

Church Profile

Christ Church, Falkirk

2025



Figure 1. The Church Building

Christ Church is located in the heart of Falkirk and serves both Episcopalians and the wider community within its Canonically Assigned District. This area includes the communities of Airth, Avonbridge, Bonnybridge, Brightons, California, Carron, Carronshore, Denny, Dunipace, Larbert, Laurieston, New Carron, Polmont, Redding, Reddingmuirhead, Slamannan, and Stenhousemuir. These are mainly residential areas, all within a reasonable distance of the church, and we are pleased to have members of the congregation living in most of them.

Our church building, designed by the renowned 19th-century Scottish architect Sir Rowand Anderson, an Episcopalian himself, is a valued part of our identity. 2024 marked its 160th anniversary, a milestone we celebrated with gratitude for its legacy and continuing purpose.



Figure 2. An Event Telling the 160 Years of our History

Though the church comfortably seats around 120 people, it is compact and thoughtfully designed. Over the years, the interior has been sensitively adapted to meet the needs of a changing congregation, including creating wheelchair spaces within the pews. We are currently engaged in a major accessibility project to improve access for wheelchair users, those with limited mobility, and people using walking aids, as part of our commitment to welcome all.

The Lady Chapel, situated to the side of the main sanctuary, had seating installed in 1995 and houses a War Memorial, providing a quiet and sacred space for reflection. The St Andrew's Chapel was re-consecrated in 2014 and is regularly used for smaller weekday services, offering an intimate setting for prayer and worship.



Figure 3. The War Memorial in the Lady Chapel

To the south of the church lies a peaceful Garden of Remembrance, where the ashes of some former members of the congregation have been interred—a space for honouring memory and expressing ongoing connection with those who have gone before us.

Christ Church stands as both a place of worship and a centre for community life, rooted in history yet committed to hospitality, inclusion, and service today.

Worship

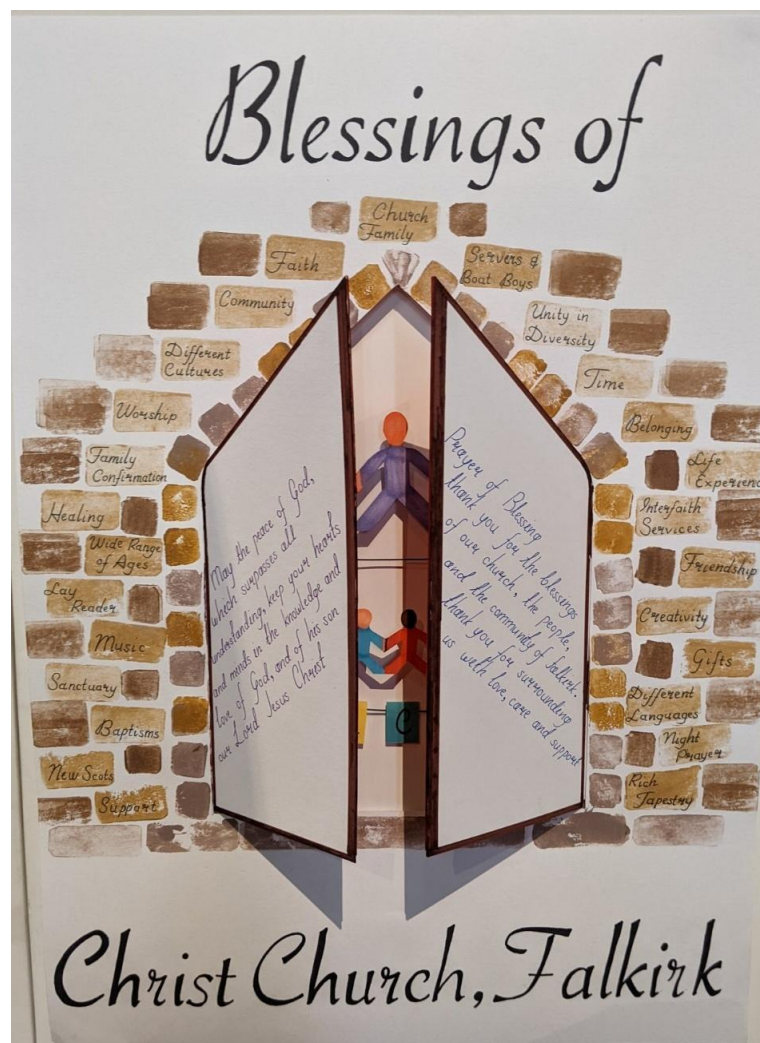


Figure 4 Blessings for an Event at the Cathedral

Worship at Christ Church, Falkirk is rooted in the rich traditions of the Scottish Episcopal Church, offering a reverent and spiritually nourishing experience. Our liturgical style is fairly high and traditional, centred around the Eucharist, with careful attention to beauty, symbolism, and sacred music.

Our services are supported by a robed choir and servers, who are members of the Scottish Guild of Servers. Their dedicated ministry contributes to the dignity and order of our worship. Incense is used on major festivals, enhancing the sensory depth of our liturgy, while the Sanctus Bell is rung at every Eucharist, drawing attention to the holiness of the moment.

Music plays a central role in our worship. We primarily use the Anglican Hymns Old and New hymn book, occasionally supplemented by selections from Common Ground. We are blessed with the gifts of four organists and keyboard players, ensuring a high standard of musical accompaniment and a varied musical offering throughout the year.

We also have a committed Lay Reader, who regularly assists in leading Sunday worship and preaches at least once a month. This shared ministry strengthens the life of the congregation and reflects our commitment to lay participation in the liturgy.



Figure 5 Our Lay Reader: Camayo Hyde

Our style of worship seeks to honour tradition while remaining open, inclusive, and accessible to all who seek to encounter the sacred in word, sacrament, music, and prayer.

Congregation

Christ Church has been described as “that vibrant church that stands on the corner”. We are a welcoming and friendly congregation.

Our congregation has grown over the past few years, and we now have a much more diverse congregation in terms of age, nationality and background. We are blessed through the gifts, talents and cultures diversity brings. Last year we celebrated Black History Month, and it was an opportunity to learn about Nigerian worship. We went on to hold a Nigerian style worship service this year with a baptism, singing Nigerian songs of praise and dancing in the aisles.



Figure 6 Baptism during the Nigerian Service on Easter 2

We have around 120 active members, 25 being children or people under 18. Many of our newcomers are natural Anglicans or have come from the Roman Catholic Tradition and our style of worship has served us well and has meant that we have been able to offer newcomers the opportunity to get involved in worship through singing, serving or reading.

We have continued to be a “praying Church “. We are blessed with a prayer group which prays for special intentions and the congregation. We hold an Annual Prayer for Peace Vigil.

For several years, although we have many young children, we have not been able to offer them a well -structured Sunday school with fun activities. There has been no one to take on this role. At present we have an area in our Lady Chapel with toys and games where children can happily play safely. The congregation are happy to hear the joyful sound of children at play.



Figure 7 Some of the children for the Easter Bonnet Parade

We encourage new members to become more involved, listen to them and allow them space to be heard and their ideas taken on board. We have an average attendance of between 48-53 on a Sunday. Many are already singing in our choir, reading, visiting, cleaning and members of Vestry.

We have become a place of welcome and sanctuary for asylum seekers through our involvement as a hub for the charity FOSS (Friends of Scottish Settlers) which supports and befriends refugees and asylum seekers. Several of our members are involved as volunteers, befrienders and trustees. This was in response to an increasing number of refugees and asylum seekers in the area following the Government's Syrian resettlement programme, the "Homes for Ukraine" scheme and the dispersal of asylum seekers out with the cities of the UK into local former hotel accommodation.

Learning and Spiritual Growth

At Christ Church, we believe that faith is a lifelong journey, and we are committed to providing opportunities for study, reflection, and spiritual growth. These sessions are an important part of our life together, helping us deepen our understanding, explore important topics, and grow in discipleship.

Our Lay Reader and Rector lead regular study groups during Advent and Lent, offering time and space for reflection during these key seasons of the Church year. These gatherings often include prayer, discussion, and shared insights as we explore scripture and its relevance to our lives today.

Throughout the year, we also hold occasional study days and themed sessions, covering a wide range of topics such as Bible study, environmental stewardship, Grave Talk (a gentle, café-style conversation about death and dying), and funeral planning and preparation. These sessions are open, thoughtful, and respectful, offering a safe space to ask questions, share experiences, and grow in faith together.

Communication

We value clear, consistent, and welcoming communication as a way of connecting with our congregation and the wider community. We use a variety of channels to share news, events, reflections, and invitations to worship and fellowship.

The Bell, our parish magazine, is published monthly and provides thoughtful articles, updates on church life, reflections from our Ministry Team, and contributions from members of the congregation. It serves as both a record of our shared life and a means of spiritual encouragement and engagement.

We also maintain a strong digital presence. Our Website (christchurchfalkirksec.org.uk) is a key resource for current information about services, events, and church life. It includes contact details, and opportunities for visitors to learn more about our community and Anglican tradition.

Our Facebook page is updated frequently and offers a more immediate way to share announcements, photographs, and reminders about worship and community activities. It also allows for interaction and connection between members of the congregation and those exploring the life of the church.

In addition, we reach out to the wider local community through advertising in the Falkirk Herald, helping to ensure that our services and events are accessible and visible to people across the area, especially those who may not be connected online.

Ecumenical

We have strong ecumenical links and good relationships with other denominations in the area, which is evident in the annual sharing of Holy week and Easter services and the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.



Figure 8 The Ecumenical Walk of Witness through the town centre on Good Friday

We invite the local Quakers, all local churches, and the Mosque to our Annual Prayer for Peace Vigil. We were blessed by the presence of three of our Muslim friends at our Wednesday service during Holy week. They also contributed readings at our Annual Prayer for Peace Vigil.

Lay Visiting Team

Pastoral care is a vital part of our ministry, and we are committed to ensuring that all members of our congregation feel supported and included, especially those who are unable to attend services in person. We have an organised rota of trained and compassionate volunteers who visit housebound members regularly, offering fellowship, prayer, and home communion as appropriate. This ministry helps to maintain a strong sense of connection and belonging across our church community.

We are delighted to have recently welcomed four new volunteers who have joined our pastoral visiting team, bringing fresh energy and commitment to this important work. Their involvement has strengthened our ability to reach more people and respond to pastoral needs as they arise.

In addition, we currently have three members who are licensed to administer the reserved sacrament, enabling us to offer communion in people's homes or care settings in a meaningful and reverent way. This ministry is deeply appreciated by those who receive it and reflects our commitment to caring for the whole person — spiritually, emotionally, and relationally.

Outreach

We continue to use our hall as a vibrant space for socialising and as a resource for our local community. Various charities and groups, including Friends of Scottish Settlers (FoSS), ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), and Falkirk Mediation Services, regularly use the hall, contributing to our income through bookings.

Several members of our congregation are actively involved as trustees and volunteers with local charities such as Friends of Scottish Settlers and Mission to Seafarers Scotland, reflecting our commitment to service beyond the church walls.

We also maintain strong links with the nearby Graeme High School, frequently welcoming RMPS (Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies) classes for tours of the building and opportunities to share our faith and traditions with young people.



Figure 9. High School Class Visiting

Eco Group

In response to the Scottish Episcopal Church's commitment to the Carbon Net Zero programme, we have actively formed an Eco Group and proudly maintain our membership in the Eco Congregation initiative. These steps reflect our deepening awareness of environmental stewardship as an integral part of our Christian discipleship.

We strive to bring environmental issues to the forefront of our community's consciousness through sermons, study sessions, and open conversations that challenge and inspire us to care more intentionally for God's creation. Our study groups have explored themes of sustainability, creation care, and the moral imperative to protect the planet for future generations.

In practical terms, we have made meaningful progress by improving our recycling practices, significantly reducing the use of single-use plastics, and switching to a sustainable tariff for our utilities. These are important milestones, but we recognise that the journey to net zero is ongoing.

We celebrated our Christ Church buildings' 160th Anniversary in 2024 and took the decision to plant 160 trees as an environmental project, symbolising our dedication to growth, renewal and caring for God's creation both now and for generations to come. Planning permission has now been granted to plant the 160 trees in an archway at Belles Meadow. The trees will be planted in October or November 2025.

Looking ahead, we are committed to making further changes, particularly relating to our church buildings—including the Rectory, the hall, and the church itself—to enhance energy efficiency and reduce our carbon footprint. This will require thoughtful planning and investment, but we believe it is vital for the health of our community and the wider world. We believe that our commitment to environmental care is both a spiritual calling and a practical responsibility.

Fellowship and Activities

At Christ Church, fellowship and hospitality are central to our life together. Alongside our worship and pastoral care, we enjoy a regular programme of social events and activities that bring the congregation and wider community together in friendship and fun.

We host a variety of gatherings throughout the year, including popular Quiz Nights, where teams come together for light-hearted competition and shared laughter. Our Afternoon Teas offer a more relaxed setting, with home baking, conversation, and a warm welcome for all generations.



Figure 10. Afternoon Tea Celebrations in our church hall

A favourite with many is our Soup and Pud Lunches, which provide not only delicious homemade food but also an opportunity for people to connect, especially during the colder months when a good bowl of soup and a tasty pudding are particularly appreciated.

We also have a friendly and informal walking group that meets regularly to enjoy walks in the local area. These outings offer a chance to enjoy nature, get some fresh air and exercise, and most importantly, build relationships through shared conversation and companionship.

These events are open to everyone and are a valued part of our ministry of welcome and inclusion. They help to strengthen the bonds within our congregation and provide easy, accessible ways for newcomers and neighbours to feel part of the Christ Church community.

Rectory



Figure 11. Christ Church Rectory

Our rectory is a large Victorian building which has been split into two self-contained living spaces – the rectory itself and an adjoining flat – which sit above the church hall and benefit from soundproofing. The rectory is separated from the church building by a small car park which is used by hall users and the general congregation.

The rectory's ground floor accommodation comprises a large room which has been used as a study and is lined with bookshelves. There is also a toilet which houses the washing machine and tumble dryer. This layout facilitates small meetings. On the floor above, there is a kitchen/diner, sitting room, two bedrooms and a bathroom. The parking area in front of the rectory is reserved for the rector and their family.

The flat adjoining the rectory comprises two bedrooms, a bathroom and a very small kitchen. This accommodation was once part of the rectory prior to a conversion a few years ago.

There is an option, dependent on the circumstances of the new rector, for the rectory to be restored to its former size, and this would not be difficult to do.

The church hall is accessed by a ramp and/or a couple of steps. The hall was recently decorated and is bright and airy. In the hall there is a kitchen, a small meeting room, and two toilets – one of which is accessible. There is also a small utility room.

Our church hall is an important source of income and is well-used by both community groups and the church itself. Several organisations hire the space on a regular basis: Family Mediation meets every Saturday, Friends of Scottish Settlers hold their meetings there, and

we have an annual booking for a dog-related AGM. The hall has also been used for regular English language classes, occasional rehearsals by a local theatre group, and private events such as birthday parties and baby showers — all of which contribute valuable income to the church.

In addition to external bookings, the hall is a vibrant space for our own congregational activities. It regularly hosts church-run events such as Soup and Pud lunches, Afternoon Teas, and fundraisers including quiz nights and Macmillan's Biggest Coffee Morning. These gatherings not only support the church financially but also help to build community and fellowship among members and visitors alike.

Falkirk

Falkirk has changed tremendously over the years; the medieval Tryst or cattle market gave way to the iron foundries of the Industrial Revolution. Now improved travel links and new housing have brought a large population of commuters. The area boasts some outstanding attractions, including The Kelpies, The Helix, The Falkirk Wheel, Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway, the Antonine Wall, and The John Muir Way, to name but a few.

The Falkirk Wheel, the world's first and only rotating boat lift is an engineering masterpiece which transports boats 115 ft between the different levels of the Union and Forth & Clyde canals.

The town is also home to The Helix, a fantastic parkland providing activities such as cycling, walking, water sports and much more. Its star attractions are the Kelpies, the world's largest equine sculptures. At 30 metres high and made from 300 tonnes of steel, these incredible horse heads are monumental tributes to the horsepower heritage that was vital to the early industries of Central Scotland.

Falkirk is also alive with history. The Antonine Wall, dating from the second century, marked the northern frontier of the Roman Empire and now has UNESCO World Heritage status. The museum in Callendar House, which stands in the attractive Callendar Park, brings life in centuries gone by, back to life.

The town itself has all the amenities you would expect from a large town, including restaurants, shops and a retail park with supermarkets and a cinema. The town is easily accessible by road and rail with frequent services to nearby cities such as Stirling, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Our New Rector

This is an exciting opportunity for a new Rector to work with a supportive, growing, and diverse congregation. We are a community that values inclusivity, shared ministry, and deepening faith.

The Vestry, having consulted widely with the congregation, has identified the following key characteristics we are seeking in our new Rector:

Inclusive: someone who welcomes all people, embracing the diversity within our congregation and community.

“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28)

Kind and Compassionate: a pastor who leads with warmth, empathy, and genuine care for every individual.

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:32)

Music Lover: enthusiastic about church music and keen to work closely with our talented choir and musicians to enrich our worship.

“Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.” (Psalm 96:1)

Welcoming and Encouraging: able to inspire and support people of all ages, from the youngest members to our more senior congregants, fostering a sense of belonging for everyone.

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Sense of Humour: someone who understands that joy and laughter are gifts from God, bringing lightness and warmth to our shared journey of faith.

“A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.” (Proverbs 17:22)

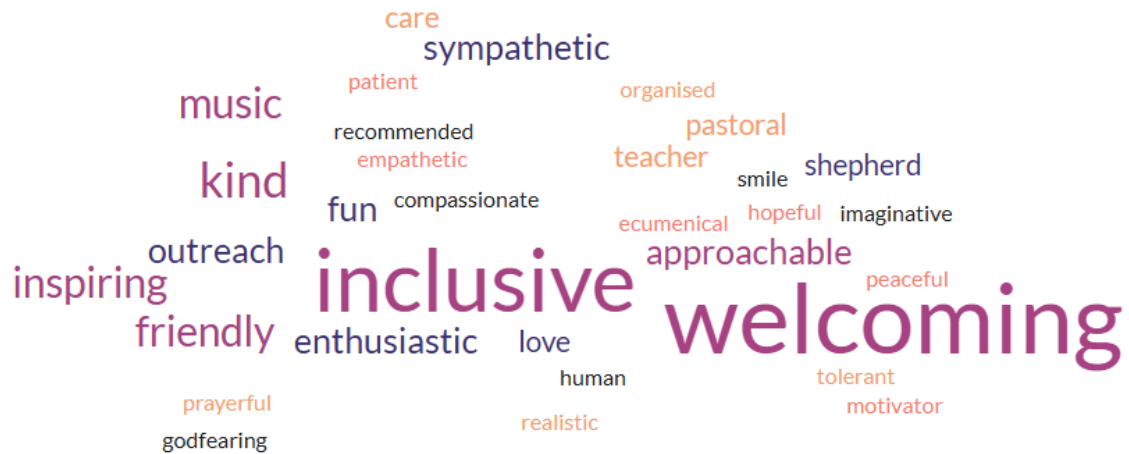


Figure 12. Word Cloud - 2025

This word cloud captures the words shared by members of the congregation for the qualities they hope to see in a new Rector. They gave these after they reflected on what initially drew them to Christ Church, what continues to inspire their commitment, and why they believe others might be drawn to join us.