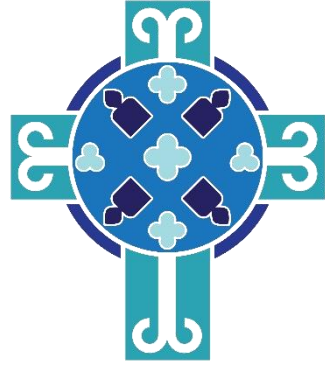


EMCOUNTER

The Magazine of Inverurie West  
Parish Church

FEBRUARY 2025



*St Luke the Evangelist*

Scottish Charity SC016907

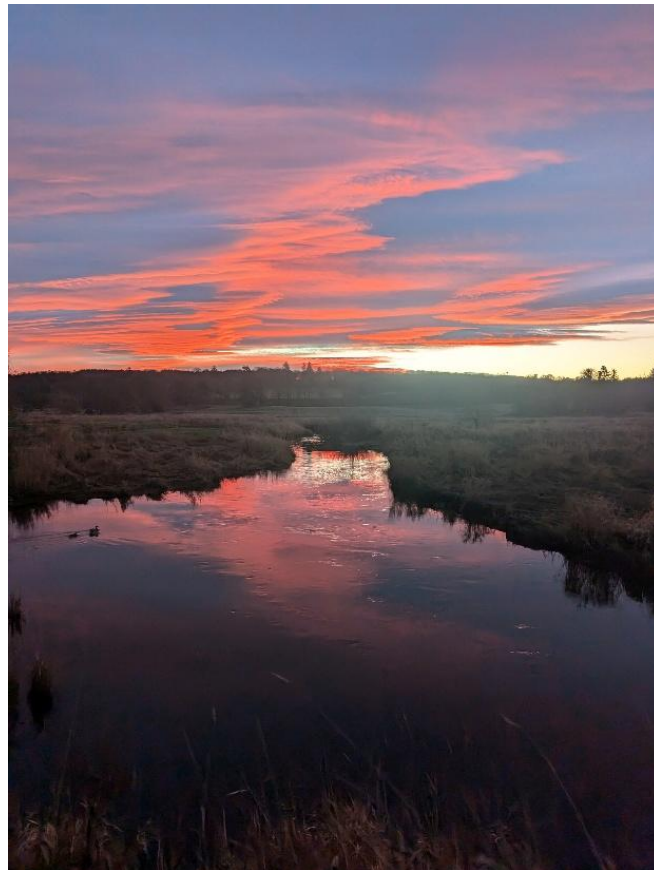


## **REFLECTION**

*At the year's beginning, it is good to think positive! Each day start afresh and "take heart with the day"!*

*Every day is a fresh beginning;  
Listen, my soul, to the glad refrain,  
And, spite of old sorrow and older sinning,  
And puzzles forecasted and possible pain,  
Take heart with the day and begin again.*

*From the poem: 'New Every Morning' by Susan Coolidge*



*Dawn on the River Ury – Christmas morning 2024 (used with permission)*

## ***From the West Manse***



When I started to write this letter my mind was on new beginnings. Maybe this is because it is still only January as I write, which means there is still the occasional *'Happy New Year'* in the air.

We're also at the beginning of a new service series when we will be looking once more at the gospel of Luke. The gospel is familiar to many of us, but one of the many astounding things about the Bible is how its old familiar stories can reveal new truths to us - about ourselves, about the world, about God.

Or perhaps it is more accurate to say they reveal truths which feel new when applied to the context of our modern lives.

Accuracy is important, which is why I am glad we are walking with Luke during this tumultuous global era when misinformation, lies and even delusion seem to be gaining the upper hand in some quarters. Luke begins his gospel with the assurance that his goal is to write an *'orderly account'* - one which will help his addressed reader Theophilus to know *"the certainty of the things you have been taught"*.

As I have preached on recently, Jesus' first recorded *'sermon'* in Luke draws his listeners' attention to God's priority for the poor, the oppressed, the captive and those in need of healing. The message doesn't go down well, especially when Jesus points out that in Israel's history God often had to go outside the faith to find those who would listen. Such messages rarely go down well when addressed to those with worldly power. But Jesus holds to the

truth of what matters to God, even when it triggers violent outrage.

Right now, at this moment in history, there are powerful voices trying to tell us that the things that matter are **power and status and prosperity** - whether for individuals, institutions, or countries. What is worse, some of those voices claim to speak in the name of Jesus.

But Luke reminds us that this can't be true. Jesus said, "*woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort*" (Luke 6: 24). Jesus didn't say this because he hated rich people, but because he understood how our social and political attitudes can change when we are invested in the status quo.

Luke then goes on to show us Jesus in and amongst the most downtrodden and despised members of his society and alongside the 'alien' or stranger. Jesus goes among them personally and directly, healing and teaching. He does this again, and again, and again.

*Luke, with his passion for accuracy, never stops pointing out what and who Jesus' priorities were. Not the powerful, but the powerless. Not the building of earthly empires and the expulsion of those who don't 'fit'; but the readiness for God's kingdom and the invitation to all, beginning with the normally excluded.*

This is still a difficult truth to speak. Power has always resisted challenge, even when expressed with grace and humility. But as a church we need to hold onto that truth - an old truth, but one that needs to be shared in new ways. We also need to support and if necessary protect those who dare to speak it.

And so I am glad that we are walking once again with Luke at the beginning of 2025. Maybe he will take us somewhere new in our hearts, in our lives, in our commitment to follow Christ's truth more closely. Or maybe he will keep us steadily focused on Jesus when the old, old voices of sin and selfishness, greed and self-interest try to take control of our attention once more.

As we sang at the last service in January, *"From the old things to the new, keep me travelling along with you"*.

Every blessing  
Rhona



## THE GUILD

*Our December meeting had a lovely Christmas Theme, party food and excellent entertainment provided by our own Chris and Alan Gardner with their daughter Kelly. Stories, jokes and lots of songs were thoroughly enjoyed by all.*

*January saw us putting on our thinking caps for our annual quiz hosted by Larry and Liz Young. The winning table, "The Bee's Knees" shared their prize of a box of chocolates.*

*Our next speaker on 10th February will be Iain Telfer, his subject being "Simba", a Scottish Charity supporting families who have lost a baby.*

*All are welcome, usual time of 2 pm.*

*Margaret Harrow*



# CHRISTIAN AID



The Inverurie Churches once again had a very successful Christmas Card delivery scheme. The sum of **£1325** was raised and has been sent off for the ongoing work of Christian Aid.

This could not be done in an ever expanding Inverurie without our large band of volunteers. Many thanks to each and every one, not forgetting everyone who posted cards and to the shops who hosted our boxes.



Sheila Rennie

P.S. We are still looking for a treasurer for the local group.

## FABRIC CONVENOR

On behalf of the session and congregation I want to thank **Jim Lyle** for his *twenty years* of service as our fabric convenor. Faithfully and patiently he has worked away, mostly in the background, ensuring not just that we are wind and water tight, and comply with all the necessary health and safety regulations, but also that we have a well maintained building we can be justifiably proud of. *Jim has well and truly earned his retirement!*



## NEW BEGINNINGS

*This selection of verses from Alfred Lord Tennyson's work 'In Memoriam' seems very apt in the context of the challenges which face the world as we move forward into 2025 and the need to 'Ring out the darkness of the land'.*

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild  
sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him  
die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the  
snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the  
mind  
For those that here we see no  
more;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.



Ring out the want, the care, the  
sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful  
rhymes  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and  
blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul  
disease;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of  
gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of  
peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

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*Alfred Lord Tennyson  
Excerpts taken from 'In  
Memoriam'.*

## NEW WEBSITE

In the next couple of months we hope to have a new Inverurie West Church website ready to launch. It will have all the things most people use on the current site (live stream, worship information, contact details, magazine etc.) plus more up-to-date content. You'll be able to access it at the same address as usual.

We are deeply indebted to **Daniel McPherson**, a young IT student, who has volunteered his services and expertise to help create the site. Our goal is a fresh, easy to access and updated website which has plenty of useful up-to-date information and which feels inviting and warm.



One of the things we will be looking for over the next month or so are new images to use on the site. So you might see Alan Harrow popping up before or after a service or during church activities to take photos. Please don't let that put you off coming to anything! We will always make sure people can choose whether or not to be in a photo. However, we really hope enough folks will be willing, as *'people'* photos will give a much more vibrant feel to the site, and be a better reflection of who we are, than just *'pretty building'* photos.

It may be that you have one or two cracking photos you've taken yourself recently - of the church, the area, or especially of people doing something at church or centre. This could include, for example, a wedding or baptism photo which you would be happy to have on the site. If so, please send them to Rhona - with the permission of the people photographed, of course. We might not be able to use them, but it would be good to have a pool to draw on.



## Social/Fundraising Team updates

Thanks to everyone who contributed to our successful Christmas fundraising, which raised over **£600**. We hope to be able to run this again this year.

We are now planning a **'unused/once used'** table. Have you received a gift set but you only want one of the items? Unwrapped a perfume that doesn't suit you? Bought the wrong shampoo by mistake and lost the receipt? Then donate it to us and maybe it will be just what someone else is looking for! Items can be dropped off at the Church/Acorn Centre any time after **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February**, and we hope to have the table available until **30<sup>th</sup> March** with items which you can pick up for a donation to church funds.

### Save the date!

**Larry Young** is running a quiz for us on **Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March**. Nibbles/snacks will be provided, BYOB and there will be a raffle too. Teams of up to 4 and tickets at £5 each will be available from the Acorn Centre soon. **Joyce Petrie**.

### REMINDER

Registering with the **'Easy Fundraising'** website is an easy way to use your online shopping to raise a little money for the Church. The site is partnered with over 4000 retailers including big names like Amazon, Tesco and Argos. You can begin by following this link:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/Inverurie-west-parish-church>



## Church Organ Update



After the successful **Garden Party Fundraiser** last August we were able to get our Church organ serviced in November. Previously we have always been able to have our organ serviced by local firms. However, there are no longer any firms operating which are close at hand to us. This meant that we have had to look slightly further afield. We are thankful that Kenneth Gray helped to make initial contacts with *Henry Willis & Sons*, who are a Liverpool based firm but also work in Scotland and service other organs in our Presbytery. The good news is that there was no major repair work needed on our organ. The organ has had a full service and a few minor bits of pipe work repaired.

Now for the bill!!! The final total amount raised from the Garden Party fundraiser was **£1480**. This was an amazing total and we are so grateful to those who could support us. The total cost for the first full service with *Willis & Sons* was **£558**. This leaves us with **£922** from the Church Organ fundraiser. This money will be used for the next service/repair that will be needed over the next year. We are sure you will agree that there is a noticeable difference in the sound quality of the organ since it was serviced. Thank you once again for supporting our Church Organ.

*Alison, Isla and Sharon.*

## NEW IN UBUNTU



These soapstone rabbits and birds have been produced by the Tabaka Chigware Youth Self-Help Group which was founded in 1996 by Charles Nyabita in Tabaka, a small town in the Kisii region of Kenya. This area is a unique source of Kisii stone (soapstone). The group now has around 40 members and in addition to providing dignified work, it also ensures good shelter, food, medical care, clean water and better education for the children in their community through their soapstone products.

Soapstone is a soft rock that largely contains talc and while it is easy to carve, it is also durable and heat resistant. Using hand tools, blocks of soapstone are dug out of large pits, before being cut into smaller pieces for transportation to the workshops. The carving is done by skilled and experienced carvers, with younger carvers often observing and practising their skills to refine their expertise. The stone is then sanded and washed several times, until the surface is completely smooth, before being painted and polished with a creamy wax.



Members of the Tabaka Chigware Youth Self-Help Group

## Confidential Waste

**CONFIDENTIAL**

I have a company coming in February to take away the confidential paperwork which I have archived from the hall. I have a number of bags as well as bound diaries to be disposed of but there will be room for more if anyone would like to add to it. The paperwork does not have to be shredded, it doesn't even have to be taken out of the ringbinder and it can include, e.g. old diaries with hardback covers.

Feel free to drop material off at the hall or centre (clearly labelled for disposal). Email me at [treasurer@inveruriewestchurch.org](mailto:treasurer@inveruriewestchurch.org) or telephone **07905 580371** for more information.

**Alison Blair**

### **FABRIC CONVENOR (AGAIN)**

As was intimated earlier in the magazine, Jim Lyle will be stepping down as Fabric Convenor. It's a vital role and church legislation requires us to have a named convenor. This is where our hard-working and skilled fabric/property team could use the congregation's help. Jim himself has said that our property team is so well-experienced that **a new convenor needn't be a buildings expert**. What they are really looking for is someone willing and able to help coordinate work, liaise with tradespeople, and provide reports for our session. If you know someone (they don't need to be a session member) who might be able to take on the role or would like further information or to have an informal chat about what it involves, please contact either Rhona or Jim. *They would be delighted to hear from you!*

## Church Calendar/Ways of connecting – February 2025

Sunday services continue at the usual time of 11 am. If you are worshipping from home, you can connect as usual via the West church website and YouTube channels.



- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Sun 2 Feb    | 11 am Morning Worship.<br>Hospitality time after the service.   |
| Wed 5-26 Feb | 7.30 pm Zoom Bible Study – Contact Rhona for the link   |
| Sun 9 Feb    | 11 am Morning Worship.<br>Hospitality time after the service.   |
| Mon 10 Feb   | 2 pm Guild Meeting – Acorn Centre<br>Iain Telfer speaks about the Scottish charity ‘Simba’.   |
| Sun 16 Feb   | 11 am Morning Worship.<br>Hospitality time after the service.   |
| Sun 23 Feb   | 11 am Morning Worship<br>Followed by informal communion.  |
| Encounter    | If you have any material for Encounter please email <a href="mailto:encounter@inveruriwestchurch.org">encounter@inveruriwestchurch.org</a> by <b>Wed 19 Feb</b> |

Children are welcome at all services. A weekly craft activity can be found in our *'Play as you worship'* box. Most weeks we also offer Junior Church for children who wish to go downstairs part-way through the service.

The prayer group continues to meet regularly on Thursday mornings. Prayer requests can be sent to [olive.duncan@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:olive.duncan@hotmail.co.uk) or [duncan.linda1@btinternet.com](mailto:duncan.linda1@btinternet.com)

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## MAINLY MUSIC

Mainly Music continues to enrich the lives of our little ones. We have several special sessions throughout the year such as. Animals, Teddy bears' picnic, Christmas, Easter, and Boxes. Boxes day is one of the most popular. We use the box as a drum, a boat, a truck and a toaster. Lily didn't make it to mainly music, on 'Boxes' day, so she had her own one at home! Milo built a garage with some of the boxes, at playtime.

*Tuesday mornings are always full of fun at mainly music!*



## WHO'S WHO AT THE WEST

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

# CONGREGATIONAL ROLL

## Deaths:

Mrs May Ritchie (District 27) on 10th November 2024

Mrs Sandra Simpson (District 39) on 13th December 2024

Mrs Dorothy Susdorf (District 28) on 18th December 2024

## Funerals:

Mrs Aileen Scott (District 21) on 17th January 2025

Mr James Bruce (District 23a) on 22nd January 2025

## Celebration of Life:

Mrs Dorothy Susdorf (District 28) on 14th January 2025

Please advise the Roll Keeper of any change of address:

[rollkeeper@inveruriewestchurch.org](mailto:rollkeeper@inveruriewestchurch.org)

## *FLOWER CALENDAR – FEBRUARY*

CONVENER - Linda Duncan

Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> Irene Jamieson and Linda Mathers

Feb 9<sup>th</sup> Olive Duncan

Feb 16<sup>th</sup> Alan and Margaret Harrow

Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> Fran Nice



**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).

