing and Administration. They have an office in the Welcome Station, and Youth Vision also have a regular presence in the building.

It is still 'early days' so far as other users are concerned, but already there are signs of things to come; an art group was in session when I called in mid August, and they are involved in painting a striking mural of Balerno's story in the large entrance hall. Victoria and Kasia were awaiting delivery of furniture to equip both the hall and also the several meeting rooms which will be available for let for meetings and activities. They plan a 'something for everyone' approach designed to help promote community including by reducing social isolation. A coffee machine in the near future is part of that vision! As importantly as coffee, BVT intend that the buildings toilets may be available for public use 'out of hours' at some point before too long. That's still a work in progress, but it would obviously be a real community benefit!

Overall the new facility is seen as working in partnership with other groups across the community, and already Victoria and Kasia have a close relationship with the Parish Church through both Pam in the Church Office and also with Lynsey and the Mill Cafe.

If you would like to book a space at the Welcome Station, or find out more information, email - hello@balernovt.org.uk

We look forward to hearing more about the Welcome Station's plans as and when they emerge; but right now the overwhelming impression is that the Welcome Station will be a real benefit to Balerno.

RMH

Do you have a minute, Lord?



It's about that bit in Matthew's Gospel when Jesus told us to go and 'teach all nations?'

That's quite a commission and perhaps a lot more challenging than it might initially seem. I have come across a fair number of pushy salespeople over the years whose efforts were counterproductive and put me off buying something and that example seems to pose a bit of a dilemma about how to spread the message of the gospels.

The world seems to be becoming increasingly scarred by the consequences of the actions of religious zealots who proclaim the certainty of their belief and show no tolerance for anyone who might hold a different opinion. Religion is being hi-jacked to provide some sort of spurious justification for heartless behaviour to others which most people would deem to be indefensible. The consequence is that religion – whatever belief system you choose – is getting a bad press. The certainty of some prominent 'believers' in seeking to 'advance' their faith becomes counter-productive to attracting others.

I recently came across a thought from the American author Anne Lamott, who was quoted as stating that the opposite of faith is not doubt, but certainty. Debate about a provocative statement like that may come down to an argument about the choice of words or the way in which the reader chooses to interpret them but I found it helpful. Faith seems to me to be about having trust in something which is beyond my understanding, but communicating that to others without putting them off is a bit of a challenge – especially in a binary world where people want simple answers.

I feel confident about my faith – if I was certain, it wouldn't be faith, would it?

Contributed

received as from Order of the Grey Monks of St Giles

Auld James was gae far through,
This Jess his guid wife knew.
The doctor came: James' pulse he took,
Then looking at Jess his head he shook,
"There's no pulse here, Ah fear he's gone"

Forthwith immediately without delay
From the bed came a faint "Ah'm no away"
To which Jess countered almost with zest,
"Haud yer whisht, ye ken the doctor knows best"

The above was received following the funeral of a very distinguished gentleman at St Giles Cathedral.

The Order of the Grey Monks of St Giles is a private, long-standing literary club founded in Edinburgh in 1852. Despite its religious-sounding name, it is a secular social and literary society for professionals rather than a religious monastic order.

DMaCl

First of all let's be clear; there is no proposal to convert the Old Hall into a Brewery.

If there were however then one might be acknowledging the Rev James Buckley of Llanelli as the inspirational genius. He was an early 19thC Methodist minister who married the daughter of a brewer and thereby fell heir - this was some years before the Married Women's Property Act - to a business which he and their family developed into a thriving concern, which is now, since 1996, part of Brains Brewery producing the not to be missed Rev James Original.

So why focus on something that's not going to happen. Well the Old Hall will probably become a real problem over time. It is currently a store, and while pretty valuable as such, sooner or later attention will probably have to look at its future.

Assuming for now that the Old Hall and the Church campus in general will continue to serve the congregation of the Kirk of Currie and Balerno in future then we are entitled if not even obliged to speculate on the options. It is one of the peculiar gifts of the Church that we can contemplate a leaking roof for twenty years without anxiety, but suggest putting the building to profitable use and suddenly people become the First of sacred tradition. Developing a brewery on the site is unlikely to be a bookies favourite, although it might be preferred over opening a betting shop, but the example of the Rev James Buckley may encourage some more flexible thinking as the foundation of Balerno Parish Church as an institution approaches its Bi-Centenary. After all the new congregation will have to look seriously at securing income streams if it is to survive.

And yes, it was indeed in 1826 that a meeting in Clayhills Farm House marked the start of Balerno Parish Church's journey. The church building, now the St Joseph Centre was opened on 1828, and one would hope that that achievement can be celebrated in 2028.

But of far greater importance will be how seriously we look at how we secure the future, and whether we have the far sightedness of those at that farm house, far less the ambition and commitment of the Rev James Buckley.

And while you're thinking about that make sure you track down and sample the Rev James Ale.



Cathedral handed to community

Brechin Cathedral, one of Scotland's most historically-significant medieval churches, has been handed over to a community trust.

The Church of Scotland has transferred ownership of the 800-year-old landmark to Brechin Cathedral Trust to ensure it remains "the beating heart of the community".

The cathedral stopped being a regular place of worship in November 2021 following the dissolution of the congregation, which had become too small to shoulder the costs of the building.

The A-listed building has an Irish-style round tower, one of only two in Scotland, which was built around 1100 and originally stood apart from the building until the 1800s.

Second - We report here on the Brechin Cathedral story, simply because it may suggest that the approach of the Church of Scotland on disposal of church property may be more flexible than hitherto.

Let's be clear also that there is no proposal for the disposal of Balerno Parish Church (or Currie Kirk) whether in connection with the Union or otherwise. The Blether applauds a decision by the Church of Scotland which would appear to recognise that 'the beating hearts of communities' need to be protected, especially in uncertain times. Transfer to a community trust likely benefits the church by removing maintenance and insurance burdens. It also protects local heritage and reduces the risk of building dereliction. Possibly most importantly, it also fulfils a mission function by transforming sacred spaces into vibrant hubs for social enterprises, childcare or cultural events.

The Kirk has actively moved to reduce its overall property portfolio by up to 20% to 40% (putting hundreds of buildings on the market) as part of an ongoing downsizing strategy.

The Church's total property holdings—which we understand historically exceeded 5,000 buildings—have faced major rationalisation due to steep drops in membership and climbing maintenance liabilities.

We understand that local authorities and both the Scottish and UK Governments are concerned about the mass

disposal of church properties; not just Church of Scotland properties. These properties perform a major social function across the country, often supplying the only community facilities in an area.

The scale of the projected sell-off of church property — estimated to affect up to 800 to 1000 buildings across denominations—has turned the issue into what some heritage leaders call 'the biggest heritage crisis facing the UK.'

The most aggressive acceleration in sales occurred over the 12 months leading up to February 2026. During that period, the Church of Scotland listed more than 160 properties for sale all at once, creating a record-breaking £30.6 million valuation pipeline.

As at 15 August there are 108 properties listed for sale on the official Church of Scotland Properties for sale page. Those range from rural, smaller village kirks priced as low as £20,000 (eg Dalton or Skerries) up to major city structures marketed for over £1M.

The inventory is divided between historic kirks, detached manses, church halls, and plots of surplus glebe land.

In addition to their internal portal, the Church acts as an estate agent and routinely pipes these properties through commercial portals like Rightmove (which currently has around 39 active listings in its primary category) and regional property auctions.

Thus for example Greenside Church (and Caretaker's Cottage) is listed on Rightmove at offers over £1.07M (Greenside Church at £700K), Falkland Parish Church is at £105K and Portmoak glebe at £9.75K.

The Church of Scotland appears quite coy about statistics. Internet response to a question as to how many CofS properties have been sold since May 2019 (the Radical Action Plan launch) is ordinally that the exact number is not publicly tracked. However it is suggested that Church of Scotland portfolio has actively downsized from over 5000 to roughly 3600.

The Blether hopes that the Brechin Cathedral model will be engaged more often in future for the benefit of the communities which the Church serves.



YOUR CHURCH - AND YOUR COMMUNITY - NEED YOU!

Programme for Action, Committees and a questionnaire - lots to think about!

There has been a flurry of activity over the summer as the process towards Union gathers pace.

In July the Steering Group launched a Consultation, circulating three documents. The first, entitled a draft Programme for Action, contains suggestions for a high-level Vision Statement, a Strategy and some possible actions. The second made suggestions for a new Committee Structure, and the third was a questionnaire which amongst other things asked recipients to indicate willingness to join (no more than two) committees proposed for the new congregation.

Return of completed questionnaires by 15 August was requested, although that was not a deadline, hence the repeat of the request in this issue of the Blether published at the end of August. The documents were published also on the Church's Facebook page, and copies were distributed to the Curie and Balerno Libraries with an invitation to the general public also to respond. The message is that your views are important.

The invitation accompanying the documents candidly accepted that the authors had no monopoly on new ideas, so they were inviting readers to be as creative as possible in commenting on the draft programme. They readily accept that a 'fresh offer' is needed 'to ensure we can once again attract people of all ages to follow Christ in the new community Kirk of Currie and Balerno.'

The Programme for Action document, which aims to set out a Vision and a Strategy, also looks at various areas of activity with suggestions for a future programme for each. It starts with the statement that, 'A purely top-down process will suffer from a lack of ownership and limited ideas, and a purely bottom-up process will struggle for direction and cohesion.' In other



words the union is unlikely to work unless those directly affected are 'up for it'; it therefore looks for that support in the separate questionnaire.

The Programme for Action further notes that 'Some of the actions are short term 'one off' ideas, others will require more effort and development but are fundamental to the survival and growth of our united congregation.' The covering e-mail note sent to the congregation includes an admonition to read the Programme for Action and the Committee paper before completing the questionnaire; this advice is akin to that offered as general advice by most organisations seeking feedback in questionnaire which refer to other sources. It is worth taking the time to consult the papers therefore.

To maximise participation, hard copies of those documents are still available from both church offices and also from members of the Steering Group who will be available to discuss the questionnaire and assist anyone who has difficulties completing the form.

The Programme for Action set out a possible structure for delivery of the vision, through a number of committees. There were some variations in the documents about the scope of the different committees but in general they covered -

Property/Fabric and Health & Safety

Finance,

Worship

Pastoral Care and Safeguarding,

Fellowship and Mission & Outreach, and

Communications (inc. Magazines and all media).

The Group invite comment on the Vision offered in the papers, and on the other matters discussed. And they would appreciate your ideas and suggestions. So please look at the papers and let the Group have your views!

Fabric (really does matter)

An update for September

The Fabric Report to the August Kirk Session considered several issues as listed here.

Much of the essential work, requiring attention within 12 months, identified in previous work is being progressed.

Having completed the initial repair to the right-hand side of the Church roof, further essential works have been identified as being required to two roof valleys, and replacement of the vestry roof which has 'nail sickness'. A request for funding to cover the £18K estimate has been sent to the General Trustees Fabric Committee.

The downpipes at either side of the main Church door have been blocked for some time, resulting in the stonework being wet. Inspection hatches have been successfully inserted to allow blockages to be removed.

Internal decoration of St. Joseph's Hall has been completed over the summer, including repainting the 'Tree'. We are indebted to Liz Cull for bringing the Mill Tree back to life again.

The wooden windowsills and sections of the frames on all windows in St. Joseph's, including the kitchen, will require to be replaced. Estimates have been obtained. Planning permission will be required for their replacement since the

church is in the Balerno Conservation Area. Again, we are faced with a further significant cost and will seek grant assistance if possible.

Painting of the Ogston Hall has also been completed, greatly improving the appearance of the hall, for all users. The fabric Committee are very grateful for the support of the volunteers in enabling these works to be completed on time as well as the painting of the entrance hall to St. Joseph's, and the disabled and gent's toilets. Special thanks to Ian Gidney for having taken on most of the Clerk of Works duties.

Energy savings work An application for further funding from the General Trustees for Ogston Hall insulation, Heating controls and some work to introduce more LED lighting (£13587) has moved on a stage, and it is hoped may be realised this autumn. Further work on installing solar panels awaits assistance from anyone who may be able to identify relevant grant funders.

The Church of Scotland's Net Zero Pathway is an online toolkit which aims to support congregations to help care for creation through taking steps, on a widerange of activities, towards the Church's goal of reaching net zero greenhouse gas emissions.

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/achieving-net-zero>

Balerno Parish Church Kirk Session business - August meeting

Not quite eclipsing the eclipse, Balerno Parish Church Kirk Session met on Wednesday 12 August and amidst the issues considered were the report from the Steering Group on progress towards the union, and matters related to the fabric of the Balerno campus.



photo courtesy of Jim Todd

into the new Kirk Session when it is established, and seven have decided to retire to Elder Emeritus status. One elder has requested sabbatical status.

The Fabric Committee are working on a five year plan in relation to the buildings, and at present

First of all however the Session discussed proposals for rescheduling hours of worship. The outcome is that as from September 1st Sunday worship will be at 9.45 am at Balerno and at 11.00am at Currie. The monthly joint service would transfer to the last Sunday of the ninth and would be at 10.30am.

A number of Elders have responded to the request that they indicate whether they wished to continue as active elders with the Kirk of Currie and Balerno. On Union all members of the Kirk Session will transfer

are awaiting news from the General Trustees in relation to applications for financial support. In particular the General Trustees have been approached for support concerning roof repairs on the Church. Applications are also being pursued for support for energy saving initiatives relating to the Ogston Hall, including insulation.

The Finance Committee report raised questions about affordability, and the Session understood that serious discussions would have to be undertaken.



photo courtesy of David Booth

The Kirk Session collectively contemplates a partial eclipse

sense of belonging, but there is an opposing view that feels that church attendance is low enough without making it possible to watch a service while having a cup of coffee. The original idea behind the recording of services was that they were being made available to those who were unable to attend and were more likely to want to listen/watch later in the day.

We do, however, owe a debt of gratitude to the members of the AV team who are regularly in church and happy to press the necessary buttons at the right time in order to make everything work. One minister – not of our congregation – who had to step in on one occasion to help out with the AV in a service said that he found the responsibility of recording the service more stressful than that of taking it! Don't let that put you off; if you are prepared to volunteer to help there will be

Worship Online

Those of us who are regular attenders of worship on a Sunday morning will be familiar

with Roy's welcome to 'those who will be watching later online' as well as those who are present in the church. The benefits of sharing worship online was something which became very obvious in the midst of the restrictions of the Covid pandemic. Audio recordings had been available for years, but modern advances in technology suggested that maybe a picture was required as well. It might not have been too difficult for people with fairly rudimentary skills to take a smartphone and share worship on the internet, but it was still a daunting prospect for those who were, by nature, averse to technology to give it a go.

For many churches the regular streaming of services is now considered to be unexceptional and the technology being used is a little more sophisticated than a smartphone. It is interesting to note that every week there are, on average, about 30 households which log in to view our service in Balerno. At Easter, we had a peak of over 60 viewers for our joint service with Currie Kirk, so we know that it is definitely worth doing – although we don't have a detailed profile of the people who are logging in.

Our services are not generally available until later on Sunday as it is a recording which is available for streaming. Nationally, there are conflicting views about the merits of streaming services 'live.' There is a body of opinion which feels that the ability to watch the service at the real time will have a greater



A link to our service recordings is to be found on the home page of our church website - www.balernochurch.org.uk/.

Operation Noah

Green Investment Roadshow 2026

Regular readers of the Bletter will be aware of recent moves by the Kirk Session to look towards making changes which will reduce the carbon footprint of activities on the church campus. It would appear that, while we not be alone in seeking to convert our structures to use less energy, there is an increasing awareness that churches have a responsibility to look after the planet.



The Green Investment Roadshow is being promoted by Operation Noah, Christian Aid, Just Money Movement, Hope for the Future and Eco Congregation Scotland to explore how to make church finances work for climate, nature, and social justice. They point out that there is an urgent need to increase investment in climate mitigation and adaptation which, for churches, is also a huge opportunity to show leadership and care for God's creation. Churches, like many other institutions, are faced with an increasingly complex landscape, including the environmental and moral implications of AI, mining, fossil fuels, and emerging green technologies and solutions.

The event is intended to bring together experts and organisations, showcasing inspiring examples of climate solutions alongside investment opportunities for institutions, churches and individuals.

Who is this for? Church leaders, church finance decision-makers and any Christians who are interested in how money can be invested for climate and nature. Timings: 9.30am arrival ending with lunch and networking at 1.30pm.

The (former) Treasurer's Thumb sesamoid times

Right then Thumb, what's this ah'm 'earin 'bout tha bein' unfit for duty. Are you I wunder perchance malingering?

Me sir!? Malingering? The very idea is unthinkable and I am truly hurt that you could harbour such thoughts. No sir it is but my sesamoids.

Yer what?

My sesamoids; your worship will be aware of them, if not by name, and that I - and that means we, are privileged to have three; one over the average. I suppose the chap at the end of other arm may also have three, but I don't see him often. Now the point is that two main sesamoids sit on the palm side of the large thumb knuckle inside the flexor tendons and volar plate; and a third smaller one is at the tip of the at the tip joint.

Really, Thumb? 'I am', as the great Lord Birkenhead once said, 'no wiser even if infinitely better informed.' But please go on with your point, if you 'ave one....

Yes indeed your magnificence; well my sesamoids protect my - I mean our - tendons from wear and tear and give extra power when you wish to pinch or grip things. Now sesamoiditis is, as you know, a rather painful inflammation of the bone and surrounding tissue which occurs from repetitive strain or overuse, which can be caused by overuse, hypertension or trauma. Pain worsens with over work.....

So you thought you'd have a day off?

Well your greatness, all the advice is for rest...

And for a splint or brace or som'at! Ah think ah'll just get the thumb stall and pop you in there.....

Oh how kind sir (gulp) but I'm sure that won't be necessary,.....

Come come, Thumb I won't hear of it; you are in need and here I am... it's providence ...in you go ...

But it's dark in there sir and, and ... and.. fancy that, I tell you sit it's a miracle ... the pain is subsiding already. Truly a miracle, your munificence. I'm sure it'll all be alright now, Oh yes.... much better....

Funny that Thumb, don't you think.. Now about malingering...

Don't think I know that one, sir. I'll look into it though.....

WOOF!

Hello again my friends – woof, woof,

Have you noticed just how many times the word 'dog' is used when people are speaking? Some are complimentary with others being anything but. The lads and I put on our thinking caps to see how many such words we could find.

Let's start with the good ones. Benny chose 'dog biscuit' – who could argue with that, and I chipped in with 'dog meat' – apparently meat that's only fit for dogs. I thought that my titbits from the butcher should be included there. Harry wanted to use 'dogs' dinner' but when we told him what that means he quickly changed his mind. 'Dog Fish' sounds interesting but does it really look like a dog? Last week, I recall hearing 'her indoors' mention 'Dogger Bank' – does that mean I've got some sort of savings?

Other dog words, no, that's not one, - are used quite regularly, some good and some not so good. Billy offered 'in the doghouse' but I'm sure it doesn't mean what he thinks. 'Hair of the Dog' refers when 'he of the house' comes back from the pub to take me for my evening walk. He usually has a pronounced 'wobble' so what good would another drink be? I wear a 'dog collar' but seemingly so does the minister. That's a strange one as there doesn't appear to be anywhere to attach his lead? One of my favourites is 'Doggie Paddle' – used when all we lads go splashing around in the lake in the park.

Then, the derogatory ones. We hear people say that someone leads a 'dog's life'. Seriously, do they know what that means? Certainly, were all most happy – who could argue with all play and no work? And then there's 'go to the dogs' meaning, I think, that things are generally going wrong, but surely that's unkind as we live good lives (once we've trained our owners of course).

Hamish thinks it's time to eat so he takes his leave of us. He seems to have a strict timetable whereas the rest of us simply eat when food is available. I'm on guard duty at the butchers tomorrow so I too had better call it a day. More next month

AI Write!

The Leak of the Leak of the Leak

by Stan Pipe, Senior Utilities Editor

There are leaks, and then there are leaks. There are also leeks but not as many. Leaks travel in multiples; you don't see one for days then like buses, at least two come along together. Leeks don't travel well.

In this tale the first, apparently, occurred in the gentlemen's toilets at St Joseph's Hall.

The second occurred when a confidential report about the first somehow escaped into the hands of people who had not been expected to receive, far less read it.

The third—and potentially most serious—was the leak of the fact that there had been a leak of the confidential report about the original leak.

For the avoidance of doubt, no leeks are involved. They are much rarer.

The reports of the leak reached the Kirk Session amid mounting concern and several conflicting accounts.

One version suggested the toilets had flooded. Another maintained that only a pipe had wept. A third claimed that the entire plumbing system, the hall and possibly the entire locality were in imminent danger of collapse.

The confidential report, meanwhile, was understood to contain sensitive information about water penetration, remedial works and expenditure. Being a very dry subject it was not expected to become a matter of public interest, although it was realised that if it did then the Session could be inundated.

The Session therefore considered whether an inquiry should investigate the leak of the report.

This raised the obvious question: who would investigate the leak of the leak?

A confidential subcommittee was proposed.

It was rejected when someone pointed out that confidential subcommittees produce minutes.

And minutes, everyone now knew, tend to leak. Session agreed unanimously that confidentiality must be respected. and it was certainly confidential; though with all that water around not inflammable,

By breakfast, everyone knew. Surely it couldn't be true. Could it?

from a report in
Cistern (Monthly Digest

Tell me a story!

Some places manage to transmit an atmosphere to both visitors and readers. Whether that is a consequence of personal experience of past events or a result of exposure to reported stories doesn't really matter, the fact is that places can evolve an identity in our minds which may or may not be appropriate. There is always the danger of developing a stereotype which might be less than kind and which then fires the imagination. The following narrative is total fiction but it was prompted by the real experience of one of our congregation as told to another, who then let his computer reinforce his imagination of life on a highland shooting estate. The question is which of the characters in the story was based on a real person?

So with that introduction and this story, the Blether offers you, our readers, the invitation to write your own short hopefully for publication in the Blether, and who knows maybe even to open the doors to a new literary career! Your public await!

The cautionary tale of the Ghillie and the Chambermaid

The castle standing in twelve thousand acres of Highland grandeur is reached by a narrow winding and virtually inaccessible track in Glen Slurry. It had been purchased by Major Sir Cuthbert Bog-Whistler, Laird of Glen Slurry - no, not Surrey - largely because his accountant had once remarked that grouse moors were "tax efficient." The Laird disliked grouse, detested rain, regarded tweed as a skin complaint, and really did not like entertaining. But every August he arrived for a week's relaxation, accompanied by financiers, retired colonels and last year a bemused television crew who had got lost in Kyle of somewhere or another. Some guests came out of curiosity and left as soon as they decently could, taking into account that getting out of Glen Slurry was never straightforward. It was the rain you see.

Murdo McMizzle, was Head Ghillie and had been for at least thirty-seven seasons; he had over the years developed something of world weariness but thankfully managed to conceal despair with *sang froid*. His dogs, he thought, possessed more intelligence than half the shooting party, though admittedly fewer expensive watches. He was half right; the dogs were clear winners and had plans for the watches.

Into the ordered chaos came Mhairi MacMopp, *chambermaid extraordinaire*, who, arriving with excellent references, immediately wondered how she could have made such a mistake. But, heigh ho, in for a penny what, what?

She was twenty-two and very practical. She did however assume that that people meant exactly what they said. On her first morning the housekeeper informed her, "The Laird likes everything aired."

Mhairi therefore opened every window in the castle, which admittedly took some time. This included the gun room.

Next morning, by breakfast, every shotgun had acquired a tasteful coating of Highland mist, three Labradors had established residence indoors, and Sir Cuthbert's toupee had disappeared into a stand of rhododendrons. Thereafter events deteriorated rapidly.

A visiting Member of Parliament mistook Murdo's game cart for transport to the first drive and delivered an impassioned speech on rural prosperity to six bewildered beaters and a pony named Hector.

Meanwhile Mhairi, believing a brace of grouse left outside the kitchen to be abandoned property, plucked them and served them for luncheon. They had, regrettably however, been entered in the Estate Produce Competition due to be judged later on that week in the large marquee on the lawn. The factor blamed Murdo. Murdo blamed civilisation, and Sir Cuthbert blamed Scotland; none of

which was particularly helpful.

Having enjoyed the Grouse at dinner, the next morning the entire shooting party awoke to increasing concern that something was not right. There were missing cartridges, mysteriously relocated boots and inexplicably soaked shooting jackets. All this pointed, they believed, to organised resistance.

The truth of course was considerably simpler. Mhairi had merely been tidying. Boots had been arranged alphabetically. Cartridges stored safely in the linen cupboard. Wet jackets had been washed because they looked dirty.

Only Murdo understood. He found Mhairi earnestly polishing a pair of antique spurs with furniture wax.

"Lass," he sighed, "there are places where efficiency is appreciated."

"There are?"

"Aye."

"Is this one?"

That was a difficult one he thought as he looked out to see Sir Cuthbert attempting to mount the pony backwards, while a journalist interviewed the cook about sustainable venison. And he sighed again.

"No," he replied. "This is a Highland sporting estate,... I think."

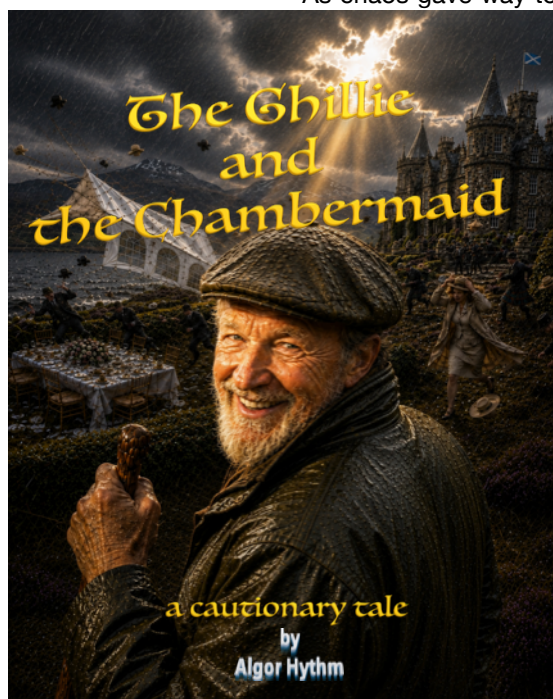
Friday, the final day of the week, would ordinarily bring the grand finale to the week's fun. However, it being August, and it having rained on St Swithin's day, a sudden gale and rainstorm carried away the ceremonial marquee, depositing the luncheon table in the loch and scattering distinguished guests across the heather in pursuit of hats worth more than small tractors. The beaters meanwhile continued beating because no one had told them to stop, and anyway the weather was 'no too bad.'

As chaos gave way to simple disorder Sir Cuthbert announced to who ever might be listening that he was thoroughly satisfied with the events of the past week and he would return next year with even more guests.

Mhairi rescued the silverware, and began on the tidying up process. The housekeeper wondered whether it was possible to have too much air so she closed a couple of windows and turfed the dogs off the beds.

Murdo smiled to himself. Experience had taught him that nature was infinitely patient, human folly entirely renewable, and that every sporting estate eventually received exactly the staff it deserved.

Mhairi simply thought they were all barking mad; which was both undeniable and a conclusion with which the dogs concurred.



A Tribute to George Burt



In very many ways George Burt was larger than life. He was a perfect gentleman, and much much more than simply good company. George passed away well before his time on June 26th after a relatively short illness but after a full life focused, to his everlasting credit, for the largest part on the happiness of others.

George was from Airdrie and at primary school his passion was football where he played for Golfhill Primary School until his final inter-school match which his team lost 9-1. realising that perhaps his value on the transfer market as a goalie, which he had been on the day, would not be enhanced, he switched to the oval ball when he moved to Airdrie Academy, from which point Rugby was a new passion. But he also excelled at swimming - particularly water polo - and at gymnastics, which he had wanted to teach. Excelling at water polo and at rugby may seem strange but George would tell you if you asked how similar these were; a lot goes on under water he would say cryptically. A founder member of Waysiders RFC in Airdrie in 1970, George moved to Balerno in 1981 and joined the Currie Rugby Club (later known as Currie Chieftains) eventually playing for the 1ST XV. Retiring from the rugby field, he took up golf which he enjoyed for the rest of his life.

George had wanted to be a PE teacher but his career took him into the Bank of Scotland, and within that he travelled all over the world including three years in New Zealand.

In May 2014 George married Lesley in Balerno Parish Church;

each had lost their partners some years before, and the whole community rejoiced with them in their new happiness. George was rarely seen thereafter without a seemingly ever present broad smile. George was a devoted husband and also a grandfather to Lesley's extended family who by then were based literally all around the world from Penicuik to Glasgow to Montana to New Zealand. Holidays became something of a world tour and George (and Lesley) were feted wherever they went.

At home George was a keen gardener, enjoying the challenge of a smaller garden when he moved to 2 Ashley Grange and he was deeply involved with the Church and its business in particular on the finance side. He also became an accomplished cook down at Holy Trinity in Wester Hailes, and importantly he became a mainstay of the bass section of One Bar Rest, where he also cornered the market on portrayals in song of the bad guys. The ensemble were privileged to be able to pay their respects to their colleague at his funeral on 20th July, with a rendering of 'Always Smile on the Bright Side of Life'. We know George would be smiling at that because it summed him up perfectly.



Tam O'Shanter with a rather surprised looking Meg

RMH

Balerno Fairtrade Village Group September 2026 update



Written on solar eclipse night, we hope with local Fairtrade/Fair Trade (FT) plans aptly shaping up again almost as fast and cheerfully as the roundness of the sun. Summer's alarming climate developments remind us how important it is to support our fellow-people everywhere, by choosing year-round to buy FT goods, whose producers and their communities are properly paid. So many communities also value the FT Premium, enabling them to fund projects of their own choosing, playing a vital part in (eg) the education of groups who had missed out earlier, and reminding everyone we need to protect our whole world too, for life now and into the future. This is exactly why 2026's Fairtrade Fortnight, 21 September – 4 October, focuses on people, planet and fair pay, urging us all to 'Do It Fair'. Our Farmers' Market dates in Balerno didn't quite coincide, so instead please look out for and support a stall with great FT crafts and foods at October 10's Market! Our FT champion the mighty MIII has also often included special tasty FT Fortnight items, as well as its regular FT drinks; if this goes for 2026 too, be sure not to

miss them either.

We also hope to hear soon, from our Sessions and planning groups, of our uniting churches' ongoing commitment to FT: formally continued backing of long-established local/worldwide FT work embodying vital caring parts of our faith, as well as recognising how useful it is to work as a Community and a Church Group both at once. We're also hoping for Church blessing soon on a regular FT stall after monthly joint services; not so different from the stalls run by much-loved members more than twenty years ago – remember those? We know they were vital in helping launch FT in Balerno, maybe in Currie too.

Very soon, another date for your diary: please come to BPC's Ogston Hall @ 7.15 pm Monday 14 September and be part of local FT's forward planning. You'll have a warm welcome from Balerno Fairtrade Village Group, however much or little time you can spare.

Thank you so much for continuing to support FT; you make all the difference, locally and much further afield.

Lesley Henderson
for Balerno Fairtrade Village Group

Seriously, what *has* the Church of Scotland ever done for Outreach?

...with apologies to Romesh Ranganathan....

The Church of Scotland is engaged in outreach across a range of areas; for example;

Social Justice Campaigns: The Kirk actively campaigns on public issues including human trafficking, the refugee crisis, and economic inequality.

Credit Union Partnerships: The church encourages members and local groups to support and host credit unions to promote fair finance and combat predatory lending in deprived areas.

Global Partnerships: Through international church networks, outreach extends beyond Britain to support global aid, disaster relief, and partner churches worldwide.

CrossReach: Formed with roots dating back to 1869, it is one of Scotland's largest social care providers, running programs for mental health, substance misuse, homelessness, and criminal justice support.

Food Banks and Community Support: Local parishes run or host regular food banks, drop-in centers, and community cafes to assist individuals facing severe economic hardship.

Volunteer Network: The organization represents one of Scotland's single largest bodies registering and mobilizing volunteers to work with vulnerable groups, youth, and the elderly.

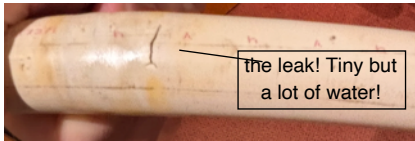
This is only a snapshot; there's lots more! Find out at the Church of Scotland website.

Time for a 'leak' inquiry! alarms and excursions at St Josephs

Probably it all started a long time ago - we don't know precisely when - but on Monday 10 August the disabled toilet started backing up; in other words it wasn't able to drain. Call the plumber; check. Plumber arrives and some work with valves seems to correct the problem; check. Fast forward to Tuesday 11 August, and the Gents toilet in St Joseph's was spilling water, flooding the floor and beginning to seep on to the corridor; check. Again enter the plumber who thought the



problem could be related to a leak, somewhere; check. So he removes the manhole cover on the landing outside the toilets.



The inspection manhole reveals a deep chamber - well most folk could stand up slightly stooped in it, but it looked a little like a dungeon, although without the dragons - and the plumber then crawled along under the floor of the gents' toilet tracing the leak which he found in a length of rubber piping feeding into the hot water system.

Repair involved replacing the pipe which meant turning off the water which in turn meant that the Mill Cafe had to close until hot water was restored; which it was later that day; check. And with that the story moved Wednesday 12th when the Cafe reopened as if nothing had happened. So without turning the story into a War and Peace type novel, one problem revealed another and that revealed yet another. But in the end all's well that has ended well.

Mill Notes



The Tree is back!

The Mill logo tree is back on the wall although now slightly west (or is it south?) of where it was.



Thankfully battleship grey doesn't intrude into the palette of the tree, and equally thankfully the tree itself while slightly smaller than it was, is now entirely visible. The grey steel cabinet no longer obscures the artwork so it can be enjoyed in all its emblematic glory.

Thank you to Liz Cull for restoring the tree, and carefully matching the foliage to merge with the over colour scheme of the decorated St Joseph's Hall aka or even

better known as the Mill Cafe.

Separately; a brief note to allay any fears regarding the advertisement for an additional worker.

One member of staff has reduced her time from 2 days a week to 1 day a week, so no one has left but the Mill has a vacancy for a member of staff to cover 1 day a week.

The Mill continues to provide excellent service - as is well demonstrated by the numbers of people coming to enjoy a snack or a meal! - and has been able to pass £1,500 to the Treasurer in addition to the regular monthly contributions of £250. RMH



Ultra-trail stars depart after lighting up our summer at the Mill!

Identical twins Raquel and Irene Picón, aged 31, arrived in Balerno in May after a two day drive in their family camper van from their home village of Castellar del Valley, just outside Barcelona. It's a long way to come just to visit the Mill Cafe, but they did have another aim; to improve their English. And they weren't coming on holiday, since they were both continuing with jobs in the pharmaceutical industry, working remotely from their laptops. Another major reason for coming to Scotland was to run. So why Balerno? Apart from the fact that it's the home of the Mill Cafe where the twins have been volunteering since their arrival. Well, the Pentland Hills do provide a perfect training ground for ultra trail running..

So here they are trying to persuade Don Macleod that he also might be an ultra-trail runner. Ultra trail running? Don discovered that means running between 26 miles and 50 miles..... non stop. And that certainly contributed to his decision not to take up the sport. Besides which Raquel and Irene are celebrities in the running world in Spain, so the chances of Don keeping up were slight. Besides which they have many sponsors, and in October, they will be in ultra trail running in China courtesy of a large Chinese trainer and clothing company, all expenses paid!

Earlier in the summer they spent a week in Torridon further honing their skills, and enjoying the scenery, and the very difficult running terrain.

Sadly for us, the girls departed the Mill on 18 August to return home, although not directly; they are going back via the Isle of Skye, where they will be spending a week sightseeing with family; and, yes, yet more long distance running.

They volunteered in the Mill Cafe in order to meet with different people and improve their English conversational skills, and were incredibly friendly and delightful company for us all.

We will miss them, and we hope they might come back some time.



Calendar announcements & chit chat

Unless otherwise notified Sunday worship is at 9.45am every Sunday at Balerno Parish Church

September 2026 Services

Sunday Service times will change from 1st Sept.

Morning service at Balerno - 9.45am

Morning service at Currie - 11.00am

Joint Service on last Sunday each month - 10.30am;

JOINT SERVICE, SEPTEMBER, 2026 IN BALERNO

Communion services will be as follows;

September and November in Balerno, which will include also a 3.00pm service

February and June in Currie

All joint services will include an informal communion after the service

September weekly events

GOOD BOOK GROUP

meets in

Shepherd Room 11.00am to 12 noon on Mondays, and
Gibson Crain lounge 7.00 to 8.00pm on Tuesdays

Holiday club

Friday 4, 11 - 2.00pm - 4.00pm - Gibson Craig

Sunday 6, 13 - 2.00pm - 4.00pm - Ogston Hall

September 2026 Events

1 Sept Help required with gardening - Balerno Church campus - 10.00am - bring gloves and gardening tools!

1 Sept Currie Kirk Guild 10.00am Gibson Craig Halls - welcome back with tea and coffee - vspeaker Rev Roy Henderson

5 Sept Coffee Stop 2.00pm to 4.00pm Currie Kirk

5 Sept Ravelrig RDA - Wine and Cheese - 18:00-21:00 £20 40th Anniversary; For tickets email fundraising@ravelrig-rda.org.uk

12 Sept Farmers Market - Main Street, Balerno - Mill Cafe open

12 Sept Coffee Stop 2.00pm to 4.00pm Currie Kirk

18 Sept

FRESH START COLLECTION

19 Sept

19 Sept Coffee Stop 2.00pm to 4.00pm Currie Kirk

FRESH START COLLECTION

18/19 September 2026

10.00am - 12 noon

CONTACT MALCOLM ON

07801456245



Date for your diary

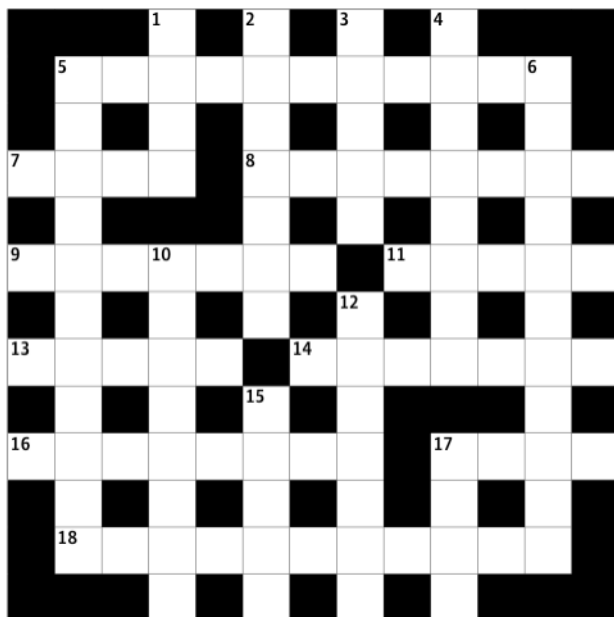
Christmas Tree Festival 12 Dec

Brass Band Concert 12 Dec

Crossword Corner

September puzzle

July/August answers



When did you last write a letter to the Editor?

We do, actually, actively welcome letters to the Editor!
Yes, Really!

Palm Cafe

Last Tuesday of each month at St Joseph's;
3.00 to 4.30pm.

'A space for people with dementia and their carers'

Useful Numbers

Interim Minister Rev Roy Henderson

0131 449 3830

rhenderson@churchofscotland.org.uk

Church administrator (Church office)

Pam McKeon 0131 449 7245

bpc-admin@balernochurch.org.uk

Session Clerks

Kay Coull 0131 449 6151

07415506947

Elaine McCulloch 0131 449 5876

balerno.sessionclerks@gmail.com

Treasurer

Jim Todd 0131 449 6422

bpc-treasurer@balernochurch.org.uk

Roll Keeper

Pam McKeon 0131 449 2541

bpc-admin@balernochurch.org.uk

Fabric Committee

Dilys Conway 0131 449 7245

dilysconway@blueyonder.co.uk

Pastoral Care Co-ordinator

Kay Coull 0131 449 6151

coullkay@hotmail.com

Mill Cafe

Lynsey Inglis 0131 449 7245

themillatstjosephs@gmail.com

Balerno Blether

Lesley Burt 0131 449 4314

lesley.burt70@gmail.com

- | Across | Down |
|---|---|
| 5 Most prominent position (6,5) | 1 Semi-precious stone used for cameos (4) |
| 7 Bend – electric cable (4) | 2 Bravery (7) |
| 8 Maintained in good condition (4,4) | 3 Lamps (anag) (5) |
| 9 Initially (2,5) | 4 Finance (8) |
| 11 Japanese capital (5) | 5 Control the proceedings (4,3,4) |
| 13 Under no circumstances (5) | 6 Scatterbrained (5-6) |
| 14 Nearer the beginning (7) | 10 Recognise (8) |
| 16 Civilising (8) | 12 Soft part of a facial organ (7) |
| 17 Jaunt (4) | 15 Wind (up) – oddball (5) |
| 18 Use obscene language (slang) (3,3,5) | 17 Surprise attack (4) |