

June 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

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

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THOUGHTS FROM REV JAMES So, shall we address the elephant in the room? That small matter of an election that will take place in July and that you'll be sick of hearing about soon...

There has always been a part of me tempted to chip in the £500 deposit and stand to become your local MP. My plan though, was to change my name to Zzzachary Zzzippy and found the political party called "None of the Above" That way I'd appear on the bottom of the ballot paper, and hopefully collect the protest votes... The part of this plan I've not quite thought through is what do I do if I actually get elected...?

So yes, there is an election coming up, and yes, in the pulpit, in theory we are supposed to be politically neutral. In John Wesley's journal, dated 6th October 1774 he wrote:

"I met those of our society who had votes in the ensuing election, and advised them

1. To vote, without fee or reward, for the person they judged most worthy
2. To speak no evil of the person they voted against, and
3. To take care their spirits were not sharpened against those that voted on the other side."

In the time Wesley wrote these words, In order to vote, a person had to own property or pay certain taxes to qualify, which excluded most working class people. There were also constituencies with several voters that elected two MPs to Parliament, such as Old Sarum in Salisbury. In these 'rotten boroughs', with few voters and no secret ballot, it was easy for those standing for election to buy votes. At least nowadays, everyone over 18 has the vote.

Wesley's words are still as valid today, as they were in 1774. Perhaps even more so, when the press and social media will strive to stir up division. We are no better or worse than someone who wears a different coloured rosette than ours. Back in the days of the bible, Jesus mixed with and challenged the political groups of the day, such as the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians, and they would each seek to trap Jesus. In Mark 12:13-17 we read:

The Question about Paying Taxes

Some Pharisees and some members of Herod's party were sent to Jesus to trap him with questions. They came to him and said, "Teacher, we know that you tell the truth, without worrying about what people think. You pay no attention to anyone's status, but teach the truth about God's will for people. Tell us, is it against our Law to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor? Should we pay them or not?"

But Jesus saw through their trick and answered, "Why are you trying to trap me? Bring a silver coin, and let me see it."

They brought him one, and he asked, "Whose face and name are these?"

"The Emperor's," they answered.

So Jesus said, "Well, then, pay to the Emperor what belongs to the Emperor, and pay to God what belongs to God."

And they were amazed at Jesus.
(GNT ©1992)

Jesus was not afraid to challenge the authorities of the day, and neither should we. Respectful dialogue is always appropriate. However when it comes to placing the X in the box, ask yourself, is the candidate and the party they represent someone who truly upholds Christian values? Will they look out for the sick, the poor, the immigrant and the marginalised, just like we were commanded to do? It's never easy. But most importantly, don't waste your vote, out of respect for those who fought and died to get yours, and for those who do not have a voice.

Now I need £500 and ten signatures to run for office...
Rev Zzzachary Zzzippy ☺

NEWS FROM THE CONGREGATION

CHURCH GIVING 2024 At the beginning of the year I asked the congregation to consider increasing giving to OHSS this year and I am very pleased to report that a good number of people have done so. Very many thanks indeed for your continued support in assisting our Church to meet its financial obligations. Colin Craig, Congregational Treasurer.

SERVICES IN JUNE

St Stephen's

Sunday 2 June

The service will be led by our Worship Group. The Toddlers' Group will be providing home baking after the service with donations towards their toy fund. Please support them if you can

Sunday 23 June

Ice Cream Sunday

Sunday 30 June

Sacrament of Holy Communion, led by Rev James Bissett at 10.30 am

James is on holiday from 1-8 June - if you require the services of a Minister during that time please contact your elder or the Session Clerk. Christine Mackenzie

New Ministers coming to the area

After a time of vacancy our friends from Ness Bank and Culloden and Ardersier will welcome new Ministers during June. The services, which are open to everyone, are as follows:

Tuesday 4 June 7.00 pm - Ness Bank Church

Rev Stuart Smith will be welcomed as their new Minister

Friday 14 June 7.00 pm - Barn Church

Rev Pamela Kennedy will be welcomed as their new Minister

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 25 June - Leadership Meeting

Friday 28 June - Memorable Melodies

Tuesday 2 July - Kirk Session Meeting

Saturday 31 August - Church afternoon Tea

DEFIBRILLATOR AT ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH

St Stephen's Church has now got a defibrillator for community use. It is clearly visible at the gable end of Southside Road.



MEMORABLE MEMORIES AT ST STEPHEN'S





DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

The Pastoral Care Group are hosting their annual **Afternoon Tea** for the elderly and housebound (almost) on **Saturday 31 August at 2.30 in St Stephen's Hall**. There will

be a Tea followed by some musical entertainment. This is an opportunity for those who find it difficult to get to Church to meet up with old friends, as there will be time set aside for chatting and renewing friendships. Please try to come if you can. If you require transport please ask your elder. Val Cantlay.

WEDDING AT STEPHEN'S

The wedding of Chloe Mackenzie and Rory Gallagher took place at St Stephen's on Friday 24 May. Here is a lovely picture of the happy couple



make this such a successful event. We were all so busy we forgot to take a photo!!

Christian Aid Envelopes and Online Giving Many thanks to the army of volunteers who delivered envelopes this year. We raised £694 from the envelopes and £652 was donated to our online page so far. With gift aid this comes to £1,426.

So a grand total raised so far of £3,016, which is up around 20% on last year's total. Well done to everyone for making this possible. Deborah Macrae.

SWEATY CHURCH 27 APRIL 2024

Belief and Bravery Daniel in the Lion's Den was the theme last month. We had 28 children- the most ever. Stewart Robertson from Crown Church told the children this bible story which has also sometimes been called "The Scary Sleepover". This introduced the themes of believing in God, and being brave in standing up for your beliefs. The children then played games to do with escaping from danger and running through hazards. Jackie Mackenzie the new Young Crown youth worker joined us for the session. She knows a lot of the children from her previous work at Crown Corner Club and will be coming along regularly to help foster links with the children for future youth work. All the pizza, juice, crisps and fruit was enjoyed after a short reflection and prayer from Stewart. Thanks again to Kirstie and Jack Simmons for generously giving their time to help and also to Stewart, Jackie and the kitchen helpers.

Next Sweaty Church provisionally 21 September : The Ten Commandments

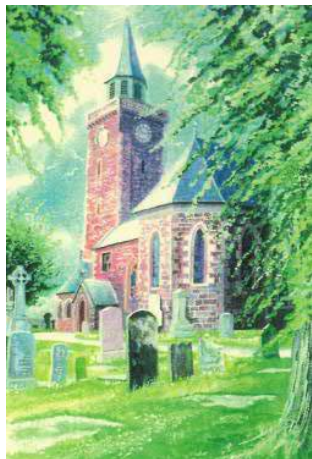


**CHRISTIAN AID
FUNDRAISING WEEK
12-18 MAY 2024**

Christian Aid Coffee & Cake On a beautiful morning on Saturday 11 May the annual Coffee Morning for Christian Aid took place at St Stephen's. It was so kind of the weather to give us the first proper blue-sky day of Summer and this set the tone for a very happy event. Plants were snapped up from the stall on the grass and slices of cake were gobbled up in the Hall! Everyone was in generous mood and an amazing total of £1,590 was achieved. Well done to all who helped to

OHSS OUTING We recently enjoyed a walk at Daviot Woods, followed by afternoon tea at Daviot Lodge. Although local, not everyone was familiar with the walk and access from Milton of Leys. Blessed with the start of the recent spell of fine weather, lively discourse accompanied the short walk over wide and easy forest tracks, including a section of General Wade's Road. We

went on to Daviot Lodge, the delightful home of the Hutchesons, where our party numbered 22, including a few non-walkers and a couple from Crown Church. We were served a restaurant standard afternoon tea by Margaret and Alex and their daughter Rachel. The party continued their lively chat and an informal vote of thanks to the Hutchesons for their kind invitation and generous hospitality. A further outing is planned for later in the Summer. Malcolm Steven.



THE OLD HIGH CHURCH - SOME HISTORY This month I am featuring two silver vases which were in the Old High Church. They were not used very often and I have to admit I did not know they were inscribed until recently. They were given to the Church in memory of Isobel Fraser, founder of the Isobel Fraser Home.



The inscriptions are as follows:

Vase 1

In mem Isobel Fraser

Vase 2

Presented to the High Church Inverness
by friends, in grateful memory of the faithful life of
Mrs Isobel Fraser
and her devoted service to the poor
Born 1853
and entered into rest 12 May 1918

It would be interesting to find out what her work with the poor was. Freda Charters is a Trustee at Isobel Fraser Home in Mayfield Road and she took the vases to show the other Trustees and staff at a recent meeting.

Whilst not particularly valuable in a monetary sense, they are very much part of the history of the church and the home. Christine Mackenzie

OTHER NEWS

YOUNG CROWN We were very pleased to welcome Jackie MacKenzie and Charlie Forbes to our morning service on Sunday 5 May. Jackie was recently appointed Youth and Family Co-Ordinator for Young Crown. Her role will be to build relationships with children and young people and their families by initiating and maintaining contact with them. Jackie was previously on the staff of the Crown Corner Club (after school club) and sings in the Crown Choir and is also a Street Pastor. We were pleased to have Jackie join us at Sweaty Church on Saturday 27 April and look forward to working with her in the future, especially on joint projects.

Charlie is Chair of Young Crown and read the lesson on the day as well as sharing with us how he came to faith. Young Crown is a registered charity attached to Crown Church and Sandie Craig is a member of their Board to represent Old High St Stephen's. Christine Mackenzie



REPORT FROM CROWN YOUTH WORKER

First Couple of Months at Young Crown Presently the most part of my outreach work is with toddlers on Wednesday and Thursday morning, which requires, along with the volunteers, setting up play equipment, crafts, making teas and coffees chatting, and singing nursery rhymes with the children mums and dads. Most days at toddlers we have an average of 21 visitors, 10 parents and their children. We regularly have new mums and their babies which is a real blessing. Since accepting this post, I have become a Scripture Union Scotland Registered Team Leader. This required online training and a few meetings with Colin Carmichael, Regional Worker Highlands, Scripture Union Scotland. Colin has been very helpful in helping me with coming to grips with Scripture Union Scotland online material, in particular One Big Story a valuable resource based on games, bible stories and reflection. I am in contact with Mrs Macdonald, Head Teacher at Crown Primary in the hope that we can plan some Scripture Union fun for the children.

I attend Monday Night Club at Kinmylies Church of Scotland, which is run by Anne Gunn a Youth Worker Leader with a wealth of experience. The Monday night Club has around 40 children in attendance and they even have a waiting list! This is something I intend to pray for, and in the hope that a club in the evening can be established at Crown Church.

I have also attended Sweaty Church at St Stephen's attended by around 30 Primary School children, many of who I knew from working at Crown Corner Club. Stewart Robertson told the story of Daniel in the Lion's Den. Kirsty and Jack who are PE instructors led the children in very active games and we then had Pizza and Snacks hosted at St Stephen's. The children thoroughly enjoyed it. Oh, and yes, they did go home sweaty! This week some of the children from Crown Corner Club came to the garden and planted lots of bedding plants. They did a grand job and were rewarded with a plant from Douglas and Jane Wilson who were overseeing the project. The children had a cold drink and a sweetie. Fiona the manager at Crown Corner Club said they came back looking like they had fun.

Gordon Camerons AED training session



Gordon Cameron found time in his busy schedule to organise and run training on how to use an AED or automatic external defibrillator. I

attended his training sessions along with others and found it very informative. A big thanks to Gordon for his time and his commitment to the Church for his work as an Elder, and Maintenance person, and who also is a Paramedic with NHS.



Having fun in the upper hall at SNAC We had a space theme on Saturday Night at Crown because it happened to fall on the 4th of May, and one of the organisers, mentioning no names (Gary McAra) said may the force be with you! The evening then grew to be very entertaining indeed with

lots of space-themed crafts and stories. Jackie Mackenzie

PROPOSED ALPHA COURSE We are planning to run an Alpha course in the Autumn, jointly with OHSS. The Alpha course is evangelistic and seeks to introduce the

basics of the Christian faith through a series of talks and discussions. It is described as "an opportunity to explore the meaning of life", is delivered over an 11-week period and in doing so can create a space, in our church, where people are excited to bring their friends for a conversation about faith, life and God.

A team of volunteers is required. We need a team with a good mix of skills and we would encourage anyone in the church who has experience of this or similar type of event to consider joining us. The target start date is Monday 23rd September 2024 but the organising team will convene in the next month or so to discuss the latest developments in the content, advertising and delivery of an Alpha course.

Please contact Brian Macgill in the first instance brian.macgill@outlook.com

CONCERT AT CROWN CHURCH - SATURDAY 8 JUNE AT 7.30PM

McIntosh High School Choir from Georgia, USA



The McIntosh Choral Program was established in 1981, involving 150 pupils in several choirs at McIntosh High School in Peachtree City, Georgia. Students perform both classical and contemporary music. Under the direction of Richard Prouty, The McIntosh Choral Department has a long-standing tradition of touring domestically and internationally and is visiting Scotland this June. Students from this program often go on to pursue professional music careers in performance and education.

McIntosh High School is a comprehensive high school with 1600+ students. The school opened in 1981-82 and has received numerous awards in academics, athletics, and in the fine arts. The faculty and staff at McIntosh High School embrace the vision "to inspire a community of critical thinkers who use passion and creativity to solve tomorrow's problems". Their mission is to work together to inspire and empower communities.

This one-hour programme of sacred and traditional music will be followed by refreshments and a chance to meet the singers. Donations at the door to support the work of Young Crown. Andrew Stevenson