

THE STEEPLE

Craiglockhart Church

Christmas 2025

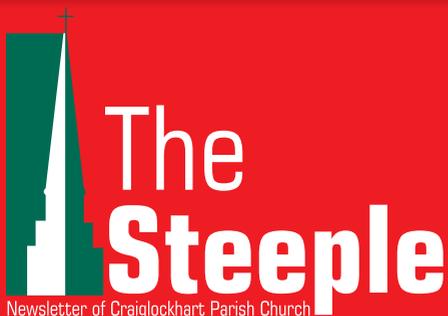
Join in the joy of the singing angels as we celebrate the birth of Jesus the Saviour of the world.



What's Inside:

Come celebrate with us at our Christmas services and events

See what's going on in the New Year at Craiglockhart and join in



Newsletter of Craiglockhart Parish Church

A free Christmas



I'm sure you've enjoyed singing about a White Christmas, or perhaps even a Blue Christmas. Often we will have enjoyed a family Christmas, or sometimes an away-from-home-on-holiday Christmas. But have you ever thought that a free Christmas might be possible?

A free Christmas!! Not after buying all the presents and wrapping paper, all the food and drink, all the cards and stamps. And this year we've all noticed the prices for everything are only going in one steadily upward direction. You can be forgiven for thinking that

a free Christmas is impossible.

The announcing angel who told Mary the good news of her miraculous pregnancy declared, "For nothing will be impossible with God" (Luke 1:37).

Our Christmas might cost us pounds and pence, but God's Christmas is free.

God our Father gives us the gift of Christ Jesus his Son for free at Christmas. Because he loves us God sent his Son from the glory of heaven to the squalor of a stable that he would be born for us, a Saviour who is Christ the Lord. A Christmas we could never earn or deserve.

God our Father gives us the gift of his grace for free at Christmas. God our Father is not far away from us, he is not a distant, aloof God. No, he is God with us. Grace is all the riches of God's presence, all the blessings of God's favour at work for us. We do not pay for God's grace with any gifts of little lambs or eastern spices. A Christmas we cannot work for or contribute towards proving.

God's Christmas has to be free. God's Christmas meets our deepest need. God's Christmas cannot be bought and sold with money. God's Christmas fills up our emptiness and loneliness.

The angels sing of good news. It isn't good news if it is too expensive for us. It isn't good news if it is another cost to add to our annual expenses.

The angels sing of good news – genuinely good news, free good news. This year God has a free Christmas for you. You didn't earn it; you didn't work for it. It really is free to you. Come then to Bethlehem, come to God's free Christmas. Receive God's free gift of Jesus, a Saviour for you. Receive God's free gift of grace, his wonderful love for you.

This year have a free Christmas.

Gordon Kennedy, Minister





**FOLLOW
THE STAR**
CHRISTMAS
FUN MORNING

CRAIGLOCKHART CHURCH
SATURDAY 13TH DECEMBER
10 - 12.30 P1 - P7'S

Come and join us for a fun morning exploring the Christmas story with games, crafts, stories, chat, snacks and lots more.

Cost £3.00

Book using the QR code or follow this link:

<https://form.jotform.com/253015736542353>



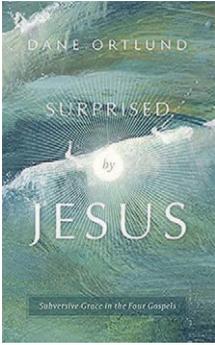
For more information or if you have any questions contact Gordon at gordon@craiglockhartchurch.org



The Real Advent Calendar A great way to share the Christmas Story

Why not buy your advent calendars this year from the The Meaningful Chocolate Company. Its a great way to bring the Christmas story to life for little ones. Order now from www.realadvent.co.uk or by phone 01925877004

What's on in the New Year



Our Winter Book Group

The next meeting of our Book Group is **Monday 2 February 2026**. At our meeting we will be discussing Dane Ortlund's book, "Surprised by Jesus: Subversive Grace in the Four Gospels".

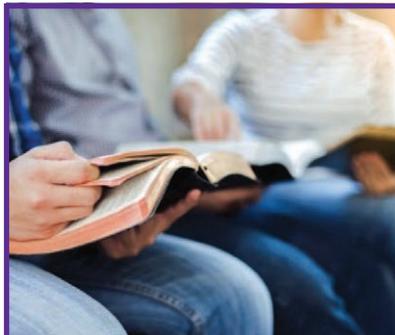
When God-in-the-flesh showed up twenty centuries ago in Palestine, the religious PhDs rejected him and the prostitutes and social outcasts flocked to him. Why? Because the open welcome of divine grace that Jesus offers, open to anyone who would simply leave their moral resume at home, is not predictable. It is not safe. It is subversive. .

In this book, Dane Ortlund reflects on this subversive grace as it uniquely emerges in each of the four Gospel accounts. In each Gospel, the message and mission of Jesus is deeply surprising:

- In Matthew, we see the surprise of disobedient obedience
- In Mark, we see the surprise of the king undergoing the fate of a criminal
- In Luke, we see the surprise of the insiders becoming outsiders and the outsiders becoming insiders
- In John, we see the surprise of the Creator of the universe becoming one of his own creatures.

Such surprises confound our law-marinated hearts. But the good news that Jesus won with his own blood will not be tamed. This good news is defiant. This book exists to exult in this good news and the scandalous mercy Jesus loves to pour out on needy sinners, on people like you and me.

Why not read Dane's book with us and come along to share in our discussion about this helpful book.



Bible Study

A small group of folks meet **fortnightly on Thursdays** in Craiglockhart Church Centenary Hall from **10.30-11.30 am** to read and discuss passages from the Bible. It's very informal and good to share doubts and thoughts with others about what the Bible is saying to us today. All welcome so please just drop in. Everyone is welcome and bring your Friends.

Our first group for 2026 is on Thursday 8 January.



The Bible Course

Exploring the BIG story

What is the Bible Course?

- Understand the big story of the Bible
- Follow the story of the whole Bible and see how it leads to Jesus

Course Details

Starts: Wednesday 14th January
Duration: 8 Weeks
Time: 7.30pm—9 pm
Location: Craiglockhart Church

Who is it for?

Everyone is welcome! No prior knowledge needed.
 A relaxed, friendly atmosphere

To find out more contact gordon@craiglockhartchurch.org or just come along on the day



Craiglockhart Church Weekly on Thursday 2-4pm

We hope you can join us for a relaxed friendly group of people who enjoy doing jigsaws and meeting others.

We run right through November until the 18th December and start again on 15th January.

Refreshments provided.

For more information contact Gordon or just come on the day.
gordon@craiglockhartchurch.org

HOLIDAY CLUB

POLWARTH CHURCH

7TH - 10TH APRIL 2026

10-12.30

Join us for 4 days of fun with games, crafts, bible stories, chat, snacks, messy games and lots more

The cost will be £10 for four days

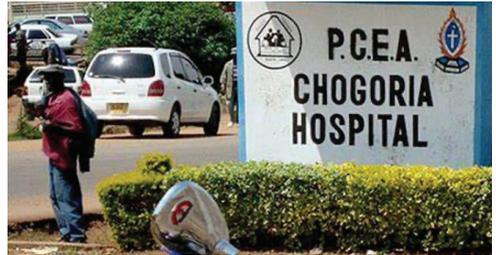
To book use the QR code or this link

<https://form.jotform.com/253015162036344>

Booking will be open on 2nd November 2025



For more information or if you have any questions email polwarthholidayclub@gmail.com



Chogoria Lunches

The Chogoria Lunches held so far in 2025 have, with some additional donations, raised the sum of £2,355. It is likely that the total will be around £3000 by the end of the year. The series then continues in 2026 with lunches scheduled to be held on January 11, February 8 and March 8. Do please attend some or all of these lunches to show our continuing support for the hospital at Chogoria and its wonderful work.

Christmas Services

Sunday 30th November 10.30am

Advent 1

During Advent we will be looking the verses in Isaiah 9 which talk of a coming Saviour. Today will be Wonderful Counsellor

Sunday 7th December 10.30am

Advent 2

We continue our journey through Isaiah 9 with Mighty God

Sunday 7th December 6.30pm

Service of Light and Remembering

This is a quiet reflective service giving thanks for the season but also taking time to remember those we have lost

Sunday 14th December 10.30am

Advent 3

This week we will finish our look at Jesus in Isaiah 9 with Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace

Sunday 21st December 10.30am

Advent 4
9 Lessons and Carols Service

We hope you can join us for our 9 Lessons and Carols Service. Our Choir will lead our worship, and we will hear all through God's word the unfolding plan of salvation in the coming of Jesus. And lots of carols for us all to join in with.

Wednesday 24th December 6.30pm

Family Watchnight Service

This is a firm favourite with lots of families in our community. A fun retelling of the Christmas story with lots of opportunities for children to join in.
A wonderful service for any age.

Wednesday 24th December 11.15pm

Watchnight Service

Come along for our traditional Watchnight service and welcome Christmas day marking the birth of Jesus our Saviour

Thursday 25th December 10.30am

Christmas Day Service

This short service is a great time to share together on Christmas morning. Children are welcome to bring one of their Christmas presents to show us all.



Craiglockhart Ladies Group

Our meetings resume on the second Monday of the month until March. Our first meeting will be held in Centenary Hall at 7.30pm on Monday 12 January 2026 when our speaker will tell us about a new charity venture called House of Hope. They support people affected by breast cancer. We welcome current members, new members and visitors. Further information from Mary Livingston 01314472590.



Bridge Drive Friday 30 January 2026 from 1.30pm.

Join in with our friendly Bridge Drive here in Craiglockhart Parish Church Hall on **Friday 30 January 2026.**

A delicious afternoon tea will be served.

Cost is £40 per table, the money raised being for church funds to allow financing of Bethany meals for the homeless, contributions to the Food Bank and other charitable causes outwith the church.

To reserve a table, please contact either Brenda Russell (07708189179) email brenda.russell2@btinternet.com or Libby Campbell (07972853984) email campbell.barnshot@btinternet.com



Wednesday Evening Social Badminton Club

New session starts **Wednesday 7 January 2026.** We meet in the church hall on **Wednesday evenings from 8pm to 10pm**, for fun, relaxed, social badminton, and new members will be made very welcome.

For more information telephone Averil Sutherland (07720 049 705) or just come along and join us.



Joy to the world



Our Sunday - Produce Stall

We're looking for the usual donations of home baking, tablet, fudge, lemon curd, marmalade and jams. The latter sell very well! Please hand donations

into the hall before the service but be sure to come for coffee afterwards to make your purchases.

Our next Produce Stall will be on **1st March 2026**.

Music at Craiglockhart

**Saturday February 28
at 7.30**

in the Church Sanctuary

Concert featuring

Sophie Askew Harpist
in aid of The Macular Society.



Sophie combines her passions in busy performing and teaching careers. She plays with orchestras and chamber ensembles across Scotland as a recitalist but also performs as a soloist or with flautist Rebecca Carson. She also takes part in functions and events.

Sophie has broadcast live for BBC Scotland Television and Radio and STV. She has appeared as a guest recitalist and teacher at the Edinburgh Harp Festival, for numerous Music Societies and for the London branch of the United Kingdom Harp Association. Sophie recently performed the Mozart Flute and Harp concerto with Rebecca Carson in Gatehouse of Fleet and in May of last year Sophie had the great privilege and joy to perform the European première of Jennifer Higdon's wonderful Grammy award winning harp concerto with Stirling orchestra.

Recent collaborations include working with photographer Lesley Redfern to create a film to accompany John Cage's *In a Landscape*. Sophie is also a member of the band *New Leaf*, appearing on their most recent album *The Year of the Ox*

Tickets, priced £10.00, will be available nearer the time on Sunday mornings from members of the Stewardship Team or email kathgrandison@gmail.com to reserve them. You can also just pay at the door!



Do good from used stamps

Please donate your used stamps from your Christmas card envelopes. It's one of the best times for stamps as most people use emails or texts for the rest of the year.

For the past few years we in Craiglockhart have been supporting the Church of Scotland Used Stamp Appeal which raises funds for a variety of international projects. The Appeal for 2025-26 is for the Al Ahli Arab Hospital in North Gaza a Christian hospital which is run by a Church of Scotland partner and is the only cancer hospital in Gaza. Despite all that has been going on in Gaza since October 2023 it continues to operate and sees hundreds of patients daily. The stamps donated at Craiglockhart go to a central collecting point in Glasgow Presbytery from where they are marketed to stamp enthusiasts worldwide. Last year Craiglockhart contributed 14Kg (30lb) of used stamps- that's an awful lot of stamps -and we want to continue the good work. You'll all be getting lots of stamped mail at Christmas so please keep the stamps and bring them to the church. You can leave them in a basket under the table at the north door, give them to Mary MacLeod or simply put them through the letter box. Every donation, no matter how small, will be helping a very good cause.

Please continue to drop off your stamps in the basket by the north door or pop them into our letterbox. Any questions about this please speak with Mary MacLeod.



Our Eco Group

Let us recycle your used Blister Packs for you

As some of you might already know, at long last it is now possible to recycle your empty medicine blister packs. Many of the larger branches of pharmacies like Boots provide receptacles to do this. In Boots, you can also link to your personal loyalty account and get rewards. To make it easier for everyone to do this, we thought it would be helpful to set up a collection point at the church. We now have a clearly labelled bin, into which you can drop your blister packs. Please do be very careful to check that the packs are completely EMPTY before you pop them in.

The bin will be in church every Sunday and in the Centenary Hall on Monday morning while the Welcome Space group is meeting. So please feel free to bring your blister packs on a Sunday or a Monday, and we'll do the rest.

We will empty the bin on a regular basis and take the packs for recycling, thereby saving lots of blister packs from landfill and helping to care for our beautiful planet!



Craiglockhart Church Guild

Everyone is welcome to join our Guild meetings. See below our programme for the coming months. **Meetings are held in Centenary Hall at 2:00 p.m.** followed by a cuppa and always good chat.

We start our 2026 programme with our Minister giving his thoughts on the Guild Theme for this year - 'Living Stones'.

See our programme below and join us for all or just those topics which interest you. You will be most welcome.

14th January 'Living Stones'

Rev Gordon Kennedy

4th February Bare your Soul

Margaret Boe

18th February Edinburgh Street Styles

Jackie Sangster

4th March Fisherrow Fisherwomen

Simon Fairnie

18th March Lunch 1:00 & AGM



Scouts

107th Pentland Scouts

I am a volunteer with the scout group and we have come to a point that we have a real lack of Volunteers and the Scout Section is in danger of closing in the new year. The group has existed since 1937 and we are now at crisis point.

We are looking for Scout Volunteers. Scouts meet Fridays 1930-2130 at Craiglockhart Church, mainly school term times.

Being a Scouts volunteer is a hugely rewarding role. All training is provided, and there is support at Group, District and National level for everything from how to run a meeting to some really technical bushcraft skills! And as the saying goes, many hands make light work, so the more volunteers, the easier it is. There are programmes and activities for

the year available, and opportunities for the programme to be as varied as the volunteers would like it to be.

The current volunteer group are willing to support the new volunteer group through their first 6 months to facilitate handover and training. The Group Lead volunteer team is in place to support the administration of training, and our Treasurer supports everything financially.

If anybody is able to volunteer, the current and future 107th Scouts would be very grateful. The current volunteers would really like to see the Scout group continue, its been running for a long time, and is an integral part of the Craiglockhart community.

Any prospective member will have to get a PVG as it is for the 10-14 year age group.

See link for more information - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteer>

Local Contacts

Peter Malone Peter@107th.org.uk
Gillian De Candole Gillian@107th.org.uk
Peter Malone, 107th Pentland SL

Craiglockhart Parent & Carer Council

invites you to our

CHRISTMAS MARKET

Raffle
Home Baking
Tea/Coffee
Prosecco
Mulled Wine
Soft Drinks
Snacks

Woodwork
Handmade Jewellery
knitted items
Christmas Decs
Fragrances
Skincare



Polwarth Church
Friday 21st November
6pm ~ 9pm

£2.50 on the door

Keep up with what's going on at Craiglockhart

- From our website www.craiglockhartchurch.org - you can watch our Sunday morning services live streamed via the YouTube button on the website
- Subscribe to our Weekly News E mail to see what's going on each week. Just add your e mail address to the subscribe button on our website Homepage.
- Follow us on <https://www.facebook.com/craiglockhartchurch>
- Insta [craiglockhart_parity_church](https://www.instagram.com/craiglockhart_parity_church)
- Go to YouTube and search for Craiglockhart Church



Contact Details for Craiglockhart Parish Church

Minister: Rev Gordon Kennedy,

20 Craiglockhart Quadrant, Edinburgh EH14 1HD

Tel 0131 444 1615 email gordonkennedy@craiglockhartchurch.org

Mission Development Worker: Gordon McBurnie

Tel 0131 455 8229 email gordon@craiglockhartchurch.org