

# Avendale Drumclog

Inspiring hope, sharing God's love

## Strategic Framework 2025-2030



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## Context

Recognising the grace of God, and the power of His Spirit working in and through people's lives, the Kirk Session and congregation of Avendale and Drumclog Church plan to use this document as a reference point for our activities over the next five years, 2025-2030. Here, we set out our vision, priorities, values, enablers, expected outcomes and potential future risks.

# Avendale and Drumclog Vision, priorities and values

## 1. Vision *(What is our overall aim?)*

Inspire people in our community to respond to the love of God through Jesus Christ

## 2. Priorities *(What is important?)*

- a) Encourage faith, prayer, and Bible reading in an active, worshipping Christian community<sup>1</sup>;
- b) Baptise, support and inspire new believers as they develop in faith<sup>2</sup>;
- c) Share the good news of God's love<sup>3</sup>;
- d) Use abilities and skills in the service of God's kingdom<sup>4</sup>;
- e) Respond to human need through loving service, promoting peace and justice in society<sup>5</sup>;
- f) Look after God's earth well<sup>6</sup>.

## 3. Values *(What behaviours do we believe in?)*

Integrity; faith; hope; love; joy; peace; patience; kindness; generosity; faithfulness; gentleness and self-control.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Peter 1:1; Mark 11:22; Hebrews 11:1; Matthew 6:9; Proverbs 2 1-6; 2 Tim 3 16-17

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 28:19-20; Hebrews 10:25; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Hebrews 5: 12-14

<sup>3</sup> 2 Timothy 4:2-12; Mark 16:15; Romans 10:14-15;

<sup>4</sup> Acts 20:35; 1 Cor 10:24; John 13:34-35; Luke 12:33-34; Isaiah 58:10; Matthew 25:35,36; Luke 10:29-37; Colossians 3:23, 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Exodus 31:3

<sup>5</sup> Colossians 3 :13; Ephesians 4:32; Hebrews 12:14; Romans 5:10

<sup>6</sup> Psalm 24:1-2; Jeremiah 2:7; Colossians 1:16-17;

<sup>7</sup> Proverbs 10:9; 1 Cor 13:13; Galatians 5: 22-23 ('The fruit of the Spirit')

## **Priorities and actions:** *(What are we going to do and how?)*

The following are examples of how we may collectively deliver these priorities. We will also be responsive to new opportunities as they arise.

### **a) Encourage faith, prayer, and Bible reading in an active, worshipping Christian community:**

Inspirational and engaging Sunday worship, preaching, teaching and fellowship; Home groups; Prayer groups; "Take time" reflection and meditation group; Pastoral support; Yarn at the Barn (Men's breakfasts); "Connect" groups; Christian-focused Book club; Messy Church; Ignite; Teen Time; Evening Teen social; His Kids; Hangout; one-off events.

### **b) Baptise, support and inspire all new believers to develop in faith:**

Prayer opportunities: pre and post service prayer; personal prayer; Zoom Prayer; Congregational prayer meetings; Mutual encouragement; Good Friday day of prayer and reflection; Pastoral support; House groups; supporting church leaders in the wider church.

### **c) Share the good news of God's love:**

Lively church presence at community events including: Gala day; Reindeer/Christmas market; Strathaven Agricultural Exposition. ACORN group; Veterinary chaplaincy; Craft club; Abbeyfield engagements and services; Annual big church event; "Crossbeats"; 321; Hangout; Church-based events with a Christian focus including Christmas Fayre; Annual Scots night; Quiz nights; Developing further existing relationships with local schools, particularly in outlying areas of our parish; partner with organisations such as SU Scotland to establish new worshipping communities where appropriate; Christian- focused clubs outwith school hours; pastoral/pupil support within the local primary schools; Parish Outreach Worker within schools; School/community volunteer support activity from church members; Connect groups; Off-site-Messy-church; Christmas & Easter services for local schools. Expanding activities at Drumclog: Drumclog Tots; Film evenings; Guild and Guild-supported events; Harvest festival for farm workers. Pulpit exchange with churches in the USA. New Pioneering ministries. Events with national and/or international Christian artists.

### **d) Use abilities and skills in the service of God's kingdom:**

Congregational involvement in delivering all of the above activities; Raising awareness of and supporting those disadvantaged and in need in the wider community and world: Loaves and Fishes; Christians against poverty; Pastoral support. Buglets; Drumclog Tots group; Monday Haven; Haven hangout; Sunday worship; Study Support zone; Kintsugi; Pastoral support; Singing group; Building maintenance; Safeguarding; Church administration and finances; Ignite; Bethany; Teens; Lunchtime organ recitals and other musical events. Local food banks; individual service.

## **e) Respond to human need through loving service, promoting peace and justice in society:**

Congregational involvement in missional activities in the community, House groups; supporting church leaders in the wider church. New Pioneering ministries. Loaves and Fishes. Presbytery mission partner; volunteering and service with other Christian organisations; Support for: SU Scotland; Good News for Everyone (Gideons); Tear Fund; Christian Aid; HHI; Latin Link; Loaves and fishes; MAF; SAT 7; local food bank; individual service.

## **f) Look after God's earth well:**

Implement new initiatives for sustainability; encourage sustainable behaviours; adopt the approach to "reduce, re-use, recycle" in that order; Recycling of clothes (HHI); Waste reduction across properties; develop energy and low-carbon initiatives for congregation to adopt; develop a sustainability group.

## **4. Enablers** *(What will help us deliver all of the above?)*

In order to deliver the above priorities, the Kirk Session and Congregation have identified the following "Enablers".

### **a) Ministry**

Avendale Church has a full-time minister on a 7-year reviewable tenure, several Readers, several trained worship leaders and around 15 people who have undertaken the course in Pioneering Ministry. The 7-year reviewable tenure began in December 2021 and will end in December 2028. Before then, the local Presbytery, hopefully through active engagement with the Kirk Session, will review whether the tenure will continue in its present form or change. The current Presbytery Mission Plan proposes a reduction in ministry in the Strathaven and villages area from 2 full-time ministers to 1.5. If enacted, this would potentially result in a part-time ministry of 0.75 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for Avendale and Drumclog (and Trinity) from 2028 onwards.

The Presbytery mission plan is subject to annual review. The Kirk Session plans to be actively involved in this annual review to provide strong representation that full-time ministry is both affordable and required at Avendale and Drumclog.

In the scenario that the Presbytery reduces future full-time ministry for Avendale and Drumclog Church from 1.0 FTE to 0.75 FTE, the Mission Plan allows for us to "top-up" the 0.75 ministry allocation from local resources. This would enable the continuation of full-time ministry beyond 2028. In that scenario, the Kirk Session plans to engage actively with the Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group to work out in detail how to make this happen successfully and maintain full-time ministry.

### **b) Kirk Session and Trustees**

Since the construction of the Drumclog building in 1912, Avendale and Drumclog Church has always been a single congregation with a single Kirk Session (Trustees). In delivering the vision and priorities of the Church, the Kirk Session is a key enabler and aims to fulfil its call and

commitment to undertake, along with the minister, responsibility for the life of the congregation in all its aspects, including worship, mission and service to the wider community.

Recent new appointments to the Kirk Session, along with some retirements, have resulted in a Session of 45 active elders. Groups have specific responsibilities for Pastoral work and visitation; Worship and Prayer; Mission and Discipleship; Youth and Families; Finances and Property. A future enabler in delivering the church's priorities is the development of a group with responsibility for sustainable behaviours.

### **c) Congregation**

Avendale and Drumclog has a lively and vibrant congregation with between 110 and 170 people worshipping at two locations each Sunday. Strathaven has a growing population and over the past two years around 40 new people have become part of the worshipping community at Avendale and Drumclog. Everyone in our worshipping community is a potential key enabler, inspired to deliver the Vision and pray for the priorities of the Church through all sorts of ministries including: Band which supports uplifting, contemporary Christian praise; Worship leaders and Readers who lead the beginning of services, freeing up the minister to be a participant for part of the service as well as deliverer. Prayer teams: providing prayer cover before and after the service; Prayer groups meeting on Mondays and Wednesdays. Hospitality teams supporting warm fellowship through meals, barbeques, coffees and teas, weekly Haven café, Messy Church; Property maintenance workgroup.

### **d) Finances**

Avendale and Drumclog Church is well-placed financially to support mission and ministry in its local community. It has sufficient capital reserves, reported each year at the church AGM, and a healthy cash flow. The church is one of the 29% of Churches of Scotland which meets its financial responsibility fully in terms of the Church of Scotland "Giving to Grow" scheme. This scheme serves numerous purposes. The majority of the funds pay salary, national insurance, pension etc. for the local full-time ministry. The balance supports smaller church congregations in less-well-off areas; provides funds to support missional activities in Scotland and overseas with a small proportion used for overarching central Church administration. Of the 118 churches in Presbytery, Avendale and Drumclog is one of 35 that supports full-time ministry through "Giving to Grow". Its contribution of £68,711 in 2023 was 15<sup>th</sup> highest, placing the church's giving in the top 14% in Presbytery. Avendale and Drumclog Church has budgeted income of £156,000 for 2024 which it plans to exceed and budgeted expenditure of £156,000 which it plans to manage prudently.

In the first year of this new strategy, we aim to explore a pioneering initiative, with local schools and the wider community as partners. To do so, the church plans to make an application for "Seeds for Growth" funds.

## e) Materials

The church has three well-maintained and fitted-out buildings.

- Drumclog building and hall
- Avendale and Drumclog manse
- Avendale building and halls

Both places of worship are kept up-to-date and supplied with appropriate audio and visual technology. Avendale sanctuary was refurbished in 2019 and the pews removed to create a flexible and modern space. In 2024 the church invested significant funds to upgrade the sound system to a state-of-the-art system supporting a 12-piece band, weekly live-streaming and external music events.

When the minister, Rev Calum Stark, was appointed in December 2021, the congregation pledged to refurbish aspects of the manse which urgently required upgrading. Presbytery has an overarching restriction on investment in all church buildings, including manses, until the "Mission planning" process for the whole presbytery area is completed. As soon as Presbytery completes this process and agrees, we will return to delivering a planned programme of refurbishment for the manse, while continuing the planned preventative maintenance (PPM) programme for all three buildings.

## 5. Outcomes *(How will we recognise success?)*

1. A **growing community of believers**: maturing in Christian faith, prayer, love, community, worship, understanding of the Bible and as disciples of our Lord.
2. A church **ignited and inspired** to loving Christian service in the community and beyond.
3. Individuals **generous with skills, resources and gifts** God has given each of us.
4. People **increasingly engaged in prayer** groups **and Bible study** groups, young people's groups and other groups exploring and nurturing faith.
5. A growing awareness and understanding of our role in **caring for God's earth and its inhabitants**.
6. A balanced annual budget **supporting effective mission and service in the community and** beyond.

## Benchmark figures September 2024.

To gauge success, the church plans to record benchmark figures for September 2024. Our aim is to grow as a faithful, inspired, worshipping community from this baseline.



## 6. Risk and mitigating actions

The single most significant risk to the future of Avendale and Drumclog Church is the possibility that Presbytery maintains its current plans for “Strathaven and Villages” as outlined in Appendix 2.

There are two significant risks:

**RISK A:** The plan to reduce ministry in Strathaven and the villages from 2.5 full-time-equivalent (FTE) posts to 1.5 FTE, and specifically, from 1FTE in Avendale and Drumclog, to 0.75 FTE from 2028.

In order to mitigate against this risk, the Kirk Session will undertake the following actions:

**Mitigating Action A1:** Engage with Presbytery Mission Planning Implementation Group to review and modify the stated current plans for “Strathaven and Villages”, reflect the need for and the affordability of a full-time minister for Avendale and Drumclog and a minimum of two full-time ministers for the churches in Strathaven.

**Mitigating action A2:** If the above action is not successful, the Kirk Session plans to put in place arrangements to fund full-time local ministry and maintain 1.0FTE for Avendale and Drumclog Church. The Presbytery Mission Plan allows for detailed discussions with the Mission Planning Implementation Group to enable this to occur.

**Risk B:** The risk of closure of the Drumclog building of Avendale and Drumclog Church in 2028.

**Mitigating action B:** Engage with the Mission Plan Implementation group to help it understand better the role of the Drumclog Building, that it is and always has been a “preaching station” or “mission station” and has never been a separate church with a separate parish boundary in a defined village. Share information about the building and its use, it’s well-maintained status, the affordability of maintaining it for Sunday worship and as a place of value to serve the rural community, the significant numbers who regularly worship there and its important role in a scattered rural community.



## Appendix A

### Reference point: Church of Scotland national statements

#### Vision

To inspire the people of Scotland and beyond with the good news of Jesus Christ through enthusiastic worshipping, witnessing, nurturing and serving communities.

#### The five marks of mission

- To share the good news of God's kingdom
- To teach, baptize and nurture new believers
- To respond to human need through loving service
- To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

## Appendix B Forth Valley and Clydesdale Presbytery Mission Plan

The above Presbytery Mission Plan refers to Avendale and Drumclog Parish Church on pages 86 and 87. Broadly it outlines the following:

#### Ministry

At present there is a 7-year reviewable tenure in place from December 2021 to December 2028. After December 2028 the plan shows an allocation for Ministry and the Word (MWS) of 0.75. The plan also allows for additional local funding to be developed with the Implementation Group to top this back up to 1.0 MWS.

#### Buildings


The use of the Drumclog building is to be reviewed by the Implementation Group with a report to Presbytery before June 2027.

If you would like further information about the Mission Plan, please ask the Minister or Session Clerk.

## Appendix C: Glossary of terms, where they are not explained in the document itself.

321	A course that invites people to see life the way Jesus does. Inspired by Jesus' vision of reality, 321 is designed to help a person think about God, the world and themselves through immersive videos and thoughtful illustrations
Acorn	Acorn is a movement that seeks to connect Christians with the work God is doing in others through caring conversation
Alpha	Group conversations that freely explore the basics of the Christian faith
Bethany	Weekly support, friendship group for women who have lost a loved one, recently or a number of years ago.
Buglets	Weekly group providing a warm, relaxed and happy place for pre-school children and their parents, carers or guardians.
Connect	20-50ish-year age group (women) and 20-40 age group (men) to help develop connections, grow friendships and develop faith together.
Crossbeats	Christian contemporary music programme on local Avondale Radio
FTE	Full-time-equivalent
Guild (Drumclog)	Monthly, check Church calendar on website for meeting dates
Hangout	Monthly Friday youth group for P6-S2
HHI	Health Help International: Christian Charity providing medical aid and educational support to those in need in Zambia and in the southern states of Kerela and Tamil Nadu in India
His Kids	Sunday school for 4-11 year old children
Ignite	Monthly Sunday afternoon worship with a difference, often with guest author, musician, speaker
Kintsugi	Kintsugi Hope is a charity based in the UK striving to make a difference to people's mental wellbeing.
Kirk Session	Elders and Trustees
Latin Link	Christian charity with mission is to evangelise, teach and equip, to prepare people for life and work, to develop their God-given potential and help them grow in the service of others.
MAF	Mission Aviation Fellowship: a Christian mission organisation that uses planes to overcome barriers of isolation in remote areas. Their pilots and personnel deliver relief workers, doctors, pastors, school books, food, medicines – everything that can only be safely and speedily transported by air.
Messy Church	Monthly, afternoon church for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to participate in activities that are fun, creative, and Christ-centered
SAT 7	Provides churches and Christians of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) an opportunity to witness to Jesus Christ through inspirational, informative, and educational television services.
Take Time	A series of relaxing, guided meditations based on the stories of Jesus and the tradition of St Ignatius
Teen time	Monthly group mostly secondary school age meets at same time as morning service.
Teen Social	Monthly Sunday evening group of S1-S6
Tots (Drumclog)	Weekly group at Drumclog providing a warm, relaxed and happy place for pre-school children and their parents, carers or guardians.
Yarn at the Barn	Monthly breakfast meeting for men of all ages

# Avendale ✠Drumclog



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