

# ***Newsletter***

***Crown Church, Inverness***

**JUNE 2023: No. 791**

**Parish Minister: Rev Douglas Robertson**



## **SUNDAY SERVICES**

We are now back meeting regularly for our two Sunday Morning Services. Douglas is continuing to broadcast on Sunday mornings at 11.00 am. To watch these and previous recordings please go to the Crown Church Facebook page (a Facebook account is not required to see the service).

**Sunday 4th June**

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at 9.30am and 11.00am followed by special prayers

**Sunday 11th June**

Morning Worship at 9.30am and 11.00am

**Sunday 18th June**

Morning Worship at 9.30am and 11.00am

**Sunday 25th June**

Morning Worship at 9.30am and 11.00am

**Sunday 2nd July**

Morning Worship at 9.30am and 11.00am followed by special prayers



**'Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!'**

**Isaiah 43;verses18-19**

## From the Minister

Dear Members and Friends of Crown Church,

I am writing this on the afternoon of Pentecost Sunday, sometimes thought of as the birthday of the Christian church. I am also writing in the shadow of two significant decisions taken recently, one by our brothers and sisters in Christ at Old High St Stephens Church and the other by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.



I used the analogy of wind in church this morning to speak of the Holy Spirit. You can't see it, but you can see, or hear, or feel its effects. It has just struck me that wind is also unpredictable. Weather forecasters do an amazing job these days, but still, the wind can gust suddenly or die down suddenly, it can change direction, it can push into places we thought were sheltered and leave untouched something we worried might be vulnerable.

In John's Gospel chapter 3, Jesus speaks about the Holy Spirit as the agent of God's salvation, you must be born again, but not of the flesh this time, of the Holy Spirit. And then he says, "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

In the church of Jesus Christ, inspired (which means "breathed into") by his Holy Spirit, sometimes we can be led off in unexpected directions. Sometimes our plans will seem to be blown away, and sometimes opportunities will surprise us. Sometimes we might feel like a ship becalmed, making no progress as if the wind has deserted us, while at other times the rate of change can make us feel overwhelmed, as if it has a life of its own which we cannot control. Which is exactly the point. The Holy Spirit does have a life of his own and we are not in control.

Only the Spirit of God can revive the church with grace and courage, so let us pray for the Spirit of God to inspire the Church of Scotland, all churches in Inverness, and Crown Church. And then let's see what he has in store for us!

Blessings,

**Douglas**

## **Union with Old High St Stephens An Update**

Matters have moved on since my article in the April newsletter but not in the way that we anticipated.

The congregational vote was taken at Crown church on Sunday 14th May and there was an overwhelming majority in favour of the union. The only issues raised related to the name which had been chosen by the 2 Kirk Sessions.

However, the vote at Old High St Stephens, which was taken on the same Sunday, went the other way and the congregation voted quite decisively to reject the union.

This begs the question, "What happens next"?

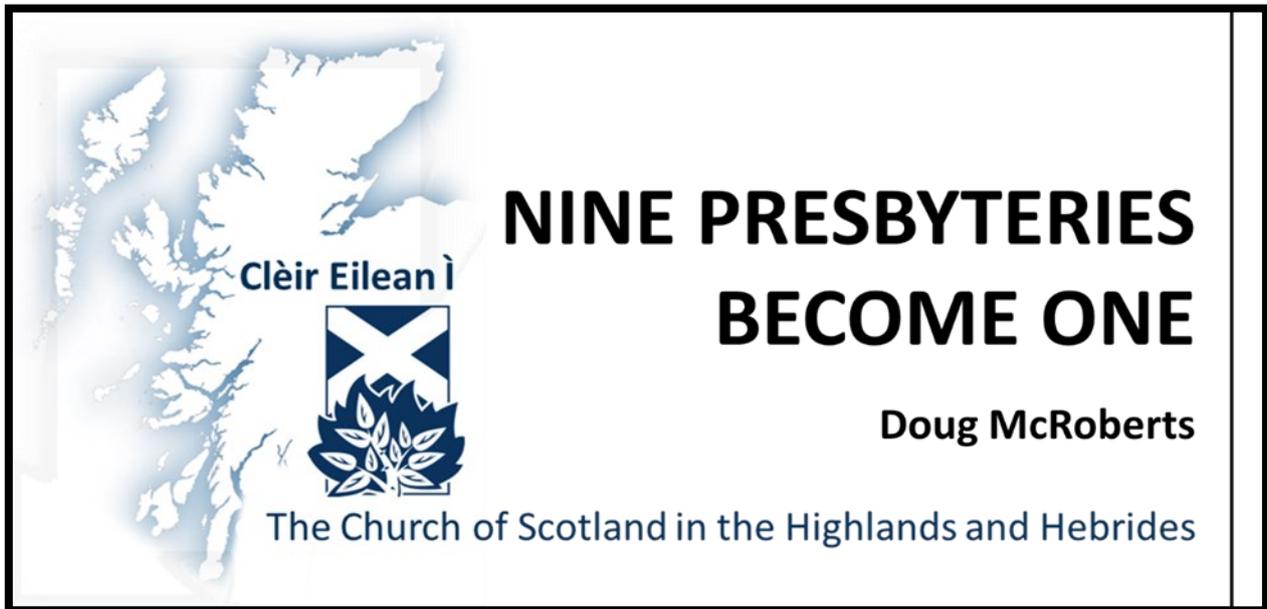
Our minister, the Reverend Douglas Robertson, has spoken both to the Presbytery clerk and the convenor of the Presbytery's mission plan implementation team and, for the moment, no one is clear what effect this decision will have in either the short or longer term. The matter is complicated by the fact that the present mission plan includes proposed parish boundary changes which affect several other neighbouring churches.

All I am really able to say at the moment is that the Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Team will meet in June to discuss the situation and it is anticipated that they will make a recommendation to the Presbytery which meets on June 27th.

I would hope that the position will become clearer after the Presbytery meeting and, when I know the outcome of that meeting, I will put a note under the "Latest News" section in our own website.

On a more positive note, there has been recent agreement that the joint ventures which Crown church has been undertaking along with the members of Old High St Stephens should continue since there appears no good reason why we should not continue to work closely with our fellow Christians just along the road.

**Bob Forrest**  
**Session Clerk**



It was my privilege to represent nine Presbyteries at this year's General Assembly – I don't think that's ever happened before! We were united in seeking to become one, as part of the Kirk's major restructuring. Over three years of work brought us to this significant moment.

The Assembly listened, agreed, and passed an Act – so **Clèir Eilean Ì** will come into being on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. It means, literally, "The Presbytery of the Isle of Iona," and the vision behind this goes back to the time of St. Columba and his missionaries, whose call was to spread the new gospel of Jesus to all of Scotland. The nine Presbyteries coming together are Abernethy, Argyll, Caithness, Inverness, Lochaber, Lochcarron/Skye, Ross, Sutherland, and Uist; together, they cover over 40% of Scotland's landmass – and there is no part of that area untouched by these early missionaries. Hence the name.

This is ultimately about **mission** – and how we can do it more effectively together in the future. So there will be a full-time clerk, professional resources to help with finance, buildings, etc, freeing up ministers, elders, deacons and others to refocus on mission. As I said to the General Assembly:

*"Welcome to Scotland's biggest Presbytery. Covering countless square miles of loch, glens, islands and mountains, together with city, suburban and university communities, cutting edge technology and new expressions of Church meet traditional Christian life in mission and ministry shaped for the 21<sup>st</sup> century."*

It's the final – and by far the biggest – change in our national Presbytery structure ever. Three years ago, there were 43 Presbyteries within Scotland, most with part-time and volunteer staff, trying to do all the things presbyteries have traditionally done, and exhausting everyone in the process.

By January, there will be nine; each one seeking to enable mission by supporting our new ministry clusters with professional support where needed, taking administrative burdens away from overstretched volunteers, and focusing on Mission.

There will be far fewer meetings – and most of these will be online, or hybrid, like the General Assembly itself – and the emphasis will be on resourcing and developing local mission and ministry, based firmly on the Mission Plans developed over the last two years by each of the Presbyteries.

As I said to the Assembly: "This Presbytery will be a uniquely interesting place in which to carry forward ministry and mission for Christ... its proposed Mission Cluster patterns, its central resourcing to empower local and regional ministry and mission, its necessary online and hybrid meeting processes, all contribute to a challenging future for us. But this is now our vision and calling."

**Doug MacRoberts**

## Food For Thought .....

**The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone):** Good afternoon. The first item of business is time for reflection, and our leader today is the Rev Kenneth MacKenzie, minister of the parish of Braemar and Crathie, and domestic chaplain to His Majesty the King.

### **The Rev Kenneth I MacKenzie (Braemar and Crathie Parish Church and Domestic Chaplain to His Majesty the King):**

Presiding Officer, members of the Scottish Parliament, good afternoon. In a place where rhetoric matters, let me crave your indulgence by asking a question that is not as rhetorical, nor as grammatically correct, as some might prefer.

What does it feel like to be prayed for?

I ask that of you who have been elected to the Scottish Parliament, because even in this month of May, in the year of our Lord 2023, when another group of nationwide representatives will assemble, as you first did, in a historic hall just up this street, I cannot think of another Scottish body that will be more often the subject of prayer than this honourable house.

What does it feel like to be prayed for?

This is not the first time that I have asked that question, but being by nature and nurture a Highlander, and still identifying as Invernessian, the last time I dropped that question, I reverted to the Queen's English. In fact, in true Highland style, I did not so much drop the question as drop the question mark.

Two weeks ago, at the door of Crathie kirk, I took the liberty of assuring one of our congregants that on the day of his upcoming coronation he would almost certainly be the most prayed-for person in all of Christendom. Like his mother before him, he seemed rather moved by such a declaration.

In his much-remarked-upon book "Religion for Atheists: A non-believer's guide to the uses of religion", Alain de Botton reflects on the fact that in every flourishing culture and society there has always been room for symbolism and ceremony. He, naturally enough, bemoans the fact that in nearly all instances, ceremony and symbolism seem so intrinsically bound to faith and belief. I—some might suggest naturally enough—am not at all surprised that that should be the case. As we preachers and parliamentarians know only too well, there are times when words—ordinary words—are not enough.

In times of trouble or triumph, and on the occasion of appointment or disappointment, words matter, but they are not enough. It is in part through ceremony and symbolism, and in part through prayer, that we mere mortals allow room for mystery and for meaning. Blessed are those who know what it is to be kept in the prayers of a nation.

Taken from the Scottish Parliament's "Official Report" for 9 May.

Thank you to Richard Ardern for drawing this to the Editor's attention.

Readers may be interested to know that the Reverend MacKenzie is the brother of Donald Mackenzie who until recently was our Church Treasurer.

# S-N-A-C Time

## Coronation SNAC



On Coronation Day itself 76 of us, aged from a few months to almost 86, gathered to celebrate. And what fun we had! We decorated gold crowns with jewels, played games with red, white and blue balloons and dined on quiche, coronation chicken, trifle, jelly and ice cream.

We're all looking forward to the next SNAC, which will be, not on the 1st Saturday of June, but on Saturday the 17th, from 5-7pm. It's going to be a barbecue, so pray for a dry evening! And then we'll take a break until the 1st Saturday of September. Hope that lots of you will come along on the 17th. Let Pat, Gary or Pamela know if you can be there.

[pamelamcara@btinternet.com](mailto:pamelamcara@btinternet.com) [pcrippin@gmail.com](mailto:pcrippin@gmail.com)

**Everyone Welcome**







## Daily Bible Readings for June

### **Sunday, May 28, 2023, Acts 2:1-4, Romans 8:18-39 Nothing Can Separate Us (Pentecost)**

Monday, May 29, 2023, Romans 8:18-39 Pentecost

Tuesday, May 30, 2023, Romans 14:1-12 Do Not Judge Another

Wednesday, May 31, 2023, Romans 14:13-23 Do Not Make Another Stumble

Thursday, June 1, 2023, Romans 15:1-13 Gospel for All

Friday, June 2, 2023, Romans 15:14-21 Paul's Reason for Writing So Boldly

Saturday, June 3, 2023, Romans 15:22-33 Paul's Plan to Visit Rome

### **Sunday, June 4, 2023, Isaiah 6:1-8, The Call of Isaiah**

Monday, June 5, 2023, Isaiah 1:1-20 The Wickedness of Judah

Tuesday, June 6, 2023, Isaiah 2:1-4 The Future House of God

Wednesday, June 7, 2023, Isaiah 2:5-22 Judgment

Thursday, June 8, 2023, Isaiah 5:1-7; 11:1-5 Isaiah's Vineyard Song

Friday, June 9, 2023, Isaiah 7:1-25 Isaiah Reassures King Ahaz

Saturday, June 10, 2023, Isaiah 8:9-15 Isaiah's Son a Sign of the Assyrian Invasion

### **Sunday, June 11, 2023, Isaiah 9:1-7 *A Son is Given to Us***

Monday, June 12, 2023, Isaiah 11:1-9 The Peaceful Kingdom

Tuesday, June 13, 2023, Isaiah 22:1-14 A Warning of Destruction of Jerusalem

Wednesday, June 14, 2023, Isaiah 25:1-12 Praise for Deliverance from Oppression

Thursday, June 15, 2023, Isaiah 27:1-11 Israel's Redemption

Friday, June 16, 2023, Isaiah 30:8-17 A Rebellious People

Saturday, June 17, 2023, Isaiah 32:16-20 The Peace of God's Reign

**Sunday, June 18, 2023, Isaiah 55:1-13 Seek the Lord**

Monday, June 19, 2023, Isaiah 40:1-11 God's People Are Comforted

Tuesday, June 20, 2023, Isaiah 41:21-29 The Futility of Idols

Wednesday, June 21, 2023, Isaiah 42:1-9 The Servant, a Light to the Nations

Thursday, June 22, 2023, Isaiah 53:2-12 The Suffering Servant

Friday, June 23, 2023, Isaiah 57:14-21 A Promise of Help and Healing

Saturday, June 24, 2023, Isaiah 59:1-8 Injustice and Oppression to Be Punished

**Sunday, June 25, 2023, Isaiah 61:1-11 The Spirit of the Lord is Upon Me**

Monday, June 26, 2023, Isaiah 62 The Vindication and Salvation of Zion

Tuesday, June 27, 2023, Isaiah 63:7-14 God Is Gracious

Wednesday, June 28, 2023, Isaiah 63:15-19 Prayer of Repentance

Thursday, June 29, 2023, Isaiah 64:1-12 Prayer of Repentance

Friday, June 30, 2023, Isaiah 65:17-25 The Glorious New Creation

Saturday, July 1, 2023, Isaiah 66:1-4 The Worship God Demands



## Friendship Club



**‘Best thing I’ve done is join the Friendship Club ‘  
to quote one of our members**

You can’t get a better accolade than that.

On Friday 31st March 38 members of the Friendship Club enjoyed a wonderful lunch at The Redcliffe Hotel. It more than made up for the cancellation of our Christmas Party and it brought our first post Covid Session to a close in style. Sadly due to ill health a number had to cancel at the last minute.

We closed with around 50 on our register and in spite of a Session that was disrupted twice due to adverse weather and twice through Sanctuary renovations it really has been an interesting few months .

We have enjoyed visits and presentations from Beekeepers, and 3 High Life Highland personnel, we have heard about Maundy money, and have had both Douglas & Alison share stories with us . Our own team members Dorothy and Liz also entertained us with Jubilee tales and an Easter Bunny Drive.

We really appreciate the space the newly refurbished Sanctuary has given us and it really is a sight to behold on a Friday afternoon, tables set with beautiful china and overflowing with goodies . You just have to walk in and you instantly feel the warmth and camaraderie between the team and the members .

As we draw to a close we fondly remember Bill, Violet and Joyce who were an integral part of the club and whose passing leaves a gap amongst us.

However we look forward to 1st September when we meet up again for another interesting Session to take us through the Winter months. Wishing all our members a warm and happy Summer .

**Chrisanne Robertson**



## Christian Aid Week 2023

A big thank you!

Thanks to members of Crown Church, neighbours in our parish and friends from farther afield, we have raised £2137.38....so far. (Like the pigeon peas that were featured in Christian Aid's campaign this year, the total is still growing.)

We put envelopes in church, we delivered envelopes to the parish, we had a Pea Soup and Bread lunch, we bought excess baking from the Coronation Party, we donated online via a Crown Church e-envelope and you supported my 300k Steps in May challenge once again. By the way, I'm glad to say I have completed the step challenge with three days to spare. Phew!

The amounts raised by the different methods were :

Envelopes in church	536.00
Envelopes from parish (including Crown members of course)	1003.87
Pea Soup and Bread lunch	237.50
Baking from Coronation Party	140.01
Crown Church e-envelope	140.00
300k Steps in May e-envelope	80.00
Total to date	2137.38



We now know a little about the pigeon pea and how it has increased the resilience of the farming economy in Malawi. However we recognise that Christian Aid is not just about pigeon peas, it's not just about Malawi; it's not just about disaster relief. It's also about fighting trade injustice; it's about developing resilience; it's about people realising their potential; it's about life in all its fullness; it's about Life Before Death.

### David Crippin

There's still time to donate to Christian Aid Week via the e-envelopes. The links for these are:

<https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/crown-church>  
<https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/300k-steps-may>



Church members Alex Grant (right) and Eddie Adie got their photograph taken with the trophy Inverness Caledonian Thistle received when they won the Scottish Cup in 2015 by beating Falkirk 2-1.

They got their hands on the trophy while attending the monthly meeting of ICT's Football Memories Group which is held at Caledonian Stadium.

Famous ICT victories over Celtic were recalled at the gathering with a particular focus on ICT's famous 3-1 Scottish Cup win at Parkhead in 2000 when the Sun newspaper carried the famous headline: "Super Caley go ballistic, Celtic are atrocious".

Alex played for Inverness Thistle and Caledonian in the 1950s and 1960s and Eddie was the first treasurer of ICT's Supporters Trust.

Another church member Gordon Fyfe chairs the meetings and is co-ordinator of the Inverness Football Memories Project which has just celebrated its first anniversary. Photos and memories can be seen at: [www.ambaile.org.uk/Inverness/football-memories/](http://www.ambaile.org.uk/Inverness/football-memories/)

Football memory meetings are held on the last Friday of each month at Caledonian Stadium (10am-noon).

# *GUILD SUMMER COFFEE MORNING*

*27<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2023*



*held in the Upper Hall  
from 10.15 am*

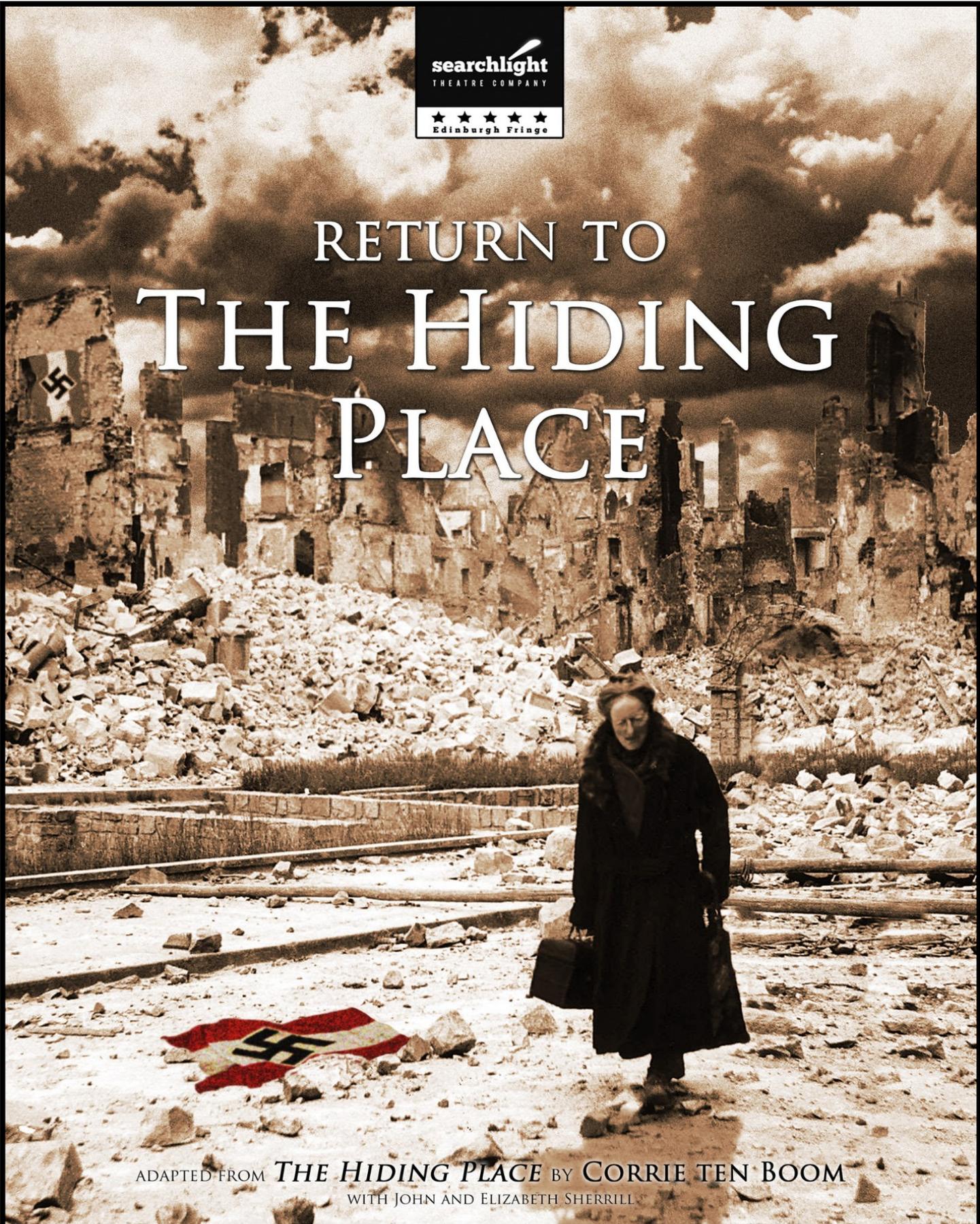
*Come and join us for a cup of tea, chat and home  
baking*

*All are welcome*



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# RETURN TO THE HIDING PLACE

ADAPTED FROM *THE HIDING PLACE* BY CORRIE TEN BOOM  
WITH JOHN AND ELIZABETH SHERRILL

Friday 16 June 7:15pm  
Culduthel Christian Centre  
Culduthel Avenue, Inverness

Tickets  
£10 (Full)  
£8 (Concessions)

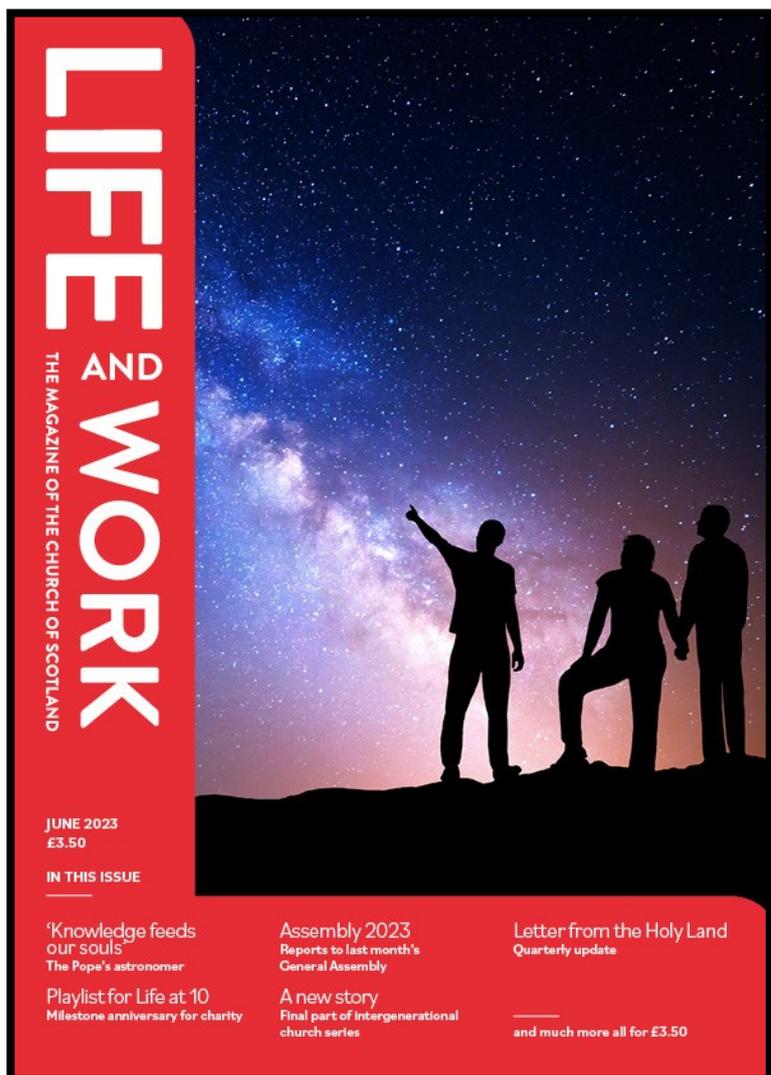
Buy tickets here



For more information contact us [hello@churchatccc.org](mailto:hello@churchatccc.org)

# LIFE AND WORK

## JUNE



**Knowledge Feeds Our Souls'**  
Interview with Brother Guy, one of the Papal Astronomers

**Letter from the Holy Land**  
In the start of a regular series from the Church of Scotland's ministers in the Holy Land, the Rev Muriel Pearson reports on an event bringing together bereaved Israeli and Palestinian families

**Assembly 2023**  
Four pages of reports to the Assembly

**The Procurator and Service**  
The outgoing Procurator to the General Assembly, Laura Dunlop KC, reflects on her 18 years in the role

**View from the Pulpit**  
The Rev Dr Marjory MacLean reflects on what two and a half years in Orkney have taught her about the things that matter in worship.

### Playlist for Life at 10

A milestone anniversary for the dementia charity supported by many churches

### Regulars

The Rev Dr Martin Johnstone on leadership  
The Very Rev Albert Bogle on digital church  
John L Bell on worship  
Reflection by the Rev Dr Richard Frazer  
Bible Study by Ruth Harvey

**Plus:** official updates from the Assembly Trustees and Faith Action Programme, readers' pictures, news, letters, reviews and puzzles – all for £3.50.

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You can also find us at [facebook.com/leadwork](https://facebook.com/leadwork) or on Twitter @cofslifeandwork and now on Instagram.

## **Welcome Team**

- June 4th** John and Marion Barbour, Anne Bowen, Lena Clarke  
**June 11th** John and Marion Barbour, Lena Clarke  
**June 18th** John and Marion Barbour, Lena Clarke  
**June 25th** John and Marion Barbour, Anne Bowen, Lena Clarke

**As we look forward to enjoying our newly refurbished premises, perhaps now more so than ever it is important that we can offer a friendly presence at our doorways.**

**If you feel you could help, even if it is just one Sunday, please do contact Gloria at the Church Office.**

## **Readers**

- June 4th** Mairi Mtui  
**June 11th** Bob Forrest  
**June 18th** Isabel Mackenzie  
**June 25th** Brian Macgill
- July 2nd** Alan Nelson

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**Items for the July/August newsletter by Sunday 25th June  
please!**

**\*\*\*Please note our new email address\*\*\***

Please send any articles, photographs or news to :

**newsletter@[crowns-church.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@crowns-church.co.uk)**

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