



life
faith
you



hello!
jump
to the
best
bits »»



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boring but
important:

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welcome to the first edition of *atSU* youth magazine!



Scripture Union (SU) Scotland's vision is 'to see every child and young person in Scotland exploring the Bible and responding to the significance of Jesus.' Everything that SU Scotland does works towards fulfilling that vision in the best way possible, including creating this new magazine for you.

The *atSU* youth magazine will include inspiring stories of God's word being shared at the many holidays being run by SU Scotland throughout the year, as well as from SU Groups and events like Magnitude and Go Conference.

We want to show how God has been at work through all that SU Scotland does and how children and young people have come to know him more. We want to encourage you in your faith journey and keep you up-to-date with all the activities, events and training you can get involved in.

As this is a new magazine, we would love to gather feedback from you. We welcome new ideas for improving the magazine, so if you have any comments, or there is something you feel would be beneficial for you in future issues, please scan the QR code and fill in the short survey.



Help us
by sending
feedback :)

I think this verse captures the heart of SU Scotland and what this magazine hopes to communicate:

Psalm 78:4 '...we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done.'

**“ Cameron McBirnie
SU Scotland Student Executive**

free free to be me



It is an exciting time for SU Scotland as we are looking to start some new youth projects in Glasgow. Did you know that Glasgow has the largest concentration of areas of multiple-deprivation? So there are more areas where people are impacted by lower income, poorer health, less employment, more crime, less access to basic services and poorer education outcomes.

We want to make sure that we are reaching children and young people in all of these areas, and we are making that a priority. We have youth projects that have been running for many years, and one of these is Junction 12 in the Riddrie area of Glasgow. Ailsa McFarlane, who is on our Gap Year programme, has been on a placement working at Junction 12. We caught up with Ailsa to ask her a few questions...



[Gap Year]
an SU Scotland programme for those who have finished school, college or university, and are keen to work with children and young people

Ailsa, what motivated you to get involved in the SU Scotland Gap Year programme?

I chose GAP:MARGINS in Glasgow to give me the opportunity to meet people whose life experience is significantly different than my own. I was also looking for the opportunity to broaden my perspective, be invested in by mature Christians and deepen my faith.

What do Junction 12 do to help young people, and how are you involved?

In essence, Junction 12 helps young people by befriending them and caring for them in action. At its heart there is a passion for young people to thrive. All activities are primarily relational, supported by structures which help maintain intentionality. During the week I am involved in drop-ins, SU Groups and the junior secondary youth group. I have been a group leader on two residentials this term and hope to support some girls' one-to-ones next term.

Tell us about a stand-out moment of working with young people at Junction 12?

My highlight of the term was seeing how the young people on the S2-S3 residential interpreted my photo challenge by taking hilarious and creative shots!

What has been the most fun part of your gap year so far?

I've had loads of fun whenever I've given my inner child free reign! A memorable example is the 'pizza box' high-ropes challenge at Lendrick Muir during Junction 12's S2-S3 weekend. Trying to fit onto a pizza-box sized platform 8 metres above the ground with three other people brought on an unexpected mixture of nerves and hilarity!

Has there been any Bible verses or Christian songs that have meant a lot to you this year? If so, why?

Free to Be Me by Francesca Battistelli is a new favourite of mine which always helps me stop obsessing over my own struggles. It reminds

me that God frees me from worry and shame by giving me confidence and dignity, showing me I'm 'free to be me'.

What do you think of SU Scotland's plans to set up more youth projects in Glasgow?

Brilliant! Experiencing the community at Junction 12 has made me jealous that I didn't have a youth project in my local area growing up! Youth projects have amazing potential to be a safety net for kids at risk from vulnerabilities ranging from social isolation to harmful behaviour. They can introduce kids to loving community and give them opportunities to learn healthier perspectives.

Some of our readers will be facing exams in the coming months, do you have any tips for them?

Remind yourself of what God wants for you. Jesus tells us to 'stockpile treasure in heaven' rather than 'hoard treasure down here' (Matt 6:19, MSG). To do this, Jesus says, 'Give your entire attention to what God is

doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes.' (Matt 6:33-34, MSG). God wants you to focus on him and gain peace. Let that soak into your soul.

On the practical side, here is my approach to seeking balance in my life. Although not exam-specific, I have found it especially helpful when a lot is being asked of me.

➔ SET YOUR PRIORITIES

How important is each aspect of your life to you? Academic study, your practical needs, relationships, spiritual devotion, responsibilities, hobbies.

➔ UNDERSTAND WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

What is required of you in each aspect of your life? How much time, how much energy?

➔ DECIDE YOUR INTENTIONS

How will you meet each need? I find routine really helpful for maintaining priorities and using my time and energy intentionally.

exam results don't decide your **worth!**

Despite weeks and months of class work, revision, and preparation, feelings of apprehension, tension, and being overwhelmed still rise to the surface, as exam season gets closer. Spending most of my (very long!) secondary school teaching career as a Pupil Support teacher, I have seen these very real emotions year after year. So, let me offer some advice as you approach your exams.

The Psalms are always a great place to turn when we are dealing with life's challenges. Psalm 121 begins:

'I lift my eyes up to the hills'

For the Psalmist, the hills represented a dangerous journey. He faced not only a steep, exhausting climb, but also the threat of bandits, wild animals, and the risk of being far from help if something went wrong. This would have stirred feelings of trepidation, worry, and fear. These are the same feelings you may have when you think about exams—daunted, fearful of obstacles, and unsure how to navigate your route. When confronting these challenges, the Psalmist asks:

'From where does my help come?'

Immediately, he answers his own question:

'My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.'

He doesn't pretend the hills aren't real and what he faces isn't terrifying, but simply reminds us that the all-powerful, creator God, is our help when we face the 'hills' of life.

For those not able to sit exams, this can be a really difficult time, and Psalm 121 speaks to you too. The hills you face might be different, but God is your help in whatever circumstances you find yourself.

Of course, it's good and right to work hard as you prepare for exams. The Bible encourages us, 'Whatever you do, work at it with all

your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters' (Colossians 3:23).

Revision, effort, and focus matter, and will help you be successful. However, exam results don't decide your worth. As Christians, our identity is in Christ Jesus, forgiven, loved and of infinite value to God.

As exams get closer, remember the repeated phrase from Psalm 121:

'The Lord watches over you.'

So, as you lift your eyes to the hills, remember your help comes from the God who made you, loves you, and is always with you.

**Colin Gardiner
Secondary School Teacher
and SU Scotland Supporter**

2026 SU Holidays

YOU BELONG HERE



This holiday was one of the best holidays I've ever had!

It was the best week of my life. I felt so close to God... things changed in my life.

The leaders and friends I met are amazing!! It has really made my summer.

When you are going through more challenging times, it can help to have something special to look forward to, whether that is a meal out, meeting up with friends, going to see your favourite band or...an SU Holiday!

Our summer 2026 holidays are booking up fast with S5, LM5 and KX6 already fully booked. But, there is still a space for you! Alongside our popular multi-activity holidays, we are offering more speciality holidays than ever before with study, watersports, canoeing or golfing just some of the 20 dedicated events available.

New for 2026, we are offering a gaming holiday. If you have an idea for a new type of holiday, we would love to hear it from you. (info@suholidays.org.uk)

Our multi-activity holidays give you the chance to enjoy everything we have to offer, and there are still spaces at Alltnacriche (EA2), Lendrick Muir (LM1), Kingscross (KX3), Gowanbank (GB4) and Scoughall (S6).

NEW TO SU HOLIDAYS?

Get 10% off using the code: [NEWHOLIDAY26](#)

BEEN BEFORE?

Refer a friend and you'll both get a discount: suholidays.org.uk/refer

NEED SUPPORT?

Financial help is available. Find out more online: suholidays.org.uk/support

BOOK ASAP!
YOU BELONG HERE:
suholidays.org.uk

confident & included

In October, SU Scotland ran its first Weekend specifically for young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN). Fourteen young people from two ASN schools, Abercorn Secondary and Buchanan High School, got together at Gowanbank for a weekend full of fun activities and friendship.

This was a brand new event and needed a 1:1 ratio of adults to young people to provide the support required. The team all had experience of Additional Support Needs, coming from a wide range of different settings.

Some of the team volunteered at one of the schools to get to know the young people before the event. They made an introductory video about themselves, so the young people already knew what they all looked like—and what they like to eat!

The team gathered information about all the young people using a communication passport so they had lots of knowledge up front about their food likes and dislikes, and the things they like to do to relax and settle down. This meant that the young people could come along feeling confident that there were familiar faces and people who cared about their needs.

With all the support in place, the young people were able to experience all the fun and activities you would expect at an SU Weekend: a firepit with the obligatory 's'mores', a silent disco, pamper sessions, crate climbing, archery, bushcraft, music, crafts and more.

It was great to see the young people respond to Jesus. When asked the rhetorical question, 'Would Jesus ever turn his back on us?' One young person shouted out 'No, of course not. He would keep on trying!'. Another young person asked: 'Can we do this again in a couple of weeks?' Unfortunately, it takes a bit longer than that to plan, but our ASN Development Coordinator, Elaine Tait, is on the case!



MAGNITUDE SHOULDER TO SHOULDER



For those of you who don't know what Magnitude is (where have you been?), it is a five-day annual Christian youth festival for 11–18-year-olds set on the beautiful grounds of Lendrick Muir, Kinross.

Magnitude also holds events across Scotland throughout the year to allow those of you who enjoyed the festival to meet up and enjoy a time of worship and Bible reading together. Many of you are super excited about Magnitude Festival 2026. Let's hear from the Event Manager, Kirsty Haxton, about how plans for Magnitude 2026 are shaping up.

There's a special kind of buzz that starts building as summer gets closer! For so many young people, Magnitude has become the highlight of the year, a place where thousands gather with the same expectation, to experience something bigger than themselves—to encounter the presence of God in a living and transformative way. The countdown has already begun, and the team are busy planning a brilliant programme for all the young people. Whether it's the worship, the speakers, the late night chats, or simply the chance to step away from everyday life and reconnect with faith, Magnitude has a way of bringing people together in a way is different from other residential.

'What makes this summer's festival even more exciting is the sense of momentum. Each year seems to grow

in energy, creativity, and community, and 2026 is shaping up to be no different. There's something powerful about standing shoulder to shoulder with other young people who are exploring the same questions, chasing the same hope, and discovering what it means to live out their faith in real, everyday ways. If you've been before, you already know the feeling. If you haven't, this might just be the year to jump in.

'Magnitude isn't just an event, it's an experience that stays with you long after the tents come down. We believe that encountering God in his fullness is life-changing. We believe that when young people are captivated by him, amazing things happen. We can't wait to gather together again this July at Lendrick Muir. **This is your invitation—an invitation to more!**



GENERATION JUSTICE: MAGNITUDE'S INCREDIBLE GIVING MOMENT

Last summer at Magnitude, something amazing happened. In the middle of teaching, worship, fun, and community, young people united around one powerful truth: *everyone belongs*. Together, they raised an incredible £3,100 for Ministry at the Margins.

Ministry at the Margins exists to make sure young people from priority communities and those with Additional Support Needs (ASN) can access everything SU Scotland offers. No barriers. No exclusions. **Your generation cares deeply about justice.** You stand up for the vulnerable, challenge inequality, and take action to create a world where everyone matters. The CAF UK Giving Report 2025 backs this up:

18–34-YEAR-OLDS ARE LEADING THE WAY IN SUPPORTING CAUSES LIKE POVERTY RELIEF, MENTAL HEALTH, EQUALITY, AND INCLUSION—AND THEIR GENEROSITY KEEPS GROWING.

The giving we saw at Magnitude reflects that passion. It's a bold pushback against anything unjust. **Generosity like this transforms lives.** Since the festival, the incredible £3,100 raised has helped our Ministry at the Margins to:

- * Host a holiday for **Ukrainian refugee families**
- * Run a weekend for young people from **two ASN schools**
- * Deliver the **Chosen Weekend** for families with adopted children

One parent from the Chosen Weekend told us their children 'had freedom to play and connect. [They] especially appreciated the younger leaders, who were adopted, being open with the kids about being adopted'.

Looking ahead, Ministry at the Margins plans new outreach in Glasgow's highest-priority areas and growth in Merkinch, Inverness—a community facing significant poverty. Every gift is a story of hope. **Every act of generosity is a step toward justice.** Thank you, Magnitude Festival goers, for showing what it means to live boldly and love radically.

suscotland.org.uk/margins
facebook.com/suscotland

COMMISSION: lead the way

COMMISSION is SU Scotland's young leaders training programme for equipping 16-23-year-olds to serve in mission with children and young people, while working towards an SQA qualification. Zach tells us what it's like to be involved...



Being a leader at an SU Holiday wasn't just an opportunity to do something useful for others. It also turned out to be an important way to understand more about myself.

My summer included a week of training and preparation at Basecamp on Arran back in June, before serving as part of a big team of volunteers at Lendrick Muir during week five of the school holidays. The experience of being together at Basecamp with others who all share the same worldview felt really important. It's good to know that you are not alone.

The practical training for young leaders is about servant-hearted leadership and putting other people's needs before your own. I guess that gave me a different view of leadership, rather than thinking of it as a way of influencing what you want to happen.

For the Bible teaching, we were looking through Acts and thinking about people such as

Stephen, Paul and Barnabas—how they were acting by faith, doing what God wanted them to do, even when it was tough.

The group I was helping with at camp were primary aged. As a Trainee Leader, I got to know the young people really well, coming alongside them to support and care for them during the week. I really enjoyed my role and am looking forward to being able to volunteer again.

Being with a large group of Trainee Leaders at the event meant that I felt well looked after. We all had mentors who were there to help us through the week. There was a lot of comfort in that and being part of a large group of trainees was definitely a highlight for me.

The final piece of the jigsaw was the Review Weekend at Lendrick Muir at the end of the summer, when trainees from all of the events were able to chat, share, see the wider work of SU Scotland at the Big Celebration and generally have a great time.

So it was all brilliant!

Attending SU Holidays was important in helping me think about my own Christian faith. I grew up in a Christian family, but it all became real for me several years ago. Volunteering was definitely an opportunity to grow my faith and understand more about what it means to lead in the way that Jesus did.

I started to see other people differently and to understand more about what my role might be in different situations. Leadership was different from what I had expected—more about caring, helping and putting others first than I had realised before.

It can feel really challenging to share your Christian faith in a school setting. I know we are called to be light in the darkness. My summer helped me to feel more ready for that challenge.

Zach Coffee, Stirling

[suscotland.org/
commission](https://suscotland.org/commission)

Find out more
and sign up
online today!

how many children and young people in Scotland are affected by the imprisonment of a parent?



The answer is a staggering 25,000. In fact, with the number of people in Scottish prisons reaching an all-time high of 8,400, it is now probably even more. If you are among the young people in this statistic, know that we care about you and we are praying for you. SU Scotland works in partnership with Prison Fellowship Scotland.

John Nonhebel, Executive Director of Prison Fellowship Scotland, said: 'Families often serve the sentence alongside the adult in prison. They cope with demanding visiting routines, long journeys, financial pressure, and at times the stigma of being known as the family of someone in custody. Money that could support children is instead spent

on travel or supporting the parent inside, leaving little for the young people themselves. This is where our partnership with SU Scotland makes a real difference.'

SU Scotland and Prison Fellowship Scotland work together to identify children who would benefit from an SU Holiday. The young person can then choose a holiday, and they can go at no cost and with no stigma. For many, it is the first time they have been able to enjoy such activities or make new friends. Feedback tells us that these holidays are transforming experiences for the young people.

Providing hope is central to the work of Prison Fellowship Scotland—both inside prisons

and among families. Prison is a tough environment, especially now with severe overcrowding. John said: 'In conversations with people inside, one constant theme is their deep concern for their children and how much they miss them.'

Join us in praying for young people impacted by the imprisonment of a parent:

Father God, please speak to young people who have a parent in prison, help them to know that you have not forgotten them, you love them and you care about what they are going through. Please comfort them in Jesus' name, Amen.



We are excited to announce that a large-scale development project is planned to begin later this year at the largest of our well-loved residential activity centres: Lendrick Muir!

Since opening its doors in 1999, Lendrick Muir has grown into a vibrant hub welcoming over 11,000 visitors every year. From school residential to holidays and weekends, training events and the Magnitude festival, Lendrick Muir is alive with activity almost all year round. However, after 25 years of intensive usage, creatively navigating quirks and challenges, parts of the Lendrick Muir building need replacement and upgrade to be fit-for-purpose.

We have spoken to lots of different groups of people to get their opinion on current challenges with Lendrick Muir, and how to improve it. This included a group of over 20 secondary school-aged young people. Feedback included:

- Better soundproofing of communal areas (especially for those with additional support needs)
- Reduced overcrowding in dining areas and entrances
- A simpler floor plan and clearer wayfinding signage
- More breakout spaces
- A few more toilets and showers (possibly en suite)

We took all this into consideration and our Board and Student Executive discussed and approved our plans to remodel sections of the main house and create a brilliant new modern, connected space for children and young people!

what's on

GRAB THE LATEST EVENT DETAILS ONLINE: suscotland.org.uk/events

MAGNITUDE 2026 | 18–22 JULY | Join us for five incredible days that will inspire and empower you to boldly and fearlessly live out your faith in the other 51 weeks of the year.

magnitude.org.uk/2026

MAGNITUDE WORSHIP NIGHT | 19 APRIL 2026: ABERDEEN | Thanks to a generous donation, our worship nights are now free to attend for youth and youth leaders. Donate via cash or card on the door to sow into the work of Magnitude and SU Scotland.

magnitude.org.uk/worship

COMMISSION | JUNE 2026 | Equipping 16–23 year-olds to serve in mission with children and young people, while working towards a Qualifications Scotland award. Start your leadership journey at Basecamp, where we'll help equip you to lead and work with Scotland's children and young people. Take your skills to the next level during LeadUP—training and personal discipleship designed to inspire, stretch, and challenge you to prepare you for wherever you'll be serving over the summer and beyond.

Basecamp @ Kingscross, 14–20 June

LeadUP @ Alltnacriche 19–26 June

suholidays.org.uk/training

SPOTLIGHT & EQUIP | SPRING 2026 | Helping you explore Christian faith, explore God's word and connect with others. Features Bible talks, group time, Q&A and plenty of fun!

- **Spotlight East (S1–S2)**: 24 April, 29 May, 7–8.45pm, Cornerstone Free Church, EDI
- **Equip East (S3–S6)**: 25 April, 29 May, 7–9.00pm, Elim Church, EDI
- **Equip West (S1–S6)**: 24 April, 22 May, 7–9.00pm, The Tron, GLA
- **Equip North East (S1–S6)**: 15 May, 7–9.30pm, Kintore Community Church, Kintore, ABD

suscotland.org.uk/spotlight | suscotland.org.uk/equipevents

BIG CELEBRATION | 22 AUGUST 2026 | Save the date! All are welcome to join us for this inspiring and engaging day as we reflect on the past year of ministry and look forward to the next academic year.

suscotland.org.uk/bigcelebration

GO CONFERENCE | 9–12 OCTOBER 2026: LENDRICK MUIR | SU Scotland's national youth conference for S4–S6 pupils who want to grow in their relationship with God and understand how the Bible shapes all areas of life—home, school and friendships.

suscotland.org.uk/go (bookings live from June 2026)

