

Newsletter

Crown Church, Inverness

DECEMBER 2023: No. 796

Parish Minister: Rev Douglas Robertson



SUNDAY SERVICES

We have two Sunday Morning Services and Douglas is continuing to broadcast the service 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 3rd December The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at 9.30am and 11.00am followed by special prayers

Sunday 10th December Morning Worship at 9.30am and 11.00am

Sunday 17th December Morning Worship at 9.30am and 11.00am

Sunday 24th December Morning Worship at 10.30am

Christmas Eve 6.30pm Christmas Family Service

11.30pm Watch Night Service

Christmas Day 10.30am The Celebration of Christmas

Sunday 31st December Morning Worship at 9.30am and 11.00am

2024

Sunday 7th January Morning Worship at 9.30 am and 11.00am followed by special prayers

Sunday 14th January Morning Worship at 9.30 am and 11.00am

Sunday 21st January Morning Worship at 9.30 am and 11.00am

Sunday 28th January Morning Worship at 9.30 am and 11.00am

Sunday 4th February Morning Worship at 9.30 am and 11.00am followed by special prayers



“When they saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy ”

Matthew 2 :10

From the Minister

Dear Members and Friends of Crown Church,

*Christmas is coming the geese are getting fat,
The credit card bills come shortly after that,
Santa quickly forgotten
Yet Jesus was begotten
And it's definitely worth remembering that*



It would be hard to believe the season of Advent was upon us, if it wasn't for the frost we had yesterday and what feels like a sudden downturn in temperatures generally. I used to say to my Australian friends that "it doesn't feel like Christmas when it's 30'C". Now it feels like Christmas!

Alison and I took a wee drive around town yesterday evening, which, so that you know the context, was the same day the town decoration lights were officially turned on. We did it just to see the lights, which in some ways seem understated compared to some other places, yet we really like it that way.

Jesus was born into somewhat understated circumstances. I can't say his birth was unheralded as he had a choir of angels singing in the night sky, but humanly speaking his family's circumstances were not great. They were forced to walk something like the distance of the West Highland Way, while mum was heavily pregnant, and they didn't have hotels.com to book accommodation in advance of their arrival in Bethlehem.

Perhaps we overstate the whole business about being born in a cowshed. I rather fancy that Bethlehem was flooded with folk forced to return to their "home town" for a census, and there were probably plenty of people accommodated in barns, byres, stables and other spaces usually reserved for the animals. But, as ever, these would be the poor people. Even if they got there early enough to secure a room, the landlord would turf them out to the shed when a rich person offered more money.

The point isn't that Jesus and his family were in some way worse off than the vast bulk of that society at that time, but that they shared in the suffering of an oppressed nation. The census was ordered by the Roman Emperor, probably so that he could levy more tax.

But it was also a society within which money and status could buy results.

Judas Iscariot turned Jesus in for 30 pieces of silver, and Pontious Pilate crucified an innocent man for purely political reasons.

In this sense, we might suggest it was a society not unlike every human society that has ever existed. But Jesus showed us another way, where truth, integrity, humility and love are more important than money and status. And that message began in the outhouse of an overcrowded inn.

That's why understated lights work. Something to celebrate with light and colour and joy and fun, but not over the top.

Blessings to you all this Advent / Christmas / New Year season,

Douglas

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE TOGETHER

Clèir Eilean Ì



The Church of Scotland in the Highlands and Hebrides



Doug McRoberts
Moderator-designate

"Help, please!" – the first thought that entered my brain when I heard that I had been designated as CEI's first Moderator. The second one was: "Well, well. This'll be an interesting and challenging journey..." And the third one was: "Thank God we're all in this together..."

Because it seems clear that God is taking the Kirk into new ways of being Church in the Highlands, Hebrides and Argyll. Nine Presbyteries becoming one. It's been a rare privilege to be part of the Transition Team – experiencing how minds focused on developing mission and ministry in new ways, driven by hearts committed to Jesus, have seen the vision of **Clèir Eilean Ì** grow.

It was also my privilege to be able to present this vision to the General Assembly earlier this year, standing together with colleagues from all the uniting Presbyteries. That, as all who were there would testify, was a real moment. A feeling. It's right. Scary, yes. Daunting? A little bit. Exciting? Definitely. A recognition that a call is being answered? Yes. Absolutely, yes.

So, together, we will enter this new world as the year turns. This is a step of faith – one we're taking together, after four years of prayerful planning. By doing things in ways that have never been done before, we will open up new possibilities, new ways of ministering and mission. It's not Presbytery as we know it – so those who seek legal or procedural precedents will continue to worry. I get that. But it **is** where Christ is calling us; and he's calling us together for a purpose.

So, what will it mean for us here in Crown? Initially, no change. The Mission Plan developed by Inverness Presbytery continues. But if you were to ask me what things might look like in, say, ten years' time, the answer would be "I don't know – but it could be **very** different." As an example, take a look at Shetland, which is now part of the new big Presbytery of the North East and Northern Isles. The whole island group, until recently eight separate "charges," each with its own Kirk Session, is now **one single parish!** That's right; one Kirk Session, working with a number of ministers and youth or community workers...

It actually works well – and makes far better use of resources and skills. Or imagine how Clèir Eilean Ì meetings will actually work, across more than 40% of Scotland's landmass: every meeting I'll be moderating will be hybrid – a mix of people actually meeting in designated places ("hubs"), where there will continue to be fellowship, together with those joining online, just as recent General Assemblies have been managed. And the man who made that work well was my colleague Rev Donald McCorkindale, who was, until this year's meeting, the Convener of the General Assembly Business Committee, and who is now Clèir Eilean Ì's Business Convener. How's that for having the right guy in the right place at the right time? Donald is currently Moderator of Lochaber Presbytery...

Much of our other work will be done online. And all of it will be directed towards finding better ways to resource local mission and ministry, seeking wherever we can to lift the administrative burdens that have for so long beset our Church.

So, as we enter 2024, and this new way of resourcing our congregations, ministry and mission begins to work, pray that God will continue to guide us going forward. I'm left with two final thoughts. The first is this: of all the world's religions, Christianity is the only one ultimately and absolutely defined by where, in Christ, we're *going*, and so, how we go forward – *not* by where we've come from.

As the New Year hymn puts it "Look forward in faith – all time is in God's hand." And the second is exactly the first thought I had when I found I'd been designated as CEI's first Moderator – "Help, please!"

Doug MacRoberts

Crown Church Conference January 2024

As previously announced, a conference is being held in Crown Church on Saturday 13th January 2024. Attendance at the conference is open to all who worship at Crown both at the 9:30 and the 11am services.

The conference is important to everyone who has an interest in the present and future life and work of Crown church. Particular care and attention is being given to its organisation and management within and beyond the church buildings. You are cordially invited to complete a registration form which is being sent out by email but hardcopies have also been printed and will be available at the Church doors over the coming weeks.

Please return completed registration forms, as advised on the form, as soon as possible.

Should you have any queries then please contact **Brian Macgill (01463-224650)**.



Christmas at Crown—Calendar of Events

Saturday 2nd December

S.N.A.C. (Saturday Night at Crown), A starry night walk from Fraser Park to the Church 5pm to 7 pm

Saturday 2nd December

'Held in our Hearts' Remembrance Service at 2.30pm

Wednesday 6th December

Concert by Inverness Singers, in the Sanctuary, 7:30pm

Friday 8th December

The Friendship Club, in the Sanctuary at 2pm

Sunday 10th December

Crown Church Choir and The Perfect Harmony Choir Band Joint Concert, in the Sanctuary at 3 pm, including congregational singing, followed by refreshments



Tuesday 12th December

Guild high tea, Redcliffe Hotel at 6pm

Saturday 16th December

Quiet Day, in the Sanctuary between 12 noon and 4 pm

Week beginning

The sanctuary will be open from 3 p.m. until 7 p.m.

18th December

to provide a space for quiet reflection and prayer

Thursday 21st December

Toddler's Christmas service, in the Sanctuary at 9:30 am

Friday 22nd December

The Friendship Club, Christmas Party in the Sanctuary at 2pm, with singing with the nursery/primary 1 pupils from Crown Primary

Friday 22nd December

Crown Primary School Christmas Service, in the Sanctuary at 9:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve 6.30pm Christmas Family Service

11.30pm Watch Night Service

Christmas Day 10.30am The Celebration of Christmas



Quiet Day Saturday 16th December

The church will be open on Saturday 16th December, noon to 4pm, for a Quiet Day. This is an opportunity for peaceful personal reflection in the beautifully decorated and candlelit Sanctuary, a warm haven from the bustle outside. Drop in for a minute or stay for an hour. Whatever suits you on the day.

Open Doors

In the week leading up to Christmas, the church will be open each afternoon & evening from 3- 7pm. The Sanctuary will be open for anyone from church or community to stop by and spend some time.

We would like to offer a warm welcome, warm drinks and to share the true spirit of Christmas in our beautifully decorated surroundings.

There will be the opportunity for anyone coming in to sit quietly or have a chat and dedicate a Christmas tree bauble too.

We will need help to staff the proceedings and are asking for volunteers to take two-hour shifts from 3-5pm or 5-7pm. There will always be at least two helpers present. The sign up sheet will be available at church on Sunday mornings.

If this is something that appeals to you or you want to know more about what's involved, please speak to Lesley or Chrisanne or Pat.



NEW ELDERS



Frank McCubbin

Frank and Sally McCubbin have come to us from Old High St Stephens church where Frank was ordained as an Elder in St Stephens congregation in 1982. We are delighted to welcome them both and they have already volunteered to be part of our Welcome Teams on door duty. An excellent way of meeting people. Both were brought up in Glasgow where they were married in 1965. The first hymn they chose for the wedding service, "I to the hills" from Psalm 121 has remained a firm favourite. They have two children. Andrea is in Inverness

and Pamela in Bridgend in South Wales. Andrea has three children, Andrew, Iain and Alice. Andrew is studying at the University of Strathclyde.

Frank started work in 1962 with the NHS as a joiner in the maintenance department at Stobhill Hospital and progressed to Deputy Group Building Supervisor before gaining promotion to Inverness in 1976 as District Building Officer with the Southern District of the Highland Health Board. Bruce Merchant was on his interviewing panel. In 1990, in another promotion, he became Estate Manager at Raigmore Hospital. He well remembers being dwarfed by big burly Royal Protection Officers when there were royal visits by the Queen to open the hospital, Princess Diana to open the helipad and the Duchess of Kent, with whom he had a long chat after she had launched the new scanner. Security was at its tightest for Diana with a lady PC detailed to stand on guard outside Diana's private room for six hours prior to the visit!

Scouting has been a big part of Frank's life for many years, as a cub scout leader and Akela, and after he came to Inverness as Leader of Kingsmills Cub Scouts from 1989 to 1999. Latterly that meant overseeing the completion of a new roof for the building in Walker Park. He is still involved with the Scout Fellowship and this includes supporting the annual Highland Cross fundraiser from Kintail to Beauly. At the Loch Benevean change over point to bicycles, he is responsible for logging the times of the first twenty runners. Frank retired in 2000 and Rev Colin Anderson asked him to be an additional elder to Inverness Presbytery. From 2013 he was Convener of the Presbytery Property Committee which involved inspections of the various churches, halls and manses. His last one was of Inverness Crown during our vacancy when we were also pursuing our 20/20 vision.

Frank and Sally enjoyed a visit to the Holy Land with Revd Douglas Clyne in 2008 and also to the Oberammergau passion play in 2010. As supporters of the Presbytery Plan proposal to link Old High St Stephens and Crown churches, they were disappointed with the result of the vote by OHSS and transferred "their lines" to Crown. We welcome them wholeheartedly and look forward to many happy years worshipping together.



Gordon Cameron

Gordon has been a regular worshipper with us since 2013 after moving to a job in Inverness. As our knowledgeable and meticulous Convener of the Property Committee, he does a huge amount of work behind the scenes (not least with the new AV and lighting systems). Crown Church owes him a great debt of gratitude.

Gordon's Dad is from Wick and his Mother from Glasgow and they met when both were employed at Nigg. Gordon is the eldest of four children, having a sister in Tain and another in Edinburgh. His brother is the farthest travelled. He lives in Perth. [Western Australia, that is].

They were brought up in the Seaboard Peninsula of Easter Ross, attending Hilton of Cadboll Primary and Tain Royal Academy and living latterly in Portmahomack.

Tarbat church and its site has a long history of Christian and pre Christian times, but Gordon's grounding in Christianity stems initially from the United Free Church parish minister who visited his school, really held the attention of the class, and first inspired his interest in spiritual matters. Having two sons of the manse as his friends at school also helped. A high achiever at school, gaining all the Highers he needed in fifth year, he left and started work helping to build the new road to Inverness Airport staying at a B&B in Ardersier. He then went on to study Civil Engineering at Heriot-Watt University in 2006. Having enjoyed technical drawing and mathematics at school, and with his gap year work experience, Gordon graduated with a Masters in Engineering in 2011.

It was during his time in Edinburgh that his friend Marcus introduced him to North Leith Parish Church whose Minister at the time was the Revd Dr Ken Baird, an Ulsterman. He enjoyed Christianity Explored courses run by several of the Elders at North Leith and was baptised and joined Church membership in January 2008. Later that year he became their Church Officer preparing the three buildings for worship every Sunday and he continued in this role until returning to the Highlands.

The jobs market was difficult in 2011 so it was back to Invergordon to help run his Dad's Garden Centre and do voluntary work with the Red Cross at weekends at Highland games and festivals over a wide area between Invergordon and Inverness.

In 2012 he obtained a civil engineering job with Halcrow's at Fairways in Inverness and bought his house a year later. The company was taken over and restructured in 2016 and redundancy ensued. He landed a job with Scottish Water but found it desk bound and rather repetitive, so in 2019 he joined the Scottish Ambulance Service and trained as an Ambulance Technician in Golspie.

COVID proved to be a very challenging time workwise and every day was different. Gordon has found his job to be very humbling with the satisfaction of knowing that he has helped people in need, serving people and sharing in their home lives, being perhaps the only one allowed in especially during COVID. Earlier this year Gordon further qualified as a Paramedic and he is now based in Nairn.

When he came to Inverness, Gordon sampled several churches and found the atmosphere in Crown reminiscent of Leith and Portmahomack – “my type of church” as he calls it. Crown has found him to be “our kind of Church Officer” We salute him and thank him sincerely for this and we wish him God Speed in his new role as an Elder.

Gordon has two favourite hymns: “O come, O come Emmanuel” and he likes the words of Psalm 50 “God the Lord, the King almighty” which is Hymn 39 to the tune Hyfrydol (a hymn that was on the order of service at his baptism back in 2008). Trying to choose a favourite verse was difficult, so he settled on picking his favourite books – Habakkuk and Luke’s Gospel.

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Saviour (Habakkuk 3:18 NIV)

Richard Ardern

CHRISTMAS GIFT OF POTMUMS



For many years Crown Church has delivered chrysanthemums to members who were bereaved and to those who are housebound. The name “potmums” has remained in the vocabulary of our Church, although in more recent years cyclamen plants have been delivered by Dobbies. This year the 17th of December will be the date for elders to pick up and deliver to those in need of Christmas cheer.

If you know of a fellow church member in need of some Christmas cheer then please contact Gloria at the church office.

Yours prayerfully,

Douglas Robertson



UPDATE: NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2023

“Two things I ask of you, Lord; do not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonour the name of my God.

from Sayings of Agur in Proverbs 30:7-9 (NIV)

So much and so many

“Christmas won’t be Christmas without any presents,” grumbled Jo... and so begins one of the most enduring coming-of-age stories written in English.¹ Set against the backdrop of the American Civil war the book charts the lives of the March sisters, four Christians, as they grow into adulthood learning about love, family, morality and experience personal growth.

As we approach Christmas 2023 there are 110 million forcibly displaced people worldwide.² Have you ever sat in your home after hearing the latest world news, looked around and wondered what you would take with you if you had to carry it in a couple of bags?

By the end of 2023/24 real disposable income per person in Scotland is expected to fall by 4%, which would be Scotland’s highest fall in living standards on record.³ It can feel pretty gloomy, so it is understandable we are tempted to distract ourselves with more and more possessions. Let’s make this Christmas different and, like the March sisters, learn that it is fine to spend less, to share what we have, and to focus on the inordinate love of a Father who sent his only son to save us from ourselves.

The Class of 23



Our city was represented by Provost Glynis Sinclair and Chief Inspector Judy Hill (right). We were deeply humbled by the expressions of gratitude and to hear of how we have an impact.

On 3rd November we were delighted to see so many people at Crown Church for our commissioning of 13 new Street Pastors and celebration of 15 years on the streets of Inverness. We are so grateful to Crown for their warm hospitality on the night. They had also generously provided an excellent venue for all the training that is needed.



Bob Forrest (Session Clerk), Owen Morris (our Chair), Don Grant and Very Rev Sarah Murray represented local churches, sharing prayers for the city and our pastors.

Sandy Gunn (right) from our umbrella organisation ASCENSION Trust Scotland, commissioned the new Street Pastors. He spoke of how Jesus noticed people and how we are called to do the same. It was a blessed night that will fuel us going forward. After the service a team of six headed out to patrol the city centre, where we put Sandy’s sage words into practice.



¹ Little Women, Louisa M. Alcott

² <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/> [accessed 17 November, 2023]

³ <https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/Committees/Report/FPA/2023/11/6/015834f7-3db3-4c16-abaa-5e1fbfad73bc#introduction>

Patrol Dates for Prayer

November Patrols		
Sat 18th	22:00-03:00	City Centre
Tues 21st	12:00-14:00	City Centre
Tues 28th	13:30-15:30	City Centre
December patrols		
Sat 2nd (Payday)	22:00-03:00	City Centre
Weds 6th	9:45-11:45	City Centre
Sat 9th	22:00-03:00	City Centre
Tues 12th	13:30-15:30	City Centre
Weds 13th	09:45-11:45	City Centre
Sat 16th	22:00-03:00	City Centre
Thur 21st	TBD day	City Centre
Fri 22nd	19:00-22:00	City Centre
Fri 22nd	22:00-02:00	City Centre
Fri 29th	22:00-03:00	City Centre
Sun 31st Hogmanay	TBD night	City Centre

Thank you!

Prayer Points



Give thanks for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. For the privilege it is to step out in His name to serve our community. For the power that we have in prayer and in the cross.

Please bless our patrols as we learn from each other. Ask for wisdom and insight. Bless too, Ross and Mark, who have worked so hard to pull together the training and rotas, and for the members of Operation Respect as they plan to make celebrations safe.

As we move into the Christmas season, pray for focus on the true meaning of Christmas and not to succumb to the pressures to conform to our consumer culture that will burden us with possessions and debt. Be bold! Pray for peace and believe it can happen.

Remember those who are away from home for whatever reason. Give thanks for the hospitality of Inverness families who are still hosting refugees, particularly from Ukraine.

It's a busy time for mental health services. Pray for Mikey's Line, The Samaritans and all front-line mental health professionals. Pray that, we too, can respectfully minister to those for whom the lead up to Christmas is a heavy burden.



Inverness Street Pastors altogether - Prayer & Street, old & new.

If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. Isaiah 9b-11 (ESVUK).

Inverness Street Pastors is managed by Love Inverness, a Scottish charitable company limited by guarantee. Companies House # 331481. Office of Scottish Charities Regulator number SC041605.

Prayer: the unseen key to the success of every ministry of the church.



This is the latest prayer update for Inverness Street Pastors, which covers our patrols until the end of the year. Although the shops would tell us otherwise, it does seem very early to be talking about Christmas but there is a lot to plan. Please forgive us.

The report also shares a bit about our commissioning service on the 3rd November, which was such a blessing.

Thank you once again for your prayer support. If we step out in our own strength we are condemned to fall.

In His name,

Sue

Sue Marrs,

Inverness Prayer Pastors Coordinator



**Join us for a CHRISTMAS
CONCERT**

**Crown Church Choir and
Perfect Harmony Choir**

Sunday 10th Dec 2023 3pm

Christmas Refreshments

**Car parking in Crown
School**

**Donations for the
Salvation Army**

Daily Bible Readings for December and January

Sunday, December 3, 2023, Jeremiah 33:14-18 Advent I: Promise of the Messiah

Monday, December 4, 2023, Mark 8:27-29 Who Do You Say that I Am?

Tuesday, December 5, 2023, Jeremiah 1:4-10 I Am Only a Boy

Wednesday, December 6, 2023, Jeremiah 1:11-19 Boiling Pot

Thursday, December 7, 2023, Jeremiah 2:1-8 Jeremiah Speaks

Friday, December 8, 2023, Jeremiah 33:19-26 Covenant with David

Saturday, December 9, 2023, Jeremiah 34:1-7 Promise of Salvation

Sunday, December 10, 2023, Isaiah 40:1-11 Advent II: Isaiah of the Exile

Monday, December 11, 2023, Isaiah 41:1-20 Israel Assured of God's Help

Tuesday, December 12, 2023, Isaiah 41:21-29 The Futility of Idols

Wednesday, December 13, 2023, Isaiah 42:1-9 The Servant, a Light to the Nations

Thursday, December 14, 2023, Isaiah 42:10-20 A Hymn of Praise

Friday, December 15, 2023, Isaiah 42:21-25 Israel's Disobedience

Saturday, December 16, 2023, Isaiah 43:1-7 Restoration and Protection Promised

Sunday, December 17, 2023, Ezra 1:1-4; 3:1-4, 10-13 Advent III: Rebuilding the Temple

Monday, December 18, 2023, Ezra 3:5-13 Foundation Laid for the Temple

Tuesday, December 19, 2023, Ezra 4:1-5 Resistance to Rebuilding the Temple

Wednesday, December 20, 2023, Ezra 4:6-24 Rebuilding of Jerusalem Opposed

Thursday, December 21, 2023, Ezra 5:1-17 Restoration of the Temple Resumed

Friday, December 22, 2023, Ezra 6:13-18 Completion and Dedication of the Temple

Saturday, December 23, 2023, Ezra 6:10-22 The Passover Celebrated

Sunday Morning, December 24, 2023, Luke 1:5-13 [57-80] Advent IV: Zechariah's Song. Sunday Evening, December 24, 2023, Luke 2:1-14 [15-20] The Birth of Jesus

Monday, December 25, 2023, Luke 2:8-20 Shepherds Visit

Tuesday, December 26, 2023, Luke 1:5-24 Birth of John the Baptist Foretold

Wednesday, December 27, 2023, Luke 1:26-38 Birth of Jesus Foretold

Thursday, December 28, 2023, Luke 1:39-56 Mary's Song

Friday, December 29, 2023, Luke 2:21-24 Jesus Circumcised

Saturday, December 30, 2023, Matthew 2:1-12 The Magi

Sunday, December 31, 2023, Mark 1:1-20 Beginning of Good News

Monday, January 1, 2024, Psalm 91:9-12 Psalm

Tuesday, January 2, 2024, Malachi 3:1-7 The Coming Messenger

Wednesday, January 3, 2024, Isaiah 40:1-11 Comfort, Comfort

Thursday, January 4, 2024, Isaiah 44:1-8 God's Blessing on Israel

Friday, January 5, 2024, Joel 2:28-29 God's Spirit Poured Out

Saturday, January 6, 2024, Isaiah 42:1-9 The Servant, a Light to the Nations

Sunday, January 7, 2024, Mark 1:21-45 Jesus' Ministry Begun

Monday, January 8, 2024, Psalm 103:1-5 Psalm

Tuesday, January 9, 2024, Isaiah 42:10-20 A Hymn of Praise

Wednesday, January 10, 2024, Psalm 2 Psalm

Thursday, January 11, 2024, Psalm 113 Psalm

Friday, January 12, 2024, Psalm 146:5-10 Psalm

Saturday, January 13, 2024, Psalm 108:1-4 Psalm

Sunday, January 14, 2024, Mark 2:1-22 Jesus Heals and Teaches

Monday, January 15, 2024, Psalm 103:6-14 Psalm

Tuesday, January 16, 2024, Mark 2:23-28 Pronouncement about the Sabbath

Wednesday, January 17, 2024, Mark 3:1-6 The Man with a Withered Hand

Thursday, January 18, 2024, Mark 3:7-12 A Multitude at the Seaside

Friday, January 19, 2024, Mark 3:13-19a Jesus Appoints the Twelve

Saturday, January 20, 2024, Mark 3:19b-30 Jesus and Beelzebul

Sunday, January 21, 2024, Mark 4:1-34 Parables in Mark

Monday, January 22, 2024, Psalm 126 Psalm

Tuesday, January 23, 2024, Mark 3:31-35 The True Kindred of Jesus

Wednesday, January 24, 2024, Mark 4:35-41 Jesus Stills a Storm

Thursday, January 25, 2024, Matthew 13:1-8 Parable of Sower

Friday, January 26, 2024, Matthew 13:9-12 Disciples Question Jesus

Saturday, January 27, 2024, Matthew 13:13-23 Parable of Sower Explained

Sunday, January 28, 2024, Mark 5:1-20 Gerasene Demoniac

Monday, January 29, 2024, Psalm 89:1-4 Psalm

Tuesday, January 30, 2024, Matthew 8:23-33 Jesus Casts out Demons

Wednesday, January 31, 2024, Luke 8:31-41 Jesus Casts out Demons

Thursday, February 1, 2024, Luke 16:13-19 Jesus Heals

Friday, February 2, 2024, Luke 9:37-47 Jesus Heals a Boy

Saturday, February 3, 2024, Acts 14:4-14 Paul Heals

Sunday, February 4, 2024, Mark 5:21-43 Jairus' Daughter Healed

Monday, February 5, 2024, Psalm 131 Psalm

Tuesday, February 6, 2024, Matthew 15:23-22 A Woman Healed

Wednesday, February 7, 2024, Luke 7:2-12 A Centurion Slave Healed

Thursday, February 8, 2024, Luke 8:40-52 Jairus' Daughter Healed

Friday, February 9, 2024, Luke 14:1-6 Healing on the Sabbath

Saturday, February 10, 2024, Luke 17:10-20 Jesus Heals



S-N-A-C Time

Starry Night SNAC For all ages

Come to Walker Park for **5pm on Saturday 2nd December** and you will be welcome to join the procession of happy wanderers. We'll make our way to the church for carol singing in the garden with warm refreshments.

Remember to wrap up warmly and bring a lamp or a torch! Dressing as a Christmas character is optional but adds to the sense of fun and occasion.

SNAC follows in the Upper Hall as usual with the theme of Christmas party food. Come to some or all of it.



Launchpad 2023

Launchpad has given out 15 awards this year. Interviews by members of the committee normally take place once a month after Gus McGowan, the current Administrator has received two references about the applicant. If an award is approved, the applicant meets with our Treasurer, Liz Forbes, in a suitable shop where the item awarded is purchased, or an online conversation takes place and the item purchased online. We have provided bikes, laptops, gardening equipment, outdoor gear, a phone, a sewing machine, a metal detector, a tablet and a rollator mobility aid. Beechwood staff who have facilitated some of the requests have passed on grateful feedback from applicants, and one of the bikes was so much appreciated that the applicant sent a box of chocolates along with a 'thank you' card.

To keep topping up the funds which support this level of activity, we are holding another 'Big Book Sale' on Saturday 10th February. Please support us with donations of books in good condition with which you are finished. We are happy to sell novels, non fiction and children's books in paper or hardback. And plan to come along to replenish your bookshelves, and maybe enjoy a cup of tea and a chat with fellow booklovers.

THE BIG BOOK SALE

Saturday 10th February 10am-4pm

In aid of Launchpad

CROWN CHURCH

Crown School Parking

Refreshments

Save the date!





The Guild

Our final meeting of October saw a good attendance for Bill McBryde who came to tell us about the wickedest women in the Bible. We were all familiar with the name Jezebel but perhaps not so aware of what she did to earn the accolade! Most interesting. The other woman was Ahab and Jezebel's daughter, Athalia, who took over the throne illegally.

The first of two meetings in November was presented by Mr Jimmy Smith and his wife from Clephanton on the road to Croy. They purchased about an acre of land there twenty five years ago, built a house on it and transformed the land into a beautiful garden which eventually won prizes in garden competitions and was visited by the public as part of Scotlands Garden Scheme. The money collected was given to charity. Many thousands of pounds have been raised. We were all amazed that most of the clearance work was done by Jimmy and his wife with fork and spade!

At our meeting on the 28th November we each brought a picture of ourselves as children for a guessing game! Heather Beck led a great meeting.

Christmas is coming and our annual outing for dinner will take place on Tuesday 12th December to the Redcliffe Hotel at 6pm. We were there last year and enjoyed the experience very much. January 2024 has two meetings, the first on the 9th and the second on the 23rd. The first, a member of the Blood Bikes will come to tell us about the way they transport blood etc all over the north of Scotland. The second is a talk by the newly appointed manager of the Victorian Market. He will give us the history of the market and the recent improvement that have been made.

Another date for your diaries. The Guilds Together committee are holding a Big Sing in Dalneigh Church on Friday 8th December at 2pm. We hope for a good attendance as it will be seasonal readings and carols.

Dorothy Mein

The Inverness Singers Christmas Concert

Wednesday 6th December in Crown Church at 7.30pm with an eclectic selection of carols and contemporary Christmas music. Programmes are available from choir members (£10/£5 for a student or child) or you can pay at the door.

A shorter version of the concert takes place on Sunday 10th December in the Nairn Community and Arts Centre, Main Street, Nairn at 3pm.

E-bookings can be made using the link **The Inverness Singers - Afternoon Concert Tickets, Sun 10 Dec 2023 at 15:00 | Eventbrite**



Firmly Planted

Collect your stamps to support Malawi Project



Crown Church is once again participating in the collection of used stamps this year to raise funds to help the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) improve nutrition, agricultural productivity, create youth employment and mitigate the impact of the climate crisis. The CCAP project, Firmly Planted, aims to establish self-sustaining tree nurseries to nurture and protect the environment and protect livelihoods for households and communities.

This year the Crown Church's collection of used stamps required two trips to the Church Office collection point in Glasgow.

The Church is continuing to use the sale of stamps to fund its international work.

If you wish to support Crown Church's contribution to this work please collect stamps from your mail and drop them into the collection boxes in the vestibules of the church. Please separate the stamps into different bags for UK and other countries.

Liz Munro



CHRISTMAS POST

If you are exchanging Christmas cards with fellow congregation members, you could leave them in the pigeonholes beside the rear corridor in the church.

FLOWERS IN CHURCH ON SUNDAY

We are very grateful to those who have donated money so that we can arrange flowers for our Sunday Services in December.

A new flower chart for 2024 will be put up in the corridor. If you would like to donate flowers on a particular Sunday please add your name to the list and Ruby will then be in touch with you to discuss what you would like.

Ruby Coe (225467)



Candles for Christmas

There are still a few of the lovely Church Window candles. These are available now for Christmas shopping. Only the Rose Window candles are left and are priced at £10 for the small size. They are available in the sanctuary, just choose one and get the payment to Lesley McRoberts when you can.

All proceeds in support of Young Crown.





BAIRNS ON BIKES



Our Bairns on Bikes project is a regular social ride for parents/carers and their small children. The rides make use of quiet routes around Inverness and include a stop for a rest and a play. Riding a bike with your children is a great way to be together outdoors enjoying the city! If you think this project could be a good fit for you, please get in touch.

SCAN THE
QR CODE TO
FIND OUT
MORE!



bairnsonbikes@velocitylove.co.uk



Bairns on Bikes is a regular social ride starting in Hilton for parents/ carers and their small children. The rides make use of quiet routes around Inverness and includes a stop for a rest and a play. Riding a bike with a child/ children is a great activity to be together outdoors enjoying the city. These events aim to be as inclusive as possible so please let us know if there is anything you need to help you come along. Best wishes,

Katie Noble
Velocity Cafe



DINGWALL & HIGHLAND
MARTS LIMITED

FARMING COMMUNITY SERVICE

Sunday 10th December
2:45pm

Christmas Decor on Wood

Dingwall Mart



with the
Highland Gospel
Male Voice Choir
Eilèen Mackintosh Director
and
Gospel Preacher
Sandy Shaw

Collection in aid of

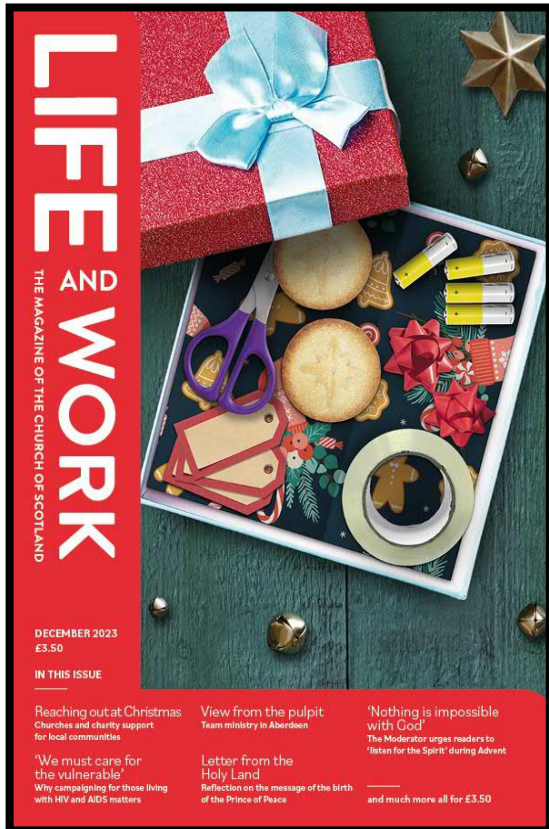


FREE ADMISSION

Refreshments to follow

LIFE AND WORK

DECEMBER



CHRISTMAS 2023

Reaching Out at Christmas: Churches and charities supporting their local communities

Letter from the Holy Land: The Rev Muriel Pearson reflects on the message of the birth of the Prince of Peace

'Nothing is Impossible With God': the Moderator urges readers to listen for the spirit during Advent

Time to Pause: The Rev Roddy Hamilton urges us to find space to consider every aspect of the Advent story anew

'We Must Care for the Vulnerable'

Marking World AIDS Day on December 1, a Bolivian campaigner living with HIV talks about her work

A Labyrinth Ministry

In his final column as Sanctuary First minister, the

Very Rev Albert Bogle reflects on the power of journey

'Christian faith is rooted in the physical'

The Rev Dr Richard Frazer links physical wellbeing to spiritual health

Sharing 'the fragrance of His love'

A young Church member who moved to Scotland from Nigeria last year shares his story

The Art of Peacebuilding

Concluding her series of Bible studies, Ruth Harvey reflects on the place of 'voicewalkers'

Regulars

The Rev Roddy Hamilton on worship

The Rev Dr Martin Johnstone on leadership

The Very Rev Albert Bogle on digital church

Reflection by the Rev Dr Richard Frazer

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

Buy or subscribe, in print or digital, at www.lifeandwork.org/subscribe, or speak to your church's Life and Work promoter.

Online

Visit www.lifeandwork.org for more news, and exclusive features.

You can also find us at facebook.com/leadwork or on Twitter @cofslifeandwork and now on Instagram.

Welcome Team

December 3rd	Helen Boynton, Sheena Ferguson, Ella Low, Eleanor Ross
December 10th	Helen Boynton, Sheena Ferguson, Eleanor Ross, Jean Smith
December 17th	Helen Boynton, Sheena Ferguson, Frank & Sally McCubbin
December 24th	Frank & Sally McCubbin, Stewart & Chrisanne Robertson
December 25th	Fiona Carter
December 31st	Sheena Ferguson, Frank & Sally McCubbin
January 7th	Jean Smith , Boys Brigade
January 14th	Helen Boynton, Boys Brigade
January 21st	Helen Boynton, Boys Brigade, Jean Smith
January 28th	Helen Boynton, Boys Brigade

It is always so 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

December 3rd	Iain S Fraser
December 10th	Jean Smith
December 17th	Mairi Mtui
December 24th	Alison Robertson
December 31st	Heather Beck
January 7th	Jean Smith
January 14th	Donald MacKenzie
January 21st	Gordon Cameron
January 28th	Jane Smith
February 4th	Fiona Carter

NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

Deaths

Mrs Janet MacPherson, Bishopbriggs, previously Burnbrae Terrace, 5th November 2023

Items for the February newsletter by Sunday 28th January 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)

Minister Rev Douglas Robertson, 39 Southside Road, 07547976054
drrobertson@churchofscotland.org.uk

Crown Church Office: office@crowns-church.co.uk 01463 231140

Session Clerk Bob Forrest: sessionclerk@crowns-church.co.uk

Published by Crown Church, Inverness (Church of Scotland)

Registered charity SC 018159

The Church website is to be found at www.crowns-church.co.uk