



Inverurie West Parish Church

Order of Service: Sunday 4 May 2025

Welcome to worship with Inverurie West Parish Church. Whether you are joining us online or in-person; as a newcomer, occasional visitor, or regular, we are delighted to have you with us. We are delighted to be joined today by our friends from Inverurie St Andrew's. This morning we begin a few weeks looking at the actions and choices made by Jesus' followers in the early months and years after his death and resurrection. Today we will look at Acts 6 and consider how the life and death of Stephen might help us to think about when we are called to be comforters and when we are called to be stirrers.

Welcome and notices

Call To Worship

COURAGE BROTHER DO NOT STUMBLE (CH4 513)

Opening Prayer (Including the Lord's prayer)

Our heavenly father
May your holy name be honoured
May your kingdom come
May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today what we really need
Forgive us the wrong we do
as we forgive those who wrong us

Lead us away from temptation
Keep us safe from evil

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours forever
Amen

Intro to the word

BROTHER, SISTER LET ME SERVE YOU (CH4 694)

Reading 1: Acts 6: 1-7 read by Irene Jamieson

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. 2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3 Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. 6 They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

7 So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

Reflection part I

Reading 2: Acts 6: 8-15

8 Now Stephen, a man full of God’s grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people. 9 Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)—Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia—who began to argue with Stephen. 10 But they could not stand up against the wisdom the Spirit gave him as he spoke.

11 Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, “We have heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God.”

12 So they stirred up the people and the elders and the teachers of the law. They seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin. 13 They produced false witnesses, who testified, “This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law. 14 For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us.”

15 All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

DO NOT BE AFRAID, FOR I HAVE REDEEMED YOU (CH4 191)

Reading 3: Acts 7: 44- Acts 8: 1

“Our ancestors had the tabernacle of the covenant law with them in the wilderness. It had been made as God directed Moses, according to the pattern he had seen. 45 After receiving the tabernacle, our ancestors under Joshua brought it with them when they took the land from the nations God drove out before them. It remained in the land until the time of David, 46 who enjoyed God’s favour and asked that he might provide a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. 47 But it was Solomon who built a house for him.

48 “However, the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands. As the prophet says:

49

““Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.

What kind of house will you build for me?
says the Lord.

Or where will my resting place be?

50

Has not my hand made all these things?’

51 “You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit! 52 Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have

betrayed and murdered him— 53 you who have received the law that was given through angels but have not obeyed it.”

54 When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. 55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

57 At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, 58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.

59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep. And Saul approved of their killing him.

Reflection part 2

Prayer

BE THOU MY VISION (CH4 465)

Grace

Blessing

News

Kirk Session - our next meeting is on Thursday 8 May at 730 in the Acorn Centre.

Christian Aid book sale - our annual book sale runs from Sat 10th - Sat 17th May in the West Church Hall, 10-4pm except Sunday 1-4 pm.

Jams & Jigsaws will be on sale on Sat 10th, from 10am, outside the hall.

Donations of J&J and books welcome. Please hand into Acorn Reception for storage on the hall stage in the week before the sale. If you need your donation collected please phone Hazel Newton (01467 620414)

Volunteers also required for manning the Book Stalls, 10-1pm or 1-4pm. (A pleasant task!) Please contact Margaret Hearne 01651 882274 (this info also in Encounter)

Encounter magazines are ready for uplift

The next St Andrew's 'Cuppa and Chat' will be in the Chapel of St. Apollinaris on Friday 16 May, from 10am to 12noon. Come along for a friendly blether over a free cup of tea/coffee and biscuit. All welcome.

Inverurie Music is holding a Quiz Night in St. Andrew's Church Hall on Friday 23rd May at 7.00pm. Tickets are available at Novello Gifts, 29 West High Street, or from Rosie Milne, 01467 622577. Price £5.00 per person with teams of no more than 4 people. BYOB etc. There will be a raffle. Come and have some fun.

Silent Auction - There will be a Silent Auction in Aid of Inverurie St. Andrew's Church in the Old Hall on Saturday 24 May, 11am – 1pm, entry and 'bidding number, is £2, with tea/coffee and a buttery available at £3, all welcome. Donations of suitable items to auction will be gratefully received.

St Andrew's Saltire magazines are ready for uplift

Foodbank - We don't have a current wishlist from the Foodbank but regularly needed items include: Tinned spaghetti/macaroni, Tinned meat (hot or cold), Tinned vegetables, Tea bags (40s/80s, please), Tinned tomatoes, Small jars of coffee, Pot noodles/Mug Shots, UHT Milk (semi-skimmed or full cream)

Fundraising and Stewardship - If you regularly shop online - or even if you do so only occasionally, there is an easy way to help fundraise for the church. The first step is to register with the Easyfundraising website, at this address: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/inverurie-west->

parish-church After this, whenever you use their link to go to major retailers like Amazon, Tesco or Expedia, and make a purchase, the church gets a small donation. As an example, the last time Rhona booked a holiday, the church got £16! If you need help registering, please chat to one of the Grants team (Janet Duncan, Alison Sharp, Laura Gray, Biff Barrow, Rhona).

Practical help - if you, or anyone you know need shopping, errands etc done, we have lots of volunteers keen to help. For assistance ring Joyce Petrie on 01467 620932 or email help@inveruriewestchurch.org

For prayer requests, joys and concerns, or content which you would like shared on Sunday, please email Rhona on r.cathcart@inveruriewestchurch.org by Saturday night, or you can text her on her mobile.

Donations to the work of the church (either nationally or to an individual congregation like ours) can be made online at <https://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/donate/11>