



September  
2023 Newsletter

Old High St Stephen's

Church of Scotland

## OUR SUNDAY SERVICES

Are recorded and are available via our [website](#) on our [Twitter feed](#) and [Facebook page](#). So you can enjoy these services at a time suitable to you, links are sent to our e-mail list. To go on our e-mail list, please contact our [Church Administrator](#).

## SERVICES AT ST STEPHEN'S

Following the closure of the Old High Church for Sunday Worship, all Sunday services are now held at St Stephen's Church at 10.30am

## CONTACT US

Church Administrator:  
(079 342 85924)  
[invernesschurch@gmail.com](mailto:invernesschurch@gmail.com)



If you would like us to keep in touch – please send us your up-to-date e-mail and address details

Registered Charity No.  
SC035073

## THOUGHTS FROM REV JAMES

I have a lovely white tablecloth. It comes out for special occasions, and it's enormous. It will cover our dining table completely, with a lot left over. That dining table belonged to my parents who gave it to my then girlfriend, now wife, when my parents re-modelled their house. It was a huge table that expands, and was bought new, around 1978. But the table cloth is even bigger. We have to fold it in half, and then on top of that goes plates, bowls, glasses, cutlery etc. If anything is spilled, well we might give the cloth a soaking to prevent staining, but it's an accident, and it's a sign of a lovely meal. While we look after the good cloth, it's there to be used.

Back when I was training for Ministry, I remember my first communion where I was behind the table - I was never an elder, although for some strange reason, Kirkcaldy Presbytery was absolutely convinced that I was... On top of the white cloth had been placed a plastic sheet, protecting the white tablecloth. It was as my probation supervisor read the intimations that I noticed some marks on the plastic. There was an arrow pointing to the congregation, then some circles where the bread, wine, two ewers were to be placed. A space had been left for the lectern, but not much. In thinking about it, there was more space devoted to the two ewers, which were not used, or even filled, than for the Minister's notes. You could not really move for fear of knocking something that custom dictated had to be in its exact spot.

We had a Methodist Deacon and their congregation with us for a couple of months while their church was renovated, and I mentioned that I preferred communion at her church, where we could all gather round the table, and there was a bit more spontaneity, although we agreed that isn't always possible due to large congregations and building layout. The last supper was a gathering of friends. I expect the atmosphere may have been a little tense, as everyone knew something was going on. But I am absolutely sure there wasn't a plastic sheet telling those gathered where the plates should go. Perhaps there may even have been food or drink spilled.

When we gather in worship, let's not do it feeling forced to follow traditions for tradition's sake, but instead spontaneously with joy and reverence for the Lord. Perhaps as we move on, we can start our own new traditions. James

**ANNUAL LEAVE** James is on holiday on 3 and 10 September. Services will be led by Rev Doug McRoberts. If anyone requires the services of a Minister during that period please contact your elder or myself. Rev Scott Polworth has agreed to provide urgent pastoral cover during this period. Christine MacKenzie Session Clerk (234835)

## NEWS FROM THE CONGREGATION

**HARVEST CELEBRATIONS** Come along and join us at our Harvest Celebrations including a Flower Festival and Family Fun, at St Stephen's Church on Saturday 30 September from 2-4pm. See the Floral Arrangements, Plant & Veg Stall and Home baking. Tea, Coffee and Cakes are being served. Join in the Activities for Children. Donations for Maggie's Centre, Food Donations for Highland Food Bank & 1668 café will be much appreciated. On the following day, Sunday, the Flower Festival will be open from 2-5pm

**HARVEST FLOWER FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS** As part of our Harvest celebrations we are planning to hold a Flower Festival in St Stephen's Church on Saturday 30 September during our Fun day, and the Church will be open again on Sunday 1 October from 2-5pm. If anyone is interested in assembling an arrangement on Friday 29 September or helping with stewarding, Linda Philip would be very pleased to hear from you. The cost of the flowers will be met by the Church. Linda is planning to hold a meeting with all those who are interested on Thursday 14 September to put ideas together. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you are at all interested in flowers and would like to help transform our Church into a spectacular floral display. Entry will be by donation and all money raised will be given to Maggie's Highland. Linda Philip [linda.j.philip@hotmail.com](mailto:linda.j.philip@hotmail.com) 07919 434 640



### FLORAL ART CLASSES

Annette Stoker, who is a qualified floral art teacher is running a course of floral art classes, commencing in October. Numbers are limited. If you are interested please speak to Annette (01463) 232141

**BEE CRAFTY** will resume on Wednesday 30 August from 2-4pm. All crafters welcome. Please bring your craft with you. New members welcome. Also, if you would like to learn a

craft we will do our best to help you as we learn from each other. Enjoy the camaraderie and a cuppa. We hope you will join us. Margaret McAleer (01463) 221393

**TODDLERS GROUP** The Toddlers group meets every Monday morning in St Stephen's Hall from 10 - 11.30am during term time. For further information contact Eilidh 07823 323330

**FIT AS A FIDDLE** This gentle exercise class, organised by the Pastoral Care Team at St Stephen's, has just re-started after taking a Summer break. It takes place in the St Stephen's Hall every second Wednesday at 2pm. The class is led by experienced leader Lorraine O'Brien and she gives a variety of exercises all set to glorious old tunes! You do what you are able and take the exercises at your own pace. Everyone is welcome, and after the exercises there is time for a cup of tea and a chat. The class next meets on **Wednesday 6 September**. Please come and join in. For further information contact Val Cantlay (231 298) or [val.cantlay@btinternet.com](mailto:val.cantlay@btinternet.com)



**SWEATY CHURCH** 23 September from 4pm to 6pm at St Stephen's Church Hall. Fun and games for children and families followed by food. Free entry. Theme: Eating and Sharing

**VISIT BY GERMAN CHOIR** On Sunday 6 August we were joined at morning worship by the Elikuren Chamber Choir, a group of 14 music students from Wunstorf, near Hannover. In recent years they have toured and sung in Egypt, Ghana, Iceland, Canada and Ireland. Their charity concerts are supporting the construction of a children's hospital in Ghana. The choir, under their conductor Christiane Kampe, sang a number of unaccompanied sacred anthems from wonderful works by Bach, Mendelssohn and Schubert. There was a beautiful clarity and depth in how these young adults sang with such conviction and warmth. That in turn inspired strong congregational singing of hymns from the German Church Tradition that had been chosen to celebrate this opportunity to worship together. Before we went through to meet together in the Hall afterwards, we could enjoy a splendid organ voluntary by Buxtehude, played by the young organ scholar who was part of the choir: truly a joyful ending to a special service. Andrew Stevenson

## OTHER NEWS

**ACORN POP-IN THURSDAYS AT INSHES** Dear friends - I would love to see the people of Inverness have God conversations, many, and always. The Acorn practice helps us move towards it. It has changed my life, and that of many. You'd be very welcome for Acorn pop-in sessions, or, why not invite anyone else and help ignite their faith. I know many of you might not be able to come, but you might know of others interested. Every Thursday till the October break at Inshes church, 1.30-3pm. It will be a deeply inspiring open time for folks to figure out How God can work in and through us in the lives of others; the way to reach our world for the Gospel. It all hinges around this simple daily prayer; 'Lord, today, who would you like me to connect with beyond the church?' Plenty of info and inspiration here; YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/@acornfaith> Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/933478613810194/> Article <https://ascend.churchofscotland.org.uk/2022/03/acorn-the-simplest-way-of-following-god-in-mission/> Paul Haringman, ACORN National Director (Scotland)

**PRIDE PARADE** On Saturday 22 July, along with my wife, Rev Susan Cord, and Sirius the Dog, I attended the Pride parade in Inverness. I went there, to let those there know that they are loved, and there is a place in God's kingdom for everyone. I spoke to a lot of people there, many of whom had troubling experiences with the church in the past, and others who may have had a strong faith, but were troubled about how they could still love their children who had come out as gay. I believe the church should be a safe space for all, and while I don't expect many new members out of my presence at Pride, I did want to let folk know that there is a welcome for them at Old High St Stephen's should they want it. It was a fun event, and I'm glad I went. I'm really looking forward to the next one - perhaps you can join us. James Bissett



**FOOD DONATIONS** Donations of food will be split between Highland Foodbank and 1668 Cafe



# Harvest 2023

Support local people in crisis by donating an item from the list below:

Items we'd be grateful for

- Tins of mince/meatballs
- Oatcakes/crackers
- Pot noodles
- Weetabix
- Jars of jam
- Washing powder

Highland Foodbank provides emergency food packages with enough food to make 3 meals over 3 days to people who would otherwise go hungry.

People in crisis are referred to Foodbank by a variety of different organisations including social work teams, schools and CAB.



"The shop I worked in closed earlier this year. I got another job in May, but it's only a 20 hour contract. With a top up of Universal Credit I only just manage to pay my rent, bills and buy food. My earnings are much lower than when I worked full-time, so there's nothing left for emergencies. Last month my cooker broke. I managed to buy a second hand one, but that left me short for buying food. I was so grateful to get a food parcel from Foodbank to see me through."

01463 717630  
foodbank.admin@blythswood.org  
Registered Charity in Scotland 048001  
Company Number 583493



## THE GLASGOW PHOENIX CHOIR

"In Honour of all who believe that Life was made for Friendship"  
Conductor: Cameron Murdoch / Accompanist: Matthew McIlree

presents **A CHORAL CELEBRATION** at **INVERNESS NESS BANK CHURCH**  
IV2 4SA

Sponsored by Ark Estates 

MADE UP OF  Marie Curie  
Care and support through terminal illness

**Sunday 24 September 2023 at 2.30pm**

"With Songs from the Classics to Scots Songs to Music from the Shows"  
Tickets: £10 online  
at [www.wegotickets.com/event/589883](http://www.wegotickets.com/event/589883) or in person - see below

**Tickets: £10** in person from Cafe de Paulo at WASPS Studio IV2 3JP (Mon-Fri 9.30-3pm) or from the Church Office 01463 221812 (Mon-Fri 9-12). Further info Tel: Nonnie on 07752 949197.

**CONTACT** the GPC at [eventsco@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:eventsco@globalnet.co.uk) or tel: 07711 421347 or [www.phoenixchoir.org](http://www.phoenixchoir.org) - The GPC is a Scottish Charity SC002904