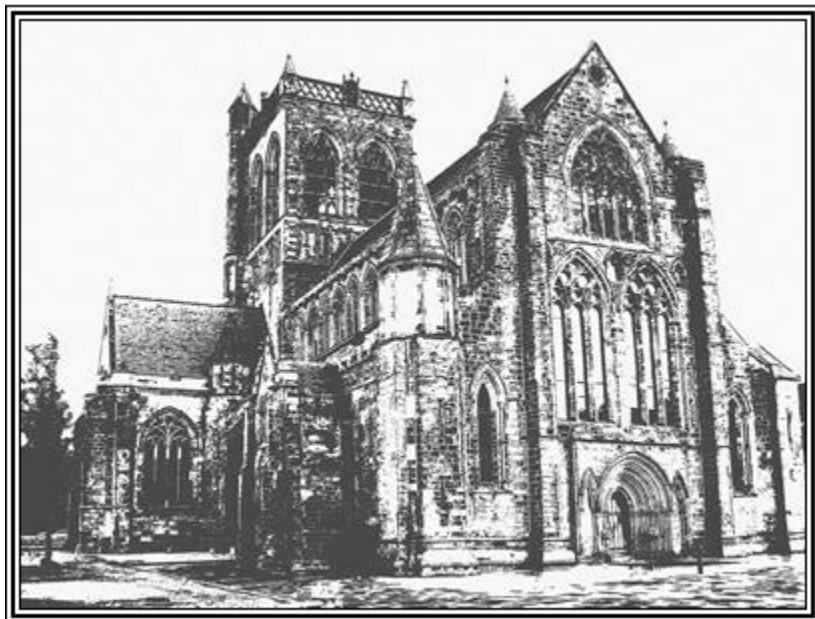


Paisley Abbey



Abbey Herald

March 2022

*Now the green blade riseth, from the buried grain,
Wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has been:
Love is come again like wheat that springeth green.*

These are the words of a hymn written by John Macleod Campbell Crum and sung to the tune 'Noel Nouvelet'. It is actually an Easter hymn and always reminds me of spring-time and the bulbs poking through the earth having lain in the ground since the previous year. From the dark of the earth springs the beauty of, firstly, the green shoot and then the the flower.

We have all been through a very difficult time since March 2020. I am not sure how many of us would have heard of Wuhan in China before then. It is very difficult to comprehend what has happened since then. They were dark and awful times from which, we hope, we are now emerging.

Amongst the difficult times though, we learned to care for each other. Suddenly, some neighbours were in contact with each other when before they might only have nodded to each other in the street. As a nation, we stood on our doorsteps every Thursday evening to clap for the NHS. We were living in communities again; we had the sense that we wanted to help others who were not as fortunate as ourselves. There were many small actions of compassion and we became more caring and aware of each other's needs. Through lockdown, we were given the opportunity to put into action the command of Jesus to love and care for each other and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

As we leave the darkness of winter and move into spring with the promise of new life all around us, let us not forget the ways in which love of other pushed through the darkness and blossomed and can continue to blossom through the times ahead.

Elsbeth

PARISH REGISTER – FEBRUARY 2022

Baptism

13 February Savannah Kennedy McCulloch

Funeral

11 February Elizabeth Bone

THANK YOU

Jennifer and Geoff would like to thank the numerous people within the Abbey congregation who supported Jennifer so well in their thoughts & prayers during the long illness of her sister Margaret in Johannesburg. The text messages, phone calls, cards and flowers have been so greatly appreciated and supportive too, following Margaret's recent sad death. Thank you to everyone.



FOODBANK

The Renfrewshire FoodBank, organised by the Trussell Trust, provides emergency food supplies to people in crisis in our area. They also signpost people to other agencies and services to help resolve the underlying cause of the crisis.

Everyone who comes to the Foodbank is referred by a service professional such as a welfare rights advisor, social worker or health visitor and over 90% is donated by the public.

In Paisley Abbey we have a regular collection on the last Sunday of the month.

With the cost of living rising, it is inevitable that more people are going to be in need of the Foodbank services.

If you haven't donated before, perhaps you would consider giving groceries or toiletries this year. Cash donations are also welcome (gift aided) to help pay for their manager and to buy essentials that are in short supply.

Amongst the basic necessities' toilet rolls, shampoo and soap are the most frequently requested.

Something we sometimes forget are sturdy carrier bags in which items can be distributed. These are always welcome.

Thank you to all our regular givers for their generous donations.

Next collection will be on **Sunday 27 March**

Margaret Sharp

SUNDAY AFTER SERVICE TEA AND COFFEE

Members of the Congregation will be pleased to learn that the after-service tea and coffee has resumed after nearly 2 years.

Tea and coffee will be available in the North Transept not the café at present. We are unable to use the café as we still have to follow the Covid guidelines. Hopefully for not too much longer.

There have been so many changes in the congregation we don't know who is able to help with it. Aileen Livingstone is planning to make up a list of volunteers as was done in the past. If you would like to be part of the team, see Aileen on a Sunday or leave you contact details at the Abbey office.

Aileen is also planning a small lunch after the service on Easter Day. Everyone is welcome to come along and for a small donation you can stay and have your lunch and a chat. This will also be in the North Transept.

Thank you



“A GIANT OF SPIRITUAL LIFE”

The Very Rev. Dr. John Chalmers reflects on a powerful address to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

In May 2009 Archbishop Desmond Tutu was invited to address the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

To say the atmosphere was electric is an understatement. He opened his speech by setting out the paradox that our all-knowing, all-powerful, omnipotent God was, in fact, impotent in the face of injustice and oppression. That God, he said, instead of raining down thunderbolts on the heads of the perpetrators of oppression, waits until there are those who are willing to turn this world's wilderness of injustice into a garden of flowers. The Assembly Hall was packed to the gunnels, listening, spellbound, to one of the finest orators of our time, but we knew that Desmond Tutu (Whose death was announced on Boxing Day 2021) was much more than a great orator. Fully immersed in the dangerous world of protest, advocacy and activism we knew that we were listening to one of those people for whom God had waited, who went to work in the wilderness of apartheid and who helped plant flowers in the new Rainbow Nation of South Africa. At great personal risk, he had walked the walk while most of us had only ever talked the talk. Integrity of word and action is one of the best references that anyone can carry.

The 2009 General Assembly was also the Assembly at which serious discussion began over the place of gay people in the life and ministry of the Church of Scotland. The Assembly had been deeply divided and the subject still troubles many folk across the Church, but as you read this article I want you to imagine Archbishop Desmond Tutu with his eyes closed as if caught up in the passion of prayer, he takes the words of Jesus from John 12:32 and he says, "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw (not some, but) all people to myself" and he describes this as Jesus' radical assertion that all in the human family are embraced by the love of God and that in his family there are no outsiders-only insiders.

In your imagination you should now be able to hear a pin drop as Tutu declares" *ALL, ALL* are insiders, all are children of our heavenly father, the rich, the poor, the lame, the blind the clever, the not so clever, the red, the black, the yellow, *ALL, ALL ALL*. The Palestinian, the Israeli, Al-Qaeda, Bin

Laden, George Bush, *ALL ALL*. I will draw *ALL, ALL* into his embrace of love that will not let you go. *ALL, ALL, ALL. ALL, ALL, ALL*. Lesbian, gay, so called straight, *ALL, ALL, ALL ALL, ALL-* we are family”.

This man of extraordinary integrity- who knew what it was like to be excluded – speaking about a God whose love knew no bounds. This man who had first-hand experience of how cruel his enemies could be was expressing God’s love for those, who from one side or another were only ever described as enemies. This Archbishop who knew only too well how theology could be used to underpin structural and societal evil was facing down the issue of the day.

At the end of his speech the Assembly rose to its feet and offered him a standing ovation that lasted longer than any I have ever heard. If Assembly moments like this could be bottled, preserved and distributed I think we would be a better Church and a better people.

Desmond Tutu was one of the giants of spiritual life whose thinking and presence and influence will be truly missed. He did not believe in a small God or a small-minded God and he reminded us, if we needed any reminding that you cannot exaggerate the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of God.



The speech can be heard at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoP8Qkh-4k5E>

This article was first published in the March 2022 edition of Life and Work.

CHURCH MINISTER WAS INSPIRATION BEHIND THE 'GREAT ESCAPE'

A Church of Scotland minister nicknamed 'Padre Mac' has been named as the inspiration behind the Great Escape. The Revd Professor Murdo Ewen Macdonald's "fiery sermons" motivated the famous breakout of a German Prisoner of War camp in March 1944, according to an author.

Dr Linda Barker said the Great Escape is often heralded as a plan masterminded by English officers, and the theme tune to the 1963 film of the same name is sung by England football fans.

The theologian has been given credit for a minor role in hiding tunnel sand in the famous break-out over the course of a year.

However, the historian claims his influence was possibly far more significant, as he had previously made his own escape while in transit to a PoW camp. He was a chaplain for the men of Stalag Luft III, including RAF Squadron Leader Roger Bushell, who has always been known as the mastermind of the Great Escape.

Dr Parker is the author of "Nearer My God to Thee: Airborne Chaplains in the Second World War," which examines the full story of padres who accompanied the airborne forces to all theatres of war between 1942-1945. "Murdo Ewen Macdonald, known as Padre Mac, may have been the 'inspiration that led to many great escapes' during the Second World War," she said. "He was moved to Stalag Luft III, where the Great Escape would take place in March 1944. Here, he befriended Roger Bushell, and Harry 'Wings' Day, both instigators and organisers of the Great Escape. "As a chaplain, he would have had access to all the troops and would have been able to speak with them, in confidence, to motivate them with the story of his own escape attempt."

A huge "thank you" to St. Wilfred's Church Bognor for allowing others to use some of the content of their church magazine during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

MUSIC FOR MARCH

Wednesday 2 March

4 pm
Communion Service
Psalm 51
Anthem

Ash Wednesday

Holy Communion
Plainsong
Allegrì
Sicut cervus
Palestrina

Sunday 6 March 2022

11 am
Psalm 91 1-2, 9-16
Venite
Anthem

Lent 1

Morning Service
Weelkes (Short Service)
In exitu Israel
S. Wesley

Sunday 13 March 2022

11 am
Introit
Psalm 27
Anthem

Lent 2

Morning Service
Hide not thou thy face
Metrical
Civitas sancti tui
Byrd

4 pm
Responses
Psalms 12, 13
Canticles
Anthem

Choral Evensong

Byrd
Howells (Gloucester Service)
Lo, the full final sacrifice
Finzi

Sunday 20 March 2022

11 am
Psalm 63 1-9
Benedictus
Anthem

Lent 3

Morning Service
Metrical
Byrd (Short Service)
Like as the hart
Howells

Sunday 27 March 2022

11 am

Communion Setting

Psalm 32

Anthem

Lent 4 Mothering Sunday

Holy Communion

Missa Ego flos campi à 8 Pedilla

Hymn to the Mother of God Tavener

Sunday 3 April 2022

11 am

Introit

Psalm 126

Anthem

Lent 5

Morning Service

God so loved the world Stainer

When the Lord turned again Batten



**LENT, HOLY WEEK AND EASTER
AT PAISLEY ABBEY**

Ash Wednesday – 2nd March

4 pm Holy Communion

Includes the singing by the choir of Allegri's Miserere

Palm/Passion Sunday – 10th April

11 am Morning Service

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week

7.30 pm Evening Service

(We will be partnering with Holy Trinity and St Barnabas Church)

Details will follow.

Maundy Thursday – 14th April

7.30 pm Holy Communion

Good Friday – 15th April

7.30 pm Service of Meditations

The Abbey Choir will sing *Lotti's* Crucifixus à 8

Easter Day – 12th April

11 am Holy Communion

The Abbey Choir accompanied by a small orchestra sing *Mozart's*
'Coronation' Mass

ABBEY DIRECTORY

Minister:	Rev. Elspeth McKay	0141 889 7654
Director of Music:	Dr. George McPhee	
Assistant Organist:	Mr Peter Shepherd	
Church Manager	Linda Barrett	0141 889 7654
Church Secretary:	Mrs Karen Kerr	0141 889 7654
Session Clerk:	Mrs Marion Sommerville	
Treasurer”	Mr Stewart McDougall	

The Abbey office is not manned every day just now so if you need to contact any of the above people leave a message on the office answering machine (0141 889 7654) and it will be passed on to the appropriate person. Thank you