

Your Parish



Newsletter

June 2025



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Dear Friends,

The Manse, May 2025

A few days before I sat down to write this letter, I had the privilege of chairing our first ever Annual Stated Meeting as a united congregation. It was good to see so many stay behind after worship for this and good to be able to thank those who have worked so hard on our behalf in helping us to establish ourselves since the union.

As I said in my sermon on the 18th May it is good to see the growing sense of togetherness. I am privileged indeed to share in the ministry of Cockenzie and Port Seton Parish Church. We've been on a journey to get here, even as we have a journey ahead of us too.

I took as my text for the sermon on the 18th May the words of Paul to the Church at Colossae in which he not only commends these new Christian believers for their faith and faithfulness, but also tells them that he prays that they will continue to grow in wisdom and in the knowledge of God.

In other words, Paul is encouraging them to use their engagement in the Church to help them grow their faith, to establish deeper roots in their connection to God. An easier thing said than done, perhaps - but Paul gives them a clue as to how they should do this. He tells them, simply put, that he prays for them. Prayer will be vital in the growth of their faith.

I commend to you, therefore, the Bible reading notes, that are distributed at regular intervals throughout the year at Church. These notes encourage a daily reading of God's word and a short prayer suggestion. Many have told me that they have proven valuable in their own faith journey and are often surprised at how often the Bible passage for the day speaks to their own situation.

This is one of the amazing ways that God, through his Holy Spirit, works. Mention of the Holy Spirit reminds us too that, as you receive this newsletter, the season of Pentecost will be upon us – a time when we give thanks that God not only established his church but also gave us the means to be the church through the presence of his Spirit.

The recently finished General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was often a difficult watch. There are so many challenges around the National Church both in terms of its future shape and its finances. There are fewer ministers at the moment than for many a year, and many are due to retire within the near future. And yet, punctuated throughout the week were reminders of how God's Spirit is still at work.

As they face the challenges before them, congregations and Kirk Sessions are increasingly beginning to be more creative with their ideas including exploring activities they haven't been involved in before, training folks to lead worship and recognising what we should have recognised long ago – the ministry of all God's people.

We have every good reason, therefore, to be hopeful. God's Holy Spirit is still at work amongst us.

With every blessing and best wishes,

Your Friend and Minister, Robin Allison (Rev)

Our Minister

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Session Section

The Kirk Session met towards the end of May, with full Committee Reports and general updates informing of the hard work that has been done in the last two months, as we continue to get to know each other and share responsibilities.

There are only a few regulatory things still to be done, as we set up under our new identity. Charity law applies to us, and people in our 'organisation' who have a 'Regulated Role', where their responsibility might put them in 'a position of influence', have to have Safeguarding checks done. That is underway. Similarly, a total membership of the Parish Church - standing at 400 people – need to have attention brought to their rights of Privacy under the Data Protection Act, and you will hear, or will already have heard, about this from your newly allocated to Elders.

We noted that, with any improvement work done having to be sanctioned by Presbytery and the General Trustees, this will be a slow process. None the worse for that, as we advise and consult with you directly when appropriate.

You might think this was a heavy meeting, but it was not. Prayer support leading up to Pentecost was encouraged. The Session agreed to give financial assistance to another church within the Presbytery who were in difficulty at present, passing on goodwill which had been received in the past. Amnesty for lost chairs (now found) was offered, and advice was received on how best to remove the mice in the Boiler Room. These were lighter touches which encourage us that we are finding a new normal – with shared faith, support and encouragement all round.

The meeting ended with sincere love and best wishes offered to the manse family, as Robin was about to take a few weeks leave.

Mary Gordon, Joint Session Clerk

Stepping Stones

Bereavement Support

offered by Cockenzie and Port Seton Parish Church

Our church's *Stepping Stones* team offers bereavement support to anyone in our congregation and community who is living with loss. Our new *Stepping Stones* work has been running for almost a year, so here's an update for everyone.

Grief at the loss of a loved one can take us into unfamiliar feelings and thoughts, so being supported through that can be beneficial. *Stepping Stones* offers **a drop-in service** on the **Second Tuesday of each month** in the **Port Seton Community Centre, 7 to 8.30pm.**

It's for anyone trying to make sense of loss, no matter how long they've been bereaved, and provides an opportunity to meet with those in similar circumstances, share with members of our team, and have time with folk who understand what we're going through. It's friendly and unthreatening, a safe space to talk and share. There are tears, of course, but laughter too. People tell us it's helped them a lot.

There's no formal registration. As it's a drop-in, we welcome anyone who turns up. So, if you'd like to come along, we'd love to see you. And if you know of someone who might need this kind of support, please pass on the information to them.

There are leaflets around the church and hall with more information. And you can speak with Tom Gordon who coordinates our *Stepping Stones* work or drop us an email at steppingstones.mail@gmail.com at any time.

Stepping Stones



*A Local Bereavement
Support Programme*

Helping you at a difficult time

Funerals

Isabella Bowie Taylor, Milton of Campsie, Glasgow (formerly Port Seton) Funeral held in Church on Thursday 10th April 2025

Wedding

Gillian Eunson to Andrew Peach on Saturday 17th May 2025
(wedding conducted by Rev Ali Sewell, Minister at Haddington Community Church)

The Guild



All are welcome to the Guild, we have had a great start and have more interesting visitors coming to chat. We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7.15pm from April – September.

Our upcoming speakers:

11th June – Blue Triangle – Mr Lewis Keddie

9th July – Plumbing – A girl's guide to: Emily Whitecross

13th August – Rev William Watt

10th September – AGM – Mr Archie Johnston BEM



Jessie Hobbs would like to thank the Church for the flowers, cards and visits she has received during her recent time of illness.

Barrie Johnston wishes to thank the Church for the flowers he received recently after being unwell.

Thank you for all the donations toward Christian Aid, £728 has been raised.

Future property work

As many of you will know, part of the journey towards the uniting of our Church included an agreement to look at essential fabric work that needs to be done to our Church building. We've known for a long time that the wiring in the sanctuary, as well as the heating and Audio-Visual system needs replacing and significantly improved. We are also aware of the need to improve our access for those with mobility issues.

The Kirk Session, at its meeting on 21st May 2025, received a report written by one of the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland, Judith Roebuck. Judith is the General Trustees specialist in Historic buildings such as ours. She recently visited the church and offered guidance as to what areas of work we might look at in the coming months. She has advised us that a complete removal of all the pews will not be allowed. I trust that allays fears that some may have had.

Our budget for any works will be limited primarily to funds made available from the sale of the former Old Parish Church Manse, Church and Church Hall. This will, in and of itself, limit the scope of work we can carry out.

The Kirk Session have agreed to make available Judith Roebuck's report to any member who requests a copy of it. If you want to see what she has written and advised us to consider then please speak to Mary Gordon, one of our joint session clerks, and she will happily supply you with a copy.

We can assure all members that no final plans will be put in place without a consultation with you – our congregation. We anticipate that you will also have a chance to meet any professional architect that we employ. From previous experience, I can tell you that any process like this will be slow, as it will involve consultation and approval from both Presbytery and the General Trustees as well as local parties.

One final thing is to note that Session have agreed to the adding of the Brass War Memorial Plaque from the former Old Parish Church to sit alongside the existing War Memorial plaque in the sanctuary. We are also going to purchase a book of Remembrance which will be inscribed with the names of all locals who have lost their lives since and from WW 1. These will be dedicated when they are put in place in good time for Remembrance Sunday 2025.

Robin Allison

Welcome Wednesday

You may be wondering what is 'Welcome Wednesday'. These are activities that take place each Wednesday of the month. This started several years ago with the lunches that were held on 3rd Wed but unfortunately since Covid they have never started back up again.

In 2006 we started the Coffee & Chat Time. This is a chance to gather with friends and enjoy a pot of tea or freshly brewed coffee and some home baking. There is a small charge for this for church funds, plus some gets sent to Tear Fund. Up till press Joyce, Sandra & myself (Janice) have organised these days. We also have others that help out serving once every 3 months as well as ladies who bake scones for the day. Due to illness & other circumstances our number of helpers are dwindling. If you feel you could help out by baking or serving on some occasions then please speak to one of us for more information. More importantly please come along and join us anytime between 10am till 12noon on the last Wednesday of the month for a time of fellowship and enjoy the goodies.

(Other Welcome Wednesday activities include craft (1st of Month), Get Together (2nd) and Curling (1st & Last) and info on them will be in future newsletters)

We look forward to seeing you at our next Coffee & Chat Time on 25th June.
Joyce Buchanan, Sandra Donaldson & Janice Bulloch.



The '**Thrift Shop**' is located opposite Port Seton harbour, it operates to support our church and other local and national charities. We are truly indebted to all who support the shop by bringing along donations of clothes, books, toys, prams, jewellery and many other items, and of course truly blessed with our team of dedicated volunteers who keep the shop in operation six days a week.

A wee ditty:

***Our Thrift Shop continues to be a success
Supported by customers we seek to impress
Items donated are sorted and sold
By volunteers with hearts of gold.***

***We have bric a brac, toys, china and glass
Books, clothes, CD's and weights made of brass
We have golf bags, handbags, carpets and games
Fitness equipment and pictures in frames***

***We collect for the Food bank and Tools with a Mission
To spread God's Love is our ambition
Jesus taught us to share what we have with others
To give to the poor and love our sister and brothers.***

Doug Bradley, Thrift Shop Manager



**Congratulations to The Thrift Shop for 1st Prize
for Best Dressed Window for the Gala 😊**



Property Report

Most of the damage suffered during the January storm has been fixed and it was good that we managed to get all the repairs completed at the Old Parish Church buildings before it was sold at the end of March. The bulk of the costs for both buildings were covered by our Insurance Policy. However, the weathervane suffered damage during the storm and is again slightly tilted. Getting this repaired is taking time and it may be some months before it is fixed, depending on cost as this will not be met by our Insurance Policy.

The roof above the east side dormer window should be fixed by now and hopefully we have now found the source of the leak. This window has caused problems for some years and there has been various sources of water entering the Church have been identified. Hopefully this is the last but time will tell.

Church Security

We have been advised by the Church of Scotland to ensure our building is secure during worship. The kitchen door and disabled access at the rear of the hall will be locked at 11am, and they will be opened at the end of worship. The main Church door and vestibule door will remain unlocked if you do arrive after 11am.

John Murdoch, Property Convenor

Finance report

Grateful thanks go to our members for their generous giving, which sustains our own church and also those less fortunate than ourselves.

We do face difficulties, with our bills ever-increasing. We only need to think of our own electricity and gas bills, for instance!

Please arrange to donate using Gift Aid, if you don't do this already. For every £1 you donate, the government adds another 25p, at no cost whatsoever to you (provided you pay income tax). John Murdoch or myself will be happy to give you a Gift Aid form. Nearly £20,000 was given to us by the government last year in Gift Aid payments - imagine the difficulties we would be in without it!

We are considering some fund-raising activities for later in the year, and more information will be coming in due course. I am confident that our congregation will rise to the occasion this year, as we give thanks to God for all His goodness to us.

Colin Sutherland, Treasurer

Gift Aid

We have recovered £2,616.02 in Gift Aid from HMRC which covers the period from 13th October to 31st December 2024. Thanks to everyone who made this possible.

At present less than 20% of our Congregation have completed the documentation to allow us to claim Gift Aid. Remember it does not cost anything - all that is needed is to pay Income Tax. It is good to relieve HM Government of some of its income. If you are a tax payer and have not yet completed a Gift Aid form, please consider it. I can easily arrange it and it is completely confidential.

John Murdoch



Children and Youth News **Kids Kirk**

At the time of writing **Kids Kirk** has just held the penultimate session for this term. The boys and girls have enjoyed sailing the High C's exploring stories from the Old and New Testament. We are preparing for our final session on Saturday 21st June. Families, friends and members of the congregation are invited to join the children and team for a light lunch from 12.15pm. Why not come along and see what we've done and maybe try a craft or two!

We are looking to expand our team of volunteers; you don't have to commit to every session. Please speak to Sheila or Amanda if you'd like to find out more and chat over the next stage.

Over the summer the team will take a break and begin planning for the new session in September.

Please contact Sheila to request further information.

KidsKirkLeaders@outlook.com or text - 07980 059 974.

God Bless, *Sheila, Amanda, and team*



The final 'Drop In' before the summer break was well attended. The entertainment was provided by John Edmond, a firm favourite of 'Drop In' regulars. Everyone enjoyed singing along and dancing to many familiar top ten hits of the 70s, 80s and 90s. There is no Drop In during the months of July and August but we start up again in September.

If you are able, please come along and join us. Meet up with friends old and new and chat over tea / coffee and tasty treats.

Friday 5th September - Alan Weatherhead

Friday 3rd October - Eddie Raven

Friday 7th November - John Edmond

Friday 5th December - Alex Hodgeson

OUR WORSHIP

**Rev Robin Allison will conduct worship.
unless otherwise stated.**



Sunday 15th June

10.00am All-Age Worship – Liz Malcolm

11.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 22nd June

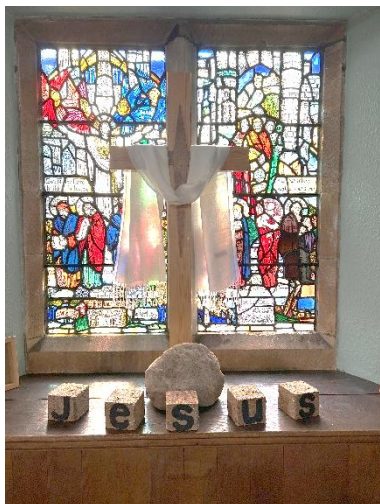
10.00am All-Age Worship – Amanda Johnston

11.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 29th June

10.00am All-Age Worship – Rev Robin Allison

11.00am Morning Worship



Sunday 6th July

10.00am All-Age Worship – George Smith

11.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 13th July

10.00am All-Age Worship – Marilyn Steele

11.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 20th July

10.00am All-Age Worship – Colin Sutherland

11.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 26th July

10.00am All-Age Worship – Linda Bradley

11.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 3rd August

10.00am All-Age Worship – Sandra Stewart

11.00am Morning Worship

Sunday 10th August

10.00am All-Age Worship – Rev Robin Allison

11.00am Morning Worship



Church Calendar

Sunday

10:00am - All-age Worship (in Hall, led by the worship team)
11:00am - Morning Worship

Monday

6.00-8.30pm - Beavers and Cubs

Tuesday

10.00am - Walking Group
2.00-3.30pm – Chest, Heart and Stroke Group (every second week)
6.00-7.30pm – Brownies
7.00pm - Prayer Meeting (on zoom)
8.00-10pm - AA Group

Wednesday

10.30am - Crafters (1st Wednesday of month)
10.00am – 12noon – Coffee and Chat (Last of month)
1.30-3.00pm - Indoor Curling (1st and Last of month)
1.30-3.00pm - Get Together (2nd of month)
5.00-6.15pm – Rainbows
7.15pm - The Guild (2nd of month)

Thursday

6.30-8.00pm - Brownies

Friday

10.30-12noon - Keep fit class.
10.00am-2.00pm - AA Group
2.00-4.00pm Drop-In (1st Friday of the month)
7.00pm-9.00pm - Scouts

Saturday

10.00am-12 noon - Kids Kirk (3rd Saturday of month) (Sept-June)



Contact us:

CPSParishChurch@outlook.com



facebook.com/cockenzieandportsetonparishchurch



instagram.com/cps_parish_church



www.cockenzieandportsetonparishchurch.co.uk



Please recycle this newsletter and care for the earth as God intended.

Cockenzie and Port Seton Parish Church (Church of Scotland)

Scottish Charity SC004630