

*The Magazine of Inverurie West
Parish Church
October 2026*

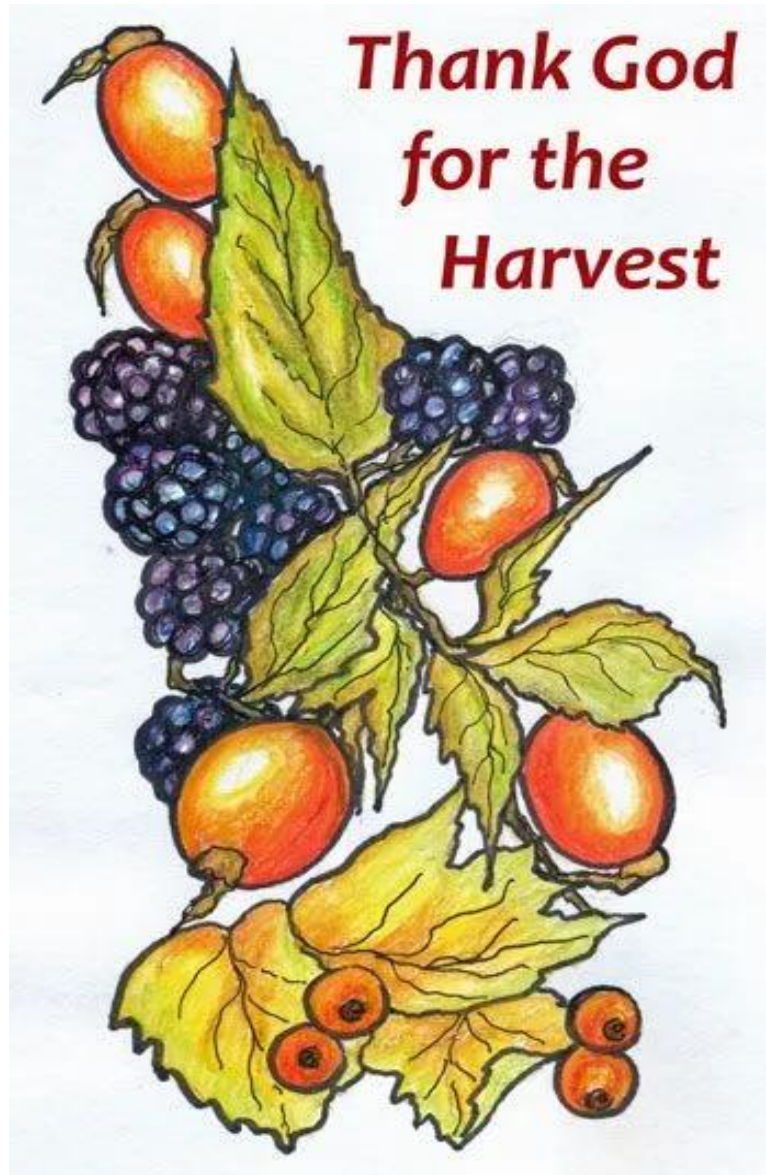
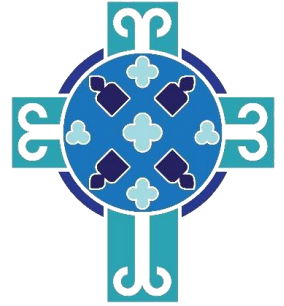


Image From - <https://www.stmarkschurch.com/year-a-harvest>

Scottish Charity SC016907

REFLECTION

The poet Kenneth Steven lives on the west coast Island of Seil. There he is well accustomed to rain, even throughout this dry summer! However, in this poem he creates a sensitive connection between Argyllshire rain and the faraway fields of Galilee.

After the Rain

*I woke at first light,
Listened to the quiet after long rainfall.*

*Like a strange resurrection
The clouds were torn, blown into pale shreds,
October above them blue and beautiful.
I went out, barefoot, found the meadows lying underwater,
The oaks still, above their own reflections.*

*I waded out through the white water,
Swayed back folds of still water,
As the swallows flickered in the morning air
And the Sabbath bells flowed over the valley.*

*I thought of Christ in the fields of Galilee,
His feet swathing through lilies and water,
Early in the birdsong of the morning.*

Kenneth Steven, from 'Iona' St Andrew Press. With kind permission.

From the West Manse

I recently discovered that I am deficient in Vitamin D. Many of us living in Scotland are, of course, but apparently my levels have dipped sufficiently that the GP has prescribed a three month mega dose of supplements.



(Please do NOT try this at home. Larger than usual amounts of any supplement must always be under medical supervision).

In any case, I am blaming myself (when I am not blaming the weather) for this state of affairs. I've been meaning for years to follow the recommendation of taking a regular supplement between September and April. But meaning to do something, and actually getting around to doing it are two very different things in my experience.

I also blame myself for lifestyle changes which probably haven't helped. Before I had a car I walked into town and back at least four or five times a week, no doubt absorbing a good bit of 'the sunlight vitamin' along the way. Once you have a car, it is easy to make different choices - especially if it is wet; or you are in a hurry; or you're visiting someone on the other side of town or picking someone up later; or you need to stop at the supermarket on the way home.

Yes, I know I could just 'go for a walk', but we run into that whole 'meaning to do something versus actually doing it' thing. Besides, when your legs have been your main source of transport for most of your life, walking becomes just what you do to get places, not something you proactively choose to do, even if you enjoy it.

Anyway, this all got me thinking as we give thanks for the harvest and start the preparations to '*coorie*' in for the darker months, about the gap there can be sometimes between the things we mean to do as followers of Jesus and the things we actually get around to doing.

Jesus is pretty clear about what we should be doing. We should be loving our neighbour and loving God and looking out for others, especially those who need it most. But almost as important as what we do is why we do it.

In the passage I am working on for this Sunday (at time of writing) Jesus says, *“When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbours; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed.”* (Luke 14: 13- 14a)

Or, to paraphrase Jesus, *“Don’t do the things I tell you to do in the hope of a reward, do them because it is the right thing to do.”*

God’s generosity is as plentiful and constant and life giving as the light from the sun. It’s worth remembering, even as our hemisphere begins its seasonal tilt a bit further away from the light, and our seasonal weather patterns add to the gloom, that the light source itself hasn’t changed. It’s pumping out as much Vitamin D generating energy as ever. What changes is our orientation, our weather conditions, our environment, and our decisions about whether to go out and walk.

To be a follower of Jesus means making the choice, every day and not just when it is convenient, to walk in his way. It means trying to absorb as much of his light as possible and reflecting that light through our daily actions and attitudes. It means doing what we know we are meant to do, even when the weather looks cloudy and the nights are drawing in.

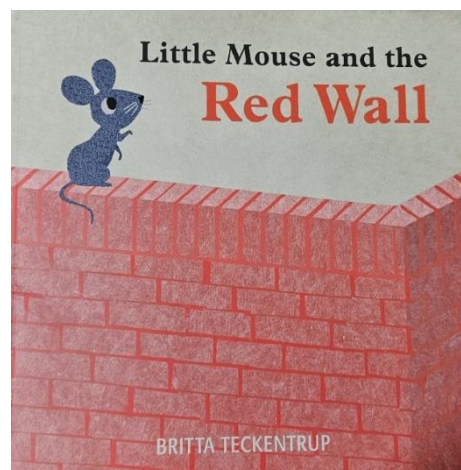
So let’s continue to encourage one another to keep walking as we absorb, reflect, and distribute light into our homes, our community, and our world. Every blessing.

Rhona



As usual Rhona opened our new session in a thoughtful, challenging way to consider this session's topic: "Beyond the Walls".

It's not every day that a group of mature people have a story read to them - but that turned out to be the highlight of the afternoon. "*Little Mouse and the Red Wall*" is a charming story but one with great depth. Its message is relevant to us all, young and old – even members of the Guild!

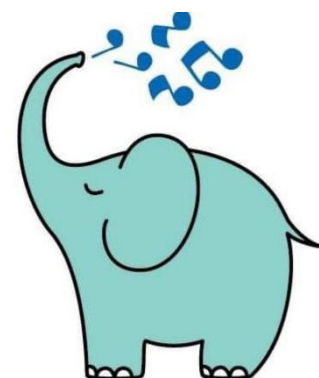


Our next meeting on **12 October** will be at the Heritage Centre in Loco Works Road – well beyond the walls of our usual meeting place. So mark your diary to remember the change of venue.

NB Our annual '**West Fest**' offering of jams, preserves, baking etc is scheduled for **Sunday 11 October** – donations of produce, baking etc. can be brought to church before worship and don't forget to bring your purse!

Ann-Marie Coleman

MAINLY MUSIC Mainly Music is about to start another year of fun music sessions together in a shared, loving family environment. We have a few spaces, so please get in touch if you are interested in joining us. We meet every Tuesday, in the church, from 10-11:30 am. Jane Fraser 07792662070



Elders' Tributes

Sadly we have had to say goodbye to two long term serving elders over the summer, George Taylor and Betty Reid.

George Taylor

George, who was 90, died peacefully at Drumdarroch Care Home after a full and community-focused life. Born in Inverurie, he grew up in Speyside before returning to Inverurie to begin work for the railway. On the closure of the LocoWorks he re-trained in banking and became a bank manager for the Church of Scotland.

George was a friendly, helpful and well-kent presence in the town. He was an able administrator, and generous with his time and skills - running the Railway Club at the Hopeville for years, and serving on the Garioch Christian Aid Group. Along with wife and fellow elder Maureen, he was a faithful supporter of the West Church. He took on many roles, including a spell as a Sunday School teacher and serving on the finance team for decades. He was elected to the Board in 1964 and ordained as an elder in 1973. He received two long service certificates as an elder - a 30 year certificate in 2003 and 44 years in 2017 - and was honoured for his service to church and community with an invitation to a Holyrood Garden Party in 2018.

George remained actively involved in the church as long as his health allowed. While life was necessarily quieter over the last year or two, he retained a delight in family and still had a twinkle in his eye.

Good humoured and gregarious, with a genuine interest in others, and always a story to tell, he will be fondly remembered by all who knew him. We thank God for a long life full of connection and community and willing service.

Betty Reid

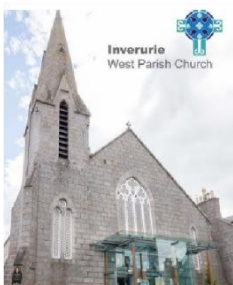
Betty died peacefully at Garioch Care Home after a long life filled with friendship, family and church. She was brought up in Forres and later lived in Peterhead, where she and her husband had a pub. Later she lived with daughter Pamela here in Inverurie.

Betty also worked for a while in Woolworths and finally as a cook at St Andrew's School. During her "semi-retirement", she accompanied the bus drivers, escorting the kids to St Andrew's.

Church was a big part of her life, having been ordained as an elder at Peterhead Old Church in 1999, and admitted to Inverurie West Parish Church on the 25th March 2007. She was an integral part of life here, and helped for a long time in UBUNTU. She would turn her hand to help with anything but had to retire from active eldership in 2018.

Although Parkinson's gradually began to limit her mobility and speech, it never quenched her spirit and she remained a cheery, warm and welcoming presence - always interested in what other people were up to. She had a great sense of fun, and was an avid Wimbledon fan and an expert bridge player, both in person and online.

All who knew her will miss her characteristic smile, warm heart and fun-loving spirit. We thank God for her life and service.



CARER'S CUPPA

The next session will be on **Thursday 22nd October** – more details in the online version of Encounter.



Any Spare Time?

Holidays are over! Kids are back at school! Life returns to “normal”! So, while you’re sitting enjoying a bit of time to yourselves, you could think about whether you have a wee bit spare? **The Acorn needs volunteers**, and I know a lot of you enjoy its fine pieces and excellent soup. Volunteering at the Acorn is not too onerous. There is a choice of shifts: 9.30am – 1pm or 12 noon – 3.30pm, and you get a plate of that delicious soup or a sandwich thrown in. Most volunteers only do one shift a week and it can be regular or *ad hoc*.

If you’re interested in finding out more, call Mike or Judith at the Acorn on 01467 670850 or Morag on 01467 629312. The Acorn is kept running with the help of volunteers, so why not come and join us?

CrossReach Christmas cards and calendars will be on sale at the end of September for 3 weeks so look out for the new catalogue at the Acorn reception. You can place an order and pay for it when your order arrives.



CrossReach is a social care providing arm of the Church of Scotland. It is a charity that supports older people, children and families, mental health, homelessness and people with a learning disability.

Thank you, Jane

CALLING ALL MAKERS AND BAKERS



The **Yarn Group** is organising a fundraising Christmas Fair in the Chapel from 10am to 1pm 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.

FUNDRAISERS

There have been 2 recent fundraisers – the Church Quiz and the Bennachie Bike ride, which raised **£475** and **£300** respectively.

Thanks to all who participated in these events and particular thanks to those who organised them for all their hard work.

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



ACORN CENTRE Well, it has been another busy summer at the Acorn Centre. Despite challenges with staff and volunteer availability, we have managed the business successfully and are well on target for our contribution this year. We have made effective use of the garden produce with tomatoes, lettuce, courgettes, marrows, strawberries, pears and of course, tatties gracing the plates. A huge thank you to all those who have donated apples, plums, rhubarb and other produce from their own gardens. Crumble and chutney production has been ramped up to try and keep pace!

Our autumn menu has just been launched and new for this season is a *Café Gourmand* – Your choice of coffee, with a taster hot pudding, taster cake and macaron. It's a lovely mix of sweet treats, flavours and textures. It has gone down very well with our testers. Our lemon brioche bread and butter pudding was very popular over the summer, so for autumn we've gone for a pear and ginger brioche version. A more subtle flavour and equally delicious!

As already alluded to, *our volunteering situation* is as challenging as ever. Whilst we have a steady throughput of young people doing their Duke of Edinburgh Awards or work experience, their availability is by its very nature short-lived, as they go on to jobs or further education. We are really looking for more people with time on their hands and with life experience. As our existing volunteers will attest, we run a flexible rota system and are happy to see volunteers whenever they are available. You are well fed, watered and trained whilst you are with us and a busy shift gives you a real sense of accomplishment. So, if you or anyone you know might be willing to give it a go then please get in touch.

Mike

(See also Morag's appeal for volunteers in the online version)



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



COULD YOU BE OUR NEW CHURCH TREASURER?

Our current Church Treasurer, Alison Blair, is relocating to Aberdeen in November and so we are looking for a replacement.

The role largely involves looking after the Church bank account, paying invoices for goods & services received by the Church, recording any income received by the Church and keeping the financial records of the Church up to date.

It would suit someone who is comfortable with numbers, has a basic knowledge of spreadsheets, keeps accurate records and lives locally in order to drop into the bank and Church when necessary. The role does not require any accountancy knowledge or technical IT expertise. The Treasurer is supported by the wider Church Finance Team and full training and a handover will be given for the role.

The Treasurer can be any member of the Congregation and will not have to present financial information to the Kirk Session or the Congregation. The role can be carried out from home at a time which suits you. The role of Treasurer is an important one but not an onerous one. It gives an opportunity of finding out how the Church finances work in conjunction with everything else we do as a Church.

If you are interested in the role (even if it's just for an initial chat) then please speak to me or e-mail me on sharp3@btinternet.com.

Alan Sharp
West Church Finance Convenor



F.R.E.E.N.S.
(formerly Friends of the Amal Project)
would like you to join them at
the *Inverurie Heritage Centre*
from 10 – 4pm
on Friday 9th October 2026
for a FREE training session entitled

‘Making our communities more welcoming – and hopeful’

Gillian Neish [NEISH Training](#) (an experienced trainer based in Glasgow) will help us begin to identify strategies to challenge racism and discrimination when we encounter it in our communities across the North East.

Through discussion we will be given the chance to reflect on our own experiences; share good practice and learn the ‘5 practical steps’ to creating an inclusive culture.

Tea and coffee will be provided on arrival
and a soup and sandwich lunch @ 1pm.

Learning small steady actions can help build understanding — and shape the kind of communities most of us want to live in.

We do hope you can join us!

RSVP to freens2025@gmail.com (a.s.a.p. please!)

UBUNTU

Across the Global South this year, many harvests were poor due to global shortages of fertiliser caused by the war in Iran. The war is having consequences far beyond the region as rising fuel and fertiliser prices have created a dire situation for many farmers in the Global South. The conflict has severely disrupted oil, gas and fertiliser shipments through the Strait of Hormuz. For farmers across the world, expensive fuel means more than higher bills. When fuel costs rise, almost every stage of food production and farming becomes more expensive. These costs are particularly difficult for smallholders in Global South countries, who often have limited access to credit and don't have the ability to increase their prices and pass on new costs further down the supply chain.

The war is also driving up fertiliser costs. The Gulf is a major source of urea, ammonia and sulphur, all of which are used in fertilisers, while natural gas, whose price has also been affected by the conflict, is a crucial input in nitrogen fertiliser production. Disruption to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has reduced global supplies just as farmers need fertiliser for planting.

This creates a vicious cycle. Farmers facing unaffordable fertiliser may apply less, risking lower yields. Those who continue buying face higher production costs and greater debt. Meanwhile, higher transport and input costs feed into their own food prices, placing additional pressure on households who have already spent a large share of their income on basic necessities. This is especially unfair because many farmers in Africa and Asia have no control or influence over either global energy supplies or the geopolitical decisions driving the conflict. Farmers are paying for a crisis they did not create. The result is not simply more expensive farming costs, but a threat to food security and efforts to reduce poverty.

Speaking about the crisis, **Md. Yakub Ali**, a farmer in Bangladesh said:

“The Iran American war has had a massive impact on agriculture because the lack of oil meant that people could not irrigate. Farmers are unable to plough the fields on time, unable to collect pesticides or fertiliser. For the farmers of Bangladesh, instead of being profitable, the situation will become such that we almost have to give up farming.”



Transform Trade (formerly Traidcraft Exchange) have long campaigned for people-centred trade by fighting exploitative supply chains, and tackling climate and trade justice. They have recently launched their **“if we wait, it’s too late”** campaign which aims to help farmers like Yakub negotiate fairer prices, build resilience and reduce reliance on costly imported inputs. Over many years, some of the profit from goods sold in Ubuntu has supported the valuable work of Transform Trade.

Save the date: Ubuntu Christmas preview evening – Monday, 9 November 2026



Play Church A new session of our monthly storytelling and drama sessions for families began on Sunday 6 September. The sessions are continuing at

Inverurie West Parish Church. Each session takes a biblical story and uses it as the basis for lots of creative fun and games. There’s no upper or lower limit on age, but children should have an accompanying adult with them. For more information or to register an interest/get on the mailing list, contact Rhona on r.cathcart@inveruriwestchurch.org It’s also okay just to drop in at any point and try it out. See p.18 for more detail on the sessions.

Church Calendar/Ways of connecting October 2026

Sunday services are at the usual time of 11 am. If you are worshipping from home, you can connect as usual via the West church website and YouTube channels.

- Sun 4 Oct 11am Morning worship.
Hospitality time after the service
- 3.00 - 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 11 Oct 11am Harvest service
Retiring offering in aid of Christian Aid and RSABI
Hospitality time after the service
Guild West Fest after the service
- Mon 12 Oct 2.00 pm Guild meeting. Heritage Centre. All welcome
- Sun 18 Oct 11am Morning worship.
Hospitality time after the service
- Tue 20 Oct 7.30 pm Kirk session
- Thur 22 Oct 2.00 pm Carer's cuppa
Drop-in and chat for informal/family carers
- Sunday 25 Oct REMINDER – Clocks go back 1 hour at 2.00 am
11am Communion service
3 pm family/informal communion

Encounter If you have any material for Encounter email encounter@inveruriewestchurch.org by Wed 21 October.

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

PLAY CHURCH TIMETABLE FOR 2026/27

2026 (first Sunday of the month)

6 Sep 2026	Lost and found	- the story of the lost sheep
4 Oct 2026	Seeds and weeds	- the story of the sower
1 Nov 2026	Neighbours	- the story of the Good Samaritan
6 Dec 2026	Building blocks	- the story of the wise and foolish builders

2027 (second Sunday of the month, excludes April)

10 Jan 2027	New Year	- stories of new and old things
14 Feb 2027	Fool's Gold	- stories of money
14 Mar 2027	Family matters	- story of the lost son
9 May 2027	Act like a boss	- stories of masters and servants
13 Jun 2027	Peekaboo	- stories of hidden treasure and light

WHO'S WHO AT THE WEST

Minister	Rev Rhona Cathcart r.cathcart@inveruriwestchurch.org	620285
Session Clerk	Morag Mitchell sessionclerk@inveruriwestchurch.org	629312
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
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		
Finance Team	Alan Sharp sharp3@btinternet.com	
Treasurer	Alison Blair treasurer@inveruriwestchurch.org	07905 580371
Committed Giving Envelopes	Cindy Farquhar Cindyfarquhar25@yahoo.com	
Gift Aid	Mark Paterson giftaid@inveruriwestchurch.org	01467 625675
Junior Church Team	Biff Barrow biff.barrow@tiscali.co.uk	623096
Pastoral Care Team	Rev Rhona Cathcart r.cathcart@inveruriwestchurch.org	620285
Social/Fundraising	Joyce Petrie joycepetrie21@hotmail.com	620932

CONGREGATIONAL ROLL

Deaths:

Mr George Taylor on 14th August 2026

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

FLOWER CALENDAR – OCTOBER

Convener – Linda Duncan 620800

Oct 4th Fred and Carol Barber

Oct 11th Gillian and Mark Paterson

Oct 18th Laura and Kenneth Gray

Oct 25th Fran Nice



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 629312).



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