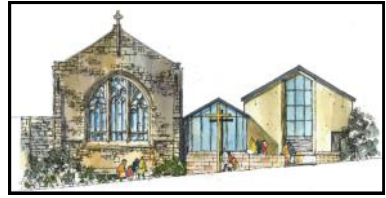


Life at St. Paul's Milngavie

February 2025



Dear Friends,

Blessings to you all in the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ! I hope this message finds you encouraged and full of hope as we journey together as a church family into what God has planned for us.

Recently, I've been reflecting on the story found in Numbers 11. It's a powerful reminder of how God works through His people — strengthening, equipping, and calling them to step out in faith. It's also a story that highlights the importance of encouragement and support within a community, a hallmark of who we are as a church. I'm so thankful for the love, care, and support that define us as a congregation. It is this strength that God can and will use to further His work among us and through us.

We are called not only to care for one another but also to partner with God in reaching out to those who have yet to experience His love, grace, and life-changing presence.

My heart — and I know yours too — is deeply burdened for the “missing generations” within our church: the youth and young families who may not yet know the richness of a life with Christ, or who may be travelling away from home to attend another place of worship. If this is the case, we need to ask the hard question – why? And how can we encourage younger people to join our caring church family?

cont...

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I believe with all my heart that God is inviting us to dream big and to take intentional steps in becoming a church that embraces and serves all generations, helping them to grow in faith and love.

As your minister, my love for this church is what inspires and drives me to focus on the future. I deeply desire for us to be a thriving, physically present congregation for years to come, sharing God's hope and light not just with those already here but also with those yet to join us. Together, we have the privilege of being a part of God's mission to grow His church, and I am filled with anticipation for what lies ahead.

On that note, I am absolutely thrilled that we will be welcoming the Very Rev Dr Martin Fair to our **Congregation Conference on Saturday, 15th February**. Dr Fair brings a wealth of wisdom about the Church in Scotland and carries a deep love and vision for her future. His insights and passion will undoubtedly help us to see more clearly the way forward as a church, and I hope you are as excited as I am to hear from him. I encourage you to mark your calendars and make every effort to attend this special event. It's an incredible opportunity to be inspired and equipped as we seek God's direction together. I believe this day will be a pivotal moment for us as a congregation, and I'm looking forward to all that God will reveal to us through it.

If you find yourself struggling or in need of support, please remember that I, along with our many caring elders, are always here for you. It is never a burden to reach out, and we would be honoured to walk alongside you. Sometimes, despite our best efforts, people can be unintentionally missed, so if you know of someone who might need a helping hand or a word of encouragement, please don't hesitate to let us know. The New Year can be a challenging time for many, but I want you to feel the love, care, and warmth of your church family, including your minister. cont...

cont...

Thank you for being the amazing, loving, and supportive church family that you are. I am truly blessed to serve alongside you. Let us continue to pray, encourage one another, and look to the future with faith and hope, trusting that God has great things in store for us.

With love and blessings, Your Minister, Lynsey

email: LBrennan@churchofscotland.org.uk

Manse telephone no: 0141 588 6023

Bible Study Notes

Many thanks to Lynsey who has prepared Bible Study Notes to supplement the sermon series on the Book of Numbers which she is currently delivering at our morning services.

If you would like a copy of these, please contact the office. They are ideal for using within a Bible Study Group or in personal devotions.

Within each, there is:

- an opening and closing prayer
- sub-headings with Bible Passages suggested
- discussion questions
- an activity relating to the passages studied.



It is great that we have this resource and hopefully many of the congregation will find them useful in their devotions.

*The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn his face towards you
and give you peace.*

Numbers 6:24 26

Working Group on Constitution Structure

As intimated at the Morning service on 2nd February, the Working Group met and proposed the new Committee Structure going forward in faith.

As a Church moving forward, but still continuing to respect our past, we initially consider that there should be 7 dedicated Committees.

There will be no set number of members for these Committees, but any member can serve, not just elders, and so volunteers are required. It is proposed that volunteers, perhaps 4, 5 or 6 will be appointed to allow the Committees to proceed with their business. Where appropriate, a youth representative may be co-opted.

It may be that members will be approached by the Convenor or Vice Convenor to ask if you will serve our Lord in this way.

UNITARY CONSTITUTION - PROPOSED COMMITTEES

Code - C means Convenor. VC means Vice Convenor.

1. Worship and Discipleship

C - Rev. Lynsey Brennan VC - Alison Bates

2. Pastoral

C - Robin Easton VC - Elizabeth McEwan

3. Mission and Outreach

C - Janice Maclean VC - Fiona Shaw

4. Children and Youth.

C - Nimmi Whitelaw VC - Neil Rankine

5. Fabric

C - Roy Prentice VC - Lachie McNeill

6. Finance.

C - Brian Adair VC - Gordon Fairbrother

7. Communications

C- Joint: Stephen Thoms and Carla MacAllister.

Stewardship will be dealt with partly under Finance and partly under Mission and Outreach.

Graham Mill, Session Clerk

Joyful Noise

Milngavie United Free Church
9th February at 6:30pm
Theme: *Who Jesus is
and
what we can do when we trust in Him*

Anyone who loves Jesus and wants to worship Him in music with instrument or voice, regardless of age or ability or church membership is welcome to join us to Make a Joyful Noise to the Lord!



A group of passionate young people from local churches in Bearsden and Milngavie have come together to form a praise group called **Joyful Noise**. They'll be leading a special service of worship and praise, and they'd love for others to join in!

This is a fantastic chance for young Christians to come together, strengthen their faith, and celebrate who Jesus is. It's also a meaningful opportunity for adults to show their encouragement by attending and supporting the young people as they share their gifts for God's glory.

Let's rally around our youth, inspire their faith journeys, and remind them that they are a valued and essential part of the wider church. Please come along on 9th February to support them.

Prayer Group: Monday 7:30 - 8:30 pm, Jubilee Hall

Each week, members of our congregation meet for prayer -
praying for our church family,
our local area and people,
and
issues in the wider world.



We are always happy to see new faces,
so please come and join us
we would be delighted to see you.

Japan Jottings



It was lovely to be with you at the beginning of January. I am looking forward to more opportunities to catch up with you all over the next few months.

I have now had confirmation of the place I will serve for my next term. I will go to a town in rural Japan called Sakata, on the west coast of Yamagata Prefecture. "Rural" in Japan means something a little different from in Scotland.

Sakata has a population of over 96,000 people. That's about the size of Bearsden, Milngavie, Bishopbriggs, Lenzie and Kirkintilloch added together. It is, however, relatively remote, about 6 hours from Tokyo, and the bullet train doesn't even go there. Apparently there are about 180 church members spread over 6 small churches. That means that fewer than 0.2% of the population of Sakata are Christian.



The church is led by a fairly new minister. There are about 50 members in the church but most are in their 70s and 80s, so they see the next five years as a key time to reach younger people, if the church is to have a future. We call this "church revitalisation". The minister and his wife are keen to reach out to the local community and asked OMF to send a missionary to help them. When I visited the church last July, we had a sense that God was leading me there, but the church has now confirmed it at their AGM.

The minister and his wife have four young girls and live in an apartment attached to the church, which is common in Japan.

cont...

...cont.

They don't know of any foreign missionary living in the town, so there will hopefully be various opportunities to reach out to the local community. The minister already has lots of ideas!

I am sure there will be various challenges along the way, but for now I am excited at the prospect of helping a Japanese church in an area with so few Christians.

I know that the church will be very appreciative of your prayers for them as they seek to be salt and light in the town.

With love and prayers, Lorna



**Pastoral Assistant Vacancy
Closing Date: 14th February 2025**

St. Paul's is currently recruiting for a Pastoral Assistant.

The role of the Pastoral Assistant is to:

- work alongside our newly appointed minister and other staff
- support our Elders and Pastoral Visiting Team
- engage in the pastoral care of our congregation and the local community
- contribute to our worship services.

For further information please e-mail:

Reverend Lynsey Brennan
or

Session Clerk, Graham Mill

LBrennan@churchofscotland.org.uk

g.mill@ntlworld.com.

**Church Community Conference: Growing Together
Saturday morning (10:00—12:30) on 15th February
Guest Speaker: The Very Rev Dr Martin Fair**

It's always good to know a little about who a speaker is and it is hoped that the following will demonstrate that The Very Rev Dr Martin Fair has much to offer us in helping to grow God's people of faith in our church and wider community in Milngavie.



The Very Rev Dr Martin Fair

The Very Rev Dr Martin Fair was the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland from 2020 to 2021. He was installed as Moderator on May 16, 2020.

Background:

- Martin was born and raised in Glasgow, Scotland.
- He studied at Strathclyde and Glasgow Universities, and Princeton Theological Seminary.
- He was ordained in 1992 and served as the Minister of St Andrew's Parish Church in Arbroath for 32 years.
- He served on the Mission & Discipleship Council of the denomination, and chaired the Church Without Walls committee.

Role as Moderator:

- As Moderator, Martin Fair was the Church's ambassador at home and abroad for the year.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, he moderated an online General Assembly in October 2020.

cont...

..cont.

(extract from Speech by Retiring Moderator Very Rev Dr Martin Fair)

I've heard it so many times that, for the Church, it's not about numbers. It absolutely will be about numbers if the numbers are so low that the Church can no longer run Crossreach or local caring services because the local church isn't there any more!

So I long for the Church to be about that Kingdom work but, oh boy, how we need the Church to be refreshed, renewed, revitalised, remade and, yes, reformed that it might do it more effectively.

I long for an alive, vibrant church - a Church that has traded in the lukewarm... and instead is passionate in its love of Jesus in such a way that others will want a piece of that action.

I long for a Church empowered as it worships - a Church shaped by the Word, alive in the Spirit - a Church that knows itself called AND sent - a Church that is confident in the Gospel in the face of both hostility and indifference - a Church that teaches and baptises and nurtures new believers in Christ.

Martin, a dynamic and deeply insightful church leader, has helped many congregations realise their vision in growing their church membership and it is hoped that as many as possible of St. Paul's congregation come along on Saturday morning (15th February) to hear how we can do this also.



**This is an invitation to you to step into something bigger,
to connect more deeply with God and with one another,
and to leave with a renewed sense of purpose and perhaps also with new connections within our own church.**

Please come along
and be part of our *Growing Together*.

Tea/coffee pastries on arrival with lunch provided afterwards

Milngavie Churches Prayer Breakfast



The next Milngavie Churches Prayer Breakfast is on **Saturday 22nd February** from 8:00 am until 9:25 am at Allander Evangelical Church

All welcome — breakfast from 8:00 am and a time of prayer from 8:45 am, with the hosting church leading the prayer time.

Bible Sunday: 23rd February 2025

The Scottish Bible Society supports the work of Bible Societies from Scotland to China and beyond.



Among the projects being supported this year are:

- Bible printing in China (including large print),
- distributing Bible storybooks to schoolchildren in Haiti,
- distribution of Bibles in Ukraine
- the production of Must Know Bible Stories - a series of free downloadable resources for use within the Religious and Moral Education curriculum in Scottish schools.

At our morning service on 23rd February, Norman Liddle from the Scottish Bible Society will give us an update on the current projects and there will be an opportunity to support the work of the Society.

Frances Ireland

Thank you so very much for your support of St Rollox Community Outreach Project - we



St Rollox Community Outreach Project

have a large number of new Scots coming through the door who are unable to get a place in college to learn English and so are keen to come to us to learn here. Your recent donation of £500 will cover the cost of many of them receiving a stationery pack with all that they need to get them started on their journey towards improving their knowledge of the English language. Your donations of food also help us to support those who cannot afford to live on the asylum seeker payments.

If you would ever like to hear more about the project, we are happy to come and share at your gatherings. We would also very much appreciate your prayers for us, that we would shine God's light as we seek to serve our neighbours.

Finally, if anyone would be interested in volunteering with us, either to work with asylum seekers/refugees, or reach the wider community, then we would very much love to hear from them as we have a number of opportunities at the moment.

Many thanks again for your generosity towards us, we are so grateful for your faithfulness to us.



Church Flowers Delivery



It would be helpful to have a few more people willing to deliver the church flowers after the morning service. In terms of commitment, it only involves a short time on a Sunday approximately every 8 weeks. Those that are already involved in delivering the flowers get much satisfaction from doing so as it is a visible sign of demonstrating how our church members care for each other and the flowers are very much appreciated by members of the congregation who receive them.

If you would like to help please contact me, it would be lovely to have you join us.

Marylyn Taggart
(Home: 584 9993 or Mobile: 07792 261968)

Report on Questionnaire issued October, 2024 to the congregation of St. Paul's, Milngavie

In December I was asked to attempt to collate the answers given in the questionnaire. This was not a simple task as the responses were very wide-ranging. The responses did make very interesting reading for the new Minister and have given her an insight into the congregation's varied thoughts and ideas for the future of St. Paul's church linked with Baldernock.

The initial response was poor (16 responses) but after some cajoling the final figures were as follows:

Responses - 48

Church members - 580

Regular attendees - ~160

giving a Response rate of: $48/580 = 8.3\%$. OR $48/160 = 30\%$.

However, assuming 2/3 of responses come from a single person and 1/3 from a couple, the number of responses becomes:

$$48 + 1/3 \text{ of } 48 = 64$$

Amended response rate. $64/580 = 11\%$ OR $64/160 = 40\%$

For information - the average response rate from surveys is:

- *Typically, the figures are between 20% and 30%*
- *A response rate below 10% is considered very low*
- *A good response rate would be anything above 50%.*

Each question was looked at and analysed.

An example of a couple of the question summaries are shown in the Appendix.

Summary

Organisations of all types are struggling to retain members. But we have such a powerful message to offer. I suspect it is all about taking small positive steps when out and about in the community. Many thanks to everyone who completed the questionnaire, the results have been and, in the future, will be of great benefit to everyone cont ...

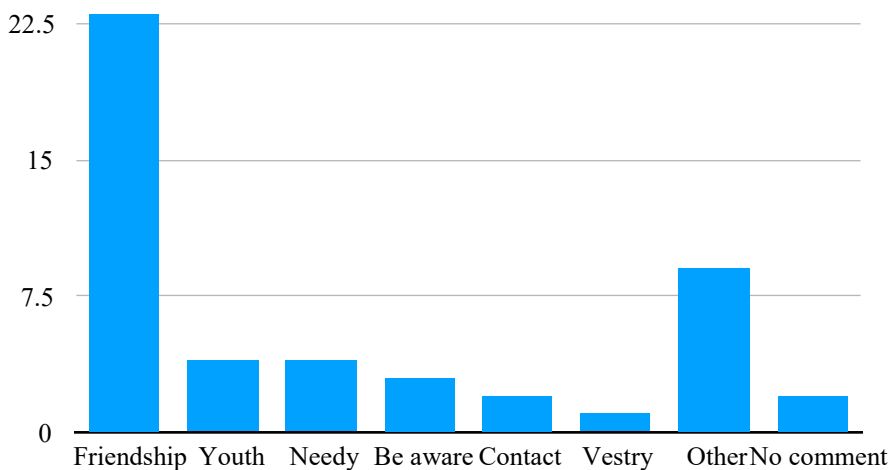
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involved in the development of St. Paul's linked with Baldernock.

I would urge all of the congregation, if asked, to give their thoughts/ opinions via any future questionnaires or surveys.

Appendix

Q1 As a church of Jesus, we should be loving and serving those in our community. What do you think are the needs of those within our community?



Key

- Friendship - incorporates loneliness, feeling isolated, needing friendship
- Youth - Encourage the youth
- Needy - Needy people both physically and mentally
- Be aware - Be aware of what this church offers
- Contact - Have contact with the Elders and Church visitors
- Vestry time - specific time allocated to private meeting with the Minister.

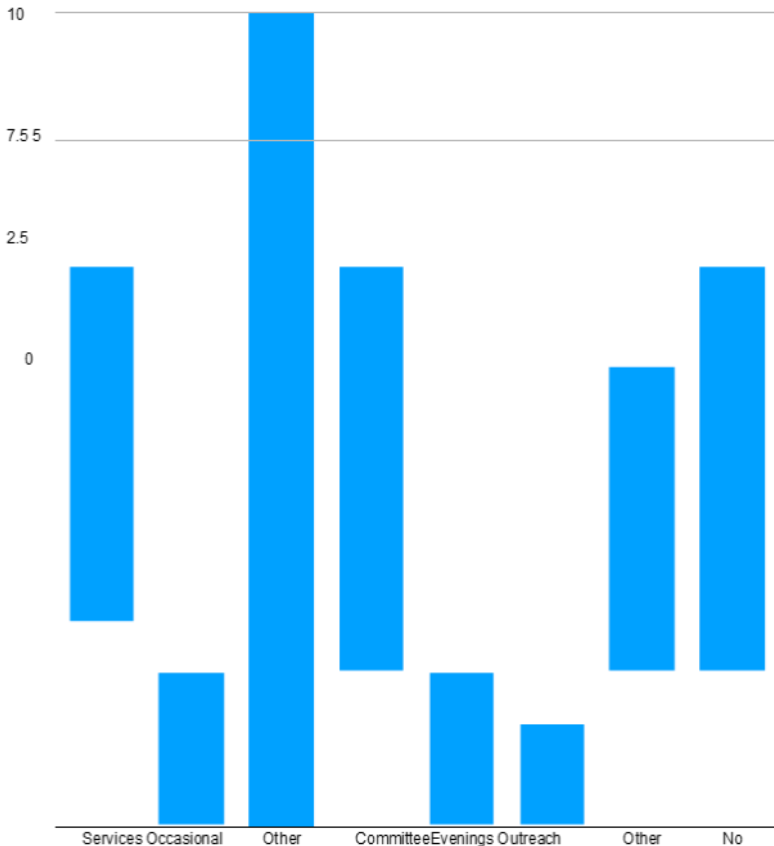
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Sample replies to Q1

*If our community means our church, then links between the congregation and elders seem to have broken down. Few if any are visiting. No church visitors with **Life magazine** now. Some members feel isolated from the church as a result. No rota now to pick up members of the congregation to bring them to church. Covid put paid to all these arrangements but surely they should by now be back in place.*

Excellent offer of vestry time with our minister - so needed Fellowship and Friendship are always needed whether it's the young, young parents, middle aged or the elderly.

Q4 We are in a 'deferred union' – how can we best work/serve with Baldernock Church in Christian unity and mutual respect?



The Story Behind The Name

Our church's WW1 war memorial is beside the pulpit at the front of the church. It contains the names of the men who served and a list of those killed. Just underneath is a smaller list of those who were killed in WW2. The war memorial plaques in St. Paul's display names but not stories behind the names. I am hoping to be able to find out and share some of these stories with you.

Lieutenant Alexander Christie Strathdee

Bracing for war, but praying for peace.

*Using his power so evil will cease: so much a leader and worthy of trust.
Here stands a man who will do what he must.* (taken from the *Leader* poem, anon.)

The Strathdee family were members of St. Paul's and lived at 26 Clober Road. Alexander was known as Christie by his friends and family. He went to Milngavie Primary and then to Bearsden Academy. He loved sport and was in the cricket and hockey teams and captain of the school football club. He was also in Glasgow Schools football club which took part in a challenge match with Bradford in 1933. In addition, he was a skilled golfer playing at Milngavie Golf Club and on becoming a senior, winning the Milngavie Cup.

On leaving school he worked at Beardmore and Co Ltd in Parkhead.

Pre-war, Alexander had joined the local Territorial Unit in Milngavie, obtaining a commission in the Royal Artillery. He was called up to service in 1939. Subsequently he was posted to North Africa. Alexander was a troop commander, in the 25th Field Regiment Royal Artillery, 4th Indian Infantry Division which was part of the 8th Army in North Africa.

Alexander was wounded on 8th December 1941 in what seems to have been an otherwise successful action against a Panzer IV tank and the capture of its crew.



Panzer IV

By the summer of 1942, the famous German General Rommell and his Panzer (Tank) army had swept across the North African Desert. His aim was to gain control of the Suez Canal.

The Allied forces fell back to Egypt. Alexander had managed to successfully lead the Indian troops under his command and they were able to retreat east from the city of Benghazi.

Unfortunately, the large allied garrison in the port of Tobruk had been cut off from retreat and was trapped and surrounded. The German Africa Corp attacked on the 19th of June and again through skilled leadership, Alexander managed to escape with his troops on the 19th June before the final encirclement in Tobruk, resulting in the garrison surrendering on the 21st June when 32,000 allied troops were taken prisoner.



Soldiers of the 4th Indian Division at Tobruk commanded by Alexander

Alexander's soldiers were then caught up in a further battle with German forces at the Battle of Gazala where he lost his life on the 20th June 1942.

Alexander was aged 26.
He is buried in the El Alalmein Cemetery, Egypt.



Battle of Gazala 20th June 1942

Robert Rutherford

Guild News

The Guild continues to meet in the Large Hall
on a
Monday afternoon at 2:00 pm.



We have a variety of topics this month:

- 3rd Bible Study led by the Rev. Marnie Johnston
- 10th Entertainment by Eva Campbell
- 17th A Gallop through St.Paul's Holidays by Anne Ritchie
- 24th Barnardos by Shona Marshall when we will be joined by some ladies from Cairns' Ladies Group.

Everyone is most welcome to join us at our meetings
and of course a cuppa to finish.

Annual Guild Coffee Morning at St. Paul's

Our annual coffee morning takes place in the Large Hall
on
Saturday, 1st March.



Tickets: £2:50

This year our coffee morning is in aid of
2 National Guild Projects:

- Operation Hope - Voice of the Persecuted Christians in Egypt
&
- Playful Beginnings - A Crossreach project working with
vulnerable families in both Glasgow and Edinburgh.

2025 will be a busy year as we celebrate
the 125th Anniversary
of the Guild in St. Paul's.

Elizabeth McEwan

The Men's Association

Fiona Hennebry, the founder and organiser of Bags Full of Love, was speaking at the Guild in January. She brought with her a thank you note for the Association, thanking for the very generous donation of £955.00 from the successful coffee morning and a private donation of £200.00. Obviously, we are happy to thank everyone who contributed to that success.

At our first meeting in January, unfortunately the speaker didn't turn up! We muddled through with some light entertainment. She telephoned the next day to apologise and she will become our first speaker next year.

Douglas Cameron helped by his wife Ina, was our guest on 28th January and he gave a very informative talk about the work of Milngavie in Bloom, which, as the title suggests, helps to keep flowers and shrubs growing in public areas of Milngavie.

Our meetings in February are on 11th and 25th at the usual time in the Jubilee Hall. On 11th we welcome back Doctor Robert Hamilton, who is well known for his extensive knowledge of the American political scene. He's going to speak about the most recent election and subsequent inauguration of Donald Trump. On 25th we have one of our members, Malcolm Boyd speaking and his subject is Panama Canal revisited.

Our Association welcomes all to attend our meetings.

Peace and blessings to all who love the Lord.

Brian Adair



Faifley Upcycling: Faifley Parish Church

(open every Tuesday from 10.00 - 11.30 am)

Sheila, who runs Faifley Upcycling, has been in touch with me to say they can no longer accept knife blocks, bread knives or steak knives. Cutlery knives, along with forks, will be acceptable.

They would welcome double or king size bedding but no single size as they have an abundance of them.

They are also looking for clothes airers if anyone has one to spare.

Jean Scott

The Beacon (formerly known as the Lunch Club)

The Lunch Club, as mentioned last month, is changing its name after more than 40 years. This is mainly because some people think you have to join a club, to come and have lunch. We had many excellent suggestions, thanks everyone. The one chosen is THE BEACON. We hope that it will shed light not just in the church, but within our wider community.



There were so many worthwhile charities looking for support at the end of the year so we decided as well as donating to the church to help with heating and lighting, we would also send donations to the following charities:

- Dalmuir Barclay
- City Mission
- National Autistic Society
- Lorna Ferguson, our OMF missionary in Japan
- Lodging House Mission.

We have received lovely letters of thanks from them all but the following extract from the Lodging House Mission which certainly illustrates how important our donations are in terms of helping people:

I wanted to share the impact of your kindness on person in particular. One young girl, living in supported accommodation, was especially delighted to receive a hot chocolate set with a mug. Having only been provided with basic cups in her accommodation, this gift brought her particular joy and made her feel truly seen and cared for. This small gesture transformed a simple gift into something truly meaningful for her, it was deeply personal and uplifting.

Thank you to everyone who supports us and we look forward to seeing you at The Beacon on a Wednesday lunch-time.

Ann MacLeod



Noah's Ark



As mentioned in the January Edition of *Life*, Noah's Ark had yet another successful year. Due to the generosity and support from the families we were delighted to donate some money to the Church and a local charity:

- we donated £300 to the Church to help cover the heating and lighting we use each Thursday
- we also donated £250 to Babes in The Wood Children's Shop & Community Room, Bishopbriggs which helps families in need in East Dunbartonshire (extract from thank you letter below).

Thank you for your kind donation of £250 which we will put to good use in our referral packs distributed for free through our partnerships with the Health Visitors, eg from the Milngavie Clinic, Social Work, the foodbank, local schools and other grassroot charities to support EDC families in need.

We supply each family that needs a clothing pack with seven days worth of clothing which includes underwear and this will be the main focus of use for your donation.



Jackie Sillars

Book Club



We have been reading *A Week in Winter* by Maeve Binchy. This was her last book and although some of the group had read a few of her novels before, for others it was the first time they had read this author.

The book is set in a hotel in Ireland and consists of nine short stories all relating to the diverse group of guests visiting the new hotel for the first time.

The group felt this was an ideal holiday read as each chapter gave us a complete snapshot of each of the guests not to mention the main character, Chicky, and the story of her life which lead to the new venture.

We did wonder however if the last chapter which brought everything together had been written by somebody else as it seemed to lack the extra touch that Maeve Binchy had brought to the previous stories.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 18th March when we will be discussing *Conclave* by Robert Harris.

If you would like to join us please contact the Church office for more details.

Joyce Clark

St. Paul's Church Society Cards

Many thanks for your continued support in this venture.
Over the years the wonderful sum of

£8,600

has been raised through the sale of cards to benefit
many local charities.



Our present charity is Ronald McDonald House Glasgow and an amazing amount of **£350** has been raised so far.

Any suggestions for future local charities to support would be most welcome.

All cards are still a bargain at £1.

Elizabeth McEwan

Baldernock Church



2025 marks the 230th year anniversary
of
Baldernock Church
and there will be a series of events throughout the year

Author event at Baldernock Parish Church
Wednesday 19th Feb at 7:30 pm
(refreshments/light bites from 7:00 pm)

Peter Ross, author of *Tomb with a View* and *Steeple Chasing*,
will give an insight into his fascination with churches and graveyards
and what they tell us about the human condition.

He will be interviewed by **Sally Magnusson**.

This event is open to all and will appeal to anyone interested in
church buildings, architecture, graveyards and family history.

Tickets £10 each
from Isabel Ewing (07968011974) or iee@tcyoung.co.uk

It would be helpful if anyone wishing to come, could pre-book (to assist
with catering). However tickets will be available on the door as well.

Car parking at Baldernock Glebe please, for those able to walk down to
church, to leave parking at church for elderly /infirm.
Disabled access ramps will be out and the church paths well lit.

CHURCH REGISTER

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Flower Donations

Thank you for the Flower Donations given in Memory:

F Dorrall, M Spencer, T Knaggs



Please address donations to: Treasurer, Mrs Barbara Lawson
(clearly marked: *For The Flower Fund*)

Donations can be left in the Flower Guild pigeon hole at the back of the Church, or in the offering plate marked *For The Flower Fund*.

Copy Date

The copy date for the March *Life* is
Wednesday, 26th February
for issue on Sunday, 2nd March

Please send any articles to st.paulslifemagazine@gmail.com