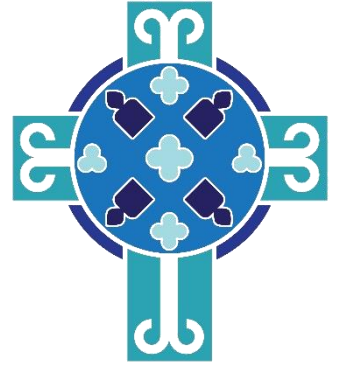


The Magazine of Inverurie West  
Parish Church

MARCH 2024



ENCOUNTER


*The  
Season  
of  
Lent*



LENT 2024  
Scottish Charity SC016907

## **REFLECTION**

*This poem by Kenneth Steven guides us from the 'grey of winter' into the 'sunlight of spring'.*



*Out of the grey of winter  
The hard of earth  
A shriek of green  
One single shoot  
Spearing the sky.*

*Fighting upwards  
Through February sleet  
Waiting to change, to break  
To the love of gold  
The sunlight of spring.*

From an early collection by Kenneth Steven,  
published by St Andrew's Press.

## *From the West Manse*



If I'm honest, I've always quite liked to do things well. You might think this would make me the kind of person who always works hard to perfect a skill. While that is sometimes true, it is also true that I have often put more time and energy into the things for which I have some skill or talent.

A case in point was dropping PE as soon as I was allowed to in school. It's true that I didn't enjoy it much, but I was also rubbish at team sports. And I didn't like being rubbish at something.

Another subject I had a problematic relationship with was art. I enjoyed it a lot more than PE, but I rarely enjoyed the results of my efforts and I didn't like being in a class and having to compare my results with others. So before long, I categorised myself as 'not good at art' and dropped it too. Fortunately, maturity brought with it a greater ability to enjoy things I'm not good at.

Another thing I'm not terribly good at (and this is an awkward confession for a minister) is keeping a Lent discipline. I'm very good at deciding I am going to do without something any given year - not so good at sticking to it.

It's occurred to me that perhaps one of the reasons many of us struggle to stick to this kind of discipline is that we think we have to do it all ourselves. Lent is generally associated with penitence; and penitence, especially in Western tradition, is often thought of as a very individual process. Kind of like art, to be honest, which is often conceived of as a form of individual expression.

But what if both Lent and art are, or can be, collaborative?

This year one of the things we've been doing for Lent at the West Church is a collaborative art project. The congregation has been encouraged to bring in fabric which can be cut into strips. Those who stay after the service for hospitality are invited to collectively

braid these strips together. Each week we are focusing on a different colour which is also woven into the theme of the service.

By Holy Week (the services for which are hosted at the West this year), we hope to have woven all the colours into ... something. Part of the fun is that we are working on this as we go along - the process as important as the product. There's a Lent lesson there too. Because it is the process of penitence - whether individual or collective - rather than the result which matters. The process of Lent is designed to increase our focus and engagement with God. Being willing to participate is what matters rather than gaining a gold star for the perfection of our discipline.

That doesn't mean there won't be a result. In terms of art, I have every confidence in our designer in chief, Sharon, who is overseeing the braiding. In terms of Lent I have even more confidence in our designer God, who loves all of his creations, and who delights in the way we are braided together.

*“For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful,  
I know that full well.  
My frame was not hidden from you  
when I was made in the secret place,  
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.  
(Psalm 139: 13-15)*

***Every blessing***

***Rhona***



## WEST CHURCH GUILD

The February meeting was led by Morag Mitchell, who welcomed her former colleague from Craibstone, John Macdonald. He spoke about climate change, which was most informative - our eyes were certainly opened.

Our next meeting is **Monday 11 March** when our speaker will be Jeanette Abel of the 'Living Well Café', which provides a safe and welcoming place for folk with memory problems. I'd encourage you to come along to hear about this wonderful initiative.

Everyone is welcome. *Ann-Marie Coleman.*

## SWIFTS AND US



Meet our summer visitors! Huntly Swift Group - NES Swifts **12:00-15:00**  
**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March**, Inverurie West Parish Church.

Drop in for info, chat and advice on how YOU can take simple steps to help our favourite summer bird visitors the Swift, Swallow & House Martin! Learn about the West Church Swift Project! These migratory miracles need our help! A family friendly event! Book: Drop in or email:

[huntlyswiftgroup@gmail.com](mailto:huntlyswiftgroup@gmail.com) This event is free. Full details of activities associated with Climate Week North East can be found at: <https://climateweeknortheast.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/CWNE-2024-brochure-SCREEN.pdf>





## ACORN CENTRE

### *Introducing Jo Lipp*

The Acorn Centre is delighted to acquire the services of Jo Lipp, our new General Assistant, for two days a week.

Jo's interest in the Centre began 13 years ago when she came in for a coffee with a friend. The venue, and the menu, impressed her enough to think she might like to volunteer; however, since she was at that time volunteering at Lochter Activity Centre, she delayed.

The change came when Dawn Banks invited her to the Coronation Event which was held so successfully last May. By then retired, and hearing of the vacancy, she took on two days, Tuesday and

Wednesday, of Kenneth Gray's post.



Jo enjoys the variety of tasks: e.g. setting up (and clearing up!) for *Mainly Music*, doing any shopping for the kitchen staff, donning an apron to serve, washing dishes; indeed anything that needs to be done. Then, on Thursdays, Jo is back as a volunteer!

Jo lives in Tarves and enjoys cycling, *Aquafit*,

long walks and knitting. She is also a hands-on Grandmother to six wee ones. This is one special lady, and we are grateful to have her services in our Acorn community.

# UBUNTU



As Easter approaches do check out the Fair Trade Easter Eggs and gifts available in Ubuntu. As the season of hope and renewal, it is a perfect time to choose Fair Trade. The gifts will not only bring joy to the recipient but will support fair wages, sustainable practices, and the gift of hope for Fair Trade farmers and artisans around the world.

## EASTER IN UBUNTU

***The Real Chocolate Milk and Dark Chocolate Easter Eggs.*** This year the free 24-page Easter story-activity book has had a whole new design. It is illustrated by award-winning artist Martina Peluso and contains the story of the first Easter along with some fun activities.



***Divine Milk Chocolate with Caramel and Rice Flat Egg.*** Proving that good things can be more environmentally friendly, these flat eggs have 40% less packaging compared to a boxed egg. The ever-popular ***Divine Milk Chocolate Speckled Eggs*** are also in stock.



***Cocoa Loco Egg and Spoon.*** A handmade chocolate egg and spoon crafted from creamy milk and white chocolate. This delightful set includes a chocolate egg nestled in its own egg cup, accompanied by a luscious chocolate spoon for an indulgent experience.

***Tony's Egg-stra Special Chocolate Mini Eggs.*** 12 eggs divided by 10 flavours, that's not equal! This carton is “un-egg-ually” divided to illustrate the inequality in the chocolate industry. *Tony Chocolonely* aims to end slavery in the chocolate industry and its mission is ***‘to make 100% slave free the norm in chocolate’***.

***Easter Cards*** in assorted designs with 15% of the proceeds going to **Mercy Ships**. This is a faith-based international development organisation that deploys hospital ships to some of the poorest countries in the world, delivering vital, free healthcare to people in desperate need.



***Gift and décor ideas*** - rabbit finger puppets, papier mâché rabbit and chicken trinket boxes, egg and rabbit hanging decorations and much more – do have a peruse in the shop.

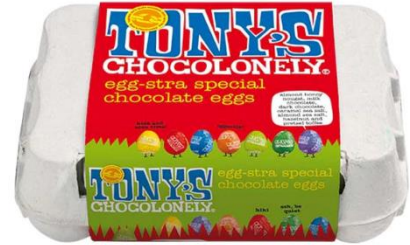
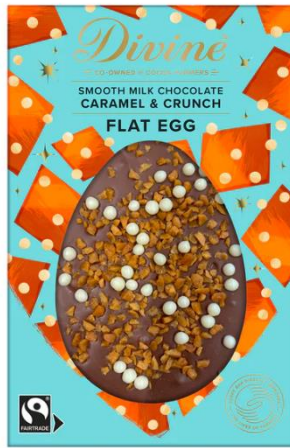
New to the sock and jute bag sections – ‘*SockaFair*’, soft and cosy Fair Trade socks made from 100% re-cycled cotton and polyester: new design Cats, Ladybirds, Puffin and Lighthouse jute bags.

***As you read this I will have retired from my position in Ubuntu. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who have assisted and supported Ubuntu and Fair Trade during my time here and to say how much I have enjoyed working with the staff and volunteers in Ubuntu, the Acorn Centre and all at Inverurie West Church. Finally, I wish the volunteer group who are taking over Ubuntu every success.***

Happy Easter and best wishes to you all,  
Anthea



# UBUNTU STOCK





## KENNETH GRAY

I wanted to write a note of thanks to all those who donated to my retirement collection. I was humbled and am extremely grateful for your generosity which came as a complete surprise. I am touched to know my contributions to the life of the West Church and the Acorn Centre were appreciated by you all.

I have chosen to donate half of the collection to The Tent of Nations - a project in Israel/Palestine which I visited in 2018 with members of the congregation. The project is working tirelessly for peace in the region.



I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues who I have enjoyed working alongside over the last 21 years. I wish you every success for the future.

My heartfelt thanks once again. I'll be sure to see you all around the place!

Kenneth



# SOME PICTURES OF THE TENT OF NATIONS VISIT





***I've Found a Friend***  
**James Grindlay Small (1817-1888)**

**A hymn/poem sent to Encounter by Margaret Sangster.**



*I've found a friend  
He loved me ere I knew Him;  
He drew me with the cords of love,  
And thus He bound me to Him.  
And round my heart still closely twine  
Those ties which naught can sever;  
For I am His, and He is mine,  
Forever and forever.*



*I've found a friend; O such a friend!  
He bled, He died to save me;  
And not alone the gift of life,  
But His own self He gave me.  
Naught that I have my own I call.  
I hold it for the Giver;  
My heart, my strength, my life, my all,  
Are His and His forever.*



*I've found a friend, O such a friend!  
So kind and true and tender;  
So wise a counsellor and guide,  
So mighty a defender!  
From Him who loves me now so well  
What power my soul shall sever?  
Shall life or death, shall earth or hell?  
No; I am His forever.*



## Church Calendar March 2024



If you are worshipping from home, you can connect as usual via the West church website and YouTube channels or access the service by phone on 01467 343790 (calls are charged at local rates).

Sunday 3 March 11 am Morning worship. Hospitality time after the service

Sunday 10 March 11 am Morning worship. Hospitality time after the service. (Mother's Day)

Thursday 14 March 7.30 pm Kirk session

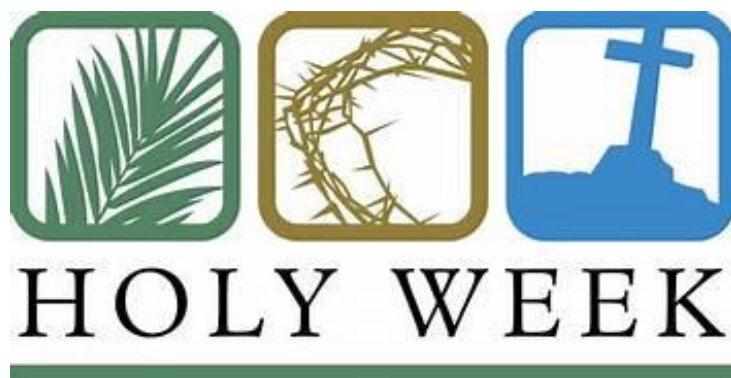
Sunday 17 March 11 am Morning worship. Hospitality time after the service

Saturday 23 March 10 am - 4 pm Hall Clear Out (volunteers wanted!)

Sunday 24 March 11 am Palm Sunday worship. Hospitality time after the service



## Church Calendar March 2024



### **Monday 25-Friday 29 March**

**7.30 pm IDCT Holy Week/Easter services - All services hosted at the West Church**

Our guest speaker for all the evening services during Holy Week is **Rev Iain Telfer**.

Monday 25 March 7.30 pm Service led by New Community and Fountain of Love churches.

Tuesday 26 March 7.30 pm Service led by Church of the Immaculate Conception and St Andrew's.

Wednesday 27 March 7.30 pm Service led by Bennachie and Daviot, Culsalmond and Rayne churches.

Thursday 28 March 7.30 pm Maundy Thursday service led by the Inverurie West church.

**Friday 29 March 8 am Walk of Witness beginning at Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception (followed by bacon rolls at St Andrew's).**

Friday 29 March 7.30 pm Good Friday service led by St Mary's Episcopal Church.

## Church Calendar March 2024

**Please note that clocks go forward in the early hours of Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March!**



Sunday 31 March 8 am Early Easter Service up the Bass (ground level option at St Andrew's) followed by Easter breakfast at the West Church.

Sunday 31 March **10 am** Easter Sunday joint worship at the West Church

**Encounter If you have any material for Encounter please email: [encounter@inveruriwestchurch.org](mailto:encounter@inveruriwestchurch.org) by Wed 20 March**

The prayer group continues to meet regularly on a Thursday morning. 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)

Our contact email address for those looking for help with collection/delivery of supplies or medication is [help@inveruriwestchurch.org](mailto:help@inveruriwestchurch.org)





## INVERURIE CHRISTIAN AID GROUP

On 24th February we had a very successful Soup and Sweet, which raised **£757**. Many thanks to everyone who helped support us in any way. There was quite a buzz about the hall which gives great encouragement to the Committee. Thank you to all who attended or donated.



*Sheila Rennie.*

*Garioch Christian Aid Group.*

## THE TRUSSELL TRUST – LENT REFLECTIONS

For anyone who is interested, the Trussell Trust has produced a series of Lent Reflections and prayers written by people with lived experience of poverty who encountered God in the midst of their struggle and are connected to the Trussell Trust network.



These reflections can be accessed using the following link:

[https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/02/lent\\_reflections.pdf](https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/02/lent_reflections.pdf)

## 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@hotmail.com">doorghens@hotmail.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

*No changes to the congregational roll*

Please advise the Roll Keeper of any change of address:

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

### ***FLOWER CALENDAR – MARCH***

CONVENER Margaret Sangster

March 3<sup>rd</sup> Carol and Fred Barber

March 10<sup>th</sup> Irene Jamieson and Linda Mathers

March 17<sup>th</sup> Robert and Hazel Newton

March 24<sup>th</sup> Carol and Fred Barber

March 31<sup>st</sup> Margaret Sangster



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**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).

