

The Link

Autumn 2025 Issue No. 34



**The Magazine of Shawlands
Trinity Church**

Hello friend,

For many of us the summer holidays are over, although I hope that doesn't mean the end of the summer weather, but these past two months have been a bit hit or miss when it comes to good weather.

The end of the summer sees the beginning of another session in the life of the church and as you read this, the Kirk Session will have already met for their first meeting of session 2025/26.

So, as we begin another year together, I have been looking forward as to what the next year may be like.

We know that there will be challenges ahead, not only in our own lives perhaps but in our shared life as a church, as we seek to adapt and relate more effectively with our community that they too may come to experience the love and grace of Jesus in their own lives.

In thinking about the year ahead, my thoughts have turned to the prayer of St Brendan the navigator. Brendan and many monks like him sailed across the seas in flimsy boats, not sure of what they would encounter when they arrived, if indeed they would survive the journey. Another of these monks was Columba, who settled in Iona which, over time, became a monastery that tended to people's mental, emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing, and I know that many of you have visited Iona and some of you have shared with me how it was such a positive experience.

The monastery was noisy because it was populated by not only priests and monks but by teachers, scholars, craftsmen, artists, farmers, people who cared for sick people and animals, and children.

Worship and contemplation were an integral part of that busy, community-focussed way of life and yet, far from being a place of escape from the world around them, theirs was a place where people were equipped be sent out across the country, to be salt and light to the communities they encountered.

As Christians we follow in the footsteps and example of Jesus, but we also follow in the footsteps of monks like St Brendan and Columba. Their love for Jesus and for all people was such that they were willing

to step away from what was comfortable and known and into the dangerous unknown.

In taking those risks, they established communities across the country where many people encountered Jesus for the first time and turned to Him because of how the Christians lived. It is because of their willingness to bring the Good News about Jesus to our country and because that Good News was passed on from generation to generation that our congregation of Shawlands exists today.

So, what will we do with the baton we have been given? Will we drop it, preserve it, or run with it to pass on the good news – even at personal cost to ourselves? Will we try, like the missionaries from Iona, to do whatever it takes to keep our bearings in Christ but engage with our community, trying all sorts of ways so that some might discover a new life through Jesus?

Can we resist the temptation to cling to the familiar and safe – to preserve what we know in the hope it will see us out but risk there being no-one on to whom we can pass our rich legacy?

Let's take comfort in the courage of our ancestors who knew what it was to face fear of the unknown and yet press on. Let's remember also who walked with them, giving them their courage to keep going in the dark and stormy times, and who promised, when He told the apostles to go into all the world to make disciples, he also promised that he would be with us always, to the very end of the age.

So, I wish every blessing upon you, and close with the words of the prayer from St Brendan the navigator for you to recite, meditate and reflect on in the days, weeks and months to come.

Help me to journey beyond the familiar
and into the unknown.

Give me the faith to leave old ways
and break fresh ground with You.

Christ of the mysteries, I trust You
to be stronger than each storm within me.
I will trust in the darkness and know
that my times, even now, are in Your hand.
Tune my spirit to the music of heaven,
and somehow, make my obedience count for You.

Your friend in Christ

Stuart

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Interim Moderator | Stuart Crawford | 239 2140 |
| Email | scrawford@churchofscotland.org.uk | |
| Session Clerk | | |
| Roll Keeper | Ian Cuthbertson | 632 8101 |
| Treasurer | Lilian Craig | 649 2237 |
| Halls Convener | Christine Cuthbertson | 632 8101 |

Congregational Register

Deaths

“I am the Resurrection and the Life”

15th December 2024

Mr I Lawson District 17

July 2025

Mrs A Crawford District 2

2nd August 2025

Mrs R Fitzsimmons District 24

Removed from Roll

Mrs J Melville District 18

Brownies

Hope you have all had a good summer.

Fifteen Brownies and five Leaders enjoyed a Pack Holiday in August for a weekend at the Brownie House at Gartocharn, near Balloch. The theme for the weekend was the Countryside and as well as enjoying being outside, the girls made Bird Feeders, paper flowers and designed their own gardens.



In the new Session the Monday Night Pack (53rd Glasgow Brownie Pack) will be very busy. We are going to be welcoming 12 new girls along who were Rainbows in Pollokshields. This Pack is now full but we have a good number of spaces in the Wednesday Night Pack (114th Glasgow Brownie Pack).

You may have seen that Girlguiding have introduced 72 new Interest Badges and 18 of these are for Brownies. We are going to be busy!

The Brownies are looking forward to a day out at Blair Drummond Safari Park on Saturday 13th September. Girlguiding Scotland are taking over the Safari Park on the Saturday and Sunday that weekend. The Park is closed to the public and only Girlguiding members will be there. We hope for a dry day!!!

The Brownies are still collecting used postage stamps for various charities.

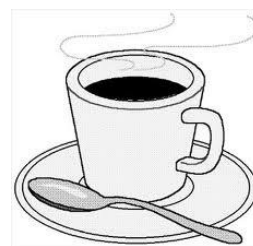
We look forward to your continued support to the girls.

Ann



WELCOME TO THE WARM CAFE

It is hard to believe that it is almost 3 years since we first had the idea of a Warm Cafe. You may remember it was at a time when people were struggling to pay their heating bills and as a Parish Church we were looking for a way we could help. We came up with the idea of a Warm Cafe where people could come into the heat, have a warm drink and a wee blether. Never in our wildest dreams did we anticipate that it would grow the way it has – now running 52 weeks per year with between 45 – 50 each week.



We started off with 4 tables and I can clearly remember wondering if anyone would turn up. It wasn't very long before we had to increase to 6 tables and now we use 8 tables AND frequently have to put chairs on the corners.

We have 3 teams of helpers and are grateful that our helpers have grown as more have volunteered to help. We also have a young man who comes along at 9.30am every Tuesday to help lay out the tables and chairs and then puts them away (as some of us are not quite as fit as we used to be!!!). He also comes to Church and is part of the Walking Group. This is a constant reminder that God never asks us to do anything for Him without supplying the help we need.

Our guests come from within Shawlands Trinity; from people passing either walking or on the bus who see our sign; and folk who have simply heard about us. We also have a little group of ladies from St Helen's RC Church who come to us after going to Chapel. Several of them came to the Sausage Sizzle and asked when the next one would be!

The table of free books which we put out at the gate (weather permitting) has also proved very popular and often brings people in for a cuppa.



We made the decision at the very beginning that we would not charge so that anyone could come in whatever their circumstances. The Church incurs no expense other than heating and we are very grateful

to the Kirk Session for their continued support. It is rare that a Tuesday passes when we are not given donations of Tea/Coffee and biscuits from the folk who come. The Co-op Funeral Care have also been very generous and we are grateful to them.

We do not preach to our friends on a Tuesday but neither do we shy away from speaking about our faith and at Easter we have a short time of reflection on the **real** reason for Easter and at Christmas we have had 2 Community Carol Events and are planning to have another one again this year. All organisations using the Church premises are invited and the Co-op Funeral Care have, for the past 2 years, kindly supplied Mince Pies and Shortbread. These events have been very well attended and supported.

We set out almost 3 years ago to provide a warm, friendly space for people to come but it has turned into something much more than that. It has encouraged not only folk from within Shawlands Trinity but also those from the community, many of whom previously had no contact with the Church, to become involved and hopefully see us as more than just a building where we have a service on a Sunday.

If you haven't dropped in to see us on a Tuesday please do so, we have been told on many occasions how welcoming and enjoyable it is.

Please continue to hold us in your Prayers as we try to do God's work in our Parish.



“Central to the Church of Scotland is our love and worship of God through following the teachings and examples of Jesus Christ. We express our love for God by our love and practical care for each other and for those we live with and encounter in our daily lives”.
(Church of Scotland – Our Faith)

Moirra J Lafferty



Material for the Winter
issue of The Link
should be in by Sunday
15th November.

Notes



Recent Outings

Callander, Sat 17th May

Well, what a day! Right in the middle of the heat-wave! When we arrived at Callander we discovered that the place was just a bit busier than usual but as we went on our walk we became aware of the reason.



We went South to a woodland path up a hill which provided some welcome shade but as we went along we kept meeting people walking in the opposite direction and soon discovered we were on a 10K route (but in the opposite direction) for a charity 'Hike' organised by Cancer Research. We

later discovered that there were also routes for Half-Marathons and Full Marathons which were completed by 100's of walkers! As for us we were quite happy to complete the rest of our route along a disused railway track.

Culzean Castle, Sat 21st June

We started by parking cars on the beach at Maidens. After a short walk we entered the park at the South end and came quickly to the Swan Pond and the Play Area which had attracted quite a lot of visitors. We then headed along the well-wooded path at the top of the cliffs which lead to the castle. On arrival, we made a bee-line for a café with a very pleasant out-door garden area within the ramparts. Since none of us were particularly interested in the Visitor Centre we did a little more exploring in the park before spending quite a bit of time admiring the borders and exotic trees in the well-stocked walled garden. Then back to Maidens where one of our number was brave enough to go for a paddle.



Mugdock Country Park, Sat 9th Aug

This time we started off at the Visitor Centre to pick up some maps and get advice about the various routes.



Apparently there had been quite a lot of damage caused by a recent storm but we were assured that the paths had all been cleared. The Rangers, though, were renewing the route markings and that led to some uncertainty at a couple of places. But we were happy to take the advice not to take the path down towards Craigallian because it might be a bit slippery (as well as steep). But despite the occasional nasty

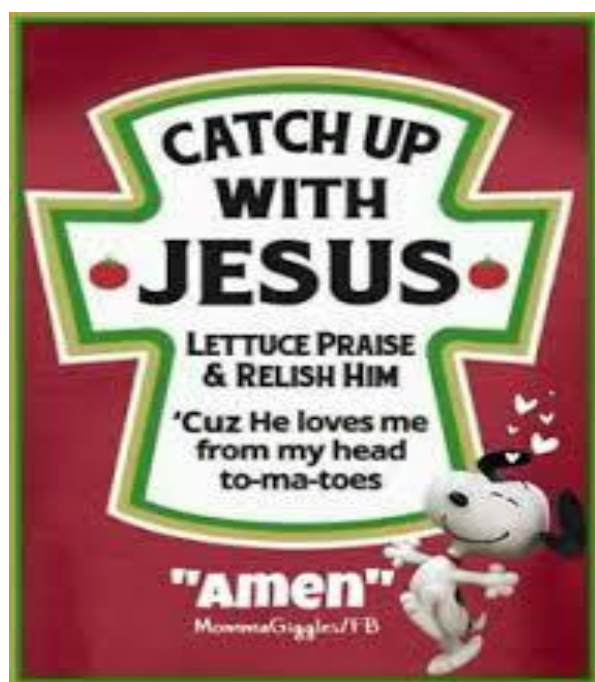
shower and blustery wind we managed round most of the park with its meadows, woodlands and lochans, taking in two castles and one interesting WW2 anti-aircraft gun emplacement.

Next Two Outings

Sept 6th - Millport

Oct 4th – River Devon Circular

Bill Craig at billcraig38@gmail.com or 649 2237





Plenty Questions, One Answer

Acts 8: 26-40; Isaiah 53

Curiosity may have killed a few cats over the years but it is not always all that bad a thing. True, in our own times, it can so easily become a serious distraction when, for example, the click-bait on our mobiles and computers lead us far from where we wanted to be – when we might well have forgotten what we were wanting to find out in the first place! Once again, children can teach us a few things. Without their (God-given) talent for curiosity and sense of wonder, they would learn very little. For adults, a loss of curiosity can lead, among other things, to a loss of enjoyment of life itself

The story of Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch itself provokes some curious questions. For one thing, where exactly had he come from? Ethiopia didn't exist as a country at that time but it is generally understood to be a kingdom (called Cush in the OT) on the fringes of the Roman Empire with a capital on the upper Nile in the middle of what is now Sudan. Who was Candace? Not a personal name but a title (kandake = 'queen, probably referring to the queen-mother). Then what had brought him to Jerusalem? Well, we are told that he had come 'to worship' so although he might not have been fully accepted as a Jew he was determined to pay his respects where respect was due. And what about the scroll of Isaiah he had acquired? If he had bought it, it would have cost a pretty penny, which shows his determination to find out more about God - further illustrated by his attempt to read it in his chariot on the rocky road to Gaza!

Be that as it may, this story plays an important part in the history of the early church and would have been of particular interest to Luke (the writer of Acts). Luke himself was a Gentile and this story is the first to record the conversion of a Gentile. (By the time of writing Acts, he had been assisting Paul in his mission to the Gentiles.) There are important lessons we can learn from this story – Philip's

willingness to go and find this man, his gracious conversation, his ability to identify what was bothering him and to come up with the answers to the questions he was asking and his willingness to baptise him on the spot. It also illustrates the truth of what Jesus had said about seeking and finding (Matt 7:7) and when at the end of the story the eunuch ‘goes on his way rejoicing’ we are reminded of the parable of the lost sheep where there shall be ‘joy in heaven over one sinner that repents. ((Luke 15:7).

Now, we can take our study a bit further. What exactly were the words that puzzled the eunuch so much and which led to his conversion? The answer lies in Isaiah chapter 53! And here we have some further questions to chew over. The first half of the book (mostly warnings) relates to the imminent fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC and the exile of its people but from chapter 40 on it is mostly about their almost immediate return (under Cyrus in 538 BC). But what is a bit more perplexing is that chapter 53 presents a picture of a coming Messiah who is almost the direct opposite of what the people were expecting! As you read it (please do, and in the Authorised Version if at all possible) you will realise that this is an almost exact description of Jesus. So, no wonder the poor eunuch had trouble understanding what he was reading. Luckily, though, help was close at hand.

If we are troubled by many questions then we can do no better than to follow the eunuch’s example by seeking by every means to find the answers. We can be helped along the way by speaking to friends, going to church services, Bible studies, prayer meetings as well as taking time on a regular basis to think things through via prayer and Bible reading. At the same time, we (like Philip) need to be ready to share what we have learned with all who may be seeking our help.

***In Christ alone, my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song
Stuart Townend***

***... I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ,
and him crucified.
Paul 1Cor 2:2***

James Chalmers

You will barely believe this one folks....

James Chalmers was born in Ardrishaig in 1841 and was a wild child, a free spirit. While attending Sunday School and Kirk like everyone else he had a more 'relaxed attitude' to the rest of the week - messing about on boats, dangerous scrapes with pals, drinking and yes: drunken punch ups after closing time. One Sunday in Youth Church – he was around 18 – he was told the story of missionaries in the Pacific dealing with bloodthirsty locals. Two things happened:

1. He decided to join them! And this was due to...
2. A visit from the Holy Spirit which reminded him of his sins and urged him to seek a passage from the Bible to remind him of his purpose.

He found it after careful reading – Revelation 22: Verse 17

*The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, **let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.***

He always ended sermons with those last two lines.

He applied to become a missionary and was sent to Cheshunt College by the London Missionary Society. He hadn't lost his sense of fun and one evening meal was spoiled for his friends when they were attacked by a ferocious bear. The bear was of course James in a hired costume.

His life changed in October 1865 when he was ordained as a minister, got married to Jane Hercus, and was told he was being dispatched to Rarotongo in the Cook Islands. Quite a fortnight for anyone!

Being James, they were shipwrecked twice en route from Australia, including one complete sinking, but survived and were finally in Rarotongo. Here they lived for a decade in the beautiful but then desolate and dangerous Pacific. He preached, helped with sobriety, learned and spoke the language, and published newsletters and newspapers. He was very popular and respected.

However this was James Chalmers, and he began intimating to his bosses that he was 'bored'. Secretly he still craved adventure, a buckled swash, and a more glorious redemption arc for the people he preached to. He wrote of 'being devoted to less tutored men'.

He and Jane applied for a move to Papua New Guinea which was at that time the ends of the earth. The first few years he spent travelling, mapping, preaching, meeting people and also brokering deals with foreign navies and speculators...demanding better treatment for locals and good faith in any bargaining. He continued travelling and preaching although he lost his wife Jane in 1879 to 'illness' – a vague term that seems to cover her ailing from stress, poor diet, and constant travel.

He wrote 3 books on flora, fauna and landscape, as well as the local people. These were published in London, to great acclaim. He visited London in 1886 to give readings and meet the publishers.

And what of the people he now lived among? James was not slow to describe conditions: many locals were still cannibals, and death was very common in raids on other villages; prisoners faced an even worse fate. Warriors wore human bone necklaces and victims of successful raids were often tortured for days before being eaten. And what did James do? He preached. He went unarmed and always on foot. And he slowly won them over until 'large crowds set aside fighting and embraced as Christians'.

He pushed on and in 1888 – on another tour to London - he remarried: Sarah Harrison, a widow. He returned to PNG and helped champion the cause of the natives when the British New Guinea colony was founded. No slavery was first on his list, no importing of foreign alcohol, firearms, or explosives. His work was prodigious – he visited around 110 villages or settlements, and it is reckoned almost 100 of those had never seen a white man. He trained locals to preach and lead worship so that when he left the Work went on.

In 1896 James decided to explore and preach from the Fly River, in the settlement of Daru. In 1893 he had first visited and found the locals 'very hostile and unapproachable'. He worked with a young English missionary called Oliver Tomkins. They worked to try and

bring God's message to the locals. In 1900 Sarah died in England. Again, he pressed on – relentless. 1901 his vessel was boarded as he and Tomkins sailed near Goaribari Island. The natives were agitated and angry and Chalmers said to them he would come to their village to parley.

He and Tomkins came ashore for the meeting. In a rather macabre, but somehow fitting end, he and Oliver were beaten to death with clubs, beheaded and cooked in a pot. The locals said later they had added Sago and the meal was a 'celebration'. No reason was established for his murder. Ironically the area they landed in for the meeting was called Risk Point. The leading theory is that they needed sacrifice for a new 'fighting men's hut' or Dubu they had built in their village. It was Easter Sunday 1901 and many reckon he went ashore to 'talk peace' as it was such a special day...he felt no harm could befall him on such a day.

Why? Why the 23 years spent without possessions, money, a home? Decades away from home, two wives lost, and no settled lifestyle. He said:

“I dearly love to be the first to preach Christ in a place,”

He had the joy of seeing communities transformed by the good news. He didn't care for salary or payments. Declining an offer to work as a government official in the British NG colony, he declared:

“Gospel and commerce, yes: but remember this: It must be the gospel first. Wherever there was the slightest spark of civilization in the Southern Seas it has been because the gospel has been preached there. The ramparts of heathenism can only be stormed by those who carry the cross.”

As a nice aside – and wonderful legacy - specimens collected by Chalmers are cared for at the [National Herbarium of Victoria](#) (MEL), [Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria](#), the majority of which were gathered by him in Papua New Guinea and were previously unknown.

Scot van den Akker

Potatoes, Eggs, and Coffee Beans

Once upon a time a daughter complained to her father that her life was miserable and that she didn't know how she was going to make it. She was tired of fighting and struggling all the time. It seemed just as one problem was solved, another one soon followed.

Her father, a chef, took her to the kitchen. He filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Once the three pots began to boil, he placed potatoes in one pot, eggs in the second pot, and ground coffee beans in the third pot.

He then let them sit and boil, without saying a word to his daughter. The daughter, moaned and impatiently waited, wondering what he was doing.

After twenty minutes he turned off the burners. He took the potatoes out of the pot and placed them in a bowl. He pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl.

He then ladled the coffee out and placed it in a cup. Turning to her he asked. "Daughter, what do you see?"

"Potatoes, eggs, and coffee," she hastily replied.

"Look closer," he said, "and touch the potatoes." She did and noted that they were soft. He then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, he asked her to sip the coffee. Its rich aroma brought a smile to her face.

"Father, what does this mean?" she asked.

He then explained that the potatoes, the eggs and coffee beans had each faced the same adversity— the boiling water.

However, each one reacted differently.

The potato went in strong, hard, and unrelenting, but in boiling water, it became soft and weak.

The egg was fragile, with the thin outer shell protecting its liquid interior until it was put in the boiling water. Then the inside of the egg became hard.

However, the ground coffee beans were unique. After they were exposed to the boiling water, they changed the water and created something new.

"Which are you," he asked his daughter. "When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a potato, an egg, or a coffee bean?"

Moral: In life, things happen around us, things happen to us, but the only thing that truly matters is what happens within us.

Which one are you?

BIBLE WORDSEARCH

H M V K V O X L W Z N E D E Z
 B X G H Q V Z F T C L P U J Z
 I T E H P O R P L K E J E A S
 P L N R L Y R M A I G Y L O H
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WORD LIST

ADAM
 ANGEL
 ARK
 BAPTISM
 EDEN

EVE
 FAITH
 GOD
 GRACE
 HEAVEN

HOLY
 JESUS
 KINGDOM
 LORD
 MIRACLE

MOSES
 NOAH
 PRAYER
 PROPHET
 WORSHIP

Homemade
GIFTS MADE EASY