

SEASON OF ADVENT

- ⇒ In Advent, the church prepares to celebrate the Nativity, when we recall Christ's first coming. As we remember, so we also look forward in faith to his second coming at the end of time.. It is a period of joyful hope. The hope of advent is expressed during the first part of advent with the concentration on the second coming while the first coming is recalled particularly from the 17th of December, when Christ is seen as the fulfilment of the hope of Israel.
- ⇒ Throughout Advent, purple is used for seasonal celebrations. The use of flowers and musical instruments should be restrained until Christmas. The Gloria is not used unless noted. The funeral mass may not be celebrated on Sundays of Advent. The wedding mass may not be celebrated on Sunday or solemnities.

ST. STEPHEN'S PARISH PASTORAL TEAM

Parish Priest/Prison Chaplain: Fr. Gregory E. Umunna Ph.D.
Phone: 01250872171. **Email:** ststephen@dunkelddiocese.org.uk
Address: 8, Bank Street, Blairgowrie, PH10 6DE.

Hall Reservations: Contact no: 01250872171.

Hospital Chaplains: Please call: N/wells Direct line: 07821624124,
 Hospital Pager 01382660111; P.R.I: 01738259371. *Pls let the priest know if you are on a long stay at the hospital and would like a visit.

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals: Please make appointment with Priest before any arrangements are made.

Diocese of Dunkeld Scottish Charity No: SC00810

Parish Ministries, Volunteers and Contact Persons:

H/T: St. Stephen's P. S: Lindsey Smith. Ph: 871950.

Catechist: Mrs. Gail McIntyre.

Parish Safeguarding Coordinator: Mrs Maureen Jackson 07952376985; Email: ststephen-psc@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Parish Webmaster: Mr. Irek Kawalinski. irekkowalinski@gmail.com

Music Directors: Mr. Tom Buckham and Mrs. Gail McIntyre. (Blair) The Donnelly Family (Alyth)

Responsible Person for Eucharistic Ministers: Mrs Maureen Jackson.

Responsible Person for Children's Liturgy: Mrs Mary Wojtowicz

Responsible Person for Lectors: Mr. Anthony Jervis (Alyth) Mrs Maureen Jackson.

Responsible Group for Parish Social Justice Issues: SVP

Responsible Person for Church Flowers: Jean Scott (Blair), Mrs Elma Sharp (Alyth)

Resp. Person: Altar Servers: Mr Rolly Colanese

Grounds Flowers: Mrs Jennifer FitzPatrick (Blair)

Responsible Person for St. Luan's RC Church, Alyth: Daria McDowall: dariam@gmx.com

Adviser on Finance: Mr. Mike Coyle

Adviser on Fabric: Mr. Jim Graham

A team of vibrant Welcomers in St. Luan's and St. Stephen's

Wishing you and your loved ones a lovely Sunday -Fr. Gregory

Tear this off please:... Are you going into the hospital? Do you have someone going into the hospital? Would you like him/her/you to be visited with communion, please fill the form below and return to Fr. Gregory.

Name:.....Hospital:..... Date:

Date:.....

Please submit all items for the parish bulletin by 6.00 p.m. on Thursday each week.

Email: peacegreg2002@yahoo.com Phone: 01250 872171



St. Stephen's R C Church

8 Bank Street, Blairgowrie PH10 6DE, 872171

& St. Luan's Alyth.

First Sunday of Advent Year C. 30/11/25

Parish website: <https://www.st-stephens-blairgowrie.org.uk/>

E-mail: ststephen@dunkelddiocese.org.uk

Scottish Charity No: SC001810



Warm Welcome to all our Parishioners and visitors.

Whether you are visiting our parish or just moved into the area, please feel very welcome ... thanks.

***Our Vision:** To be a welcoming and participating Catholic community on a journey, striving to be led by the Spirit, strengthened by a bond of love and unity, guided by the gospel message of Christ, refreshed and nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ at the Eucharistic table. Enriched by a vibrant people of God from diverse backgrounds and supported by many gifts employed in various ministries and stewardships, we journey together hand-in-hand through life as a community.*

Parish diary: Week beginning from 30/11/25

Saturday - 5.30pm: Vigil mass St. Stephen's.

Sunday - 9.30 am: Holy mass at St. Luan's.

Sunday -11.00am: Holy mass at St. Stephen's.

Monday - 10.30am/1.30pm Masses and Ministry of Care all day in Prisons.

---5.30pm Overnight Prison Chaplains Meeting/Retreat starts

Tues---

Wednesday -

---6.00pm Adoration, Rosary at St. Stephen's.

---7.00pm Holy mass for the Sick at St. Stephen's.

Thurs - 10.30am/1.30pm Masses and Ministry of Care all day in Prisons.

Friday -10.00am Holy mass at St. Stephen's.

Saturday - 5.30pm: Vigil mass St. Stephen's.

Sunday - 9.30 am: Holy mass at St. Luan's Alyth.



-Other Participatory Programmes of the Parish.

-Family Rosary and adoration. Every Wednesday 6.00pm-7.00pm. Mass for the sick every Wednesday 7.00pm-7.30pm.

-Sac. of Reconciliation: 5.00pm every Sat and 9am every Sun.

-Divine Mercy Devotion. Tuesdays after morning mass.

-Please join us. Mass with St. Stephen's Pri. Sch: 1st Fri. of the month; end of terms and core events masses.

- Journeying together in Faith Group - Come and learn the faith we celebrate! Session, Every fortnight. Next Session starts in Feb.26.

- Don Bosco Group with activities tailored to children & young people & open to everyone in the community. Every fortnight. 5/12/25. 6pm

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad

"The central mystery of Christian faith and life is the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity. Christians are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (CCC: No. 44).

This Week's Message in a Glance... "you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honourably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy"

Kindly remember also those on our prayer list: Michael Rolls, Neil McDowall, Pam McKenna, Mary and George Flockhart, Snooky Marshall, Maud McGinn, Cipriano and Carmelita, Tom O'Malley, Giles Umunna and Tony Donnan, Lisa Robertson, Philip Lafferty, Philip Jackson, Morag McInness, James Jeffrey.

Opening Prayer

God of majesty and power, amid the clamour of our violence your Word of truth resounds; upon a world made dark by sin the Sun of Justice casts his dawning rays. Keep your household watchful and aware of the hour in which we live. Hasten the advent of that day when the sounds of war will be for ever stilled, the darkness of evil scattered, and all your children gathered into one. We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose day draws near: your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

Introduction to the Scripture Readings

Isaiah 2:1-5 Isaiah gives a prophecy of a time of peace when all people will worship the one God. **Romans 13: 11-14** Paul advises the Romans to live decent lives.

Matthew 24: 37-44 We're told to stay alert, because we don't know when the Master is coming.

Blessing of the Advent Wreath

Priest: We walk by faith and not by sight and our faith is a light shining brightly.

All: May we embrace this light of faith; may it conquer everything that casts darkness into our lives. **Priests:** The light of faith illuminates our faith and our future.

All: showing us our destiny and helping us to keep present realities in a true perspective. **Priest:** The light of faith summons us to a great adventure.

All: May it lead us to courageously venture into the deepest realm of spiritual experience of advent.

Together: Lord our God, grant us the grace to prepare for the coming of Christ your Son, the Light of the World, with an expectant, hopeful and joyful heart and prayer Amen. **(The first advent candle is lit)** Priest: Let us Pray: Lord our God, your Church joyfully awaits the coming of its saviour, who enlightens our hearts and dispels the darkness of ignorance and sin. Pour your blessings upon us as we light the candles of this wreath; may their light reflect the splendour of Christ, who is Lord, for ever and ever. Amen.

Coming and Going: Advent is a time Christians think of Jesus coming, and his presence and encouragement is what gets us going!!!

It is all too often that we are more reminded of the coming of Christmas by commercial decorations and shop ping spree than by the start of the Church's new liturgical year. No wonder then the season of Advent always begins with the message of wakefulness. The 'staying awake' motif is also found in both the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. It re minds us of the necessity to be alert and watchful but, to be alert and watchful of what? For the early Christians, they would have understood these sayings of Jesus. Living in adversities and hard ships, they were in eager anticipation of the return of the risen Christ who will bring them peace and justice. How about us? (After two thousand years of waiting) Except when there is a worldwide crisis or calamity and perhaps for some doom sayers, most of us certainly do not feel the tension of our Lord's coming like the early Christians. 'Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead' becomes our lip service as we profess our faith on every Sunday. This is exactly why Jesus repeatedly urges us to be vigilant and stay awake. The kind of wakefulness that Jesus warns us and what we need is not from without but from within. It is a constant effort to be prepared at all times but not to be instilled with fear nor unhealthily preoccupied with it. It is a habit, a practice that we should cultivate in order that we are always united with Christ. It is a way of living, to love Him through deeds, prayers and supplications. It is a state of being to be mindful of what is unfolding around us at present and hence be able to reflect upon its meaning. Without this space ready in our consciousness, we are all too easy to elapse into 'religious laziness'. Our everyday 'busyness' and mundane activities may soon consume us, like those people in the days of Noah, and eventually we may lose sight of our spiritual realities, our ultimate goal and finally our faith. If the first generation of Christians were urged to be on guard, all the more urgent for us now! So let us respond to the call of Advent by keeping vigil and be patient in waiting, but at the same time, look forward to our Lord's coming either in flesh (Christmas) or in His glory (Parousia). 'And what I say to you (people in Jesus' time) I say to all (future generations—including us now): Keep awake.'

Foods 4 Thought: These challenging and most difficult Times Require us to LEND A HELPING HAND.
Please let us know if you would like somebody to talk to at this difficult time.



"Service is our work too; it makes our talents bear fruit and it gives meaning to our lives. Those who do not live to serve, serve for little in this life. We must repeat this, and repeat it often: those who do not live to serve, serve for little in this life. We should reflect on this: those who do not live to serve, serve for little in this life." —Pope Francis

→ Today's and Up Coming Events:

30th November: Poor Mission Fund:

- 28th Dec: Building maintenance Fund; 11th January: Justice & Peace Collection; 25th January: Building maintenance Fund; Feb. 15th: Ecclesiastical Students Fund; 1st March: Building maintenance Fund. 15th March: SCIAF Sunday; 29th March: Building maintenance Fund. Feb. 18th 2026, Ash Wednesday; 5th April 2026 Easter; 31st May 2026: Confirmation; 7th June 2026 First Holy Communion; 25th/26th June Joint Anniversary Celebrations for St. Luan's and St. Steph's "300 years of Catholicism."
- **Christmas Carol in St. Stephen's Church by the pupils of St. Stephen's Pri. School** 6pm. Everyone is invited.
- **Funeral Mass for Late Patricia Rich**, Friday 12th December, 10am followed by internment at Perth Crematorium.
- Visit of a guest at mass, Rev Graham Bell, advisor of HM Prisons Glenochil in furtherance of the Jubilee Year cel. of Jubilee of Prisons
- **Join Justice & Peace Scotland** to call for "Dignity Not Detention" and advocate for an end to the inhumane practice of unlimited immigration detention. The UK is the only country in Europe that does not have a statutory time limit on detention, meaning people can be held in prison-like conditions indefinitely with no idea when they will be released. We do so mindful of Pope Leo XIV's recent reaffirmation that we will be judged by how we treat the stranger.
- **Don Bosco Group:** The Parish is beginning a programme, Don Bosco Group with activities tailored to children and young people and open to everyone in the community. The aim is to meet every other Friday from 6-7:15pm. St. Stephen's Hall. Next session, 5th December. Basic idea: This project seeks to engage young people with meaningful activities. We Learn skills, Perform tasks, Gain confidence, Grow together and Pray together. In November we can start preparing a quiz/play for a parish Christmas social night. Contact person: Esther Brown sdjbya@gmail.com.
- Children's Liturgy: I want to thank Mary Wojtowicz and her team of Liturgists for the wonderful work they do for us and I encourage the parents to please
- **SSVP Christmas nibbles for senior citizens:** Sandwiches, sausage rolls, traybakes, tea and coffees will be served. Date: Sunday, 7th December, Parish Hall, 1.00pm. Interested persons should please add their names to the list at the back of the Church.
- **Altar Servers/Children/Young parishioners Christmas Party:** 22nd December 2025, 6.00pm, Parish Hall. Lots of gifts, music, dance, games, snacks and fun.
- **Social/Family Night 12th December** 6.00pm, BYOB. Some poetry, songs, drama and more ('And more' refers to others wishing to contribute as usually happens on these evenings). All welcome.
- **Religious articles setup Stalls** coming to St. Luan's Alyth on Sunday 30th November for your early shopping for Christmas cards, gift items and other religious items.
- Mill Hill Missionaries will be preaching mission here in St. Stephen's parish in the weekend of 19th of April 2026. Please welcome them.

Please submit all items for the parish bulletin by 6.00 p.m. on Thursday each week.

Email: peacegreg2002@yahoo.com Phone: 01250 872171



We begin this season of Advent in a spirit of expectation. During this time we look forward not just to the birthday of Jesus at Bethlehem but also for his second coming at the end of time! Advent reawakens hope and longing for a better future. Not just a secure financial future for me or you, but a future of Redemption for the entire people. The scriptural recommendations of Advent try to wake us up and shake us out of our complacency, but they generally end by affirming that all will be resolved by the power and faithfulness of God.



Adoration in St. Stephen's, every Wed. 6.00pm-7.00pm. 'The Eucharist is that love which surpasses all loves in Heaven and on earth.' - St. Bernard.
Please feel free to join us for adoration.

Do I feel nourished after holy communion? Do I feel a sense of relief that Mass is over? □ Has the Mass strengthened our identity as a community? □ Do I take away a message, thought or prayer for the week?

St. Stephen's Parish Library.

Selection of Books on:
Spirituality/
Prayer

Lives of Saints/
Martyr

Theology/
philosophy
History/
Psychology

Pilgrimage sites

Pls feel free to borrow any from the shelves in the lower hall and return a week after use. Thanks.

Communion to nursing homes,

house bounds and the elderly is part of our ministry of care. Please let any of the Eucharistic Ministers or myself know if you know some-one who is in need of this care.



Last call for candidates for preparation of First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

By the end of November, admissions will end so that the registered candidates will have an unbroken six months of preparation for the sacraments.

Venue: Lower Hall.
Days of Catechism: Wednesdays.
Time: 5.30pm.

You are never alone: For a shared a prayer, or just have someone listen to you, a candle lit for you or yours, have a mass offered for your intention or that of a loved one living or dead, please speak to the priest.

-Details of Parish account: Name: **St. Stephens RC Blairgowrie**. Account Number: 28075068; Sort Code: 80-22-60.
Last Sunday offertory collection: £464.27. Many thanks for your support to the parish. *Figures exclude takings from Standing orders, bank transfers and direct debits. Comprehensive Parish Financial Audits and Accounts are published on the Notice Board. Many thanks .



Project Matthew 25: Make the joy of the Christmas season go round. Support the PRISON APOSTOLATE with food and vouchers, canned food, biscuits, chocolates, pastries etc. Collection bag at the back of the church.



Christmas Hampers 2025: Please could you bring any items for the hampers to this Sunday's (30th November) masses—we're hoping to have the hampers ready to raffle for tickets going on sale the first Sunday of December. Thank you very much.

Relection:

This Sunday we begin a new season in the liturgical calendar of the Church. Today, we begin the great season of Advent. There are two messages that we will hear over the next four weeks. One message and set of values will come to us from the media and the shops. We will be told that we will have to move faster, stay busy, queue longer in the shops and spend more money on those 'must have' presents so that we will have the 'perfect' Christmas, as if such a thing exists. We will be told and sold the idea that unless we buy more and more and surround ourselves with all the trappings of Christmas, we won't be happy. This most definitely is 'fake news.' However, there is a very different message and set of values that will be offered to us through the gospels, the prayers and the liturgy of Advent. We are being asked to prepare a way for the Lord, to stay awake, to make a straight path for the Lord and to get ourselves ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. This is most definitely 'Good News!'

The message of Advent is an invitation and it also a challenge to us. We are called to be looking forward, to be ready, to be prepared and we are asked to wait in joyful hope.

Waiting is not something that we are usually good at these days. Our modern world tells us to move faster in so many ways. We have smart phones, emails and microwave ovens that all 'help' us to get through our busy days. However, Advent asks each of us to do very opposite. During these sacred days of preparation, we are being asked to take some time to be still and silent as we prepare ourselves deeply for the Christmas. While we can't simply ignore the shops, the media and the advertisements over the next few weeks, neither can we ignore the words and message of Jesus in today's gospel: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come... what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'

If we get too caught up in the shopping and spending, there is the danger that we will miss what Advent is really about. This is what the call to 'stay awake' means. We are asked not to miss the next four weeks of Advent. We are asked to prepare and get ready as best we can as followers of Jesus. It would be so sad, that if after the shopping and all the other preparations we missed Advent and its joyful and hopeful message.

In what ways can I prepare a way for the Lord this Advent as I get ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas? - The Oblates

Parish Website: www.st-stephens-blairgowrie.org.uk

Diocese of Dunkeld Scottish Charity No: