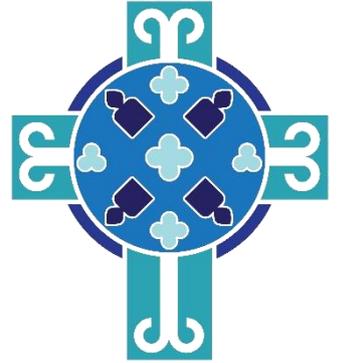


The Magazine of Inverurie West
Parish Church

JUNE 2023



ENCOUNTER



PENTECOST

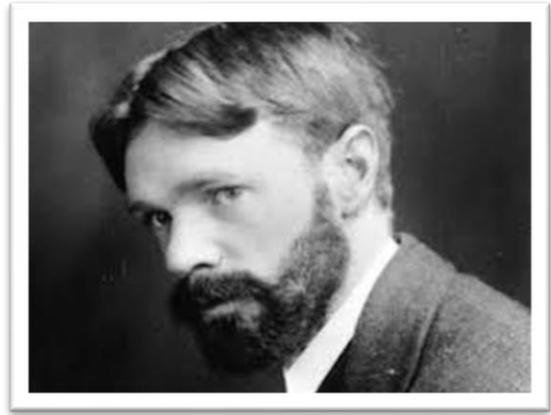
www.inveruriwestchurch.org

Scottish Charity SC0169

REFLECTION

Pax

by D. H. Lawrence



All that matters is to be at one with the living God
to be a creature in the house of the God of Life.

Like a cat asleep on a chair
at peace, in peace
and at one with the master of the house, with the mistress,
at home, at home in the house of the living,
sleeping on the hearth, and yawning before the fire.

Sleeping on the hearth of the living world
yawning at home before the fire of life
feeling the presence of the living God
like a great reassurance
a deep calm in the heart
a presence
as of the master sitting at the board
in his own and greater being,
in the house of life.



**Tavish – ‘ex officio’ member of the
Encounter Team.**

From the West Manse



One of my earliest ambitions in life (after my ‘ballerina’ phase) was to be able to speak lots of languages. I’ve always been fascinated by words and was a voracious reader, and a writer of stories, from the moment I could put letters together. In my teens I had great ‘original language’ reading plans. I was going to be able to read Victor Hugo in French, Chekhov in Russian and so forth.

In a limited way I have achieved some of these ambitions. I have read ‘Notre Dame de Paris’ in French along with a few other French classics. I’ve also read some of the works of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and other authors in Spanish. I’ve read the book of Ruth, the beginning of Genesis, and a few psalms in Hebrew and at one point managed a chunk of the gospels in Greek, dictionary at my elbow. But I am pretty certain I will never now read any of the great Russian authors in their original tongue, or explore Rumi’s poetry in Persian.

Part of my desire to read things in their original language stems from a feeling that this is the most authentic way to read something, without the influence of a translator adding their own slant to things. Some of the character of a writer and the mood of their story comes from the metaphors they choose (which often don’t translate well) and even the sounds the language makes. This is also why I would rather watch a foreign language film with subtitles than a dubbed one.

Having said that, there are undoubtedly times when a translator is necessary and at Pentecost (which this year we celebrate the day this magazine comes out) the gathered believers had the most effective translator of all, namely the Holy Spirit.

At Pentecost we celebrate the gift of God's spirit, poured out among all believers. Acts 2 describes a sound from heaven "*like the rush of a violent wind*". One of the effects of the Holy Spirit's arrival was that all of those listening were suddenly able to hear the disciples speaking in their own languages. Presumably it was a bit like having a Google Translate chip temporarily embedded in their brains. It is no wonder the listeners were astonished.

Roll on 2000 years and we are in an era when a language translator chip embedded in our brain isn't all that unimaginable. We already have them embedded in our phones. Artificial intelligence can do extraordinary things. And yet what it can't do, and probably will never manage to do, is help us to truly understand one another. With maturity I have come to understand that part of what drives my interest in languages, indeed part of my fundamental character, is a desire for people to really understand each other. In almost every walk of life I have been involved in, including ministry, I have found myself translating or interpreting in some way. This might be a text or script, but it can also involve helping people to communicate with one another clearly, negotiating difficult relationships or situations; or giving people tools to help them figure out how to '*interpret*' for themselves what God is doing in their lives.

The trick in any such work is to represent people (and God) accurately and not let your own translator biases get in the way. I definitely don't always get it right, and occasionally I am sure I have got things actively wrong. However I do believe that the Holy Spirit is also a Holy Editor and can and will layer a more accurate translation over my mistakes whenever necessary, enabling listeners to hear what God needs them to hear.

These are complicated times and the need to truly listen to one another, even those who seem to be '*speaking a different language*' really matters. We need to make the effort to understand each others' fears, concerns, hopes and dreams if we are to be an

effective 21st century church within a society which mostly doesn't share our core beliefs. Who knows? The 21st century church might end up looking a lot more like the 1st century church than anything we have been used to. Our upcoming Annual Stated meeting, after the service on June 11th, will be an opportunity to hear both about the highlights and challenges we face. Do join us, if you are able.

I'd also like to invite you to invoke the Spirit's translation ability more consciously on a day-to-day basis, as I have learned to do, when you are struggling to understand someone else's point of view. *The Great Translator* can help us hear the unspoken or poorly expressed needs and values of others, even when they are disguised by surface confidence or aggression. The Spirit can also help us express ourselves better. Hopefully this means that even when talking about challenging subjects (like church finances, buildings, mental health, or difficult personal relationships) something of God's Pentecostal love and power will remain in the translation.

Every blessing

Rhona



REMINDER - The North East Guilds' Gathering is on Thursday 15th June at **Inverurie Church Centre 10.30 am for 11am**. We have a variety of workshops and will be joined by Rev Neil Meyer as our guest speaker.

Karen Gillon, our General Secretary, and Helen Eckford, our National Convener, will both attend. Please pass your name to Ann-Marie or me if you wish to attend. Bring a packed lunch: teas and coffee will be provided.

Charge for the day will be £6.

Margaret Harrow

SOCIAL/FUNDRAISING TEAM

Quiz Night – 12 May

A huge thank you to all who supported our quiz night - by being part of a team, buying raffle tickets or providing raffle prizes. We had 14 teams of four and raised an amazing total of **£355**. Thanks to Larry and Liz Young for all their preparation and also for providing the winner's prize.



Bennachie Bike Ride

The Bennachie Bike Ride on **Saturday 12th August** will leave and return to Fetternear Hall. Please spread the word – especially to any cycling contacts. We will also need help on the day, as marshals, with registration or making tea!! Let me know if you are free to help please.

Save the date

We are planning an Italian evening – with entertainment. Keep **Friday 6th October** free!!

Joyce Petrie





Queen for a Day

We were delighted to welcome volunteers, regulars and their guests along to help celebrate the coronation. Judith helped with the trolley dash around M&S, and we got some strange looks as we were clearing the shelves!

Margaret Ross was crowned Queen for the Day in honour of her successful funding application to Viking Cruises, and we all enjoyed watching the spectacle on the big screen. They were plenty of folks who remembered watching in



1953, and one lady who was enjoying her third coronation, having been alive for King George VI in 1937. Then everyone tucked into an extensive buffet and even got to fill up a goodie bag to take home too! It was a lovely day sharing a moment in history together.

Small Grants Scheme Reminder - Please note the closing date for completed applications is noon of **Wednesday 31st May!**

Excess Produce - Want to help save the planet and contribute to the community? Who doesn't?! We are always willing to take any excess fruit and vegetables if you are experiencing a bumper crop. As with the community garden produce, we like to turn "*dirt into gold*" to help fund our community outreach projects as well as keeping the church going. Many thanks in advance!

(More pictures available in online Encounter).

Mike





UBUNTU NEWS

Some good news for the coffee farmers. Fairtrade is raising its minimum price for coffee in an effort to strengthen the protection of coffee farmers around the world. The new Fairtrade prices will come into effect on 1st August 2023 and this will provide farmers with further support as they face inflation in their home countries and additional costs that are being incurred adapting to climate change.

New coffee to Ubuntu - *Mayan Gold*. This organic smooth yet dark coffee with caramel sweetness is grown at high altitudes above Mexico's colourful and vibrant southern states of Chiapas and Oaxaca.

You may be wondering where the new Fair Trade cards are that I spoke about last month – the supplier moved warehouse recently and the envelopes got lost! Do keep checking in the shop as I hope they will arrive soon.

We Are Fair Trade is a new fair trade retailer, with most of the team having worked at Traidcraft. They are selling the last of Traidcraft's stock so if you are missing your favourite tea, jam etc. do check out their website - wearefairtrade.com. They are not supplying shops so I will be unable to order from them but perhaps this may change in the future.

What's new in Ubuntu – Re-cycled Denim and Sari Bunting (perfect for summer celebrations), New Design Bamboo Socks, Re-cycled Brass Tree of Life Windchimes, Divine Chunky Chocolate Gift Sets.

Anthea



The Pentecostal Dove

The dove is frequently associated with Pentecost as, symbolically in the Bible and in religious art, it is associated with the Holy Spirit



– most notably when Jesus was baptised by John.

“... Heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” — Luke 3:21-22

The Bible contains a range of references to birds. The dove again is specifically referred to in the story of Noah in Genesis.

The Psalms record that King David in his suffering in old age cried out - *‘Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away and be at rest. Psalm 55:6.*

While birds are often seen as small and insignificant, God’s care for them is used to illustrate his love for all humanity as in *Matthew 10 v.29-31*

“Are not five sparrows sold for two small coins? Yet not one of them has escaped the notice of God. Even the hairs of your head have all been counted. Do not be afraid. You are worth more than many sparrows.”



We also see references to powerful birds like eagles which are used to illustrate strength –

“They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength, they will soar on eagles’ wings; They will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint.” Isaiah 40, 31.



In Jeremiah, owls are used as symbols of desolation, while ravens are frequently associated with God’s provision for humanity – for example in the story of Elijah being fed by ravens 1 Kings 17.



In religious art peacocks are symbols of the eternal life we receive through Christ. They were significant symbols used in the early years of Christianity.

Likewise, (without a biblical basis) the finch is associated with resurrection and the Passion. A legend holds that a finch snatched a thorn from Jesus’ crown while he was carrying the cross, causing his feathers to be stained by His blood.



Detail from Raphael’s ‘Madonna del Cardellino’ (‘Madonna of the Goldfinch’).

Report from the Joint Halls Task Group

Background

As you may recall, under the presbytery plan agreed last year, either St Andrew's New Hall or the West Church hall must be released with the agreement of both congregations. Alternatively, both existing halls could be disposed of and a new hall planned. In Church of Scotland terms, to 'release' a building means to have it no longer our responsibility. This could mean selling it, transferring ownership to a community trust, or demolishing it.

A decision about which hall or halls is to go needs to be made by December 31st 2025. The actual 'releasing' process would take longer.

What's happened so far

For the better part of the last year, a team made up of both West Church and St Andrew's representatives have been meeting to work out how to make this very difficult decision. The group's remit was to gather information and present it to the sessions for their consideration of the way forward.

The group has met eight times, working together positively and co-operatively, and has presented their findings to a joint session meeting in March. The process and findings are briefly summarised here for the wider congregations, via both of our magazines.

The process

Our first step was to research and assess the background, condition, running costs and current usage of both halls.

We then engaged in a process known as option appraisal. This is a tool used to help look at the issue mathematically rather than emotionally. Importantly, it is also transparent, meaning that the reasoning behind any suggestions or decision is clear. By the end of the process, the most favoured options will have the highest numerical values.

The method begins with brainstorming all possible options - we had 31! These were winnowed down to ten. Separately a list of eight criteria were identified and given weightings. The criteria against which we assessed the options were as follows:

- Meeting the church mission statement (including needs of community and needs of churches).
- Affordability - (e.g., initial capital, running costs, potential income).
- Level of practical church support/engagement.
- Flexibility/Diversity.
- Access.
- Deliverability.
- Consideration of existing groups' viability.
- Environmental sustainability.

With the help of this process, the group identified five top scoring options. These were:

- Release both halls, identify a site for a purpose built facility.
- Release the West hall and re-develop St Andrew's hall.
- Release both halls, acquire an existing alternative building.
- Release St Andrew's hall and re-develop the West hall.
- Release both halls and manage with existing main buildings.

The team took these findings to the joint session meeting, and asked our sessions to consider them, identify any gaps in our process, or additional pros and cons we hadn't considered, and to let us know which three of these should be researched further (for example to look more closely at costings).

The joint session meeting concluded that the top three options were: to release both halls and identify a site for a purpose built facility; release both halls and acquire an existing alternative building or release both halls and manage with existing main buildings.

Next steps

The joint halls team members all agreed to remain on the team for the next stage of the process. Accordingly, they have begun looking at various aspects of the preferred options. To date we have investigated the processes involved in community asset transfers and had a look at a couple of alternative buildings.

At the same time, both congregations are facing financial challenges and are looking at deficit budgets. The St Andrew's session recently concluded that it might be best to concentrate on releasing both halls first (since that is the common factor in all three preferred options) and then review whether or not to look at alternative premises. The West session did not discuss buildings at their last meeting but, assuming they are similarly minded, the joint team recommends that we focus for the moment on recruiting those with experience/expertise to help us assess the various forms of release and approximate costs; and assessing how we might meet our community's needs using our main

buildings. We will continue to report back to session at regular intervals.

We are also consulting with presbytery about the proper procedure if/when a hall is released.

We have been determined throughout to do our best to keep our processes transparent. Accordingly it was agreed that we needed to keep the congregations up to date, and that we would do so via our magazines and at our annual stated meetings.

Summary

This has been a challenging process. Both halls are well used in different ways and have emotional and historical value for the congregations. At the same time, both buildings also have long term maintenance issues and would require a good deal of investment to become sustainable in the long term. Nevertheless, neither will be easy to 'release' - practically or emotionally. We have all struggled with the impact this will have on our congregations and community. However, the option to do nothing is not available, With prayer, and with the ongoing goodwill that the team/sessions have shown working together on this, we hope to find a way forward that will support our future mission together in Inverurie.



Christian Aid Week in Inverurie: Saturday 13th – Friday 19th May

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to the fundraising efforts for Christian Aid this year – whether by donating or buying books, jams, or jigsaws, or by giving their time to set up, staff, or pack up the book sale, or by making a monetary donation using the e-envelope or a paper envelope.



The book sale achieved its highest ever total of **£1307.68**, with the Saturday morning Jams & Jigsaws stall realising an additional **£128.30**. The total raised via the e-envelope currently stands at **£280** (with Gift Aid, **£337.50**), and paper envelopes dropped off at the Acorn Centre so far total **£296**.

Because of this year's success, it is highly likely that we will repeat the pattern of the book sale running from Saturday-Friday again next year.

Particular thanks are due, as always, to Margaret Hearne for master-minding the book sale, drawing up the rota, and ensuring that everything that is left at the end is distributed to various charities who can benefit further from unsold donations.

Quote from Margaret - *Many thanks are due to donors, volunteers and purchasers - enjoy your books; see you next year!!*



Church Calendar/Ways of Connecting

June 2023



If you are worshipping from home, you can connect as usual via the West church website and YouTube channels or access the service by phone on 01467 343790 (calls are charged at local rates).

- Sun 4 June** 11 am morning worship
Hospitality time after the service
- Sun 11 June** 11 am morning worship followed by
Annual Stated Meeting
- Sun 18 June** 11 am morning worship including dedication.
Hospitality time after the service
- Tue 20 June** 7.30 pm Kirk session meeting
- Wed 21 June** If you have any material for Encounter please
email encounter@inveruriewestchurch.org
- Sun 25 June** 11 am Morning worship
Informal communion after the service

Children are welcome at all services. A weekly craft activity can be found in our '*Play as you worship*' box. Where possible, the junior church team will be available so that any children who wish to do so can go downstairs to do their craft halfway through the service. Some weeks, if only one junior church team member is available, we will need a parent/carer to accompany any children who prefer to head downstairs.

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

Summer services

As has been our pattern for the last number of years, we will be sharing services with St Andrew's over July and August. **July services will be hosted at the West Church and August services at St Andrew's.**

Summer services begin at 10 am.

CONGREGATIONAL ROLL

Wedding:

Felicia Oyewusi & Yusuf Murtala 28 April

Baptism:

Luke David Smith 14 April

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

WHO'S WHO AT THE WEST

Minister	Rev Rhona Cathcart r.cathcart@inveruriewestchurch.org	620285
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Church and Acorn Centre Administration	Judith Will admin@inveruriewestchurch.org	670850
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Rollkeeper	Ann-Marie Coleman rollkeeper@inveruriewestchurch.org	620378
Life & Work	Irene Jamieson irenejamieson@live.co.uk	
Safeguarding Co-ordinators	Valerie Napier Gail Buchan	623279 622145
Transport Co-ordinator	Linda Mathers	622586
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Fabric Team	Jim Lyle jimlyle@hotmail.co.uk	624159
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Treasurer	Alison Blair treasurer@inveruriewestchurch.org	620677
Committed Giving Envelopes	Cindy Farquhar Cindyfarquhar25@yahoo.com	
Gift Aid	Mandy Aitken mandyaitken@sky.com	07532 487788
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Pastoral Care Team	Rev Rhona Cathcart r.cathcart@inveruriewestchurch.org	620285
Social/Fundraising Team	Joyce Petrie joycepetrie21@hotmail.com	620932

FLOWER CALENDAR JUNE



CONVENER – LINDA DUNCAN		620800
4 th June	Fran Nice	07975 815581
11 th June	Susan Routledge	07759 954009
18 th June	Irene Jamieson/Linda Mathers	622586
26 th June	Eileen and Robbie Eunson	-

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 625675).

