



## **Church of Scotland**

**Baldernock linked with Milngavie, St Paul's**

### **Parish Profile**

**February, 2024**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Baldernock is a rural parish located in the rolling farmland between Milngavie and Torrance, six miles north of Glasgow city centre. The villages of Baldernock and Balmore are within the parish bounds but otherwise the land in the parish is primarily used for agriculture. The current church building dates back to 1795, though it is generally thought there would have been a church at or close to the present site since the Reformation.

St Paul's is a gathered congregation in the village of Milngavie, approximately five miles north of Glasgow. Milngavie has had a long industrial history largely based on the River Allander, which flows through the village. This work ranged from milling corn, bleaching, dyeing and laundering to making cardboard boxes and ginger beer. Milngavie is now primarily a commuter town for the city of Glasgow which can be reached in less than 30 minutes by train.

On the retirement of the minister at Baldernock, the two parishes were linked in August, 2017, under the minister of St Paul's. He retired in September, 2022.

An Interim Moderator was appointed by Clyde Presbytery and, following the adoption of the Presbytery Mission Plan in June 2023, permission to call a minister to the linked charge on unrestricted tenure was granted in February, 2024.

## **PRESBYTERY PLAN**

The Clyde Presbytery Mission Plan was adopted in June 2023. The plan envisages the linkage continuing for the foreseeable future and requires the new minister to agree a worship plan for Baldernock in consultation with the Kirk Session. A union between the two churches has been mentioned in the plan as a possible future development but no timetable has been prescribed.

## MANSE

The Baldernock manse was sold on the retirement of the minister and substantial funds are held by the General Trustees on behalf of the congregation for future works.

The St Paul's manse, a 1900s stone detached villa, did not meet Presbytery energy requirements and has also been sold.

To replace it a four-bedroom detached bungalow was purchased in November, 2023. The new manse is located within a mile of the church and close to local amenities, transport links and excellent schooling. The property falls into the catchment area for Craigdhu Primary School and the highly acclaimed Douglas Academy. The property has gas central heating and double glazing throughout (with the exception of the original stained-glass feature windows). There is also a substantially sized basement with power and light which is currently used as a workshop. The property meets Clyde Presbytery requirements and has an EER band C rating.



## **BALDERNOCK PARISH**

Baldernock is largely a rural parish. The villages of Baldernock and Balmore are within the parish bounds but otherwise the land in the parish is primarily used for agriculture. The Communion Roll was recently revised and there are 131 members and six adherents. Services are currently held every Sunday at 12 noon and the congregation is generally in the region of 25-30. The majority of members are in the age group 60+ but we have a group of regular attenders ranging from 20-60 years of age. We have welcomed six new members since June 2023 and three of our members and adherents are under 30. The church hall is located two miles from the church in Balmore and, prior to Covid, was regularly used by a number of local organisations. Since 2022, we have been encouraging renewed local use and have made some progress. It should be noted that the current Presbytery Plan envisages the hall being sold, and we have begun to explore the possibilities regarding that. The hall is owned by the congregation, not the General Trustees. If the hall is sold we will have the option of using the extensive hall facilities at St Paul's in the future.

## **MANAGEMENT**

There are 13 elders on the Kirk Session, eight women and five men. The parish is a quoad omnia parish and there is no congregational board. Session meetings take place approximately bimonthly. The session has agreed that its membership does need reviewed and envisages that this will be addressed once the new minister has been inducted. The church has no employees. The treasurer and church officer operate on a voluntary basis without remuneration.

## **WORSHIP, PASTORAL MATTERS AND OUTREACH**

During the vacancy the session has willingly accepted the challenge of leading Sunday worship when the Interim Moderator or a supply preacher is not available. It has been heartening to see how well this has been received by the members, as well as how willing elders and members have been to take part. The session is happy to continue and extend this practice in consultation with the minister to help to ensure the continuance of public worship. This experience has persuaded the session of the need to modernise the audio-visual aids in the church.

We use an electric organ for musical accompaniment and have a permanent organist. The session is aware that part of any upgrade of facilities might involve a replacement for the organ which is now too old to be satisfactorily repaired.

Holy Communion is celebrated twice a year in May and November and the church conducts a service at the parish war memorial on Remembrance Sunday, which is attended by a local councillor. The church also sponsors an outdoor act of worship at the trig point above the church on Easter Sunday each year.

Elders take an active role in maintaining contact with parishioners and are able, via the Session Clerk, to ensure that the minister is kept up to date on any pastoral care requirements. The Sunday School fell into abeyance a few years ago but involvement with the nearby primary school has maintained the link with local children and will continue to be encouraged.

The session realises that, as a rural parish, we have to think more imaginatively about appropriate outreach strategies. To that end, we have promoted events open to the whole community, including a parish picnic in spring and a coffee morning in autumn. We have revived the community Christmas carol concert (interrupted by Covid) and rebuilt an active involvement with the local primary school, which holds Easter and Christmas services and its end-of-term gathering in the church. We open the church on two Monday evenings each month for private prayer and meditation.

Baldernock's Harvest Thanksgiving has in recent years focused on the collection of donations for Glasgow's Lodging House Mission, a charity with which we have had a long association. At Christmas the church collects gifts for the Tollcross Community Nursery, again a practice going back many years. We collect funds to sponsor students in Swaziland and, on an ad hoc basis, for other organisations such as Crossreach.

## **FINANCE**

In the year to December 2021, the church incurred a deficit on income and expenditure of £4,974, largely as a result of an extended closure during Covid. In the year to December 2022 the deficit reduced to £4,737. The current year has seen a noticeable improvement in income and the treasurer anticipates that in the current year, the church will break even. The Presbytery Plan requires the session to devise a plan for the upgrading of some facilities, primarily for access and toilet facilities. The session is consulting an architect well acquainted with the church and the Presbytery's Buildings Officer about the most practical solution. The General Trustees hold substantial funds for the church and it is anticipated that funds will be available for the necessary works.

## **ST PAUL'S PARISH**

St Paul's is one of three Church of Scotland parish churches in Milngavie. The parish area of St Paul's is relatively small, with a population of around 6,000. Originally Milngavie Parish Church, the first building was established in 1841 and the congregation moved to the present building in 1906.

### **MANAGEMENT**

The church is administered in the terms of the Church of Scotland Model Deed of Constitution. The members of the Kirk Session and the Congregational Board are the charity trustees (SC002737).

There are 77 Elders in the Kirk Session who meet 5 times a year and 21 elected members on the Congregational Board who meet 6 times a year. There are a number of committees who meet as required throughout the year. There are also 4 part-time members of staff.

### **WORSHIP, PASTORAL MATTERS AND OUTREACH**

In St Paul's on Sunday there are two services of worship, at 10.30am and 7pm. The morning service is recorded and streamed on the internet. Communicant membership of the church is 580. Attendance at Sunday worship continues to average around 170 members at the morning service and 30 members at the evening Service.

Future plans regarding audio-visual equipment for use in the sanctuary continue to be investigated. No decision has yet been made and further discussions will be ongoing.

The church has a reliable pipe organ situated in the West Transept with the pipe work set into the side wall of this area. The West Transept pews have been removed to create an adjustable space which normally houses the 25 members of the choir. The choir repertoire covers a wide range of musical styles from which are selected introits and anthems for each Sunday morning service.

This area also contains a digital piano. There is space for a praise band which plays during the Christmas season and which could be reintroduced for Sunday worship. Led by the choir and the organist, congregational singing is a powerful part of our worship.

On Thursday a weekly prayer meeting is held at 8pm. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated four times a year, during a morning service in January, April, June and October. Advent services are held at 9.30am each Saturday during Advent and Lenten services at 9.30am each Saturday during Lent. Guest preachers and elders have led and delivered the addresses. A number of home bible study groups operate in the parish. A Harvest Thanksgiving Service is held in September, with donations given to the housebound and local charities. A family service is held on Christmas Eve.

The Sunday Club and Bible Class meet during the morning service each week for children from three years old to those in S6. Sun Kids, for all children in the community who are of primary school age, meets once a month on a Saturday afternoon.

The Ark, which is for secondary school pupils in the community, meets on Saturday evenings once a month. A toddler group, Noah's Ark, operates on a Thursday morning during school term time for children up to the age of three.

The Guild and the Badminton Club meet weekly, and the Men's Association fortnightly, throughout the church season. BreakAway is our outreach to the community to support families and those affected by early-onset dementia. A lunch club is run by members of the congregation every Wednesday during the church season for members of the local community.

Members of Baldernock Parish Church attend many of the activities.

An in-house produced monthly magazine entitled Life at St Paul's, together with our church website and a printed Sunday intimations sheet, are our primary ways of communicating with the congregation.

St Paul's and Baldernock participate and co-operate, with other local churches in events and activities and joint services are organised at Easter.

A number of our members also assist in the running of an ecumenical drop-in centre supported by the local churches called Friendship House. The Douglas Academy Annual Christmas Concert is held at the church and is well supported by the members, parents and friends. Fundraising for Christian charities is a part of the witness and outreach at St Paul's, and during the year we support many charities both locally and overseas. Every second year a Tree Festival is held in December which is supported by the local churches, schools, youth and community groups.

St. Paul's also has a long connection with the Overseas Missionary Fellowship. A St. Paul's member has been working for OMF in Japan for many years.

## **FINANCE**

Income was £271,978 in 2022 (£261,274 – 2021) with a net surplus of £18,385 (£51,092 – 2021). The congregation has strong reserves and has met the Giving to Grow figure each year, £101,249 in 2022 (£101,100 – 2021). There is a Stewardship Committee which works within the congregation and reaches out to the parish particularly at Easter and Christmas. The Stewardship Convener is a member of the Finance Team and both report regularly to the Congregational Board and Kirk Session.

## **PROPERTY**

The red sandstone sanctuary is grade C listed and can accommodate 600 people. The Jubilee Hall was added in 1961, the large hall in 1964 and new kitchen, toilets, vestry and the Centenary Room were added in 2005. Ongoing maintenance of the church building and halls facilities continues to be achieved to a very high standard.



## **WHAT WE SEEK**

We seek, with God's help and guidance, to reflect the love of God in our worship, our words and our daily living. We wish to share the good news of Jesus with those in our parishes and beyond.

We seek to be led by a minister who loves God's Word and who, by preaching and teaching, will help us to grow in our faith. The minister will have a concern for pastoral care and lead us by example in our caring for others.

We maintain the traditional position of the Church of Scotland with regard to same sex relationships.

**Interim Moderator**, Rev Barbara O'Donnell. [revbarb1@gmail.com](mailto:revbarb1@gmail.com)

### **Applications to:-**

Nominating Committee Clerk  
Mrs H Rutherford,  
St Paul's Church,  
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