

CONTACT

CRAIGIE, DUNDONALD and SYMINGTON CHURCH



DECEMBER 2025/JANUARY 2026

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A MESSAGE OF ENCOURAGEMENT



Dear Friends

A well-known atheist was once interviewed on Radio 4. When asked how he spent Christmas, he said that he went to Midnight service at Church. 'But you're an atheist', his interviewer protested. 'Yes', he replied, 'but what they celebrate at Christmas is the most beautiful story ever told'.

Christmas is indeed part of a still unfolding beautiful story. It has all the appealing elements for a good children's story. Animals, angels, shepherds and wise men. (The innkeeper isn't directly mentioned but I believe he could have been there!). However, Christmas is only the beginning of the story.

The story celebrated at Easter will embrace the darker side of life. Then we will discover how after sorrow can come joy. How after an ending comes a new beginning. We will understand the true power of His love which we celebrate at Christmas gurgling in a manger. A love which is indeed stronger than death.

Everyone is welcome to our Christmas Eve services in Dundonald Church at 7pm followed by our Watchnight at 11.30pm in Craigie Symington Church where we will celebrate in music a beautiful story! More importantly may we encourage each other to share the Christmas message in acts of humble service to others making Christmas real once again!

Finally, can I suggest that part of the wonder of Christmas is how God surprised us and continues to surprise with His presence in our lives?

"Who would think that what was needed to transform and save the earth might not be a plan or army, proud in purpose, proved in worth? Who would think, despite derision, that a child might lead the way? God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas Day!" Rev. John Bell

As another year draws to a close can I thank you for your generous support of the newly united Church of Craigie Dundonald and Symington Parish Church. I wish you and yours a very peaceful Christmas and surprisingly Good New Year!

Yours in His Service

Tom McLeod, Interim Moderator and Locum Minister
07596719107 Tmcleod@churchofscotland.org.uk

Catriona Mayes, Pastoral worker - 07305620611 treenieg@gmail.com

Many congratulations to Mrs Dorothy Watson on celebrating her 100th birthday on 16th October! We look forward to hearing more about Dorothy's life and her celebration in February/March Contact Magazine

PARISH REGISTER

WEDDING - CRAIGIE SYMINGTON

23/10/25 - Iain Rutherford and Mollie Hamilton

DEATHS - CRAIGIE SYMINGTON

Miss Jess Gibson, 11 Townend Terrace, Symington

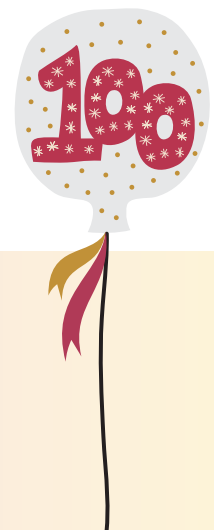
Mr Alex Cousar, Howcommon Farm, Craigie

Mr Robert McIntyre, 14 Brewlands Crescent, Symington

DEATHS - DUNDONALD

14/10/25 - Margaret Muirhead, Hallyards, Old Loans Road

27/11/25 - Alec Wilson, 25 Warly Drive, Dundonald



*Remembering
family and
friends in our
prayers*

SUNDAY SERVICES

CRAIGIE SYMINGTON CHURCH @ 9.30am

DUNDONALD CHURCH @ 11.00am

DECEMBER 2025

7th December - Second Sunday in Advent

9.30am: Advent Communion - Craigie Symington

11.00am: Morning Worship - Dundonald

7.00pm: Lessons and Carols - Craigie Symington

This service is a wonderful opportunity for us to meet together as one congregation. There will be time to meet and chat over a cup of tea & baking after the service in Symington Community Hall

14th December - Third Sunday in Advent

9.30am: Morning Worship - Craigie Symington

11.00am: All Age Santa and Gift Service - Dundonald

See details below of the Night Before Christmas

2.00pm: Good Grief Service - Dundonald

A 'Time to Remember' Service is open to all who are grieving. A time for reflection, A time to remember, A time for giving thanks for the lives of those we have loved & are no longer with us; A time to share & a time to care.

Refreshments following the service - all are welcome

21st December - Fourth Sunday in Advent

9.30am: Morning Worship - Craigie Symington

11.00am: All Age Nativity and Baptism followed by Two Spoons

Lunch in aid of Sunday School Funds, Church Hall - Dundonald

24th December - Christmas Eve Service

7.00pm: The Nativity told through the Gospel readings and songs followed by mince pies - Dundonald

11.00 pm: Watch Night Service, preceded by tea and mince pies in the Community Hall at 10.30pm - Craigie Symington

25th December - Christmas Day

10.30am: All age Christmas Day Service with Communion - Dundonald with Rev Bob Mayes- Dundonald

28th December

9.30am: Morning Worship with favourite carols - Craigie Symington:

11.00am: Favourite carols with choir - Dundonald

The Night Before Christmas Gifts

14th December - This will be a family service with all our youngsters from Creche, Sunday School, Youth Group & Boys Brigade. Santa will be gathering gifts from us, which will then go to the Night Before Christmas Campaign's elves workshop in Annbank for putting into the Big Red Bags of Joy.

For ideas of what to donate please see <https://www.nightbeforechristmas.co.uk/red-bags-full-of-joy>

Can you please ensure the gifts are not wrapped or placed in gift bags. Staff need to see the items before placing them in the Red Bags of Joy. Last year 8000 bags were given out to help vulnerable children & families in Ayrshire. The wonderful donations received from Dundonald Church helped toward this being achieved & the charity is very grateful for all donations received. If you require any further information, please contact Helen Campbell 07821936472

JANUARY 2026

4th January - Rev Tom McLeod

11th January - Rev Tom McLeod

18th January - Rev Tom McLeod

25th January - Rev Tom McLeod



DUNDONALD CRECHE

A warm welcome to children age 3 and under

The Hall is open from 10.45 am.

DUNDONALD COFFEE/TEA AFTER CHURCH

Come over after the service for a coffee and catch up after the service.

Please contact Ruth if you are able to take part in one of the teams erutheaston@gmail.com

CRAIGIE SYMINGTON COFFEE/TEA AFTER CHURCH

The first Sunday of every month (except July and August), in November on Remembrance Sunday and in May on Christian Aid Sunday

Thank you

Thank you for the lovely flowers from the Church for my birthday, and also many thanks to the car drivers on the car rota for the many lifts they carry out.
Rosalie Hemingway

I would like to say a huge thank you to my Church family for all the cards, flowers, prayers and goodies to eat sent after my latest hip joinery. I felt very comforted and cared for. Also, a big thank you to Maureen, Frances, Irene and Elaine for dealing with the Church flowers each week and to Johann for her help with the car rota. Sheila xx

Thank you so much for the flowers from the Church we received for our wedding anniversary. They were lovely and much appreciated
Lynn and Billy Fagan

Thank you so much for my lovely flowers. I was just recovering from Covid so the flowers and my wee visit from Frances just made my day, very much appreciated.
Thanks to all
Nancy Armour

CHURCH FLOWERS

Thank you to everyone who kindly gave towards Dundonald Church Flowers in October/November
Nancy Armour, Frances Mavor, Elaine Grant, Maureen Brown, Elaine McClure

Please get in touch with Sheila if you know of anyone who would appreciate flowers from the Dundonald Sunday Service.



DUNDONALD GUILD Monday @ 7pm Church Hall

1st December
Crossroads Hub Choir
Guest Evening

15th December
Christmas Meal &
Auction
The Auchans

5th January
Scottish Themed evening

2nd February
Scams
PC Blair McGarva

CRAIGIE SYMINGTON GUILD - TUESDAY @ 2pm Community Hall

9th December
Christmas afternoon tea

27th January
Talk on Mary Slessor
Barbara Graham

24th February
GUEST AFTERNOON
True Colours Band



PASTORAL CARE TEAM

Isobel Mactier



The Pastoral Care Team is one of five teams or administrative committees that currently look after the work and running of our local Church in Dundonald. Each team is made up of both elders and wider Church members who feel that they have something to offer in that particular area of Church Life. The elders on the team report back to the Kirk Session as required.

This team model is prescribed by the Church of Scotland and replaces the old Church Board system.

We are currently reviewing the teams and their remits so that we can move forward in a similar way in all localities of our unified Church of Craigie Dundonald and Symington. We look forward to the new “blood” and ideas that this will bring.

The term “**Pastoral**” comes from the Latin, Pastor, meaning “shepherd”. In Christian Communities we strive to follow the example of our Lord Jesus Christ as a shepherd caring for his sheep. Sharing the joys and sorrows of people is one of our greatest privileges as it mirrors the love of Jesus for all those He met and should therefore be an integral part of any Church’s ministry.

The Pastoral Care Team in Dundonald has taken on a number of pre existing initiatives under its administrative remit including the Home Visiting Group, the Car Rota, Nursing Home and other Residential Care Unit visits.

The Home Visiting Group (HVG) visit people who are no longer able to attend Church such as those who are housebound or elderly. They are seen regularly in their own homes or nursing homes. If feasible, they are taken out for a coffee at nearby garden centres or cafes.

The Car Rota offers an invaluable service for getting people with mobility issues to Church on a regular basis who would otherwise not be able to attend.

More recent initiatives have included our “**Silver Services**” which have been organised in the Spring of 2024 and 2025 in conjunction with the Worship Team. Members who can no longer attend regular Church Services are invited to attend a special afternoon service where Communion is celebrated and then afternoon tea is served in the Church hall. These have proved to be very popular and very joyful services attended by people from all three village areas of our United Church.

Last November, **Good Grief** - which is a group for bereaved people both in the Church and wider community was set up and is to be repeated next year. The group meets for 6 short afternoon sessions in the Auchans Inn. A few relevant topics are discussed but much of the time takes the form of informal chat with a cup of tea. **The Pastoral Team** also work with the ministry team to support hospital visiting and the distribution of Church flowers to those who would benefit from this.

As a team, we meet every two months and continue to explore other areas where people may benefit from further initiatives. We would love to have more people involved in any of the areas we cover. We also look forward to members from Craigie Symington joining us and bringing their ideas. Often the only skills required are a listening ear and a kind word. If you think you could help please get in touch with any of us listed below:-

Sheila Payne - Pastoral Care Team Convenor

Jane Ritchie - Car Rota Coordinator

Isobel Mactier - Home Visiting Group Coordinator

Please continue to let Tom or Catriona know if you or someone you know feel that you/they would benefit from a visit or appreciate any other of the initiatives mentioned above and they will pass on names to us as appropriate. We may otherwise not get to know. Thank you.



ADVENT

At the start of the advent season, a season of expectation and preparation of our hearts and minds for the birth of Jesus this is the perfect time to take stock. Look at where we are, where we want to be, what does God have planned for us, what does He want us to let go of?

Some things we can pray for:

- Attentiveness to what truly matters, without being distracted by trivial things.
- Opportunities to challenge ourselves and learn or try something new
- Discernment of how God would like you to set your priorities and the ability to focus on them consistently to fulfil His purpose in your life.
- The grace to be able to rest, become aware of God's presence, hear his voice and to enjoy spending time with him.
- Strong relationships with other people in the bond of a loving community
- Peace in all situations, irrespective of the difficulty of the circumstances.
- Realisation and appreciation of the unique gifts we have, the blessing we can be to others and the positive contribution we can make.
- Freedom from all that burdens you - past mistakes, fears, destructive habits, hurts others have inflicted, unresolved issues you need to address and forgive.
- Confidence in God's love for you and trust in His power to work all things out for the best in your life
- Openness to the Holy Spirit's guidance
- A genuine awareness of God's grace in your life and the humility to extend that grace to others.

LET JESUS SHOW!

The Nativity scene with all its characters was in place, as the children (representing angels), gathered around the manger they sang 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will among men'. Suddenly a small girl on the edge of the crowd, who could not see what was going on shouted out, "Let Jesus show!" At Christmas time, we want to let Jesus show, in our Churches, communities and lives. We have an amazing message to share - 'in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you, He is the Messiah, the Lord' (Luke 2:10).

It was to the shepherds, apart from His parents, that Jesus was first showed. The filthy, hardworking shepherds, living in the fields with their flock of dirty animals, were unlikely candidates for this honour. By the nature of their work, they had the status of migrant workers. Yet this underlines for us that the good news of Christmas is for everyone, irrespective of social standing, background, race or gender. No doubt these simple shepherds would have had no idea of what the names given to Jesus fully meant (ie Saviour, Messiah and Lord). All they needed to know, and all we need to know is that God has done something unique in coming to earth as a human being. This is good news of great joy for everybody.

After worshipping the child, the shepherds returned to their normal routine. However, they would never be the same again. Even though their work and social standing were unchanged, they had a message to share and let Jesus show. Although we do not normally see angels, we have the same good news to share. When Christmas is over and we are back to our normal routines, how will we let Jesus show in our lives?



THEN ON



Sunday 7th December 2025 2pm

FILM — **"It's A Wonderful Life"**

BYOB Free Snacks Raffle

Ticket £5

Book Tickets : 07944 377837 or 07855 781325 or 01563 830713

Email: symingtonhall4all@gmail.com



CRAIGIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Jingle & Mingle

Join us for cheese & wine for the adults,
Christmas entertainment for the children!

All welcome!

SUNDAY, 07 DEC, 2.00 PM TO 4.00 PM
CRAIGIE VILLAGE HALL, CRAIGIE

Raffle to be held in aid of the Village Hall



On
Sunday 14th December 2025
11am — 3pm Come and Meet
SANTA

Ticket £10 includes gift

Tickets must be purchased by 4pm on Friday 12th December
Book Tickets : 07944 377837 or 07855 781325 or 01563 830369
Email: symingtonhall4all@gmail.com

DUNDONALD CHURCH GUILD

**CHRISTMAS MEAL AND
DUTCH AUCTION**



**MONDAY 15TH
DECEMBER**

**7PM IN
THE AUCHANS —
£25 FOR TWO COURSES
INCLUDING TEA/COFFEE**



**PLEASE BRING A
SMALL GIFT
FOR THE AUCTION
around £5**



See Anne Young or one of the Committee as soon as possible if you would like to come along

Directed by Max Todes
Organist Ronan McQuade

glasgow chamber choir

Christmas CAROL CONCERT

followed by mince pies & mulled wine
at Symington Community Hall

Retiring collection for  **BEATON CANCER CHARITY**

Seats limited, reserve your free tickets at glasgowchamberchoir.org.uk
or by phone at 07966 619878

4PM **Craigie Symington Parish Church**
SATURDAY 13 **1 Brewlands Road, Symington, KA1 5QX**
DECEMBER Glasgow Chamber Choir is a registered charity in Scotland SCO30802



WELCOME TO

**Our Annual
Two Spoons lunch**

DELICIOUS SOUP AND DESSERT

**After Church
Sunday 21st December
in Dundonald
Church hall**

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL FUNDS



Please join us for an afternoon of Festive Fun at Dundonald Church Hall There will be an area of crafts for children. We would be grateful for donations to tombola, bottles and home baking. Set up at 9.30 on Saturday 6th.

Please contact Eilidh Purdie if you would like to help 07541138815

Our Proceeds this time will go to our Nurseries in Northern Malawi

CRAIGIE, DUNDONALD AND SYMINGTON CHURCH

invite you to join us at our **Christmas Fayre**

SATURDAY 6TH DECEMBER
2PM
DUNDONALD CHURCH HALL

- Christmas Crafts & Games
- Tea, Coffee & Cakes
- Visit from Santa
- Raffles, Tombola and more Festive Fun



Trek to Everest Base Camp

Alasdair
McFarlane

In October of 2024, I signed up for what seemed like an impossible challenge. Trek to Everest Base Camp with a group of people that I had never met and raise £4260 for Amnesty International UK - the world's leading human rights organisation. Fast forward to September 2025, many fundraisers and a generous donation from the Church later, I had raised £5,845 and I was ready to set off! Landing in Kathmandu in the early hours of the morning, I was so nervous about what lay ahead but so excited. We had one day of exploring before the adventure - this was going to be the longest day of my life! However, after a restless night and a 4am start, the time was finally here to head to the airport, to catch our Twin Otter flight into the Himalayas! This was a terrifying 30 minute flight, but the feeling of landing in Lukla Airport and getting to see these huge mountains was such a surreal feeling.



Almost straight after landing, it was time to begin our ascent to base camp! We got so lucky with the weather, with the first few days always being clear skies, blessing us with beautiful views of some of the impressive 6,000m mountains like Thamserku, a mountain so dangerous that it has never been summited! On the last few days of the ascent however, as well as our descent, we were greeted with grey skies and a cold breeze. As we moved further into the Himalayas, the quality of food dropped - nearly everything was stale rice, badly spiced potatoes or some variety of yak cheese, the worst cheese I will ever taste. Even the treats that were somehow available, like mars bars and pringles were difficult to eat, as they were all months out of date. Unsurprisingly, the sleeping conditions were worsening too, with the teahouses we were staying in becoming cold, damp and mouldy. I spent days feeling hungry and exhausted. Thankfully, I hadn't been affected by the altitude.



After 8 long days of walking, we could finally see what we had been working towards for the past year - the iconic Everest Base Camp, at 5,364m in altitude was in sight. Upon reaching it was the greatest sense of achievement I have ever felt. I was so proud of myself for pushing myself both mentally and physically for the past 8 days. It was a feeling like no other. However before it was time to descend, we had one final challenge - a 3am start for a sunrise hike to Kala Patthar, the highest point on the trek at 5,644m. The altitude had finally got me today. I felt so unwell and had an awful headache. I pushed on, knowing the view I was about to be rewarded with would make it all worth it. There was no view... it was too cloudy! However, the fact that I had managed to go even higher than the Base Camp, that was rewarding enough. And then we made our way back to Lukla airport. After 3 days we were back at the gateway to the Himalayas, ready for our flight the next morning back into Kathmandu.

We were not so fortunate however, as the weather grounded us for an additional 3 days, with the airport shutting just 5 minutes after we finally flew out on the last day! This was incredibly annoying at the time and really blurred the sense of achievement we all felt, but looking back, it did not affect my view of the trip whatsoever.

Now that I am back in Dundonald, I am proud to talk about what I've done, and why I've done it, as not many people get the opportunity to take on this challenge, especially while raising this money for such a vital cause. It allowed me to explore a completely new culture, make new lifelong friends and make real life change for those whose rights are being violated all around the world.



Well done Alasdair on your wonderful achievement!



DUNDONALD GUILD

Julie De Simone

6th October

Rev Tom McLeod dedicated the Guild for the coming year. This was followed by wonderful entertainment from Centre Stage Junior Show Choir.

20th October

Crossreach came and gave a presentation on 'playful beginnings'. This aims to build stronger families reducing poverty, chaos and deprivation. The Daisy Chain early year's project strengthens family relationships, helps families become more resilient. They also have a perinatal mental health service which deals with anger issues, depression, anxiety, miscarriage and risk of suicide resulting in more positive outcomes for the baby. A very interesting and informative talk.

3rd November

Gilda Smith came and gave a talk about her career and her involvement with the Glasgow Cookery Book. She first became interested in home economics as a pupil at Darley High School. It was here she first had a copy of The Glasgow Cookery Book. The book was relaunched in 2008 and Gilda tested the recipes in this new edition. Interviews with the BBC and STV followed and she was part of the Good Food Show demonstrating recipes from the Glasgow Cookery Book

17th November

Sally Gray demonstrated how to make a Christmas wreath. Using ivy as a frame she added spruce, fir, holly, pine cones and rose hips to make a beautiful wreath. A very enjoyable evening.



Display by Shirley at Dundonald

Thank you to all who knitted or crocheted these lovely poppies which went into the beautiful displays on our Church railings (Also remembered, by purple poppies, were the horses who lost their lives in the wars.



Display by Helen at Dundonald

Symington Church Display



PRAYERS

Debi Dunn

From Church of Scotland National Day of Prayer

Prayers for our Church

A Prayer for God's desire for us to grow as a Church.

Lord, grant us wisdom and spiritual insight, to know how to enlarge the space for You to do a work in our lives—our ministries, our Churches, our vision.

Show us how to stretch out without holding back.

Help us discern Your will for us—as a denomination, as parishes, and as part of the body of Christ.

Give us the courage, faith, and conviction we need to take bold steps, to take the risks that faith requires, and to spread out on every side in Your name.

You are our Maker, O God—the Lord Almighty, the Holy One of Israel, our Redeemer. You are the God of all the earth.

You have promised to have compassion on us, and so we stand and declare: "Let the compassion of the Lord, Our Redeemer, be upon every broken place in the Church."

We proclaim your promises, Lord—that Your unfailing love will never be shaken and Your covenant of peace will not be removed.

We claim these truths over every aspect of our Church life, our parishes, our nation, and our communities.

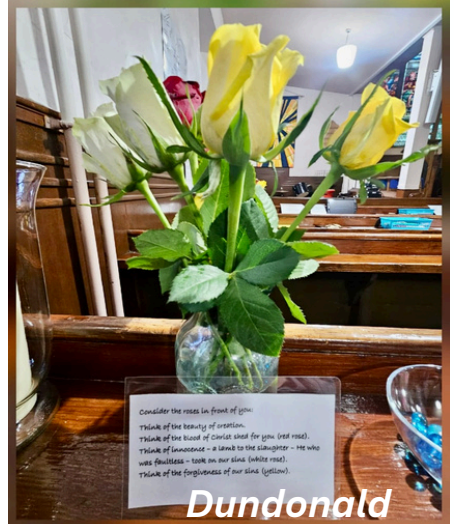
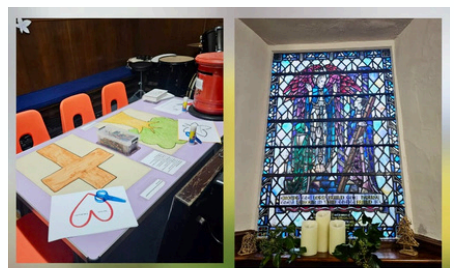
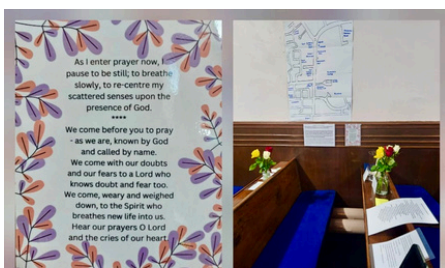
According to Your Word, O Lord—renew us.

Build us up with every good thing You have for us: Your mercy, Your favour, and Your grace.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

We pray that as in Nehemiah's day, people of all ages and generations will find themselves stirred in their hearts so they join us for the worship of God's name.

Cofs Day of Prayer, Saturday 29th November



The Lord's Prayer for the Church and our communities

A reflection on the Lord's Prayer - We can use this prayer to help us pray in lots of different ways if we take time to notice the words we are saying.

We cannot say "OUR" if our FAITH has no room for other people, their needs, and their differences. Take a moment to pray for others, especially those who are different to me.

We cannot say "FATHER" if we do not accept others as sisters and brothers in our daily lives, and unless we are prepared to come to God as children. Take a moment to acknowledge the deep relationship you have with others.

We cannot say "IN HEAVEN" if all our interests and pursuits are limited to earthly things. Take a moment to bring your material requests to God, then ask that these may have their right place in life.

We cannot say "HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME" if we, whom God has called, do nothing to praise, honour, and glorify God; Take a moment to speak praises to God.

We cannot say "YOUR KINGDOM COME" if we are unwilling to give up our selfishness and accept God's love; Take a moment to acknowledge that God's ways are not yours, and to ask for the insight to recognise God's kingdom in the world.

We cannot say 'YOUR WILL BE DONE' until we do not put God first; Take a moment to consider how you might act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.

We cannot say "ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN" unless we are truly ready to give ourselves to God's service in the here and now. Take a moment to offer your service to God.

We cannot say "GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD" if we expect "to receive and not give" and to continue to ignore the needs of others. Take a moment to offer your time, commitment and resources for God's use in the Church and the world.

We cannot say FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, unless we are first willing to say FORGIVE MY DEBTORS. Take a moment to name those whom you need or want to forgive and those whom hope to receive forgiveness from.

We cannot say "LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION" if we deliberately choose to remain in a situation where we are likely to be tempted. Take a moment to name those areas of temptations in your life.

We cannot say "DELIVER US FROM EVIL" if we are not prepared to acknowledge those places of evil and injustices in our lives and our world. Take a moment to pray for those areas of injustice and harm in our world.

We cannot say "THINE IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY" if we are seeking our own glory and are not open to God acting in our lives. Take a moment to remind yourself of the Glory of God present in your life.

We cannot say "AMEN" unless we can also say "Cost what it may, this is my prayer. Yes LORD. Your will be done in me."

The Nominating Committee would appreciate the prayers of the congregation as they begin the work they have been elected to do. This is a huge responsibility. They have been asked by you, the congregation, to discern where God is leading us & to identify the minister that God is calling to serve in this community. Please pray for wisdom, discernment and guidance.

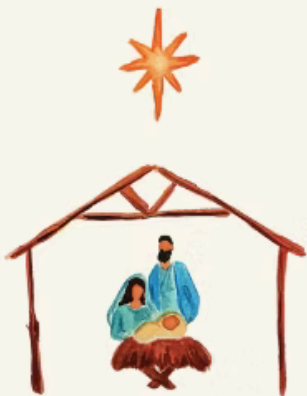


The BBs will once again be doing our Christmas Card delivery service within the village on the run up to the big day. All proceeds go back to the running of the company.

Our postboxes will be in the following locations from **Monday 1st December until Friday 19th December**- Dundonald Parish Church, (Church Hall for Christmas Fete), Keystore Dundonald, Dundonald Castle Visitors Centre. Please note that we can only deliver to the village of Dundonald as the boys/leaders deliver these by hand!. Cost is by donation (simply pop it in the postbox with your cards).



Micah Project Christmas Wish List



This Christmas, the project is dreaming of making a difference - one thoughtful gift at a time. Their Christmas Wish List is full of simple, meaningful ways you can help Ayrshire families thrive this festive season - from cosy clothes & baby essentials to little extras that bring big smiles. See list below for how you can help give hope, share joy, & make Christmas brighter for someone local. Together with the Micah project you can make this season truly Twice Treasured !

The Micah shop in Troon, (40 West Portland Street - next to the Maharani Indian Restaurant), is not open every day so you can leave any donations at Floyds and Frances Mavor will deliver them.

When the Christmas lights fade the needs remain. Your monthly support keeps us going, providing clothing packs, baby bundles and school kits long after the holidays have passed.

£3.40 a month refills a Twice Treasured Bookcase with a box of clothes

£10 a month provides the supplies for 5 beautiful baby packs for families needing extra care.

Size one nappies (24/26 pack), Baby wipes, Shampoo & Conditioner or 2in1, Toothpaste and brushes, Toilet cleaner, Antibacterial spray, Washing up liquid Pants/socks all sizes 3 years-15 years

Thank you for helping us share love that lasts longer than Christmas



Marr Cappella presents

Where are you Christmas?

With Musical Director Kirsta Donnelly and Accompanist David Sullivan
St Meddans,
Troon Church of Scotland
Weds 3rd and Thursday 4th Dec
at 7.30pm (doors open 7pm)
Suggested donation at the door £10 and Children free
Proceeds to Whiteley's Retreat and Cycling Without Age, Scotland



SCAN TO BOOK TICKETS




Troon Singers



presents
"Jingle All The Way"
Saturday 6th December
2.30pm
St Meddan's Church & Halls
An afternoon of carols, tea/coffee home baking and our famous Raffle
Raising funds for the Micah Project
Tickets £5




DREGHORN MUSICAL SOCIETY

presents
Carols & Classics

Friday 12th December 2025
7:30pm
Greenwood Academy, Dreghorn
Tickets £8, available from members or online.

AYR CHORAL PRESENTS

SILENT NIGHT

Andy McTaggart & Jenna Martin
Newmilns and Galston Brass Band

7:30pm Sunday 14th December 2025
Ayr Town Hall

www.ayrchoralunion.net



Thank you to everyone who has contributed throughout the year to Contact Magazine and as always there have been so many fabulous, faithful and regular contributors of interesting articles about all aspects of our Craigue, Dundonald Symington Church life.

Thank you also to our proof-reader John, all our distributors of the printed copies, Fraser who puts the magazine online and Lorna who adds the link to the intimations.

Wishing you all God's many blessings for a Happy Christmas and a joyful, faith filled new year as we serve the Lord in the days ahead.

Frances, Editor



CHRISTMAS AT DUNDONALD CASTLE

SAT 13TH DEC | FROM 11AM | £5PP
TICKETS ON OUR WEBSITE

WWW.DUNDONALDCASTLE.ORG.UK | Dundonald Castle, Winehouse Yett, KA2 9HD
CHRISTMAS THEMED FUNDRAISER FOR FODC (SC031541)



Get ready for a magical day of festive family fun at Dundonald Castle!

Join us on Saturday, 13th December, for a family-friendly event filled with Christmas fun.

Make your own tree bauble, write a letter to Santa, and gather around for enchanting storytelling with Mrs. Claus. The highlight of the day? A special visit with Santa himself!

Tickets: £5 per participant (includes one free adult per child)
Slots available every 15 minutes from 11am. Activities take approx. 1 hour to complete.

TICKETS: www.dundonaldcastle.org.uk



FRIENDS OF DUNDONALD CASTLE SCIO
CHARITY NO. SC031541
INFO@DUNDONALDCASTLE.ORG.UK
WWW.DUNDONALDCASTLE.ORG.UK

FRIENDS OF
DUNDONALD CASTLE
www.dundonaldcastle.org.uk | SC031541

FESTIVE FILM & CRAFT NIGHT

AT DUNDONALD CASTLE VISITOR CENTRE

FRI 19TH DEC | DOORS 615PM FILM STARTS 7PM | £6PP
TICKETS ON OUR WEBSITE | AGE 12+

WWW.DUNDONALDCASTLE.ORG.UK | Dundonald Castle, Winehouse Yett, KA2 9HD
CHRISTMAS THEMED FUNDRAISER FOR FODC (SC031541)

Join us for a heartwarming evening of creativity and Christmas cheer as we screen the holiday classic

HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS (2000)

Bring your current craft project (or just yourself!) and settle in for a cosy night of making and movie magic.

A hot drink and festive treats are included with your ticket!

Arrive early to grab your goodies and get comfy while the film begins. Whether you're stitching, sketching, or simply soaking up the festive vibes, this is the perfect way to unwind and get into the holiday spirit.

Spaces are limited; book early to avoid disappointment!

TICKETS: www.dundonaldcastle.org.uk



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COMMUNITY HUB DUNDONALD CASTLE

Ayrshire Young Archaeology Club First Sunday of the month from 2pm to 4pm. Youngsters aged 8 to 16.

Please email archaeology@dundonaldcastle.org.uk

Knit & Natter Mondays 1pm to 3pm. Fancy sharing tips and techniques, working projects and showing off talents with like-minded knitters over tea/coffee?

Write Lines Mon evenings from 630-830pm every other week. Local author, Ellie Ness, Writer in Residence, is leading sessions encouraging people to explore creative writing.

Scrabble Wednesdays 1.30pm to 3.30pm. Enjoy some friendly competition and keep your mind active.

Castle Cronies Thursdays 2pm-4pm. Led by our senior trustee and well-known local historian, Jim McQuiston. Meet to chat about the history of the castle, village and surrounding areas.

Back in Time Drop-in Thursdays 1100-1230. Step back in time and join us at Dundonald Castle Visitor Centre for a relaxed morning with friends. Open to anyone living with dementia/memory loss and carer/family members.

Crazy Castle Kids Every 2nd Friday. Young people in P3-P7. For more info please email education@dundonaldcastle.org.uk

Dundonald Historical and Archive Society The second Wednesday of the month at 7.00pm.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Meets on the second Thursday of the month (apart from January, July & August) to discuss any issues in the Village. All matters addressed.

From 7-9 pm in Montgomerie Hall. ddcdundonald@gmail.com



The Warm Heart of Africa

Dear Friends,

I've sat down to write this letter a few times over the last couple of months. Each time, I have made significant edits because the situation has changed substantially. It was the cold season, now it's hot; it was campaign season, and now there's a new government; here were fuel queues, and now there are, well, longer fuel queues.

The September elections went peacefully. We thank God for that and don't take it for granted. Tensions were high with a floundering economy biting in many parts of everyday life. The incumbent president was unseated and his rival, former president Peter Mutharika, was returned to office. It would have been hard to imagine a victorious return five years ago, but Malawians seeking change had few other options.

A lot has become familiar, subtly, without being noticed. "Eish" has slipped into our vocabulary, like a Scottish "och" but with a bit more exasperation. "Thingy" is "ujeni" and "stuff" is now "katundu", even between us at home. Occasionally, I'll pronounce the letter "l" as "r" - a common Malawian trait. News of serious road accidents come less of a shock. Shortages of essential medicines and fuel are unsurprising.

In May, I travelled to Harare to deliver the Emerging Leaders Programme - 24 people gathered from around the country. The ages ranged from 18 to 75, bringing another dimension to conversations. It became apparent how much the Church had changed and is changing, and how that experience has been met with mixed feelings. Many of Zimbabwe's older CCAP members came from Malawi, bringing their language and culture with them. Now, two or three generations later, those Chewas and Tumbukas are mixed with Shonas, Ndebeles and international influences from technology and media. ELP is not designed as a toolkit on Church culture, but it was encouraging to see different generations learn new skills together. If we're not careful, an understandable focus on youth development can give rise to internal conflict just as easily as a focus on traditions can alienate younger generations.

In Church, we recently looked at the lives of Saul and David. *Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed David in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah. Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a harmful spirit from the LORD tormented him. (1 Samuel 16:13-14, ESV)* Look how quickly God's spirit moves on when we decide to make it about ourselves and not His glory—leaving us to our bitterness. We can all learn a lesson from that, particularly in seasons of change.

In early July, we began developing materials on fundraising and stewardship for congregations. When resources are so limited, a significant amount of time can be spent on raising funds and ensuring they are used effectively. A group of ministers, elders and members with experience in local development, theology, and research has begun its work to ascertain how money plays a role in Church life. A first step towards producing a handbook that we pray will help congregations to be good stewards of what God provides for local mission and development through His Church.

Work continues at Zomba Theological University to bring the vision of a Postgraduate Centre to life. The classroom blocks are nearing completion, but this has not been without some trials. Costs have skyrocketed as a result of record inflation and a shortage of foreign exchange, making it difficult to maintain affordable supplies of imported building materials. Maintaining momentum for the Emerging Leaders Programme, Church fundraising resources, and construction is a current challenge. Please pray.

When the school year recommenced, we were confronted with change once again as Eilidh moved up to secondary school, Morven adapted to being the only Brough in primary school, and Caitlin started nursery. The change of routine has allowed Jacqueline more time to focus on her studies. However, it has required some adjustments due to three different school schedules. Eilidh now leaves the house for school at about 6.30 am! We welcomed the October break and took the opportunity to rest together as a family. We took a long-overdue trip to Nyika National Park, which is often described as looking like Scotland. The landscapes were familiar, but the wildlife was not, with nighttime visits to our campsite from zebras and jackals. Where is the year going? What has changed in 2025? And how has God changed you? We're grateful that every detail is in His hands and for your friendship and prayers.

Every blessing, Gary, Jacqueline, Eilidh, Morven and Caitlin

PO Box 112, Mzuzu, Malawi gbrough@churchofscotland.org.uk Capacity Development Facilitator, CCAP General Assembly
FaithAction@churchofscotland.org.uk +44 (0)131 225 5722 Scottish Charity Number: SCO11353PARTNERPLAN

TASTY TREATS



SMOKED SALMON TERRINE - Moira Kerr

500g/1lb 2oz) smoked salmon, 300g (10oz) flaked hot smoked salmon
300g tub Philadelphia cream cheese, 2 tablespoon horseradish sauce
zest and juice of 1 lemon, small handful dill leaves
1 and half pink peppercorns, crushed, 125ml (4 and half ons) whipping cream
You will need 28cm(11in) terrine dish or 900g(2lb loaf tin, doubled lined with cling film)

In a food processor, blend 150g (5oz) of the smoked salmon and 150g (5oz) of the hot smoked salmon with the Philadelphia horseradish, lemon zest, dill and peppercorns to make a smooth paste. Season with salt, pepper and lemon juice and transfer to a mixing bowl. In another bowl, lightly whip the cream to soft peaks. Fold through mixture and set aside.

Line the terrine with the remaining smoked salmon slices, allowing an overlap to fold over and almost cover the top. Spoon half the salmon mixture into the terrine and spread to the edges. Place the remaining hot smoked salmon down the centre of the terrine in a neat line. Spoon the rest of the salmon mixture into the terrine, being careful not to disturb the hot smoked salmon. Smooth then fold over the smoked salmon to cover the top. It doesn't matter if they don't meet. Wrap in the overhanging clingfilm and leave in the fridge overnight weighed down with a board and some cans. Turn out, remove the clingfilm and slice. Store in fridge for up to 4 days. Serves 8-10

BAILEYS TIRAMISU - Sheila Payne

350ml espresso coffee, made with 350ml water
and 9 teaspoons instant espresso powder, cooled
250ml Baileys cream liqueur, 2 x200g packets lady finger biscuits
2 eggs, 75g caster sugar
500g mascarpone, 2 1/2 teaspoons cocoa powder



Mix the coffee with 175ml of the Baileys in a shallow bowl. Dip the biscuits into this liquid, let them soak on each side enough to become damp but not soggy. Line the bottom of a 22cm square glass dish with a layer of biscuits. Separate the eggs, but keep only one of the whites. Whisk the two yolks and the sugar together until thick and pale yellow, then fold in the remaining 75ml of Baileys, and the mascarpone to make a moussy mixture. Whisk the single egg white until thick and frothy... you can do this by hand with such a small amount. Fold the egg white into the yolky mascarpone and spread half the mixture on top of the biscuits on top of the layer of biscuits. Repeat with another layer of soaked biscuits and then top with the remaining mascarpone mixture. Cover and leave in the fridge overnight. When ready to serve, push the cocoa powder through a small tea strainer or sieve to dust the top. Serves 12.... Good for a crowd.

CHEWY PEANUT BEARS - Glynis Scott

110g oats, 70g almonds, 25g sunflower seeds
35g dried apricots or dates, 100g peanut butter
110g golden syrup, 100g milk chocolate
100g dark chocolate



Preheat oven to 180C/Gas 5. Grease and line a 20x20cm baking tin. Place greaseproof paper on a baking tray and place oats, almonds and sunflower seeds on the tray but keep them separated. Toast oats, almonds and seeds until golden and toasty for 20 minutes, turning half way through. While oats almonds and seeds are toasting roughly chop dried apricots or dates. In a medium saucepan add peanut butter, golden syrup and melt gently. Take almonds, oats and seeds out of the oven and roughly chop the almonds. Stir the nuts, oats and seeds into the peanut butter mixture. Pour mixture into lined baking tin and press down until smooth. Chill for 15 mins. Melt the chocolate in a microwave in 30 second bursts, stirring each time, until smooth. Spread chocolate over the mixture. Allow the chocolate to set. Cut into 16 squares.

COFFEE SPONGE - FELICITY PAPE

Sponge: 4oz (125g) of butter, 4oz (125g) caster sugar
4oz (125g) SR flour, 2 eggs (medium or large), beaten

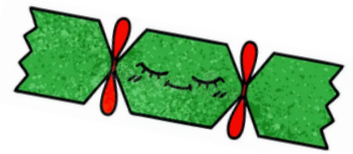
Coffee essence: either- 3 coffee bags soaked in 6 full tbs (approx 90ml) of just-boiled water, or if you have a coffee machine make two double espressos (ie 4 shots) and set aside.

Filling: 120g icing sugar, 80g soft butter,
Approx one half (45ml) of the coffee you have made.



Line and grease 2 x 7 or 8inch sponge tins. Beat or whisk butter and caster sugar together until creamy and almost white. Add the egg little at a time. Whisk or fold in flour a little at a time. Gently stir in one half of coffee essence. Bake for about 20 minutes at 175C fan oven, GM 3.5 until light brown, shrinks a little away from sides of pan and a skewer piercing the centre comes out clean. When sponge is cold whisk icing sugar and soft butter together until fluffy and pale, and gently stir in coffee essence a tablespoon at a time until the desired flavour and texture is reached. Use it to sandwich the two sponges together. Alternatively use half the filling in the middle and coat the top of the cake with the rest.

The History of Tom Smith



It was on a trip to Paris in 1840 that an adventurous and forward thinking Tom Smith discovered the 'bon bon' sugared almond, wrapped in a twist of tissue paper. Seven years later this simple idea evolved into the Christmas cracker.

By placing a small love motto in the tissue paper he created enormous interest in this product, especially at Christmas and it was during a search for inspiration to achieve even greater sales that he casually threw a log on the fire. The crackle sound, made by the burning log, gave him the idea that would eventually lead to the crackers we know and love today. After a great deal of hard work and experimentation he came up with a cracking mechanism that created a 'pop' as the 'bon bon' wrapping was broken. This eventually became the snap and the cracker was born.

Over the next few years his idea evolved and grew and he moved from his original premises in Clerkenwell, East London to Finsbury Square in the City. His sons, Tom, Walter and Henry took over the business when he died and later a drinking fountain was erected in Finsbury Square by the family in memory of his father who invented the Christmas cracker. It was Walter who introduced the paper hats and he toured the world to find new and unusual ideas for the gifts. The company was very aware of current affairs and crackers were created for the Suffragettes, War Heroes, Charlie Chaplin, The Coronation and many other great occasions.

Exclusive crackers were also made for the Royal Family and still are to this day

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Music at Craigie - THE QUIGGS IN CONCERT

in Craigie Village Hall - 7.30pm on Saturday 14 February 2026

Ayrshire-based The Quiggs are a husband-and-wife duo performing on guitars, bodhran, banjo and voice, and are always popular with Craigie audiences. Stephen is well known as a solo performer and a member of the former McCalmans folk band. Together with his wife Pernile, the result is a duo with wonderful harmony singing. They perform a mixture of Scottish traditional and contemporary music. Expect some great singing and humour!

Please bring your own refreshments and glasses. Teas, coffees and cakes are available at the interval.

Tickets (advance booking preferred) £12 & £6 (under 16), payable by cash only on the night • Lorna Dewar 07899978736



GOOD GRIEF GROUP

**2nd Tuesday of the month,
1.30pm in The Auchans**

An informal group who meet to chat & support each other over a cuppa. Those who think they might benefit from this are welcome to attend.

Feedback from anyone who has attended in the past year will be very welcome for future meetings. Please share your thoughts with

Anne FitzGerald,
Moira Kerr, John Wilson,
Catriona and Tom).

BADMINTON

**Tuesdays/Thursdays
10am -12noon
Dundonald Church Hall
Marie 07847388646**



GENTLE EXERCISE CLASS

Wednesdays 10-11am Dundonald Church Hall
Increase resilience, calm, flexibility and strength. Carolyn 07961 323078 seasonalwellbeing@gmail.com



FELLOWSHIP GROUP

**Every Wednesday in
Symington Community Hall**

from 11.45am until 2.30pm.
. All are welcome to come along for a cup of tea/coffee, cakes, biscuits and a good blether!



Dundonald Craft and social club

Tea, coffee & biscuits
Board games
Card Making
Pool

Over 50's

THURSDAYS 2PM-4PM
Montgerie hall

33 MAIN STREET DUNDONALD SOUTH AYRSHIRE

One off yearly joining fee £20

**SWI Dundonald
First Thursday of month,
Montgerie Hall**

**Dec 4th BILL ROGERS -
CHRISTMAS TRADITION**
Competitions
Candle/ Handmade Christmas Card
Nellie Murdoch Trophy - 3 Truffles

Jan 8th MEAL OUT - TBA
Competition
Coins for Friendship/Teaspoon

**Feb 5th JESSIE YOUNG
CORONATION OF KING
CHARLES 111**
Competitions
Royal Souvenir/ Savoury Scone

MEN'S CLUB

**Every Thursday 7.30 pm
in Dundonald Church Hall.**

An informal group who meet to chat & support each other over a cuppa.

Carpet bowling, fellowship and a cup of tea.

Ladies most welcome!



DUNDONALD BURNS CLUB

Dundonald Burns Club extend a warm welcome to all those who wish to join them.

Dundonald Bowling Club at 7.30pm unless Otherwise Stated

Weds 17th December - We Entertain Ourselves -

Weds 14th January - From Business to Football - Billy Bowie

Fri 23rd January - Annual Celebration Dinner

Weds 25th February - Inter-Club Night

Sat 28th February - Senior Citizens Burns' Supper

These events are open to all. No tickets or pre-booking required, except for the St. Andrews and Burns Supper events.

For further info. see <https://www.burnsclub.org/syllabus/>
<https://www.facebook.com/people/Dundonald-Burns-Club/100086497921801/> or Dundonaldburnsclub@gmail.com



SMILERS Laughter is the soul's medicine

As I was lying around, pondering the problems of the world, the following occurred to me

If walking is good for your health, the postman would be immortal.

A whale swims all day, only eats fish, drinks water, but is still fat.

A rabbit runs and hops and only lives 15 years, while

A tortoise doesn't run and does mostly nothing, yet lives for 150 years.

And you tell me to exercise?? I don't think so.

Now that I'm older here's what I've discovered

I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it

My wild oats are mostly enjoyed with prunes and All-bran

I finally got my head together, and now my body is falling apart

Funny I don't remember being absent-minded

If all is not lost, then where the heck is it?

It was a whole lot easier to get older than to get wiser

I wish the buck really did stop here. I sure could use a few of them

It's hard to make a comeback when you haven't been anywhere

When I'm finally holding all the right cards, everyone wants to play chess

It's not hard to meet expenses... they're everywhere

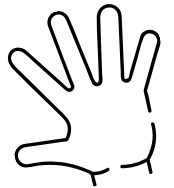
These days I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter ... I go somewhere to get something and then wonder what I'm 'here after' Have I read this somewhere before?

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Prayers for Children and Young People

- the Five Finger Prayer



Thumb - Pray for those closest to you, closest to your heart, your family and loved ones. (Colossians 4.2)

Pointer finger - Pray for those who instruct/teach you, the people who point the way. (1 Thessalonians 5.25)

Tallest finger - Pray for those who lead and instruct us including our government and our church. 1 (Tim 2.1-2)

Ring finger - Pray for those who are struggling or are in trouble or pain. (James 5.1)

Little finger - Pray for ourselves and our own needs (Philippians 4.6)

Another Year

So Christmas comes with all the festive fun

But is there time to think of Christ and all that He has done?

Presents to get, the cards to write and all the food to prepare

But is there time to think of Christ who swaddling clothes did wear?

And families too together meet for this great holiday

But is there time to think of Christ, the life, the truth, the way?

But is there time to think of Him who once came down from heaven

To pardon and to cleanse our sins so we may be forgiven?

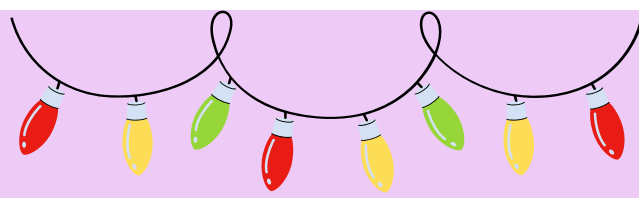
To think of Him in Bethlehem who in a manger lay Who would in time be crucified, the debt of sin to pay O here was love, amazing love, such grace and mercy too To show to us the way to heaven as only He could do O may there be that real concern to know for us He came The blest redeemer long ago for Jesus is His name.

Contact Magazine 2018

Lord of the Years, we ask your blessing on the year to come.

Give us the resilience to bear its disappointments, energy to seize its opportunities and openness to accept the more abundant life which you have promised us in Christ Jesus





In September we sadly said Farewell to our dear friend Barbara, a regular visitor to Floyds over the years who loved her egg sandwiches which were made by the girls in Floyds kitchen with such care each week. Even when Barbara became housebound, a sandwich would be taken over to her house for her at the end of the cafe morning. We miss Barbara and her caring, thoughtful nature.



Janette's beautiful jumpers for Blytheswood Shoe Boxes



Ann's lovely Seafarers's hats



Maureen's cosy hats and blankets for Ukraine via The Micah Project



Fiona's friendly teddies for The Micah Project



Floyd's Cafe

Christmas Party!

Monday 22nd December
9.30am - 12noon

Come along and enjoy our Christmas fun with festive food, games, carols and quiz

Bring a Friend!



Freda's mouse

