

A PLACE OF BELIEVING AND BELONGING



ERSKINE PARISH

Church

The Brig
SEPTEMBER 2025



ERSKINE PARISH CHURCH

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A Word from Our **MINISTER**



September is when it all starts again. Our lives are ruled by times and seasons, which come and go, and hopeful to give us a sense of rhythm. With the marker of school summer holidays, comes a bit of a pause in many of our programs, including the church. It's a good thing, I think. I don't know about you but by summer I am usually ready to pause what I've been busily working on, and try and chase some sun and a couple of good books for a few weeks.

Ideally, this refreshes us for the next phase. But not automatically. The idea of rest now has a bit of science behind it. Apparently we need just the right amount of relaxation, with enough mental and physical

stimulus as well to really reset things. We also need to evaluate how full our 'plate' is and prioritise as we go again.

I've tried to do this over the summer. It won't surprise you to know the nature of ministry in our current climate and culture is exhausting, and at times feels impossible to meet all the demands. Leading a church, and trying to do it well can also lead easily to mission creep... where you innocently get involved in trying to solve more and more issues and leap into helping with more causes, with your limited resources.

So I've done some pruning. I feel a sense of calling to try and rebalance my energies back even more locally in this season.

I've stepped back from my Crossreach Board and Renfrew FC duties. My interim moderator work for Clyde presbytery is immovable so I want to give my remaining evenings to my family, our local boxing outreach and of course work that needs done for our own church. Our church's finances remain challenging, with a big deficit between our income and obligations - so I'm encouraged as a church we're welcoming a new Core Group for fundraising led by Margaret Rhoddan which we pray will begin to help. I do hope we can all support their work, and continue to be open to God's leading with how we might be part of the answer to that challenge, whether through giving, or even considering leaving a legacy. It's absolutely lovely to start this new

season with the smart new windows in the small hall, thanks to Molly's generous legacy.

Additionally, it looks like we will be welcoming a new ministry candidate as a student, and Lord willing will see another big move forward in developing local youth work for teenagers. There is so much life and activity to give thanks for. It is my prayer coming into the new term we all know God's refreshing Spirit and presence, His guidance in our time, commitment and resources, and above all that we encourage one another in the work He's given us to do in Erskine.

*Yours in Christ.
Rev David Nicolson*

A Word from A CORE GROUP



Property

Over the last few months the team has been working hard to keep our church in good shape and I would like to thank all members of the team for their unwavering support, time and efforts.

The Property Group would like to thank everyone who took the time to identify items that needed to be dumped during our recent clear out campaign which allowed us to do the work in a timely fashion. This exercise has cleared the stage which will allow the Fundraising Group to organise events that need space

on the stage and it has also created an area which can be used for the Youth Club which hopefully will start very soon.

I would like to update you with a list of works which have been carried out over the last few months:

Manse

- ~Replace flooring in the hallways (contractor)
- ~Redecorate the walls in the halls (contractor)
- ~Replace guttering at the front of the manse (contractor)



Church

- ~Replace the existing flooring with laminate in the Vestry toilet (team)
- ~Replace the w/c and wash hand basin with new sanitary ware (contractor)
- ~Repaint walls and ceiling in Vestry toilet (team)
- ~Continuation of planting & weeding in the church gardens (team)
- ~Thanks to a thoughtful legacy from Molly Newton we were able to replace the windows in the small hall (contractor). These windows will now be affectionately known as Molly's windows.

We have also settled our dispute with Scottish Water over the historic problem with the drains between the church and Robertson House. We

have accepted an offer of 50% from them towards our costs for the work carried out investigating the foul smell around the main entrance to the church. On the back of our complaint we understand that Scottish Water carried out repairs in the main drain that runs under Robertson House so hopefully the foul smell should now be a thing of the past.

As with most church buildings the to do list never ends but you can be assured that the Property Group will continue to work hard to deliver the best we can with the funds available.

Irvine Bain
Property Group Leader

PROSTATE SCOTLAND



Supporting Prostate Scotland in raising awareness of prostate disease.

Erskine Parish Church are delighted to be supporting Prostate Scotland to raise awareness of prostate disease and prostate cancer.

Almost 1 in 2 men in Scotland over middle age will be affected by prostate disease (an enlarging prostate) at some stage in their life.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer for men in Scotland with 1 in 10 at risk of developing prostate cancer. NHS projections suggested that in the 10-year period to 2027, the incidence of prostate cancer was set to increase by 35%.

Earlier diagnosis is vitally important as it can often lead

to successful treatment and potential cure.

Symptoms to look out for include:

- ~ Needing to urinate frequently and often with a degree of urgency throughout the day.
- ~ Having to push or strain to get urine to start to flow, sometimes experiencing an intermittent stream.
- ~ Having a weak stream and feeling that you have never quite emptied your bladder.
- ~ Having to get up 2 or more times during the night to urinate.
- ~ Having some pain when urinating or noticing some after dribble.

That said, many men diagnosed with early prostate cancer do NOT have any symptoms.

Risk factors for prostate cancer:

~ **Age.** Prostate cancer is relatively uncommon in 40's although it can happen. It becomes more common as the man ages.

~ **Family history.** Prostate cancer can run in families. A man is more at risk if his dad, grandad, Uncle on fathers side or brother has or has had prostate cancer.

~ If close female blood relatives have breast cancer caused by a genetic alteration e.g. BRCA1 and 2 gene, then close male blood relatives are more at risk of developing prostate cancer.

~ **Background.** Black men and those from an African/Caribbean background are more at risk of developing prostate cancer.

~ **Trans women.** Can develop prostate cancer and prostate disease.

It is essential that we encourage each other to talk about men's health and to speak to your GP about a PSA test. PSA is a simple blood test but will not give a diagnosis but may point to something going wrong with the prostate.

John Malcolm, Prostate Scotland trained Champion said, "Every man of 50 years and over is entitled to a PSA test, provided he has thought through and discussed the advantages and drawbacks of having a PSA test with his GP or Practice Nurse. This is informed decision making in practice."

If you fit into one of the groups in the risk factor section, then it is vital that you inform your GP of this from the age of around 45 onwards.

Know the symptoms to look out for, but always bearing in mind that many men diagnosed with early prostate cancer may not have any symptoms at all.



It is important that women in the family, partners and wives are aware of prostate risk factors and symptoms as they can encourage men to visit their GP.

Please use the symptom checker but remember you do not need symptoms.

For a symptom checker visit:
<https://www.prostatescotland.org.uk/>

Going forward we may have coffee and chat days at The Hub where men and women can discuss the subject with trained Prostate Champions.

Full information talks can also be arranged.

“This is an area of men’s health that needs to be discussed more openly and by making men and their families aware of the Prostate related diseases we can only hope that more men get a PSA test especially if you fall into one of the risk categories. As a community centred Church we are delighted to be at the forefront of this awareness initiative”

~ Rev David Nicolson

Erskine Parish Church now has a full range of information leaflets and booklets available as does The Hub.

John Malcolm
Prostate Scotland Trained Champion



Give as you Live Online

Do you shop online? Did you know that you can raise free funds for Erskine Parish Church by signing up to Give As You Live Online?

There's no catch, just download the Give As You Live online app or go to the website and you'll find a simple way to shop in over 6,000 popular stores and raise free funds for our church.

Just sign up to the site and nominate Erskine Parish Church as your charity and each time you buy something using the App or through the website, the store will give a percentage to the church and it will cost you nothing!

For more information go to www.giveasyoulive.com

A Word from A **CORE GROUP**



Local Missions

The Local Mission group have been running monthly drop in café sessions in the Hub on the last Thursday of the month since January . We have welcomed a small group of unpaid carers to these informal get togethers where they have made connections with others in a similar situation and enjoyed some respite from their caring role. The feedback has been positive with carers commenting that 'it is good to talk to others outside of the family' and 'have some time out from the caring role.' The group recently enjoyed a lovely lunch at Pendulum in Paisley, courtesy of the Renfrewshire Carers Centre who kindly donated vouchers from

their Short Breaks Fund. We are grateful for all the advice and support the Centre has provided in helping us to establish the drop-in group. If you or someone you know is a carer, a warm welcome awaits you in the Hub on the last Thursday of the month from 11.00.am. to 12.30pm. Just a reminder that the Listening service is still available in the Hub by appointment on Monday, Tuesday and Friday mornings . If you have a worry or concern that you would like to talk over in strict confidence with a trained listener, please don't hesitate to get in touch on 07778 719735 or email : erskinehublistening@gmail.com. We are pleased to report that the Listening service is now



Monthly Unpaid Carer's Drop-in Cafe

established in Park Mains High School and will restart after the summer break on Monday afternoons. Since starting the service in February, the two listeners have been well received and the Pupil Support team have set up a system to identify pupils who may benefit from the service and arrange appointments, with a maximum of 4 pupils being listened to each Monday.

Our church is privileged to be a member of Erskine Churches Together, 7 churches who work together to spread the gospel and serve the local community. At the time of writing, we are coming to the end of the Wonderzone Summer Holiday Club which has welcomed around 45 children to a week of fun, games, crafts and much more, celebrating the wonders of God's creation. The week has been a great success, thanks to the volunteers from all the churches who worked as a fantastic team.

We were delighted to receive a grant for £1000 from Clyde Presbytery to develop Puppet Ministry in Erskine Parish Church and beyond, which enabled us to purchase a new puppet stage and three puppets. The puppets made an appearance during the Holiday club and were a big hit with both the children and adults. Erskine Churches Together will be holding their Annual Community Fun Day at the Waterfront Campus on Saturday 6th September from 11.00 a.m to 3.00 p.m when there will be a day of exciting games, sports, crafts, BBQ food, bouncy castles and much more. The Local Mission Team will be holding a free children's Lucky Dip again this year. This is a completely free event and hopefully we will be blessed with the sunshine of the past two years so why not come along and join in the fun.

Aileen Robb
Local Missions Group Leader



mothers & toddlers **Playgroup**

Mothers & TODDLERS



On Wednesday morning starting on 27th August, Toddlers will meet in the large hall from 9:15-11:30am. Please note the new time. It means that mums or who is taking a child or children to nursery or school can come straight to toddlers.

We have a large variety of toys (i.e. a large dolls house, dolls & prams, cot, a large kitchen with lots of utensils & hovers, a play garden, see saws, a number of ride on toys, as well as 3 large sit in cars to drive and scooters. We put down carpet town mats on the floor which garages and a fire station are placed on as well as boxes with cars, a train track & a box with trains and carriages. We also put down on the floor 2 large animal mats that children can sit on to play with toys. They can press buttons to open and close lids or toys that play music.

We have a registration form that needs to be filled in by an adult with a child or children they are bringing which has information about allergies.

The charge per week is £3. Children have a snack of fruit or a small packet of biscuit. Adults have a cuppa & a chocolate biscuit. We also have 3 parties in the year. We hope to have new mums and also mums who already come to the group as well as grandparents and childminders. All will be made welcome!

If you want any more information, please contact Carol Dobbie at 07813885852

WHAT EPC *Means to You*



We asked you to let us know what EPC means to you and here are some of the many responses we have received so far! We hope you find it encouraging to hear a response to your ministry as a church!

“

Erskine Parish Church is a new beginning for both my husband and I. We have experienced a wonderful welcome and the continuation of our Spiritual understanding!

~Coral & Scott McLaughlin

To unwind, take the cares of the world away, meet with other like-minded believers and come away with our burdens lifted and help others face the week ahead.

~G.J. McVicker

A place of learning & friendship.
A place of inclusion for all.

~Helen Sime

Being in church helps me understand and feel closer to God. I love being part of the church family. I have made a lot of friends.

~Margo H Lunney

The people are very welcoming and friendly. I got a wonderful surprise on my second visit, when I was given the Church flowers; thank you so much.

~Lorraine Hamilton

EPC is an oasis of peace shared in friendly, caring fellowship. EPC is my chance to give a tiny fraction of my time and thanks for the endless love and gifts given by our immortal God and maker.

~Brenda Mill

I recently took unwell in the church and the love, care, and concern shown to me on the day and since has been wonderful! It's just a very caring church.

~Janette Miller

”

Monthly UPDATES

JUNE

In June, we began a new core group for Fundraising which is led by Margaret Rhoddan. Our hope is that this group will be able to find various ways to bring funds to the church so we can keep up with our many missions! If you have any interest or experience and would like to be part of this group, please contact Margaret.

We were also blessed and thankful to receive gifts of £2,000 from The Hub and £750 from 1st Erskine Boys Brigade.



JULY

July gave us an opportunity to hear from Steven McLeish from The Leprosy Mission when we learned about their cause and as a church, managed to donate £727.50 for it. The line dancing group is now in their 4th decade! They graciously made a donation of £1,000 which we are thankful for!

Another thank you to our Mothers & Toddlers group, which donated £800 to help with ongoing maintenance!

We also secured a grant from Seeds for Growth, which will help to employ a Youth & Community Worker in hopes to expand our youth ministry and outreach, especially through the beginning of a trial youth club! If you are interested in volunteering in this area or have any expertise, please contact Rev David Nicolson.



SEEDS FOR GROWTH

AUGUST

In August, we had a huge success with the summer holiday club as we saw around 45 children and lovely volunteers from many churches across Erskine come together for the week of fun and learning!

Our gracious thanks to the Hub and the Sunday Hub team for donations of £3,000 and £800, respectively.

Also, we are blessed to say that thanks to the legacy left by Molly Newton, we have been able to replace the windows in the small hall.

As a church, we were able to watch as Eileen Elder and Irvine Bain were ordained as elders.

August also saw our participation of the Church of Scotland Stamp Appeal, which is supporting the work of Al Ahli Hospital in Northern Gaza. This is an ongoing campaign so the collection box will remain in the Hall of Fellowship if you have any stamps to contribute!

We are introducing a new podcast led by Rev David Nicolson, that is going to feature some commonly asked questions where Rev David will be giving his best responses. You can scan the QR code in the adverts to check out the podcast on Spotify, including the first episode already aired, which addresses prayer according to our latest sermon series, Teach Us to Pray!



EPCT

EXPLORING PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY

WITH REV DAVID NICOLSON

New
PODCAST



SCAN ME

ERSKINE CHURCHES TOGETHER

Annual
**FUN
DAY**

WATERFRONT CAMPUS

SATURDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER

11:00 – 3:00

Event Highlights

Exciting Games & Activities

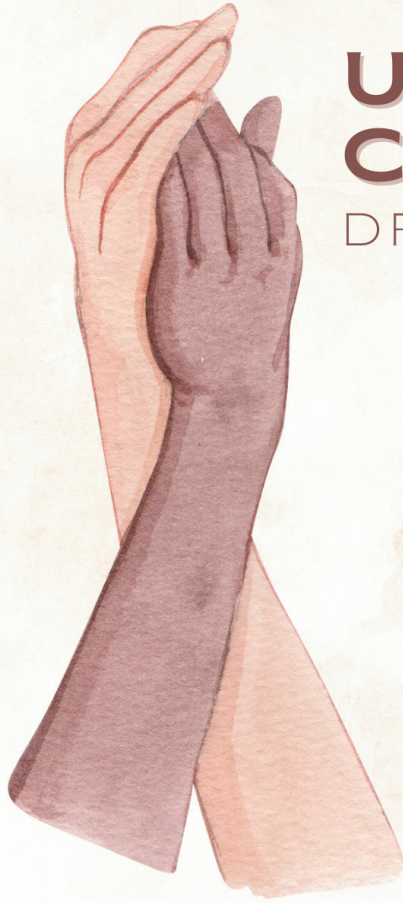
BBQ Food

Bouncy Castles

Crafts

And More

All completely FREE!



UNPAID CARERS DROP-IN CAFE

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

NEXT DATES:

25TH SEPTEMBER
30TH OCTOBER
27TH NOVEMBER

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



Erskine Parish Church Christmas Fayre



for the Fundraising Core Group

- Several Stalls
- Santa's Grotto
- Tea Room
- & More!

8th November 2025

11am-2pm

Adults £3



let's get in touch

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