JOHNSTONE KIRK

CONGREGATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF JOHNSTONE KIRK

Summer 2026







Baptism – 29th March 2026

Matthew Martin Duncan Macdonald was born on Christmas Day 2025 to Fraser & Susan Macdonald. He has a big sister Millie. Matthew is the 9th Great Grandchild of Nan & Duncan Macdonald (Granddaughter Jenna is expecting Great Grandchild no. 10 in June). The service was conducted by the Very Rev Dr Lorna Hood OBE. It was a lovely service with many young families attending. After the service, family & friends celebrated at Kilbarchan Bowing Club. In Fraser's words the weather was dreadful. You could say ironically it was of biblical proportions.

The attached photographs show parents, grandparents, great grandparents, grandchildren, great grand-children& of course the Very Rev Dr Lorna Hood OBE.



Tuesday Afternoon Tea Group



By the time you read this article the afternoon teas will be finished for this session. What a wonderful year it has been. We've enjoyed many & varied kinds of entertainment, all from home grown talent. From stories, poems, history, quiz, singing & community singing. Everyone who attends has be amazed at the talented people we have. We've also had memorable birthdays to celebrate. 80th, 90th,94th & even a 97th One of the highlights was when our retired former Minister the Rev Dr Alistair Shaw attended our tea in January. He conducted a short communion service and thereafter joined us for our fish suppers. This was appreciated by all. We could not organise & run the afternoon teas without our helpers. Those people who act as drivers, set up, clear away and of course our bakers who make all the scrumptious treats. Thanks to them all. Our final thanks go to you who attend faithfully and make all the hard work worth it. Please keep an eye on the pew leaflet for the date of the first afternoon tea of the new session.



Jean Shanks

THE BARD HIMSELF (by John Muir)

I was looking for links between Scotland's National Bard; Robert Burns andJohnstone. I could not find any!
I had heard that in the past there was actually a Johnstone Burns Society but I have no details at all of its history. I can tell you that there was an Annual Masonic Burns Supper which was always a rollicking affair and I know this for a fact, I've been there! Possibly there were many other quieter celebrations held in Church Halls and the like throughout the area.
Thanks to the writings of the late Derek P Parker MA. BD (Hons) and others, I did find a link to Burns via Elderslie.

Most of us probably met the Bard in our primary school days, where the teachers made valiant efforts to get us interested in the 3Rs and most of the time they succeeded. Poetry was popular and by the end of our schooldays we could all recite bits and pieces of Robert Burns and other poets. Who can ever forget:

To a Mouse	*Wee sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie*
Tam o' Shanter…	*Ah Tam! Ah Tam! thou'll get thy fairin| In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin.*
A Man's a Man for a That.	*That Man to Man the world O'er Shall Brithers be for a' that.*
Auld Lang Syne.	*The world's parting song.*

As most of us know at the end of family and public functions nowadays and throughout the whole world people link arms and sing "*Auld Lang Syne"* If ever there was a No 1 in the world of song writing, this is it.

In Elderslie during the eighteenth century there was a house at the top of Newton Avenue called Newton House, which belonged to the well-off Alexander family. A member of that family was Claud Alexander (Of course it was!) and he married Joanna Cuninghame of Craigends, near Houston. The couple had a family of eleven, 6 sons and 5 daughters. (At the last count) One of the daughters was called Wilhelmina and she was considered to be a rare beauty; in fact, she was renowned far and wide for her beauty.
Still with me?
It so happened that Wilhelmina went to Ayrshire to live with her brother Claud who had made his fortune as Paymaster - General of the British East India Company soldiers in Bengal, India. Brother Claude had bought the magnificent Ballochmyle House, near Mauchline, in Ayrshire.
The plot thickens.
It so happened that one fine day Wilhelmina was out for a stroll in Ballochmyle Woods when she crossed paths with the Bard. There may have been a few pleasantries exchanged,
Burns: Aye Aye. Fine day.
Wilhelmina: What did he say?
However, Wilhelmina played hard to get and the pair continued with their walk.
A few days later Wilhelmina was surprised to received a letter from the Bard along with a poem dedicated to her by him.
The poem was "The Bonnie Lass o' Ballochmyle!
This song is now sung all over the world.
Wilhelmina Alexander died unmarried in 1843 aged 88, but thanks to Robert Burns her memory will never die.

WAYS AND MEANS SOCIAL COMMITTEE



Burns Supper

As always, this was a very busy and enjoyable evening with good food, good company, and great entertainment from our own members.

Around 70 people attended. Sincere thanks to everyone who helped in any way to make this such a successful event.



Sale of covered Easter eggs

Once again, Irene, Ishbel, and new recruit Karine excelled themselves producing a wonderful variety of covered cream eggs for Easter. As usual, the sale of these was fast and furious. Many thanks to the "girls" for knitting and to everyone who donated towards them and also bought them.

Light bite lunch



On Sunday 29th March, we held a light bite lunch in the Keanie Hall after the morning service.

This was very busy with more than 70 people coming through to enjoy sausage rolls, sandwiches, and of course, delicious home baked treats.

It was lovely to see everyone enjoying the fellowship and having a good catch up with friends old and new.

Upcoming events

We are having Brian Taylors Fashions on 12th June, please check in the pew leaflet nearer the time for further information.

If anyone has any suggestions for other social events please speak to Aileen McColl or any of Ways & Means Committee member.

Johnstone Kirk Junior Drama



Celebrating our 30th Anniversary

In 1995 St. Paul's Church Dramatic Society put on a production at Johnstone Town Hall of "Annie Get Your Gun" We needed children for this production and we managed to get all the roles filled. The enthusiasm of the children gave Linda Rae the idea to establish a Junior Section of the Society. It was obvious there were many children in the local community who had an interest in Music and Drama. The Kirk Session agreed that we could go ahead. In September 1996 our first meeting took place and we had over 30 children coming through the door. At present we have approximately 24 children who attend regularly and full of enthusiasm. Music and Drama are an excellent way of giving children confidence and this has been proved over the last 30 years. Many of the children continued onto the adult club. In 2007 we were very fortunate to obtain the performing rights for Les Miserables School Edition, which was quite a challenge for both the cast and the production team, we were so proud to carry this out at Johnstone Town Hall to sold out audiences. As well as performing our annual shows we are very happy to sing at the Church Christmas Fayre and are also privileged to stage the annual Church Nativity.







The Juniors have continued to move forward from strength to strength and hope this continues. Linda would like to thank everyone who has helped her with the Junior Section throughout the 30 years.









Junior Drama Past Productions	
Unicef Concert 1996	Anna of Nazareth 2011
Christmas Gift Service 1996	Oliver 2012 (Joint/Adults)
The Music Machine 1997	The Greatest Story Ever
Star and the Animals 1997	Robin Hood & Babes in
Wizard of Oz 1998	Alice in Wonderland 2014
Junior Showtime 1999	50th Anniversary Concert
Oliver 2001 (Joint/Adults)	Fame 2017
Annie Jr 2002	Wizard of Oz 2018
The Boyfriend 2003	Aladdin 2019
Showstoppers II 2004	2020-2021 Covid
Oklahoma 2005	Snow White 2022
Fame 2006	Jungle Book 2023
Les Miserables School Edition 2007	Shine Nativity 2023
Summer Holiday 2008	Little Mermaid 2024
Wizard of Oz 2009	Jesus, Mary Joseph & Little Donkey 2024
Aladdin 2010	Aladdin 2025
Fame 2011	Greatest Story Ever told 2025















3rd Johnstone Boys' Brigade

We had a fun filled year with all the Boys progressing through their badge work and we are looking forward to our Annual Display where the Boys will receive their well-earned badges and trophies and for the first time ever, 3rd Johnstone BB will see the award of King's Badges to Ewan Courtney and Callum Patrick.

From everyone @ 3JBB thank you for your support & we look forward to seeing you and the Boys inour next session 2026/27.







We resume with a **recruitment evening on Friday 28th August 6:30pm** and **then every Friday from 04/09/2026.**We would always be delighted to welcome new members.



Anchor Section (P1 - P3) 6:30pm –7:30pm Contact: Liz Anderson Tel. 01505 335597

Junior Section (P4-P6) 7:00pm –8:30pm Contact: Stephen Gardner Tel. 07515 831114

Company/Snr Section (P7–S6) 7:00pm–9:30pm Contact Stewart Digney Tel. 07355 054878

Best wishes from all the Boys & Officers of 3rdJohnstone BB

Find us on: facebook

3rd Johnstone Boys' Brigade Company

3rd Johnstone Brigade Band

1st & 3rd JOHNSTONE

GIRLS' BRIGADE



By the time you read this report the Girls will have finished for the summer recess. Our Display was held on the 28th April and was a great success thanks to the Girls & Leaders hard work. Leading up to the Display the Girls were extremely busy finishing off Badge Work and other items for the Display. Our Explorers visited Almond Valley along with the rest of the Division and had a great day out with reasonable weather into the bargain. We flung in a wee surprise baby shower for our Laura-Jane with baby pictures of all the Girls, decorating baby bibs and making nappies out of toilet roll. Of course, it has been all go this year.
Please watch the Pew Leaflet for the starting date of the new Session.







THE FRIENDSHIP GROUP

The above group meets within the Church Hall from 1pm until 3.15p.m on the 2nd& 4th Monday in each month. The Group has now finished for this Session. It will resume on Monday 24th August. Many thanks to those who attend and enjoy the fellowship & of course a nice cup of tea/coffee & cake/biscuits. If you're free please come and join us as you'll receive a warm welcome.

BIBLE EMERGENCY NUMBERS

When in Sorrow	Call John 14	When you want Christian assurance	Call Romans 8: 1-30
When men fail you	Call Psalm 27	When you leave hone for labour or travel	Call Psalm 121
When you have sinned	Call psalm 51	When your prayers growth narrow & selfish	Call Psalm 67
When you worry	Call Matthew 6:25-34	When you want courage for a task	Call Joshua
When you are in danger	Call Psalm 91	When you think of investment returns	Call Mark 10
When God seems far away	Call Psalm 139	If you are depressed	Call Psalm 27
When your faith needs stirring	Call Hebrews 11	If your pocketbook is empty	Call Psalm 37
When you are lonely and fearful	Call Psalm 23	If you are losing confidence in people	Call Corinthians 1: 13
When you grow bitter & critical	Call Corinthians 1: 13	For understanding of Christianity	Call Corinthians 2 5: 15-19
When you feel down and out	Call Romans 8:31	For a great invention opportunity	Call Isaiah 55
When you want peace & rest	Call Matthew 11: 25-30	For how to get along with fellow men	Call Romans 12
When the world seems bigger than God	Call Psalm 90	For Paul's secret to happiness	Call Colossians 3: 12-17

Available 24/7 Phone service not required. Direct petitions heavenward

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Interim Moderator	Rev David W G Burt 331 Eldon Street Greenock PA16 7QN	01475 633914 07971431185
Session Clerks	Elizabeth Alexander 24 Spey Place Johnstone	07581480155
	Graham Martin 6 Taylor Avenue Kilbarchan	01505 704373

This newsletter is for everyone. If you have articles 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.