

The Magazine of Inverurie West
Parish Church

FEBRUARY 2024



ENCOUNTER



River Don, Inverurie January 2024
Scottish Charity SC016907

REFLECTION



The words of Robert Burns - "*Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn*" - could be seen to be highly relevant to the world situation at the beginning of 2024. However, let us pray, as does he, that a more humane world is yet to come.

*Then let us pray that come it may
As come it will for a' that;
That sense and worth o'er a' the earth
Shall bear the gree and a' that;*

*For a' that, and a' that,
It's coming yet for a' that;
That man tae man the world o'er
Shall brithers be for a' that.*

*Extract from: A Man's a Man For a' That
(Burns, 1794)*



Many thanks again to Liz Young for her drawing (a copy of the Cotter's Saturday Night) which we also used in a previous edition of Encounter.

From the West Manse



My eldest cousin came to stay with us in Canada for a month when I was 13. I say my eldest cousin, but at the time he was fond of insisting that he was, in fact, only $4^{1/2}$. This was because while he might have been alive for 18 years, he was only half way between his fourth and fifth birthdays.

He was, of course, a leap year day baby, born on the 29th of February.

Tongue firmly in cheek, I might ask why on earth the creators of the Gregorian (or prior to that the Julian) calendar chose February to which to add an extra day? Surely we'd all benefit more from an extra day of spring or summer or autumn, or anything really apart from more winter?

Of course, our meteorological systems don't actually bother to read calendars. Calendars are a very human attempt to impose our own preferred numerical order onto a solar year which refuses to subdivide neatly for our convenience.

Don't get me wrong. I have nothing against calendars. My life would fall apart without the ones in my phone, on my fridge, on my desk. But there are times when it feels like it would be nice if we could 'leap' over the dates we don't like: difficult anniversaries; paperwork deadlines; the entire month of November...

Clearly we need the structure and order that a calendar brings. Apart from anything else, calendars help us to organise ourselves as communities. However, our own desire for order and control should not obscure our ability to recognise that life has its own organic order, an order we should be careful to respect. We cannot organise everything to suit our own convenience and comfort.

Right now there are billionaires spending fortunes to try to expand their lives well beyond what we might consider ‘natural’ limits. There are companies financing commercial ventures to tap the mineral resources of the moon. There are artificial intelligence systems being developed to do any number of the tasks we don’t wish to do, or can’t do, ourselves. Out of these projects may come innovations to improve life and health for all, but there’s a real risk they will only add to the earth’s imbalances - allowing a chosen few perhaps to ‘leap over’ the limits nature imposes on our health and resources.

The bible reminds us that although we are valued stewards of God’s creation, and have been given astonishing gifts and agency, we are not ultimately in charge.

As Job said, “But ask the animals, and they will teach you,
or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you;
or speak to the earth, and it will teach you,
or let the fish in the sea inform you.

Which of all these does not know
that the hand of the Lord has done this?
In his hand is the life of every creature
and the breath of all mankind. (Job 12: 7-10)

So roll on February; spring will come in time. It always does - no matter what the calendar says.





WEST CHURCH GUILD

There was a wonderfully large turnout of members and friends for our first meeting of the year.

Larry Young along with his wife Liz entertained us all with one of his quizzes. It was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon and at the same time very educational. A bring and buy table raised a wonderful **£95** towards this year's Guild projects.

Our next meeting is on Monday 12th February at 2pm. The topic is **"Rural Sustainability"** with our guest speaker Mr John Macdonald from Scotland's Rural College at Craibstone.

All are welcome.

Margaret Harrow.

... AND ANOTHER QUIZ ...

The Social/Fundraising Team have a quiz planned for **Friday 1st March**. It will be held in the Acorn Centre and starts at 7 pm. Nibbles will be provided, and you can BYOB. There will also be a raffle.



Tickets can be purchased from the Acorn Centre or church in advance or on the door on the night at £5 per person. Teams should have a maximum of 4 members, and these can be made up on the night itself.

Joyce Petrie



ACORN CENTRE UPDATE

“Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.” So

says the US postal service who in turn were quoting Herodotus. Whilst the Acorn Centre did close one day during our recent “weather event”, for the most part, staff and volunteers dutifully turned up to provide a much needed warm welcome and hot soup to help the customers thaw out. Many thanks to them all for their dedication.

If you aren't already following us on Facebook it is a good idea to do so to save yourself a wasted journey if we have to close for any reason.

February Offers

Following us on social media is also a great way to stay up to date with our special promotions. This February we will be offering some great value options to see us through the shortest month. These will include the return of the £5 lunch, as well as “early bird” offers on drinks and bacon rolls.

New Crew

We have a slew of new volunteers joining the Acorn Centre at the start of this year, keen to make volunteering part of their life and enjoying the food and fellowship that becoming part of the Acorn Centre Team brings. We also welcome **Jo Lipp**, who has volunteered for us over many years, but has now become a welcome addition to the paid staff as a General Assistant two days a week, doing whatever it takes to keep the show on the road. She must be enjoying it, because she is still volunteering another day as well!



Elke Adams 1943 - 2024

On a final note, this year started with the loss of undoubtedly our most prolific volunteer, Elke Adams. Starting not long after the centre opened, she racked up approximately 6000 hours of volunteering over 14 years, serving right up until she was 80 – an incredible achievement and one that will unlikely be matched. *Thank you for your service ma'am. You can now hang up your apron and enjoy a permanent tea break.*

Fabulous February Special Offers!!

Early Bird Brunch

(Available 10am-11am)

*Bacon Roll with Tea or Filter Coffee**

Only £2

The £5 Lunch

(Available 11.30am-3pm)

*Hot Dish of the Day with Tea or Filter Coffee**

*Please see the daily specials board
or ask your server.*

The Secret Café

(Available 2pm—3pm)

Free tea or filter coffee with every purchase
from the cake trolley.*

*These offers are subject to availability and
when they're gone, they're gone!*

**Sorry, no substitutions!*

1st – 29th February 2024

UBUNTU



I am normally giving details about Fair Trade fortnight in the February issue of Encounter but, as you can see from the communication below, this year it has moved to September.

News from the Fairtrade Foundation.

‘Our next Fairtrade Fortnight will be from Monday 9 September – **Sunday 22 September 2024**. 2024 will be our big ‘three-oh’ birthday, so we want to use the occasion to highlight how 30 years of working together has made the FAIRTRADE mark a leader of life-changing impact for farmers and workers across the world.’

I was pleased once again to be able to source Zaytoun Olive Oil and Zaytoun Dates from True Origin (formerly Just Trade Scotland). In November, True Origin deservedly won the Scottish Fair Trade Forum Business Award for making a very significant contribution to Fair Trade in Scotland. Since Traidcraft went into administration, True Origin has worked hard to manage the loss and to minimise the impact on the producers whose goods Traidcraft stocked. They did this by introducing the ‘and friends’ range – Zaytoun, Divine, Café Direct, Equal Exchange and more.

I have often written about new designs of **bamboo socks** but have never gone into detail about their story. The bamboo for these first Fair Trade bamboo socks on the market the bamboo is processed into yarn in Rajasthan, India, then transported and made into socks in Perundhurai. Seventeen workers are employed, six men and eleven women, with both sexes in positions of management. They earn about 48% above the minimum wage. Clear fair-trade principles are adopted in their production of the socks. There is no child labour and the staff are valued and included in decision making processes.

Now that we are looking ahead to springtime and thinking about our gardens again, do have a look at *the insect hotel, bird feeder, butterfly house, suncatchers etc.* available in Ubuntu.

Finally, new for chocolate lovers - Divine Dark Chocolate and Ginger bars.

Anthea

UBUNTU

Anthea Burke will be retiring as Ubuntu Manager at the end of February after more than seven years in post. During this time she has continued to promote and raise awareness of Fairtrade which has been an important focus for the congregation for the past 30 years. We are very grateful for all Anthea has done and wish her a long, happy and fulfilled retirement. Going forward, it is planned that a small team continue to run Ubuntu on a voluntary basis and anyone wishing to help with this is asked to contact the Session Clerks. sessionclerk@inveruriewestchurch.org Tel: 625675

RETIREMENT OF CHUCH OFFICER KENNETH GRAY



Alan Harrow kindly sent us this picture of Ken and Rhona at the Church Officer's retirement event last month/year. It as a reminder of just how much Kenneth did as Church Officer and of how much the Church relies on people who are always willing to 'go the extra mile'. So if you feel you would like to volunteer to help plug any of the gaps left by Kenneth's

retirement please contact Rhona or the Session Clerks to discuss.

UBUNTU OFFERINGS



NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

By the time you are reading this you may already have made and perhaps broken a new year's resolution. It is interesting to look at this tradition and how it evolved.

As with many traditions it seems to have had its roots in agriculture and the changing seasons. For the ancient civilization of Babylon, this was integrated into a 12-day festival (Akitu) at the vernal equinox. Commonly this time was used to resolve issues and prepare for the farming year by paying off debts and particularly returning borrowed farm equipment!

The tradition was adopted by the Romans and merged with their Julian Calendar in which January 1st was declared to be the first day of the year. The Romans would offer sacrifices to Janus (the two-faced Roman God who look forward to new beginnings as well as backward for reflection and resolution). They would make promises of good behaviour.



The Roman legacy in Europe was profound. In mediaeval times knights would start the year by placing their hands on a peacock at the start of the year as a resolution to maintain their vows of chivalry (the 'Peacock Vow').

The actual phrase New Year Resolution was first recorded in a Boston newspaper in 1813. Since then, the practice of making and breaking resolutions has been common, though interestingly the types of resolution have changed. Historically more moral or religious in character they now tend to be more centred on personal goals such as losing weight, drinking less, getting fit, stopping smoking, etc.

No matter what your resolutions are, the Encounter Team wish you success with them and in particular wish you a happy and healthy New Year.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TEAM - ADVENT REFLECTIONS EVENING

Tuesday December 12 2023

'Follow that star' was the theme for the Christian Education team's evening of Advent reflections in West Parish church in December. Starting with mince pies and an appropriate song by Perry Como projected on the screen "*Catch a falling star*" the team then invited the gathering to suggest other names for a star, from 'heavenly body' to today's celebrity meaning and to ponder on whether they would have had the courage and faith to follow a star.

They were asked to imagine what had prompted those lowly shepherds, on the one hand, and on the other the three erudite kings from the Orient. The conclusion was that the inspiration came from faith and strong beliefs.

The audience was then asked to write on the five points of an Advent star what they would wish for from a star. Answers ranged from the local - better transport services and lower cost of living prices in the shops, to the more global - world peace and more universal understanding.

After the singing of hymns old and new the Rev. Rhona Cathcart drew discussions to a close with a prayer.



***THE Christian Education team at
Inverurie West Church***

***Words and photos by Griselda
McGregor***

Church Calendar February 2024



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

- Sunday 4 Feb 11 am morning worship
Hospitality time after the service
- Sunday 11 Feb 11 am morning worship
Hospitality time after the service
- Sunday 18 Feb 11 am morning worship (1st Sunday in Lent)
Hospitality time after the service
- Sunday 25 Feb 11 am morning worship (2nd Sunday in Lent)
Informal communion after the service
- Lent Bible Study Begins Wednesday 7 Feb at 7.30 pm via Zoom
and runs for six weeks. Contact Rhona for link

Encounter If you have any material for Encounter email encounter@inveruriwestchurch.org by Wed 21st February.

Children are welcome at all services. A weekly craft activity can be found in our 'Play as you worship'. 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 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@inveruriwestchurch.org



INVERURIE CHRISTIAN AID GROUP

The Christian Aid Committee would like to thank everyone for their support with the Christmas card delivery scheme and to all who sorted and delivered the cards. **£1,259** was raised.



Our next fundraiser is a Soup and Sweet to be held on **24 February** in St Andrew's Church Hall. Tickets will be available beforehand can be purchased at the door (cash only). These will be priced at £8 for adults and £4 for children. We are also planning a tombola table so any donations for this would be gratefully received. These can be given to *Mark Paterson, Hazel Newton or Sheila Rennie or handed in to the Acorn Centre.*

Sheila Rennie

Inverurie Christian Aid Committee

Soup & Sweet

Saturday, 24 February 2024

In St Andrew's Church Hall

12.00 noon – 2.00 pm

£8 (Children under 12 - £4)

Tickets available from The Acorn Centre



WHO'S WHO AT THE WEST

Minister	Rev Rhona Cathcart r.cathcart@inveruriwestchurch.org	620285
Session Clerks	Mark and Gillian Paterson sessionclerk@inveruriwestchurch.org	625675
Church and Acorn Centre Administration	Judith Will admin@inveruriwestchurch.org	670850
Church Officer	A team approach will be implemented.	
Rollkeeper	Chris Gardner rollkeeper@inveruriwestchurch.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@inveruriwestchurch.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@inveruriwestchurch.org	620285
Social/Fundraising Team	Joyce Petrie joycepetrie21@hotmail.com	620932

CONGREGATIONAL ROLL

Funerals:

Mrs Eleanor Officer (District 22)
Mrs Elke Adams (District 21)
Mrs Mary Winton (District 7)

6th December 2023
15th January 2024
24th January 2024

Lines Given:

Miss Marilyn Pirie (District 17) to Methlick

Change of Address:

Mr John Robertson to District 38
Ms Elizabeth Ternant to District 5
Mr Ian & Mrs Liz Nelson to District 37

**Please advise the Roll Keeper of any change of address:
rollkeeper@inveruriewestchurch.org**

A Charming Poem which anticipates spring.

Winter Cricket

*A cricket on a rubbish-tip
Fiddles a winter tune;
He has no heating problems,
Scraps and enough to spare.*



*Robin in the holly
And the wren in the ivy-tod
Fluff up their plumes and try to keep warm
With a tootle on their pipes –
Waiting for spring to come.*



And spring will come.

John Heath-Stubbs In: The Oxford Book of Christmas poems ed. by Michael Harrison and Christopher Stuart-Clark. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 152

FLOWER CALENDAR – JAN/FEB

CONVENER Eleanor Mitchell ☎ 620852

January 7th Joyce Petrie

January 14th -

January 21st Betty Reid

January 28th Irene and Linda



CONVENER Linda Duncan ☎ 620800

February 4th -

February 11th Alan and Margaret Harrow

February 18th -

February 25th Joy Doorghen



Thanks to all who donate, arrange, or deliver flowers.

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).

