

# ***NESS BANK CHURCH***

***Congregational Newsletter***

***August/September 2024 - No 1023***



***Congregation Formed 1787***

***Present Church Opened 1901***

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Dear Friends,

In our first few Sundays together at Ness Bank, we read the short Book of Ruth from the history pages of the Old Testament. It is the story of an outsider finding a home. Emotionally challenging, Ruth had to make a number of brave decisions – to come to Israel, to go out to the fields, to meet with Boaz. But practically rewarding – she gains a home and a family. Some of that reflects the experience Elspeth and I have had over the last few weeks, moving to a new city, home and church. It has not all been easy, but we are starting to feel at home.



But the story of Ruth is not just about the outsider coming in. It also describes the wanderer returning. Naomi left Israel many years earlier with her husband and two sons, but now all of them have died. Her bright future has disappeared, and she feels the need to return to the land of her birth and the God of her youth. Sometimes hard things make us turn away from God – “How can he allow this to happen?” But sometimes they make us turn back – “I can’t do without him”.

Perhaps some of us need to make that return journey? We could be newsletter readers who have stopped attending the services. Or viewers online now out of the habit. Or people who attend out of a sense of duty, but no longer in expectation. Or people who spectate rather than participate.

On her return, Naomi makes two great discoveries. First, there is no criticism. No questions are asked, no blessings are withheld. Old friends are pleased to see her back and are willing to help. Second, she can bring her new friend with her. She doesn’t need to leave Ruth behind in order to return, and she shares in all the blessings Ruth receives.

In short, she re-discovers that God is good!

I hope and pray at the start of my Ness Bank ministry that we can make that re-discovery together. There will be lessons to learn, habits to form, questions to ask, perhaps changes to contemplate, and hopefully a steady stream of guests to welcome

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and new friends to make. Emotionally challenging, but practically rewarding – as Peter reflected towards the end of his lifetime of discipleship:

***Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!***

***Because of his great mercy he has given us new life by raising Jesus from death.***

***This fills us with a living hope, and so we look forward to possessing the rich***

***blessings that God keeps for his people...***

***for you, who through faith are kept safe by God's power.***

(1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1.3-5)

***Stuart***

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## ***The Blessing of Old and New***

Thank you, dear God,  
for the blessing of things that stay the same:  
for people we have known for ever  
and the familiar paths where we walk.

Thank you, dear God,  
for the blessing of things that change:  
for newcomers with their new customs,  
new ways of doing things, new paths to discover.

Thank you, dear God,  
for the blessing of the old  
and the blessing of the new.

Amen

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## ***So who is the new minister's wife?***

Allow me a few words to introduce myself to you all – it is going to take some time to do this in person, so for the moment, words will have to do!

I am Elspeth, born in Edinburgh, where I lived until leaving home to study in Aberdeen. I met Stuart in Glasgow, and we married in 1993. In the days when I was paid to work, I was a Land Use Planner with Strathclyde Regional Council, but after the birth of our son I left and have never returned to full-time employment or professional activity.



I have loved being part of our church families, sharing the joys and sorrows, supporting in practical ways, and encouraging my brothers and sisters in Christ in their own growing faith. I avoid leading things wherever possible, and am always happy to be part of the background team! I am looking forward to sharing life with you, to studying the Bible together, praying for our community and our town to be transformed by Jesus' love and power.

I am enormously grateful to the team of folk who oversaw the work on the manse during the vacancy, you did a marvellous job! We are glad that we have space to entertain our family when they come to visit, and a garden which will give me hours and hours of occupation. It is very much your house, and I hope that you will feel you can always come to say hello – you will find a welcome and perhaps even a fresh scone...

***Elspeth***

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Kind hearts are the gardens,  
Kind thoughts are the roots,  
Kind words are the flowers,  
Kind deeds are the fruits,  
Take care of your garden and keep out the weeds,  
Fill it with sunshine, kind words, and kind deeds.

***Henry Wadsworth Longfellow***

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## ***Congregational Register***

### **Deaths**

28 April:	Margaret Morton Funeral held on 10 May
6 June:	Christina (Cathie) Loughlin Funeral held on 18 June
18 June:	Alan Nairn Funeral held on 9 July
2 July:	Arthur Bennett Funeral held on 15 July
18 July:	Patricia (Pat) McWilliam Funeral held on 26 July

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### ***Flower Group***

The Flower Group wish to thank everyone who have donated flowers so that our front entrance and sanctuary are always nicely decorated on Sunday mornings and when a special event or service takes place. Following services the flowers are then distributed to members and friends who may be unwell or may have suffered a bereavement, therefore the flower ministry is such an important part of pastoral care.

The current calendar is on the noticeboard and there are spaces available, so if you wish to donate then please add your name to the date of your choice.

If anyone is interested in joining our group you will be most welcome and further details can be obtained from me.

***Finella Thomson***  
***01463 230155***

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## *Induction of Rev Stuart Smith*

On Tuesday 4 June 2024 the congregation of Ness Bank together with members of Clèir Eilean Ì witnessed the induction of Rev Stuart Smith to Ness Bank Church. The service was led by Rev Doug McRoberts, Moderator of Presbytery, who began by welcoming the congregation to "*this happy occasion, the induction of a minister*", and went on to share his hopes for Ness Bank. "*Start to think of this building as a factory turning out the things people need*", he said, telling the congregation that as apostles, they were charged with changing people's lives.

Professor Bill McBryde led the congregation in prayer and Sheila Proudfoot, Presbytery Elder, read the passage in Matthew 16 about Peter's declaration about Jesus.

The formal induction of the minister was carried out by the Moderator, then members of Presbytery and the congregation were invited to offer the hand of fellowship to the minister.





An induction social event then took place in the hall which was packed with members of the congregation and presbytery.







Rev Ian Manson welcomed everyone to this time of fellowship. The Guild served wonderful home baking and tea and coffee which was enjoyed by everyone. The Choir sang *'With a Voice of Singing'* and the Music Group sang *'He will hold me fast'*.



The session clerk, Malcolm MacBean, presented Stuart with a welcome gift from the congregation which was a silver quaich,

Lilian Gilbert presented Elspeth and Catriona with some gifts.







Esther MacRae thanked Rev Ian Manson for being our Interim Moderator and presented him with a gift together with flowers for his wife.

On behalf of presbytery Rev Scott McRoberts welcomed Stuart and his family to Ness Bank.



Stuart's daughter, Catriona, then introduced her father to the congregation. Warning that while his jokes might have them rolling their eyes, she added: *"In the words of one of his favourite singers, the late Tina Turner, he is simply the best and I know in time you will all love him as much as I do and through God he will bless you all."*

A very enjoyable social evening ended with David Ewen giving the vote of thanks to everyone involved, Ian Manson giving the Benediction and the choir singing Hymn 36 - *'God is our refuge'* - to the tune Ness Bank.

***Joyce Muir***

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## ***Blythswood Shoebox Appeal***

Thank you to the team that helped wrap shoeboxes ready for the congregation to start filling. The appeal has been well supported by Ness Bank in previous years and I hope you will once again be filling boxes. If you would like to donate, but not fill a box with all that's requested (or like buying multiples of only a few items), that is fine. Just pop your donation into a carrier bag and hand that into the vestibule instead. If you're a knitter, they happily accept knitted hats/scarves/gloves, so get your needles out if you would like to donate that way.

You can start shopping now but the essentials they ask to go into every box are, toothbrush and toothpaste, hat and scarf and gloves, soap, underwear/socks/tights, sweets and either a small toy for children or a wee gift for adults. After that they look for a variety of things which are detailed on the leaflet. If you want to look online, click on **Shoe Box Appeal Checklist**. If you want ideas of other fillers to include have a look at **Filler Ideas for Blythswood Care Shoe Box Appeal**. If the links aren't working, just google Blythswood Shoebox Appeal (Blythswood may update links between this article being prepared and the official launch.)

Items in the box should be new, but 'value/supermarket brands' are fine, although they also ask that we choose items that will last rather than those with a short shelf life that can't be recycled.

Leaflets and pre-wrapped shoeboxes will be available in the vestibule from Sunday 15 September. Donations should be returned to the Church by **SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER**.

***Janet Russell***

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## ***Volunteers Required for Newsletter Folding***

Folding and stapling of the newsletter is carried out by a small team of volunteers and it would be good to have a few more to help out. At each session we need five people. If we had a few more volunteers then we might only need to attend twice a year. The folding takes place on a Wednesday afternoon in Room 1 starting at 1.30 for about two hours. It is a very straightforward process and training will be provided. If you are interested in helping please contact me by phoning 07739 457713 or email **conandjoyce@btopenworld.com**

***Joyce Muir***

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# Checklist

Please ✓ items included and firmly secure this list on your shoebox lid.

**Include the essential items highlighted in the red box.**

**IMPORTANT: PLEASE ONLY INCLUDE NEW ITEMS.**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Toothbrush and Toothpaste</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Hat, scarf, gloves</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Soap</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Underwear/ Socks/Tights</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Small toy* / gift</b> *small children's toy such as cars, dolls, balls etc. Please only include new shop-bought toys.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Sweets</b> No chocolate or any other food items. No loose sweets, lollies or undated bags of sweets. Best before date no earlier than 31st March next year.
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**Do not include** used or damaged items; war related items such as toy guns or knives or military figures; hand-made or knitted stuffed toys; chocolate or any food other than sweets. Chocolate Eclairs and Chocolate Limes are not allowed; books that are mainly words should not be included.

## Toiletries (NO TALCUM POWDER)

- ☐ Shampoo or Shower gel
- ☐ Face cloth/ Moist wipes
- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Moisturising Cream
- ☐ Comb/Brush
- ☐ Sanitary Products
- ☐ Shaving foam/Razors

## Miscellaneous

- ☐ New Make-up
- ☐ Sewing Equipment
- ☐ Household Candles
- ☐ Screwdrivers/Pliers
- ☐ Kitchen Utensils

## Stationery

- ☐ Pens/Pencils/Sharpener
- ☐ Notepads/Colouring books
- ☐ Rulers/Rubbers

## Clothes and other Items

(T-shirts/Pyjamas/Jumpers/ Shirts) etc

- ☐ .....
- ☐ .....
- ☐ .....
- ☐ .....

**Please tick the box next to who the box is for and the age of the female or male you have filled this box for:**


☐

**Female**


☐

**Male**

- ☐ Preschool age.....
- ☐ Primary age.....
- ☐ Teenager age.....
- ☐ Adult age.....
- ☐ Elderly age.....



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## ***Familiar Faces in Ness Bank - This Month's Spotlight is on:***

**Katia McFarlane**

How did a Brazilian end up living in Inverness and being part of the Ness Bank congregation? This is how it came to pass.

I was born in Curitiba, the capital of the state of Paraná in the south of Brazil. This part of Brazil became home to immigrants from several countries in Europe after WW2. My grandfather arrived from Germany in 1929. My family are mainly from German descent and I was brought up listening to my grandparents and my father speaking German at home. From a young age I acquired a taste for drawing and painting from my grandfather who was a painter.



My father is an army officer, now retired, and my mother was a PE teacher. I have an elder sister who currently lives in Ely, and a younger brother and sister who live in Curitiba. Due to my father being in the army, we moved around a lot when I was young, spending time in different places including the US and Manaus, in the centre of the Amazon region.

I first learnt English when we lived in Vicksburg, Mississippi, for two years in the 70's. My dad made sure we kept studying English when we returned to Brazil so we wouldn't forget it. Later I chose English language and literature as my main subjects at university. I graduated in 1984 and worked as an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teacher for 25 years. The first language school I worked for was a British-English Cultural franchise and I learnt a lot about people and life in the UK by teaching pupils of all ages from 7-year-olds to adults. My first trip to Scotland was in 1993, when I visited Glasgow and Edinburgh. Little did I know Scotland would be home years later.

I met people from several countries and made many friends either through work or the local amateur English-speaking theatre of Curitiba, which I was involved in for

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many years. I was very lucky to be asked to help backstage when the Royal Shakespeare Company performed 'Henry VI' in 1995 in the local theatre.

My life changed completely after I met my husband-to-be, Stewart McFarlane, in 2001. At the time he was a British company's South American manager based in its manufacturing facility in Curitiba. We were married in Inverness in 2004. We did a lot of travelling to the UK, partly due to Stewart's job, and decided we needed a base so we bought a house in Scorguie, Inverness. We would spend Christmas there so the house was rented most of the time. Our main residence was still in Brazil.

However, when Stewart retired in 2009 we returned to the UK and settled in Inverness. We kept our apartment in Curitiba, which we return to twice a year for six to eight weeks at a time. Thus, this keeps me in touch with my family and friends. As a permanent resident in the UK, I had to sit a driving test and start the process of acquiring a British passport and citizenship. That involved several interviews and sitting a 'Life in the UK' test.

I was honoured to become a British citizen and thus have dual nationality. The ceremony took place in Inverness Town House in April 2011. Inverness received me with open arms and I gradually made some amazing friends. I joined dancing classes at Eden Court and also became a member of Nairn Camera Club. In the summer we enjoy walking and cycling. I have other hobbies which are sewing, painting, learning new handicrafts and learning languages.

Stewart and I were introduced to Ness Bank Church in 2010 by neighbours in Scorguie and joined the congregation. We moved to Croy in 2013 but kept coming to Ness Bank where we had many friends and felt at home with the congregation. We enjoyed being part of the Welcome Teams, which I cannot do now as I am part of the Audio-visual Team. This involves preparing PowerPoint presentations and livestreaming the Sunday services. It's amazing how technology brings people and the church together by enabling people to join the services remotely. It also enables us to follow the church services when we are in Brazil.

***Katia***

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Ness Bank Church is online at [www.nessbankchurch.org.uk](http://www.nessbankchurch.org.uk)

Follow Ness Bank Church on Facebook and Twitter

Ness Bank Church of Scotland, Inverness, No: SC010870, is a Registered Charity

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## ***Finance Team Leader***

A Team Leader role exists for assisting with money management within the church.

The functions of this role are as follows:

1. To guide the Finance Team which meets 4 times per year
2. Ensure that the team fulfils its roles which are:
  - a) Review the financial information provided by the accountants
  - b) Prepare annual budgets for each category of expenditure
  - c) Ensure that the team performs duty of care and acts in good faith with church funds and legal and financial obligations of the church are being met
  - d) Ensure the team approves any exceptional costs that may arise outwith the budget
  - e) Ensure gift aid is controlled
  - f) Be updated by the finance administrator on any issues within their role
  - g) Liaise with ancillary organisations and provide the accountants with their financial expenditure and income
3. Report on the finances at Team Leaders meetings and to the Kirk Session as required

Anyone interested should inform the Session Clerk or a member of the Finance Team.

***Finance Team***

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## ***Where?***

A rather long-winded preacher was dealing with the Old Testament prophets, one by one. "And now," he propounded, "we reach Isaiah. Where shall I put Isaiah?" At that, a little man in the front row stood up. "He can have my seat - I'm going home!"

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## *Girls' Brigade*

The Parents' Evenings held in April and May by both Riverside and 4B Companies went well, with good turnouts at both. It was nice to tell parents and friends about our busy programmes and present the girls with their well-deserved awards.

4B Company held a picnic at Inshes Park on 28 May and although the weather wasn't the best, it was an enjoyable night. The photo shows the girls and leaders at the spider's web climbing frame.



The leaders joined others in Highland Division at a planning meeting in June to discuss the 2024/2025 session and there will also be a Refresher Training Day at the end of August to prepare us for the year ahead. A new company is opening in Dornoch which is great news! The Divisional Service will be held at Ness Bank Church in March 2025 so the congregation will have an opportunity to hear more about the work of Girls' Brigade in Highland Division.

Both companies will resume when the schools start back, and the actual dates will be given in the church intimations nearer the time. There are spaces for new members in both companies and new leaders are always welcome. Anyone interested in finding out more about either company should do so using the following email addresses:

**Riverside – [riversidegbinv@gmail.com](mailto:riversidegbinv@gmail.com)**

(company meets on a Monday evening at ICF, Trinity Life)

**4B – [maria.girlsbrigade@gmail.com](mailto:maria.girlsbrigade@gmail.com)**

(company meets on a Tuesday evening at Hilton Primary School)

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We are looking forward to another exciting year at Girls' Brigade and we will keep you posted on our activities.

*Hazel MacDonald*

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## ***Scottish Bible Society - Bibles for Bairns***

**Do you know a baby who was born in Scotland in 2024?**

**You can register them with the Scottish Bible Society to receive a Share a Story Bible and other fun resources**

**(<https://www.scottishbiblesociety.org/>)**

(Please ask the parent or carer of the child for permission if you are not registering your own child)

**We know that reading to babies and young children helps them learn and grow:**

It helps them to feel safe and loved. It builds self-esteem, vocabulary, imagination and even improves sleeping patterns. What if the stories read to babies and young children at these crucial moments were stories from the Bible: stories that told children they were safe and loved by a God who made them, and who will always be with them as they learn and grow.

### **How it works:**

Once a child has been signed up, they'll receive the **Share a Story Bible** on their **1st** birthday.

On their **2nd, 3rd and 4th** birthdays they'll receive **birthday cards and fun resources** to encourage the whole family to keep engaging with the Bible.

On their **5th** birthday, they'll be given a **children's Bible** to start to read themselves and to explore with the adults in the family.

**©Scottish Bible Society**

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## ***The Good Shepherd***

Psalm 23 is well loved, and its paraphrased words are often sung in the popular hymn '*The Lord's My Shepherd*'. At the time of Jesus, these labourers were everywhere, as sheep were a common commodity. So when Jesus described a shepherd, He was referring to someone the people all knew about.

Our Lord's description of a shepherd helped His hearers to understand Jesus, as they were aware that sheep were valuable. A good shepherd made sure sheep were protected and fed. If they got into danger, they had to be rescued. A hireling would not be so considerate. He would abandon the sheep when faced with dangerous animals or aggressive thieves! Only a good shepherd would risk his life in caring for the flock.

In His parable (John 10:1-18) Jesus goes a step further talking about a good shepherd as He is speaking about Himself. Sheep know their owner and follow him, and Jesus wants us to know and follow Him. Sheep can get lost and end up in trouble. Jesus came to our rescue and is indeed our Saviour. A shepherd knows each sheep by name and Jesus knows **us** individually too. We can trust Him with our lives.

Jesus said that just as a shepherd is willing to die caring for his sheep, He too would die – looking ahead to His crucifixion. This would secure our salvation and provide a home with Him. Jesus also said that there are other sheep of interest to Him! He speaks of being the shepherd of all nations, not just the Jews. His love extends to everyone. These words of Jesus are so important. Give thanks that Jesus died for us and now awaits for us to be with Him. We belong to Him, we are His people, we are His flock.

**©Parish Pump**

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## ***Aled Jones - Eden Court***

Aled Jones is coming to Eden Court on Sunday 20 April 2025 at 7.30pm (Easter Sunday). The Eden Court blurb says "after 40 years in the business, he's looking back on a remarkable career with a one-man show that will feature never-before-heard music, tales from the decades and, for the first time, his story told in his own words." Ness Bank reserved a row in the stalls (which can be accessed with no steps). If anyone would like to join a Ness Bank trip to see this, please give your details and correct payment to Janet Russell. It's £34 (£32 Friends of Eden Court).

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## ***Ness Bank Audio-Visual System***

By the time you read this article you may already have seen the changes made to our audio-visual system within the sanctuary.

During the week beginning 5<sup>th</sup> August work is expected to start on updating the equipment we use to show you the words of the hymns, videos and illustrations to accompany Stuart's sermons.

Ever since lockdown happened, way back in March 2020, churches throughout the UK had to adapt to a new way of keeping in touch with their congregations. Through the joint efforts of our previous minister, Fiona, and her husband, Andrew, we had livestreaming of services from the manse and then from the church. This meant putting together an array of equipment to enable this to take place.

It has meant that we have a mix of different monitors, laptops, adaptors and cabling to contend with. We did have a digital projector, but despite trying all the various settings we could never show on the screen the clear, colourful slides as they appeared on the laptops and monitors in the gallery.

You may recall us experimenting with switching off and on the two spotlights that shine down on the chancel area, to try and give the congregation a clearer picture on the screen. We also took out the background photos and tried various fonts and colours to make the words of the hymns easier to read.

Eventually we were able to make use of another projector, originally belonging to the Church of Scotland HQ in Edinburgh, but it too makes showing of some illustrations/photos difficult, even with the screen put in place by our wonderful Property Team it is still problematic. If you sit close enough in the front pews of the sanctuary and look up at the small monitor to our organist's left you get an idea of what should be on the screen. If the motorised screen is just kept as a standby piece of equipment it means that the choir will be able to have their previous seating arrangements.

The new equipment will include a large monitor screen above the door used by our choir when they enter the sanctuary, with another above the door next to the pulpit. They will be slightly angled inwards. A third monitor will be hung where the 'girl with the kite' wall hanging is situated on the back wall of the main section of the seating in

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the sanctuary. This third monitor will enable the Minister and choir to see what is being shown to the congregation and to those watching the service online.

Up until now the livestreaming has involved controlling the camera (situated above the wall hanging) from controls on a monitor, the livestreaming software from a MacBook and sound from a 'little black box' with the PowerPoint presentation from a Windows laptop! It can be operated by one person – with difficulty – as sometimes two or three things have to be changed almost simultaneously.

The new system should make things easier for everyone, and will do away with the need to move the current projector every time there is a funeral, wedding, visiting choir concerts etc. It will also mean that our Minister can advance the slides illustrating points in his sermon.

Please bear with us as we get to grips with the new equipment, and let us know what you think of this new system.

There have been a number of occasions recently when none of the team were available to use the system during a funeral, and we are indebted to David Bain who was able to look after the sound in relation to the Minister's headset microphone and the lectern.

We would encourage anyone, of any age, who would like to assist us in this work to contact myself, Katia McFarlane or Gordon Leitch, as we really need to increase the number of people who can use this equipment.

***Geoff Thomson***

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## ***Messy Church***

I'm happy to say that a date has been chosen for the next Messy Church - it is pencilled in for Sunday 1 September from 12.30pm - 1.30pm with the theme of 'New Beginnings'.

Although we have a regular team, this is an invitation for you to take part in this venture. If you feel that you could contribute in an active or quiet way, please feel free to contact me for further information.

***Margaret Livingstone***

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### **Firmly Planted: Agroforestry for Sustainability**

The Stamp Appeal is an easy way for congregations to get involved in the world mission work of the church.

***"Let us not become weary in doing good,  
for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."  
(Galatians 6:9)***

Firmly Planted is a community-based agroforestry initiative with the ambition of making a sustainable impact across Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. It is spearheaded by our partners in the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), and built around the church's community structures. The initiative will resource individual groups to respond to the various challenges affecting Malawi today.

Agroforestry presents an opportunity to address challenges of food insecurity, deforestation, climate change and youth unemployment. Tree nurseries create employment opportunities, fruit trees improve nutrition and wider tree planting helps mitigate the impact of the climate crisis, in turn improving agricultural productivity.

Firmly Planted will provide community-based training tailored to the community's needs, ensuring woodlots are well maintained to have the greatest chance to thrive. The programme, through effective distribution, looks to attain large-scale tree planting of locally relevant woodlots - these could be linked to schools, churches, clinics and community groups. Having already established a pilot tree nursery, CCAP is looking to replicate this across the Synods by implementing Central Tree Nursery Hubs allowing each nursery to grow tree seedlings based on the needs of their communities.

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Our mission partner, Gary Brough, is one of the project coordinators and is looking for opportunities to grow the project. You can keep up to date with Gary's work on the Church of Scotland Mission Partner page of the website. The Guild is also involved in supporting this programme. This year stamp appeal proceeds will go towards establishing the tree nurseries.

Please continue to collect your used stamps and put them in the green container in the vestibule. They will be trimmed and sent on, and once the project closes the amount raised will be put into the Order of Service and the Newsletter. Thank you very much for supporting such a valuable project.

***World Mission Team***

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Remember to pop this date in your diary:

**SATURDAY 23 NOVEMBER**

**10.00am - 12noon**

This is the day of the Christmas Fayre. A chance to enjoy a blether over a cuppa and mince pie, and get some Christmas shopping done. Please hold on to any donations you may have until November.

***Janet Russell***

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***Christian Aid Week 2024***

The money raised from the pew envelopes, the envelopes delivered and returned to the church, the Ness Bank Giving page and Gift Aid, has amounted to **£2,504.71**. This total is similar to the amount Ness Bank has collected for the previous two years.

Special thanks to all volunteers who helped make this total possible, as without everyone's help such a total would not be reached.

***Raymond Mathieson***

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## ***Marty MacBean***

### ***Recipient of Youthlink Scotland Lifetime Achievement Award***

Marty was nominated by Highland Girls' Brigade for the Youthlink Scotland Lifetime Achievement Award for her service to Girls' Brigade over 70 years and she received this very well deserved award in Glasgow recently.



Marty joined 4<sup>th</sup> Inverness Company of Girls' Guildry when she was 7 and said she was very fortunate to have received so much kindness, guidance and training from Guildry officers in Ness Bank. These leaders encouraged Marty to become a leader and in 1964 she became an officer.

At that time a second company was formed: the 4<sup>th</sup> Inverness became 4A and the second company was 4B, and Marty was appointed Captain. It started in Green Drive Hall and then moved to Cauldeen School, and to this day she continues to be an officer in 4B Company.

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Over the years Marty received her Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award and the Queen's Award which is the highest award a girl may gain. In 2017 she received the British Empire Medal for services to GB.

From 1962 until 1964 she was involved in the Crèche, then became a Sunday School teacher and to this day is still involved in Sunday School.

The citation from Youthlink stated:

*"Her selfless dedication is evident in every aspect of her involvement, from her 20-year tenure as divisional secretary to her enthusiastic participation in events. What sets Marty apart is her genuine care for each young girl she works with. People talk about her warmth and kindness, always placing the girls' best interests at the forefront. Marty's impact extends beyond the GB meetings, she takes the time to understand the complexities of each child's family situation, offering support and guidance. In a world where consistency is rare, Marty's presence has provided a safe haven for countless girls in Inverness. Through her gentle demeanour and empathetic way, Marty has touched the lives of many, leaving an indelible mark on the Girls' Brigade community and beyond."*

Well done Marty, a very well deserved honour for a special lady.

***Joyce Muir***

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## ***Come and Sing***

After the summer break Choir Practices resume on

**Thursday 15 August at 7.30pm in Room 1.**

New voices in all parts will be made very welcome.

Music and friendship guaranteed.

Please contact Bridget Black on 01463 230588 or

just turn up!

In any case

**COME AND SING**

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## ***Prayer Diary***



**Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our  
Lord Jesus Christ, the Merciful Father,  
the God from whom all help comes!  
He helps us in all our troubles,  
so that we are able to help others who have all kinds of troubles,  
using the same help that we ourselves have received from God.**

**(2 Corinthians 1 vs 3-4)**

It is suggested that this prayer diary should be used as an additional resource for private daily prayers. The prayer points can be used as you choose each day. Give thanks for each topic as you pray and bring the needs of every situation before God.

### **Week beginning Sunday 18 August**

- Loving God, we give thanks for our Minister, Stuart Smith, and ask Your blessing on him as he preaches Your word to the congregation and to those on the livestream. We pray that Stuart and Elspeth will enjoy their new life in Inverness.
  - Lord, we give thanks for Professor Bill McBryde and Rev Penelope Smirthwaite who led worship during the period of vacancy and Rev Ian Manson who carried out the duties of Interim Moderator.
  - Father, we ask Your blessing on the Session Clerk and the Kirk Session, and give thanks for their dedication and commitment to Ness Bank and to the members in their districts.
  - The high cost of living continues to be a great worry for so many people. Lord, as we approach autumn and winter we pray that those who struggle to pay for fuel and food will be assisted by the various agencies and charities.
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- Almighty God, the conflict in Israel and Gaza continues to be fierce and our hearts go out to those who have lost family and friends and those who have been injured. We pray earnestly Lord for peace in this region. Dr Moira Lang is a Palliative Care Specialist who spends time in Gaza training doctors and her eye-witness account sheds light on the dire healthcare situation in Gaza, revealing a lack of pain medication, inadequate resources, and critical health conditions faced by patients.

### **Week beginning Sunday 25 August**

- Father, schools and colleges have now resumed after the summer holidays. We pray that teachers, support staff and pupils are rested and ready for the new session.
  - We ask Your blessing on our organist, Ian, and members of the choir as they continue to lead praise on Sunday mornings. We pray that choir practice is a time of fun and fellowship.
  - Lord, we think of those in our congregation who are unwell, some of whom in hospital, in a care home or in their own home. We pray for the staff and family members who are caring for them and ask that Your love and comfort will sustain them during their time of illness and subsequent recovery.
  - Inverness Foodstuff continues to be busy and the number of meals being provided at both Ness Bank and Hilton is rising. We give thanks Lord for the trustees, volunteers and staff who are involved in this wonderful organisation. We pray too for the participants who come along for food, support and company.
  - Pray today for all who play a part in the Blythwood Shoe Box Appeal - individuals who organise the appeal in local churches, supporters who buy shoebox fillers throughout the year, staff who give extra time to ensure a task is done well, volunteers who give time to sort through boxes, drivers who drive on wintry roads and challenging conditions to deliver the boxes to Eastern Europe.
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### **Week beginning Sunday 1 September**

- Gracious God, we pray for those known to us who are grieving for the loss of a loved one, whether it be recent or long ago. We all know that the pain of loss is difficult to bear, and we ask Father for your love and comfort during these difficult times.
- We give thanks for all leaders and members in the various teams in Ness Bank and ask Your blessing on the work they carry out in Your name.
- We ask Your blessing Heavenly Father on Messy Church which is taking place on 1 September. We give thanks for the volunteers who are involved and we pray that many families will come along for this time of food, fun and fellowship.
- We ask Your blessing Lord on the staff and volunteers in the Inverness Foodbank who provide a three-day emergency supply of food for those in need. We give thanks for the local congregations who support the Foodbank.
- Climate change means that our weather can be very variable and sometimes will result in flooding causing widespread damage to homes and businesses as well as to crops and animals. We pray Lord that the UK government will continue to strive for Net Zero.

### **Week beginning Sunday 8 September**

- Loving God, we ask Your blessing on the couple who will be married in Ness Bank this week. We pray for a happy and meaningful day for the families.
  - We pray for all the young people who are involved in Ness Bank in Girls' Brigade, Boys' Brigade, Sunday School, the Baby & Toddler Group and Messy Church. We ask Your blessing on the leaders and helpers.
  - Lord, the NHS continues to have very long waiting lists for appointments and treatment. We pray for the staff who have to cope with the stress of these demands, both in hospitals and in the community.
  - Father, we give thanks for the church administrator, church officer and cleaner who provide great support to the congregation.
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- Clèir Eilean ì - Presbytery of the Highlands and the Hebrides - will meet in Fort William this week and we pray Lord that this meeting will be constructive with good decision-making.

### **Week beginning Sunday 15 September**

- CrossReach is the social care arm of the Church of Scotland and provides many services throughout Scotland. Within our area we give thanks for the residents, staff and volunteers in Whinnieknowe in Nairn, Oversteps in Dornoch, Cameron House, Cale House and Beechwood House all in Inverness. We pray for the Counselling Service in Inverness which provides support to young people and adults.
- Migrants seeking asylum in the United Kingdom continue to arrive in small boats and unfortunately many have lost their lives during the dangerous crossing in the channel. Lord, we pray that our government will find a way to resolve this problem which is so complex but also urgent.
- Lord, we give thanks for the many chaplains involved in hospitals, hospices, workplaces, the armed forces and in charities.
- The ladies of Ness Bank Crafties continue to meet every Tuesday morning for a time of fellowship. Father, we give thanks for their skill in creating such wonderful articles which are sold for church funds.
- God, we give thanks for the mental health services and charities. The demand for help for those suffering from mental health issues continues to rise and this in turn has increased the waiting list in mental health hospitals. We give thanks for the CPNs who give support to those in the community.

### **Week beginning Sunday 22 September**

- We give thanks God for the Guild, both nationally and locally, and ask Your blessing on the members of the Guild in Ness Bank. We pray that members are looking forward to the new session and we give thanks for those who have arranged the new syllabus. We give thanks too for the Work Party who continue to provide many garments for local hospitals and charities.
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- Loving God, we pray for those people who have physical disabilities and who are unable to work. We pray that the welfare system will ensure that they have housing, food and enough money to pay their bills.
  - God, we pray for those members and friends who are housebound and unable to come to church. We give thanks for the livestream service which enables them to watch Sunday worship and we ask Your blessing on the volunteers who are involved in this service.
  - Gracious Father, we are grateful that volunteers from Ness Bank lead a time of worship in Ach an Eas once a month. We pray for all the staff who provide such wonderful care to those unable to stay in their own homes.
  - We pray for those living with Dementia or Alzheimer's Disease. Due to a lack of beds in care homes many require to be cared for at home by relatives and home carers. We ask Your blessing on all care staff who provide a valuable service to those unable to look after themselves.

### **Week beginning Sunday 29 September**

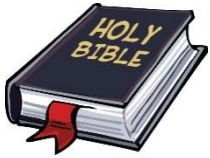
- Within the parish of Ness Bank is the Bught Cosy Cafè and on Mondays at lunchtime volunteers from the community and from Ness Bank provide a warm space for the folks in the area. Tea, coffee, soup and scones is available and we ask Your blessing on this facility which enables friendships to be formed which in turn eases loneliness.
  - The conflict between Ukraine and Russia continues to cause so much heartache for the residents of Ukraine. Lord, we think of those Ukrainians who have come to Scotland seeking peace and asylum until they can return home. Our prayer today is for peace and for the war to end.
  - Lord, the prison service is under extreme pressure and many prisons are full. As a result prisoners are being released earlier than planned so that more accommodation can be made available. We ask Your blessing on the rehabilitation programme taking place in prisons which is designed to help prisoners integrate into communities after release.
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- Lord, let us pray every day for all the many blessings we receive from You and we ask that you will give us the strength to follow your footsteps all the days of our lives.
  - Lord, we ask Your blessing on the emergency services who provide essential support to the communities in the Highland Area and throughout Scotland. We give thanks for their dedication and skill.

### **World Mission Prayer Topics:**

- This summer, at Scripture Union Camps and SU/Church local Missions, thousands of children will hear that God loves them and cares deeply for them. We pray for the staff and volunteers who give the Bible teaching, who organise the games and activities, who cook the meals, and we ask that the Holy Spirit will help the children to understand God's love.
  - The Church of Scotland has two Mission Partner ministers in Israel/Palestine, supporting the small congregations in Jerusalem and Tiberias, as well as the chaplaincy of Tabeetha School and of the Scots Hotel and St. Andrew's Guest House. They ask for our prayers for this "strategic ministry" in the current difficult situation where reliable reports note that 3,600 Palestinians are currently held, without charge, in Israeli jails.
  - Tearfund reports that "The Rubbish Campaign" is thriving in Latin America thanks to a movement of young Christians passionate about the ending of plastic pollution. In Bolivia and Columbia, for example, they have been raising their concerns with government and UN staff. They are promoting the creation of green jobs through waste management and recycling, and increasing the use of organic fertilisers in these countries so vulnerable to climate change. We give thanks for their courage and enthusiasm, asking for Your blessing on their efforts to bring about change.
  - In the Great Lakes region of Africa, listeners can hear Gospel messages and health advice, in their local languages. These are broadcast by Radio Ivyizigiro, which is supported by Blythswood Care. We pray that these programmes will change lives, both physically and spiritually.
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## ***Daily Bible Readings***

### ***August 2024***

Thursday	1	John 8: 31 - 41
Friday	2	John 8: 42 - 47
Saturday	3	John 8: 48 - 59
Sunday	4	Psalms 147
Monday	5	Judges 2: 6 - 23
Tuesday	6	Judges 4: 1 - 24
Wednesday	7	Judges 6: 1 - 24
Thursday	8	Judges 6: 25 - 40
Friday	9	Judges 7: 1 - 15
Saturday	10	Judges 7: 15 - 24
Sunday	11	Psalms 148
Monday	12	Judges 8: 22 - 35
Tuesday	13	Judges 13: 1 - 25
Wednesday	14	Judges 14: 1 - 20
Thursday	15	Judges 15: 1 - 20
Friday	16	Judges 16: 1 - 22
Saturday	17	Judges 16: 23 - 31
Sunday	18	Psalms 149
Monday	19	1 Corinthians 14: 1 - 25
Tuesday	20	1 Corinthians 14: 26 - 40
Wednesday	21	1 Corinthians 15: 1 - 11
Thursday	22	1 Corinthians 15: 12 - 34
Friday	23	1 Corinthians 15: 35 - 58
Saturday	24	1 Corinthians 16: 1 - 24
Sunday	25	Psalms 150
Monday	26	Micah 1: 1; 2: 5
Tuesday	27	Micah 2: 6; 3: 12
Wednesday	28	Micah 4: 1 - 13
Thursday	29	Micah 5: 1 - 15
Friday	30	Micah 6: 1 - 16
Saturday	31	Micah 7: 1 - 20

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## ***Daily Bible Readings***

***September 2024***

Sunday	1	Psalm 1
Monday	2	John 9: 1 - 12
Tuesday	3	John 9: 13 - 34
Wednesday	4	John 9: 35 - 41
Thursday	5	John 10: 1 - 10
Friday	6	John 10: 11 - 21
Saturday	7	John 10: 22 - 42
Sunday	8	Psalm 3
Monday	9	John 11: 1 - 16
Tuesday	10	John 11: 17 - 27
Wednesday	11	John 11: 28 - 44
Thursday	12	John 11: 45 - 57
Friday	13	John 12: 1 - 11
Saturday	14	John 12: 12 - 19
Sunday	15	Psalm 4
Monday	16	Ruth 1: 1 - 18
Tuesday	17	Ruth 1: 19; 2: 13
Wednesday	18	Ruth 2: 14 - 23
Thursday	19	Ruth 3: 1 - 18
Friday	20	Ruth 4: 1 - 12
Saturday	21	Ruth 4: 13 - 22
Sunday	22	Psalm 5
Monday	23	Philippians 1: 1 - 6
Tuesday	24	Philippians 1: 7 - 11
Wednesday	25	Philippians 1: 12 - 26
Thursday	26	Philippians 1: 27 - 30
Friday	27	Philippians 2: 1 - 4
Saturday	28	Philippians 2: 5 - 11
Sunday	29	Psalm 6
Monday	30	Philippians 2: 12 - 18

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