



## MINISTER'S MESSAGE



Hello friends,

Advent and Christmas with all its preparation went by in a flash although there was much to celebrate with hope, peace, joy and love shared in so many of our services including our fun Christmas eve Christingle and our Nativity service as our youngsters shared the story in a novel and meaningful way as well as our many Carol Services - Guild, Care Homes and Sunday worship. I tried not to duplicate any carols as there are so many but of course Away in a manger and Still the Night featured a couple of times. I hope that however you spent the end of 2024 it was a blessing and you found peace and hope in our Lord and Saviour's birth.

We are now moving into Spring and are beginning to see shoots of hope in our gardens, in the parks and in the countryside. Recently I visited Kilmacolm and saw a host (not of daffodils although I await that with anticipation) of snowdrops and they were just beautiful. The beauty in God's creation never fails to bring delight and joy.

Preparations have begun for our season of Lent which begins on Wednesday 5th March. There are also plans afoot for new initiatives including a Church brunch, a Congregational Gathering and a Bazaar for the community. These will take place in April and further details will follow soon.

I hope you will enjoy reading about some of the ways that so many at St George's continue to serve and care for our congregation, those in our Parish and people in the wider community too. There is much to give thanks for and each day I give thanks for God's great provision and for each of you. As always I encourage you to join in our wide and varied missional opportunities and always remember God loves you, He loves us so much that He gave His only son. John 3:16

Love and blessings

Your friend and minister, Hazel



### Friends from the Watermill

For many months now our Church has been supporting the many asylum seekers being accommodated in Paisley's Watermill Hotel. They are invited to come along to the Church hall on Friday afternoons for a few hours of company and friendship and of course tea and cakes! Just before Christmas this took the form of a party with fun and games and gifts. All 67 guests were given a small gift and Christmas card.

Some of their asylum claims have been upheld and they have been given permission to stay in the UK. They have now moved into their own flats in Paisley and the surrounding areas, and are provided with the basics, but donations of soft furnishings e.g. cushions, throws, lamps etc would help to make their accommodation feel more like a home.

We can help those that are still in the Watermill by donating gents toiletries and items of clothing. Warm jackets, small and medium sized sports tops and trainers size 8-11 are especially needed.



There are boxes at the side and front doors of the Church where you can place any donations.

If you would like to meet and help with our friends from the Watermill then come along to the hall any Friday at 2pm. You will be made very welcome.



## 15th Paisley Boy's Brigade Update

This is a very special year for our Company as we celebrate 40 years of 15<sup>th</sup> Paisley linked with our Church.

In 1985 when the former St Andrew's and St George's churches united to be known as The Laigh Kirk the two Boys' Brigade Companies involved also united and were given a new united identity of 15<sup>th</sup> Paisley. That Company number had lain dormant for some years. The number, we've recently discovered, was originally given to a Company formed way back at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Coats Memorial Church. Sadly that Company didn't last and the number was later given to a new Company at Mossvale Church in the North of our town. With the demise of that Company the number lay unused until 1985 and since then our own Company has proudly borne that identity.



We've some early plans to mark the anniversary as a Company but hope that you'll all share in the celebrations as you've been such an integral part of our work during the 40 years.

By the time you read this we'll have started these events by leading worship – it's an important part of our work in helping our boys and young men learn of God's love.

Since we last reported we had a great night at the Panto (Oh yes we did). The boys loved it and joined in at every opportunity. With the Church there too it really was a whole church night out! Our Juniors entered teams for the Battalion's 10 Pin Bowling competition and we were delighted when one of our teams (Connor, Finlay and Jonathan) came second.

Service plays a huge part of our programme in all sections and boys respond very positively. Among the work so far this year was our assistance to the Night Before Christmas Appeal, Seniors participation in the Nativity service, Seniors, along with our Guides, serving at our first Burns Supper and also service to our Company with boys from all sections fund raising through being sponsored to do the Jingle Bell Run. Did you know too that each Friday our boys end their night by laying out tables and chairs for Sunday's coffee bar?

All sections enjoy working through a variety of programmes available through BBUK and although age appropriate they cover the same themes which are titled Get Into The Bible, Get Involved, Get Active, Get Learning, Get Adventurous and Get Creative.

In March our halls will ring with the noise of the Battalion's Anchors coming together for an afternoon of fun and learning that the Boys' Brigade is much more than just their own Company.

Our Anchors have a good number of boys who come along regularly with a busy programme every week. As almost all of our Anchors are Primary 3 they'll be promoted to Juniors in May and so we're looking for new members. Any boy in Primary 1 or 2 would be especially welcome.

We're looking forward to our Presentation night on **Friday 9 May** when our Chaplain Hazel will present our Awards. Alan and Matthew are working hard to complete the requirements of the Kings badge and we hope that their hard work will be rewarded with our first, for a very long time, Kings Badges being presented that night. With Millan almost finished the work for his President's badge it really will be a night of celebration as we mark the commitment and efforts of all our boys. Please put the date in your diary and consider yourselves invited.

Jan Phillips, Captain



**A message from Pat Angus, who has been spending time with family**

**Down Under!**

Hi everyone, I have been keeping track of your terrible weather over the last few days and hope no one suffered too much damage. As I write this, it is Australia Day and a pleasant 25 degrees however tomorrow will be dreadful as it's going up to 39°C! Too hot to do anything. I know it sounds good after what you've had but this climate is full of extremes which of course set off bush fires, etc. Fortunately only been on 'pack up belongings' once but enough of the bad stuff. It's a beautiful country full of amazing wildlife and lots of bitey things. We travelled over to South Australia to Tulka and Coffin Bay. If you love oysters it's the place to go. Personally, I hate the things but the rest of family loved it. Our house was on the water and my grandson was pulling out 'blue swimmer crabs' and other things which they ate but I have no idea what they were. I don't do seafood. I look forward to being back among you all soon. I have included some pictures of the local wildlife— pelicans waiting for leftovers and 'roos' enjoying some breakfast oats.



## The Guild

At the time of writing this, we have had three meetings of the Guild since our festive break. Our first guest was Rev. Peter Davidge from Glasgow Presbytery. He gave an interesting talk about the Church of Scotland; past, present and future.

The following week we were given lots of advice about healthy eating and cooking from Sue Memmott who has been a Dietitian in the Health Service for many years. Her advice was very topical in today's world and much appreciated.

This week we welcomed Alan and our own choir. We had a lovely afternoon of Scottish music and songs. Now we look to the future where for much of February we will be busy with our Concert when we will welcome back, after a few years, the Bearsden Fiddlers. This should be a very enjoyable occasion and tickets are on sale and selling fast. The date is Saturday 15th February 2 - 4pm.

On Sunday 16th February we have our annual Guild Service. Our guest Preacher is Rev. Elizabeth Clelland and our own Minister Hazel who will be very much involved and has already given us much appreciated advice.

We continue our schedule until the end of March with a variety of Speakers and musical entertainment finishing with our AGM. Everyone is welcome to join us at all of these meetings so do come along on Mondays at 2pm for fellowship and chat.

"Whose we are and Whom we serve."

Pat (C)



## Friendly Hour—All are welcome Tuesdays from 2pm in the large hall

February	March	April
4th - Paisley Mysteries	4th - Quiz	1st - Beetle Drive
11th - The Midges (music)	11th - Neilston Strings	8th - AGM (music)
18th - Beetle Drive	18th - Iain Shaw	15th - TBA
25th - Local Vocals (music)	25th - Toast (music)	22nd - Aires and Graces (music)
		29th - Closing Lunch

## PASTORAL CARE

Our Pastoral Care Visitors currently visit members of our congregation in 7 Care Homes throughout the area and other members in Sheltered Housing. The members are brought up to date with ongoing events etc about the church life by the visitors.

We also do phone calls to members who are housebound and unable to attend church.

Members of the Care Team and congregation take part in short services held at two of our Care Homes on a regular basis. Our Christmas Carol Services were a success with residents joining the singing as it was hymns and songs that they recognised.

If you know of anyone who would like a phone call or a visit, please pass their details to Hazel to be included.



The flowers in the church are always a beautiful addition to the sanctuary on a Sunday morning and are appreciated by members of the congregation who receive a bouquet to acknowledge important life events; births, birthdays, anniversaries, illness, bereavement, etc.

The rota for 2025 donations is now available on the notice board. Please add your name to the list on a date that is special to you or which you wish to remember a family member.



To all my friends in Paisley St George's, thank you so much for your kind wishes on the occasion of my 90th birthday. Margaret Barrie

## OUR FINANCES

The Finance Team have been asked to give members a regular update on the state of our finances. Each quarter we will set out our income and expenditure with some comments or explanation.

For the most recent quarter from October to December the numbers were:

**INCOME: £38,417**

**SPENDING: £35,936**



For that quarter we had a narrow surplus of £2,480 [6% of income]. This is a positive picture but we always have things to pay for and we will have to see how things develop in coming months. Our next update in May will start to show comparative figures and trends, but we thought it might be useful at this stage to show where our money comes from. For last quarter this was:

GIVINGS - the Plate and Standing Orders	£ 23,320
GIFT AID - claimed from the tax man on Givings	£ 4,212
DONATIONS	£ 2,771
HALL LETS	£ 1,342
BANK INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS	£ 2,820
RENTAL FROM GLASGOW RD	£ 3,952

So what you give is vital because it is 72% of our income.

**Thank you and keep up the good work.**

**Gavin, Jack and the Finance Team**



**Connect Hub continues to meet on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays every month**, from 1.30 – 3pm at St George's Outreach Centre. The informal, café style service usually lasts about 30 minutes, leaving plenty of time for chat and more cuppas. There is plenty of room for more folk to join us. So, if you are free, please come along.

**Learning Together is a gathering on Wednesday mornings**, from 10am till 12 noon at the Outreach Centre. Some folk knit, some crochet, and various other craft challenges are tackled. The most useful part is the sharing of ideas – sometimes to do with the craft work, other times ideas about anything else that is relevant to us. So come and contribute to our conversations, and if you want, you can bring some craft work as well.

Immediately following on from this, from 12 noon to 1pm, there is an exercise group which aims to stretch muscles, improve co-ordination and balance. Although some of the exercises allow you to remain seated, they can still prove to be challenging. Cost is currently £4.

Some people come for only the exercise group, while others stay on after Learning Together. New members welcome.

Also, at the Outreach centre there is a **Bible Study, on the first Tuesday of the month**, starting at 7pm. This is a great chance to discuss a Bible passage, and it is always interesting to hear how the verses impact each other's life.

**On the second Tuesday of the month**, also at 7pm, there is a Prayer Meeting. As there are so many different activities at St George's it is great to have time to pray for them and for the people who attend them. It is further enriched when people use the Prayer boxes in church to highlight situations they would like supported by prayer.





# Social Committee Update



We ended 2024 with our Hogmanay Party with around 50 members of the congregation and friends enjoying a night of dancing, party games and challenges. The party atmosphere was present and everyone enjoyed themselves, so much so that we had to call time at the end of the evening. We think this could become an annual event.

Our first event for 2025 is an ambitious one, a Burns Supper which is being held at the start of February. So many people have signed up for this that a waiting list has been started. Entertainers for the evening are members of the congregation reciting poems and singing and the Choir who are currently practicing a few songs. By the time News from the Pews is out, we hope that it has been a successful evening and a report will be in the next edition.

Many events have been planned for throughout the year starting with a Quiz Night on 15th March, if you wish to come along, please contact Hazel, myself or any member of the Committee. The cost is £3 per person which includes refreshments, with a maximum of 6 people per team. Come along and bring your friends.

Watch the intimations for more details for other events such as our Easter Brunch on 20th April and Bazaar, which will be held in June.

If you are interested in coming along to join us at any of the events, please get in touch with Linda on 07989743558.

## Youth update

We are looking for the youth to join us.

We have **Sunday club every Sunday morning from 11 am.** We have stories and crafts.

We have a **Youth group at Causeyside street complex from 7pm.** This is open to all of our youth from primary 7 and above

We also have **Messy church on the 3rd Sunday of the month from 1.30 till 3.30** this is open to families .

If you would like any more information please contact Charlotte Ashton.

## Ice Cream Sunday— last Sunday of every month.

The first ice cream Sunday for 2025 got off to a great start with a Burns Brunch.

We spoke about Robert Burns, who he was, when he was born and about the size of his head as it was found to be larger than the average man's skull!



We had an attempt to learn and say the Selkirk Grace:

*Some hae meat and canna eat  
And some wad eat that want it  
But we hae meat and we can eat  
Sae let the Lord be Thankit!*

This was followed by a sit down meal which comprised of haggis, neeps and tatties (for those who didn't like haggis there was pizza). We also had shortbread, tablet and not forgetting ice cream. This was all washed down by our other national drink of Irn-Bru.

# Bubble Gum and Fluff

Bubble Gum and Fluff is an event that we hold in December to show the pupils of the local primary schools, Langcraigs and Bushes, what the true meaning of Christmas is. This can see upwards of 100 pupils coming through the doors of the Paisley St George's Outreach centre.



We have a committed group of volunteers who work tirelessly to set up, run and tidy up Bubble Gum and Fluff. The volunteers reenact well loved bible stories, play games, sing songs and make crafts with the pupils all while reminding them what the true meaning of Christmas is. A firm favourite has to be the puppet who makes sure the pupils leave knowing that Christmas isn't all about the bells and whistles that today's society makes it all about but that is all about a tiny baby Jesus born in a stable. Born to save us.



This event has been running for 14 years! So, A BIG THANK YOU to all the volunteers that have given their time to help with this amazing event.

A Thank You has to go to the teachers who bring the pupils down to the Outreach Centre rain, hail or shine, with a smile on their faces. Knowing that everyone involved in actually excited to be there.



So, now that the pupils of Langcraigs and Bushes have learned all about Jesus's birth it is only right to bring the pupils back for Easter Code (March 13<sup>th</sup>). Through reenactments, games, songs and crafts. The pupils will once again learn that Easter isn't about eating chocolate for breakfast but actually about the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are always looking for volunteers and I think you will be amazed at how well received the event is.



The editor would like to thank all who have contributed to the church magazine. All items for inclusion in the next magazine should be with Irene Gemmell by **Sunday 4th May**.

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