

What's Happening at Kirk Session – December 2025

Here are the key points from the Kirk Session meeting of Linlithgow and Avon Valley Church, held on Tuesday 9th December.

Finances: Session noted that general funds for the 10 months' period to 31 October showed a budgeted deficit of £7,000 and this deficit had increased further in November.

The annual salary review for our employees was considered with increases agreed for implementation in January 2026. It was agreed that whilst salaries vary per role, employees are paid the Real Living Wage as a minimum. It was noted that a number of our grant funders expect us to be a Real Living Wage employer.

The 2026 budget was discussed and a projected deficit of around £54,000 was noted. The number of properties in our estate to manage and maintain is placing a strain on our finances and also on the amount of time and effort for our property team. It was recognised that an effective Stewardship campaign, aimed at increasing giving as well as addressing the other areas of stewardship should be launched early in 2026.

Property: Approval was sought and given for a number of projects across the parish which are required to maintain the fabric of the buildings, including some which are legal requirements. The Kirk Session was also informed of the likely level of costs which are required to undertake Phase 1 of the restoration work on Torphichen Kirk. A fundraising team to lead on this project is in the process of being established and consultations with other stakeholders will also take place.

Team Reports: As part of the regular reporting from individual Teams, the Worship Team and Discipleship Team updated Kirk Session on recent activities as well as an indication of future plans. Alison Miller, who leads the Discipleship Team posed the following question to Session which was then considered in small discussion groups:

The key words of Advent are Hope, Peace, Joy and Love – which of these means most to you today?

Something for us all to think about?

MP Visit: Our local Westminster MP, Kirsteen Sullivan visited St Michael's and Cross House a couple of weeks ago to find out more about our major projects for these two buildings as well as the work required for Torphichen Kirk. Apart from her local interest, she is also a member of one of the Westminster committees which has responsibility for the conservation and renovation of historical buildings.