

Orchardlea Community News



Autumn 2026

Orchardlea Community Church



The Church of Scotland

A Word from Gillian Rooney



Dear Friends,

Since Orchardhill and Merrylea united earlier this year to become Glasgow Orchardlea Community Church, I have been so encouraged. We are thriving as one congregation, with new friendships and a shared heart to serve in this part of Glasgow.

Yet we cannot rest on our laurels. A key part of this new chapter is being a "Growing Together" church. That means making space for, listening to, and encouraging the generation behind us. Our children and young people are the church now, and we all have a part to play in supporting them.

We saw this spirit of togetherness on our trip to Culzean Castle in June. It may have been wet, but the laughter and company made it a great day. It was a chance to relax and enjoy being a church together

As we look to autumn, I pray we continue to be marked by kindness. In a world quick to judge, we are called to speak gently and build one another up. That is how people see Jesus in us.

There is much to look forward to. Thank you for all you give to the life of Orchardlea.

Yours in Christ,

Gillian

Certificates of Long Service



Congratulations to Jim McKinnon, David Howard, Gary Crosbie, Alan Rennie, Lindsay Barr, Jim Blair, Marion Watson and Jo Weir who were recently presented with Certificates of Long Service in recognition of their faithful service as Elders in our church.

Church Trip to Culzean Castle

It may have been a wet day, but that didn't stop Orchardlea having a wonderful day out at Culzean Castle on the 13th of June.



The children made a beeline for the adventure playground and had a fantastic time climbing, sliding and letting off steam. Meanwhile, the adults enjoyed a slower pace with a coffee and cake in the cafe before meeting up again.

Many of us brought packed lunches and found sheltered spots to eat together. After lunch, everyone enjoyed a walk around the beautiful grounds, with lots of chatting, laughter, and the odd shared umbrella.





It was a great opportunity to relax, catch up, and enjoy being together as one church family. A big thank you to everyone who came along and helped make it such a special day.

Golf Outing – Pollok Golf Club

The new Orchardlea Community Church has inherited a golf trophy, originally presented in 2002 by the widow of David Reid, who was a talented golfer, as well as a committed elder at Orchardhill.

His club was Pollok, where the clubhouse has a special lounge in his honour, and where members and friends of the linked congregations of Merrylea and Orchardhill, played for the trophy in August 2025.

The winner was our friend and Pollok member, Maurice Paterson, and he has done sterling work in organizing this year's outing, again at Pollok, where 22 golfers gathered on 23rd August for an afternoon round, with an additional 14 family members and friends joining for an excellent evening meal and convivial fellowship.



We were blessed with favourable weather and a course and greens in good condition. Closest to the pin at the par 3 sixth hole was Alan Rennie, and his grandson Lewis was the winner of a new prize for under-25s.

First equal among the ladies were Shona Fisher and Aileen Scudds, and second prize among the gents was shared by Andy Gall and Jim Kerr. Despite knowing well that winning the Reid Trophy again would require him to organize next year's outing, Rev Graham Cartlidge prevailed by one Stableford point, and was presented with his first prize by our minister, Rev Gillian Rooney.





New Elders

Earlier in the summer David Patrick, Jane MacDonald and Alistair Ramsay were Ordained as new Elders and joined the Kirk Session. Many congratulations.



A Chat with Eilidh

Regulars around the Church and the Black Door Shop will have noticed a new face in recent weeks.

Eilidh Macdonald joined the Team at Orchardlea in June as our Community Engagement and Faith Development Worker, or “Community Worker”, a part time post funded by our successful grant application to Presbytery under the Seeds For Growth scheme.

Eilidh sat down with the OCN recently to give us a brief rundown on her background and what she’s been up to.

Raised in the north east as a child of the manse and one of five children, Eilidh originally trained as a nursery nurse. Most of her career, though, has been spent as a social worker. Latterly she was responsible for the recruitment, support and assessment of foster parents, work she describes as “incredibly demanding, and incredibly satisfying”.



And now Eilidh is applying the skills garnered from 20 years in social work to her new role. Although there's definitely an element of "build your own job" about it, those skills are proving vital. Both jobs, she says, are about partnerships, relationships and seeking solutions - seeing an issue, and developing the solution to it.

As an elder at Cathcart Church, heavily involved in women's ministry and pastoral work, Eilidh has seen first hand the difference a church community can make in challenging situations - and she's excited to be part of the outreach we are continuing to develop at Orchardlea.

"The Black Door Shop is an amazing place, and we should be shouting about it" she says. "We need to continue to build links between the BDS, Orchardlea and the wider community".

Following the success of her first event, the Black Door Bake Off, Eilidh has two major projects in the pipeline. The first is to establish a new walking group, on the basis that faith talk often comes more easily when people are doing something else - and the second is to launch the Bereavement Journey, a course produced by Holy Trinity Brompton Road, who also produced the Alpha Course.

What, then, does Eilidh want to achieve in her new role? That's not an easy question, but after some thought, Eilidh would love to be able to see a growing community of faith, passed from person to person. to have Orchardlea recognised as a part of the community of Giffnock, and for people to understand that this is their church. Most of all, to provide that sense of belonging which matters to us all.

Amen to that.

Church Garden & Grounds

Gardens were historically judged on tidiness, colour and produce. Modern gardens look different, and one that buzzes tells a much more interesting story.

Bees are widely considered the most indispensable pollinators, with 115 different species residing in Scotland alone, responsible for pollinating 80% of our wild and cultivated plants. The balance between pollinators and plants relies on a healthy environment.

Bees are struggling to adapt to changing flower seasons, habitat loss and extreme weather conditions, all of which threaten their survival. Having planted a diverse array of pollinator-friendly plants with staggered flowering cycles throughout the year in the church grounds, we are providing bees with food sources that help to close the hunger gap they usually experience during the winter months. We have particularly avoided plants bred to be brighter/bigger/smaller/ many of which are sterile.

However, despite our best efforts there has been a noticeable reduction in butterflies this year, and we must continually find ways to support the habitat of our pollinators and analyse the sustainability of our gardening practices.





Orchardlea Bake Off

For Eilidh's first event as community worker, The Black Door Shop Bake Off on Friday 7 August at 1pm was a great success. There were 15 entries from all ages in the church, BDS and the wider community - a real intergenerational activity. Tea and coffee were served by Dorothy and Alistair - a great turnout and a bustling atmosphere.

There were 2 judges, our very own Gillian Rooney (not that she dropped many hints at wanting to be a judge) and Stephen Bennet, convener of The Black Door Shop. They highlighted the high standard and quality of cakes entered, which made deciding on the winners very tricky. The categories to be judged on were taste, texture and presentation.



In the end, Norma won first place, Kaitlyn 2nd and Winnie 3rd.



Eilidh has had a lot of positive feedback about the event and hopes to run the bake off next year at some point. She would like to thank everyone who helped make the event such a success. Over £100 was raised from entries for BDS. 'Moran Taing' as they say in Gaelic.

Articles for the Orchardlea Community News & Editorial Team

Readers are welcome to submit articles to the Orchardlea Community News Team to be considered for publication. Items should not exceed 500 words, and should report on events in the Church, publicise forthcoming events, or be of likely interest to the congregation.

It would be hugely appreciated if any articles could be in an editable format such as within the body of an email or in MS Word etc. Please avoid PDFs if at all possible.

Articles are not normally attributed to the Author.

Please send anything you'd like us to look at to: ocnteam@orchardlea.org.uk

Church WhatsApp Group

If you would like to be added to our new Orchardlea WhatsApp community for last minute church updates and social chat, please send your mobile number to secretary@orchardlea.org.uk

Ladies Book Group

Are you a keen reader of (mostly) contemporary fiction? And would you enjoy friendly chat - sometimes even book related - with a lovely group of ladies?

If this sounds like you, our book group might be what's missing from your life. We meet about every six weeks at the home of any one of our members. Previously we have always met in the evening, but we are now trying to alternate afternoons/evenings.

If you'd like to know more, or just to talk about books, catch Linda Moir at coffee some Sunday, or call 07968 793437.

Bible Study Groups

Members and friends of Orchardlea have gathered, over the years, in groups at Church, or in our homes, to study sections of the Bible, and share hospitality and fellowship.

We currently have one study group who meet in the afternoon and another who meet in the evening – each group generally meets every 2-3 weeks.

To assist us, we use study guides suitable for those at any and all stages in their Christian journeys.

New participants are always welcome, and are invited to seek more information from our Minister, Rev. Gillian Rooney, or from Ian Cartlidge -

ianjcartlidge@gmail.com

New Church Logo

There was plenty of response to Gillian's request for suggestions for a logo for the newly united Orchardlea Community Church.

The Communications Group reviewed all of these, and we're delighted to share the final decision with you.



You'll see that the tree trunk comes from different directions, but has come together to hold up the canopy. The bright, rainbow colours show that this is a friendly and inclusive church. And at its heart you will see the flame of the burning bush.

Together with our strap line - Growing Together - we feel this provides a strong message about the kind of church we want to be.

Look out for the logo appearing on Orchardlea material in the coming weeks and months.

Summer Club 2026

Summer club is over for another year and what a fabulous week it was! A week of singing, dancing, crafting, playing, snacking, meeting old friends, making new friends, bible stories and many, many, many headcounts! And, of course, the Orchardlea tradition – it has to be done –our own personal ice cream van!

Mornings were a cacophony of noise and excitement and about 100 primary aged children. Then the 25 teens came along at night and, while marginally quieter, they still had a brilliant time.

Of course, this was only possible due to the 50 volunteers and teen team leaders who sang along with us, prepared endless cereal and toast, served fruit, juice and custard creams, helped craft, read stories, crowd controlled and head counted.

We learned about Nehemiah, Joseph, The Ten Commandments, The Parable of the Talents and The Disciples, alongside our musicals theme and all families who attended were extremely grateful to Team Orchardlea for such a brilliant week.

*******DATE FOR YOUR DIARY***** Summer Club 2027 will be back on the 9th August 2027. We look forward to seeing you all and doing it again next year.**





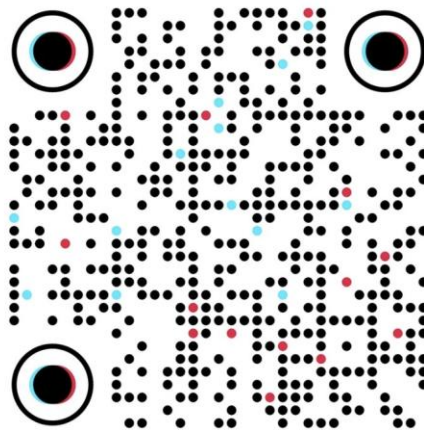


OY! Orchardlea Youth News

Check Us Out on Our Socials

orchardlea_youth

@orchardlea_youth



 TikTok



@ORCHARDLEA_YOUTH

Instagram

Coming Up This Year

BRICK CHURCH – Sunday 20th September. Join us at 12.30-2pm for a light lunch, some bible stories and some brick building. Registration required – email lorna@orchardlea.org.uk to book a spot for your family.

HALLOWEEN - Saturday 31st October - pop past when you are out guising, tell us a joke and get a hot chocolate and a sweet. Toilets will also be open and available!!

OY! – Friday nights during school term. 5-7pm in the church for games, activities and a light dinner. For anyone going into P6-S6

Cosy Café – Wednesdays during school term from 3pm. Open to all high schoolers. Come along for toast and hot chocolate.

Toddler groups – for preschoolers and their grown ups! Tuesday in church hall 10-11.30am. Wednesday in Memorial Halls 9.30-11.15am.

Sunday morning activities – join us in church at 10.30am for the first part of the service then leave for fun games and activities.

Check website for more details.

Volunteers for Media Desks

We are always looking for new volunteers to join the media team during our services. If you are interested in helping with the sound desk, presentation slides, or live streaming, we would love to hear from you.

Please contact the church office by emailing secretary@orchardlea.org.uk or speak to Bill Wallace or Dave Thomson before or after a service.

Family News, Announcements Etc.

We would like to include a section in The Record where you can share your news. This could be the arrival of a new baby, the graduation of a loved one, or the announcement of an engagement or marriage.

In addition to the joyful events, we would like to include a 'remembrance' section where we can publish tributes and life stories of deceased members of your family who were members or attendees of Orchardhill. Such information can act as important records for future generations. If you would like assistance in producing the articles, please let us know, and we can help with this.

To submit an article, please email to ocnteam@orchardlea.org.uk or hand in a hard copy to the office.

Orchardlea Congregational Roll

Deaths

George Robertson – 19.8.26

Well done thou good and faithful servant. Rest safe in the Lord.

George Robertson

George Campbell Robertson was born on 29th July 1943, the second child of Bruce Robertson and Jemima Campbell Robertson, known to everyone as Mina. George and his sister Joyce were brought up at 673 Pollokshaws Road in Strathbungo. Whilst George and Joyce were close later in life, it would be fair to say that, initially at least, Joyce was not particularly enamoured by her younger brother. There is a wonderful family story of George sitting in his Silver Cross pram when he somehow managed to fall out or, depending on who told the story, was pushed and was left dangling by the reins while Joyce stood and laughed.

George attended Shawlands Primary School before going on to Shawlands Academy in 1954. He did well at school and just recently told the family about just missing out on 100% in an exam – apparently that teacher never gave anyone full marks! When he left school, he was keen to enter a reputable profession, and he began his career with an insurance company. Through day release, he was able to study accountancy and eventually became a member of the Association of Certified and Corporate Accountants. George was a hard worker, and he was particularly proud of one achievement. Of the 104 people who sat the examination, only four passed. George was one of those four.

In 1969, George moved to Weirs as Assistant Group Accountant and, in 1975, he joined SUITS, which was managed by Sir Hugh Fraser. It was while checking the company accounts that George noticed an unsecured loan and quite rightly queried it. What followed was a lengthy investigation where George was blamed for a supposed mistake, a mistake that, as he knew very well, he had not made. He stood his ground and maintained his honesty and integrity throughout. When the truth was uncovered, George was commended for his honesty by the judge who ruled on the matter.

George left with his integrity intact, and integrity was something that mattered enormously to him throughout his life.

He later became Chief Accountant at Howdens, where he remained until taking early retirement at the age of 55. But retirement, as far as George was concerned, certainly did not mean putting his feet up. He took a part-time job with a design firm, auditing their accounts.

In 2024, after 52 years living in St Anne's Drive in Giffnock, where he was a good neighbour and friend to many, George made the decision to move to his flat in Netherton Court. It proved to be a very good move for him. He made new friends and created a beautiful home for himself. It is particularly sad that he did not have more time there to enjoy it and to enjoy the fruits of all his hard work.

George took great pride in keeping himself fit and healthy. His birth certificate might have said one thing about his age, but George never really believed it, and he certainly never behaved as though he did! He loved it when people told him that he didn't look his age. He regularly bounded up the stairs at Netherton Court. He would walk into Glasgow city centre, over the Squinty Bridge and up to John Lewis.

He took great care of himself and took enormous pride in being fit, well dressed and well presented. George certainly enjoyed the finer things in life. He loved his cars, classical music and beautiful clothes. It will not be a surprise to many that when his niece Gillian was helping him pack for his move to Netherton Court, she discovered 52 sweaters. She wisely decided not to attempt to count the shirts, ties and jackets. Instead, Gillian called her husband Alan and told him to bring down every suitcase and hold all that they had!

George was part of this church community for many years. In many ways, he was the definition of a good and faithful servant. When the Reverend John Miller asked George to take on the role of Treasurer, George accepted the responsibility and went on to help steer this church and its finances for more than a decade. For someone who had already had a long and successful career, and who had spent many years caring for his mother, others might quite reasonably have thought it was time to retire and take things a little easier - but that was not George.

He took the role of Treasurer as seriously as he had taken everything else in his life. He would come into the church two or three days a week, depending on the workload, and do whatever needed to be done. But our memories of George are far more than just the accounts and the spreadsheets. He worked closely with the office team, first Carol-Anne and Isabella, and later Karen and Lorna. The office became a place where work was done, but also where there was plenty of laughter, cups of tea and biscuits. George could often be heard to say, "I'm not feeling all that well, but I could maybe manage a dry biscuit if you've got one," and despite often saying that he shouldn't have a chocolate, he would enjoy one anyway.

Even when George eventually retired from the formal role of Treasurer, he agreed to continue helping. He looked after the staff wages and the church's insurance policy, making sure that everything was done properly and, in true George fashion, perfectly.

He was a perfectionist and paid great attention to detail, a skill that was hugely appreciated.

George was famously not great with certain pieces of technology. He tried hard to embrace the new ways of doing things, and he made good use of his iPad and phone. But the HMRC website had a particular ability to make George, shall we say, just a little cross!

George served in many other ways too. He was a faithful member of the pastoral care team, committed to ensuring people were looked after. During the Covid years, he bought and delivered plants to many older members of the congregation, wanting them to know that they had not been forgotten about.

He served as beadle on a number of occasions and really enjoyed this role. He took it very seriously, particularly when it came to funerals. He understood that these were important and often difficult days for families and wanted everything to be right. That determination, that attention to detail, that sense of responsibility and that commitment to doing things properly were all part of the man we knew and loved.

George was much more than his career or the responsibilities he carried. The messages of condolence that were sent to Gillian and Alan all had a common theme. Again and again, people described George as a true gentleman. He was a man who gave generously of his time, his talents and his money. He was incredibly loyal. Over the years he formed strong and lasting friendships, and those friendships deeply mattered to him. He was devoted to his family and, in particular, he was exceptionally good to his mother, Mina.

George had, of course, faced significant health challenges during his life. In 1976, a perforated ulcer resulted in two major operations. Then, in 2004, he was treated for prostate cancer. He faced these experiences and his final illness with the courage and determination that those who knew him would recognise.

George cared about people. He showed that care in so many ways: in the practical things he did, the responsibilities he took on, the help he offered and the loyalty he showed.

May George rest in peace, and may his memory remain a blessing to all who knew and loved him.

Musical News

As a musician, I love rehearsing and performing all kinds of different music, indeed variety is the spice of life!

I've spent the summer touring the UK with the show Symphonic Ibiza, performing at the Edinburgh Fringe, playing old tunes to residents of Glasgow care homes, and of course playing here in church on Sunday mornings.

But all summer my mind has been looking to the months ahead, planning shows, organising rehearsals, and now at the end of August we are finally getting stuck into this year's Christmas choir concert: "Behold! A Saviour".

After the success of last year's "Come Messiah King" we are working on another cantata by the same composers. But this year we will be performing it as the final concert of 'Orchardlea Sessions'. I am very excited to announce this new monthly concert series, taking place in the Giffnock building on the first Saturday (and sometimes Sundays) of each month.

I am grateful for the support from the congregation in making this series happen, and I do hope you enjoy the music we have in store for you! The first concert will be a smorgasbord of musical theatre tunes, which will be sung by some amazingly talented friends of mine (which songs you ask? Well, you'll just have to come along and find out!)

Then in November my own wind quintet Prismatic Winds will perform a concert of wind quintet music with a Scottish theme, including Mendelssohn's iconic Hebrides Overture, and a few surprises thrown in for good measure. And finally for 2026 our very own church choir will get us ready for Christmas with 'Behold! A Saviour'. I believe these concerts will have wide appeal and hope that this will bring new people into our church, so please do support this endeavour, and invite friends to come along. I am hoping this 'mini' season will springboard a whole year of music in 2027.

If anyone fancies coming to sing with the choir for this Christmas musical, please do let me or any of the choir members know! We are currently trialling a new rehearsal time of 5:15pm-6:45pm on Wednesdays in the run-up to Christmas, so if you feel like this time would work for you, we would absolutely love to have you!

Yours,
Robert

Orchardlea Sessions

THIS SEASON'S CONCERTS

SATURDAY 3RD OCTOBER - 1PM

SONGS FROM THE SHOWS

A journey through the world of musical theatre, featuring both new and familiar tunes

SATURDAY 7TH NOVEMBER - 1PM

PRISMATIC WINDS

One of Scotland's most exciting chamber ensembles presents a programme of Scottish and Scottish-inspired music

SUNDAY 6TH DECEMBER - 3PM

BEHOLD! A SAVIOUR

Orchardlea Church Choir & Friends present this Christmas cantata, accompanied by a live orchestra

Tickets for each concert are £5 on the door, cash only.
All concerts are held at Orchardlea Community Church (Giffnock Building), last for one hour, and include a cup of tea and a biscuit afterwards.

Orchardlea Community Church, Church Road, Giffnock Glasgow G46 6JR

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