



UP FRONT 184

22 September 2026

REV GARY BARCLAY, MINISTER, 586282

JOHN MARTIN, CLERK TO BOARD, 815817

JEAN HASTINGS, TREASURER, 811225

JOHN CROSS, SESSION CLERK, 818254

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

This Sunday's service (27th September) will be led by Rev Gary Barclay at 10.30am in the Enterprise Hub and on YouTube. It is our annual Harvest Service when gifts of money and produce can be brought for Start Up Stirling.

CONNECT GROUPS

The Connect groups resume on Tuesday 22nd September in Greenacre Court at 2.00pm and on Wednesday 23rd September in 2A Stein Square at 7.00pm. The intention is to see what lessons we can learn from the life of David. You are welcome to join either group, which will meet fortnightly thereafter. (Some questions to consider at the first meeting can be found below).

CHURCH PRAYER MEETING

The Church Prayer Meeting continues to meet fortnightly in the lounge at Greenacre Court on Tuesdays at 2.00pm. The focus has been on prayer for Bannockburn. The next meetings are on 29th September and 13th October.

CONGREGATIONAL BOARD AND KIRK SESSION

The Congregational Board and Kirk Session meet on Monday 28th September at 2.00pm in 2A Stein Square.

COMMUNITY QUIZ NIGHT

The next Community Quiz Night will be on Friday 2nd October in the Hub at 7.30pm. All are welcome to display their knowledge (or lack of it). Come on your own, or with friends, for a fun evening. Cost is £5 per person, including refreshments.

ALLAN CHURCH INDUCTION

The Allan Church welcomes their new minister, Rev David Hood, this week with his induction service on Thursday 24th September at 7.00pm, to which visitors will be made welcome.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Christmas may be a few months away but already we are planning our annual Christmas Lunch to which all church members (and family and friends) are invited. Our lunch this year will once again be at the Gallery Restaurant, Forth Valley College, Stirling on Wednesday 2nd December at 12.30pm. More details will follow at a later date but please put this date in your diary if you would like to join us for our Christmas lunch.

2027 CALENDARS

New Year is even further away, but the Global Focus 2027 calendar is now available for sale from John Cross, priced £7.50. The calendars are printed on high quality paper and contain full coloured images from the recent photo competition. They are A4 in size (A3 when open) and make excellent gifts for family and friends. The money raised from calendar sales will be donated to Flying Mission Zambia.

ONE MAN MUSICAL

As part of our outreach to the community, we have hosted around 20 Christian concerts over the past decade, mainly in our old church building and more recently in the Allan Church Hall. This man, Rob Halligan, has performed in a couple of them.

On September 11th 2001, Rob's father was killed in the attack on the Twin Towers, and a week after his father's death, he found himself, along with his stepbrothers, in New York City on the start of a journey, trying to make sense of what he'd seen. On his return to the UK, Rob became a professional musician.

Now, twenty-five years on from that experience, Rob has written a one-man musical entitled "How Did We Get Here?". Through songs, stories and pictures, Rob tells the story of his life: from his dysfunctional childhood to being a homeless teenager, befriended by Christians who introduced him to Jesus; from having to extricate himself from an abusive church to becoming an acclaimed songwriter visiting Lebanon, Bangladesh and Ethiopia as an ambassador for the children's charity Global Care.

"How Did we get Here?" has been getting great reviews throughout England, and we are delighted to bring it to Bannockburn – well, almost Bannockburn. We're grateful to St Ninians UF Church for allowing us to use their building as our venue this time on Friday 30th October at 7.30pm. Tickets (£8) available from John Cross



Connect Group 1 on the Life of David (Read 1 Samuel chapters 16 - 18).

It's important that what strikes us in the story comes out. Particularly, what we are learning from what it has to say to us about God, about the characters in the story, about ourselves, and of course about Jesus.

So... What stands out for you in this early part of David's story?

The questions below are meant as an additional help.

1 Samuel 16

- In 1 Samuel 16:7, God tells Samuel, "I do not judge as people judge. They look at the outward appearance, but I look at the heart." What do you think it means for God to "look at the heart"? Why is this important? In what ways are we most tempted to judge by outward appearances rather than the heart?
- Verses 13 and 14 mention David receiving the Spirit and the Spirit leaving Saul. What difference does this make to David and Saul?

1 Samuel 17

- The Israelite army was paralysed by fear of Goliath for 40 days. Can you think of a "giant" (a fear, problem, or anxiety) that feels impossible to defeat?
- David's main concern wasn't that Goliath was big, but that he was defying, "the army of the living God." (17:26). Why does this matter so much? How much does God's reputation matter to us? What if anything in today's culture makes you feel like David did?
- David knew he could defeat Goliath because he was able to look back and remember how God had already saved him from the lion and the bear. How important is the way God has been with you in the past for helping you in battles you now face or may face?

1 Samuel 18

- What do we learn from the main characters and their relationships in this chapter.
- What do you think of Jonathan and David's friendship? Jonathan gives David his robe, armour and weapons—essentially handing over his status as heir to the throne. What does that tell us?
- Saul's jealousy of David is triggered by a song: "Saul has killed thousands, but David tens of thousands." Saul's real problem however, wasn't the song, it was his heart. What do you make of this? What does it teach us?
- It's a small distance from jealous anger to harmful words / actions. In an awful moment of rage, Saul twice throws a spear at David. And David escapes without throwing it back. What does this tell us firstly, about our personal spear? And secondly, about handling attacks? Why did David not retaliate?
- We are told four times that the Lord was with David. Chapters 16:18; 18:12; 18:14, and 18:28. And that David had great success because "the Lord was with him." What does this say to us? How is the way the Bible understands "success" different from the way the world understands success?

