



2025 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Our vision

Our vision for Brechin and Farnell Parish Church is to establish a church that is an integral part of the local community in Brechin and Farnell. We seek to be a truly forward-thinking community church and hub offering comfortable, friendly facilities and a meeting place for all ages and members of our community, regardless of whether they are members or not. We aim to be supportive both practically and spiritually. Discipleship is part of being a church member. We want to see a thriving and vibrant Congregation with many more people from all generations involved in its life.



A Message from the Minister

Dear friends,

As we approach the summer season, I find myself reflecting with gratitude on what has been a truly full and meaningful year in the life of Brechin and Farnell Parish Church.

Across both our worship centres, we've shared in numerous hospitality events that have deepened our connection with our local communities. It's been a joy to welcome our local schools into our churches for their special services, and equally a privilege to spend time with pupils and staff in their own school settings — nurturing relationships that we deeply value.

Our weekly worship continues to be the beating heart of our church family life. Gathering each Sunday to lift our hearts in praise and share in fellowship remains a source of strength and renewal. I've been especially encouraged by the ongoing success of our all-age Family Services and Café Church gatherings at the end of each month, and we look forward to continuing them in the year ahead.

We're also beginning to explore new ways of connecting in worship and fellowship beyond Sunday mornings. Our collaborative Messy Church with St Andrew's Episcopal Church and the monthly evening services at Gardner Memorial are just a couple of exciting steps on that journey.

This year has also brought moments of sadness as we've said goodbye to beloved members of our church family. We hold their loved ones in our thoughts and prayers, trusting in the comfort of God's eternal embrace.

As we enter our summer worship calendar — alternating between Farnell and Gardner Memorial — I warmly encourage you to consider worshipping at whichever centre you may not have visited in a while. It's a lovely opportunity to share in fellowship with a wider circle of our congregation.

Finally, let me offer my heartfelt thanks for your continued loyalty, dedication, and faith. Your support sustains the life of our church, and I'm genuinely excited about where God is leading us next. May the Lord bless you richly this summer with His goodness and grace.

**With every blessing,
Adriaan**



A Season of Welcome and Gratitude

During the last school year, our Kirk Session was blessed with new energy and wisdom as we welcomed four new elders: *Bruce Cessford, George Doig, Mark Nash, and Scott Valentine*. We give thanks for their willingness to serve and for the gifts they bring to the ministry and mission of our congregation.

We also took the opportunity to express heartfelt appreciation to some of our long-serving elders, presenting certificates to *John Aitken, Martin Cessford, Frances Angus, Peter George, Elizabeth Kidd, and Mabel Smith*. Their faithful and generous service over many years has been a testament to quiet dedication and steadfast leadership.

At the same time, we marked the retirement of *Donald McIntyre* from active eldership. We offer Donald our sincere thanks for his years of service and wish him every blessing for the days ahead.

On *18th August 2024*, we said a fond farewell to *Shena Balbirnie*, our long-standing cleaner and beadle at Gardner Memorial Church. Shena has served our church family with care, diligence, and a warm spirit. We send her into retirement with our deepest thanks and every blessing for the journey ahead.

Highlights from Farnell



The hive of activity across Farnell reflects the vibrancy and energy of the community, not our size or average age! Over the last 12 months, we've held several community engagement events and fundraisers to build the profile of the Church, and we've gone from strength to strength with new residents and visiting attendees at our Sunday services. Numbers swelled, as they do, for the Harvest, Remembrance, Christmas and Easter Services – Christmas in particular found us packed to the eaves as revellers from the Farnell Festivities (community Christmas party) trooped down after being fortified by mince pies and mulled wine.

Following the annual Summer Fete in July, we've had a talk from the Duke of Fife about the history of the Carnegies and Kinnaird Estate, a Treasure Hunt, the annual Coffee Evening & Plant Sale and a musical evening with the Prosecco Singers and South Esk Strings. Union events have also been held in the Farnell SWI Hall, including the party to celebrate the Union and Adriaan's First Anniversary, a concert by Bruce Davies and a Soup & Sweet Saturday. The Church has also been hired out as a venue for talks organised by members of the community and by Friends of Farnell, all bringing visitors across the threshold.

A huge thanks must go to the members of the congregation and wider community for volunteering time and skills to bring us all together.

Highlights from (Breachin) Gardner Memorial



We continue our mission to reach out into the community.

Adriaan is involved with the two primary schools even attending their adventure weekend at Dalguise outdoor centre. Their end-of-term services are now held in the

church. It is great to see so many young people participating in the service through music, stories and games. We had the Easter trail for the Maisondieu pupils who looked for the Easter story clues throughout the church.

Every Thursday during the winter months the Night Light service between 7 pm to 9 pm has been held in the church.

Members of the congregation donated food items at Harvest Thanksgiving for the Jars community hub. Several members of the pastoral group helped to pack food parcels, which was used to help struggling families in the town. We welcomed in February the local Scout and Guide groups to celebrate the Founder's/Thinking Day service.

Our Hospitality team has been very busy this past year providing catering at numerous events, e.g. VE Day Café celebrations, The Big Lunch, monthly Coffee and Bletchers, and soup & sweet lunches.

The Worship team are working closely with Adriaan to provide services within local care homes and sheltered housing. Adriaan has started a Bible Fellowship Group during this year.

We removed the pews from under the balcony area in August to provide a play area for the very young. We were delighted to get pew cushions from The Glens & Kirriemuir United Parish Church. We are planning to do a major redesign of the back of the garden.

We have welcomed an increase in attendance in person and YouTube at our weekly services as well as at our joint summer services, Remembrance, Christmas services and Easter services.

Thank you to all our groups and the congregation for all their hard work and support. A special thanks to Adriaan, Sanelle, Albert and Lukas for being part of this Church family.

Worship Group

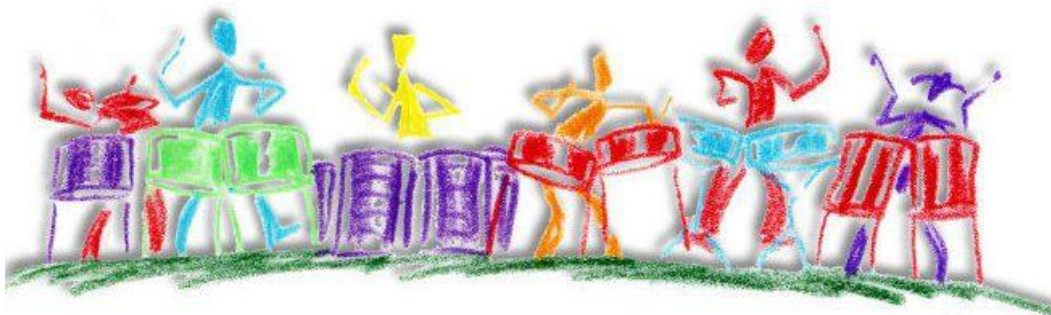
Worship has a major role to play in the life of the church, and it was decided to approach the Care Homes and Sheltered Housing to offer services for the residents and staff. We started our first service in November 2024 and we have led worship in St Drostan's, Bearehill, The Glade and Southport at Christmas, Easter with monthly services at The Glade. We have also visited the Dalhousie Centre this year.

We realise how much the residents and staff have missed the opportunity of being part of worship since the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been a joy to watch the residents start to tap their feet in time with the music and join in with the hymns. Friendships have been renewed and formed, and it is good to chat to the residents and staff over a cuppa after the services.

The themes of the services have ranged from remembrance, spring and creation. There is a mixture of poetry, readings as well as hymns from CH4, as well as Songs of God's People in the 30-minute service. We are planning to have a wee break from the care homes during July and August, but will be supporting our Minister by leading worship on 20th July at Farnell and 27th July at Gardner.

Brechin and Farnell members make up the Worship group. we would like to do more services in the homes, but need more helpers, so if you are interested in worship and would like to join us, please contact the Church Office.

GARDNER STEEL PAN BAND



The band was formed a number of years ago after a legacy was left for the benefit of the young people of our church/community. The stipulation was that something different should be tried to encourage their interest in music. The steel drums were bought and here we are! Originally, there were youngsters in the band but now we are a band of seniors. Over the years, different people have come and gone.

During the past year we have entertained in local care homes and Day Care centres in Brechin, Forfar, Montrose, and Kirriemuir. Other venues have included local church guilds and afternoon social clubs within Angus.

The band members leave these venues with a happy feeling when we see people have enjoyed our music, especially hearing them sing along and often, if able, enjoy a wee dance. We have also played at the Big Lunch held annually in St Ninian's Square. We are frequently given donations for our church.

We would welcome new members. We usually practice on Mondays in the church hall, but may also be away playing. If interested, please contact the church office.

John, June, Irene, Sheena, and Mabel.

If you've enjoyed reading this newsletter, why not pass it along to a friend, neighbour, or family member who might be looking for a church to call home? There's always a place for them here

