

# ST. PAUL'S HERALD

CONGREGATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, JOHNSTONE



## Autumn 2023

Dear Friends,

On behalf of my wife and myself, I want to thank you for your tremendous kindness and generosity to us as we retire as organist and minister at St. Paul's. We have received countless cards, personal gifts and an extremely generous congregational gift. We do appreciate all this. Words of praise have been expressed for my ministry among you and when I hear them or read them, I find it difficult to believe that what is being said is about me.

I am only too well aware of some of my shortcomings. I have not visited or got to know the whole congregation. I had attempted to visit everyone in my previous congregations, but when I came to St. Paul's, a colleague said that by the time I had been with you for ten years, I would have visited or got to know everyone. I have been here twenty years and that is still not the case. Some of you will only know of me through the Herald or by hearsay. I apologise for that.

I have been asked whether I will be staying on in St. Paul's as a member. In the past a minister could do that when he retired. It is now strongly discouraged so that the minister does not interfere in the work of his successor. I have also been asked whether I would come back to preach. I would do so, if invited, but I think there would need to be a fair lapse of time. I will, however, come back to perform three marriages next year, but only one is actually in the church. I am willing to return for funerals, provided I am available and not away on any of my intended travels, but only where a family specifically request me.

Well, the time has now come to say "Good-bye". Did you know that the original goodbye, dating from the 1570s, was godbwy, which was a contraction of the farewell phrase "God be with ye!"? I do pray that God will be with each and every one of you in the days and years ahead. In many ways I don't need to pray for that, because He has already promised that is exactly what He will do.

I think you have a challenging time ahead as you face an unsettling period of vacancy with the ultimate goal of a triple union in Johnstone. Most people do not like change, but this will be fairly radical change. My final sermon finished with a reminder that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever. His presence is the one unchanging, stable influence. Please cling to that belief and God bless you all!

Yours sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Alistair N. Shaw



## Tuesday Afternoon Tea Group



The Afternoon Tea Group meets on the second Tuesday of the month in the Minor Hall within the Church from 1.30pm. The first Afternoon Tea of this session was held on the 12 September. All who attended thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon, catching up with friends they had not seen over the summer and of course the delicious home baking. The dates for the last three months of the year are: 10<sup>th</sup> October, 14<sup>th</sup> November & 12<sup>th</sup> December. Hope you can join us and maybe bring a friend.

These photos are from the final Afternoon Tea of the last session.



## THURSDAY CLUB



The Badminton Group and the Craft Group have now joined together to form the Thursday Club. Everyone is welcome to join us on a Thursday afternoon at 2p.m in the Keanie Hall.

If you are able to enjoy a game of badminton or whether you just enjoy the company of others then come along for an afternoon of fun, chat and a cup of tea. We have started our new session but thought you would like to see the photos taken at our last afternoon before the summer break.

## CHURCH REGISTER



### **Baptisms**

Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2023—Millie April Macdonald, Daughter of Fraser and Susan Macdonald.

Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2023—Caleb Stuart Andrew Moore, Son of Craig Moore and Caitlin Cullen.

Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2023 - Adult Baptism Flora Lamond

Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> August, 2023—Emma Erin Paton Greenlees, Daughter of Graeme and Stephanie Greenlees.

### **Ceremony of Infant Blessing**

Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2023—Lily-Mae Pamela Thomson, Daughter of Calum Thomson and Chloe Taylor.

### **Weddings**

Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2023 Bride: Gillian Patricia Rawls Groom: Christopher John Allen

Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2023 Bride: Fiona Jane Ferrier Groom: Edwin Charles Sheffield

### **Funerals**

Mr James Donaldson. 18 Craigston Place, Johnstone .

Date of Death: Tuesday 2nd May. Date of Funeral: Tuesday 6th June 2023.

Ms Norma Prescott, Flat 0/1, 7 Walkinshaw Street, Johnstone.

Date of Death : Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2023. Date of Funeral : Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2023.

Mrs. Irene Whitehead, 139 Springfield Park, Johnstone.

Date of Death : Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2023. Date of Funeral : Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2023.

Mrs. Margaret Rankin, Flat 18, 6 Bankside Avenue, Johnstone.

Date of Death : Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2023. Date of Funeral : Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2023.

Mrs. Irene Dorris, 6 Craigdonald Place Johnstone, latterly of Cochrane Care Home, Quarrelton Road, Johnstone.

Date of Death : Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2023. Date of Funeral : Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2023.

Ms Margaret Bell, 91 Homemount House, Gogosite Road, Largs.

Date of Death : Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2023. Date of Funeral : Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2023.

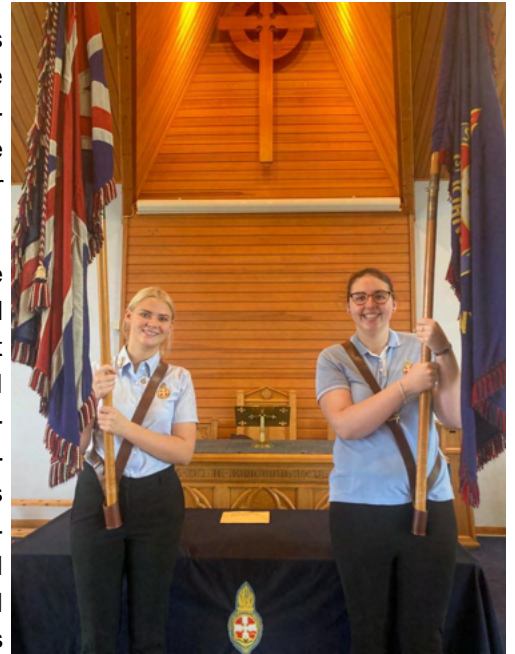


## 1st JOHNSTONE GIRLS' BRIGADE



On Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> August, a prize giving ceremony was held for 1<sup>st</sup> Johnstone Girls' Brigade, as part of the Sunday Service. We had 12 girls in attendance. Unfortunately, a number of girls were unable to join, due to it being the final weekend of the school summer holidays.

We had the pleasure of welcoming Jennie Cook, the new Clyde Division (former Renfrew, Inverclyde and Dumbarton merge) Commissioner, to present the awards to our girls. She also presented one of our Brigaders, Megan, with her Brigader brooch. The Brigader brooch is the second highest award a girl can achieve; it takes four years to complete and the individual receiving this award must have first gained badges for Spiritual, Physical, Education and Service. We are very proud of Megan's efforts and are very excited as she works towards becoming a young leader!



The service was also very special as it was the first time that the Company had marched in the colours; we would like to give a big thanks to Rachel, Sophie and Megan, who did very well with this. It was a very proud moment for our Company.

We had a successful first night back on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> August; we had three new girls join, hopefully we will have even more



joining over the coming weeks.

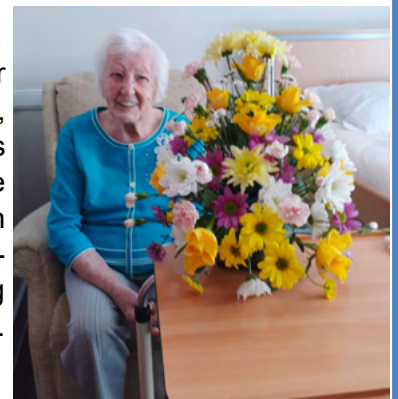
We would really appreciate any support! Please follow us on Facebook.

We look forward to bringing you more good news throughout the year.

Janet Macleod  
Captain

## Church Member

Rena Brown, a lifelong member of the Church, who for health reasons can no longer worship with us in person, celebrated in August her 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday. The pictures show Rena with two arrangements of flowers which the Church sent and her proudly holding up her balloon showing the world that she is now 95 years young. Although Rena is in residential care, she enjoys receiving The Herald and hearing about Church Life. All at St. Paul's wish her well.





## A Fond Farewell to Alistair & Brenda

On Friday evening 25<sup>th</sup> August over 150 of us gathered in the Keanie Hall to bid a fond farewell to Alistair and Brenda. We enjoyed a delicious buffet, followed by a couple of speeches and presentations to Alistair and Brenda. The gift from the congregation was vouchers for "Macdonald Resorts" and a Jasmine Bush for their garden.

We were wonderfully entertained by Margaret Linnie who read a poem she and a friend had written for the Minister and Christine McCormack who sang for us, accompanied by Shirley Munro.

Alistair then spoke about his journey through his ministry, sharing with us some extremely funny stories. A lovely evening of friendship and fellowship was had by all.



We are all sad to say goodbye to Alistair and Brenda but thank them for their commitment, dedication, hard work and friendship. We wish them both the happiest of well deserved retirements.

Elizabeth Alexander  
Session Clerk

## Interview with Rev. Dr. Alistair Shaw

**It's been 20 years since you first started your ministry at St Paul's Church. Can we take a wee look at your time with us by answering the following questions?**

**What first attracted you to move to Johnstone and your family were young when you moved here. Did you worry as to how you would all settle in Johnstone?**

When I was looking for a new congregation, I wanted it to be within a given area so that my daughters did not have to change school. A local colleague told me about St. Paul's being vacant and we came and looked at it from the outside and looked at the manse in Auchenlodment Road. I then decided not to apply, as none of us fancied living in that manse. Later my colleague told me of the congregation's intention to sell the manse and purchase a new one. Then the vacancy became more attractive and I did apply. I was not too worried about us settling in Johnstone, as I had been brought up in the area.



**How do you feel now that retirement has arrived – excited, happy, relieved etc.?**

I have a mixture of feelings. I am genuinely sad to be leaving St. Paul's (and Howwood). To be honest, I'm glad to be getting out of active ministry because of the massive changes which are taking place within the Church of Scotland at the present time.

**What did you enjoy most about being a minister?**

That would be preaching, as much the preparation as the delivery. I like exploring the Bible, finding out the background of a particular passage, its historical context, and then trying to relate its ancient message to life today. I also like the speaking part, trying to ensure that I am communicating it intelligibly and with clarity.

**A minister's role is a very challenging one, what have you learnt from your more challenging experiences in the position?**

Several things, I suppose. One is to be thoroughly prepared for meetings as well as Sunday worship. Another is to keep calm even when others are getting heated. I used to tell students that it's not the mistakes we make which matter but how we get out of them. A further one would be to be disciplined in the use of time.

**You continued to study during your time with us. What motivated you to study for your Doctorate and to write a book?**

When I graduated with my Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1979, two of my professors encouraged me to embark on a doctorate. I did academic research for a year, during which time I was locum in a vacancy. Members of that congregation kept telling me to proceed to the parish ministry which I did. However, I lived to regret that and most of my working life I wished that I had completed the doctorate. I thought that I might do it in retirement, but back about 2009 two of the New Testament lecturers at Glasgow urged me to do it there and then.

As to the book, it was the professor who supervised my work who suggested that I publish it. I consulted the tutor from Oxford University who had examined my thesis and he said that he thought my research was worthy of a wider readership. So I went ahead and edited it to make it into a more readable book.

**Who have been the most influential people in your career?**

My own minister was influential in that he had me preach my first sermon at the age of 14. As a teenager, I did not have pop idols. However, I greatly admired the late Willie Barclay who used to appear on TV in the late sixties and early seventies, explaining the Bible in a very down-to-earth manner. I also had a high regard for the late Leonard Small who was a terrific preacher. I managed to get him to come and preach in my church in Kilmarnock.







### **Do you have any funny or memorable stories from your time as a minister?**

In my first church at Bourtreehill in Irvine I had not long arrived and was visiting the local hospital. I met another minister who asked where I came from. When I told him, he said, "That's the area where they wife-swap." A few months later a woman came to see me after the Sunday service and asked if I would visit her husband because he had tried to commit suicide. When I saw him, I asked what led him to take such drastic action. He then told me his wife had slept with her nephew – so he slept with the woman across the road. Her husband was annoyed and slept with another woman down the street and in the end there were six different people involved.

### **You minister to others – who ministers to you?**

When I was acting as presbytery clerk, I set up a scheme whereby ministers could nominate a colleague who would be their pastor. I am pastor to three colleagues and I have another colleague to whom I turn when I have a problem.



### **We know your love of travelling around the world, do you have plans to visit new and exciting destinations? Any place you still have to tick off your bucket list?**

Brenda and I were in the very fortunate position that we managed to visit all the places on our "A" bucket list before Covid struck. However, I do have a "B" list. It includes Chile and Argentina, Cambodia, Egypt, Romania and more of Greece.

### **What advice would you give to someone who is just starting as a Minister in the Church of Scotland in this time of change?**

My answer to this one might surprise you. It is to have qualifications for another career. As the Church of Scotland's membership shrinks, so do its finances. I fear that in the future the Church will not be able to afford full-time ministers on a stipend.

### **How do you intend to spend your retirement?**

I want to spend more time with Brenda and my grandchildren, have regular lunches with some of my friends, engage in daily walks, travel more, as I've already indicated. I would like to continue preaching on a Sunday. I already have four Sundays booked in a church in Clydebank, but am open to further engagements. I would like to write another book, but one more geared for lay people, something along the lines of "a thought for the day". I have books to read which I have not properly dipped into yet.





## WAYS AND MEANS SOCIAL COMMITTEE

It seems such a long time ago now, but back in May we had a lovely afternoon in the Keanie Hall to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III.

Around 70 people attended and we were entertained by the very talented children and young adults from "Stage Avenue" who gave us a taste of their upcoming show "Oliver". Margaret Linnie gave a rendition of her ever-witty poetry, and the wonderful singing of Christine McCormack was accompanied by Brenda Shaw. We were finally treated to a fabulous rendition of songs by Regan Lyndsay.

There was such a good atmosphere in the hall and we sang and danced the afternoon away.



Thank you and well done to our volunteers, our ever-faithful bakers and everyone who contributed in any way to make this such a resounding success. In all we raised £542.16p for Church funds.





## WAYS AND MEANS SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Following on from our Summer break we now have plans in place for several events.

On Friday 22nd September we have for the first time the "Jimmy Blair Accordion Orchestra" this will consist of 12 accordions and 2 keyboards.

They were first established in the early 1970's and play a mixture of music from traditional to modern and also include some "sing along" songs which I know we at St. Paul's always enjoy.

Tickets will be on sale from Sunday 3rd September from Betty Usher.

In October we are once again having our ever popular Beetle Drive. This will hopefully take place on Friday 20th, the actual date, time and price will be advertised in our pew leaflet nearer the time so that's one to watch out for.

We hope to have Brian Taylor's Fashions in November. At the moment I am in contact with Brian to try and arrange a confirmed date.

We will make every effort to ensure this very popular event goes ahead so watch for further details on the pew leaflet.

Aileen and the Ways & Means Committee

### Brenda's Retirement Lunch

The Choir members enjoyed a delicious lunch on Sunday 23 August at Trattoria Roma to celebrate the retirement of Brenda Shaw as Choir Mistress & Organist. The Choir presented Brenda with gifts and there was much laughter and chat all afternoon. A great time was had by all. The photos give a snapshot of the day.



### Sunday 6/8/23



Adult Baptism of Flora Lamond. Flora also joined the church after being Baptised. Flora's friends had organised tea and cakes to be served in the church hall. All were welcomed to this event. The cakes were delicious and the company very friendly. This day was very special and emotional for Flora.



### Sunday 6/8/23

Infant Blessing of Lily-Mae Pamela Thomson, the daughter of Calum Thomson and Chloe Taylor.

A wonderful day was had by all. The photo shows the proud parents with Lily-Mae at the time of her Blessing.



### Sunday – 2/7/23

Baptism of Millie April Macdonald, Daughter of Fraser & Susan Macdonald and the Great Granddaughter of Nan & Duncan Macdonald. Duncan being one of our long serving Elders. The family enjoyed a wonderful afternoon of celebration. The photos show proud parents and even prouder Great Grandparents.

### Sunday 23/7/23

Baptism of Caleb Stuart Andrew Moore the son of Craig Moore & Caitlan Curran. Caleb is the Grandson of Karine Moore one of our elders and the Great Grandson of John Muir.

Craig's brother Jamie joined the family celebration all the way from Hong Kong which made the day even more special. A day never to be forgotten.



### Sunday 13/8/23

Baptism of Emma Erin Paton Greenlees. Emma is the daughter of Graeme and Stephanie Greenlees. Emma also has two older brothers. As Emma was born prematurely, the whole family were delighted to celebrate this special day.

Emma is also the Great Granddaughter of Jean Anderson one of our long time Church Members. The photo shows Emma's parents at the time of her Baptism.







## Saturday Sunshine Club

Our new session started on the 19<sup>th</sup> August at the usual time of 4pm to 6pm. We also met on the 9<sup>th</sup> September. Our next meetings are being held on the 21<sup>st</sup> October, 18<sup>th</sup> November & 9<sup>th</sup> December.



The numbers grew over the last session with the age group range from 7months to 14 years and continue to grow this session. We have all the usual activities and enjoy the fellowship of coming together to share food and a story.

The photos show some of the children and helpers involved in craft work and enjoying their meal.



## St. Paul's Junior Drama



At the beginning of January 2023, the Junior Drama started rehearsals for the production of the Musical Jungle Book Kids. This took place in the Church at the beginning of June for two nights with great audiences both nights. The children thoroughly enjoyed taking part singing and dancing to the lively music and we also had tears at the end when we finished. The children were taken to the ten-pin bowling at Braehead for an aftershow treat the following week before we stopped for the summer break.

We resumed rehearsals on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September from 7 pm till 9 pm in the Church Hall, we are rehearsing for our Christmas Nativity "SHINE". New members will be made most welcome.



For further information please contact Linda Rae 07901 334952

### CHURCH DIRECTORY

Interim Moderator	Rev Phillip Wallace 1 Alexandra Drive Renfrew	0141 570 3502
Session Clerk	Elizabeth Alexander 24 Spey Place Johnstone	01505 705390

This newsletter is for all of St Paul's congregation. If you have any thing that you would like to share, like family celebrations, news, photos from past events in the church or other items of interest, please email or phone the editor. Thank you.

Website and Facebook



St Paul's Church Johnstone



[www.johnstonestpauls.org](http://www.johnstonestpauls.org)