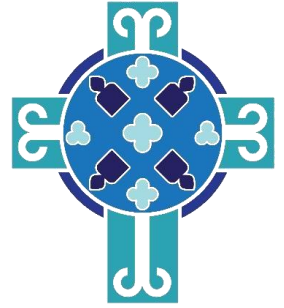




*The Magazine of Inverurie West
Parish Church*



JULY/AUGUST 2026



Scottish Charity SC016907

REFLECTION

Living in the North-East we all appreciate the long summer nights, as does Rhona in her letter. Yeats described these evenings beautifully as ‘midnight’s all a glimmer’ ... And evening full of the linnet’s wings.

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made:
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee;
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight’s all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet’s wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart’s core.

W.B. Yeats, “The Lake Isle of Innisfree” from *The Wanderings of Oisín and Other Poems*. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Co., 1889.) Public domain.

From the West Manse



It's summer.

Honestly it is, even if last week I had my hot water bottle out, and the week before that we had three inches of hailstones lying in the street. Mind you, it is entirely possible you are reading this in blazing sunshine. These days I hesitate to forecast the next hour never mind the next week!

So if summer doesn't mean dependable sunshine and warmth - at least not in Scotland - then what does it mean? Well, the big thing that doesn't change, no matter what the weather does, is *light*. More specifically it is daylight. During summer our hemisphere of the earth is tilted towards the sun and this gives us longer days and shorter nights. The opposite is true in winter.

Now, we might not always be able to see or feel the full increase in light due to the aforementioned weather, but it is there. So, yes, I did want a bedtime hot water bottle at least twice last week. But as I stood filling the bottle, I didn't need to switch the kitchen light on due to there still being light in the sky at 11.30 pm.

Summer is the season of long light. And the further north you are, the longer that light lasts. I recently discovered there is an extra element to this, namely that summer actually lasts longer in the northern hemisphere than in the southern hemisphere. This is because the earth's orbit around the sun is elliptical (an oval, or extended circle) meaning the distance between the Earth and the Sun changes throughout the year. When the earth is closer to the sun, it travels faster. As a result autumn and winter are shorter in the Northern Hemisphere and spring and summer are longer.

In other words, summer doesn't just have longer days, there are actually more of them. Conversely, while winter might *feel* endless, it is actually the shortest season for us in the north.

Of course, while these astronomical facts tell us what summer is, they perhaps don't quite answer my question, "*what does summer mean?*"

The late Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks made the point that science is about explanation, while religion is about meaning. As he put it, "*Science tells us what is. Religion tells us what ought to be*". Furthermore he said that "*Science practises detachment. Religion is the art of attachment, self to self, soul to soul.*"

So maybe what summer '*means*' is a season in which to celebrate the gift of light and how it illuminates the world around us. It's not a season to detach from the world or even '*coorie in*' to our homes and churches (lovely as that can be) but instead to engage and explore and even to simply notice the things that the darker seasons can sometimes hide.

In the West during the four Sundays in July we'll be experimenting a little with our joint services as we explore what it means to be church. There's more information about this in the magazine. Then in August we'll be worshipping at St Andrew's. But wherever and however we worship this summer - including on our various holidays - I'd encourage you to take the time to enjoy, appreciate and be grateful for the light. And not just the sunshine - if and when it chooses to appear - but for the true light of the world who illuminates all that we do, who infuses our relationships with warmth and genuine attachment, who gives us meaning and purpose.

Have a blessed summer

Rhona

West Church Annual Stated Meeting

We had our ASM on Sunday 14th of June after our regular service. It was a chance for people to hear what all took place in the Kirk during 2025. It wasn't live streamed this year, but we are investigating doing that in the future.

Alan Sharp, our finance guru, outlined the financial position, and like many churches, our balances could be improved. Morag Mitchell spoke about all the activities the church had engaged in over the year, and when you put it all together, you realise how active the members and volunteers are. However, again like other churches, we are an aging population, so if you know of anyone who would like to give a couple of hours they would be welcomed with open arms. Rhona spoke about the happy team atmosphere within the church, a positive welcome she has enjoyed for 9 years now.

We hope things continue in the same vein into the future. We need you to continue to be actively involved, and if you'd like to know more, please get in touch. All the best for 2026!

NOTE – THE GUILD will resume after the summer break on **Monday 7 September at 2 pm** when Rhona will lead us into the new theme "*Beyond The Walls*". The syllabus for the new session will be available then.

Ann-Marie Coleman

Organ Fund Garden Party - REMINDER

Well, it's that time again & hopefully sunny and warmer days are ahead. The organists are having another garden party in July (details in poster) so please put it in your diaries. Let either myself or any of the others know if you plan to come - we need to know numbers for catering & seating. Hope to see you there. Isla



SOIAL/FUNDRAISING TEAM REMINDERS

WEST CHURCH TREASURE HUNT

It's a couple of years since we've had a walking treasure hunt as part of our fundraising efforts, but **Larry and Liz Young** have put one together which will be available during June and July.

For **£5** you can pick up a clue sheet, and it's a chance to enjoy a stroll round parts of Inverurie, to get the brain cells working as you solve the clues, and to perhaps win a prize. Fun activity for kids too. **Clue sheets will be available from the church from Sunday 31st May** and from The Acorn Centre and the church thereafter.



BENNACHIE BIKE RIDE– 29th August



The Bennachie Bike Ride is on **Saturday 29 August** and, as last year, will leave from 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.

Joyce Petrie (620932)

Small Grants Scheme

We are happy to let you know which Groups received an award from the Small Grants Scheme this year. They are:



Foos Yer Doos Sing Song Club
Garioch Heritage Society
Garioch Community Kitchen
Inverurie District Girl Guiding
Inverurie District Men's Shed
Kids Out Aberdeen (Inverurie
Schools)

We had fewer applicants this year, so if you know of a local group who may apply next year, please keep them informed when the Small Grants announcement is made. We give grants to mainly local groups who focus their application on furthering their work with groups. There are no age restrictions but we tend not to make awards for physical improvements, such as painting premises, joinery work etc...

The Small Grants scheme provides a little help to local groups and we wish you all well in the future.

Morag Mitchell

UBUNTU UPDATE

Ubuntu is well stocked with a range of jute shopping bags made by **Earthbags** in Kolkata, India. Founded in 1995 the company has taken advantage of the fact that Kolkata is the global epicentre of the jute industry to produce these high-quality, fairly traded, biodegradable bags. Earthbags are committed to helping the environment by encouraging more and more people to use earth-friendly bags instead of single-use plastic. The bags are also hand-printed and recyclable. The company provides vital employment to women and self-help groups in the region. They have been exporting their bags for 25 years and they are now available in 72 countries. Since 2008, the Earthbags project has partnered with UK-based ethical retailer **Shared Earth** whose mission is to tackle the climate crisis and create a fairer, more sustainable world. Earthbags has recently become the first factory in eastern India to receive the ‘Gold Standard’ from the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) which is a significant step in the company’s stride towards championing environmental sustainability. Greenhouse gases are kept to a minimum through energy saving machines, and millions of gallons of water are saved each year through the rainwater harvesting system. The importance of saving water is paramount in a hot country like India and less water-demanding plants and trees have also been planted to save this precious resource. In response to achieving the ‘Gold Standard’, the company said “*just producing environmentally friendly bags is not enough for us. The manufacturing of our products has to be done in the greenest way possible.*”



Church Calendar/Ways of connecting Summer 2026

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

Please note that our shared services are in the West Church building in July and start at 11 am. During August, services will be in St Andrew's and start at 10 am.

- Sun 5 July 11 am joint worship at the West
'Outside-in church' - focus on our spaces and creative prayer in and for them
Hospitality time after the service
- Sun 12 July 11 am joint worship at the West
'Sing along church' - songs, readings, and prayer.
Hospitality time after the service
- Sun 19 July 11 am joint worship at the West.
'Café' church' - conversational café style worship
Hospitality time during/after the service
- Sun 26 July 11 am joint worship at the West
'Hands on church' - puzzles, crafts and worship
Hospitality time after the service
- Sun 26 July 2-4 pm Garden party at Hillhead of Harlaw

Sun 2 – Sun 30 August 10am joint worship at St Andrew's
Hospitality time after the service

Sat 29 August Bennachie Bike Ride

Encounter If you have any material for Encounter
email encounter@inveruriwestchurch.org by 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. Note that the first Play Church after the summer will be on 6th September.

Rhona will be on annual leave from July 27 to August 17. During this time pastoral cover will be provided by Rev Carl Irvine.

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@inveruriewestchurch.org

JULY SERVICES WITH A DIFFERENCE!

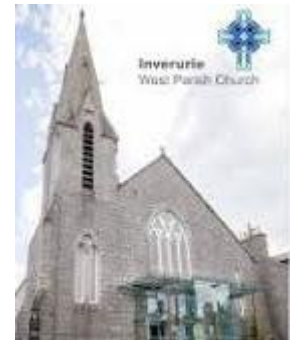
This summer we've decided to try something a bit different with our joint services in July at the West. This is in keeping with a commitment in our **five-year action plan** to explore some alternative ways of worshipping.

This isn't, however, just a tick box exercise. Instead it's a chance to see if doing things differently opens up new ways of connecting to God as a community. For those of you who don't like change - don't panic. We're not planning any big changes to how we worship through the year, but the summer seemed a good time to experiment a little - especially as attendance varies from week to week.

Having said that, most of us like a little predictability, so here's the gist of the planned July services. They may feel a bit more informal, interactive, or participative in style than usual.

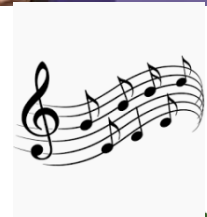
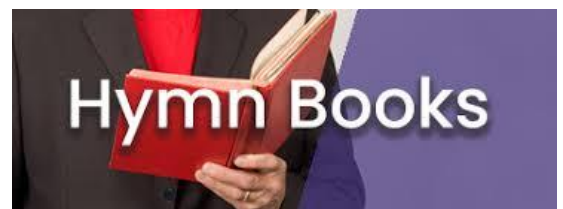
July 5 **Outside-in church**

This service will be focused on the spaces we inhabit - our buildings, our garden, our town - and different ways we can creatively pray in and for them. Feel free to bring in some nature-based items or creations to add to the decor!



July 12 **Sing along church**

This service will be focused around favourite songs and pieces of art interspersed with prayer and reflection. Please let Alison Sharp know your favourites!



July 19 **Café church**

This service will be held downstairs in the hospitality area, cafe church style. There will be tea/coffee and fine pieces and lots of chat and discussion.



July 26 **Hands-on church**

This service will very much be all age/family friendly and centred around crafts, quizzes and puzzles, with prayer and worship woven in.



STOP PRESS ... FLASH NEWS



A SPECIAL ARRIVAL FOR THE ACORN CENTRE !!!

We are pleased to announce that on the morning of 25th June the new



dishwasher was delivered. This was a tremendous fundraising achievement, and thanks and congratulations are due to all who have contributed to it. Thanks to all for generous donations, sales of knitted Christmas Puddings and time and effort, we reached our target and our new dishwasher has now been installed.

Choosing the same make as our old long serving machine, the new model has more energy saving features which will help us

to reduce both cost per wash as well as environmental impact.

Thank you all again!!!

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		
Finance Team	Alan Sharp sharp3@btinternet.com	
Treasurer	Alison Blair treasurer@inveruriewestchurch.org	07905 580371
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

Change of Address:

Mrs Hazel Smart from District 22 to Aberdeen (Postal District)

Lines Received:

Mr David and Mrs Margaret Miller (Postal District)

Deaths:

Mrs Wilma Cooper (District 4) on 18th May 2026

Mr J Simpson (District 23) on 2nd June 2026

Mrs Elizabeth (Betty) Reid (District 38) on 9th June 2026

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

FLOWER CALENDAR – JULY/AUGUST

Conveners: Linda Duncan/Joan Feltham (620800) / (620872)

July 5 Joyce Petrie

July 12 Margaret Sangster

July 19 -

July 26 Joan Feltham

August 16th Susan Rucklidge



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).



Again, thanks to Dr John Hearne who continues to assist to ensure print copies of Encounter are published and ready for distribution. Again also, a reminder that if you are happy to access Encounter online and do not require a print copy please let the Session Clerk know as it will help to contain costs.

We strive in Encounter to respect intellectual property rights. If you read or see anything which you feel infringes your copyright, please contact encounter@inveruriewestchurch.org, and the material will be removed immediately from the electronic version of the magazine.

A reminder to all gardeners – if you have surplus produce or plants as we go through the summer months could you please consider donating these to the Acorn Centre which is always pleased to accept donations of fresh fruit and vegetables.

SAVE THE DATE – MAKERS’ SALE - SAT 14TH NOV 2026

The Yarn handcraft group are organising a fundraising Makers’ Sale. If you might be interested in being involved more details to come in September's edition. We are planning to hold it in the Chapel and it will be in the morning to coincide with Farmers’ Market - but these details are still tentative. Look out for more details in the September Encounter.



Linda McCreath