

Williamwood Parish Church Newsletter November 2025



“Preparing for Christmas – Preparing Our Hearts”

As I come to the close of my year serving among you here at Williamwood, my heart is full of gratitude. It has been a privilege to share worship, friendship, and faith together. We have journeyed through seasons of joy and sorrow, hope and uncertainty, and we have seen again how faithful God is in every circumstance. Now, as we stand on the threshold of Advent and look towards Christmas, I find myself reflecting on what it truly means to *prepare*.

We are all good at preparing in one way or another. Soon, kitchens will fill with the smell of mince pies and fruit cake; cards will be written; presents bought and wrapped; lights hung on trees. But amidst all the bustle, there's a quieter, deeper kind of preparation that the Bible invites us to — the preparation of the heart.

1. “Prepare the way of the Lord”

In the Gospel of Luke, we meet John the Baptist crying out in the wilderness,

“Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him.” (Luke 3:4)

John's message was not about decorating or organising, but about *repentance* and *readiness*. He called people to clear away the clutter that blocked their relationship with God — pride, complacency, and indifference — so that when the Messiah came, they would be able to recognise Him and welcome Him in.

Perhaps that's still our calling today. As we prepare for Christmas, God asks us not only to tidy our homes, but to make space in our hearts — to clear the spiritual clutter that fills our minds and keeps us from peace. In the quiet moments of Advent, we can pause to ask: *What paths in my life need straightening so that Christ may come nearer?*

2. “Let every heart prepare Him room”

The carol *Joy to the World* puts it beautifully: “*Let every heart prepare Him room.*”

At Bethlehem, there was no room for Mary and Joseph — no space in the inn for the Saviour of the world. Yet God's Son came anyway, not to the palace or temple, but to a manger — humble, simple, poor.

This story tells us something vital about the heart of God. He does not wait for perfect circumstances or spotless people. He comes to the humble and willing heart — to anyone ready to receive Him. Christmas reminds us that God is not far off, but Emmanuel, *God with us* — here in our homes, our struggles, our ordinary days.

In my time with you at Williamwood, I have seen that truth lived out — in the warmth of fellowship after worship, in quiet pastoral visits, in moments of shared prayer and kindness. Christ comes wherever hearts make room for Him, and I have seen His presence here among you.

3. “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light”

The prophet Isaiah saw it long before that first Christmas:

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness, a light has dawned.” (Isaiah 9:2)

Light and darkness are powerful Advent themes. For many, this season is not easy. Empty chairs remind us of loved ones who have gone. The days grow shorter, and worries often seem heavier. Yet it is precisely *into the darkness* that the light of Christ shines.

The message of Christmas is not escapism, but hope in the midst of reality. God steps into the world as it is — not as it should be — and brings light that no darkness can overcome. That’s why we light candles each Sunday of Advent. Each flame is a small defiance against despair, a visible reminder that *“the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”* (John 1:5)

If your own Advent feels shadowed this year, may you find comfort in knowing that God’s light still shines. You are not forgotten, and you are not alone.

4. “Do not be afraid”

Again and again in the Christmas story, the angel’s message is the same: *“Do not be afraid.”* To Mary, to Joseph, to the shepherds — each time, those words break through fear and uncertainty with reassurance and peace.

We live in a world where fear often dominates — fear of change, fear of the future, fear for loved ones, fear of conflict or loss. Yet God’s word to us remains steady: *“Do not be afraid, for I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.”* (Luke 2:10)

That joy is not dependent on circumstance. It comes from knowing that in Christ, God has drawn near. Whatever lies ahead — for you, for me, for this congregation — we can move forward with courage, because the same God who came in Bethlehem still comes to us today, quietly but powerfully, in love.

5. “A Saviour has been born to you”

The Christmas message is profoundly personal. The angel said, *“A Saviour has been born to you.”*

Not just *to the world*, but *to you* — to each of us. That's what transforms Christmas from a lovely story into a living faith. It is God's personal invitation: to receive His love, to trust His grace, and to walk in His peace.

As I reflect on this past year at Williamwood, I give thanks that together we have proclaimed that good news — in worship, in prayer, in our care for one another, and in our service to the wider community. You have been a light in this parish, pointing others to the hope of Christ. My prayer is that you will continue to shine that light long after I have moved on.

6. "Glory to God in the highest"

In the end, Christmas is about glory — not ours, but God's. It is about wonder breaking into the ordinary, heaven touching earth, and grace reaching out to every person. The shepherds returned from Bethlehem "glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen." (Luke 2:20)

May that be our spirit too this Advent. As we prepare, as we wait, as we worship — may we do so with hearts full of gratitude and expectation. For Christ still comes, not only once in Bethlehem, but again and again into the lives of those who are ready to receive Him.

So, as we prepare for Christmas this year, let's prepare not just our homes but our hearts. Let's open ourselves afresh to the God who comes near, who brings light to our darkness, peace to our fears, and love without end.

And as I take my leave from this wonderful congregation, I want to say a heartfelt *thank you* — for your faithfulness, your welcome, and your partnership in the Gospel. May the Lord bless you and keep you in the year ahead. May He fill your hearts with hope, your homes with joy, and your lives with His light.

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)
Thanks be to God.

Rev Paul Read
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CONGREGATIONAL ROLL

It is with sadness we announce the death of the following members of our Church family.

Gavin Burns on July 7th
Keneth Gordon on September 19th
Hugh McGhee on October 1st
Jean Little on October 13th

Dear Friends,

On the 1st of October, as you know, the Kirk Session voted unanimously for the Basis of Linkage between Williamwood and Broom Parish Church and today the Congregations of Williamwood and Broom Parish Church also voted unanimously.

Thank you to all of you who turned out to vote, it was much appreciated.

The next step is to have a Service of Linkage in Broom or Williamwood Parish Church. The Moderator Rev George McKay will take the service on the **20th November at Broom Parish Church at 7pm.**

Meantime the Kirk Session Working Group will prepare a Church Profile to call a minister.

Rev Paul Read will be with us until the end of November, and for the first three weeks of December, leading us in worship, will be the Rev Jim Boag, former Minister of Broom Parish Church. We extend our gratitude to Paul for his service to us during the last few months and to Joy who has been very supportive of him especially on the 20 mile drives each way!

The Christmas Coffee Morning will be on the **29th November, Remember, Remember the 29th November**

Kind regards, Margaret



**WE WILL MARK REMEMBRANCE
SUNDAY ON
9TH NOVEMBER 2025**

**Our service will begin in
the area outside at the front
of the Church at 10.45am
and
then continue inside the Church
for those who wish to attend.**

Williamwood Parish Church, 4 Vardar Avenue, Clarkston, G67 7QP
Scottish Charity No. SCO09939
Website – new.williamwoodparish.church

FLOWER CALENDAR

A big thank you to those listed below who are providing the flowers in the Church over the next two months. They are greatly appreciated by those in the Church and those who receive them after the service on Sunday.



If you would like to donate flowers for the chancel, please contact Joan Black or add your name to the calendar in the Church vestibule. The calendar for 2026 will be available for you to add your name in the middle of December.

If you know of anyone who you think would appreciate Church flowers, please speak to Joan Black or any committee member.

The committee are at present -

Joan Black (Temporary Convener), Sheila McDonald (Treasurer), Sandra Fraser, Elizabeth Purvis, Jenny Barr and Margaret McIntyre.

November		December	
2 nd	Margaret Petrie	7 th	Ross Johnstone
9 th	Carole Fergusson	14 th	Vacant
16 th	Irene Russell	21 st	Lorna Goudie
23 rd	Vacant	28 th	No fresh flowers
30 th	Liz Taylor		

Important Flower Club Information

Due to the introduction of bank charges for the Treasurer's accounts the flower fund account is being incorporated into the church account. Our flower fund treasurer, Sheila McDonald, will still collect the cash and cheques week by week. Cheques should now be made payable to the Williamwood Church please. If anyone would prefer to donate by bank transfer, the bank account details are as follows.

Account Number – 20185259

Sort Code - 82-20-00



Ross and Lynn McGhee would like to thank the members of their Church family for the kindness and sympathy shown following the recent sad loss of their dad Hugh. The phone calls, cards, flowers and visits have been a great comfort. The large turnout of members at the funeral was also very much appreciated. Grateful thanks to the Rev Paul Read for his comforting visits and to Rev Derek Munn, lifelong family friend and Church of Scotland Minister (and former member of Williamwood) for conducting the funeral service.



Rouken Glen Get-Together

The next get-together at Rouken Glen Garden Centre will be on **Tuesday 4th November at 10.30 am**. As usual please come along for an hour or so of fellowship and chat.

The Guild

We have had a very enjoyable start to our 2025/2026 Guild session. On Monday 6th October Rev Aquila Singh, our Interim Moderator, spoke to us about this year's Guild Theme "Living Stones" and led us in Communion.

Mr George English spoke to us about Family History and Surnames on Monday 20th October which was an interesting topic.



Our syllabus for November and December is as follows:

November 3 rd	Bible Smuggling	Heather MacDonald
November 17 th	GUILD PROJECT	
	Crossreach Playful Beginnings	Miriam Rana
December 1 st	Christmas Crafts	Pearl Munro
December 15 th	Christmas Lunch	Eglinton Arms Hotel

If you would like to join us for our Christmas lunch on 15th December, we would be very pleased to have your company. We are arriving at 12.30 pm for lunch at 1pm. The cost for 2 courses is £25.00 which includes tea/coffee/tablet and a gratuity for the staff. We need to pre-order our choice of food. Please speak to myself to see the menu.

Everyone will be made welcome at any of our meetings. We meet in the Session House at 2pm with time for tea/coffee and a chat after the speaker.

Evelyn Graham, Guild Convener

Events

we look forward to seeing you all at the Christmas Fayre at the Church. Tickets will be available at coffee after church, from any Events committee member or from your church elder.



Sing with the Williamwood Parish Church Choir this Christmas!

The Williamwood Parish Church Choir warmly invites anyone with an interest in singing to join them for a special performance of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. This special festive service, which features lots of varied and beautiful music for the choir, will take place during the morning service on Sunday, December 28th, from 11:00 am – 12:00 noon.

No prior musical experience or music reading is required; our rehearsals will be accessible and engaging for singers of all abilities, and we will even supply audio practice tracks to help you learn your parts between sessions. We hope this might be a nice opportunity to give singing a go and see what the choir is all about, though there is no expectation for extra singers to stay on after Christmas.

We welcome everyone—including friends and neighbours outwith the Williamwood congregation, as well as those from other congregations—so please spread the word! Rehearsals will be held in the Williamwood Parish Church halls throughout December on Thursday evenings between 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm, as well as on Mondays/Tuesdays from 10am-1pm. If you are curious about singing with others, please do consider joining us; you will be made most welcome!

For more information, and a full rehearsal schedule, please contact our organist and choir leader, Richard Scholfield, at: richard.scholfield@yahoo.com.

Nine lessons rehearsal schedule

Monday 1st December - 10am-1pm

Thursday 4th December - 7:30-9:30pm

Tuesday 9th December - 10am-1pm

Thursday 11th December - 7:30-9:30pm

Tuesday 16th December - 10am-1pm

Tuesday 23rd December - 10am-1pm

Sunday 28th December - 9:30am rehearsal for 11:00am-12:00pm service

Please note: there will be no Thursday rehearsal on 18th December

3rd Williamwood Brownies

We had a huge intake at the start of the session with 12 new recruits joining us throughout the month of September. We've been busy helping them settle in, preparing the seven-year-olds to make their Brownie Promise and pressing on with the Brownie Programme.

Following on from our first Gold Award presentation, last May, we were thrilled to present another 4 girls with this award- the top award in Brownie Guiding (see photo). We combined this awards night with half of our new brownies making their Brownie Promise and had an open night for all their parents.

The other half will be making their Brownie Promise on the 12th November, after our Hallowe'en craft night (see photo), our Hallowe'en party on the 29th and our 5th of November games night.

We're hoping for a good turnout for the Remembrance Service on the 9th November and at the Christmas Coffee Morning, on the 29th November, for Guess the Teddy's Birthday. We're off to Eastwood Theatre on the 3rd of December for our Christmas Panto outing to see Cinderella and we finish with a Christmas Craft night on the 10th of December!



Many thanks to our fabulous young leader, Olivia, and we hope everyone has a Happy Festive Season,

Lorna, Fiona, Karen, Lindsay and Kirsty xxxxx (The Owls)



The Next Newsletter is due on 1st December
Any articles for this should be with Evelyn Wallace
by November 26th

CHURCH CONTACTS & INFORMATION

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Sunday School: Maureen McCulloch	Media Team: David Liddell Data Protection: David Lidell Roll Keeper: David Lidell
Hall Lets: Fiona Gunning	Director of Music: Richard Schofield
Guild Contact Person: Evelyn Graham	Temporary Flower Convener: Joan Black