

ENCOUNTER

The Magazine of Inverurie West
Parish Church

JULY/AUGUST 2025



Psalm 4 v 8
Scottish Charity SC016907

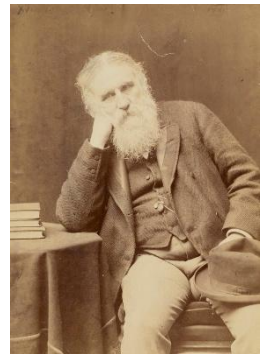
REFLECTION

In her letter Rhona writes of the importance of rest. The Huntly poet, George MacDonald, expresses the balm that comes from gentle rest in the evening. This seems particularly apt in summer Aberdeenshire with our long days and our gradual "drawing in" of the dark.

REST by George MacDonald (1824 - 1905)

When round the earth the Father's hands
Have gently drawn the dark;
Sent off the sun to fresher lands,
And curtained in the lark;

'Tis sweet, all tired with glowing day,
To fade with fading light,
And lie once more, the old weary way,
Upfolded in the night.



And a short and poignant poem by Thich Nhat Hanh

"Waking up this morning, I smile.
Twenty-four brand new hours are
before me. I vow to live fully in each
moment."



From the West Manse

I once overheard a visiting American pastor describe the Church of Scotland as a 'winter sport'.



He was referring to the fact that a lot of our regular church activities take a pause in the summer, which didn't seem to be his experience in the States. Then again, it seems to me that children are the only ones in the States who get much time off!

Personally, I'm a fan of having a block of time where a reasonable number, if not all, people have a chance to share a time of rest and alternative activities. Besides, there is good biblical precedent for building into our shared lives not just days of rest, but seasons of rest.

Not everyone gets a rest in the summer of course. Working parents can find they have more to juggle; emergency and health and care services have their usual shifts; tourist and hospitality businesses are often busier than ever. And for those informal carers looking after family members, pressure can increase when regular service providers take breaks.

Still, rest matters, and not just in order to make us better workers.

I think our modern world has an ambivalent relationship with the concept of rest. On the one hand, we theoretically have more leisure time than the generations which came before us. We take for granted ideas such as a five day/40-hour work week - something which might never have been achieved without the hard work, campaigning, and even protests of historic unions.

At the same time, we have entire industries devoted to what we do with our leisure time. We are constantly fed the message that what matters is that we are productive, at work or play, whether as individuals or as countries. Furthermore, the times of rest which our predecessors fought for are being filled with constant demands on our attention, not least by modern media. As a result, what is fostered in us is more restless than restful.

Certainly I can be guilty of feeling I've wasted my day off - as if the whole point of a day off is to fit in the things you don't have time for the rest of the week; or as if rest itself is yet another task to achieve.

In contrast, what does the Bible tell us about rest? In Genesis 2 we hear that God set apart or 'made holy' the day when he rested from all the work of creating he had done. It appears that God spent that day simply being. Importantly, this day of simply being wasn't an optional extra, it was included in the cycle of creation.

The Ten Commandments embedded a day of rest into Jewish practice, although arguably the complex rules which evolved to avoid anything that looked like work on the Sabbath were unhelpful. Indeed Jesus made it clear that we cannot as a society rest from the need to heal or care for others.

It seems to me that what the Bible honours is purpose rather than productivity. Our purpose is to care for creation and for one another and to glorify God in so doing. This includes purposeful rest - taking time to simply be in whichever way restores us and restores our society.

And so, whatever your summer brings, I hope it brings you some time to simply be, and to know that your value doesn't lie in what you can produce or achieve. We'll continue to worship of course, alongside our friends at St Andrew's, in our usual summer pattern, knowing the value of setting time aside to focus on simply being with God and with one another. Our church is not, after all, a summer sport. But it is one which values and encourages purposeful rest for volunteers, staff, leadership team, and all who put so much work into making this a place where the restful and restoring love of God can be felt in all seasons.

Every blessing

Rhona



Billy McLelland and Tom McMorland being presented with certificates marking 50 years' service as elders.



Acorn Centre Update Volunteering this Summer

Ah, the endless days of summer. Nothing to do but empty the cupboards and raid the fridge ... If you have a teenager for whom this may strike a chord then get them to join us for some volunteering shifts and we promise to feed them up before sending them back! And if they won't then perhaps you could come and enjoy some respite by volunteering instead!

(See poster for details).

New for Summer

Our new menu launches in July. As well as new soups and cakes to try, we have a *three course lunch and beverage for **only £17.50***, new recipes and a fabulous 'sweet taster platter', with a selection of cake and dessert bites for those with a sweet tooth.

Catering Operations Update

The new staffing structure seems to be working well, and our cost control measures are producing good results and making our target contribution more achievable, but it only works if we have sales. So as a challenge to **YOU** dear reader, we ask that you bring someone new to the Acorn Centre for lunch, for a cuppa, for a cheeky breakfast. Every sale helps and amazingly there are still people who have lived in Inverurie for years that don't realise that we have a fabulous café! *We look forward to welcoming you.*

The Acorn Centre Team



You've done gaming, you're done with TikTok, you've emptied the fridge and there are no biscuits left in the tin. So, what *are* you going to do this summer?

- A chance to get vital references for your CV, future job and university applications.
- A great way to meet and interact with people from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Great work experience.
- Learn new skills.
- Do something valuable for the local community.
- Get fed—not fed up! Free lunch for volunteers!
- Flexible volunteering, so you choose the shifts you want to do.

If you're over 14 and want to get started please contact:

Mike Pickford 01467 670850 e.centremanager@theacorncentre.org
or message us via Facebook



The Acorn Centre,
West High St, Inverurie, AB51 3SA



THE GUILD

LIVING STONES is our theme for 2025/26.

The Guild meets on the second Monday of the month at 2 pm in the Acorn Centre and while all our speakers are not yet confirmed for the new session we can say that our meetings will be varied in content. Among other topics we hope to hear from one of our project partners, see what travel 'down under' offers, and enjoy poems and stories from Larry Young and Margaret Hearne.

Dates are as follows and a complete schedule will be available after the summer once everything is confirmed.

Mondays: 8 September, 13 October, 10 November, 8 December, 12 January, 9 February, 9 March, 13 April.

NB: Opening meeting 8 September at 2 pm: Rhona Cathcart – "Living Stones".

Come along, drop in or become a member – you'd be very welcome.

Ann-Marie Coleman

NEW IN UBUNTU

We have a new range of greeting cards from **Cards from Africa**, which supports young, orphaned adults in Rwanda. Many of the young card-makers missed years of school because of the civil war during their childhood. The organisation develops young adults' confidence and life skills, while also providing fairly paid work in good conditions. For many this experience is a vital stepping stone out of poverty and into a new career.



Cards from Africa employ over 90 people full time to make their cards. The organisation is World Fair Trade Organisation certified which means every card-maker is over 18, paid fairly and works in good conditions.

The cards are carefully made by hand, signed on the back by the card-maker, and incorporate handmade paper which is made by recycling office waste. This makes the cards environmentally friendly and ensures that they have a large range of colours and textures of paper to work with.



FLORENCE'S STORY



When Florence (left) was eight years old, her family was forced to flee Rwanda because of the genocide. Miraculously, her brothers, sisters, and mother all escaped to the Congo, but her father, who helped the family get away, was killed before he reached the border. After years of hard work to support the family, Florence's mother died when she contracted malaria and could not pay for medicine.

Eventually Florence and her siblings were able to return to Rwanda, but finding work was difficult because she had not finished primary school. Working for ***Cards from Africa*** for eight years turned Florence's life around. Not only did it enable her to pay for food, shelter, and medicine, but she was able to save money and started putting her son through school before starting her own business after working at ***Cards From Africa***.



MAINLY MUSIC

Jane Fraser writes: “It has been another very busy year at Mainly Music. We have had lots of fun singing, learning about life around us, making cards for others and playing with old and new friends! Here are a few photos from a typical mainly music morning.”





... AND SOME OTHER JOYFUL PICTURES

Thanks to Alan Harrow for these pictures taken on Sunday 22nd June of the Dedication of the Elsie McRae bench.





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

Carers' Cuppa

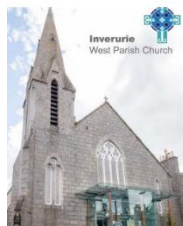
Thursday 21st August 2025

Thursday 18th September 2025

Thursday 23rd October 2025

Drop in any time between 2 - 4 pm

Tel 07905 580371 for more information



SOCIAL/FUNDRAISING TEAM UPDATES

Bennachie Bike Ride – 30 August



The Bennachie Bike Ride is on Saturday 30 August and, as last year, will leave and return to Fetternear Hall. The full route is roughly 23 miles but there are short cuts to reduce the distance and there is no entry fee. We just ask for a donation towards church funds please. Please highlight this to your cycling contacts and encourage lots of folk to join us.

Help is needed with registration, marshalling and hospitality on the day. We need approximately 12 helpers - please contact Joyce Petrie if you are free! We'd also appreciate help with the organisation of the bike ride. If this is something you'd like to be involved with please let Joyce know.

Save the date – 14 September

A **soup and sweet** fundraiser is planned for after church on Sunday 14 September. To help with numbers, a sign-up sheet with more details will be available in the Acorn Centre nearer the time.

Steeplejacks at the West Church



Steeples have been included in church buildings since Emperor Constantine proclaimed Christianity to be the official religion of the Roman Empire. They are both symbolic and practical.

Question – Why are they called steeplejacks?

Answer – Linguistically the word 'jack' just meant a man – hence lumberjack and the expression 'jack of all trades'.

GARDEN PARTY You are all invited to the Organists' Garden Party which is going to be on Sunday 27th July, again at Isla's house - full details in the poster below. Let's hope for a nice sunny (or at least dry) day 🌞. *Isla, Sharon, Alison & Marie.* Could you let us know if you're planning to come, for rough numbers.



★ 2025 fundraising challenge ★



Last month Duncan MacLellan wrote about his *fundraising challenge raising money for RSABI.*



Isla now updates this as follows: *As you read this, Duncan will have started his run from the far north - I'm doing most of the support driving in the camper van, so I'm hoping for dry weather so that I'm not stuck in the van all day & dealing with lots of wet running gear! It's going to be 12 days of doing more than a marathon distance each day! (Approx 370-380 miles total). Thanks to those who have donated to this worthy cause, one so special to our dear friend Richard Huxtable. 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 or scan the QR code below.

Thank you
Isla



Church Calendar/Ways of connecting Summer 2025

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



**Please note that our shared summer services start at 10 am!
During July they will be in the West Church building and in August they will be in St Andrew's.**

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Sunday 6 July | 10 am joint worship at the West Hospitality time after the service |
| Sunday 13 July | 10 am joint worship at the West Hospitality time after the service |
| Sunday 20 July | 10 am joint worship at the West Hospitality time after the service |
| Sunday 27 July | 10 am joint worship at the West Hospitality time after the service |
| Sunday 27 July | 2-4 pm Garden Party at Hillhead of Harlaw |

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Sunday 3 August | 10am joint worship at St Andrew's Hospitality time after the service |
| Sunday 10 August | 10 am joint communion worship at St Andrew's. Hospitality time after the service |

Sunday 17 August 10 am joint worship at St Andrew's
Hospitality time after the service

Sunday 24 August 10 am joint worship at St Andrew's
Hospitality time after the service

Saturday 30 August Bennachie Bike Ride

Sunday 31st August 10 am joint worship at St Andrew's
Hospitality time after the service

Encounter If you have any material for Encounter
email encounter@inveruriwestchurch.org
19th August.

There is no junior church running during July and August but children are welcome at all services. Please feel free to use the craft/activity box in the corner of the sanctuary and/or stretch your legs downstairs as needed.

Rhona will be on **annual leave** from **Monday 28 July to Monday 18 August**. Rev Carl Irvine will provide pastoral cover during these weeks.

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

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 | 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@inveruriewestchurch.org | 620677 |
| Committed Giving Envelopes | Cindy Farquhar Cindyfarquhar25@yahoo.com | |
| Gift Aid | Mark Paterson mgpaterson@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

Interment of Ashes:

On 28th June 2025 – interment of David Crawford's ashes, with his mother, Mrs Margaret Crawford who died last year (formerly District 15).

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

FLOWER CALENDAR – JULY/AUGUST

July Convener: Margaret Sangster

| | |
|---------|------------------|
| July 6 | Linda Walker |
| July 13 | Sharon Huxtable |
| July 20 | Eleanor Mitchell |
| July 27 | Isabel and Eddie |

August Convener: Joan Feltham

| | |
|-----------|------------------|
| August 3 | Lynwen Greavey |
| August 10 | Susan Rucklidge |
| August 17 | Eleanor Mitchell |
| August 24 | Doreen Tough |
| August 31 | --- |



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).

