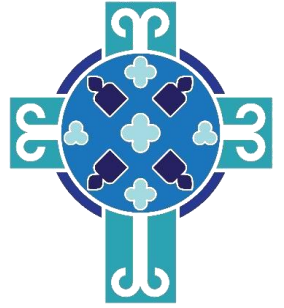




*The Magazine of Inverurie West
Parish Church
November 2026*



*Inverurie War Memorial
Scottish Charity SC016907*

REFLECTION for REMEMBRANCE

For the healing of the nations,
 Lord, we pray with one accord;
for a just and equal sharing
 of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action
 help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead your people into freedom,
 from despair your world release,
that, redeemed from war and hatred,
 all may come and go in peace.
Show us how, through care and goodness,
 fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living,
 let it from the earth be banned:
pride of status, race or schooling,
 dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice
 may we hallow life's brief span.

You, Creator-God, have written
 your great name on humankind;
for our growing in your likeness,
 bring the life of Christ to mind;
that by our response and service
 earth its destiny may find.

Words By Fred Kaan

From the West Manse



As I write, we've just celebrated our 'big communion' Sunday. At the same time *Storm Boelo* has been making what will hopefully be its last few passes over Aberdeenshire.

The wind has been wild, although we've been spared too much rain. Still, the town centre wasn't perhaps looking quite as pristine today as in the videos I watched the day before when the announcement was made that we'd won Scotland's town of the year!

As for those of us 'coorrying' in at the West as we shared the Lord's supper, both services passed with only a few minor power blips to add occasional special effects. I was impressed how many people made it to one or the other of the services in the circumstances - although I blame no-one who decided the safest choice was to stay at home. After all, we may have the gift of a solid well-maintained building, but one still needs to get there!

In our small informal afternoon communion service we thought about how in Psalm 139 we are told that we are '*fearfully and wonderfully made*'. I asked everyone (children and adults) to think about something they liked about themselves or, if that was too hard, something they enjoyed doing. They were then invited to make a Lego model that expressed something about themselves. The responses and models were brilliant. They also, I think, helped us know one another a little more and share the enjoyment of our God made diversity.

As the service finished I thought again about all that I'd seen in the videos and comments celebrating Inverurie's win and expressing all that is positive in the town. Many people mentioned community spirit, and the feeling that the town had deep roots, and was a place where

‘everyone knows everyone else’. While it would be wrong to assume that this is everyone’s experience, it was nevertheless encouraging.

It’s good for a town to feel rooted. And when we gather for the Remembrance Day service this month, we remember and honour not just those who lost lives, but also a community that pulled together to support each other.

At the same time, a community also needs new branches to thrive, and part of what makes Inverurie work is that combination of new and old.

This is also true of the West. We’ve always, in my experience, had a mix of new and old - and that keeps us both rooted and connected. As I looked out at your faces during both services, and thought of those joining at a distance, I felt strongly that even though churches were never mentioned in all the Town of the Year interviews and celebrations, our presence matters.

We are fortunate to sit right at the heart of a very special and well loved town. At the Acorn Centre we make connections every day with people in the community. And every Sunday we reaffirm our belief that the love of God still flourishes here, and empower one another to share that love. In a scattered, divided, and often stormy world, this should never be underestimated.

So this November, as it gets darker and possibly stormier; and as we have times of solemn remembrance, let us hold onto the joy that comes from being part of a community of fearfully and wonderfully made followers of Christ working together to share God’s love.

Every blessing

Rhona

Guild Report October 2026



This year's Guild theme is "*Beyond the Walls*". With this in mind we decided to hold the October meeting at Garioch Heritage Centre. We followed our usual format with our brains and memories being challenged with a quiz about "Then and Now", which involved us being asked to name the prices of various everyday commodities. It was thoroughly enjoyed by our 20 attendees and proved how little we knew about past and current prices.

We then had a walk around the Heritage Centre exhibits which resulted in many stories from our members about various items. We discussed the memories the whole museum brought back to us and how important the place is for "*telling the story of the Garioch*".

It was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon. Thanks to Ann-Marie Coleman for arranging and hosting the meeting. Next Meeting: **Monday 9th November at 2 pm** when Morag Mitchell will tell us about her trip to Jersey.

All are welcome.
Margaret Harrow

INVERURIE ORCHESTRA

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Sunday 6th December 7.30pm, St Andrew's Church Tickets
£12.00 (under 16's £5.00) available from ticketsource.co.uk, orchestra
members and Novello Gifts, West High Street Inverurie.

LAST CALL FOR MAKERS AND BAKERS

The **Yarn Group** is organising a fundraising Christmas Fair in the Chapel from **10 am to 1 pm on Saturday 14th November**. If you would like to donate handcrafted items, baking, preserves or plants, all donations to help fill our stalls will be gratefully received. The Yarn Group is also looking for the following for the Fair:

- New/unused gift items (we all have them in a cupboard!)
- Jigsaws
- Items for an alcohol free bottle stall.

Please drop off any items at the Acorn Centre.

For further information please speak to Linda McCreath.

CHRISTMAS FAIR
Saturday
14th November
10am – 1pm

WEST CHURCH
 **Inverurie,**
AB51 3SA

Free Entry

Knitted Gifts
Crafts
Home Bakes
Produce
Jigsaws
Bottle Stall
Gifts

 Organised by the
Yarn Group
Scottish Charity
SC016907



Are you a caregiver?



Loved one in a care setting?

Would you like to meet others for support?

Come along to

Inverurie West Church

For a Carer's Cuppa

Thursday 17th September 2026

Thursday 22nd October 2026

Thursday 19th November 2026

Thursday 17th December 2026

Drop in anytime between 2 - 4 pm

Tel 07905 580371 for more information



Scottish Charity SC016907





UBUNTU



Fairtrade Shop

**Christmas Open Evening
Monday, 9 November
2026**

6.30 - 8.00 pm

**Complimentary fairly traded
refreshments.**





This year we will be taking part in Aberdeenshire Restaurant Weeks, a great initiative aimed at encouraging



people to try different venues throughout the shire at what can be a challenging time of year. Check out all the venues taking part at www.aberdeenshirerestaurantweek.com

Our offer will be:

- * Dish of the Day plus any drink for only £10 per person
- * Dish of the Day plus any drink plus cake or pudding for only £15 per person

We hope to see you!

Social/Fundraising Team updates



We will be running our reuse/recycle pre-loved baubles and other Christmas decorations again. From late November we will have a table set up in the Acorn Centre with Christmas items which you can pick up for a donation to church funds. Items can be dropped off at church on **Sundays from 1 November** or at the Acorn Centre from Tuesday 3 November.



If you need items collected, please let us know.

Save the date! The Big Switch-on – Sunday 29th November.

The Acorn Centre will be open from 12 noon to 2 pm for a soup and sweet lunch (including tea/coffee) for £10! We will also be open for teas/coffees and treats from 2 pm to 4.30 pm (last orders 4 pm) to warm you up before the fireworks. Tickets for lunch available from 1st November. **Joyce Petrie**

REMEMBRANCE 2026

'A Time of Remembrance'. In the 21st century this can be a time of contention. For some, there is the issue of 'Commemoration' becoming glorification of past military prowess. Of equal concern is remembering two wars which took place a century ago, while currently our media outlets nightly reveal to us more conflicts which are on an unprecedented, and even more dangerous, scale.



Yet for many people, this season of remembrance is deeply personal. Within our own congregation many will have mementoes, artefacts, tales to tell and photos to cherish, of relatives whose lives were changed by these two wars. This applies particularly in Scotland where one in four of those who *'Joined the Colours'* never returned.

International conflict results in personal tragedy for so many. It casts long shadows over each community involved, often for generations.

One aspect of remembrance which can be overlooked is the work of the Commonwealth Graves Commission (CWGC). This organisation was formed in 1917 when it was realised that the sheer scale of losses from WWI meant that transporting the dead to their home country was impossible. In that conflict over one million died, of which almost 530,000 had no known grave. For the CWGC the overriding principle was *'everyone is equal in death'*, so memorials were created utilising a simple wooden cross, with no deference to class or rank of soldier. In later years the wooden cross was replaced with the white stone which we see today. These are more practical as they can comprise local

stone, e.g. granite, and snow and rain can fall naturally from the curved top. Stones placed in rows were designed to resemble soldiers on parade. Inscribed on each is the Regimental Badge, name, rank and number. Families could, at the cost of 6d (sixpence), add a personal inscription.



We are now familiar with the large scale memorials: the Menin Gate, Belgium with 50,000 names; the London Cenotaph, designed by Sir Edward Lutyens, unveiled in November 11th, 1920. Locally we have several Commonwealth Graves - Inverurie Cemetery contains 11. There are also graves in St Mary's, while Dyce Cemetery contains German and Polish gravestones. Kemnay has an additional interest: within the primary school the *"Roll of Honour"* includes photos of the

area's casualties. Every year a group of Kemnay Academy pupils travels to France to view the battlegrounds, thus encouraging a visual and cultural link to a past they can scarcely imagine.

Here in the West there is a strong personal connection to the famous '***Tomb of the Unknown Warrior***' within Westminster Abbey. Ann-Marie Coleman's father, George D. Rowe, R.N. was selected to be one of the Guard of Honour from H.M. Destroyer Verdun as it escorted the body from Boulogne, in utmost secrecy. In November 1933 he wrote an article describing this experience. (**Lest we Forget.** By George D. Rowe. '*Mirage*', November 1933). Here is an extract:

'The most careful precautions were taken to ensure that the identity should not be known, not then, now or ever. Several bodies were exhumed from various battlefields and placed in a hut. An officer who was sworn to secrecy then stripped the body of all identification marks, buttons and badges, and was

blindfolded to select one of the bodies as the Unknown Warrior. No-one will ever know whether he was a soldier, sailor or airman or to which of the services he had belonged.

The body was placed in its casket at Boulogne, and brought home on H.M. Destroyer Verdun on which I was serving at the time, and was privileged to be one of the guard of honour. I remember the coffin of old English oak which contained the casket, and our impressive arrival as we steamed slowly into Dover to the salute of nineteen guns - an honour for an unknown warrior. Unknown, yes, but known and honoured by us all as a son of England and the Empire.

The body was conveyed to the Abbey with a guard of V.C.'s and was buried in the presence of the King on November 11th, 1920. On the tomb are words written by the Dean of Westminster.

*'Beneath this stone rests the body
Of a British warrior,
Unknown by name or rank;
Brought from France to lie among
The most illustrious of the land,
And buried here on Armistice Day,
November 11th, 1920, in the presence of HM King George V.,
His Ministers of State,
The Chief of his Forces
And a vast concourse of the nation.*

*Let us tell the story as often as we can - **Lest We Forget.**'*

Thanks are due to Ann-Marie. Also to **Gaenor Berkin** of the CWGC who works tirelessly to assist relatives trace their family members. Gaenor is involved with Kemnay Community Council and is a minister of the Ancient Celtic Church. *Margaret Hearne*

Christian Aid Christmas Card Delivery Service 2026



The Christian Aid Christmas Card delivery service will run this year from **5th December**, with the last posting date being **14th December**. Post boxes will be available at the Acorn Centre, St Andrew's Church, Morrisons, Tesco, Strachan's and J.G. Ross at Highclere. Only local cards for Inverurie, Port Elphinstone, or Osprey Village can be delivered. **The minimum donation requested per card this year is 60p.** All funds raised go to Christian Aid.

This is a service that relies heavily on a lot of volunteers to make it work. We are always on the look-out for new volunteers to help deliver cards, and if you would like to get involved, we would do our best to match you to a street or two close to your home. Only one delivery is made, once all the cards have been sorted, so it is not very time-consuming, and you can choose a time that suits you. If you are interested in delivering, or helping to sort cards, please speak to either Mark Paterson or Sheila Rennie. We would be delighted to have you on board!

WORLD MISSION STAMP APPEAL has ended.

For many years, the West Church supported this key World Mission Council initiative by collecting used stamps, but it has now sadly come to an end. From 1995 to 2024 an amazing total of **£96,459.67** was raised for projects around the world. The final project to benefit was Al Ahli Hospital in northern Gaza.

Although neither the West Church nor the wider Church of Scotland will continue a used-stamp project, other charities can still benefit from donated stamps e.g. the Red Cross Shop, so please consider an alternative if you are still collecting. To every collector, trimmer, collator, deliverer **THANK YOU** for all your support over the years!

Ann-Marie Coleman

COMMUNITY GARDEN – *VOLUNTEERS NEEDED*

The Community Garden at the back of the West Church Hall is officially thriving. What started all those years ago as a patch of dark and overgrown ground has been transformed into a vibrant, green sanctuary where friends connect and fresh food is grown.

From crisp lettuces, luscious strawberries, blackcurrants and heirloom tomatoes to fresh herbs and root vegetables, nothing has gone to waste this Summer and more recent produce – tatties, leeks and tomatoes - are currently being delivered straight to the Acorn kitchen where they are being transformed into warm, nutritious stews and soups.

And that's not where the story finishes. Thanks to the abundance of our harvest this year we have also been able to sell surplus fresh produce to raise money for church funds through a table at the Acorn Centre Reception Desk.

While the tools are being put away for the winter, we are already dreaming up big plans for next season - including expanding our use of raised beds and hosting educational workshops. To make these goals a reality, we REALLY need your help. We are looking for volunteers of all experience levels for Spring 2027.

Whether you are a master gardener or have never touched a trowel, there is a place for you. If you would like to pledge a few hours of help or join our planning committee for next year, please get in contact. We would love to hear from you.

For now, however, as the autumn air crisps and the leaves turn to brilliant shades of gold and amber, our thoughts are naturally turning to tradition, community, and gratitude.

The garden reminds us that we are all connected to the earth and to each other. It has provided a space for quiet reflection, a playground for our Junior Church to learn about nature, and a tangible way to live out our faith.

Our Harvest Thanksgiving service was once again especially meaningful as produce from the garden took centre stage in our Harvest celebrations - a harvest which would not be possible without a dedicated small bunch of volunteers who turned over the soil, planted the seeds, weeded and watered through the hot summer days and gathered the crop.

So thank you to each and every volunteer- and a massive thank you to everyone who purchased vegetables!

*May this Harvest remind us to keep sowing seeds of kindness, generosity, and community in the year ahead. **Biff Barrow***

*And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD. **Isaiah 2:4-5 King James Version***

Church Calendar/Ways of connecting November 2026

Sunday services are at the usual time of 11 am, apart from the two exceptions* noted below for this month. If you are worshipping from home, you can connect as usual via the West church website and YouTube channels.

Sun 1 Nov 11am morning worship
Hospitality time after the service
3 pm-4.30 pm Play Church
Interactive storytelling and drama for the whole family

Wed evenings 7.30 pm Zoom bible study
All welcome. Contact Rhona for the link

Sun 8 Nov **10 am*** Remembrance service. Followed by shared
Act of Remembrance at 10.45 in the square

Mon 9 Nov 2 pm Guild meeting. All welcome
6.30-8 pm Ubuntu Christmas evening. Acorn Centre

Sat 14 Nov 10 am-1 pm Yarn Group Christmas Fair in the West
Church chapel

Sun 15 Nov **10 am*** Joint worship with and at St Andrew's
(Rhona on leave)

Thu 19 Nov 2 pm Carers' cuppa
Drop-in and chat for informal/family carers

Sun 22 Nov 11 am morning worship
Hospitality time after the service
Pre-loved Christmas baubles for sale from today

Thu 26 Nov 7.30 pm Kirk Session

Sun 29 Nov 11 am Advent morning worship followed by:
 11.45 am Informal communion and
 12 noon-2 pm soup and sweet
 (tickets £10 from the centre)
 2 pm-4.30 pm 'Lights on at the West'
 Cafe open for teas/coffees and treats

Encounter If you have any material for Encounter
 email encounter@inveruriewestchurch.org by
 Wed 18 November

Children are welcome at all services. Most weeks during term time we offer Junior Church for children who wish to go downstairs partway 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



Advent/Christmas dates to add to your diary:

- Sun 6 Dec 11 am Advent morning worship
3 pm – 4.30 pm Play Church
Interactive storytelling and drama for the whole family
- Sat 12 Dec 11 am Carol singing by the Nativity in the town square
with the Inverurie Concert Band
- Sun 13 Dec 11am Advent morning worship
- Thur 17 Dec Lunchtime Working carols at the West with Inverurie
District Churches Together. Bring your own picnic!
- Sun 20 Dec 11am Advent morning worship including all age
Pop up nativity
- Thur 24 Dec 4pm Christingle service at St Andrew's
11.30 pm Joint Watchnight service at St Andrew's
- Friday 25 Dec 10 am Christmas morning worship 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
Safeguarding Co-ordinators	Valerie Napier and Gail Buchan	623279 622145
Transport Co-ordinator	Linda Mathers	07842 195032
Acorn Centre Management Team	Laura Gray lauragray25@btinternet.com	620658
Environmental Matters Team	Joy Doorghen doorghens@outlook.com	620823
Fabric Team	Bill Ducan bill.dorothy@btinternet.com	629051
Finance Team	Alan Sharp sharp3@btinternet.com	
Committed Giving Envelopes	Cindy Farquhar Cindyfarquhar25@yahoo.com	
Gift Aid	Mark Paterson giftaid@inveruriewestchurch.org	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	Joyce Petrie joycepetrie21@hotmail.com	620932

CONGREGATIONAL ROLL

Lines Received:

Mr Clement & Mrs Sheena Stewart (District 28) from Fetteresso Church, Stonehaven

Lines Given:

Mrs Elizabeth Simpson (District 23)

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

FLOWER CALENDAR – NOVEMBER

Convener – Margaret Sangster 672043

Nov 1st Robert and Hazel Newton

Nov 8th -

Nov 15th Alan and Alison Sharp

Nov 22nd Ian and Liz Nelson

Nov 29th Eleanor Mitchell



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

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