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**EAST AND OLD  
PARISH CHURCH  
FORFAR**

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Services of Public Worship:

✠ **Every Sunday at 9:00am and 11:00am**

Minister:

The Rev. Barbara Ann Sweetin B.D.

The Manse

Lour Road

Forfar DD8 2BB

Tel: 01307 248228

E-mail: **[bsweetin@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:bsweetin@churchofscotland.org.uk)**

**Church website:** [www.thebigkirk.co.uk](http://www.thebigkirk.co.uk)

**Church E-mail:** [eando\\_office@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:eando_office@yahoo.co.uk)

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# LETTER FROM THE MANSE

*Hello everyone!*

*I have just got back from a week's annual leave – I am not calling it a holiday because it wasn't what I would term a HOLIDAY! However, Billy and I had a great week and it started with the wedding of my friends' son Alistair to his new wife Emma. It felt as though things were getting back to a bit of normality with the wedding in Meigle Church which I conducted and that was such a honour, privilege and blessing. The bride was stunning and the groom so handsome and even though the numbers were restricted everyone was in their finery, dresses, kilts and hats abound and then off to the reception at Rufflets Hotel in St Andrew's where everything went very smoothly indeed. Later in the week we visited Thaer and Manar who were the Syrian couple who had a five-day holiday with us in 2019. The girls were at school and baby Fajr has had his cochlea implants operation so can now hear and Manar is now expecting their fourth child! Billy and I then took a day return flight to Barra so we could land on the beach and then take off from it also – we were on Barra for 30 minutes! The final part of our few days off was taking our grandson Finlay to Blair Drummond Safari Park – what a brilliant day out! I hope my GOOD NEWS has brought a smile or memories back for you of similar trips.*

*In just a few days I witnessed an act of love as a loving couple made vows and promises to each other, caught up with friends who I only met for the first time less than two years ago*

and saw the joy in them as they prepare for the arrival of their new baby into this world, witnessed God's creation in mountains, hills, valleys, rivers, the beautiful landscapes and seas from the air on the west coast of our country and then the animal kingdom and all of this completed while keeping socially distant – mostly!

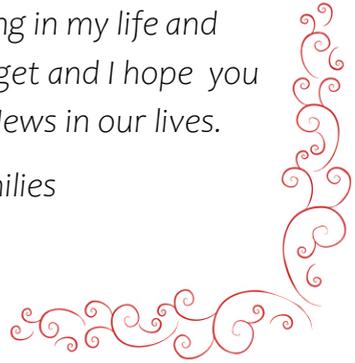
Sometimes we get caught up in the horror that surrounds us – Covid on the rise in some areas again, badly behaved football fans, missiles and fighting in Israel and Palestine, injustice, poverty, hunger and on and on the list goes. However, I believe there is far more GOOD NEWS in our world but we simply don't get to hear about it. What is your GOOD NEWS! It doesn't need to be BIG news but something someone, somewhere will be pleased to hear. You have had either your first or both vaccine doses – GOOD NEWS! You have managed to meet up with family in one way or another – GOOD NEWS! You visited a local café or restaurant – GOOD NEWS for you and the café/restaurant owners! You got your hair cut – GOOD NEWS! You have got away for a few days or about to get away – GOOD NEWS! You received a surprise gift – GOOD NEWS! Someone thanked you for something you did – GOOD NEWS! The lighter morning and evenings are here – GOOD NEWS! You have come back to the church building now that are numbers are increased to 75 downstairs and 16 upstairs – GOOD NEWS! You are putting your faith into action in any way you can – GOOD NEWS! Our Baby Blether has re-started – GOOD NEWS! Our Wee Blether and Cosy Corner are re-starting – GOOD NEWS! Our renovations are finished – GOOD NEWS!

*I thank God every day for everything in my life and I share God's Good News every chance I get and I hope you do too because there is so much Good News in our lives.*

*Every blessing to you and your families*

*Your friend and minister*

***Barbara Ann***



## ***WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING ....***

**Our church building re-opened on Palm Sunday** with a capacity of 50 people at each service and it was so good to welcome everyone back. All the usual protocols were in place and everything went without a hitch! Barbara Ann would like to say thank you to Isabel Farquharson and Bob Kidd for taking the services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday when she had a really bad throat and couldn't speak very well. Easter Sunday was particularly busy and we would like to thank the elders who went home so other members could stay. You missed out on your Crème Egg but we will make it up to you.

As of Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> May our capacity has increased in line with government guidance so that we can now take 75 people downstairs and 16 up in the gallery. By the time this issue is printed that may have changed again but only if they relax the 2-metre rule to 1-metre or no social distancing.

We are now allowed to start various activities within the church, however for some of the activities like coffee mornings and Cosy Corner where social distancing is a problem, while other activities

cannot re-start because the rules of adults meeting indoors has not changed yet. At the time of writing this Weddings and Funerals were at 50 people however there are very few venues in Forfar that can take 50 people socially distant for a funeral tea. We will try our best to keep you up to date.

## **K**irk Session Meetings

The final full size Kirk Session meeting took place at the end of March where many things were discussed, and our annual accounts approved before voting on the members of the new Kirk Session which would come into effect at the Stated Annual Meeting in April. Our minister Barbara Ann, Session Clerk Lexi Smart and Depute Session Clerk Karen Kelly are automatically on the new Kirk Session because of the roles and positions they hold within the church. The conveners of the Strategy Group, Mission Group, Green Group and Media group also have automatic places however they can ask someone else in their group to represent the group not necessarily the convener. To that end our members are Angus Spence – Strategy Group, Jim Stewart – Mission, Heather Munro – Green and Bob Kidd – Media. As Heather is not an ordained elder she is on as a convener and a member of the congregation with the other congregational member being Marion Duncan. That left us with four spaces to fill and eight names to vote on. The additional four members were Alf Birse, Jean Alexander, Karen Liddle and Isabel Farquharson. Thank you to everyone who put their name forward. Remember if anyone would like a copy of our accounts or a copy of the Kirk Session minutes just let Lexi or Karen Kelly know.

The new Kirk Session met for the first time on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April on Zoom with full attendance where a new strategy was discussed and re-arranging which elders were to serve on which committees, but the

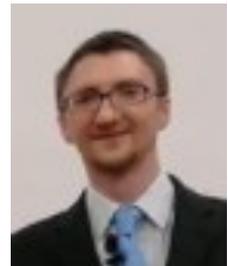
big change is that we are looking for members of the congregation to join our groups for a designated period or for a special project. It may only be for one month, six months or even a year but not for life. At the end of the meeting, it was discussed as to how long each person would serve on the Kirk Session. Normally it would three years however we do not want everyone coming off the Kirk Session at the same time, so we needed to stagger who came off when. To that end: one year – Bob Kidd; two years – Alf Birse, Heather Munro and Karen Liddle; three years – Marion Duncan, Jean Alexander and Isabel Farquharson; four years – Angus Spence and Jim Stewart. When we are looking for new members it will be announced and voting will take place at the Stated Annual Meeting each year.

**S**tated Annual Meeting (SAM) - Our SAM took place via Zoom on 12<sup>th</sup> April and although it was not very busy, there were in excess of 20 people. It was agreed by the Kirk Session to amend the basis of union of 1978 to which congregational approval was also required. After being intimated in the last edition of the Steeple Times and subsequently voted on at the SAM, the basis of union was changed accordingly. Barbara Ann received a special thanks at the SAM for all her work, guidance, support and vision and was delighted to receive a bouquet of flowers the following morning.



### Neil Campbell

Many of you will remember Neil Campbell who was with us from September to December last year in his Discernment Placement. The last update we gave you said that he had passed his local interview and was going through to the National Assessment Conference. We are delighted to say that Neil passed this process and is now in training to become an Ordained Local Minister. Congratulations Neil and every blessing to you and your family.



## Heather Gourlay



Heather was with us in her Discernment Placement a few years ago and she has been in training as an Ordained Local Minister for the past couple of years. Heather is at Lawson Church in her probation year and is just about to complete that, after which she will be an Ordained Local Minister. Congratulations Heather and we wish you every blessing in your continuing journey of faith.

**F**ood Appeal - In the middle of March, we put out an appeal for members and friends to bring food parcels into the church so we could support the Lawson Memorial Food Project. Once again you rose to the challenge and Lawson Church were delighted to receive so much towards the project.

As you are aware Barbara Ann is the chair of the local Leprosy Mission committee and our representative on that committee is Esther Kidd. A Zoom meeting was held with the CEO and support worker of Leprosy Mission Scotland and with the Forfar Leprosy Mission team. They were given updates, happy and joyous stories and stories of concern. Since nothing has happened for over eighteen months, we think you should watch this space!

**D**ubendorf Church linked with Schwerzenbach Church near Zurich - Barbara Ann held a meeting on Zoom with Rev Catherine McMillan for Switzerland to catch up and see what else we can do together with them. They are booked to come to Oberammergau to meet up with some of us next July which will be great. Barbara Ann and Catherine would like to hold a Zoom reunion night for those people who went to Switzerland and for those who hosted the Swiss when they came here. **A provisional date for this meeting has been set for Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June.**



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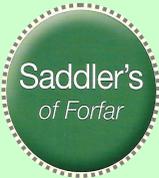
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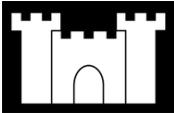
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## Communion Sunday — Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April

The Kirk Session took the decision to hold three services this Sunday and not four as we did in October 2020. The services were at 9:00am, 11:00am and 2:30pm with each service nearly at full capacity – the 2:30pm service was a bit quieter. Those who normally attend at this time were disappointed there was not the usual afternoon tea! We are sure it will return in October!



## Birthdays Galore! - Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> April

East and Old as we had 6 members with their birthdays that day! Congratulations to Mabel Martin, Manalita Calder, Marian Nicol (80), Bob Todd and Dave Bowman. Dave told our minister the week before



he was going to be 80 so she got an eightieth birthday card for him and Marian. However, when he came to church the following week he said he made a mistake and he was only 75! He had based his age on the age of someone else – “it’s only a number” he said. Barbara Ann is

hoping his wife Linda will forgive her! As you all know our minister likes to celebrate birthdays so in case you did not know Muriel Anderson and Liz Nicoll will be 90 years of age just before this edition comes out! Happy Birthday to you both.

**Finavon Court** - The staff at Finavon Court log into our “Zoom to the Music” every Monday afternoon and they asked me if it would be possible to do a Zoom just for them which involved dance and party music and of course our minister was happy to oblige. So at the beginning of May the residents and staff at Finavon Court had a 45 minute party and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

# TheBigKirkShop



**O**ur shop is open once again and we would like to thank our staff for getting the shop ready to re-open, for sorting through the many donations and for staffing the shop and greeting the many people who come through our doors with a cheery welcome. The profits that are made in the shop have helped us in numerous ways over the years from the building project to general income to missional work in the community. We are currently looking for donations of any unwanted Bric-a-Brac, just hand it into the shop which is **open every Tuesday through to Saturday 10:00am to 4:00pm.**

We are looking for additional staff to join our team of volunteers at the shop – the more the merrier!



## **F**lower Deliveries

Due to the restrictions during the last year and a bit, our flower deliveries had to stop but they are now recommencing. We know our members appreciate receiving flowers from the church so thank you to Irene Carnegie for being willing to restart the deliveries at the beginning of June.

**O**ur **Steeple Times** does not come to fruition on its own. We have the people who contribute the material, the companies who advertise in it which helps to pay for the printing of the magazine, the editors, the printing team and everyone who delivers the magazine – thank you to you all. After many, many years of being part of the printing team, Janet Milne has decided to retire from the role. We are not too sure how many years it has been but it must be well over 20 years. Thank you very much Janet for your dedication and we hope you enjoy reading the Steeple Times when it is delivered to you at home.

We would love to receive articles from the conveners or indeed any of our members. Material can be given/sent to the Editor or e-mail [\*\*steepletimeseditor@gmail.com\*\*](mailto:steepletimeseditor@gmail.com). The deadline for each edition is generally the 15<sup>th</sup> of every second month and the next cut-off date is published in each magazine.



## **G**irls' Brigade



As many of you know Barbara Ann is Chaplain to Tayside Girls' Brigade Division. Normally the position is held for one year but due to the pandemic last year they asked her to stay on another year. Well, it has happened once more and they have asked Barbara Ann to remain their Chaplain until the organisation can get up and running again. To that end Barbara Ann will remain their Chaplain until May 2022.

For our church members who have a smartphone, you can now use the official NHS Scotland **Check In Scotland App** service when you visit our church. This is a new digital service to support venues and businesses with collecting contact details for contact tracing purposes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Check-In Scotland will allow you to log your contact details with any business or venue displaying the Check-In Scotland Test and Protect QR code poster.

**Using this service to record your contact details on entering the church is entirely optional so don't worry if you do not have a mobile phone or are unable to use it - we will record your details manually just as we have been doing recently.**



## **Check In Scotland**

**[NHS National Services Scotland \(NSS\)](#)**

### **How to use the Check in Scotland app**

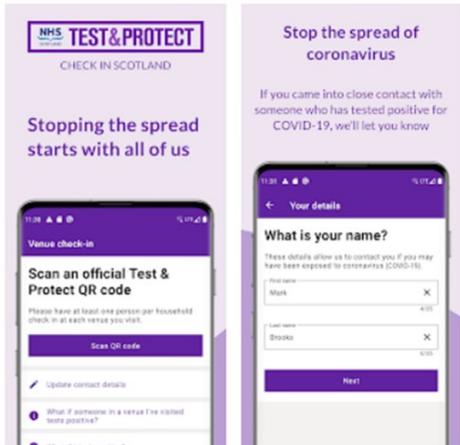
To use the app, simply download it to your mobile phone (from either the Apple App Store or from Google Play) open the App and then scan the **Check In Scotland QR code** using your phone. Checking in will give the NHS the time and date you arrived. Any contact details collected will be held in a secure, encrypted data store unique to each venue for 21 days.

Alerts will be sent by SMS, email or letter depending on what details users provide and will be clearly marked as being from NHS Scotland Test and Protect.

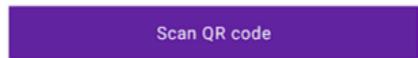
### **Who can use the Check in Scotland app?**

Anyone over the age of 12 can use the Check In Scotland service. The service is designed to take as few details from you as needed.

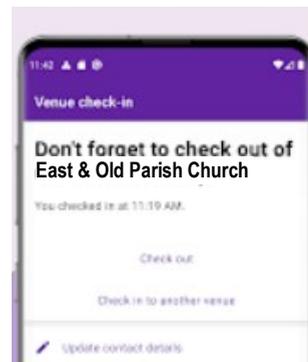
- Once the App has been installed on your mobile phone you will be asked to add your First name, Last name, Phone number, Email address and Home address (*save your details when prompted so that the app stores them for future use*)



- On entering the church, open the **Check In Scotland App** and select **Scan QR code**



- Point your camera at the QR code on the poster to scan it



- When leaving the church remember to select the **Check out** option in the App on your mobile phone

**R**ECYCLING - we have restarted collecting empty crisp packets (all brands) , so please hand them into the church or the Big Kirk Shop. You can also bring in your used stamps,



old spectacles and used batteries.

We had recently started collecting

medication blister packs but this has now stopped as

unfortunately the company involved can no longer do it.



## Re-Starting Soon ....

The Wee Blether and Cosy Corner



Minibus pickups for Sunday services.



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## **T**he Twinning Committee

met again online with our counterparts in Zuglo Church, Hungary at the end of April. It was good to have some more members from our side join us after the call in the last Steeple Times for anyone who is interested. The first thing we did was organise our next meeting, which will take the format of a joint bible study with the Scots and Hungarians, conducted by our minister, Barbara Ann. We would like to invite all members of East & Old to join us for this, you don't have to be involved in the twinning committee to come to this and you don't need to "do" anything! If you are interested in joining our bible study session on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June at 7:00pm, please just let Barbara Ann or Karen Liddle know and we'll send you the Zoom link for the meeting.

The next part of our meeting was very interesting indeed. Barbara Ann led a discussion on bioethics – looking at the “big

questions” and how our opinions are shaped by our faith, or not. The tough moral questions we looked at were euthanasia, stem cell transplants and abortion. It really made us think about our own beliefs and why we think what we do, and it was fascinating to hear the Zuglo Church members' views on the topics. We look forward to our next meeting with all our Hungarian friends and an enjoyable time together.



**T**he Baby Blether ran for two and half years until we had to close our doors due to Covid-19 and we have been waiting patiently for 13 months to restart.



During this time some of our little babies have become amazing little toddlers and have started their own journeys at either Nursery or Playgroup and we have also welcomed some new little babies who cannot wait until group can start back up again so they can join in all the fun. I have spoken with a few of the mums who regularly attended our group to ask them how they are, what they miss most and what they loved about attending our Baby Blether Group and this is what they had to say.



*"We are so looking forward to group beginning again! Paula does an amazing job of making EVERYONE feel welcome and part of a team. Lara Rose started group at 16 weeks old and it was a fun way for her to interact with other children, growing her social skills and confidence. I have missed sitting with other parents discussing the roller coaster of parenthood and general life, feeling supported and at ease. A relaxed atmosphere where the little ones explore and have fun and the parents can relax."*

Dana Mason

*"I honestly don't think Baby Blether would have been as good if it weren't for Paula running it, she is amazing and gave the group everything. She turned up without her own kids and was always so chatty and happy."*



Regan Lawson

*"I really miss Baby Blether. I was lucky enough to attend for a year after the birth of my first child and the group was a great way to meet new mums as well as socialise with your children and do fun activities. Sadly, with my second child the group hasn't been able to run the full year I have been off work. The group is worth its weight in gold for new mums and their babies and hopefully will run for many more years."*

Carrie Evans

*"I have personally missed the group a lot. I started going to the Baby Blether when my daughter was 6 weeks old, she is now 2. It was an opportunity to get out and about and for me to interact with other mums and not just sit in the house. Going to the group helped my daughter with her social skills, it taught her how to share and play nicely with other children. She also learnt to crawl watching other children doing it at the group. I miss going there weekly, I feel that it would have benefitted my daughter's development with not being in a nursery and because of Covid-19 not seeing any other children. I have recently had a little boy who again is going to miss out because of the situation we are in. Hopefully soon the group can open, and the children can all be back having fun."*



Chantelle Thomson



*"I have missed meeting other mothers and kids, getting to see how everyone is getting on. The children are missing out on fun and making friends and getting out of the house and not being stuck in all the time, can't wait to get the freedom again."*

Kim Armstrong

*"What I miss about group is meeting people. I used to either take my niece or come to help out but during lockdown I had my son, he is now 7 months old, and he has missed out so much already due to not being able to socialise with others."*

Alana Fleming



**STOP PRESS** - We are delighted that we are now able to meet again even with the restrictions that are in place. We are **allowed 10 adults with children** and because so many people want to come along, we are holding the **Baby Blether TWO mornings a week on a Monday and a Friday from 9:30am to 11:30am**. We look forward to seeing you.

# Groovy Gryphons & Echo Teens

We are all glad to be back in the church!

We have had a busy few weeks back, firstly meeting Heather from 'The Green Team' and planting some seeds in the new boxes on the west side of the church.

We are looking forward to watching them grow and learning how to cook with them and make some soup with the vegetables.

We heard the prayer Jesus made to God, before his crucifixion, praying to keep his disciples safe and guide them in the right direction. We decided to create a "wall of prayers" with different things we wanted to pray for written on bricks - have a look on our notice board in the social area next time you are passing.

If your child or grandchild would like to join us, they would be made most welcome.

We meet in the church from 10:45am every Sunday and finish around noon (during school term time)

*Joyce, Frances,  
Matthew and Karen*



# THE GREEN TEAM

From **April to November on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at 2:30pm**, we are holding **gardening sessions** in the Kid's Kitchen Garden.

Learn how to grow your own vegetables and receive handy information on how each vegetable benefits you.

All kids and parents welcome to come along.

The Green Team are currently conducting a study to discover how many of our congregation members with gardens would like to take part in a proposed tree-planting project.

Anyone with a garden who would like to have a tree planted please e-mail

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or telephone/text on 07485198537





# THE GUILD

*On 24<sup>th</sup> March on our Zoom meeting, Ivan Cornford the owner of St David's care home gave us an interesting and thought-provoking talk on how the pandemic has effected the care profession. The staff and residents all look forward to a time when they can have family and friends visit again as this has affected the residents especially, so much.*

*The talk was followed by our AGM chaired by Rev Barbara Ann Sweetin, present were 11 members of the Guild.*

*If we are allowed, we hope to have an afternoon tea on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September followed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> with our opening social and we are all looking forward to that time when we can meet and share fellowship with one and other.*

*May you all keep well and safe in these strange times.*

A decorative border of stick figures surrounds the central text. The figures are arranged in a grid-like pattern, with some figures in the corners and others along the sides.

**WE NEED YOUR HELP**

THE Kirk Session of East and Old are asking our members and friends of East and Old to let us know what is happening in the community.

Are you or your family members of an organisation? We are looking to work in partnership on some missional projects but because everybody does their own thing sometimes, we don't hear about it whereas if more organisations are involved, we would make a bigger impact in our community.

So let us know how we can help your organisation.

## COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

Count your blessings instead of your crosses;  
Count your gains instead of your losses.

Count your joys instead of your woes;  
Count your friends instead of your foes.

Count your smiles instead of your tears;  
Count your courage instead of your fears.

Count your full years instead of your lean;  
Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.

Count your health instead of your wealth;  
Count on God instead of yourself.

- Anonymous -



*Thank you to our members  
who donated money at our  
retiring offerings over  
recent weeks.*

*You raised £313  
for Christian Aid.*



## MINISTRY OF FLOWERS



6 JUN Wilma Pringle

1  
3 Alistair McDonald

2  
0 Ruth Stewart

2  
7 Barbara Ann

4 JUL Willie Hunter

11 JUL Sheila MacTavish

18 Karen Kelly

25 Esther Kidd

1 AUG Stewart Davidson

8 Beryl Stobie

*Please pass your donations to Catriona Milne,  
Irene Duthie or pop your money in an envelope and  
hand it in to Jennifer at PRIMA –Thank you*



We are in need of additional  
volunteers to join the Flower  
Team who prepare the flowers  
for church each Sunday.  
If this is something you would  
be able to help with,  
please speak to either  
Catriona Milne or Irene Duthie.

## CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

### DEATHS

March	24	Edith (Bunty) Bell	<i>(member)</i>
April	14	Jessie Lindsay	<i>(member)</i>
	16	James (Jim) Foreman	<i>(member)</i>
	27	Mavis DeVeres	<i>(parish)</i>
May	7	Kay Irvine	<i>(member)</i>

### WEDDING

May 7 Alistair Doak to Emma Stanhope



**~ NEXT ISSUE OF STEEPLE TIMES ~**

The deadline for submission of articles for the **AUGUST 2021** issue is **15th JULY 2021**

Material can be given / sent to the Editor  
or e-mail **steepletimeseditor@gmail.com**

Session Clerk	Lexi Smart	01307 464330
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Depute Session Clerk</li> <li>■ Church Secretary</li> </ul>	Karen Kelly	01307 465043
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Treasurer</li> <li>■ Gift Aid Convener</li> </ul>	Paula Stewart	07715596465
FWO Treasurer	Jean Alexander	01307 463860
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Steeple Times Editor</li> <li>■ Flower Group Admin</li> </ul>	Catriona Milne	07962065936
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Church Officer	Vanessa Ferrie	01307 461111
Groovy Gryphons & Echo Teens	Joyce Archibald	01307 469519
Guild Contact	Lauraine Grant	01307 468724
Life and Work	Esther Kidd	01307 462701
Big Kirk Shop Organiser	Muriel Fairley	01307 463936
Prayer Group	Mary Pickstone	01307 466569
2nd Forfar Company The Boy's Brigade	Betty Lovegrove	01307 466467
Friends of Forfar East & Old	Barbara Ann Sweetin	01307 248228
Safeguarding Coordinator	Isabel Farquharson	01307 462053
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