

A PLACE OF BELIEVING AND BELONGING



# ERSKINE PARISH

*Church*

The Brig  
SEPTEMBER 2024



# ERSKINE PARISH CHURCH

1 Rashielee Drive

Erskine

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Tel: 0141 586 0359

01	A Word From Our Minister
03	A Word From Worship & Spiritual Formation
05	A Word From Property
08	Growing in Faith Campaign
11	Monthly Updates
13	Adverts

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*Table of*  
**CONTENTS**



# *A Word From Our* **MINISTER**



Let's have a conversation...

I'm old enough to remember the British Telecom TV adverts from my childhood, where they encouraged us to use our landlines because, 'its good to talk'. Of course none of us could have conceived at that time how the means of talking to others would multiply into a plethora of platforms, so that it seems we are now always chatting in one form or another.

But of course, there is talking and there is conversation. I still hold that conversation is a great gift, and even an artform. As I work through our current series on the Mission of Jesus in John's Gospel, I'm struck again by how much Jesus relies on engaging conversation to procure His ministry. Its as though Jesus knows something about the power of conversation, and the change and transformation, not to mention the sense of connection it can create.

For me, I would love to cast a vision for Erskine Parish Church being skilled at conversation, as part of our Mission. Let me explain what I mean. I think conversation can overcome disconnection, fear and hostility. Some of the most historic peace treaties in world history happened at a table with a meaningful conversation. Its where we learn about, and hold space for one another. Today, it is no secret our churches are often disconnected from the surrounding community. I don't think that is true of EPC, but I would love us to continue explore 'a conversation' with our community, learning about what makes it tick and how we can best serve it.

I'm grateful to the Listening Service and Local Mission team who already work to do this in a very literal and helpful way. When I think of my own experience, my most profound spiritual insights and leaps forward have taken place through good conversation. My prayer is that we all grow together in conversation, with each other, the wider church, and of course our local community. Its good to talk, and when we really talk, sometimes things change for the better.

*Yours in Christ,  
Rev David Nicolson*

# *A Word from A* CORE GROUP



## Worship & Spiritual Formation: Leading Worship in YOUR Church

Who is responsible for leading  
Worship in the church?  
The answer to that is the Minister.

In Christianity the role of the  
Minister is to perform functions  
such as, teaching of beliefs,  
leading services such as  
weddings, baptisms, funerals and  
providing spiritual guidance to  
the congregation and the  
community.

Times have changed over the  
years and with churches not  
having enough ministers training  
and filling the vacancies it has  
become the responsibility of  
Elders and members of the  
congregations to take an  
active part in worship and  
support the Minister.

I was a reluctant church goer  
and like a lot of people was a  
Sunday  
worshiper only playing a very  
minor part in the church.

Several years ago, my wife and  
my mum along with other  
members of the church went to  
Crieff for a weekend conference  
each year and every year I  
wouldn't go even though when  
they came home telling me how  
wonderful it was.

Slowly, I began taking more to do  
with the church and my Faith  
grew to a time, along with two  
other members of the church I  
attended the Church of Scotland  
"Leading Worship" course.

It was a very good and interesting course over a period of 6 weeks when members of Presbytery taught us about prayers, music and delivering sermons or as I like to say talks or messages.

We are NOT Theologians by any means but it gave us the confidence to develop our own styles and delivery.

I don't think the course runs anymore, however, there is a lot of material on line in the Church of Scotland website and "Google" has come to my help on many occasions.

When Rev. David Nicolson became our Minister in October 2019 we had 9 members in the worship team, sadly since then we are down to 4 members due to ill health, people moving away and other reasons.

Having an active worship team means that we are able to continue Sunday services if the minister is ill, or on holiday or being at other churches

as Interim Moderator, and it also saves the cost of Pulpit Supply which is difficult to arrange due to lack of availability.

If you had asked me several years ago to lead worship in the church, I would have laughed at you and would have been horrified at the thought of it.

Have you got what it takes to be a part of the Worship team and lead Worship in YOUR church?

If you think you would like to assist in worship in the church by doing a reading or prayers or leading services then please speak to me, the Minister or Session Clerk.

*Blessings to you all.,*  
*Stuart Boyne*  
Worship Convenor

# *A Word from A* **CORE GROUP**



## Property:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Property Group (Ben Pearson, Gordon McVicker, Ian Robb, Ken McIntosh, Neil Anderson, Sohrab Jafari Nejad & Stuart Boyne) for their efforts since the group was established 4 months ago. In this short period of time we have completed many of the outstanding works that had been proposed by the surveyors

in the current quinquennial report. The main jobs being painting and decorating all exterior grilles and hand rails; painting lines for 3 disabled parking spaces; drain and gutter repairs & removing unused building materials from the church roof as well as a general clear out of the cupboards and the storage area under the stage. We have worked



*Thank You*  
for all of your hard work!!



## Before...



alongside contractor, George Elder, who I would also like to thank for the excellent job he has done on painting the exterior of the church.

I have attached a few photos of the team at work along with a before and after picture of the church exterior which shows the fantastic improvement we have achieved. By undertaking this work ourselves and the generous free provision of the skip by WRC Skip Hire of Inchinnan we have been able to complete this work at a greatly reduced cost.

## ...and After!



We have started work on the outside landscaping and are currently seeking quotes for removal of tree stumps after which we will undertake some planting. The next project will be painting the hallway to the rear of the Hub and the hallway at the vestry.

We will continue to work hard into the future to help keep our church looking as good as we possibly can.

*Irvine Bain*  
Property Group Leader



Growing in faith  
proposed garden area

Two hand-drawn blue arrows. One arrow points upwards from the text, and another arrow points to the left from the bottom of the text.

# *Campaign* GROWING IN FAITH



To allow the painter access, the Property Team cleared the overgrown section at the main entrance and they now plan to create a garden rockery in this space.

It has been suggested that this could be an opportunity for the congregation to be involved in creating the new garden, contemplate their spiritual growth and do a little spiritual gardening.

Think about it. A growing plant is a very clear picture of how Christians grow in Christ. Jesus loved using nature and gardening in his parables. Plants need three things to

grow and thrive: water, sunlight and soil and we can link these three key items for success to the ingredients we need to have growth in our Christian life.

## What can you do?

If you would like to be part of this initiative you can dedicate a plant. You can donate a sum of money using one of the Grow in Faith envelopes decorated by Junior Church and available in the foyer, or you can discuss bringing or buying a particular plant with any member of the property team so that we can have a coordinated approach to the planting.

# SPIRITUAL GARDENING

*Needs*

1

## SOIL

Plants need a good foundation of soil to start their growth. For Christians our "soil", our foundation, is Christ. Christ nurtures us and supports us. He gives us a place to extend our roots in safety.

Remain united to me, and I will remain united to you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine. In the same way you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me.

– John 15 : 4

Just like a plant needs nutrient rich soil to thrive, Christ gives us every possible nutrient we would ever need. Peace, Love, Encouragement and Wisdom....and His supplies are unlimited.



2

## SUN

What else do plants need to grow? Sunlight.

Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path – Psalm 119 : 105

The Bible is our sunlight. Plants grow towards the light. They long for the warmth and strength that only sunlight can give. As children of God, we should also lean towards the light, His Word, for guidance and strength. It can give us warmth and comfort in times of struggle, and lead us on the clear path in times of doubt. The Bible is a source of many things we need in our Christian life.



# 3

## WATER

Last but not least, plants need water to sustain them. We can think of that much-needed water as fellowship with fellow believers. God didn't intend for us to grow alone, but to be there to encourage each other in Christ.

For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them – Matthew 18: 20-22

Fellow believers are meant to come together, loving one another and supporting each other as we grow. Fellowship can be refreshing to a soul, just like water to a plant. It can help perk us up on a particularly draining day or quench a thirst. Water can be a vessel for the nutrients we need to grow.



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## DON'T FORGET THE WEEDS!

As well as the essentials to grow we must be mindful of the "weeds" that can sprout up in our gardens, both in real life and in our spiritual life. Weeds come in all shapes, colours and sizes. The worst weed in our spiritual gardens, Satan, can sometimes be easy to spot, while other weeds like wayward friends or feelings of bitterness and anger can be hard to keep away. Weeds choke plants, creating an atmosphere where growth can be impossible. Weeds work in our lives in much the same way. They distract us from Christ as we pour all our vital nutrients into them instead of our Christian growth. Weeds can crush smaller, weaker plants easily. As we plant this garden we ask God to help us strengthen ourselves with good soil (Christ), sunlight from above (His Word), and refreshing water (fellowship with fellow believers) so that we may find ourselves with strong roots that dig into our foundation, and a close spiritual walk with our Father



# Monthly UPDATES

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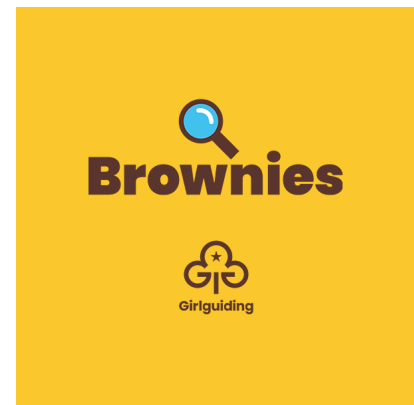
## JUNE

In June, we saw some fantastic donations to charity and to the church that we would like to highlight.

The J.A.M. group held a Tartan Tea where an amazing £583 was raised for Prospects Across Scotland, which will help to assist in their work to make worship accessible to more people with learning disabilities across Scotland.

We also received a donation of £100 to the church from the Monday Brownies Group. Thank you very much for your wonderful gift!

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## JULY

In July, we said a bittersweet goodbye to our Administrative Assistant of many years, Aimee Smart, as she moved to Aberdeen to continue her studies in primary teaching. The role of Administrative Assistant has been adapted to Communications Assistant as we look to increase our presence on the internet and in social media, as well as maintain the livelihood of sharing events and news that are happening within Erskine Parish Church. As such, we welcomed Alyssa Macdonald to the team as she has taken on this role!



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## AUGUST

In August, we received a generous donation of £700 from the Mothers & Toddlers group to the church. We are blessed to be able to provide a place for our community to gather and we are always so grateful when the community feels led to give back to the church as well. The Mothers & Toddlers group provides an opportunity to welcome mums, dads, grans, grandpas and childminders to join together in fellowship as the children enjoy playing with others. This also includes a snack for children and a hot drink and biscuit for adults. All are made welcome!





# Playgroup

Erskine Parish Church

1 Rashielee Ave

Erskine

PA8 6HS



## Stay & Play

9:45 - 11:30

Every Wednesday

£3

per week



Includes a snack

Hot drink & biscuits for grown ups



How are  
you?

I'm fine

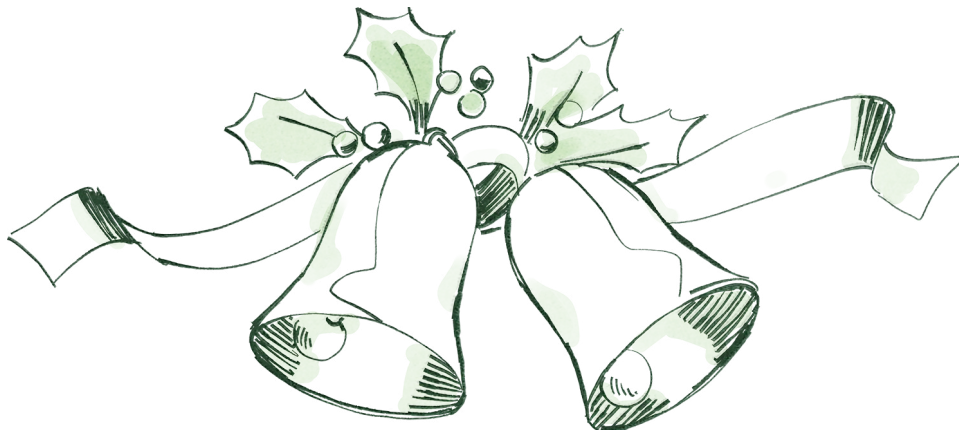
But are you  
really fine?



Do you have a worry or concern that you would like to talk over with someone? Someone who will really listen?

ListeningTime4U, our free confidential 1:1 listening service is available on Mon, Tues and Fri mornings from 10 – 12 through the Hub cafe at Erskine Parish Church.

For more information, pop into the Hub cafe and pick up a leaflet. You can also contact us on 07778 719735 or by email at: [erskinehublistening@gmail.com](mailto:erskinehublistening@gmail.com).



# J.A.M. JESUS AND ME

*invite you to attend our annual*

## *Christmas Carol Service*

**Saturday, 30th November at 2pm**

at Inchinnan Parish Church

Tea/coffee, mince pies  
& shortbread will be served

For more information about Prospects Across Scotland, visit  
[www.prospectsacrossscotland.org.uk](http://www.prospectsacrossscotland.org.uk)





*let's get in touch*

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