

May 2024

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



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 was wondering if we give thanks to the workers of the world often enough. Because unless we are very self sufficient, we always have to rely on someone to do work for us.

International Workers' Day, also known as Labour Day in some countries and often referred to as May Day, is a celebration of labourers and the working classes that is promoted by the international labour movement and occurs every year on 1 May, or the first Monday in May. In many countries, the first Monday in May is celebrated as a public holiday, and the first of May is dedicated to St Joseph the worker, the patron saint of workers and craftsmen. He is also, the patron saint of barristers, emigrants, travellers and, surprisingly, house hunters. I could have done with his assistance late last year.

In the UK, we are lucky to have a string of laws that are in place to ensure workers are protected, for example, the Working Time Directive, the Health and Safety at Work Act, and the Children (Protection at Work) Regulations, which ensures that children under 13 may not be employed, and that full time work may only be given to those who are above school leaving age. All of these laws are in place to protect the health and wellbeing of people in the workplace. And every time you see a law, it was probably put in place because someone, somewhere, had a terrible accident, and it was seen that regulation was required.

However, even though we have a string of laws in place to protect our workers, the same cannot be said for many other countries throughout the world, where lax employment laws, long hours and low wages are used to make the products we may use every day. The elements we use in the batteries in our phones, household appliances and cars are dug out of the ground in places like Congo, where workers toil for about 30p per hour doing backbreaking work. There's no employment protection. No sick days. And apparently, no minimum age for a worker.

The bible says

"You shall not oppress a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your brothers or one of the sojourners who are in your land within your towns. You shall give him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets (for he is poor and counts on it), lest he cry against you to the Lord, and you be guilty of sin." Deuteronomy 24:14-15 ESV

When we buy or use items, it is clear that we are relying on someone else's hard work. On May Day, and through the rest of the year, please remember to give thanks for those who are far worse off than us, but upon whose labours we rely upon.

Up the workers!
James

NEWS FROM THE CONGREGATION

SALE OF OLD HIGH CHURCH Some of you will have seen the article in the Inverness Courier on Friday 19 April regarding the sale of the Old High. The length of time this has taken to conclude is more than frustrating and I can assure you that I am in regular contact by phone and e-mail with the Solicitor at 121 who is dealing with this. I am also grateful for the support I have from Calum MacLeod in the 121 Communications Department, who has a close family connection with the Old High who fields the many press enquires we receive. Hopefully there will be a conclusion soon. I will keep you informed of developments. Christine

REV PETER NIMMO The following message was given to the congregation at Cambuslang on Sunday.

It is with much sadness that I am letting you know that I will have to demit as Minister of Cambuslang due to ill-health.

As you know, I have been struggling with my health since I contracted COVID-19 in November 2021. I was left with Long Covid, suffering fatigue which made it impossible for me to work. I was delighted to be able to return to work a year later, in November 2022, but sadly my health broke down again in August 2023, and I was once more left with the frustration of fatigue. As I am still unable to work, Church law now requires that I demit office. Presbytery will consider my request at their meeting on 14 May 2024.

As you can imagine, this has been a difficult time for me, for my wife Katharina, and for our family. As we navigate the next few months, ending our time here, looking for a new place to live, and seeking the path which God intends for us, can I ask that you keep us in your prayers?



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2024 (MAY 12TH-18TH) is fast approaching. For Christian Aid week this year the focus is on Burundi which

has been badly affected by climate change. They are being helped to set up Women's groups and small-scale agriculture.

Locally the Inverness Christian Aid Group organises this week of fundraising as well as other events throughout the year.

The red 'door to door' envelopes this year are again are for delivery only. Then they are to be dropped off by the recipient at the Drawing Room, or church and they can

also give online. If you are able to deliver some envelopes this year that would be great, please let Pat Macleod or myself know. We will also have envelopes in pews and we will have a Just Giving webpage again for those who are comfortable with the convenience of online giving.

There will be a **Coffee and Cake morning with baking and plant stalls at St Stephen's church on Saturday 11th May 10am-12pm**. Plants and baking can be donated by leaving at the hall door on Friday evening 7-8pm or Saturday morning from 9am. For more information about envelope distribution please contact me at the email address below or speak to me. To volunteer to help at this on the day contact Val Cantlay. Deborah Macrae deb.macrae.10@gmail.com



MEMORABLE MELODIES Memorable Melodies is the monthly singing group at St Stephen's. We usually meet on the last Friday of the month. We had a gathering on 26 April and our next 2 sessions are on Friday 31 May and Friday 28 June. Each month we have a theme and the songs are all well know numbers from the past. After the music we have tea and home baking. Please join us if you can. Further information from Joan Darcy 07765 073583 or Val Cantlay (01463) 231298

Memorable Melodies

Why not come along to our singing and music afternoon.

This is an opportunity to meet others, join a sing-a-long and enjoy a cup of tea/coffee together.

This month Theme

Welcome Summer

Join Us on
Friday 31st May at 2pm
in

St Stephen's Church Hall
For further information contact

Joan Darcy 241042 or Val Cantlay 231298



Dear Members of OHSS, I would like to thank you all for your support after my recent fall and hospital stay. The visits I received and the church flowers helped

lift my spirits. I am now back home and making progress with the help of my physio. We are working towards me being able to walk to church, so I hope to make it along and see you all soon. Best wishes, Jean Sim.

CAFE 1668 continue to be very grateful for the donations we give them on the last Sunday in each month.



A rather nice comment on Facebook after our donations from Easter Sunday

True spirit and embodiment of Christianity and love in action

The next collection will be on Sunday 26 May. Christine
OHSS EASTER WALK An eclectic group met recently for an Easter walk. We were favoured with an (almost) dry afternoon and enjoyed a pleasant ramble down to the ford at the river Nairn and back via the Cawdor burn and woods. We were once again served an excellent afternoon tea at the Cawdor Tavern and its consumption was mixed with lively conversation. Malcolm Steven



OHSS WALK AND AFTERNOON TEA - SUNDAY 12TH MAY

A further outing is planned for Sunday May 12th when Alex and Margaret Hutcheson (Daviot Lodge) have kindly offered to host us at their Daviot home for afternoon tea. A short walk is also anticipated prior to that. We will finalise transport plans beforehand and arrange car sharing and lifts, as required, for the group. We need to **confirm numbers by Friday 10th May** so please confirm attendance with one of us by then.

Malcolm Steven mmsteven1@btinternet.com
07773017928

Derick Robertson roderick43r@btinternet.com
01463790372

Iain Russell iainrussell01@gmail.com 01463 239344

SEAGULL TRUST PRESENTATION We Remember Calvary, a Tennebrae Service held in St Stephen's Church on Good Friday, 29 March Once again the service was held by the joint choirs of Old High St Stephen's and Crown Church.

Sincere thanks to Pam McCulloch and Alyn Ross for their organisation of the music and to the choirs for their hard work. There was a good attendance on the night for this most moving service. There was an opportunity to support the work of the local Seagull Trust at the Service and £542 was raised.

The Seagull Trust run a small boat on Loch Ness providing a free service to the elderly, disabled and nursing home residents. It is run entirely by volunteers and the service is much appreciated by those who use it. A presentation of the money raised was held at St Stephen's on Thursday 18 April when the Trust were represented by Kenny Beck, Duncan Sutherland and Ramsay McGhee.



inscribed "Bequeathed to the Woman's Guild of the Old High Church, Inverness by Mrs MacKay, Craigmonie 1942"

The bowl was made by Roberts and Belk, Sheffield 1921 and is 5.5 inches diameter. It was retailed by W B Taylor, Inverness., This company had connections with a member of the Church. Christine MacKenzie, Session Clerk.

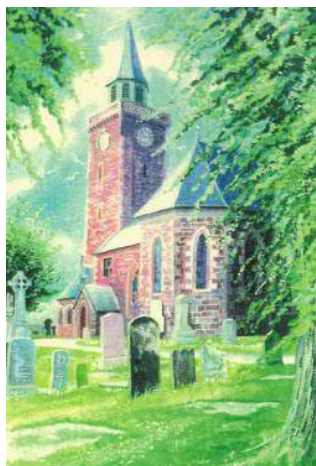


WHAT'S ON 2024 - Just a Litte Reminder of all our events and classes for 2024

FUNERALS

Tom MacLeod, latterly of Isobel Fraser Nursing Home

Ardyn Scott-Brown, former elder and latterly of Culduthel Road



THE OLD HIGH CHURCH - SOME HISTORY The silver from the Old High Church was valued recently by Sarah Marr, Beauly. Over the next few newsletters I will illustrate some of the items and some additional history I have managed to get. We will start with the Baptismal bowl of lipped panelled octagonal form on lipped spreading foot. It is

WHATS ON AT ST STEPHEN'S		FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT 01463 - 419781 invernesschurch@gmail.com
MONDAY Toddler Group - 9.30 - 11.30 Yoga - 13.45 - 15.45 Wildrae Yoga - 18.00 - 19.00 Musical Theatre Choir - 19.30 - 20.30	TUESDAY Rainbows - 17.15 - 18.30 Yoga - 19.00 - 21.00	
WEDNESDAY Zen Class - 10.00 - 11.00 Fit As A Fiddle Every two weeks 14.00 - 15.00 Bee Crafty Every Alternative Week 14.00 - 16.00	THURSDAY Pilates 9.00 - 12.00 Yoga - 13.45 - 15.45 Choir - 19.00 - 20.00 Community Choir - 20.00 - 21.30	
FRIDAY Magic Movers 10.00 - 12.00 Once a Month Memorable Memories 14.00 - 16.00 Expressive Dance - 18.15 - 20.00	SUNDAY Morning Worship 10 - 11am Every two weeks Argentine Tango 13.45 - 17.45	

OTHER NEWS

CRAIGMONIE: BIG HOUSE > MATERNITY HOME >

HOTEL Looking on line I found considerable information on the history of the Craigmonie and Mrs Mackay and thought members would be interested in this. It was written by former police officer Dave Conner and I have his permission to reproduce this information. Christine MacKenzie, Session Clerk

Research by Dave Conner (this has been reproduced with his permission)

What is now the Craigmonie Hotel in Annfield Road, Inverness was originally built as a private house in 1880 for William MacKay LLD (1848-1928), eminent Inverness lawyer and keen and much-published local historian, and a co-founder of the Gaelic Society of Inverness. He held office as Chief of the Society in 1908 and again in 1921. He was a native of Glenurquhart, and called his new abode after his home area. His was the first private home in Inverness to be equipped with a telephone - he was the second telephone subscriber in Inverness, with the number Inverness 2 - and Provost MacAndrew made the first telephone call in Inverness in 1885 when he called Mr MacKay at Craigmonie House. The Town House number was Inverness 1.

The Honourable Mrs Ida Helen Lizzie Merry of Belladrum was the wife of Archibald Merry, proprietor of Belladrum Estate. Kiltarlity. He had inherited it from his father, James Merry MP, who had bought the estate in 1857. Ida (nee Chetwynd) had married Archie Merry on 14 November 1899. Ida's mother was the daughter of Baron Macdonald of Sleat, and her maternal grandfather was Duncan Davidson, 4th of Tulloch, Dingwall (Lord Lieutenant of Ross-shire). A local philanthropist with a particular interest in health and maternity matters, Mrs Merry established the Ida Merry Maternity Home (IMMH) in 1919. It was supported by endowments and much hard work in fund-raising. Until 1930 the IMMH was located at 101 Church Street and was called the "Mother's Welcome, Bowmont Centre". At its AGM in October 1930 it was identified that a large building was required. In July 1931 was announced that it was transferring to the former family home of Mr Mackay, "Craigmonie", Annfield Road, with hopes to open in early August. Mr Mackay had died in 1928.

The new home was opened on 3 September 1931 by Lady Dawking, lady in waiting to the Queen. Queen Mary (grandmother of our present Queen) had also sent her good wishes. In September 1931 it was reported by the British Medical Journal: *"Inverness Maternity Home*
"The opening ceremony of the Ida Merry Maternity Home, situated in a new property at Craigmonie,

Inverness, was performed on September 3rd by Lady Bertha Dawkins on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen. "The home was established by the Hon. Mrs. Merry of Belladrum some years ago, and has now been transferred to more commodious quarters. It is intended for working men's wives of the Inverness district, and occupies a finely appointed building with open surroundings."

The local press reported that Mr Archibald Merry had paid £2,400 for the new house, but would recover £600 from the sale of the Church Street premises. This was achieved when in 1932 the YWCA took over the Church Street premises as their new Flora Macdonald Centre.

Craigmonie remained home to the IMMH - full title "THE IDA MERRY MATERNITY HOME and BOWMONT CENTRE FOR THE WIVES OF WORKING MEN" until its closure during the 1940s. It seems to have been a victim of its own success, in that demand for its services exceeded the income raised from fundraising. A number of fundraising events were held, including fetes both at the home itself and at Belladrum, but demand for the Home's services continued to grow at a faster level than the Home's trustees could raise money. The establishment also seemed to have trouble recruiting, and retaining, nursing staff - there were frequent advertisements placed in national publications. This is hardly surprising as, unlike large hospitals, the Merry Home was a small undertaking - the few staff would be kept so very busy, and literally run off their feet. Efforts were made to have the Inverness Town Council take over the running of the premises - but this was declined in September 1940, the Council concluding they could not assume control "because the funds had been too securely conveyed to trustees".

Prior to that, in August 1940 Mrs Merry had decided to keep the premises open for another 3 months to give interested parties an opportunity to come up with some sort of survival package. Meanwhile Rosedene had opened as the Town's Maternity Home in March 1940. A converted domestic house which provided sixteen beds, it was formerly the Northern Counties Children's Home. Although it disappeared off the radar after 1942, it would appear the Ida Merry Home continued in some form before finally closing completely in 1945, and it therefore did not transfer to the National Health Service (in 1948).

Archibald Merry died in 1933, and Mrs Merry commissioned the construction of a memorial chapel - known as the Gibbs Chapel - on Belladrum Estate, Mr Merry's ashes were interred there, as were those of Mrs Ida Merry after she passed away in 1950.

The house Craigmonie thereafter became a hotel, a role it still fulfils today, albeit nowadays in a much altered and extended form.