

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 28 March
10.00am - Roslin Church
Coffee Morning

Wednesday 01 April
7.00pm - Bilston Church
Spy Wednesday Service

Thursday 02 April
7.00pm - Roslin Church
Maundy Thursday Service / Communion

Friday 03 April
7.00pm - Loanhead Church
Good Friday Service

Sunday 05 April
10.30am - Loanhead Church
Easter Sunday Service / Communion

Sunday 05 April
9.45am - Roslin Church
Easter Sunday Service

Tuesday 14 April
2.00pm - Loanhead Church
Guild Meeting - "Operation Hope"

Saturday 25 April
10.00am - Roslin Church
Coffee Morning

Tuesday 12 May
2.00pm - Loanhead Church
Guild Meeting - AGM and Bring & Buy

Saturday 16 May
2.00pm - Bilston Church
Afternoon Tea

Friday 22 and Saturday 23 May
10am - 4pm - Roslin Church
Roslin Thru' A Lens Exhibition

Sunday 24 May
9.45am - Roslin Church
Communion Service

Saturday 30 May
10.00am - Roslin Church
Coffee Morning

Sunday 31 May
10.30am - Loanhead Church
Joint Sunday Service / Annual Stated Meeting

Tuesday 09 June
2.00pm - Loanhead Church
Guild Meeting - Spring Tea

REGULAR PATTERN OF SERVICES

Weekly Sunday Service at Loanhead
starting at 10.30am

Weekly Sunday Service at Roslin
starting at 9.45am

Sunday Service at Bilston on the 2nd and
4th Sunday of the month starting at
11.30am



loanhead
bilston &
roslin
parish church
news
April 2026





A message from our Interim Moderator Rev. Keith Mack

Dear Friends at Loanhead Bilston and Roslin Parish Church,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is a real honour to write to you at this significant time in your Church's history. The Rev. Graham Duffin's retirement signifies the conclusion of an extraordinary chapter. Twenty-five years of dedicated service is a truly remarkable achievement, and it is fitting that we take a moment to express our gratitude to God for all the wonderful things he has achieved through his work with you.

Scripture reminds us that the work of the Church is always a shared journey of faith. As the Apostle Paul writes: "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow." (1 Corinthians 3:6). Over these past twenty-five years, Graham has faithfully planted and nurtured much in the life of this church—through preaching, pastoral care, worship, mission, and friendship. Yet we recognise that it is God who has sustained and grown the ministry of this church.

Times of transition can bring a mixture of emotions: gratitude for the past, sadness at farewells, and perhaps uncertainty about the future. Yet the people of God have always been a people on the move. The Lord's promise remains sure: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11).

As Interim Moderator, I am here to walk with you during this time of vacancy. I will support the Kirk Session, encourage the life and witness of the church and help guide the process that will eventually lead to the calling of your next minister. This is not just a time of waiting, but a time of prayerful discernment and renewed trust in God's leading.

The writer to the Hebrews encourages us: "Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith." (Hebrews 12:1-2). The mission of Church continues, and the same Christ who has guided you in the past will continue to lead you in the days ahead.

As we look back on what we have achieved with thanks, we also look forward with hope. One of the big things happening for you is the new union that has been formed. This is the start of a really important new chapter for our churches.

All over Scotland, people are being encouraged to find new ways to work together so that the Church can keep serving its communities well. Our union is part of that

bigger journey. Even though each congregation has its own history, personality and traditions, we are now going forward together as partners in spreading the gospel.

The early Church reminds us that Christian community is built not on uniformity but on unity in Christ. The Apostle Paul writes: "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." (Ephesians 4:4-6).

This new partnership opens up so many possibilities! By pooling our resources, gifts and ministries, we can really boost our mission and grow closer together. It's a chance for us to share knowledge, support each other in our faith and work together to serve our communities, all in the name of Christ.

Of course, new beginnings also bring questions and adjustments. Yet Scripture reminds us that God often does his most creative work in times of change. As the prophet Isaiah says: "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?" (Isaiah 43:19).

In the months ahead there will be opportunities to worship together, to build relationships between our congregations, and to explore how God is calling us to serve Loanhead, Bilston, Roslin, and the surrounding communities in the years to come.

Above all, we remember that the Church is Christ's. He is the one who calls us, guides us and keeps us going. As we walk this new path together, may we do so with faith, generosity and a spirit of partnership, trusting that God will keep leading us forward.

Let us hold one another in prayer as we start this shared journey, giving thanks for what has happened and looking with confidence at the future God is preparing for us.

In the coming months, I look forward to meeting many of you, sharing in worship and working together as we seek God's direction for the next chapter of your congregation's life.

Please continue to pray for Graham and his family as they begin this new season following his retirement. At the same time, pray for your Church—that God will guide, strengthen, and inspire you as you continue to serve Christ in your community.

May the words of the Apostle Paul encourage us all: "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain." (1 Corinthians 15:58).

With every blessing,

Keith Mack
Interim Moderator

Session Clerk's Update

The Times They Are A-Changin'

At last we have had some lovely sunny days after all the wind and rain of late! Seeing the colourful spring flowers makes me smile and thank the Lord for his beautiful world around us.

There have certainly been big changes since our last newsletter, not least that of Graham's retirement on 1 February. We had a full church that day and it was lovely to see so many of Graham's family with us.

The evening before we held a "Farewell Party" which was also very well attended. This was both a sad and happy occasion with time to reflect on Graham's almost 25 years with us. It was also time to thank Jane for all that she had brought to the church in various ways over the years.

On 1 March we held our Service of Union at Roslin. We are now Loanhead, Bilston and Roslin Church and hopefully we can all work together to grow the churches in all three communities.

We now move on to start the process of finding a new minister to serve all three churches. I would ask you to pray for the committee who will be tasked with this work.

We are very fortunate that we have several people in our churches who are willing to lead services over the vacancy and we also have two locums, Allan Eaglesham and Stewart Goudie who are also leading services. My thanks to all.

The final change for now is in our Session Clerk. I have stepped back from this position after eight years and Audrey McLaren officially took over at our last session meeting on 12 March. She will be Clerk and will be supported by a small team consisting of one person from each community. I have agreed to stay on as the Loanhead person. I am sure Audrey will serve us well over the next few years and wish her all the best especially over the vacancy period.

I would like to thank everyone on the session and in the congregation for their support over the last eight years.

My thoughts and prayers are with you all over this Easter period.

Blessings to you all,
Margaret Hurst

This is the first magazine that has been distributed since the union of Loanhead, Bilston and Roslin on 01 March 2026 and this magazine covers the parish.

To make things easier, all Loanhead specific items will be shaded in **blue**, all Roslin items shaded in **pink** and all Bilston items in **green**. Anything in white relates to the parish as a whole.

As a parishioner, you are welcome to attend any events or make a contribution to the work of all three churches.

Guild Meetings

The next Guild meeting is on Tuesday, 14 April at 2pm where the speaker is James Fraser who will be speaking about one of the Guild projects, "Operation Hope".

The 12 May meeting is our AGM and Bring and Buy, and the session ends with a Spring Tea on 09 June.

Church Flowers

If you would like to contribute to the church flower fund, there is a list on the noticeboard in the entrance to the Church. Please pass any donations, marked in an envelope with your name to Dean Matheson-Bowley.

Many thanks to Dean for taking over the church flower fund and for his lovely displays.



Roslin Coffee & Blether

Roslin Church hold their weekly "Coffee and Blether" every Wednesday in the Church Hall between 10.30am and 12pm. They would be delighted to welcome you if you fancied a cuppa and a blether.

Roslin Coffee Mornings

Great news - Roslin's monthly coffee mornings start back up on Saturday 28 March at 10am. It's a great chance to meet new people or catch up with old friends. There is always a home baking stall which proves to be very popular.

Further coffee morning dates are Saturday, 25 April and Saturday 30 May.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Roslin Village Fete

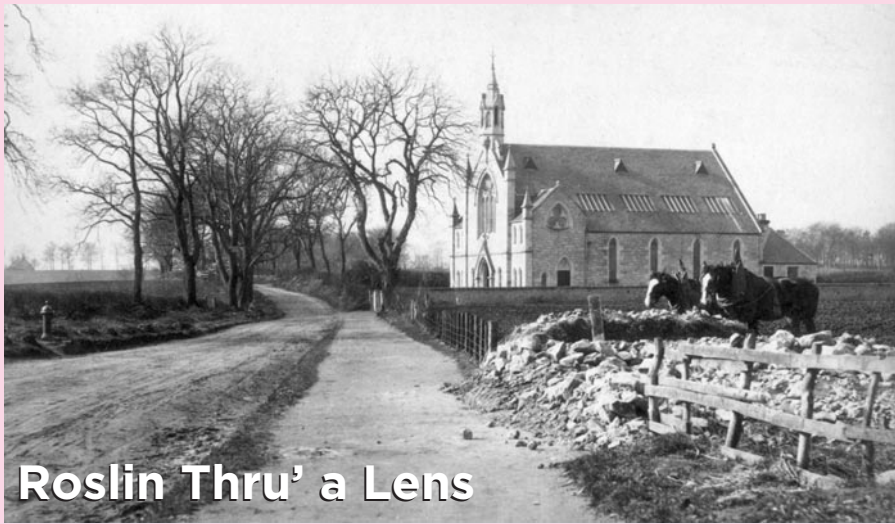
Another date for your diary!

Roslin Village Fete will take place on Saturday, 29 August 2026. We will be repeating our Bottle Stall as this has proved very popular in previous years, so we would like to ask for your help again in gathering bottles.

Roslin Flower Calendar

My thanks to everyone for their continued support in brightening up our church with your donations of flowers.

If you have a love of flowers and would enjoy "playing" with flowers you would be very welcome. It is so therapeutic!!



Roslin Thru' a Lens

We're going to have a joint exhibition in Roslin Church with Roslin Heritage Society on Friday and Saturday, 22nd & 23rd May, open from 10.00am till 4.00pm. This will be part of Local and Community History Month and will celebrate 145 years since the opening of the church in May 1881. Sadly, in March 2020, we had to cancel the exhibition in celebration of 140 years since the foundation stone was laid and again in May 2021, 140 years since the opening, due to Covid.

In Roslin, we are all familiar with the beautiful artwork of the late Andrew Combe which has featured in so many exhibitions and played a part in the centenary celebrations. The thirty foot long mural he made for the "You and Your Kirk" exhibition in 1966 describing the churches of Roslin will be on show along with some of his other work.

There will be photos taken at the Centenary Celebrations in 1981 as well as other church events. The late Jim McNish was always out and about taking photographs, not only of the village and local scenery, but also at Roslin Gala Days, the Pensioners' Summer Outings, and not forgetting the Bowling Club. There will be many "weel kent faces" to see. Also courtesy of Jim, we'll have photos and programmes from Roslin Dramatic Club in which Jim himself often had a starring role.

We are fortunate to have the Bryce Collection of photographs of Roslin, Roslin Glen, and the surrounding area taken in the early 1900s. Many of these showing how Roslin used to be will be on display. We used to have an ice cream parlour, a fish and chip shop, a bank and a police station....!! In addition, there will be an insight into the local industries - farming, coal mining and associated brickworks, the bleachfield, carpet factory, and the gunpowder mills. And lots more.

So come along, entry is by donation, everyone is welcome. There will be light refreshments available so you can have a seat and enjoy sharing memories of days gone by.



Roslin Finance Update

At the year end the church accounts showed a deficit of £984. This was because in December we paid out over £4,000 as a deposit for the new sound system. We have since paid the full payment for this and recouped the total from the Consolidated Capital Fund.

Going forward within the union there is a massive increase in ministry costs. This is because we are now in a union and have to pay our share of these costs and even although we are now in a vacancy we still have to pay the full costs of ministry. This is a new way that the national church has decided upon. We will be reimbursed for the pulpit supply while in vacancy. Thank you to all our people who give regularly as this is very much appreciated.

I would urge all of our members to review their giving and also to support all our fundraising as much as they can as it is the only way we will manage to survive financially. We also have to try to increase our numbers in church as again these have fallen since Covid. We hope to do some stewardship to help with this, but, if you are thinking of coming back to church, if it has been a while you will be sure of a warm welcome from all. Jeanette Millican

Roslin Pastoral Care

Please remember we are always here for church members and anyone in the community.

You can telephone either Ros McLeish on 07900 887185 or Nan Cairns on 01968 672757 for a chat, or to arrange a visit.



Meet your Locum

Rev. Allan Eaglesham

1. Tell us a little about yourself?

I was born in the mining village of Newtongrange, when it was still a village, and the store horse still pulled the cart that delivered the milk. The last fifty-six years I have been married to Mary and we have two sons and four wonderful grandchildren. We had the opportunity to travel extensively and in particular spent many years travelling to Brazil and ministering in the Churches there, I even had a ministerial licence in Brazil. The stories we could tell could fill the magazine so I'll stop there.

2. Have you pursued any other career apart from ministry?

I have had a super career and was privileged to work in Social Work for about forty years. In that role I worked with children and families also the elderly. Life was never boring, whether you were defending the families from the Sherriff Officers emptying the house, or wondering how they could keep breeding pigeons in the kitchen larder, I'll let you use your imagination. I eventually went into residential care and managed Care Homes for the Elderly. The pleasure derived from the rich stories from lives well spent, or not! was indeed an honour to be part of. My final post prior to early retirement was consultant to new build care home for the elderly when I could draw on years of experience. I always considered that I had two careers and that social work was part of my Christian ministry as well as Pastoring and leading Churches in the Lothians.

3. What hobbies or interests do you enjoy?

I enjoy painting in particular contemporary style, or if you like "the imaginations of an idle mind". Reading and the theatre, and lets throw in music in particular live music of the eclectic kind.

4. What is your favourite hymn or worship song?

There is a very long list but let's settle with "Be Thou my Vision"

5. What is your favourite book of the Bible and why?

This is a difficult one but if I have to make a choice I would go for the Gospel of John. Why because it is the most mystical of the gospels, just think of chapter one verse one and go from there. How can a man be born again, how are we born of the Spirit. All a wonderful read and just flows beautifully. If you have not guessed by now, I do like the mystics and their writings. I hope I've sold the Gospel of John, and I've not mentioned his letters to you, go read it now. Oh! if I can change my mind I love Matthew Chapter five six and seven, the Sermon on the Mount.

6. What excites you most about taking on the role of locum at Loanhead, Bilston and Roslin Parish Church?

Church excites me, it is the living breathing expression of the Kingdom of God, or we should be aspiring to be so. When God called me into ministry, unlike others who knew it was to Loanhead or some other geographical area, I was aware only that I was called to serve the body of Christ wherever He took me. Now I'm in a different Parish one that is on a journey, I know it's a well-worn cliché, but we know it's a good one. I'm not sure about you but I want to see round the next corner and to be on that path with you is both super exiting and a huge privilege. Life experience has given me a wealth of knowledge, remembering it all is the challenge, but really I hope I can be an encouragement and a blessing to you as we move forward together. I'm always encouraged by one of my biblical heroes Caleb, who at eighty-five was still able to fulfil his vision in God.

Easter Unpacked

On Wednesday 25 March Bilston Church will be Hosting "Easter Unpacked" for Primary 4 children from Bilston School between 11am .and 12pm

Coffee Mornings

Bilston Church hold their coffee morning every Tuesday between 10.30am and 12.00pm. You are more than welcome to attend.

John King

It is with sadness that we announce the death of John King (1931 - 2026).

John served as an elder and was the recipient of a Dedicated Service Award to mark 50 years of service in 2011.

Our thoughts are with Ann and Faye and the family at this difficult time.

Afternoon Tea

Bilston Church will be holding an afternoon tea on Saturday 16 May between 2pm and 4pm. The cost is £6.50 for adults and £2.00 for children.

Please speak to Donald Bain for more information.

Christian Aid Week

Christian Aid week is from 10 - 16 May 2026.

Donation envelopes will be available from 10 May.

Food Store

The Christmas appeal to feed 42 families with 113 children and 61 adults was most successful. The use of Farmfood vouchers allowing families to choose their own provisions was implemented, plus a Christmas Yule log for each family and a selection box for each child.

The weekly emergency parcels for referred families in crisis continues and is still unfortunately busy. Donations of food, toiletries and cleaning supplies are most welcome. If you prefer to make a monetary donation that is also very welcome. A big thank you to all of those who have donated to this worthwhile cause.

Kath

Blythswood Shoebox Appeal - Roslin

Once again we would like to take part in the Blythswood shoebox appeal.

This year there is a slight change in that they cannot accept baby boxes however they are very grateful for knitted clothes for children up to 8 years old. This seems very logical as obviously an adult jumper would take up too much room in a shoebox, even the trainer size boxes. Please start to save your shoeboxes for when we start again at the end of September. Also if at all possible shoeboxes with detached lids as otherwise we need to cut off the lids as they are very difficult to cover. Thank you once again for all your help in this worthy cause.

Rwanda Update

Bronwen Ryalls provides an update on our work in East Africa.



The sponsored students and some of their siblings met for the annual Christmas "get together" at the end of December. They ate meat, rice and chips cooked by Melissa, Carine and Crystelle. Everyone had an enjoyable time. Bags of basic foodstuff and meat were provided for local families so they too could celebrate Christmas together.

The cooperative have rented another plot of land where they are growing sweet potatoes and beans. Onions and cabbages have been planted closer to Marie Therese's house. Despite much rain and too little sun a sizeable quantity of maize has been harvested. This has been distributed among the Mamas.

The Saturday Daycare project at Inkuru Nziza Rugende Church continues to provide a meal for the children when they meet to learn basic life skills and hear bible stories.

Umuganda is a nationwide government project which runs on the last Saturday of every month. The whole local community meet for a couple of hours to support each other with projects like minor road repairs and fixing buildings damaged by bad weather. In February Marie Therese met with some of the Mamas to offer nutritional advice and help with looking after their families.

Money raised at the Rwanda Group soup lunch in September supported all of these projects. A big Thank you to everyone involved.

Please pray for all those we support and especially for better weather as the new crops grow and are harvested in the months to come.

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Join us for Holy Week

Wednesday 01 April
Spy Wednesday Service
Bilston Church - 7pm

Thursday 02 April
Maundy Thursday Service
Roslin Church - 7pm

Friday 03 April
Good Friday Service
Loanhead Church - 7pm

Community Lunch

Many thanks to everyone who attended our community lunch in January. It was good to see so many people attend.

Good food and plenty of chat made it a great success.

Special thanks to Ros for organising.

Communion - Roslin

Please make a note in your diaries.

The next Communion service at Roslin will be on 24 May at 9.45am

Finance Update

The Stewardship campaign that kicked off in January last year resulted in a 15% rise in giving through the year so a big well done to everyone.

The focus for the next finance meeting will be to set the budgets for the rest of 2026 and looking closely at our energy costs.

Last but not least, a huge thanks to Jackie Easton for preparing the 2025 accounts. As with any organisation it is important to keep track of finances and we are lucky to have Jackie's skills and expertise.

Ian Gillespie

Blythswood Shoebox Appeal - Loanhead

In October, our 104 filled shoeboxes started their onward journey to Eastern Europe.

It may seem early to be thinking about shoeboxes, but we never stop looking for bargains in sales!!

This year we are focusing primarily (but not exclusively) on boxes for adults and are spreading our requests for donations throughout the year. Each month we are looking for different items and have set a timetable for this (see below)

April

Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, Soap and Facecloths

May

Shaving Foam / Gel, Razors and Sanitary Products

June

Underwear and Socks / Tights (please ask us for size guidance)

July

Playing Card, Dominos, Jewellery and Hand Cream (or small gifts suitable for men and women)

August

DIY tools, Small Kitchen Items and Sweets (Sweets BBE March 2027. Multipacks must not be split and must have BBE date on outer wrapping)

September

Stationery Items (pens, pencils, notebooks, erasers, sharpeners etc (many supermarkets have items reduced as Scottish schools have already gone back).

October

Shoeboxes leave for Eastern Europe

A labelled donation drop off box can be found in the church vestibule.

Hats, scarves, gloves, shoeboxes and monetary donations will be gratefully received at any time.

If you have any further questions or would like to join our team please speak to us.

Thank you in advance for your continued support and generosity.

Mary Millan and the Shoebox Elves.

Vacancy Process Update



Our new Session Clerk, Audrey McLaren, explains how we will be searching for our new minister and the process that needs to be followed.



The union between Loanhead and Bilston Parish Church and Roslin Parish Church took effect from Sunday 1st March 2026 and was celebrated at a joint service at Roslin, with people from all 3 churches coming together in worship, along with representatives from Lothian and Borders Presbytery.

In the weeks since 1st March, there have been a lot of procedures to be followed, with formal intimations read out on Sunday mornings and Kirk Session meetings held, all in preparation for the Congregational Meeting to elect a Nominating Committee.

At a meeting on 22nd March, the Kirk Session voted to permit the Nominating Committee to consider, amongst others, applications from ministers in civil partnerships and same sex marriages.

The congregational meeting on the 22nd March was advised of this decision. It will also be noted in the Parish Profile, and will be reflected in the listing of “vacant charges” on the Church of Scotland website.

Nominating Committee

The task of the Nominating Committee is to search for and recommend one person to the congregation to be our new minister. At the congregational meeting, the following members were elected to serve on the Nominating Committee:

Doreen Smith, Helen Crozier, Caroline Brownsell, Tom Easton, Donald Bain, Dean Matheson-Bowley, Paul Anderson, Mike Gordon, Kayleigh Brown, Scott Ralston, Louise Ferguson, Amy Pickering and Roberta Lunn.

We give thanks for the commitment of all 13 members and their willingness to serve in this way. Please pray for them in the weeks and months ahead, that they will know God’s leading and guiding as they seek to discern who it is that God is sending our way as our next minister.

The work of the Committee is strictly confidential at all times and should not be discussed with other members of the congregation, or with anyone outside the committee, including elders and family members. Please support the Nominating Committee in the requirement for confidentiality by not asking them for any information. The committee is supported in its work by Rev Keith Mack, our Interim Moderator and the Vacancy Advisory Panel of Presbytery.

The only report that the Committee will make will be to report the name of the Nominee at the end of the process. Arrangements will then be made for the successful candidate to lead Sunday worship. Immediately after that service the congregation will vote on whether or not the Nominee should be appointed as our new minister. Anyone who is on the electoral register of the congregation is entitled to vote.

Parish Profile

A small team has already been working on behalf of the Kirk Session drafting the Parish Profile. The completion of the profile is key in being able to advertise our vacancy. It will be approved by the Kirk Session and Presbytery’s Vacancy Advisory Panel before it is used to advertise our vacancy on the Church of Scotland’s website.

In summary

Much work has already been done in preparation for the search for our new minister. We have appointed a Nominating Committee and the Parish Profile will be finalised in the coming weeks.

We don’t know how long the search to find our new minister will take, but we can be sure of God’s leading and guiding in this “waiting time”. Please pray for the team working on the parish profile;

Please pray for all the members of the Nominating Committee. They are all doing very important work on our behalf. We pray that they know the power of the Holy Spirit working in them and we know and trust that God will lead them and us in the months ahead.

But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.

Isaiah 41:31