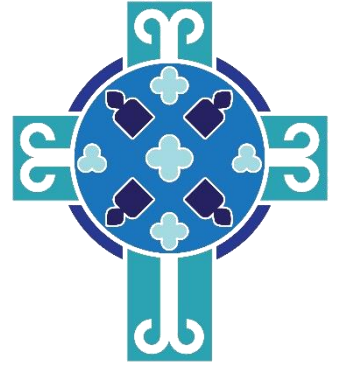


EMCOUNTER



**The Magazine of Inverurie West
Parish Church**

JUNE 2024



***CHURCH OF SCOTLAND ASSEMBLY
18th – 23rd May 2024***

Scottish Charity SC016907

REFLECTION

A prayer for the month of June. As we come into June, we appreciate anew God's creation and our responsibility to care for it.



The Lengthening Days

Great God,
in these lengthening days of beauty,
help us to appreciate your glorious creation
and defend the fragile life of your good earth.

Let us tread the earth lightly,
and see the light of your spirit in every creature.

And we pray for ourselves.
May our worship be worked out in our lives.
May the mercy we have received be extended to others
through the mercy we show;

All this we ask in the beautiful name of Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen.

Extract from a prayer first published in Life & Work



From the West Manse

I'm writing this from Edinburgh where elder Morag Mitchell and I have been attending General Assembly, although by the time you read this we will be home and this year's round of national decision and policy making in the Church of Scotland will be past.



It's fair to say that the two of us might need a wee rest when we get home - 9 hours a day of debate and discussion for five days takes its toll on mind and body! Said debates and discussions have been wide-ranging. To name just a few: procedures and issues arising from presbytery mission planning; the financial difficulties facing the church; the work of Crossreach and the Guild; proposals for a minimum income guarantee; the church's role in education; a new training programme for ministers; a new hymnary supplement; the conflict in Gaza; the work of partner churches overseas; theological reflection on transgender identities and assisted dying; how to support priority area churches with limited resources - and there are still two days to go!

The sheer volume of content covered by the General Assembly every year is mind-boggling, and humbling. It's easy to grumble about our church governance and structures (and I've done my share of grumbling) but there's no doubt that a mammoth amount of work by dedicated and sincere colleagues and volunteers happens - often unseen or unrewarded.

As a parish minister it is instinctive and understandable to focus primarily on the local. This is, so often, where we feel called and where we primarily serve. It's where the people we love reside. But our vows of ordination also involve committing to both regional and national work, and that work also matters.

There's no doubt that the church is going through seismic change - nationally, regionally and locally. Some of those changes have been very hard, others are potentially quite exciting. But as I have listened and pondered and voted and been reminded about the

length, breadth and depth of what the Church of Scotland still does, I am convinced that the church matters more than ever.

We matter because an institution can sometimes speak truth to power with an amplified voice in a way that is harder for individuals. *If* that amplified voice is also one which acts justly, loves mercy and walks humbly with God (*to quote the prophet Micah*) then real life-giving change can happen - changes not just to individual lives but to society itself.

However, institutions also always run the risk of focussing too much on keeping themselves going at the risk of the work they are supposed to be undertaking. So perhaps it isn't a bad thing, painful as it may feel, that we have lost some of the institutional power and status which we used to take for granted. God may be calling us, as we move from the centre to the margins of civic power, to new ways of being church. Perhaps our institution over the next few years, or even decades, will defy the narrative of decline and emerge both lighter and stronger.

I will be very glad to get back to the local and to our own Stated Annual Meeting (which will also be past by the time you read this). The parish is where I belong. It's where the people I have been called to love and serve reside, and I am very grateful to be there, and for all your support.

But I will try to remember, and ask you to try to remember, that the national church is also 'us'. As long as 'we' - individually, locally, regionally, nationally - are doing all we can to truly share the love of God; as long as 'we' keep seeking the Spirit's guidance; as long as 'we' serve in Christ's name, then the church will always be strong.

In the meantime, it's well past time for one weary servant to go to bed in order to cope with tomorrow's nine hours of debate!

Every blessing Rhona

SOUP AND SWEET (26th MAY)

Many thanks to everyone who attended the Garden Soup and Sweet Fundraiser at the end of last week's Sunday Service.



As always there was a lovely buzz about the place as folk came together to enjoy a choice of either leek & potato, or carrot &



coriander soup, followed by a delicious array of tempting 'sweets'. The rhubarb crumble, made from the rhubarb in the garden, was very popular, and folk did not need to be told twice that if they wanted to taste something different, they could come back a second time for more. (*No Charles Dickens at the West I am pleased to say!*) It is always lovely when we take time to sit and eat together and enjoy one another's company and chat and this was no exception.



The money raised (£300) will be shared with general Church Funds but will also go towards an *improved watering system* for the garden to keep those tatties and leeks growing (ready for the next fundraiser.) Again, many thanks to those of you who were able to come along; to the amazing team who contributed food; to those who acted as waiters or waitresses for the afternoon, and to those who cleared up afterwards!



We hope to have our hospitality area at the garden tidied up and our seating revamped with a fresh lick of paint in the next week or so, enabling us to be 'visitor ready' for another season. If you would like to pop by and see for yourself how things are going please get in touch, it would be lovely to see you!

Best wishes Elizabeth Barrow (on behalf of the Garden Team)



ACORN CENTRE NEWS

New Menu

With the warmer months approaching, we have moved to our summer menu, which will enable us to make the most of the produce from the kitchen garden. We also hope to reduce a lot of food wastage by reducing salad garnishes on our dishes and instead offer side salads or salad platters to those who want them. This will help us to maintain or even lower the price of some menu items whilst increasing choice.

After the success of our Spring Savers menu it is clear that our customers like a good offer. On the new menu we have catered for this with a *"Deal of the Day"* which we hope will direct business to our quieter periods and increase turnover. Deals include *Dish of the Day* for only £5, *Free Refills on tea and filter coffee* and *Breakfast Rolls* for only £3.

Save the Date!!

Friday 27th September sees the return of our fundraising *"Pop Up Bistro"*, this time with a Mediterranean theme. More details to follow!



Volunteering

A regular reminder that we are always seeking new volunteers and the summer is a great time to start. We have already welcomed two new volunteers as part of the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, but it is a great way for people of any age to meet new people, learn some new skills and enjoy being part of a team - not forgetting the fact that we feed you too!)

VOLUNTEER



Contact Mike for details.



UBUNTU NEWS

Great Big Green Week (8-16 June 2024)



Each year, Fairtrade campaigners support the *Great Big Green Week*, which is the biggest celebration of community-led action on climate change. The theme for 2024 is *'Let's swap together for good'*. In

addition to the suggestion of swapping books, clothes, and knowledge, people are also being encouraged to swap to a Fairtrade product to ensure that the message that there is *no climate justice without trade justice* is heard loud and clear.

Small everyday changes to what we eat, drink and wear can add up to a big difference when it comes to climate justice. Swapping to Fairtrade bananas, tea, coffee, flowers or wine supports farmers and workers across the world, and even helps tackle the climate crisis. When it comes to climate, many farmers and workers must pay the financial price of flood damage, droughts destroying harvests and weather-related crop disease, which can force them into poverty.

Eco-friendly farming, training and equipment costs money, but when farms are Fairtrade certified they receive a Fairtrade Premium which they can choose to invest in taking on climate change. This additional financial support, and the training many can access through Fairtrade, can make it easier to embrace sustainable farming techniques which protect people and planet.

Make a swap in your shopping basket this Great Big Green Week and support farmers and workers to earn a fair wage, whilst tackling the climate crisis together.



Thoughts from the Assembly (Morag Mitchell)

I was really pleased to get the chance to attend as a Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The name Commissioner sounds grand, but it only means that I was attending as a voting member. It was my first time at the Assembly, and I have to say I enjoyed the experience. Rhona's letter has indicated the breadth of topics discussed, so I won't go into details, but I was very taken with the depth of discussion and the engagement of the audience. Sometimes time constraints shortened discussion, which was a bit frustrating, but overall, I was impressed.

We have a new Moderator, the **Rev Dr Shaw Paterson**, from Strathaven, who seems very different from his predecessor, the Very Rev Sally Foster-Fulton. He gave us a sermon about how everyone is equal, then, ironically, we spent the next week standing and bowing every time he came into a room! Some of the pomp and points of order can be a bit bewildering, but past that, there is real feeling and engagement. However, one thing became clear, the Church doesn't do anything in a hurry!

There were a number of interesting Fringe events during the week, often accompanied by a nice sandwich lunch. As a new Commissioner, I also got invited to a reception at Holyrood Palace. Prince Edward and his wife Sophie were there, and he spoke at the Assembly. I'm not sure I had actually heard him speaking before, but he did it very well. The reception was a bit underwhelming, but the canapés were very tasty!

If anyone has the chance to go, I would urge you to think about it. There are long days, often 9 hours, but the whole experience is really thought provoking, and I definitely came away feeling part of the wider Church.





RHP IN CONCERT

**a cabaret evening of top class entertainment from
Right Here Productions' talented performers!**

**Saturday 22nd June
Acorn Centre, Inverurie
7.30pm • £12 • Raffle**

**Tickets available via the Acorn Centre, or online
righthereproductions.com/shop/rhp-in-concert**

Joint fundraiser for Inverurie West Parish Church and 'Celtic Roots'

Church Calendar/Ways of connecting - June 2024

If you are worshipping from home,
you can connect as usual via the West
church website

<http://www.inveruriwestchurch.org/westcast.html> and/or
the Inverurie West Church youtube channel



Sunday 2 June	11 am Morning Worship Hospitality time after the service
Sunday 9 June	11 am Morning Worship Hospitality time after the service
Sunday 16 June	11 am Morning Worship Hospitality time after the service
Thursday 20 June	7.30pm Kirk session
Sunday 23 June	11 am Morning Worship followed by Informal Communion *
Sunday 30 June	11 am Morning Worship with baptism Hospitality time after the service
Bible study	7.30 pm Every Wed evening until 19 June
Encounter	If you have any material for Encounter email encounter@inveruriwestchurch.org by Wed 19 June

The prayer group continues to meet regularly on a Thursday morning. Prayer requests can be sent to olive.duncan@hotmail.co.uk or duncan.linda1@btinternet.com

Our contact email address for those looking for help with collection/delivery of supplies or medication is help@inveruriewestchurch.org

*** Please note informal communion is on the second last Sunday this month instead of the last Sunday.**

Summer services are expected to follow the customary shared pattern of services hosted in the **West Church in July and then St Andrew's in August**. Full details will be in the summer edition of Encounter.

Garden Party in Aid of the Organ - Save the Date

Sharon, Alison and I (the 3 organists) are organising a garden party at my house at Harlaw this summer, similar to last year's, to raise money for the maintenance of the organ which, we have been told, is a very good instrument.



It'll be on Sunday afternoon, the **21st of July**, so put it in your diary and keep fingers crossed for a nice day!

More information will be on a poster in the Acorn Centre & in the summer magazine.

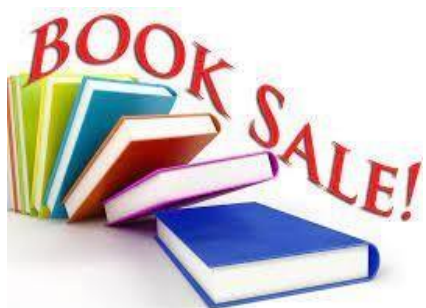
Hope you can make it.

Isla

GARIOCH CHRISTIAN AID GROUP



Christian Aid Week this year was from **12th-18th May**.



The Christian Aid team had a very successful book sale under the leadership and hard work of Margaret Hearne. Thanks to her and her team of helpers we raised the magnificent sum of £2072.41. Thank you to all who made this such a great success.



Three very satisfied customers!

Margaret adds: *This is by far the most money the Book Sale has raised, and there will be more to come as a result of selling some online. Thanks to all those willing volunteers who manned the stalls. Particular thanks are due to those who lent tables, those who, pre-sale, sorted books by the hundred, and those who helped with The Big Clear Up! It truly is a team effort! Several local charities have also benefitted from surplus books, e.g. Books Abroad, King's Church, Oxfam, Garioch Charity shop, and several more. All in all, a very successful operation.*



In addition to books, 'Jams and Jigsaws' were also on sale and proved, again, to be very popular.



As at time of print, online donations stand at **£383.00** but the e-envelope is still **open for donations**.

You can use the link below to use our Garioch Christian Aid e-envelope to make a donation.

Click on the image to make a donation



Finally, a 'traditional' collection using Christian Aid envelopes was part of the fund raising effort. Currently this has raised £505. If anyone still has envelopes in which they wish to make their donation please hand those in to the Acorn Centre or at Church on Sunday.



Again, we would like to thank anyone who has helped in raising a really significant amount of money for Christian Aid. As the Christian Aid poster shows, donations help fund a wide variety of projects and have a significant impact on the lives of individuals - helps them to '**push back against poverty**'. For more detail about how Christian Aid is making an

impact and improving the lives of people who are struggling to survive, visit: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week/alines-story>

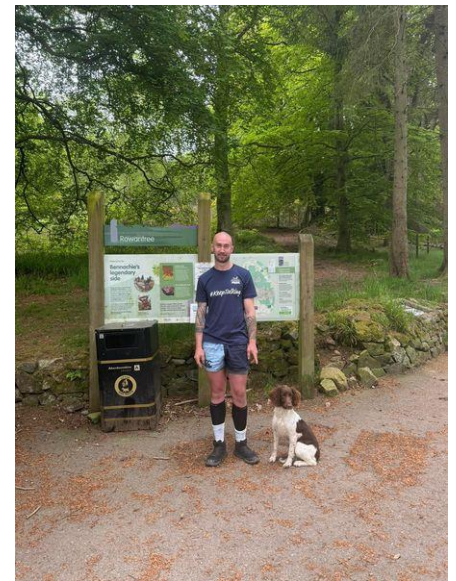
Duncan Maclellan Charity Challenges for the RSABI.



RSABI

My son Duncan is once again challenging himself this summer and this time he's doing two different ones. Both are to raise money for the RSABI (*Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Institution*), who do an amazing job supporting those working in the agricultural industry. They support people of all ages, including those affected by illness, accident, bereavement, and those struggling with their mental wellbeing. This year especially has been extremely hard with all the rain/flooding.

His first challenge was climbing Bennachie 17 times in 24 hours which apparently is the equivalent of climbing Mt Everest!!! This was on the weekend of the 18th/19th May. He actually achieved 17.5 climbs and the overall distance he covered was over 60 miles.



His second challenge is in the first week of July and he is walking coast to coast (Aberdeen to Morar), on his own and wearing wellies!! Crazy! His mother of course will be standing by if he needs assistance!

I know many of you donated last year, but he'd really appreciate even a small donation towards this very worthwhile cause. The link is below or I can pass anything on to him.

Click on the link to donate  

Thank you, **Isla**

WHO'S WHO AT THE WEST

Minister	Rev Rhona Cathcart r.cathcart@inveruriewestchurch.org	620285
Session Clerks	Mark and Gillian Paterson sessionclerk@inveruriewestchurch.org	625675
Church and Acorn Centre Administration	Judith Will admin@inveruriewestchurch.org	670850
Church Officer	A team approach will be implemented.	
Rollkeeper	Chris Gardner rollkeeper@inveruriewestchurch.org	07791 630495
Life & Work	Irene Jamieson irenejamieson@live.co.uk	
Safeguarding Co-ordinators	Valerie Napier Gail Buchan	623279 622145
Transport Co-ordinator	Linda Mathers	622586
Acorn Centre Management Team	Laura Gray lauragray25@btinternet.com	620658
Environmental Matters Team	Joy Doorghen doorghens@hotmail.com	620823
Fabric Team	Jim Lyle jimlyle@hotmail.co.uk	624159
Finance Team	Alan Sharp sharp3@btinternet.com	
Treasurer	Alison Blair treasurer@inveruriewestchurch.org	620677
Committed Giving Envelopes	Cindy Farquhar Cindyfarquhar25@yahoo.com	
Gift Aid	Mandy Aitken mandyaitken@sky.com	07532 487788
Junior Church Team	Biff Barrow biff.barrow@tiscali.co.uk	623096
Pastoral Care Team	Rev Rhona Cathcart r.cathcart@inveruriewestchurch.org	620285
Social/Fundraising Team	Joyce Petrie joycepetrie21@hotmail.com	620932

CONGREGATIONAL ROLL

Baptism:

Isla Grace Will 5th May 2024

Please advise the Roll Keeper of any change of address:

rollkeeper@inveruriewestchurch.org

FLOWER CALENDAR – JUNE

CONVENER - Linda Duncan 📞

June 2nd Fran Nice

June 9th Morag Mitchell

June 16th Irene Jamieson and Linda Mathers

June 23rd Hazel and Robert Newton

June 30th -



ENCOUNTER ONLINE – Currently we are producing and distributing Encounter online and in print. If you have not already provided details of your e-mail and would like to ensure you receive the online version, please contact the Session Clerk (01467 625675).

