

A PLACE OF BELIEVING AND BELONGING



# ERSKINE PARISH

*Church*

The Brig  
JUNE 2025



## ERSKINE PARISH CHURCH

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# *A Word from Our* **MINISTER**



As I write this, in May of 2025, I am making my way through the voluminous reports for the Church of Scotland's General Assembly of 2025. This will be my first time attending as a commissioner, having had the chance eclipsed by the small matter of Covid 19 when I was due to go in 2020.

Time stands still for no one, and it is impossible for any of us not to be affected by the change around us. Indeed, that eventually becomes the change within us. Even the sturdiest rock is prone to erosion by the elements around it, over time. So, I think it's a useful time to reflect on what has changed for me as a minister, with the gap of 5 years separating my first scheduled

visit to the GA and the one I prepare for now.

The main one is probably certainty. I am much less certain about much more things. Don't worry, I continue to be steadfast in my trust in Christ and the great promises that uphold our faith. But beyond the essentials, the last five years have taught me there is always more to learn. Whether it's ethical issues that confront the church, what mission should look like, and even what Christian faith and discipleship look like, I've realised many of these things don't come with a neat program which we can extract from the Bible. And even when we are doing something that seems right and is fruitful, things can always



change and our approach has to as well. A lot of newly-trained ministers can have big bright ideas, full of certainty about how they are going to lead and do things just right. I definitely started the role with some of that certainty, but the pandemic soon knocked it out of me! I'm grateful for the process over these years which has taught me humility, patience, and flexibility in how we do things. But just as all things change, there is an awe inspiring facet to being part of the church, which is such an old and steadfast institution. In preparing for the GA, I was reminded that 2025 is a special anniversary. This year marks 1700 years since the council of Nicea. Maybe that is a piece of history that doesn't seem relevant to us, but in many ways, that early church council made us what we are today.

In 325 AD, the picture of Christ we take for granted today, as fully God and fully man, one person of the Godhead with two distinct natures, was far from obvious. Fierce debates raged through the Roman Empire about how we should view Jesus of Nazareth, in light of the Apostles teaching. As much as we mark change, it is humbling to know we belong to a faith tradition, in confessing Christ as we do, that has spanned 17 centuries. The result of the council was of course the Nicene creed which has been instrumental in forming Christians all over the world for these 17 centuries. As we look ahead together as a church, no doubt with many more changes to navigate, let us place our hope in the unchanging Christ, and the words of the creed found on the next page.

## Nicean Creed:

We believe in one Lord,  
Jesus Christ,  
The only Son of God,  
Eternally begotten of  
the Father,  
God from God, Light  
from Light,

True God from true  
God,  
Begotten, not made,  
Of one being with the  
Father.  
Through Him all things  
were made.

*Yours in Christ.  
Rev David Nicolson*



# ANCHOR BOYS

## *Junior and Company Section*



1st Erskine B.B. Company has had another busy year with a total of 23 boys across all these sections and three dedicated officers. As always, each section has been busy working towards and for badges. The Anchor Boys and Junior Section have experienced a variety of activities including Crafts and a visitor from S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths), Let's Go Construct, who use Lego for their tasks and of course there was marching and games, which are always popular. The Company Section has also been working for badges. Physical involved the boys doing "The Beep Test." They also made sling shots from canes and rubber bands, lots of fun. During the year, we also had a visit from Police Scotland, who shared the various aspects of their job policing and keeping people safe. The boys had the experience of using handcuffs,

helmets, hats, and riot shields. We are delighted that two of our boys, Jake and Max, are among the first in the battalion to be working towards gaining their Kingsman badge after having gained their Presidents. As you can imagine, there's a lot of hard work involved in this, including doing voluntary work within the community with football coaching and working in charity chops being among them. The boys have to be dedicated in this especially as this coincides with working towards academic exams at the same time.

Speaking of volunteering, there are times due to work commitments when the staff are unable to attend on the Friday evening. If this is something you would be interested/happy to do, we would love to hear from you. Our awards evening is on Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm.

*Craig McLean*

Captain

# *A Word from A* CORE GROUP



## Pastoral Care:

### Caring for Each Other, Caring for All- Pastoral Care in Today's Society

One of my favourite passages is the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), which starts with a question to Jesus, a question that is still central to so many modern issues that the church and our society faces today. In this reading, a teacher of the Law asked Jesus 'who is my neighbour?', a question that still rings out today. How little has changed since this question was asked of Jesus, it's still important today, from the treatment of immigrants, to who can claim care on the NHS. The central tenet of the parable is pastoral care.

The parable states 'a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him,

he took pity on him.... and took care of him.' It didn't matter to the Samaritan who the injured man was, all that mattered was that the man needed his help and that he was in a position to help him.

We can be overwhelmed by the scale of events in the news or the scale of events affecting ourselves. Jesus taught us in the parable, that caring for others is part of our Christian life. The parable also tells us that caring can start from where we. The Samaritan did not have to go find others to care for, he found it where he was.

As I write this article, we are approaching 2 opportunities to once again show our care for



others; Christian Aid Week and the visitation of elders with members ahead of the June Communion. Christian Aid, again faces a difficult year, with on-going campaigns for the Myanmar earthquake, the crisis in Sudan, and wars in Ukraine and the Middle east. There are many ways we can show who our neighbour is through the good work that this charity does.

As a church, we have been blessed with hard working and dedicated people, who give up their own time to care for others. Amongst these, are our hard-working Elders, who visit our members on a regular basis, provide them with an opportunity to have a chat and some company.

The pastoral care our Elders provide is vital to how the church connects with its members but its also vital that our elders are themselves cared for. When they visit, welcome them, be open to them and after they leave, pray for them.

I pray that you care for each other, care for your friends and family and care for your neighbours, wherever they be.

*God Bless.  
Willie McGregor*

# THE GUILD



“The new [theme] began this year under the umbrella heading of “Let Us Build a House” with our focus for 2024/25 entitled ‘Sure Foundations.’”

We have just come to the end of another session building on fellowship, friendship, and learning, which is what happens when we are blessed with speakers coming along and sharing their knowledge and skills. For the past few years, the Guild nationally has provided members with strategies for their meetings. These are changed every three years and the new one began this year under the umbrella heading of “Let Us Build a House” with our focus for 2024/25 entitled “Sure Foundations.” We began by trying our craft skills, by building a paper house, which

was interesting. We had visits from Rev William Boyle, Port Glasgow New Parish, and Rev Steven Owen from Houston who spoke about their foundation while Rev Phillip Patterson from the Veterans Chaplaincy team shared with us how veterans from our services can be supported. While David, our own minister, shared with us about his work in the community through the Boxing for Fitness classes. A few afternoons were spent learning about a variety of charities such as Mary’s Meals, Water Aid, Smalls for All, and BEAT, which we were happy to support. We were able to listen





to stories about Pollock House, Glasgow's grand, beautiful hotel and exercised from the comfort of our chairs.. Singing is always popular and we used home grown talent for some of this as well as inviting "The Midgies" along for an Open Afternoon and we were able to raise funds for the National Guild Projects and The Midgies donated thier money to CHAS. Food is always a popular afternoon and we enjoyed a Christmas Lunch as well as other "Special Days," coffee

mornings, etc. A few pretty Easter bonnets were also created and worn as a result of our crafting. Worship is a vital part of any Guild gathering and this year we were blessed to host the World Day of Prayer Service and Holy Wednesday's service as part of the church's Holy Week. All in all, it's been another busy year and we are blessed to have a sure foundation with so many people attending and supporting our group. Roll on September 2025 when we continue this strategy with the theme for 2025/26 being "Living Stones."



*Elizabeth McDade*

# *Information About* **GIFT AID**



During 2024, we received £15,686 from HMRC in Gift Aid donations. This is a very much appreciated component of the church's income, particularly as costs have risen sharply and other income sources have fallen during the year. Thank you to everyone that has signed up. If you are a UK taxpayer, we can claim 25% of your offering from HMRC if you have paid tax to that value. So for example, if your weekly or monthly payments add up to £400 over a year, we can claim £100 from HMRC if you have paid at least £100 in income tax during that year. We need a signed Gift Aid authorisation form to allow us to add you to the Gift Aid Register.

A Gift Aid claim can only be made for an individual. In some cases, our freewill offerings are made by couples as joint donations. In these circumstances, the Gift Aid claim is made in the name of one person. If a couple wish the Gift Aid claim to be shared between them, each must sign an authorisation form and we will split the total amount donated between two claims.



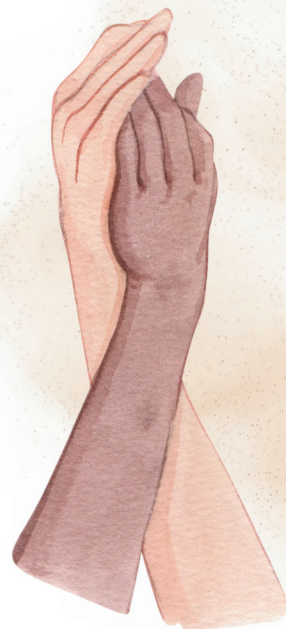
The form asks for your full name, address and postcode. The personal information on the form is only accessed by the Treasurer or Freewill Co-ordinator and used for Gift Aid claims; it is not used by or disclosed to anyone else in the church. Gift Aid authorisation forms are available from the Treasurer (Marion Menabney) or Freewill Co-ordinator (Margaret Rhoddan). They can also be downloaded from the church website.

If your circumstances change and you stop paying income tax or pay less than a quarter of your freewill offering, you should let us know and we will remove you from the Gift Aid register. This will make sure we don't make a claim for tax you haven't paid.



*Marion Menabney*  
Treasurer

# UNPAID CARER'S *Drop-In Cafe*



## UNPAID CARERS DROP-IN CAFE

**NEXT DATE:**

**26 JUNE**

The Unpaid Carers drop in Café began in January and meets monthly on the last Thursday of each month in the Hub.

Caring for someone can be exhausting and isolating. Our Carers Cafes are monthly, informal get - togethers where carers can chat with other carers over a cup of tea or coffee. They provide carers with a short break from caring and give them the opportunity to build supportive friendships based on shared experiences or just to find common ground through hobbies or interests.

The group also allow carers to share ideas, tips, and useful information with each other, and we can organise speakers on caring related issues with support from Renfrewshire Carers Centre.

If you or someone you know is a carer for a loved one, friend or neighbour and would like to meet others in a similar situation, please come along to the Hub on the last Thursday of the month between 11.00am and 12.30pm where you are assured of a warm welcome and a listening ear. There is no charge and refreshments are provided.

**The next meeting will be on Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> June.**

For more information, give us a call on 07914601033.

# Collection Point



## Ending hunger together across the Renfrewshire area

Providing emergency food and practical support for people left without enough money to live on. If you are able, please donate an item or two from the list. Thank you!

### Shopping list

Tinned meat & fish

Tinned veg & fruit

Pasta sauce

Diluting Juice

UHT Milk

Custard or Rice Pudding

Jam

Washing up liquid

Soap



**0300 102 2500**

**[www.renfrewshire.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.foodbank.org.uk)**

Registered Charity in Scotland SC044200.



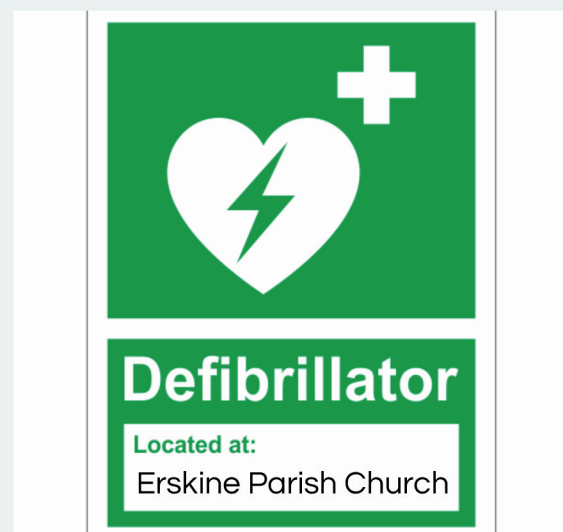


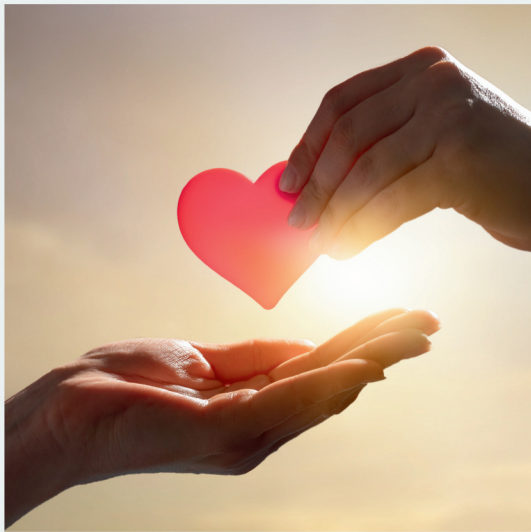
# Monthly UPDATES

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## MARCH

In March, we saw some generous donations from The Hub who gifted the church with £4,500 and an anonymous donor who graciously purchased the defibrillator which has been installed on the wall beside the Hub for community access. March saw events such as the World Day of Prayer service held at the church, where folk enjoyed a service written by the Christian women of the Cook Islands.





## APRIL

In April, the church received many donations from various groups and causes. We thank each for their generosity:

- The Guild..... £1,000
- Choir..... £300
- Jan’s Stall..... £200
- Tuesday Brownies... £400

The church also received a donation of a PC for the AV Team from the family of the late Robert Gray in memory of their much loved and missed dad. We are so appreciative of this thoughtful donation in honour of Robert.

## MAY

In May, the Guides graciously made a donation of £400 to the church. We saw another much appreciated donation of £100 from the Monday Erskine Brownies. An anonymous donor also generously purchased the apple trees that were planted by the Junior Church on the church grounds.

Erskine and Bishopton Churches together announced their theme of “Wonder Zone” for a summer holiday club. It will run from 11-15 August at 10am-12pm each day for all children P1-P7. To sign up, you can use the QR code in the advert in the following pages. If you are interested or willing to help, please contact Aileen Robb.





# UNPAID CARERS DROP-IN CAFE

LAST THURSDAY EACH MONTH  
11AM-12:30PM  
THE HUB AT  
ERSKINE PARISH CHURCH

## NEXT DATES:

26TH JUNE

If you are an unpaid carer in the local community looking after a relative or friend, come along for a cuppa and some chat.

We'd love to hear from you, help you find support, and share each other's experiences in a warm and welcoming space.

Contact us at 07914601033



# Wonder Zone

PRIMARY  
AGE  
P1\*-P7

FREE SUMMER HOLIDAY CLUB  
Scan the QR code to Register



ERSKINE & BISHOPTON  
CHURCHES TOGETHER



11 - 15 AUGUST 2025





# WANT TO HELP?

Your ongoing support is always welcome through liking and sharing each post and video, which helps us to ultimately reach more people.

We also depend on our members to send in pictures of church life; whether it is a normal Sunday morning, a special event, a moment shared in The Hub, or a weekly group that meets. All pictures are helpful to keep everyone connected in how our church is moving, growing, and taking part in fellowship.

If you take any pictures at all, please send them to Alyssa at [epcnotices@gmail.com](mailto:epcnotices@gmail.com)

## Follow us on all our available platforms!

 **YouTube**



@EPCVideo

 **Spotify**



EPC Sermon Audio

**facebook**



Erskine  
Parish Church

**Instagram**



@erskineparishcofs

*let's get in touch*

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