

**Menstrie Parish Church
of Scotland**



“All things bright and beautiful”

NEWSLETTER

JULY

2023

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Menstrie Parish Church
Registered Scottish Charity No SC004778

Notes from the manse Summer '23

Hello and greetings from a manse bathed in the glorious sunshine of a warm summer day. So, it is going to be a bit strange thinking about services such as Harvest, Remembrance and Advent. But after my first year here in Menstrie I am finally getting around to planning a bit ahead, not just so that I know what I am doing but so that others can plan where and how they may also wish to get involved in worship.

I have found my first year very enjoyable, whilst a touch stretching. Getting to know so many new people and trying to remember names, not my strong suit. Finding out how the church and the community fit and work together and discovering a remarkably strong sense of community here in Menstrie. Unfortunately, this has also meant helping some families say their last farewells to loved ones.

My year has been one of discovery and learning and relearning, which now leads into the chance to look forward, and to start thinking about how we work more closely with our neighbours in Alva as within 5 years our two churches will be a single linked charge with one minister. One way we have started is with the ministers swapping pulpits regularly and we have now invited the congregation of Alva to join with us in September to celebrate Holy Communion. So we look forward to having a full church for the service of Holy Communion on 3rd Sept '23.

Before that we are once again moving to shorter summer services during the School Holidays so that everyone can benefit from the, hopefully, warm and dry days of summer and spend them with family and friends.

I explain a little more about the summer series later in the newsletter, so please look out for that, especially the invite to Café Church.

Looking forward we have Open Doors weekend in September, Harvest Thanksgiving at the end of September then Armistice and Remembrance before we arrive in Advent once again. Just as the seasons come around every year, never stopping, always changing - so does the Church of God stay constant in our lives, always there, always changing to meet the needs of His people.

I have included a letter and prayer which the Moderator of the Presbytery of Perth has sent to all congregations, encouraging us in this time of uncertainty and change. I have also included in this newsletter a brief summary of the recent General Assembly decisions.

Finally, if you would like to know why in the face of so much change and frustration we should keep striving as God's hands in our families and communities – I recently read an article which said that in our modern ultra-connected society – there are some people who are so lonely that they pay for companions to meet them in coffee shops just so that they have someone to talk to every now and then. This hurt me deeply – are we not supposed to be the living, breathing, sharing, caring body of Christ on earth. Should those of us who look to God Almighty not be reaching out to those who feel abandoned and lonely. Is this not the greatest reason for working and striving to keep active churches in our communities and perhaps to worry less about buildings and more about people.

So, in God's name – look around for those who need a kind word, and if that is you, do not be afraid to come in and ask.

Blessings

Mike, and Archie and Sam



Summer Services July 2023 including Café Church

Each summer, during the school holidays we shorten the Sunday Service so that church members can spend time with their other family and friends. We all need to make the most of the, hopefully, warmer and drier weather, to soak up the summer sunshine and refresh the body ready for the coming return of winter. So, the service this year from July 2nd to Aug 13th will still start at 11 am but will normally be around 30-35 minutes only.

This July I would like to spend these services looking at what it was about Jesus that made Him special, what skills and attributes did Jesus have that allowed him to attract and teach so many people, many of whom gave up all they had to follow and become a disciple of Jesus Christ.

The Series is called the “Genius of Jesus” and will look at how he developed potential in others, how he balanced power between keeping his followers content and rubbing up against authority, how he promoted peace, how he invited action from those around him, and how he crossed the lines of society and respectability when he had to.

Additionally, on the 30th July I would like to hold Café Church. So rather than meeting in the Sanctuary we will meet in Rooms 2-3, sit around tables, share tea, coffee

and perhaps a biscuit. We will still sing hymns, hear scripture and think about what scripture means. Hopefully this is another style of worship that may just freshen up how we worship God here in Menstrie. Café Church is something we have not tried yet, and I would be grateful for comments or feedback after the service. I hope you will join us for the services over the summer and look forward to having a chat.

Blessings, Mike.



Scripture Union The Easter Journey



Following the success of our visit from Menstrie Primary School, for The Christmas Journey, we were pleased to welcome the schoolchildren back to experience The Easter Journey.

Adults and children alike enjoyed this joint effort from Scripture Union, members of Menstrie Parish Church and Menstrie Primary School.

Finance July Update

As I put together this article, we are into the second week of June and the weather is being kind to us. The last newsletter item on Finance was very detailed so I will try to keep this one straightforward.

The Kirk Session is being updated monthly on our budget position. So far in 2023 our regular level of giving by members is a bit ahead of expectations. Thanks to all of you who give regularly. It is rewarding to see many of you have increased your contributions this year, whether by Offering envelopes or by Standing Orders.

Our claim to HMRC for Gift Aid Tax refund for the 6 months to April 6th 2023 has been submitted and should achieve over £6000 when processed.

If anyone has now started to pay tax this year because of the new tax rules, then we can reclaim tax paid through the Gift Aid scheme. It just requires a simple form to be completed and returned to myself. Should you wish to do this just contact me for a form.

Thanks is also due to all the hard work of the members and volunteers organising and running the wide variety of Fund-raising activities needed to raise a total of around £9000 this year.

In March a bequest of £5000 was received. This generous gift will be used wisely and clearly assist our financial position.

Expenditure is under good control so I am hopeful of a positive outcome by the end of the year. The overall surplus for the two years 2021 and 2022 combined was £8742 - greater than anticipated but very welcome.

News that we are to receive a £5000 grant from Foundation Scotland to enable our soffits and gutters to be replaced around the Hall and Extension Rooms is fantastic - thanks to Jim Young, Property Convener, for this success.

Also, news that additional funding has been obtained to have our website upgraded and modernised is another positive success.

Best wishes to you all for a good summer.

Jim McAlpine Treasurer

Property Matters

A grant for replacement of the fascia boards and gutters around the Hall and meeting rooms has been funded by EDF Renewables Burnfoot Wind Farms Community Fund (Clackmannanshire) and administered by Foundation Scotland.

The work will be done by Robbie Thomson in the summer. We are very grateful to receive this grant as it allows us to maintain the building as a focal point in the village as a resource for all the community.

The borders and tubs, including the three planters on the pavement, have been tidied and summer flowers planted.

Jim Young

COMING SOON

A new website for Menstrie Parish Church!

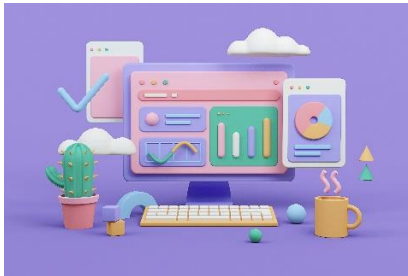
We are in the process of creating a new website to keep people informed about all the great things which happen in and around our wee church!

We are keen to make it as interesting as possible and would be very grateful for photographs or interesting facts which could be included.

Also, if you know of any other groups, from the Community, who would like their contact details included, please ask someone to get in touch.

If you can help us, in any way, please speak to Rev Mike, Susan Delaney or Sandra Small.

Many thanks in advance!



CORONATION FLOWER FESTIVAL



We would like to thank everyone who participated in the Coronation Flower Festival 4 to 6 May 2023 – whether that was in providing a display for the event or whether that was coming along and appreciating the efforts of others. It was very much a Community effort so our thanks goes to all those who participated in the displays – the Church Flower Group; the UF Church; the Blairlogie & District SWI; Deputy Lieutenant; and Menstrie Primary School. The displays celebrated the Coronation; the four countries of the UK; the King's interest in the Environment and Nature; the three branches of the Armed Forces – Army; Navy and Air Force; The Royal Company of Archers – the King's Body Guard in Scotland; and 'Volunteering Opportunities' marking the 'The Big Help Out Day on 8 May 2023' when folk all over the UK were encouraged to be involved in their communities through volunteering.

Members of Menstrie Parish Church play their part as volunteers in many organisations which can include fund raising; make donations, including Gift Aid, to agreed

charities including Poppy Scotland and the Bible Society Scotland; joining in worship at Menstrie House; working with the pupils of Menstrie Primary School when they visit the Church pre-Christmas and pre-Easter to be told and re-enact these stories as well as our ongoing donations to the Gate Foodbank.

During the day-time hours of the Festival we appreciated the music provided by our organist, Meg Carroll – both on the harp and on the organ, as this provided a gentle background to the floral displays.



As with most events held in the Church, refreshments were offered during day-time hours – we thank everyone who gave of their time to welcome people in Rooms 2 & 3 where they could reflect on the displays they had seen as well as have a good old natter.

There was no set charge to visit the Festival but we are very grateful for the donations made throughout the three days - £385.17 towards Church funds.

Finally as we acknowledge the support for the Flower Festival can I ask you to note the dates, 23 and 24 September 2023, when again the Church will be open to all as we take part in 'Doors Open' Weekend – this opportunity will be available to view our beautiful stained-glass window and read about who presented it to Menstrie Parish Church along with seeing a display of selected Banners we have to mark various events in the life of the Church – we look forward to welcoming you then.



Christian Aid

We have had two soup lunches for Christian Aid this year, one after the March Communion Service and one after the June Communion.

£225 was raised at the first and £445 at the second and once Christian Aid receive the gift aid from the government our total contribution to the charity will be nearly £840.

This is a fantastic sum of money bearing in mind the present economic climate and I would like to thank you all for your continued generosity.

I would also like to thank all those who provided the soup, bread etc. and those who helped serve on the day. We hope to have two more soup lunches over the course of the year, this time to raise funds for the Poppy Appeal.

Calum Macleod (on behalf of the Pastoral Care Group)

The Gate

We continue to support the Gate Food bank in Alloa. You can leave dried goods (tins, packets or boxes) in the Church vestibule or at front of Church below the PowerPoint .

If you prefer, monetary donations are most acceptable as fresh produce can then be purchased.

Menstrie Gala Day



This was the 2nd year we had the pleasure of organising the 'tea tent' at the Gala.

We were certainly blessed with gorgeous weather. The Gala was very busy and it was lovely to see the Community supporting the event.

We raised over £600 for Church funds.

Thanks to everyone who donated most generously, helped on the day or came along for a cuppa and a chat at the Gala.



Come and have a bit of a chat while you knit on Thursday afternoons between 2pm and 4pm.
Or just come and have a cuppa.

Mary Bett 928905 or Helenor Wilson 761657



Blairlogie S.W.I held their A.G.M. on Monday 8th May in Rooms 2/3 in Menstrie Parish Church Halls

Our votes were counted for the New Committee by 2 members from Tillicoultry S.W.I

8 members were voted for the Committee. Ray Mcleod returns as President and we have 2 new members on the Committee for our new session.

Prize Giving took Place:

Trophy for Homeskills Silver Quaich

1st equal ; Isobel Green and Jackie Powell
2nd ; Marion Walker.

Hand Crafts Rose Bowl

1st: Isobel Green
2nd: Ray Mcleod.

Overall Winner Logan Cup

Isobel Green

After our business, 5 games of Beetle were played and we enjoyed the friendship.

Competition results : 3 pieces of shortbread.

1st Moira McCulloch 2nd Isobel Green
Decorated Card : 1st Shona Storer 2nd Jill Ross

We enjoyed tea/coffee and homemade shortbread.
Our next event is our 90th Birthday Celebration in June.
We start back after the Summer in September. New members or visitors are most welcome.

FROM THE ORGAN LOFT



It's almost 9 months since I took up post at Menstrie and I really feel "at home" now and I am thoroughly enjoying being part of the church. I am grateful to Mike for arranging monthly planning meetings so we can discuss the hymns and try our best to get the tunes right!

The Christmas services were lovely and I enjoyed looking on as the school performed and sang at their end of term service. Blue Christmas, which was new to me, was an opportunity to reflect and remember and I was able to play my clarsach for background music.

I appealed for singers to come forward to start up a wee group, but only one person has done so, so far. Perhaps I can try again to persuade some of you to meet up and look at the upcoming hymns and practice any that are not so familiar. With Tin2 stopping at the end of June, perhaps that space could be used to meet for an hour throughout the summer. I suggest that if you are able to come along, please do. It doesn't need to be the same people each week, as holidays will undoubtedly get in the way, but just an interested few that can lead the singing will make all the difference. It would be good to try and get a few together with a view to singing introits at the start of services later in the year and particularly for Advent.

Café church will be a new challenge and it would be so good to have some instrumentalists to help out with the music. There is a keyboard, but I know there are players of other instruments out there and it will be a very informal

setting and a great opportunity to enhance the worship. So – please make yourselves known.

The Flower Festival was such a lovely event and I played my clarsach and the organ for part of each day. One lady I know from my swimming group turned up with her daughter. I happened to be standing with the clarsach and she said “What are you doing with that? Cleaning it?” She had no idea I played it. I put her right!

It has been good to get into Menstrie House and be part of the monthly services. The residents sing well and have provided Mike with a list of their favourite hymns which have been included in the services.

Fundraising is always high on the agenda and with the Organ “hanging by a thread” I have been glad to be part of the sales taking place and have to date raised almost £500 which I do hope will go towards an initial repair to at least stabilise the instrument and see it through the autumn and winter before the cold winds blow through!

In September, Fe the minister’s wife, is planning a sponsored dog walk/organ crawl along the Hillfoots to aid the organ fund. She will start out at Logie, then Menstrie, Alva, Tillicoultry and Dollar with Archie in tow. Hopefully access will be granted to the organs in these churches for at least one tune to be played. More information about this will follow later.

Organising a concert has proved much more difficult than I thought, with so many folks already engaged or on holiday and dates difficult to secure. So, I will try in the Autumn to round people up for a Spring event of some kind.

If you have any musical ideas, please do let me know about them and see if we can take them forward.

Meg Carroll



Parish Bereavements

Services of Celebration and Thanksgiving were held for the lives of the following people.

Cowan Macnair	9/3/23
Stewart Inglis	16/3/23
Tom Barrie	24/4/23
Anne Sievwright	10/5/23

We include all these families in our prayers

"In my Father's place there are many rooms"
John 14:2



Teas after Church

Will resume on Sunday 20th August after morning service.

Please pop into Rooms 2/3 for a cuppa and a chat after morning service.

Teas after church rota 2023

- Aug. 20. Laura Christie & Hazel Dow
27. Jill Ross & Wendy Tetlow
- Sep. 3. **Communion & Afternoon Tea –
Alva visiting.**
10. Susan Delaney & Janette Hunter
17. Wilma Irving & Betty Winkley
24. Norma & Jim McAlpine
- Oct. 1. Annette & Jim Young
8. Heather Bain & Nancy Stewart
15. Ray McLeod & Nancy Hay
22. Julie Lucas & Calum McLeod
29. Lilian McVey & Liz McKinlay
- Nov. 5. Jill Ross & Wendy Tetlow
12. Laura Christie & Hazel Dow
19. Susan Delaney & Janette Hunter
26. Wilma Irving & Betty Winkley
- Dec. 3. Communion & Soup Lunch(Poppy Scotland)
10. Norma & Jim McAlpine
17. Annette & Jim Young

Tea in 2

Tea in 2 will be restarting after the summer break on Wednesday 6th September from 10.30 am- 11.30am in Rooms 2/3 of the Church.

Please come along and join us for a cuppa and a chat. Meet up with friends old and new.

If you feel you could help on a Wednesday morning, (only one week in seven or eight) please contact me.

Laura Christie
Outreach Co-ordinator



Guild

The Dedication service will be on Sunday 24th September during morning service led by Rev Mike Goodison.

The Guild will be restarting for the new session on Monday 25th September at 2.30 pm in Rooms 2/3. Our opening meeting is an Afternoon Tea served by the committee.

Meetings are held on the last Monday afternoon of October & November.

In December we propose to arrange a Christmas Lunch early in the month

We would restart at the end of January followed by meetings in February and March. Our AGM will be end of April followed by a Cheese & Wine.

We welcome back our members and look forward to welcoming any new members for an afternoon of chat and fellowship. At this time the syllabus has not been finalised but we propose to hold a Burns afternoon, have a speaker on our project "At home for good", to hold a Musical afternoon with Clackulele Group and have other interesting afternoons. We will also be holding a Coffee morning on Saturday 20th April in aid of our Project We look forward to welcoming you.

Laura Christie
Secretary



Coffee morning and Tabletop Sale.

After a very successful Coffee morning and Tabletop sale in May we are holding both again on Saturday 30th September from 10 am to 12 noon in the church hall and in rooms 2/3.

Please come along :-
Bag a bargain then enjoy a coffee with friends.



Quiz Night ???????????

Keep the date free.
We are again holding a quiz night in the Church hall on

Friday 6th October at 7.30 pm

Please bring your own refreshments
Tickets can be purchased from Annette or Laura at a cost of £5.00 per person.

Welcoming you to Church



July

23rd Heather Bain, Laura Christie
30th Susan Delaney, Ruth Gourley, Norma McAlpine

August

6th Mike Hamilton, Julie Lucas
13th Jim McAlpine, Calum Macleod
20th Ray McLeod, Margaret Perry, Isobel Munro
27th Sandra Small, Jim Young

September

3rd Les Sawers, Annette Young
10th Heather Bain, Laura Christie
17th Susan Delaney, Ruth Gourley, Norma McAlpine
24th Mike Hamilton, Julie Lucas

October

- 1st Jim McAlpine, Calum Macleod
- 8th Ray McLeod, Margaret Perry, Isobel Munro
- 15th Sandra Small, Jim Young
- 22nd Les Sawers, Annette Young
- 29th Heather Bain, Laura Christie

November

- 5th Susan Delaney, Ruth Gourley, Norma McAlpine
- 12th Mike Hamilton, Julie Lucas
- 19th Jim McAlpine, Calum Macleod
- 26th Ray McLeod, Margaret Perry, Isobel Munro

December

- 3rd Sandra Small, Jim Young
- 10th Les Sawers, Annette Young
- 17th Heather Bain, Laura Christie
- 24th Susan Delaney, Ruth Gourley, Norma McAlpine
- 31st Mike Hamilton, Julie Lucas

January 2024

- 7th Jim McAlpine, Calum Macleod
- 14th Ray McLeod, Margaret Perry, Isobel Munro
- 21st Sandra Small, Jim Young
- 28th Les Sawers, Annette Young

Shine Musical Concert



On The 22nd of April, The Shine Touring Group presented a show in the church worthy of London's West End.

These talented young people sang and danced through the evening with exuberance.

This is the 4th time we have seen the group and we look forward to another show in the future.

The next two items are a Summary of some of the discussions and decisions from the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland May 2023.

(Extracted from the Free summary of Life and Work magazine which can be found

<https://www.lifeandwork.org/downloads/general-assembly-2023-supplement.pdf>)

“A NEW REFORMATION”

The convener of the Church of Scotland’s Assembly Trustees has urged the Church to display a new spirit of Reformation in the face of falling membership and ministry shortages. The Rev David Cameron told the General Assembly that it was a “critical time” for the church, but encouraged Commissioners to imagine an exciting future.

“Imagine Church where members are enthusiastic about doing things differently,” he said.

“Imagine listening to one another and dreaming bold dreams and having the energy and encouragement to experiment and learn in the process. Imagine being able to move forward in positive ways, tackling serious issues of the day, responding to the real need in Scotland. Imagine finding a creative way of getting different people with different views together to create a different future. Imagine planting new church communities where they’ve always been needed, breaking out of our constrained systems to do so.

“Sharing ministry for the pastoral care of the elderly in the aging congregations whilst recognising the need to be intergenerational, fully integrating our young people, shaping the life of the Church.

“The new alongside the old, energising and inspiring with the gospel imperative, ‘go and make disciples’.”

In his speech as outgoing Moderator, the Very Rev Dr Iain Greenshields urged all congregations to “take a long, careful look at who we are”. He added: “Out of lament and grief comes new life and new identity.”

And this year's Moderator, the Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, closed the week saying that that the church was "the body of Christ" with "hands that aren't afraid to get dirty", "feet that walk the extra mile", and "here to hold up a sister who's struggling or sit with a brother who's afraid".

And she added: "We are part of something so much bigger than any one of us and we are blessed to be. So, challenges – bring them on."

WORKING WITH OTHER CHURCHES

The Church of Scotland is to 'initiate a conversation' across the church and with sister churches in Scotland about how they can work together in mission and service. The instruction to the Ecumenical Relations Committee followed an opening day in which the church was urged to build on its interdenominational relationships by the Moderator, guests from other churches, the Lord High Commissioner and even King Charles III.

In his first letter to a General Assembly, King Charles said he had been "especially heartened" to hear of the ecumenical pilgrimage of peace to South Sudan, undertaken by Dr Greenshields with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Pope in February. He added: "Messages of justice, peace and reconciliation made all the more powerful by their visible presence which signified both the unity and the diversity of the church."



Presbytery of Perth.

The new presbytery of Perth was formed on 1st January 2023. If you would like to know more about the size, setup and staff of the presbytery they have produced a short you tube video which can be found at [\(141\) Presbytery Staff video - 2 June 2023 - YouTube](#)

Church of Scotland - Presbytery of Perth

To all church members.

The new Presbytery starts at a time of many challenges for the Church of Scotland and our world.

In the midst of all the uncertainties we affirm the lasting truth, secure hope and dynamic relevance of

“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever”

It is not a case of “Why don’t they?” but “Why don’t we? Let us...” for all Christians are in the front-line representing Jesus.

The first of the five marks of mission from which all others follow is to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom. Overleaf in simple language is a summary of the Good News all Christians have to share.¹ We deal with an active God, operational in Creation and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. He has promised to be at work in and through the lives of all Christians

What a great dimension for our thinking and dynamic for our living: security, purpose, hope and power in and through Jesus! Isn’t that an exciting thought with which we head up towards Easter in a new Presbytery with a fresh vision!

Donna Hays Rev Donna Hays – Presbytery Moderator

¹ “God’s Invitation” was Commissioned as a user-friendly expression of the Christian faith and authorised by the General Assembly 1992, - version has been adapted.

God’s Invitation

God made the world and all its creatures with people made in His image.

By breaking his laws people have broken contact with God and damaged God’s good world.

This we see and sense in the world and in ourselves.

The Bible tells us the Good News that God still loves us and has shown this love uniquely in His Son, Jesus Christ.

He lived among us and died on the cross to save us from our sin. But God raised Jesus from the dead!

In his love, this living Jesus invites us to turn from our sins and enter by faith into a restored relationship with God Who gives true life before and beyond death.

Then with the power of the Holy Spirit remaking us like Jesus, we - with all Christians - worship God and enjoy his Friendship and are available for him to use in showing and sharing his love, justice and peace locally and globally until Jesus returns!

In Jesus’ name we gladly share with you God’s message for all people – **“You matter to God”** and invite you to accept his invitation.



CHRISTMAS FAYRE

We are pleased to host our annual Christmas Fayre
This is our main fundraising event of the year.

Keep a note of the date:-

Saturday 25th November from 10am to 1pm in the
Church Hall.

There will be the usual stalls, Crafts, Cake & Candy,
Adult tombola, Guess the whisky, Raffle, Guess the
Birthday, Christmas Crafts, Silent Auction and many
more.

Refreshments will be served in Rooms 2/3.

Tickets will be on sale in October and can be purchased
from any Elder or you can pay at the door on the day.

Entry for Primary school children is free.

Take a note of the date in your diary.

We look forward to seeing you.

Outreach Group.





You are invited to join us at
Menstrie Parish Church for a
joint service with Alva Parish
Church, for Communion on
Sunday 3rd September
at 11am.
All are welcome.