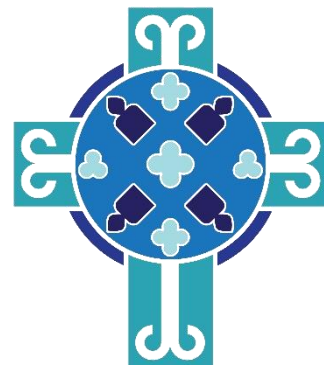


ENCOUNTER



The Magazine of Inverurie West Parish Church

JUNE 2025



Pentecost 8th June 2025
Scottish Charity SC016907

REFLECTION

“The Good News” by Thích Nhất Hạnh

At a time when our media is so full of bad news, it is good to be reminded of the simplest of life's pleasures.

*They don't publish
the good news.
The good news is published
by us.
We have a special edition
every moment,
and we need you to read it.
The good news is that you are
alive,
that the linden tree is still
there,
standing firm in the harsh
winter.
The good news is that you have
wonderful eyes
to touch the blue sky.
The good news is that your
child is there before you,
and your arms are available:
hugging is possible.
They only print what is wrong.
Look at each of our special
editions.*

*We always offer the things that
are not wrong.
We want you to benefit from
them
and help protect them.
The dandelion is there by the
sidewalk,
smiling its wondrous smile,
singing the song of eternity.
Listen. You have ears that can
hear it.
Bow your head.
Listen to it.
Leave behind the world of
sorrow,
of preoccupation,
and get free.
The latest good news
is that you can do it.*

Reproduced from: *The Emergency Poet : an anti-stress poetry anthology* / edited by Deborah Alma. London: Michael O'Mara Books Ltd, 2015.

From the West Manse



I've been thinking quite a lot about clarity lately.

In part this has been brought on by the work which Alan Harrow, Chris Gardner, and I, alongside our web designer Daniel McPherson, have been doing over the last few months to create a new church website which we hope will be clear, consistent, warm and welcoming.

The website is now live at the usual address and we are delighted with the work Daniel has done for us. Chances are, you are currently reading this letter in the magazine's online version on the site right now!

Among his many sterling qualities, Daniel has been very patient when we have asked for various tweaks and changes as the website settles in. One of these was an unfortunate 'mea culpa' on my part. Having used a quote in a recent Sunday service, which I believed was from the new pope, I referred to part of the same quote in the draft of my first blog on the website. Only, not long after sending it to Daniel, I discovered there was no reliable evidence that Pope Leo had indeed used those exact words.

I am usually quite careful about the quotes I use. I've had too much academic training not to check sources and get attributions right. But this time I failed. My second draft of the blog turned into a confession, a few thoughts about the confusion and murkiness that sharing of online information can create, and a promise that it would always clearly be me writing the blog not an AI bot!

Confusion and clarity share the stage in the festival of Pentecost, which this year is in June.

Of course your average person on the street, and even many church-goers, don't pay a lot of attention to Pentecost. If they do, they are apt to find what they hear rather confusing. A sound like a great wind? Something that seemed like tongues of flames? And then suddenly Galilean apostles speaking in multiple languages they couldn't possibly have known but which were each understood by someone listening?

I mean what is all that about? It sounds a recipe for mass confusion!

There's a humorous scene in one of Adrian Plass's *Sacred Diary* books about church life, in which the fictional version of himself is caught up in a Pentecost service which descends into chaos. If I remember correctly, a smoke machine and flaming gas canisters were involved.

Plass gently and affectionately pokes fun at the church's well-meaning, but ultimately doomed attempt to re-create what must have been an incredibly dramatic, and for some a very confusing, moment in the church's history.

But the purpose of Pentecost was not chaos or confusion but clarity and connection. The spirit arrived with the ability to connect people through the power of language. Amidst the drama, the outcome was that everyone present heard the apostles declaring the wonders of God in their own languages.

The important thing was not how it happened, but that it happened at all.

This Pentecost we will be once more having a shared IDCT Pentecost service in the town. Unlike last year, it will be a Sunday evening service rather than an alternative to our various morning services. This is to allow people both to worship in their usual ways in the morning, and to join us in the evening in the hall of the

Church of the Immaculate Conception, North Street for something that might feel both familiar and different as it combines our varying traditions.

I feel entirely confident in saying that nobody at IDCT has purchased either a smoke machine or any gas canisters and I don't expect the service to feel remotely chaotic. But it can be a little unsettling for some to step outside their usual patterns of worship.

But what is clear to me, in these divisive times, is that it is a good thing that we live in a town where Christians of a whole range of denominations are willing to put aside their differences or preferences to worship together.

And what is also clear to me is that anything which connects us and encourages us to listen and pay attention to one another and to the Spirit is good.

Most of all, what is clear to me, is that the Spirit has many ways - some dramatic, some quiet - of helping us to hear about and understand the wonders of God.

So spare a moment if you can, wherever you find yourself this Pentecost, to breathe in some of that spirit-enabled wonder. And may it fill you to the brim with the clear awareness and living presence of the love of God.

Every blessing

Rhona



The year marches on, and with the growing season well underway, we are proudly using leaves and lettuce from the polytunnel, making sure that we can keep our food miles low. Many thanks for the donations of an

abundance of rhubarb, which has not only featured on the menu as crumble, but also made a lovely batch of homemade relish. As always, we welcome your produce donations and can always turn them into gold!



Volunteers

Got any boomerang kids home from uni, left school or haven't got anything planned for the summer?

We are always looking for volunteers to boost our team

over the next few months. It's great for their CV and as we provide all volunteers with a lunch, it'll give your fridge a break!

Pop in for a chat and we'll take them off your hands!



Mike

GARIOCH CHRISTIAN AID GROUP AWARD



Garioch Christian Aid Group have won an award which is part of the **80th Anniversary Recognition Awards** - the **Power of Hope Awards**. Specifically the Group has won the **Standing Together Award** which recognises strong group teamwork and co-operation in running a range of community fundraising events. The group was nominated by Charlie Meiklejohn of CAID Scotland. As chair of the group, Val Reid has been invited to receive the award after the 80th anniversary service in Westminster Abbey on 12 June. As she says, *“This is a great privilege for me but is very much an award for a great group effort.”*

The Group is keen to recruit more members.

GARIOCH CHRISTIAN AID GROUP BOOK SALE

The Garioch Christian Aid Book Sale had a very successful week and at the time of writing, has raised **£2381.91**. Additional money may come from online sales. People were very generous in their donations of books (and also jam and jigsaws).



Many thanks are due to Margaret Hearne and her team of volunteers who manned the book sale and/or contributed to setting up and later clearing up the West Church Hall. And, of course particular thanks to all of the people who purchased books.

Thanks to Griselda McGregor for the pictures of some of our younger visitors.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

The 2025 General Assembly took place from Saturday, **17 May to Thursday, 22 May 2025**, at the Assembly Hall on the Mound, Edinburgh. Rt Rev Rosie Frew reflected on this having been a challenging and inspiring Assembly. A few of the discussions are summarised below.

‘We must be present, prophetic and purposeful’ -

The convener of the Public Life and Social Justice Programme Group, set out a call for commissioners and congregations to consider how all parts of the Church of Scotland can pray and work for peace, climate action and against the entrenchment of poverty in Scotland and across the world.



Truth in the public square - The General Assembly heard from **Marjorie Clark**, an elder from Perth St Matthew's, who said, *"Increasingly we hear of climate change deniers, those casting doubts about vaccine safety, the blaming of Muslims and asylum seekers following the Southport attacks."* She cited these as examples of where truth is challenged and dangerous opinions are presented as fact, fuelling further division and fear only encouraging further division and fear. The Assembly agreed a motion which encouraged the Church to uphold truth in the public square and to challenge misinformation.

Fossil Fuels --In a landmark decision, the General Assembly agreed to endorse the global initiative calling for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Church of Scotland has, at previous General Assemblies, made commitments to respond to climate change and promote climate justice.

Scotland Demands Better - The Kirk gave its backing to a major Anti-Poverty march planned for **25 October** in Edinburgh.

The Church of Scotland heard an invitation to renew its work in the words contained in Micah 6:8, "*And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God*".

PENTECOST

*Today we feel the wind beneath our wings
Today the hidden fountain flows and plays
Today the church draws breath at last and sings
As every flame becomes a Tongue of praise.
This is the feast of fire, air, and water
Poured out and breathed and kindled into earth.
The earth herself awakens to her maker
And is translated out of death to birth.
The right words come today in their right order
And every word spells freedom and release
Today the gospel crosses every border
All tongues are loosened by the Prince of Peace
Today the lost are found in His translation.
Whose mother tongue is Love in every nation.*



From 'Sounding the Seasons' by Malcolm Guite.
Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2024. Reprinted with
kind permission.



**Inverurie West Church Climate
Action and Community Garden
Group**



Thursday 19th June
7 pm
Acorn Centre
West Church Inverurie

Talk on **‘Gardening for Wildlife’**
by
David Hunter from The Habitat People
(Some native plants will be on sale)

followed by a short
‘Walk and Talk’
round the centre of the town
led by **Cally Smith of Huntly Swift Group**
(leaving the Acorn Centre at 8pm)

Tea/coffee and ‘fancy pieces’
at 7.30pm.

£5 per ticket
available from Acorn Centre
or on sale at the door on the night.



★ 2025 fundraising challenge ★

My son Duncan MacLellan is doing another fundraising challenge on behalf of RSABI (Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Institution) in July. Last year he was awarded the Huxtable trophy from RSABI for not only his fundraising but for his willingness to speak out about men's mental health, especially in the farming industry. **Isla**



Duncan writes : *This year I have decided to dust off the running shoes for one last mad fundraising adventure!*

In July I will be running from John O'Groats to Gretna Green, north to south, all in aid of RSABI again. For those who don't know my story, I have suffered with depression for over 15 years, and in 2022 I hit rock bottom and attempted to take my own life. There's still so much to do to break the stigma around mental health, men's mental health and the mental health of farmers. I'm raising money for RSABI for the great work they do for everyone in Scottish agriculture whether that be practical, financial or emotional support.

Any donations would be hugely appreciated.

Either go onto the JustGiving website and search for Duncan MacLellan *Long Way Down*, or click on the RSABI logo below.

Thank you
Isla



WHAT'S NEW IN UBUNTU?

We have a variety of new fairly-traded scarves in stock including these floral examples which are available in several complementary colourways. The brightly coloured designs are printed on cotton fabric with a pale coloured background and the scarves have long end tassels for a touch of glamour.

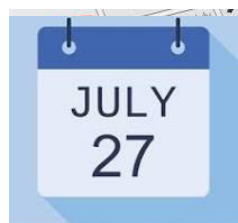
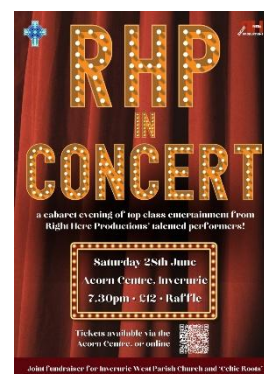
The supplier is a well-established maker of cotton scarves based in New Delhi, and they abide with all local and national government regulations on workplace practices and pay above the minimum wage. There is no child labour or discrimination of any kind, and men and women earn the same rates for the same work.



REMINDERS



Right Here Productions Saturday 28th June -Cabaret Evening. Acorn Centre
7.30 pm. £12. Raffle



Garden Party Sunday July 27th.

Isla, Sharon & Alison are having another of their popular garden parties this summer, in aid of the maintenance of the organ.



Bike Ride - Fetternear Hall is now booked on **Saturday 30 August** for the Bennachie Bike Ride. Plenty time to get 'race fit'! **Volunteers needed.**



Church Calendar/Ways of connecting June 2025

Sunday services continue at the usual time of 11 am at the West.

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



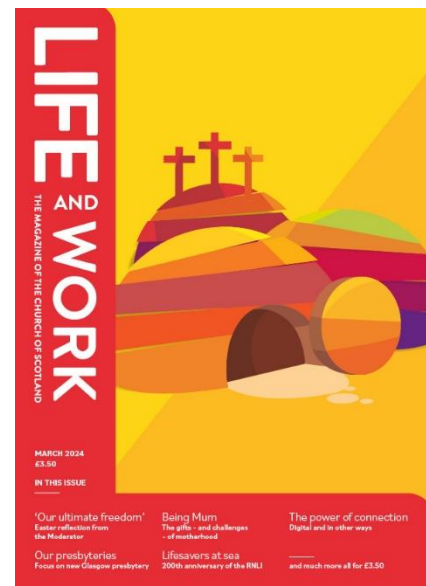
Sun 1 June	11 am morning worship. Hospitality time after the service.
Sun 8 June	11 am morning worship Followed by our Annual Stated Meeting Hospitality will follow the ASM.
Sun 15 June	11 am morning worship. Hospitality time after the service.
Thu 19 June	7 pm Garden Talk & Swift Walk and Talk starting at Acorn Centre.
Sun 22 June	11 am morning worship. Hospitality time after the service.
Thu 24 June	7 pm Kirk session in the Acorn Centre.
Sun 29 June	11 am morning worship . followed by informal communion .
Encounter	Deadline for Encounter Wed. 18 th June. email encounter@inveruriewestchurch.org

Children are welcome at all services. Most weeks during term time we offer Junior Church for children who wish to go downstairs part-way through the service. Activities and toys can also be found in our 'play as you worship' box in the sanctuary.

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

LIFE AND WORK UPDATE

Sadly, the Church of Scotland can no longer afford to print its **146-year-old** magazine, Life and Work. The Kirk's General Assembly in Edinburgh was told that publication of the monthly magazine would end later this year. This is because of falling readership and a "*growing financial deficit*".



Lynne McNeil, who has edited Life and Work for 23 years, said many print publications were struggling due to a market of "*diminishing returns*". She said the magazine's core audience was among the 68,160 worshippers on average who attended church on Sundays. Sales of the magazine have also been affected by church closures. Proposals are expected to be put to next year's assembly about a new publication.

Thanks to Irene Jamieson for co-ordinating distribution of Life and Work and to Alison Blair who co-ordinates subscriptions at the West..

WHO'S WHO AT THE WEST

Minister	Rev Rhona Cathcart r.cathcart@inveruriewestchurch.org	620285
Session Clerk	Morag Mitchell sessionclerk@inveruriewestchurch.org	629312
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@outlook.com	620823
Fabric Team		
Finance Team	Alan Sharp sharp3@btinternet.com	
Treasurer	Alison Blair treasurer@inveruriewestchurch.org	620677
Committed Giving Envelopes	Cindy Farquhar Cindyfarquhar25@yahoo.com	
Gift Aid	Mark Paterson mgpateron@talktalk.net	01467 625675
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

Lines Received:

Mrs Kathleen Price (District 29)

Change of Address:

Mrs Aileen Macaskill from District 2 to District 24

Mrs Elizabeth (Betty) Reid from District 21 to District 38

Funerals:

Mrs Thora Yule (District 3) on 14th May 2025

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

FLOWER CALENDAR – JUNE

Convener: Linda Duncan

June 1	Fran Nice
June 8	Dorothy and Bill Duncan
June 15	Irene Jamieson and Linda Mathers
June 22	Bunty Sievwright
June 29	Joyce Petrie



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 629312).

