

The Church of Scotland

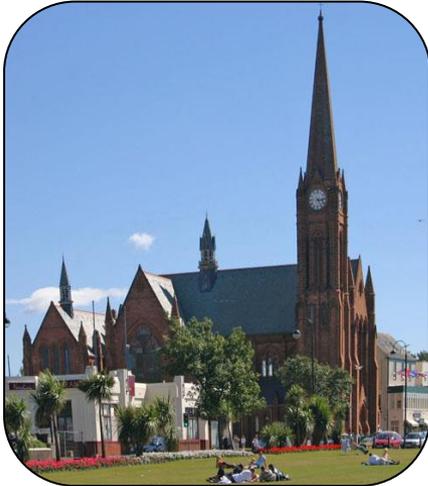
Presbytery of Ardrossan

## **Parish Profile for**

**Fairlie**



**linked with**



**Largs: St Columba's**

This linked charge lies on the Clyde coast  
in the district of North Ayrshire.

St Columba's Church is on the seafront in Largs,  
Fairlie Parish Church is on the A78 in the middle of the village,  
and the manse is on the seafront in Fairlie near to the Ayrshire Coastal Path.

## ***Introduction***

**This section deals with matters the congregations have in common and gives a brief overview of the facilities in Largs and Fairlie.**

**Each congregation has a separate section later in this Profile.**

### ***The linked congregations***

The linking of the parishes took place in 2015. St Columba's is a congregation in Largs, a small town with a population of about 12,000 and several Christian churches. Three miles south, Fairlie Church is the only Christian congregation in a village of 1,500. The parishes are therefore quite different in nature. New housing is being built in both parishes, so both populations are likely to increase.

Sunday worship is at 9.45 am in Fairlie and 11.30 am in St Columba's. Joint services are held annually. Worship is audio-recorded during the service in each place, and you can find the recording of the Fairlie sermon and the full St Columba's service on the respective websites.

As part of their missionary work, both congregations support the North Ayrshire Food Bank.

Each congregation has a choir and they sometimes sing together. The congregations are good at attending and supporting each others' events such as Coffee Mornings, seasonal fairs and the like. They share a part-time secretary who works in an office in the vestry at St Columba's.



At the time of linking in 2015, Fairlie manse was chosen as the residence for the minister. Situated close to the seafront at Fairlie, it is a relatively modern detached house which has recently been extended to meet the full Church of Scotland manse specifications.

14 Fairlieburne Gardens,  
Fairlie KA29 0ER

### ***Decision about ministers in Civil Partnerships and Same Sex Marriages***

In preparation for the current vacancy, both Kirk Sessions voted to depart from the traditional Church of Scotland position regarding ministers in Same Sex Marriages or Civil Partnerships.

### ***Transport links and local facilities***

Both Largs and Fairlie have direct rail links to Glasgow via Kilwinning and Paisley, and both have direct bus links to Greenock and Ayr. Largs has a direct bus service to Paisley via Kilbirnie, and frequent bus services direct to Glasgow via Greenock / Gourock and Braehead Shopping Centre.

There is a ferry terminal in the centre of Largs, from which the ferries cross the short distance to the Isle of Cumbrae. There is plenty of scope for walking and cycling all around the easily-accessible Clyde coast area.

Largs benefits from extensive recreational and sporting activities on its doorstep. There is a particularly fine Yacht Haven (marina) located at the south side of Largs, with Largs Sailing Club hosting many International Regattas. There is another, smaller, marina in Fairlie, which hosts Fairlie Yacht Club. Largs is home to Inverclyde National Sports Centre, which now offers first class facilities for disabled athletes. There are two excellent golf courses. There is a gym, a swimming pool, a theatre and a cultural centre named Vikingar, commemorating the historic connection with the Vikings. Kelburn Country Centre is located halfway between Largs and Fairlie, offering a real treat for children of all ages.

Largs has a supermarket and a large number of shops of all shapes and sizes. There are many coffee shops and restaurants to cater for the large number of tourists and visitors who come to Largs at weekends and holidays.

Largs and Fairlie are well served by a new local modern medical facility in Largs, with a Day Hospital attached. There are three dental practices. There are major hospitals in Greenock, Kilmarnock and Irvine which are easily accessible within 45 minutes' driving time from the manse.

### ***Schools and other educational facilities***

In Largs a new school campus will be operational in 2018, accommodating two primary schools, one Roman Catholic and one non-denominational, and Largs Academy, which has a fine reputation for excellent academic results. There will also be a pre-school facility. The new campus will be able to take advantage of sports facilities nearby.

There is a primary school in Fairlie, and for secondary education students are bussed to Largs Academy.

There are Further Education colleges in Greenock, Kilwinning, Kilmarnock, Paisley and Glasgow, and of course universities in Paisley and Glasgow.

Further details about each congregation are to be found in the following pages.

Contact links are to be found at the end of this document.

## Parish Profile

### Fairlie Parish Church (Presbytery of Ardrossan)



We are a friendly and committed church at the heart of our village community, in linkage with Largs: St Columba's Church.

#### ***Worship life***

Our young Musical Director (a student at the Royal Conservatoire in Glasgow) continues the tradition of leading worship with our Music Group (Praise Band and Choir). A variety of hymns and worship songs are included in our services and both the church organ and keyboard are used as appropriate. CH4 and Junior Praise are used. For special services the church choir has been augmented by additional singers from Fairlie, Largs and West Kilbride.

The service at Easter is always well attended by members and visitors. During Holy Week, as well as the communion Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services led by the Minister, the Kirk Session and other committees organise services on the other evenings of the week. At Christmas a Watchnight Service preceded by carol singing is held in addition to the traditional Family Christmas Service. The beauty of the sanctuary is enhanced by a Christmas tree donated by Kelburn Estate and tasteful decorations. At these services invariably the Church is filled to near capacity with young and old alike. Three Communion services are normally held each year, two formal and one informal.

The membership roll is 204 and average attendance at our Sunday service is between 60 and 80 people. The service is also available on CD for those unable to attend. Recordings of the sermons can be found on our Church website. The congregation is largely elderly but a few children regularly attend "Sunday Funday" (our name for Sunday School) and "J-Team" in the summer months.

The multi-purpose nature of the premises promotes a form of mission by opening the church to the community at large and beyond in a relaxed and congenial atmosphere. In addition to the coffee mornings and social events, a successful Kirk Café open to the community takes place on Thursday mornings. Visitors are encouraged to look round the sanctuary and invariably go away impressed with its beauty together with the warmth of welcome extended.

A very successful family-based Messy Church has been running monthly for a number of years, averaging around 50-70 people each time, mostly young families from both Fairlie and the surrounding area. Messy Church is an informal way to promote the Christian message through fellowship, crafts, stories and songs and is followed by a meal.



Like other churches, Fairlie Church is keen to encourage young people to come and join us and several young people have participated in our Praise Band. An active Brownie pack meets weekly within the church premises.



### **Governance**

In 2013 the Kirk Session decided to adopt the Unitary Constitution with committees covering all aspects of governance, mission and church related activities. These committees are open to all members of the congregation and report to the Kirk Session. Emphasis is placed on strict financial controls and the Church is financially secure and responds generously to Christian Aid and other appeals.

After many years as a Women's Group functioning under the auspices of the Guild, it was decided to revert to the Guild identity and open membership to men. Regular meetings with good speakers are held and are open to the community. The Guild has been partnered with Cadder Church in Glasgow for many years and a warm association has developed between the Guilds who take it in turn to host an annual event.

### **Community Profile**

The Parish comprises the village of Fairlie and outlying districts bordering the parishes of Largs and West Kilbride. Within the Fairlie Parish boundaries to the south are located the Hunterston Nuclear Power Station and the Peel Ports terminal. A marina is located at the north end of the village and Fairlie Yacht Club has been established in the village for many

years. There is a thriving community garden, children's play park and a multi-use, all-weather court for several sports – football, tennis and basketball. A badminton club, Art Club and fitness club meet in Fairlie Village Hall, which also houses Fairlie Library. Fairlie Primary School is modern and has a fine reputation for preparing pupils for secondary education at Largs Academy. The church maintains a strong and healthy participative link with the primary school.

The village is essentially residential and attracts people seeking retirement in an attractive area. Young families also choose to set up home in the village to benefit from the educational facilities, community spirit and life in a pleasant environment with extensive recreational and sporting activities on the doorstep. There are good transport links for commuting further up and down the Ayrshire coast and inland, for example to Paisley and Glasgow.

A new housing development has increased the number of families attending Messy Church and a larger housing development is in the planning stages, offering an opportunity to spread the message of God's love.

### ***Pastoral care***

Elders look after the people in their districts and in normal circumstances work closely with the Parish Minister to provide pastoral care. Fairlie Church also participates, sometimes alone and at other times in conjunction with the Largs churches, in visits to and services at the various Care Homes in the area. A monthly newsletter is published and delivered free by hand to all households within the village and also to every church member in other localities. Contributions from other village organisations are welcomed. The Newsletter is compiled by a volunteer Editor, printed locally and distributed by a Newsletter team. The Newsletter team liaise with Elders to keep them updated on happenings in their district.

A Welcome Pack is delivered by Elders to all new people who move into the village. Printing costs are met by an annual, well supported fundraising coffee morning. The local press also reports on church events. A dedicated Flower team distribute flowers from the sanctuary every Sunday to households experiencing both illness and other distressing events as well as happier, celebratory events. The "Wee Fairlie Church" (their nickname!) Alcoholics Anonymous group meets regularly in our premises.

### ***Christian education***

In addition to the Christian message promoted through Messy Church, Bible study groups meet monthly and at other times such as Lent and short, informal prayer meetings are held on Thursday mornings throughout the year. The Minister also makes regular visits to the Primary School and school services several times a year are held in the church.

### ***Ecumenical***

The Parish Church is the only place of worship in the village and welcomes people from the whole community, from other denominations and other faiths. Fairlie Church also participates in ecumenical services and events held in Largs.

As a forward-looking congregation, we make every effort to be disability-inclusive and we have made a commitment to becoming a dementia-friendly church.

## ***World church***

**Fairtrade** - Fairlie earned the distinction of being nominated first Fairtrade village in Scotland, the initiative coming from members of Fairlie Parish Church. Produce and goods are on sale monthly within the church and at appropriate times throughout the year. The Fairlie team willingly give assistance to other congregations wishing to set up their own initiative

**Eco Congregation** – The congregation is one of the first in Scotland to become an Eco Congregation and we have won first, second and third awards for our efforts. There is a committee to engage in and promote the principles of protecting the environment and reducing the carbon footprint. Heating and lighting costs are monitored and recycling of waste implemented. Many members of the congregation are active in the widely respected Fairlie Sustainable Community Garden project that promotes high yield organic vegetable and fruit production.

The congregation accept willingly their obligations to support charities nationally and internationally and contribute generously. The church actively supports Christian Aid appeals and events. There is a weekly collection basket for donations to our local Food Bank, which is also the focus for our Harvest collection.

On an annual basis, Crossreach and the Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal are given overwhelming support and nearer to hand, donations have been given to Church House (which operates in a deprived area of Glasgow). These charitable activities owe much of their success to dedicated members of the congregation.

## ***Stewardship and finance***

The Church exercises careful financial controls and has conducted various Stewardship campaigns. The Church is in a good financial condition, overseen by the Treasurer and Finance Committee. The Church's financial reserves are held in the Church of Scotland Investors Trust. The majority of the congregation have Gift Aid Declarations in place.

## ***Staffing***

The congregation employs a part-time Musical Director and part-time church cleaner. Other functions required such as a Church Officer are undertaken by one of the six Welcome teams (a mixture of Elders and non-Elders) who are on duty from Sunday to Saturday each week by rotation.

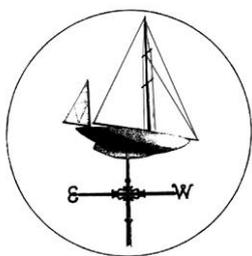
## ***Church building***

In addition to the sanctuary, the Church building footprint includes a small hall (the Session Room) and a meeting room (Millennium Room). The church is used weekly by the Brownies and other groups such as Yoga class. The Kirk Café is held weekly in the Millennium Room and is open to the community. In addition, a number of coffee mornings, concerts and fundraising and/or community events are held, including the annual "Open Doors Day". The church building is in a good condition but, due to its age, requires regular inspection and maintenance expenditure, overseen by the Fabric Committee.

## Historical

In 1834 a Chapel of Ease was built in Fairlie. In 1876 the Chapel was elevated in status to Parish Church and, in 1895, the church building was extended with the Chapel becoming the nave of the present church. Following the Disruption of 1843 a second, Free Church was built in Fairlie however, in 1968, the two church congregations united to become Fairlie Parish Church. (see church website for fuller details).

A relic of the past is the Fairlie Stone, recognised as an example of early Scottish sculpture and thought to be of Pictish origin with early Christian connections. The stone is inset on a wall of the church vestibule. A copy of the Geneva Bible (also known as the "Breeches Bible") and printed in 1578 is on display in a glass case within the sanctuary.



Fairlie is recognised as being the home of the Fife shipbuilding dynasty which designed and built world-famous yachts. In memory of their brother William Fife, his two sisters funded the erection of a weather vane placed on top of the church steeple in 1951. The vane is a model of the yacht "Latifa", regarded as one of his finest designs and said to be his favourite. A fine model of the boat, built by a past member of the congregation, resides in the sanctuary.

In 2000, a Millennium Project was undertaken in the church involving the removal of pews to create a multi-purpose facility which, in addition to worship, provides what has proven to be a highly successful venue for activities, both clerical and secular, and thus opening up the church to the whole village community. Also included in the Project were new kitchen and toilet facilities (including disabled access) and construction of an additional meeting room. At the same time, restoration work on our stained glass windows was completed.

The open plan nature of the sanctuary enhances unhindered appreciation of these magnificent windows which are widely recognised for their outstanding design and construction.

Further Information about the Church can be found on the church website.  
[www.fairlieparish.co.uk](http://www.fairlieparish.co.uk)

Fairlie Parish Church

*"Lord, you have come to the seashore"*

Ayrshire Scotland

Reg. Charity SC017304

HOME  
NEWS  
ORGANISATIONS  
ECO CONGREGATION  
CHURCH HISTORY  
INTERIOR FEATURES  
PRESBYTERY  
CHURCH WINDOWS  
MILLENNIUM EXTENSION  
VILLAGE HISTORY  
FAIRLIE GROWERS  
FAIR TRADE VILLAGE  
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Minister, Office Bearers, and Congregation,  
welcome you to the Parish of Fairlie  
on the West Coast of Scotland

## Parish Profile

### Largs - St. Columba's Parish Church (Presbytery of Ardrossan)



We are a faithful, friendly and outward looking church linked with Fairlie Parish Church.

We are confident that we can assure our new Minister of the loyalty and support of an enthusiastic, motivated and hard-working Kirk Session and Congregation.

St. Columba's Parish Church seeks to provide a range of opportunities for:

- Worshipping God and teaching His Word.
- Bringing to God in prayer, the needs of individuals, the Church, and the wider world.
- Meeting together in Christian fellowship.
- Reaching out to those with no formal Church connection.
- Showing the love of Jesus Christ in practical ways to members of our Christian fellowship and the wider community.



## ***Historical***

St. Columba's Parish Church was built in 1892. It is a handsome red sandstone building, standing on the seafront of the attractive town of Largs and forms a prominent landmark. The property consists of the main Church building with the adjoining Stewart Memorial Hall. There is also a Session Room which is used for meetings and for monthly summer tearooms..

The Church is fortunate to have an excellent "Father Willis" organ built in 1892 which is considered to be one of the finest examples of this work in Scotland.

The Church embarked on a major external restoration project in 2003 which included replacing the roof, stonework repairs and stained-glass window refurbishment costing a total of £1.3 million. This was funded by Historic Scotland, the Heritage Lottery Fund and a sizeable portion was raised by our own congregation. The Church is blessed with outstanding stained-glass windows which are much admired by experts in this field.



## ***Governance***

We operate under a Quoad Omnia Constitution with structured subcommittees responsible for Fabric; Finance; Mission, Outreach and Learning; Education & Spiritual Development; Social Activities.

Expenditure is tightly monitored by our Church Treasurer, in liaison with the Mission and Finance Committee. We have initiated several Stewardship campaigns and a copy of our Annual Accounts is available on request from the Clerk.

## ***The parish***

The Parish of Largs is served by a variety of churches of different denominations overseen by the Largs Churches Together Committee. Largs is an attractive seaside residential town with a population of around 11,500. More information about facilities can be found in the joint profile pages.

## ***Community newsletter***

A monthly newsletter "Landmark", edited by the Session Clerk, is published and distributed to all members of the congregation. In addition, our Church Website and Facebook page provide in-depth information and is updated on a daily basis. The local Newspaper, Largs and Millport Weekly News, keeps everyone abreast of local news and features Church events.



## **Youth**

Our Young church currently consists of 9 enthusiastic children aged between 6 and 15. They are led by a team of 5 dedicated leaders and assisted by 2 older teenagers.

On a Sunday we encourage the children to get involved/get to know the rest of the congregation by assisting with some of the duties during worship, handing out leaflets about current YC projects and also occasionally running the tearoom after church.

We also run additional activities for our older children. Currently we are running a monthly early breakfast meeting on a Sunday and regular family games nights.

The Young church also lead the congregation in our link with the North Ayrshire Foodbank in Ardrossan, run an ongoing collection of small change for Water Aid and regularly raise money for local and worldwide charities by running various events.

## ***Mactaggart Memorial Chapel***

Located as part of the Sanctuary, this Memorial Chapel and its furnishings were dedicated on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1984, a most generous gift from the Mactaggart Family and members of the congregation. A Centenary Wall hanging is displayed in the Chapel gifted as the final celebration of the Centenary Year in 1992. The Chapel is well used for private funerals, private weddings, baptisms, prayer services, choir practice, private meetings, business meetings and candle lit prayer and reflection.

## ***Organisations***

Traditional organisations such as choir, young church, bible study, prayer groups, peregrine walking group, creche and a busy toddlers group operate on a weekly basis. In addition, external organisations hire our halls for recreational activities such as Line Dancing, Scottish Country Dancing, a very popular ballet and dance group which has been running for over 40 years for youngsters of all ages: a weekly Rainbow Group for people with learning difficulties and a Monthly Craft Fayre.

## ***The guild***

The Guild is one of the strongest organisations in the church with a weekly attendance of approximately 50 members. It is open to both men and women. Like Fairlie, the Guild is highly active and annually contributes to church funds. In addition, the "KIT" Club (Keep in Touch) normally runs during the summer months when the Guild does not meet, but is in temporary abeyance until new organisers are identified..

## ***Mission and outreach***

Elders are expected to maintain a close link with their districts and work closely with the Minister to provide pastoral care. A dedicated Flower team on behalf of the congregation distributes flowers every Sunday to households experiencing illness or other distressing circumstances. Often the flowers are sent to members of the congregation celebrating special occasions.



The Mission, Outreach and Learning Committee is always looking at ways in which we can reach out to the wider community. We have a Welcome Pack and regularly pay a visit to anyone that we hear of who has moved into our Parish. Each year we try to find a new approach in order to encourage and maintain attendance at worship.

The multi-purpose nature of our Church premises allows us to reach out to the community at large. We are fortunate in having our own minibus, 'Betty's Bus', which is used to collect our less mobile members to allow them to attend Sunday services and the Guild. We operate a very successful Monthly Tea Room for six months of the year, offering home-made soup lunches and delicious home-baked "goodies". As well as generating income, the tea rooms provide a very important opportunity for fellowship and linking with the local community.

Our popular Annual Summer Fayre and "Christmas Cracker Wonderland" attract both locals and visitors who now highlight the dates of these events in their diaries. During special celebrations in the town e.g. The Viking Festival, succour and sustenance are offered to all participants and this is warmly received.

### ***Worship***

The membership roll is 327 and average attendance at our Sunday service is between 60 and 90 people. For those unable to attend recordings of the service are made and distributed as well as them being found on the Church web. In addition to Sunday morning worship we hold a variety of special services throughout the year. These services include Remembrance Day, Young Church Nativity, Easter Sunrise and Christmas Eve Family Service. The St Columba Experience Group encourages external organisations such as Kelburn Trefoil Guild to hold concerts in the Sanctuary. The Sanctuary has a prayer tree, often used by visitors, and a prayer service is held monthly

### ***Pastoral care***

Pastoral needs are controlled via a church coordinator from the Kirk Session and Sunday flowers are delivered to those who are unwell, recently bereaved or similar. Various elders and members of the congregation assist with pastoral visits.

### ***Staffing***

We have a full-time Organist who with the choir leads the worship in the church, as well as a part-time secretary, who is shared with Fairlie Parish Church, a Church Janitor, a cleaner and a driver for the mini-bus.

### ***Recent important changes and links with the past***

#### ***Heritage centre***

30<sup>th</sup> April 2008 was a memorable day for St. Columba's when we received formal confirmation from the Heritage Lottery Fund that £45,800 had been awarded to us (equivalent to 55% of the total costs) to establish a Heritage Centre in the North transept of the Sanctuary. The transept has been cleared of pews, painted and new improved lighting introduced.

The Centre was officially opened in March 2009 and is open to visitors 6 days a week including week-ends from May to September. The Heritage Centre is operated by two paid members of staff in addition to many volunteers from the church. The Heritage Centre has

made it possible to open the doors to the public in a “Church without Walls” environment. Since the centre opened almost 60,000 people have visited our Church.

### ***St Columba experience***

At the opening of the Heritage Centre, St Columba’s set up a separate charity to manage it. The overall objectives were to develop a venue for concerts, events and meetings and, by so doing, become a Church very much at the heart of the local community. We have had much success in these areas and we now run monthly concerts, attracting top quality brass bands, choirs, fiddle orchestras and Scottish flute bands. We have also hosted children’s book events and photographic exhibitions. Removing the pews has provided a flexible venue for community initiatives, an area we see as being an important part of our mission work and an area which we are keen to develop.



### ***St Columba’s parish profile ~ Summary***

We hope that this Parish Profile, combined with the Fairlie Parish Profile, will interest and excite you. We look forward to receiving your application and we will be delighted to provide any further information which you may require.

**LINKS**      *(correct at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018, but may change)*

- <http://www.largscolumba.org>
- <http://www.fairlieparish.co.uk/>
- <http://www.largsandmillportnews.com/news/largs/>
- <http://www.brisbane.northayrshireschools.co.uk/>
- <http://www.kelburn.northayrshireschools.co.uk/>
- <http://explorelargs.com/whats-on/>
- <http://www.largs.n-ayrshire.sch.uk/>

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**Informal enquiries can be made to the Interim Moderator**

Rev Alan Ward      Tel: 01294 822 244      email: [alanward@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:alanward@hotmail.co.uk)

**Applications, with CV and names of two referees,** may be made to the Clerk to the Nominating Committee

Mrs Christine Thomas  
73 Castle Bay Court, Largs, KA30 8DP      email: [cathomas54@gmail.com](mailto:cathomas54@gmail.com)

Thank you for your interest.