



The Church of Scotland



DALSERF PARISH CHURCH

PARISH PROFILE 2021



www.dalserf.org.uk



www.facebook.com/dalserfchurch



CHARITY SC016156

Dalserf Church is a 50% charge.

Serene yet humble

Welcome to the idyllic parish of Dalserf Church.

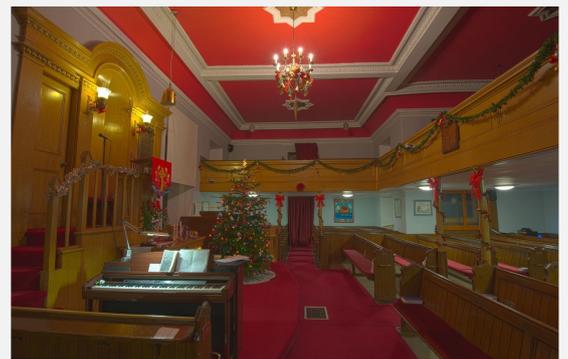
We are set in the beautiful Clyde Valley and we serve the local areas of Ashgill, Netherburn, Dalserf and Shawsburn Village. We have a membership of 151 plus 14 Adherents. Our average attendance on a Sunday morning is 45 – 50, at present we have 21 Elders.

Dalserf is a very friendly, caring and welcoming congregation and we believe our role is to follow Christ and to do his work for the goodness of the whole community.

Sunday worship pre Covid-19 was 11.30am – 12.30pm, followed by a short time of fellowship together in Hamilton Hall. We have been doing online services recently but we are planning on re-opening our doors again on Sunday the 22nd of August and resuming our normal worship and fellowship. Our other building, Rorison Church, holds a service on the 1st Sunday of the month, except July and August. This takes place from 2.30pm-3.30pm there is a regular attendance of approximately 12. We also have a third building, Hamilton Hall, it is used for various purposes including Christian fellowship after each Sunday service.

We celebrate communion three times a year, first Sunday in March, June and November.

In terms of the process for a decision to depart contained in the ministers and Deacons in civil partnerships and same sex marriages act [Act 1 2015]. The Kirk Session voted on this on the 15th of October 2019 and the decision was to remain with the church's practice in relation to human sexuality, and therefore not to call a minister who is in a civil partnership or same sex marriage.



The History of Dalsenf Church 1655

Category A listed building

Dalsenf's constitution is called "Quoad Omnia" meaning the congregation is governed entirely by the Kirk Session.

Dalsenf Parish church is a simple whitewashed building nestled demurely in the picturesque village of Dalsenf, on the west bank of the river Clyde, in the Clyde valley. The inside of the church is unpretentious but it emits a feeling of peace and tranquillity.

The name Dalsenf comes from the Gaelic word Dal for field and senf meaning saint. The church itself was built in 1655 on an original structure possibly a chapel dating back to the 6th century at the time of Saint Senf who was the son of a king from Canaan and his mother, the daughter of a king of Arabia.

The Parish of Dalsenf includes Ashgill, Netherburn, Larkhall, Shawsburn and Rosebank. The church was renovated in 1894 costing £1000 which was donated by Lord Newlands of Mauldslie following the renovation the approx. capacity of the church was 400.

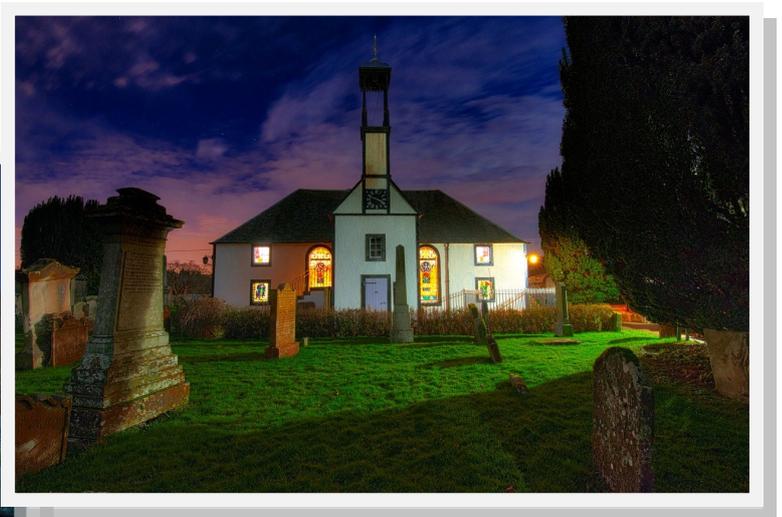
The church is one of a few churches remaining from the time of the covenanters and a time in history in the 17th century called the killing times when the covenanters were persecuted for their faith Presbyterianism.

It is thought the seven doors in the church allowed the congregation to flee from their oppressors if attacked during worship. Reports tell us 52 men and woman from Dalsenf suffered for the cause-freedom to worship in a Presbyterian instead of an Episcopalian manner.

The first Presbyterian minister of Dalsenf church was the reverend John Macmillan the first covenanting minister. A tall obelisk in the church yard marks his grave.

Also in the grave yard is a hog back stone carved grave marker, possibly dating back to the 10th century and indicating Vikings where in the area.

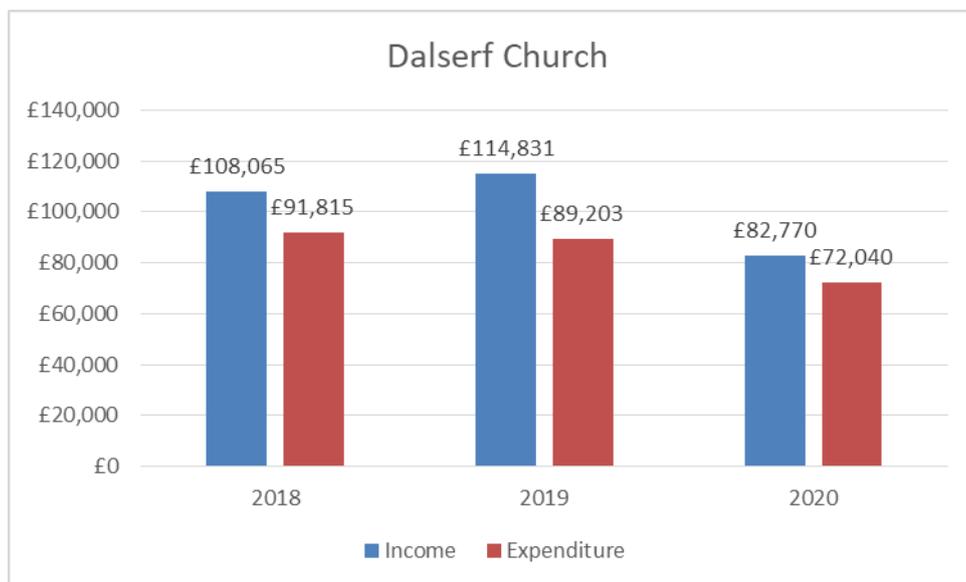
In 2000 Windows of Dalsenf were replaced in memory of Andrew Shaw by his granddaughter Mrs Diana O'Neil and were designed by Douglas Hogg.



Dalserf Church

Stewardship and Finance

The Finances of Dalserf are very healthy. Our M & M contributions for 2020 was £47,465, we also support Mad Ministry who have been doing online sessions with our two Primary Schools.



	2018	2019	2020
Income	£108,065	£114,831	£82,770
Expenditure	£91,815	£89,203	£72,040

Our Finances remain strong, covering all our expenses from income each year. We also have reserves and long term investments that help provide a steady income.

During the Pandemic a Church Newsletter has been delivered online, monthly providing a link with those who are unable to attend. Prior to Covid-19 the Elders delivered these Newsletters monthly.

Also Church flowers donated by members of the congregation are distributed each week to members who have had a recent illness or bereavement.



THE CHURCH GUILD

MISSION STATEMENT

Dalserf Church Guild constitutionally exists for the spiritual and social benefit of the members, male and female, without restriction.

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday evening from September to March.

The 22 members, who attend regularly, enjoy a varied programme with a variety of guest speakers from Christian and Secular sources, charitable organisations, hobbies and practical evenings concluding each meeting with the usual cuppa and chat.

Throughout the session we host a variety of social events involving our own church members, community and local congregations. These events in general allow us to financially support the fabric of our own church, and a range of external charitable organisations.

In conjunction with the Summer Teas Group, many of whom overlap, we hold specialised afternoon teas and lunches in support of local hospices. These are well attended and we often have a waiting list.

At Christmas we enjoy a night out with food, fun and fellowship and look forward each year to our annual outing in May.

In general we are a committed Christian Fellowship supporting each other, the surrounding community and the wider world in prayers and fellowship while striving towards the aim of the National Guild Motto

“Whose we are and Whom we serve”



WHAT IS FOCUS?

Focus was originally a two weekly mini church service, to which other churches were invited to attend. At that time the minister organised the speakers who were friends from his Fraternity. Each meeting concluded with Christian Fellowship over a cup of tea and catching up with news from the other churches.

The group now meet once a month with each informal service commencing with a warm welcome, a hymn and a prayer. Following a Scripture reading a guest speaker normally brings a Christian message and after a further hymn we conclude with a prayer and the blessing.

Over the years our speakers have been varied from Ministers, Lay Ministry and others bringing a Christian Message.

The group averages 15 at each meeting including some from other churches. The opportunity is given at the end of each service for questions followed by a cuppa and Christian Fellowship. It is a happy group who enjoy each other's company. We have Christmas lunch and before the summer recess we meet for lunch which we all enjoy.

We do encourage others to join us but as with all groups as people join others leave so our numbers remain static. Great changes are taking place in our society both local and national putting demands on possible attendees preventing them from joining.

As always we will continue to pray and encourage others to join.





1st Dalserf Girls Brigade

The Girls Brigade is an international and interdenominational Christian youth organisation which is open to girls and young women of all faiths and none. The aim of the Girls Brigade is “To help girls become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ and through self-control, reverence and a sense of responsibility to find true enrichment of life. It is important is that we recognise each girl is unique and offer them the opportunity to learn, make friends, try new challenges and grow into strong confident young women during their GB experience.

We meet on a Monday night from 1800 to 2030 in Rorison Church Ashgill. Pre pandemic we had approximately 40 girls on the register and have a compliment of six commissioned leaders and one parent helper. The Chaplain is in integral part of our company whom we welcome as often as their workload allows. Our GB year runs from mid-August to the last Monday in March.

We follow the national model and have girls divided into 3 age group sections, these being – Explorers for primary 1-3, Juniors primary 4-7 and Brigaders for S1-S6. We utilise the Girls Brigade in Scotland materials to provide a varied programme with a wide range of topics for our badge work. This is based on 4 elements – Spiritual, Physical, Educational and Service. Brigaders have the opportunity at age 14 to enrol in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme and Queens Award from age 16. We currently have 1 girl registered for Gold, 2 at silver and 2 at bronze and while the company has not met during the pandemic the D of E work has continued supported through Zoom. The Brigaders are given the opportunity to undertake leadership training with the option to become a commissioned officer and currently 50% of our leaders came through the ranks in our company, a trend we hope to continue.

As only a handful of our girls regularly attend Sunday worship, we ensure that a Monday night at Girls Brigade is “Church” for our girls and leaders. Attendance at Sunday parades has dwindled over the years however a resolution was found by holding the parades in Rorison rather than Dalserf meaning more girls and their families could attend. The main parade is held on Remembrance Sunday with colour party provided by Girls Brigade at the war memorials in Netherburn and Ashgill.

The company has been at the fore in the work of Girls Brigade Scotland both nationally and at Division level. Our former minister the Reverend Dr Cameron McPherson served as National Chaplain and one of our now retired leaders was National Vice President. We also have had leaders undertake commissioner role and serve on national groups.

Our company will celebrate its 40-year anniversary in 2023 and we would like a chaplain to join our ranks and help us in our journey over the next 40 years.



DALSERF SUMMER TEAS

Our Summer Teas have been going from strength to strength for around 20 years. Originally the initiative of our Girls Brigade was to raise much needed funding for a total restoration of our Rorison Premises in Ashgill.

As the years have rolled by our role in raising funding for the fabric has not changed but our aims and objectives have widened. Our group has also grown in number making up an enthusiastic fellowship in its own right. The majority of our group have undergone "Food Hygiene Training and following a high code of practice.

Our clientele come from "All Airs and Pairs", many far travelled, some from overseas others seeking information on relatives who once lived in the area. All enjoying our delicious faire and warm hospitality.

As a team we pride ourselves in the contribution we make to the fabric of our premises but paramount to our aim is Christian Fellowship and Outreach.

The 16-18 weeks we operate provides opportunity to open up our beautiful historical church and surrounding grounds resulting, in friends we have made, returning year after year. Through this Saturday Outreach we are blessed with many visitors and new friends who sometimes come back and join us for Sunday Worship

Many of the thanks we receive, verbal and written, refer to us as "The Friendly Wee Church in the Valley" with excellent hospitality and warm Christian Fellowship. Fellowship we also share with each other as a working team.





Netherburn Primary and Dalsersh Primary have had an excellent relationship with Dalsersh Parish Church for many years, with both schools and the church also working in close partnership with Mad Ministries.

The school roll at Netherburn is 121 and Dalsersh is 82.

Pre Covid19 restrictions, the school attended the Dalsersh Church Christmas Evening event where both schools took part in the evening alongside the church choir and parents, staff and the local community were invited along. Both schools attend the church for their annual Easter Service where the minister and the schools plan the service jointly.

In previous years when there was a permanent minister in post, the minister would visit the school termly and over the course of an academic year, all the classes would have received an educational visit from the minister.

Moving forward, both schools would like to continue the close partnership working relationship we have had with Dalsersh Church for many years to come.

Rachel Baxter and Nicola Thomas
Head Teachers of Netherburn and Dalsersh Primary Schools



DALSERF CHURCH SMALL GROUPS

THE GATHERING meets from autumn till spring when the group share a time of fellowship over a soup lunch, listen to a Christian message from the Keswick Convention followed by a time of discussion.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP meet on Monday's when they study and discuss passages from Scripture followed by a time of prayer for others and fellowship.

THE HOUSE GROUP meets regularly when they also share a time of Scripture reading, discussion, prayer and fellowship.

DALSERF PARISH CHURCH is in partnership with MAD Ministry from Motherwell which carries the Christian message into our two primary schools on a very regular basis, by means of personal visits, clubs and assemblies when allowed, or via the internet during Covid-19.

Both nursing homes in the parish are visited monthly and the church holds an annual open day in the month of May.



The Machan Trust

The Machan Trust is a Scottish Charity based in Larkhall and established in 1998 to work within Larkhall and the surrounding areas to deliver a wide range of activities for children, young people and families. The activities include breakfast groups in local Primary Schools, after school activities, cooking groups, holiday programmes, sports groups, lunch groups and youth groups. All the work of the Trust is supported by a team of dedicated volunteers and offers a wide range of opportunities and training.

The Trust's Mission Statement is

“Working together with communities we support and inspire children, young people and families to thrive”.

A Board of Trustees supervises the management of the Trust, and a Volunteers Forum - three members of which are at present members of Dalserf Parish Church - supervises the day-to-day activities in of the Trust.





“We are looking for someone to help us continue to grow within our parish and to expand where needed. We need a minister who is enthusiastic and can encourage and guide Dalsert congregation forward, helping us to reach our entire community, especially the younger generation, to allow Dalsert to continue to flourish for many years to come”.

