

NESS BANK CHURCH

Congregational Newsletter

November/December 2023 - No 1020



Congregation Formed 1787

Present Church Opened 1901

Dear Friends

Moving forward... getting involved...

Time can be a strange thing. We know in theory that it runs consistently, as measured by our clocks or digital devices. Yet we also know that in reality our perception of it can be very different. It amazes me to think that I was born just 17 years after the end of World War Two, which has always seemed like distant history to me. Yet the same length of time back from today would take us to 2006, which feels not too far removed from yesterday.



So when we reflect that it is over 18 months since Fiona Smith left us to move to her new job, I wonder how we perceive that period of time. Certainly, it has been a busy one for the congregation, adapting to that change while getting on with all the good work that we are part of. It has also been a challenging time, not least with Penelope's illness and the loss of her valued contribution to our life and mission. Yet we can also see that it has been a time of growth, as people have risen to those challenges and taken things forward. Our 'Kirking of the Council' Service felt like a significant part of that, as we started to step up to our new role as the City Centre Church, and the growth in Sunday attendance at worship has been particularly encouraging. We have much to be grateful for in the way Professor McBryde has stepped up to the new work which he has willingly taken on.

However, there is also an awareness that this period has been a time of waiting as the search for our new minister has progressed. Here again, time can be perceived differently. It might seem to some like a slow process, and indeed it is, but in the current context of the Church of Scotland we have actually done very well to get so far so quickly, and the Nominations Committee has done fantastic work to get to where we are. We hope to be able to present a 'Sole Nominee' to the congregation in the fairly near future. Naturally it is going to take another period of time for all the practicalities to be worked through after that, but we can see the way ahead starting to emerge.

When we think of the passing of time it is often in terms of reflecting back on what has passed, but of course it also stretches out ahead of us. What the coming years in the life of Ness Bank Church will look like is certainly unknown at the moment, but it is not outwith our control. That future will be shaped by our effort and enthusiasm and commitment, as we bring our own particular gifts and contributions to the life of the congregation. That can be a bright future, for with God we have nothing to fear and everything to hope for. As the old hymn says:

*“Be still, my soul;
thy God doth undertake to guide the future as He has the past.
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.*

*Best wishes
Ian Manson*

Nominations Committee

After a lot of work and miles the committee have narrowed the field to a couple of candidates. They will be invited to attend an interview and have the chance to visit the parish in a more formal basis. After this process (*if there is a majority consensus within the nominating committee*) they will be invited to preach to the congregation and all being well approved by session. All being well there should be a nominee to present prior to year-end.

*Gordon Leitch
Convenor*



The Baby and Toddler Group continues to meet on a Wednesday morning from 0930 - 1130 during term time and we have space for some new children with parents/carers. If anyone has some spare time to help with this group, especially with suitable 'craft' ideas, you would be very welcome!

*Anne Sutherland
Tel: 01463 238238 or 07425 154715*

Congregational Register

New Members:

By Certificate:

Christine Robb District 27 Elder: David Abbott

Deaths:

22 August: Connie Mackenzie
Funeral held on 31 August

13 September: May Sutherland
Private funeral



The Guild

Our new session has begun well as we enjoy fellowship again after the summer break.

We look forward to a guest evening with friends from other Guilds on 24th October when we will hear from Mr Alasdair Munro on our chosen project this year, which is the Vine Trust Village of Hope in Kazunzu, Tanzania.

On 7th November we will be looking at a study of our theme this year - New Wine, New Wineskins, and on 21st November Rev Doug MacRoberts will be speaking. On 5th December we have a music evening.

Any members of the congregation will be made very welcome and we would love to see some new faces at our meetings.

Anne Sutherland

Ness Bank Church is online at www.nessbankchurch.org.uk

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Hope you have **Saturday 25 November** (10am-12noon) in your diary for our Christmas Fayre!!

Donations can be handed in to the vestibule on Sundays 5th/12th/19th November for the hampers and raffle.

If you have any empty 1lb jars with lids they would also be appreciated for the 'Filled Jar Stall' (plus filled ones as well!).

The Boys' Brigade will be manning the Cake & Candy stall and donations for this would be appreciated - we know a lot of you enjoy baking.

We hope to have a book stall but rather than piles of old books, perhaps look out one nice book to donate.

The same idea for 'Unwanted Gifts' would be great.

Donations would also be appreciated for the bottle stall, toy stall, crafts and floral stalls. And hopefully a few others as well.

Of course, all this can be washed down with a cuppa and a mince pie served by the Guild.

Donations can be handed in on the afternoon and evening of Friday 24 November.

Janet Russell

Light

A small boy was fascinated by the red lamp in the Sanctuary during a rather long sermon. Finally, he whispered: "Mum, when the light changes to green, can we go?"



on

26th November 2023

Messy Church is both a modern and excellent way to introduce the Christian faith to parents and young children! Given that there's no Sunday School at the moment, it is more important than ever for us to find ways of reaching out to families. As such, a team of 13 volunteers have come together to deliver the next Messy Church event on Sunday 26th November which will take place after the morning service.

The theme is '**Getting ready for Christmas**' and we've organised lots of innovative activities for the children but at the same time, we have some in mind for parents. Flyers for the event will be distributed in the town centre and also sent to five local schools via Facebook.

The theme will be partly developed through the eyes of Mary, explaining her amazing experiences before and after the birth of Jesus. We are going to convey this in a drama sketch – a brand new venture for us! The story lesson will focus on making time in the busy Christmas schedule to think about that very first Christmas.

Preparations are in hand to make this a special day. We would appreciate any encouragement you can offer, not least your prayerful support.

Thanks in advance from the Sunday School Team.

Margaret Livingstone

Oops!

A father had given his daughter a young puppy for Christmas. Next day, he found her in the kitchen, looking sadly at a puddle in the centre of the floor. "Look Dad," she said, "My pup runneth over!"



Messy
Church

NOVEMBER 26TH
12.30 - 2.30

**'Getting ready for
Christmas'**

- Lunch
- Family Fun
- Christmas Music
- Activities
- Songs & Drama

Ness Bank Church



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***A Message from Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton,
Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland,
on the Israel Gaza conflict***

Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, issued a statement on 10 October 2023 in response to the outbreak of violence in the Holy Land:

"Peace in our world can never come through violence."

Mrs Foster-Fulton said:

"Friends,

I reach out to you all, as we continue to grapple with the shattering violence unfolding in Israel and Gaza, and to ask for your prayers and your action.

Across Scotland, our Jewish friends, neighbours and colleagues grieve the loss of loved ones following the devastating terrorist attacks we witnessed unfolding over the weekend, worry for friends and family who have been kidnapped and fear the possibility of increased antisemitism in their own neighbourhoods as tensions rise across the world.

In Scotland, our friends with family in Gaza mourn the loss of loved ones, worry for those unable to find safety or a place of refuge and fear an even more uncertain future.

Together we agonise, yet again, over peace gone to pieces. We desperately try to fathom how we can be any comfort to the members of our global family trapped in the middle of such a barrage of violence and fear. We are appalled by the horrifying levels of brutality and the inhumanity of mass murder scenes of which were broadcast across our screens in horrifying, gut-wrenching detail.

We call for calm and active consideration for the innocent civilians who are suffering in Israel and Gaza. Peace in our world can never come through violence. Peace in our spirits can never come through revenge. So, what can we do in the face of war?

If you pray, pray from your guts, not your lips - offer a prayer that moves in you and through you - one that calls you to reach out to a fearful neighbour, to speak up for peace and calm and the unity of humanity.

Pray for all those many people injured and those mourning the loss of loved ones and those living in abject fear who await news of family members missing.

Wherever you are, check in on your Jewish neighbours, friends and colleagues.

Wherever you are, check in on your neighbours, friends and colleagues who have family in Gaza.

Wherever you are, be mindful of your words. Tarring with a broad brush adds more fuel to the fire, so be kind to one another wherever you find each other.

The Zulu phrase, Ubuntu, is the theme for my year as Moderator and its challenging truth resonates powerfully today, 'I am because you are.' We are one global family. When we look into the face of another human being, God looks out from the windows of their souls. Today, love God by loving each other."

A prayer for peace

'In days to come... they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war anymore.'

God, it is said that you are the peace that passes all understanding. We sit now, staggered at how quickly the fragile half-peace we had pieced together has unravelled. The lessons we have so desperately needed to learn have been laid aside as the instruments of war begin their horrible, haunting reprise. Call us back to our senses.

For the angry, abused and frightened among us, who strike out in a distorted quest for victory, help us find ways to convince that there is no victory to be found in violence. Peace-making is a daunting path to tread, especially when fear follows so closely behind, so breathe your loving spirit into our hearts and help us walk your way.

We pray ceaselessly for our family in Israel and Palestine, for we are all family and when one part suffers, we are all depleted. Peace in pieces is a collective, shared shame.

God, you are the peace that passes all understanding, so help us understand how to find you.

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

Amanda James

I was born just outside Inverness, in a house beside the river. I believe the house was originally part of Ness Castle estate. On my way into Miss Marion Munro's Nursery School at the top of the Raining Stairs, I remember the sign near Holm Mills with the Ceud Mile Failte greeting to Inverness. Those welcoming signs are no longer at the entries to the town. Luckily, before I got too inquisitive, we moved away from the river to Southside Road.



I was baptised in and attended St Columba High Church. The seats were originally velour cinema seats so gave a big clank when we stood to sing! I also remember the small hole in the wall behind the pulpit which enabled baptism families in that room to see when it was time for them to join the congregation. The minister all through my childhood was Rev Stephen Frew. Mrs Edgar led the Bible Study group and I still have my copy of the Ten Commandments which she gave to us all. Mr Rhind was the Sunday School Superintendent and Mrs Chalmers looked after the Infants. Every room in the Dr Black Memorial Hall was full.

My grandmother was the eldest of seven, so I was taught gym by my Great-Aunt Pat in primary school and by my Dad's cousin, Liz Munro, in secondary school. My Great-Grandfather and then my Great-Uncle had the bicycle shop and ironmongers in Baron Taylor's Street. I was well-warned that if I got up to anything in town my parents would hear about it as there were so many relatives about! However, one of Grandma's sisters lived in Ayr and we finally met her when we moved there.

Music was my mother's all-consuming interest so I was sent to piano lessons with Miss Rhoda Macleod and violin lessons with Archie Gillies. Mr Gillies used to take a bunch of secondary school pupils to West Linton to join in the Ayrshire Schools Orchestra Camp for two weeks every summer holidays. There was limited instrumental lessons in school back then and so he also started an orchestra for adults and children which met in a hall in Greig Street on Sunday afternoons.

I attended the Crown Primary School and then went onto the Royal Academy until the

end of 5th year. When my father died, we moved to Edinburgh and I went to the Mary Erskine School for Girls for 6th year, quite a different experience! We attended Murrayfield Parish Church until Mum started working as the Minister's secretary at The High Kirk of St Giles. Alan and I were married there, in the middle of the morning service, apparently the first since the Reformation.

We moved to Cornwall, first to Bodmin and then to Truro where we attended St Paul's Church and our children went to Sunday School. We travelled back to Edinburgh every holiday so our two boys were baptised at St Giles but Vairi was baptised at St Paul's as by then we had made many friends there. We moved to Ayr and lived there for 30 years, much easier for seeing our mothers in Edinburgh and it was a great place to bring up the children.

After leaving school, I trained in Taxation with a firm of Chartered Accountants and when we moved to Cornwall I travelled to Plymouth to work in another CA firm until Christopher was born; then I became a Childminder for a few years, before travelling to Cork to train as a Suzuki Method violin teacher. Through my teaching, I have travelled to France, Iceland, Italy, Poland and, of course, Japan where the Method started.

We joined our parish church in Ayr, St Andrew's, and the children attended Sunday School; Christopher and Alasdair joined Anchor Boys followed by the Boys' Brigade and Vairi joined the Brownies. The church family was very sociable with treasure hunts and church picnics. I kept falling into jobs – Flower Convenor – having been assured that it was an admin role – until the first Sunday there was no name on the flower rota – turned out **I** was supposed to 'do' the flowers. Luckily, I had great support from the ladies who actually **could**. Then I became Gift Aid Convenor just as the role changed over to being computerised - another steep learning-curve! When we moved to Ayr, Lynne was one of the first people with whom I became friends, so it was very special that in 2014 we were ordained as Elders together.

As Alan and I reached retirement, we decided to move to Inverness. Our daughter was here, although she is now in East Lothian, and Christopher is in Skye so it is much easier to see them than the five hour drive from Ayr. Strangely, it is also easier to get to Croydon to see Alasdair than from Ayr. Vairi had already joined Ness Bank so we followed her there and have been absorbed into the Choir, the Music Group and the Guild.

Amanda



Girls' Brigade

The new session of Riverside Girls' Brigade is well underway with twenty-two girls on the register.

We have been delighted to have visits from Karen Halkett and Janet Russell. Karen is one of the Pastors at Inverness Christian Fellowship (ICF) and is our new Chaplain. Karen led opening worship for us one night and then went around the various sections to see what the girls were up to. She's a longstanding GB leader herself so is very familiar with our programme. Janet visited to tell us about the Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal. She brought along some filled boxes and gave us tips about finding items for them. The girls and their families have been encouraged to collect some items for the appeal.

Suzie Allan, one of our Brigaders, travelled to West Calder to take part in the final of the Jean T Morrison Competition. She had to bake a bee-themed cake in two and half hours. We are very proud of Suzie, who was one of the runners-up, and the photo shows Suzie on the left with her wonderful cake in front of her.



Ailsa McAra, another Brigader, joined in a Divisional Taskmaster Challenge where she enjoyed meeting Brigaders from the other local companies for a night of problem-solving and fun.

A big thank you to our members and families who helped at a Loch Ness Marathon and 10K water station at the start of October. The money raised goes towards our Membership Fees which are now £35 per member. It is also good for the girls to get involved in community events.

We are looking forward to our Enrolment Service at 11.00am on Sunday 5 November at ICF at Trinity. On Saturday 25 November we'll be taking part in the Ness Bank Christmas Fayre and our Christmas Singalong will be at 6.45 pm on Monday 11 December at ICF at Trinity. You are very welcome to come along. Definitely a busy couple of months ahead!

Anyone wishing to learn more about our company should contact Ann or Alison, our Captains, at riversidegbinv@gmail.com.

Hazel MacDonald

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care at Ness Bank is a top priority for us all. The contact we have with one another is a vital part of our care in the congregation and fulfilling the message to love one another.

Just now while in 'Vacancy' it is good to see our congregation growing, so with my 'pastoral hat' on I ask are you new or not so new? Make yourselves known - I am always about in the vestibule.

Do you have any concerns, joys or sorrows? Share them. No request is too small and all are confidential.

Our Prayer Group and Flower Team are such an important ministry and there to bring God's message of His loving care and comfort. I would love to get to know more of you so please look me out.

Sheila Proudfoot
Pastoral Team Leader

Easy come, easy go!

Father Christmas enters through a hole in the chimney
and leaves through a hole in your pocket.

**News from Clèir Eilean Ì
Transition Team**



TAKING SHAPE:

Beannachdan ràith an fhoghair bhò Chlèir Eilean Ì – Harvest season greetings from Clèir Eilean Ì. The countdown is on: with three months to go, CEI's leadership team is taking clear shape; embryo committees have begun to hold their initial meetings online, and all should do so over the next six weeks – the main agenda items in each case being to establish key remits and nominate conveners, who in turn will comprise CEI's Business Committee. Nine Mission Plans will become one; databases are due to be merged and established across CEI's area, and a date set for the first formal online meeting of the new Presbytery in January 2024. This Update is being circulated to everyone through our existing nine Clerks; it is hoped that we will move to circulating everyone centrally by the end of October. And here's the man who will do it...

PRESBYTERY CLERK:

Welcome to Rory MacLeod, who has been appointed as our first Presbytery Clerk, following interviews with short-listed candidates earlier this month. Rory, currently serving as Clerk to the Presbytery of Lochcarron-Skye, will now transition to his new role, becoming the key CEI contact. He says:

"I am excited - and not a little nervous - to have been chosen to serve Clèir Eilean Ì as Clerk. No other calling would have persuaded me to leave my charge of Strath & Sleat, which I love. Indeed it is my concern for parish ministry which motivates me to channel my 30 years of experience into seeking ways of supporting local churches, through bringing more resources closer to the frontline of mission and ministry. As the Parish Church of Scotland in the Highlands & Hebrides, our new presbytery unites us in mission to proclaim the good news of Jesus to every single resident throughout over 40% of the Scottish landmass!



"That is an impossible though necessary task, which fuels our faith in the God who works miracles through those who rely on him. Once the Transition Team has completed its task of preparing us all for a flying start on 1st January 2024, my priority will be to get out and about so that all of our local churches feel supported and know that they / you are at the centre of Clèir Eilean Ì's activities. Nì mi fiughar ri bhith a' frithealadh còmhla ri-cheile gu glòir Dhè ann an seirbheis Eaglais... I look forward to us working together to the glory of God in the service of his Church."

Rory will be in touch directly with our existing nine Clerks, to arrange transfer of databases, documents, and Mission Implementation Plans, as key functions of Clèir Eilean Ì are prepared to go into operation.

WORKING TOGETHER:

Two of our Presbyteries – Argyll and Inverness – have already welcomed members of the CEI Transition Team to their meetings this month, for a presentation/Q&A/discussion opportunity. It's hoped to complete the "roadshow" round the other seven during Oct-Dec. So far, the main areas of interest were in combining Mission Plans, merging of databases, and the ways in which key functions (e.g. mission, finance, property) could be better resourced and developed. This can now be co-ordinated through Rory MacLeod as Clerk.

PRAYER POINTS

Give thanks...

...for Rory MacLeod's appointment to serve as Presbytery Clerk.

...for work already started, and vision expressed, through our nine Mission Plans, now due to be united.

...for the service and witness of our nine uniting Presbyteries, particularly in the 21st century so far.

Ask...

...that the transfer of databases, documents, budgets and Mission Plans goes well, enabling future mission.

...for God's guidance in the merging of nine Mission Plans into one.

...that God's call to our first Moderator will soon be discerned.

Beannachdan fhad 's a thigeas sinn còmhla ann am misean agus seirbheis –

blessings as we unite in mission and service.

And finally... a glimpse of the future?



Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, Moderator of the General Assembly, with CEI's designate Business Convener Rev Donald McCorkindale, at the dedication of a new church in his parish at Kilchoan, Ardnamurchan, this month. It's equipped for worship, community activities, and can stream services. Sally said "You will serve your God-given, love-inspired purpose. Blessed will be your worship and your music, blessed will be your clubs and meetings, blessed will be your outreach and service in the community you are part of, blessed will be your lives, an embodiment of Christ. Open wide the doors of your building and the doors of your hearts." The backlit cross was made from old pews, and another above the door is from an old mission church which was at Sanna Bay. As the Radical Action Plan puts it, we need "Well-equipped spaces in the right places." Here's a link: [Joy as Moderator dedicates new Highland church | The Church of Scotland](#)

Summer Open Days - August 2023

This year our church was open from Monday 31st July until Friday 1st September.

Shortly after Lilian and I had agreed to take over organising the event from Jim Anderson, our son Ronan and his finance Fliss, announced that they were coming over from New Zealand to visit us during July and August.

Whilst this was very exciting for us, it created a real problem and so, at this point, not only we, but Ness Bank Congregation, owe David Bain a huge 'thank you' as he graciously agreed to take over the day-to-day running of the open church event.

For those interested in statistics, I have set out lots of these below, and they are as follows:-

- The church was open for 25 days
- With two sessions per day, there were 50 sessions
- With two members of the congregation overseeing each session, this required 100 members
- Actually, 42 members signed up for our 'open church' and therefore, a big thank you to those who signed up for two or more sessions
- We had 1303 visitors during the days that Ness Bank was open
- These came from 25 countries - Scotland, England, Guernsey, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, India, South Africa, Australia, Brazil, The United States, Hawaii and Canada
- One of the visitors, from Austria, had NEVER been inside a church before
- And we also had four dogs!!

- The highest number of visitors was on 21st August when 100 came to see Ness Bank and the least number was on the 1st September, our last day, when 25 came to see our Church
- We received over £300 in donations

A note for your diaries, and subject to confirmation, the dates for Ness Bank Open Church 2024, are proposed as Monday 29th July to Friday 30th August.

We would like to thank all those members of the congregation who gave their time and talents for this event.

Barry & Lilian Gilbert

One For The Ladies

Recycle your unwanted bras and raise money for Breast Cancer Research

Like me I am sure some of you from time to time find you have bras you no longer use and remembering that Fiona once asked us to donate our bras I searched the Internet for somewhere to recycle bras as I hated the idea of them going to landfill.

I found **Against Breast Cancer** - a charity that recycles bras to raise money for Breast Cancer Research. They collect them using Bra Boxes at many locations throughout the UK. They take bras in any condition and the ones they decide cannot go forward are dismantled and parts used to repair other bras.

I found one Bra Box in Curves Gym in Inverness which unless you have a car is not very easy to get to, so I now have approval that if you would like to be involved just bring your old bras to church and pop them in a box in the vestibule then I will take them down to the Bra Box. This will run for four weeks only from **Sunday 12 November until Sunday 3 December**.

Clover Jackman

A wee bit too pious!

A Scottish lady invited a gentleman to dinner on a particular day, and he accepted with the dour reservation - "if I'm spared."

"Weel, weel," she replied briskly, "If ye're deid I'll no'expect ye."

Community Outreach Team

The Community Outreach Team is involved with Local Mission.

Our aim is

to reveal the love of God for all people in our parish and our city

These are our main areas of work at present:

- Outreach to the elderly population
- Outreach to young families
- Outreach to the homeless and vulnerable
- Mission to the West side of the parish
- To increase the profile of Ness Bank to the whole parish and city

During Covid, the groups that we support were not all able to continue meeting face to face but we have supported groups to open again and we have also ventured into new areas of work.

Unfortunately, the Wednesday Lunch Club did not reopen after Covid as there were several issues with setting up again. However, we are still collaborating with those who organised it as well as the Pastoral Team to hopefully enable the elderly to meet up again in some form in the future.

We support those who provide the monthly service in Ach An Eas which is very warmly welcomed by the staff and residents.

We also support The Guild and are happy to say that there is a full programme for 2023/24 and the meetings are very well attended.

The work we support for families and young children includes the Baby & Toddler Group which is running very successfully at the moment with at least 15 to 20 children each week, and Messy Church, both of which are wonderful ways of introducing local children to our church family.

Inverness Foodstuff continues to offer a warm space, food and friendship to those who are homeless or vulnerable in our community, three days a week, in Ness Bank Hall. The number of people accessing this service is increasing and two more days (Wednesday and Friday) are now provided in Hilton.

We started a new venture on the West side of the parish in January this year to provide a warm space with food and friendship at lunchtime on a Monday in the 'Bught Stop'. We called it the Cosy Café and it ran very successfully for 16 weeks through to June. We welcomed 20-25 people each week who were glad of a free meal and warmth and company. This was a joint venture with the Ballifeary Community Council. Funding was provided by various grants and we were given free use of the venue.

We have got funds to run this project again this year starting in November, providing sandwiches, a hot drink, scone or cakes, friendship and a warm space to anyone who would like to join us. There will be a box available if anyone wishes to give a small donation but no charge will be made. Ness Bank will take the lead on this at the moment as there is no formal Ballifeary Community Council at present. Our volunteers from last year are ready to go (some from the community and some from Ness Bank).

Our team aspires to be outward looking and ready to serve our local community. If you feel that you would like to join us or help with any of the projects we support please let us know. We are always looking for volunteers in all areas.

Lilian Gilbert
Team Leader

Christmas Prayer

Father,

Thank you for creating us and for loving us so much that you sent Jesus to become one of us and to be our way to you. This Christmas may we know the love, peace, comfort and joy that only You can give, no matter what our circumstances. And may we reflect Your light and love in this dark world to bring glory to You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Daphne Kitching



Flower Calendar - 2024

The 2024 Flower Calendar will be on the noticeboard in the vestibule on Sunday 10 December. If you wish to donate flowers to the Church please add your name to the date of your choice. Our sincere thanks to all who donated flowers to the 2023 calendar.

Anyone interested in joining our Flower Group will be most welcome. If you would like to help please telephone me on 01463 230155.

Finella Thomson

Cleaner Vacancy

As I am sure you are aware, Heather our previous Cleaner decided to retire on Friday 28th April and as there was no immediate replacement the local company, Topside Cleaning, took over part of the cleaning and the remainder was covered by Heather free of charge until we got a replacement. As Heather's last day of service drew closer we were delighted to receive an application from Mrs Kath Millar who stays in Inverness, and who after a long service of 36 years as a nurse in Raigmore Hospital was about to retire. After interview and receipt of two excellent references Kath commenced as our new Cleaner after a bit of guidance from Heather. Please introduce yourself to Kath so she has the chance to get to know everyone.

Jim Anderson
Admin Team Leader

A little girl had been to Sunday School for the first time and was asked by her mother how it compared with her new primary school.

“Oh, I like it much better,” she said. “There are no exams there, you go only once a week for an hour, and at the end you go to heaven instead of high school.”



- Musick Fyne -

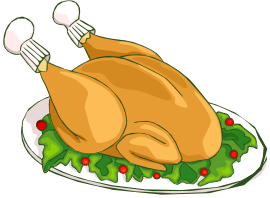
dir D James Ross with members of
The Marvel of Peru present
A Truly Traditional

Christmas Carol Concert

Lovely carols from the 18th and 19th centuries
for voices & instruments,
as well as your favourite carols to join in with!

**on Saturday 9th December at 7.30pm
in Ness Bank Halls, Inverness
(Retiring collection in aid of the church)**

You can follow and like Musick Fyne on Facebook



The Everlasting Turkey

On the First Day of Christmas my true love said to me,
I've bought a big fresh **Turkey** and a proper Christmas tree.

On the Second Day of Christmas much laughter could be heard,
as we tucked into our **Turkey** - a most delicious bird.

On the Third Day of Christmas came people from next door,
the **Turkey** tasted just as good as it had done before.

On the Fourth Day of Christmas came relations young and old,
we finished up the Christmas pud and had the **Turkey** cold.

On the Fifth day of Christmas outside the snowflakes scurried,
but we were nice and warm inside - we had the **Turkey** curried.

On the Sixth Day of Christmas and the Christmas spirit died,
the children fought and bickered - we had **Turkey** rissoles fried.

On the Seventh Day of Christmas my true love he did wince,
when he sat down at the table and was offered **Turkey** mince.

On the Eighth Day of Christmas and the dog had run for shelter,
he'd seen our **Turkey** pancakes and the glass of Alka-seltzer.

On the Ninth Day of Christmas by lunchtime Dad was blotto,
he knew the bird was back again this time as a risotto.

On the Tenth Day of Christmas we were drinking home-made brew,
as if that wasn't bad enough we were eating **Turkey** stew.

On the Eleventh Day of Christmas the Christmas tree was moulting,
with chilli, soya and oyster sauce the **Turkey** was revolting.

On the Twelfth Day of Christmas we had smiles upon our lips,
The guests had gone, the **Turkey** too - we dined on fish and chips.

→ Become part of the CrossReach Family

There are many ways that you could become more involved with the work of CrossReach. Here are a few ideas:

Join our growing team of staff and volunteers

Because of the type of organisation we are and the breadth of our service, we have a wide variety of jobs, career paths, and voluntary opportunities available across a range of flexible working patterns, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Take a look at our website www.crossreach.org.uk/careers or simply get in touch with us at recruitment.team@crossreach.org.uk

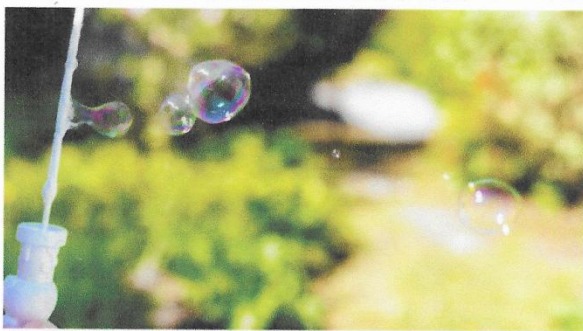


Become a member

By setting up a regular gift with CrossReach, no matter how much or how often, you will be helping us plan for the future. That means we can be there for even more people across Scotland who desperately need a lifeline. You will receive a special gift of recognition when you sign up and throughout your time with us, as well as regular updates and invitations to events throughout the year. To find out more email supporters@crossreach.org.uk or visit www.crossreach.org.uk/become-a-member

Leave a lasting legacy

It's not something we talk about day to day but it's so important to have a will in place to protect our assets and family. Every gift in a will has the potential to enhance a life, change a life and even save a life. If you are interested in updating yours and think you could leave something to CrossReach we would love to have a chat. Email supporters@crossreach.org.uk visit www.crossreach.org.uk/lasting-legacy



Pray for us

You can download our prayer diary to your phone. Each week we highlight a different service area and share areas for thanksgiving as well as areas that need help. Print versions of our prayer diary are also available, and you can also add a widget to your Church website to allow friends to also keep up to date. [Prayer Diary | CrossReach](#) If you aren't sure how to set this up we'd love to help. Call us on **0131 657 2000** or email info@crossreach.org.uk

Prayer Diary

The Prayer Diary has been part of the newsletter since 2012 and during that time the basic style has not changed, only the prayer topics are different in each issue. However, in recent months I have been aware that the prayer items have been quite detailed and this made me wonder if a more condensed diary would be easier to use. Therefore, this month I have shortened the prayer topics into one or two short sentences. World Mission prayer topics will be listed separately as these items require a bit of background information which is usually quite detailed.

Over the years I have not really received any feedback regarding the usefulness of the prayer diary and it would be good to receive some comments from members and friends. For instance:

- do you use it on a daily basis or just occasionally?
- do you find the topics appropriate to life today?
- do you find the condensed style easier to use?
- if you don't use it can you say why?
- do you have suggestions on how it can be improved

I really would welcome your comments and I can be contacted either by email or speaking to me at church.

Joyce Muir

Email: conandjoyce@btopenworld.com

Jesus' Granny

A little boy came home from his first day at Sunday School and casually told his mother that the Sunday School teacher was Jesus' granny. Astonished, his mother asked: "Whatever makes you think that?"

"Well, it's pretty obvious," said her son. "She never stopped talking about Him all morning. She told us Jesus is smarter and stronger and better-behaved than anyone else she knows. She even showed us a picture of Him. Who but a granny would do that?"



Prayer Diary



November/December 2023

**The Lord is good;
his love is eternal and his faithfulness lasts for ever.**

(Psalm 100 v5)

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.

During the week beginning 12 November please pray for:

- Professor Bill McBryde who continues to lead us in worship every Sunday and Rev Ian Manson who is undertaking the duties of Interim Moderator.
- Those known to us who are grieving for a loved one whether it be recent or long ago. Lord, support those who are hurting, may they be surrounded by Your peace and comfort.
- All who are ill. God, we ask that your love and strength will sustain them during these difficult times.
- The Nominations Committee as they continue their endeavours to interview candidates.

During the week beginning 19 November please pray for:

- Everyone involved in the Christmas Fayre on 26 November and give thanks for the support being given by members and friends.
- The Church of Scotland congregations whose buildings have closed requiring members to worship in a different church and to integrate into a new congregation.

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- The volunteers and families involved in Messy Church on Sunday 26 November.
 - The Guild in Ness Bank and throughout Scotland. We give thanks for their time of fellowship and fun.

During the week beginning 26 November please pray for:

- All trustees, staff, volunteers, participants and support services at Inverness Foodstuff.
- Girls' Brigade throughout Scotland, and especially the 4B Company who meet in Hilton Primary School and Riverside Company who meet in Trinity Church, both of whom are associated with Ness Bank.
- Peace and unity throughout the world. It is our prayer that people can live in a world free from violence and strife.
- Organisations who support people practically and financially during the ongoing cost of living difficulties. In particular, we think of Citizen's Advice Bureau and Christians Against Poverty.

During the week beginning 3 December please pray for:

- Ness Bank Crafties who meet every Tuesday morning, give thanks for their skill in producing so many wonderful items which are sold for church funds.
- The services provided by CrossReach throughout Scotland but in particular in Inverness, ie Cameron House, Cale House, Beechwood House and the Counselling Service for both adults and young people.
- The Boys' Brigade in Scotland, in particular the 2nd Company in Ness Bank.
- Those known to us who are housebound and unable to attend church. Lord, we give thanks for the livestreaming service which enables members and friends to enjoy being part of worship in their own homes.

During the week beginning 10 December please pray for:

- Our organist, Ian, and the choir who lead praise every Sunday and who during Advent will be rehearsing for Christmas services.
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- The church administrator, church officer and church cleaner who provide great support to all office-bearers in Ness Bank.
 - The Prayer and Bible Study Group who meet to pray for people and situations requiring our prayers.
 - Highland Council as they continue to try and allocate resources within a reduced budget.

During the week beginning 17 December please pray for:

- All staff in the NHS. We give thanks Father for their compassion and loving care to all in need.
- Those who find this time of year very difficult as they come to terms with bereavement, family separations and loneliness.
- The new Chief Executive of Inverness Women's Refuge and give thanks for the volunteers who support this service.
- The Inverness Foodbank which continues to provide a three-day emergency food parcel for those in need.

During the week beginning 24 December please pray for:

- Those taking part in Christmas Services and give thanks for the baby born in a manger so many years ago who is our Saviour Lord.
- The emergency services who provide a 24 hour seven day a week service, many of whom will be unable to spend time with family over Christmas.
- The leaders and members of teams in Ness Bank who support worship and activities in Ness Bank.
- Members and friends who provide a short service at Ach an Eas once a month for residents and staff. Loving God, give thanks for this time of fellowship.

During the week beginning 31 December please pray for:

- The year ahead and give thanks for everything the Lord has done for us in the past year.

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- The Flower Committee who continue to provide wonderful floral displays every Sunday and on special occasions.
 - The toddlers, parents and carers who come along to the Baby & Toddler Group on Wednesday mornings. Give thanks for the volunteers who provide snacks for the children and adults.
 - Highland Council employees who are responsible for ensuring that roads and pavements are cleared of snow and ice.

World Mission Prayer Topics:

- **Whinnieknowe Care Home** in Nairn is run by CrossReach and has 24 residents. We pray today that they will enjoy their life in the home and feel protected and secure. We pray also for Ness Bank friends who are in care homes in Inverness.
- **Scripture Union in local schools:** being a Christian can be a challenge for many young people. We thank you for each Scripture Union group that meets in our local schools in Holm, Lochardil, Muirton, Charleston, Kinmylies, Millburn and the Academy, as well as those throughout the Highlands. We pray for each person trying to follow Jesus and for each volunteer who prepares for and meets these groups.
- **Israel-Gaza War:** we continue to lift to you, our Father, the situation on the Israeli-Gaza border. We pray for compassion in the negotiations where the value of each human life is recognised and protected. We also remember the two Church of Scotland Mission Partners who are serving in different roles in Jerusalem.
- **Mission Aviation Fellowship:** In Papua New Guinea about 87% of the population have no access to electricity, which combined with a limited health service leaves thousands of women at risk during childbirth, especially at night. In one area MAF has installed a solar-powered lighting system which will significantly improve safety. The technology expert involved said that he did not previously understand how challenging life was for mothers in such a remote community. Thank you Lord for these skills making life safer for mums and babies.

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- **Leprosy Mission:** In 2019 the Leprosy Mission lodged a three-year campaign to treat people in Nepal who have undiagnosed leprosy. Each pound donated in the UK was matched by the UK Government, and 1,997 people were identified, treated and cured. Government health workers were trained in the early signs of the disease and local female volunteers also received basic training. We have just had the local Leprosy Mission coffee event and this further information increases our prayers for the eradication of leprosy.
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Christmas Rush

That time again, my trolley's full
buying all the Christmas fare,
a turkey crown, a rib of beef,
crisps and nibbles, lots to spare.

Christmas crackers and serviettes,
paper for wrapping and cards to send,
nuts and oranges, figs and dates
the list goes on, there seems no end.

In all this rush it's good to pause
and think about that Special Day,
when shepherds watched and angels sang
as a Baby lay in a bed of hay.

Celebrating the Birth

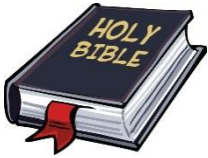
We celebrate the birth of Jesus: for God has come among us.

We celebrate the birth of Jesus: for heaven has come to earth.

We celebrate the birth of Jesus: and let love grow between us.

We celebrate the birth of Jesus: and live as God's children on earth.

Sophie Piper



Daily Bible Readings

November/December 2023

November

Wednesday	1	Mark 7: 24 - 37
Thursday	2	Mark 8: 1 - 13
Friday	3	Mark 8: 14 - 21
Saturday	4	Mark 8: 22 - 30
Sunday	5	Psalm 119: 1 - 24
Monday	6	Mark 8: 31; 9: 1
Tuesday	7	Mark 9: 2 - 13
Wednesday	8	Mark 9: 14 - 29
Thursday	9	Mark 9: 30 - 50
Friday	10	Mark 10: 1 - 12
Saturday	11	Mark 10: 13 - 16
Sunday	12	Psalm 119: 25 - 48
Monday	13	Mark 10: 17 - 31
Tuesday	14	Mark 10: 32 - 45
Wednesday	15	Mark 10: 46 - 52
Thursday	16	Isaiah 22: 1 - 25
Friday	17	Isaiah 23: 1 - 18
Saturday	18	Isaiah 24: 1 - 23
Sunday	19	Psalm 119: 49 - 72
Monday	20	Isaiah 25: 1 - 12
Tuesday	21	Isaiah 26: 1 - 21
Wednesday	22	Isaiah 27: 1 - 13
Thursday	23	Isaiah 28: 1 - 29
Friday	24	Isaiah 29: 1 - 24
Saturday	25	Isaiah 30: 1 - 18
Sunday	26	Psalm 119: 73 - 96
Monday	27	Isaiah 30: 19 - 33
Tuesday	28	Isaiah 31: 1 - 9

	Wednesday	29	Isaiah 32: 1 - 20
	Thursday	30	Isaiah 33: 1 - 24
December	Friday	1	Isaiah 34: 1 - 17
	Saturday	2	Isaiah 35: 1 - 10
	Sunday	3	Psalms 119: 97 - 112
	Monday	4	Isaiah 36: 1 - 22
	Tuesday	5	Isaiah 37: 1 - 20
	Wednesday	6	Isaiah 37: 21 - 38
	Thursday	7	Isaiah 38: 1 - 22
	Friday	8	Isaiah 39: 1 - 8
	Saturday	9	1 John 1: 1 - 4
	Sunday	10	Psalms 119: 113 - 128
	Monday	11	1 John 1: 5; 2: 1 - 2
	Tuesday	12	1 John 2: 3 - 11
	Wednesday	13	1 John 2: 12 - 17
	Thursday	14	1 John 2: 18 - 27
	Friday	15	1 John 2: 28; 3: 1 - 10
	Saturday	16	1 John 3: 11 - 24
	Sunday	17	Psalms 119: 129 - 152
	Monday	18	1 John 4: 1 - 12
	Tuesday	19	1 John 4: 13 - 21
	Wednesday	20	1 John 5: 1 - 12
	Thursday	21	1 John 5: 13 - 21
	Friday	22	2 John
	Saturday	23	3 John
	Sunday	24	Matthew 1: 1 - 17
	Monday	25	Matthew 1: 18 - 25
	Tuesday	26	Matthew 2: 1 - 12
	Wednesday	27	Matthew 2: 13 - 23
	Thursday	28	Habakkuk 1: 1 - 17
	Friday	29	Habakkuk 2: 1 - 20
	Saturday	30	Habakkuk 3: 1 - 19
	Sunday	31	Psalms 119: 153 - 176
