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Holy Trinity Church

Albert Place, Stirling, FK8 2RG

Issue 6

April 2026

Scottish Charity: SC016471

Rector's Letter

Dear all,

The labyrinth is an ancient symbol of birth and rebirth, found in many different cultures. In Christianity, the labyrinth becomes a tool for prayer and pilgrimage as it starts to appear in churches and cathedrals in the late Middle Ages.

An ancient Native American labyrinth of the tribe of the Hopi symbolising Mother Earth and Birth.

As we once more mark the happenings of Holy Week and Easter, the labyrinth may serve as a reminder that we, in our baptism, are called to die and rise with Christ – that we are to walk into newness of life – not content with the status quo, but with the aim to make our common life deeper and more colourful.

As Paul says in Romans: 'Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.' (Romans 6.3-4)

Labyrinth at Chartres Cathedral, France

The profound message of the labyrinth (as opposed to a maze) is that we can't really go wrong as there is only one way in and the same way out again. As we journey into newness of life this Easter, die to our old selves and

are reborn into deeper human life, God's love guides us at all times in our going in and going out as we grow in love, light and life.

A happy rebirth this Eastertide,

Christoph

Service of Thanksgiving

There will be a Service of Thanksgiving for the life and achievements of Patrick Stirling-Aird at Holy Trinity on **26th May** at **2.30pm**. Susan and her family will be delighted if you would like to come.

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HT News

Easter Flowers

The church will be decorated on **Saturday 4th April at 2pm**. If you are able to help, you are more than welcome to come along.

We are looking for people to decorate a basket with flowers, as well as donations of daffodils. Cash donations towards the flower fund are always welcome and these can be given directly to our treasurer, Robert Nellist, or to Karen Ellis or placed into the flower jar at the back of church.

Many thanks for your help towards helping to decorate our church.

Karen Ellis

Our Services

Sundays
10.30am Sung Eucharist

First Sunday in the Month
8.30am Holy Communion

Thursdays
11.00am Holy Communion

At present Sunday School (HTKidZ) meets according to demand.

Young Adults Group

Young Adults - Rooted and Roaming

On Sunday 8th March, our local Young Adults Group met with other youth ministry groups from across Scotland at St Saviours (Bridge of Allan), the host church for the Provincial Youth Network's 'Rooted and Roaming' initiative. Revd Aaron Moffat-Jackman and his congregation warmly welcomed us and our new friends who travelled from as far as Aberdeen, Dumfries, and Dundee. After the service, we headed to the Westerton Arms for lunch - we had some great discussions about theology, music, travels, and more!

Diocesan Synod Report

Christoph and I travelled to Perth for our Diocesan Synod on Saturday, 7th March. Our Revd Ian Boa was there too, working hard to make sure the day went smoothly for all attendees.

Bishop Ian started the day with a warm welcome and last year's minutes were approved. We went on to discuss the statistical return and were told of new additions to the questionnaire to allow us to capture a range of different activities across the diocese, such as young adults ministry. Revd Rachael Wright (Dunblane) raised concerns about the impact of the imminent departure of Daphne and John from the Diocesan Office on our safeguarding. Revd Ian reassured us that the PVG process won't be impacted and encouraged all to continue submitting applications as normal. As part of the ministry board report, we were told about a newly established network for lay worship leaders, which will meet yearly in person and more regularly online.

The admin board and finance reports were approved without questions or comments. After a coffee break, Christoph asked for questions and comments on the text of the *Liturgy for the Blessing of a Marriage*, which attracted more attention and sparked a short theological debate about the blessing of rings! We moved on to consider three feasts for inclusion in our diocesan calendar. The addition of the Cathedral Dedication proved most controversial and was rejected after a vote count. The Synod approved the commemoration of local saint St William of Perth (23 May) and priest-martyr Robert Lyon (27 October). Afterwards, we heard inspiring stories from Pilot and Pioneer Charges and learnt about innovative solutions churches implemented to reduce their carbon footprint and heating costs.

The Bishop's charge focused on the challenges we face in the current political climate when those in power too often seem to choose war over peace. Without denying the scale of the tasks we're called to undertake

as Christians, he reminded us of things that give us hope. He also drew our hearts to the core of our faith, summarised in three words: *God loves us*. I would highly encourage you to read his speech when it becomes available on the Diocese website. Bishop Ian reflected on his time with us and announced his intention to retire by the end of the year. We had a short presentation from the Dean explaining the process we will go through as a diocese to select a worthy successor—with the calling to serve in our diocese, the right experience for the role, and good chemistry.

Fr Ross Stirling-Young had a lovely presentation about his work in St Columba's Church in the village of Stanley. It was heartwarming to see the fruit of his and others' hard work: a growing (in numbers and holiness) congregation, local community brought together (through church services, chats and crafts, or AED* training!), and so many lives enriched.

At the end, we moved into the chancel to install three members of our diocese as new honorary Canons of the Cathedral in recognition of their contributions to the life of our Church. It was a cold day, but the sun was out in the afternoon and the light entering the cathedral through the stained glass felt like a physical sign of the Spirit's presence with us.

Please let me or Christoph know if you have any questions, comments, or reflections you'd like to share with us.

Bartholomew Koman

* Automated External Defibrilator

Prayer Diary April 2026

Wed 1 Wednesday of Holy Week, that we walk in repentance

Thu 2 Maundy Thursday, that we remember the poor

Fri 3 Good Friday

Sat 4 Holy Saturday, that hope is in our hearts

Sun 5 Easter Day

Mon 6 Monday in Easter Week, for all who minister to us

Tue 7 Tuesday in Easter Week, that we show Easter joy in our lives

Wed 8 Wednesday in Easter Week, for all prisoners of conscience

Thu 9 Thursday of Easter Week, for those who have the care of children

Fri 10 Friday of Easter Week, for our actions in the Flourishing Future group

Sat 11 Saturday of Easter Week, for acceptance of the neurodivergent

Sun 12 Second Sunday of Easter

Mon 13 William Forbes, Bishop, 1634, for our Bishop Ian

Tue 14 for the Samaritans and their work

Wed 15 for peace in the Ukraine and in the Middle East

Thu 16 Magnus of Orkney, Martyr, c1116, for our Primus Mark

Fri 17 Donnan, Abbot, and Companions, Martyrs, c617, for faith to increase in Scotland

Sat 18 for Stirling Street Pastors

Sun 19 Third Sunday of Easter

Mon 20 Maelrubha of Applecross, Abbot, 722, for all who have ministries at Holy Trinity

Tue 21 Anselm of Canterbury, Bishop and Teacher of the Faith, 1109, for all involved in education

Wed 22 for all forced to leave their homes to seek a new life

Thu 23 George, Patron of England and of Scouting, Martyr, c303, for our youth organisations

Fri 24 for all who grieve

Sat 25 Mark, Evangelist, that we do not fear the sacrifice of sharing the Gospel

Sun 26 Fourth Sunday of Easter

Mon 27 Albert Ernest Laurie, Priest, 1937, for the Scottish Episcopal Institute

Tue 28 for all who work on the land or at sea

Wed 29 Catherine of Siena, Mystic and Teacher of the Faith, 1380, for all carers

Thu 30 for the Episcopal Church in Europe

Readings April 2026

SERVICES FOR HOLY WEEK:

Sunday 29th March	**10.30am**	Sung Eucharist with Procession of Palms
PALM SUNDAY	**Readings**	Isaiah 50.4-9a; Philippians 2.5-11; Matthew 26.14-end of 27
Tuesday 31st March	**7.30pm**	Stations of the Cross
Wednesday 1st	**7.30pm**	Symbol of Rebirth: Walking the Labyrinth
Thursday 2nd	**7.30pm**	Liturgy for Maundy Thursday
MAUNDY THURSDAY	**Readings**	Exodus 12.1-14; 1 Corinthians 11.23-26; John 13.1-17,31*b*-35
Friday 3rd	**2pm**	Liturgy for Good Friday
GOOD FRIDAY	**Readings**	Isaiah 52.13-end of 53; Hebrews 4.14-16, 5.7-9 John 18.1-end of 19
Saturday 4th	**9.00pm**	Easter Vigil
HOLY SATURDAY	**Readings**	see separate service order
Sunday 5th	**8.30am**	Holy Communion
EASTER DAY	**10.30am**	Sung Eucharist
	Readings	Acts 10.34-43; Colossians 3.1-4; John 20.1-18

Readings April 2026

Thursday 9th	**11am**	Holy Communion
Sunday 12th	**10.30am**	Sung Eucharist
EASTER 2	**Readings**	Acts 2.14a, 22-32; 1 Peter 1.3-9; John 20.19-31
Thursday 16th	**11am**	Holy Communion
Sunday 19th	**10.30am**	Sung Eucharist
EASTER 3	**Readings**	Acts 2.14a, 36-41; 1 Peter 1.17-23; Luke 24.13-35
Thursday 23rd	**11am**	Holy Communion
Sunday 26th	**10.30am**	Sung Eucharist
EASTER 4	**Readings**	Acts 2.42-47; 1 Peter 2.19-25; John 10.1-10
Thursday 30th	**11am**	Holy Communion

Rotas April 2026

	Readings	Intercessions
2nd April	**C Johnston**	**Maundy Thursday**
3rd April	**T Mitchell**	**Good Friday**
5th April	**D Brown**	**A Pont**
12th April	**W Wheeler**	**R Nellist**
19th April	**M Kenyon**	**T Mitchell**
26th April	**C Johnston**	**A Shaw**

Sidesduty

2nd April 7.30pm A Lees and L Coats

3rd April 2.00pm L Coats and C Kendall

4th April 9.00pmC Watson and Volunteer

5th April S Goss and R Piper

12th April C Kendall and A Lees

19thApril L Coats and R Campbell

26th April C Watson and R Nellist

Articles for the **May edition**

are requested on or before

Sunday 12th April

The magazine will be available on

Sunday 26th April

Seeing the light in Finland

Many of you will know that I have had an interest in how light, and lighting, affect the quality of our experience of our surroundings. This year I was lucky enough to go to Oulu in Finland to attend the summit of LUCI (Lighting Urban Communities International). Over 200 delegates from 26 countries were there, so it was fascinating to share insights of the many different aspects that people were dealing with. Oulu is the European Capital of Culture this year and so the City took the opportunity to show us their lighting practices and how it is interwoven into daily life – a 'living laboratory'. There were lots of examples of technology improvements helping to make navigating the city easier.

One of the fascinating projects for me was '*The Art of Darkness'* which is a multi-faceted international programme exploring both the role of light art and levels of 'just the right amount of light'. Woodlands, relics of industrial heritage, paths, and underpasses have all been transformed by artistic interventions causing one to look at things with a fresh eye.

It was particularly interesting to be in the Nordic light – where even small amounts of light were reflected by the deep snow cover. A contrast from the gloomy grey that I had left in Scotland! Sunset over the frozen sea was an extraordinary experience too, beautiful colours reflected across large expanses of snow and ice. The extraordinary beauty of nature.

This made me think about and reflect upon the book we studied a while ago called '**Learning to Walk in the Dark**' by Barbara Brown Taylor. In it she explores how we often associate Christian thinking of 'into the light' as being into bright, solar, light, whereas often the 'dark' is not totally dark. She recommends looking at how moonlight gives different insights into what is 'dark'.

Whilst there was some moonlight, I was struck by the light of the fading sun, which made expanses of landscape look quite different, as you can see in the photos. The juxtaposition of artificial light and natural light was really intriguing too.

Here are just two examples and the links to more information. I am always happy to chat about it! *Cathy Johnston*

Sunset over the Frozen Sea

A bridge

For more information about the event:

https://www.luciassociation.org/events/luci-cities-lighting-summit/oulu-2026/highlights/

For the Art of Darkness programme:

https://artofdarkness.eu

When you mix children and religion...

You get some unexpected gems. The following are extracts from religious exam papers...

In the first book of the Bible, Guinesses, God got tired of creating the world, so He took the Sabbath off.

Moses died before he ever reached Canada.

Solomon, one of David's sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.

Economic definitions

A recession is a period in which you tighten up your belt. A depression is a time in which you have no belt to tighten. When you have no trousers to hold up, it's a panic.

Jesus' granny

The little boy came home from his first day at Sunday School and casually told his mother that his Sunday school teacher was Jesus' granny. Astonished, his mother asked: "Whatever makes you think that?"

"Well, it's pretty obvious," said her son. "She never stopped talking about Him all morning. She told us Jesus is smarter and stronger and better-behaved than anyone else she knows. She even showed us a picture of Him."

Random Reflections

My mouth doesn't seem to have a backspace key.

Tax collector: a person who has what it takes to take what you have.

When I was a kid and getting put to bed at 9:00, I couldn't wait until I was a grown-up and could stay up until whatever time I wanted. That time is, apparently, 9:00.

Vanilla Tablet Recipe

At coffee on Sunday 15th March I was asked by some for the recipe for the tablet I had provided. This is the recipe.

Ingredients:

4oz butter - Make sure butter and milk is at room temperature

4 tablespoons of water

2 heaped tablespoons of golden syrup

1lb of sugar

4oz tin of Carnation condensed milk (it comes in 379 grams, so you have to weigh the tin and extract 4oz)

Method:

Place the butter, water, syrup and sugar into a large saucepan, heat slowly until the sugar is dissolved. I tend to dissolve the first three a little before I add the sugar.

Add the 4oz of condensed milk, bring it to the boil and once boiling evenly put the timer on for 10 minutes and leave. Do not stir once the timer is on.

Meanwhile prepare a baking tray with greaseproof paper. When there is about 4 minutes to go fill the sink up with cold water so when pan put into sink a third of the sides will be submerged.

When timer rings remove from heat stirring swiftly especially in the sink and you should start to see graining on the sides of the pan. You can also just beat the pan without the water but you will have to beat longer!!

Once you can see and feel it is thickening pour out on the prepared tin allow to cool a bit and then divide with a sharp knife.

Sometimes it will be like toffee sometimes overbeaten but made with love it will be perfect.

Do not try when under pressure or time poor. *Jean Wheeler*

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Organisations Meeting in the Church Hall

Mondays

10-12noon HTTots Gen Pont: gandapont@yahoo.co.uk

4.00-6.15pm Destination Judo: info@destinationjudo.com

6.15-7.45pm Mindbodysoul Yoga: grant@mindbodysoulyoga.co.uk

Tuesdays

10-12noon Pilates: judithgraham090@gmail.com

6.30-8pm Lishi Self Defence: damien@lishi.org

Wednesdays

9.15-10.15 Pilates Mini Ball Class: Jackie.govan@live.com

12-1pm Latin and Ballroom Dance Class: stirling4community@gmail.com

5-7pm Dance: francescahamill@icloud.com

7-9pm SABOS: sabosmusicaltheatre@gmail.com

Thursdays

11-2pm Stirling Community Lunch: stirling4community@gmail.com

7pm Stirling4Community Choir

Fridays

9.10-9.55 Pilates: judithgraham090@gmail.com

10-12 noon Art Group: stirling4community@gmail.com

2-5pm University of the Third Age (monthly): membership@fvu3a.org.uk

5-6pm Capoeira class: dendemaruouk@outlook.com

Saturdays

9-12.30 Babyballet: livingstonandfalkirk@babyballet.co.uk

The church hall is available for further lettings. If you would like to rent the hall please contact Sarah Shaw on 07970466551 or shaws1@talktalk.net