

September 2024
Newsletter

Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland

SUNDAY SERVICES

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. Services are recorded and are available via:

OHSS website:

www.oldhighststephens.com

Youtube:

www.youtube.com (type in Old High St Stephens)

OHSS Facebook page:

www.facebook/oldhighststephens

Links are also sent to our e-mail list following the service.

To go on our e-mail list, please contact our [Church Administrator](#).

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 For those of us who spend more time than is perhaps healthy online, we learn to be not very trusting. I remember back around 1997 when my Dad first brought home a computer from his work which connected to the internet, this could be a great thing in the right hands. Dad worked in IT, so strange computers coming home wasn't an oddity. We had computers kicking around our house since the early 1980's when Dad brought home a circuit board for one of Clive Sinclair's computers which we all played with. But this internet thing was the first time we were able to connect to mass networks of people, and the early days of the internet, when you really had to work hard to get connected, was a kinder, gentler place. However you did learn early on that the person you were talking to might not necessarily be who they said they were, and to enter into any chat with a bit of scepticism.

Nearly thirty years later and I'm still a bit of a cynic when something pops into my mailbox. Is this person really who they say they are? What do they want from me? My email address and phone number are pretty public, so I get some unusual emails quite often. Even if the mail seems to come from a friend, I've got to ask, why exactly are they asking for money? In recent months, someone has sent emails pretending to be me asking for cash, and I know many of you have had to deal with the bother when someone hacks your email. I will never ask you for money over email, and if you get a strange request from your friends or your bank, ask yourself if this could be genuine, pause, take time to think, and then phone your friend or your bank to see if there's a problem. Yet the problem is, as Christians, we are supposed to be generous, caring and supportive of each other, and also of anyone who cries out for help. If someone stops you in the street asking for the bus fare home, is your first thought to give them a few coins, or to take them to the bus station to buy a ticket, or do you say no, with the thought in the back of your mind that they are just going to spend it on booze? It's always difficult. Who is genuine, and who is trying to scam us? How can we be supportive and charitable where, as Luke said in Acts, it is more blessed to give than to receive.

I don't like picking and choosing verses from the bible to fit my agenda, however when I was looking at trust, this message from Micah 7:5-6 sprung up:

"Put no trust in a neighbour; have no confidence in a friend; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your arms; for the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house."

I thought that was a bit harsh, but it is perhaps a warning in this digital age that the message which claims to be from a friend or family member may not be genuine. I don't want to turn you into battle hardened cynics like myself, but I would like you to take care to prevent others taking advantage of your generosity so your good deeds and good money may go to those who are in genuine need. Stay safe. Now excuse me, I've just seen an email from a guy who wants to sell me the Forth Bridge...

James

NEWS FROM THE CONGREGATION

ANNUAL LEAVE Rev James Bissett will be on holiday from Sunday 22 September until Monday 14 October. Services will be covered as follows:

Sunday 22 September (tbc) (Church Conference) - Service to be led by Rev Susan Cord

Sunday 29 September - Service to be led by Stewart Robertson

Sunday 6 October - Harvest Thanksgiving - service to be led by our Worship Group

Sunday 13 October - Service to be led by Stewart Robertson

If anyone requires the services of a Minister during this period please contact your elder or the Session Clerk. Christine MacKenzie, Session Clerk

VIDEOS/LIVESTREAMING OF OUR SUNDAY SERVICES

If you prefer to watch our service live go onto Youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/>) and type in Old High St Stephens and you'll see a list of the most recent services.

Links are also available on the front page (left hand column) of the Newsletter.

SUNDAY SERVICES AT RAIGMORE HOSPITAL

I appreciate an advert was circulated some months ago looking for volunteers to act as escorts at Raigmore to bring patients from the wards down to the Chapel for Sunday morning worship.

Prior to Covid, I had the pleasure and privilege of conducting these services on a monthly basis and found them to be so special. Special in so many ways ... for those patients who would normally be attending church on a Sunday morning ... and special for patients with no church connection but who had serious health issues going on for them and who had big questions. Special too for the team of escorts who made these services possible and who provided this help for many years, but since Covid these dear folk are having a well-earned rest!

At the moment these services have not yet resumed and won't do so until there is a new team of escorts in place. So, this is an URGENT appeal for help. Raigmore is of course now within our new parish boundary and if you feel this could be one of your ways of serving, and would wish to learn more, please contact either Janet Davidson, Head of Spiritual Care (704463 ext 5733) or Mike Robertson, Lead Staff Support Chaplain (705748) or give me a call on 791161.

It is so worthwhile and can make such a difference to folk in need. Thank you. Iain Todd

PARISH NEWSLETTER

The first issue is now available and has been sent via email to all those on our list. Printed copies have also been delivered. If you have not received your copy, please contact Pat at Church Admin and she will arrange for you to get a copy.

PARISH GROUPING

The Presbytery of Clèir Eilean Ì (CIE) have agreed a parish grouping for Crown and Old High St Stephen's (OHSS) as part of the wider Presbytery Mission Plan and to work together to achieve a union of the two congregations by December 2025. The draft document is attached at the end of this Newsletter.

ACTIVITIES IN OHSS HALL

WHATS ON AT ST STEPHEN'S
FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
invernesschurch@gmail.com

MONDAY Toddler Group - 9.30 - 11.30 Yoga - 13.45 - 15.45 Violin Classes 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 Saturday 10-11 Fit As A Fiddle Every two weeks 14.00 - 15.00 Bee Crafty Every Alternative Week 14.00 - 16.00 Inverness Singers 19.00 - 21.00	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 11.00 - 12.00 Memorable Memories 14.00 - 16.00 - Once a Month Expressive Dance - 18.15 - 20.00 Violin Classes	SUNDAY Morning Worship 10.30 - 11.15am Argentine Tango 13.45 - 17.45 - Every two weeks Yoga 18.00 - 21.00

SCAN ME!

VISITING AMERICAN CHOIR The Chancel Choir of the First Presbyterian Church from Greenville, North Carolina asked if they could worship with us at St Stephen's on Sunday 14 July. They were on a tour of Scotland, starting on Iona where they sang in the Abbey and finishing in St Giles in Edinburgh. Totalling 35 - along with their supporters - they joined enthusiastically in with what was, for them, a familiar style of service.

Under their conductor Karrie Rushing, they sang an anthem during the service and again at the end, with a depth of sincerity and joyfulness that spoke to us all. Then to bring all our voices together, they invited the congregation to join in a favourite hymn by Shirley Murray that is included in our hymnary too.

Due to James' ill health, Margaret Neville and members of the Worship Group led the service, adding to the sharing of many voices in this act of worship. Andrew Stevenson.



1. Is there more to life than this?
2. Who is Jesus?
3. Why did Jesus die?
4. How can I have faith?
5. Why and how do I pray?
6. Why and how should I read the Bible?

Each of the evenings starts with a light meal, then we watch a video which is followed by some discussions in small groups. Start time for each of the evenings is 7pm (until 8:30pm). We also intend to hold an away-day one Saturday in November.

The course is open to anyone who is interested, whether they have a church connection or not. Curious? Please contact by email: brian.macgill@outlook.com

BEE CRAFTY GROUP RESUMES

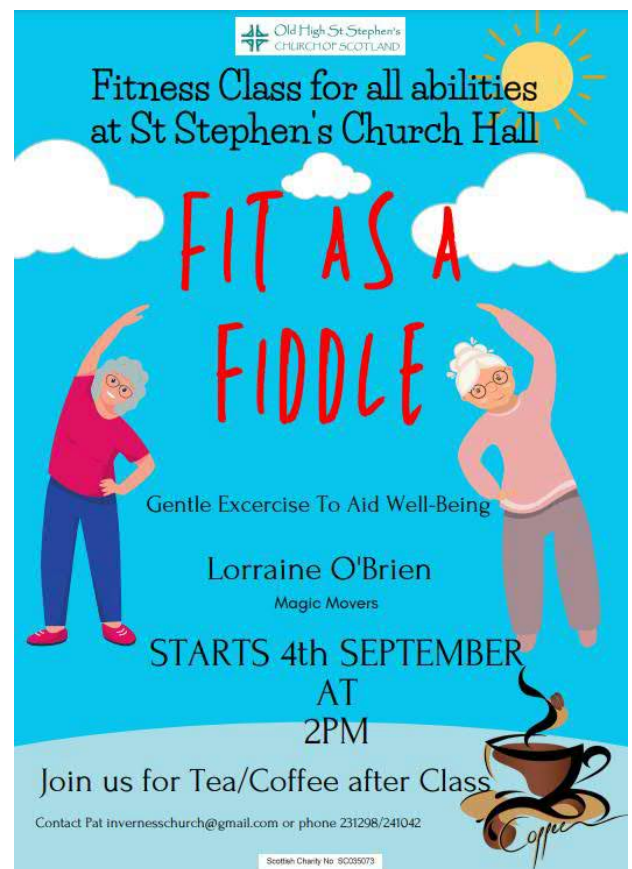


Wednesday 28 August fortnightly 2-4 pm in St Stephen's hall. We are a small group and would love new crafters or potential crafters to join us. We will endeavour to help with any crafting issues. Refreshments are served and the camaraderie is great. All will be made most welcome and we look forward to meeting you.

For further information please contact Margaret McAleer on (01463) 221393.

ALPHA COURSE - EXPLORE ALPHA You are invited to a new Alpha course on Monday evenings starting on **Monday 23 September 2024** through to Monday 9 December 2024 (with a break for the October School Holidays).

The course is being run at Crown Church upper hall and in conjunction with Old High St Stephens church. We hope that people will attend all eleven evenings but at least the first six evenings, as these contain some of the most important topics of the Christian faith:



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. Please come and join in. For further information contact Val Cantlay (231 298) or val.cantlay@btinternet.com

Old High St Stephen's
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Suitable for the whole family all ages & physical abilities

SWEATY CHURCH

St Stephen's Church Hall
Southside Road

**SATURDAY
21ST SEPTEMBER
FROM
4PM-6PM**

FUN AND GAMES FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES
FOLLOWED BY FOOD. FREE ENTRY.
THEME: MIRACLES CAN HAPPEN

Scottish Charity No. SC035073

HARVEST EVENT Once again we are having a Harvest Fun Day on **Saturday 5 October**, from 2pm to 4pm at St Stephen's. This will take the same form as in past years. Outside there will be a Bouncy Castle for the children, and our famous plant stall for gardening enthusiasts will be on the grass. (We would welcome contributions for this stall).

In the Hall there will be a variety of stalls - Home Baking, Jams and Chutneys, and vegetables from a local farm. There will also be a food Hamper raffle and a second Hamper raffle. Teas, coffees and cakes will be sold and can be taken into the Church, where there will be a variety of musical entertainment during the afternoon.

We will be collecting Food for the Highland Foodbank and for Café 1668 during the week beginning **Monday 30 October**. The Church will be open on Thursday 3 October and Friday October in the mornings from 10am to 12 Noon for goods to be left, or you can bring them with you to the Harvest event, or to Church on the Sunday.

Items asked for are : **tins of potatoes, corned beef/ham, mince/stew, custard/rice, tomatoes/vegetables, or tinned fruit, Also packets of crackers, UHT milk, long-life fruit juices, jars of pasta sauce and breakfast cereals.** Toiletries and cleaning materials are also very much appreciated.

To complete our Thanksgiving for Harvest, we will be having a family service at Church on **Sunday 6 October** led by the Worship Group. This will be an informal service and children are most welcome.

Old High St Stephen's
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

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.

Special Guest
Ramsay McGee

Musical Quiz

Join Us on
Friday 27th September at 2pm
in
St Stephen's Church Hall
For further information contact
Joan Darcy 241042 or Val Cantlay 231298

Old High St Stephen's
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

HARVEST

Event For All The Family

**SATURDAY
5TH OCTOBER**

FACE PAINTING

ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH & HALL
2pm - 4pm
Free entry
in Aid of

COBBS
Luxury handmade cakes
TEA/COFFEE & CAKE

ROCKZKOOL Academy

BOUNCY CASTLE

LIVE MUSIC BY
HOME BAKING STALL & PRODUCE STALL

JOCK FRASER & SUSIE SIMPSON

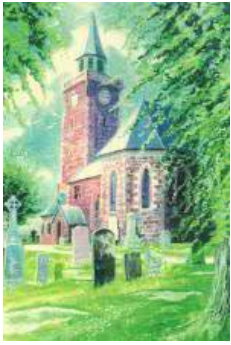
HIGHLAND SWING BAND

BRING ALONG YOUR FOOD
DONATIONS FOR HIGHLAND FOOD BANK & 1668 CAFE

Scottish Charity No. SC035073

All money raised during Harvest Week will be donated to Rokzkoolacademy, a local charity who encourage children to play musical instruments and also run a Food Bank.

OLD HIGH COMMUNION SILVER



Continuing our look at the communion silver from the Old High Church, here is a photo of a Silver-plated lidded communion wine flagon of cylindrical shape on a spreading foot with two bands of chased decorated vines, with angular handle and a flame shaped finial. Inscribed 'Inverness High Church mdcccxcii.' (1892), Christine Mackenzie



will be discussing her new book at Waterstones in the Eastgate Shopping Centre, Inverness at 1500 on 14 September 2024. No tickets required. Jean Fleetwood (jean.fleetwood@btinternet.com).

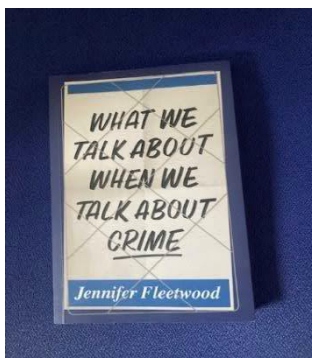
<https://www.waterstones.com/events/meet-jennifer-fleetwood/inverness>

OTHER NEWS

INVERNESS FAIRTRADE GROUP will be participating in events for Fairtrade fortnight in September.

Harvest Picnic on Saturday 7 September at Bellfield Park bandstand 1.30 - 3.30. Celebrate another great growing year. Bring local food and drink to share. Apple pressing so bring your apples and bottles. Learn about bees. Further information from Rae Swan (222318).

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY



Jennifer Fleetwood grew up in St Stephen's Church Sunday School and Bible Class, then left for University. Having gone on to become a senior university staff member herself at Goldsmiths, she has written a book "What We Talk About When We Talk About Crime", about to be released. Jennifer

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: SC035073

**Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2023
for
Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland**

Frame Kennedy
4th Floor Metropolitan House
31-33 High Street
Inverness
IV1 1HT

Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland

**Contents of the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31st December 2023**

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Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland

**Report of the Trustees
for the year ended 31st December 2023**

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

Objectives and aims

The Kirk Session met on 10 occasions during the year. Meetings are now in-person. The Leadership Group normally met the week before the Kirk Session.

Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland

Report of the Trustees
for the year ended 31st December 2023

Achievement and performance

Charitable activities

Statistics

Membership 287

Deaths 10

Certificates Received 2

Certificates Issues 11

We were sorry to record the death of three former elders, Donald Campbell, Diana Fraser and Daryl Walker. Diana had moved to St Andrews in 2018 to be nearer to her family but gave great service over 30 years and was also convener of the Pastoral Care Committee for many years, a post she enjoyed and showed her great compassion for others. Daryl assisted with the Sunday school and was also organiser for Christian Aid some years ago.

We were delighted to welcome Margaret Neville and Iain Russell as Elders and Trustees at the morning service on Sunday 19 November.

Frank McCubbin, John Clarkson and Andrew Stevenson stood down as elders during the year and we are grateful to them for their work and support over many years.

Long Service Certificates were presented on 19 November to:

Isobel Allan (30 years), Andrew Stevenson (38 years), Jim Alexander (43 years), Ken Cantlay (44 years), Stuart MacKenzie (45 years), Flora Milne (46 years) and Gordon Harvey (50 years)

Streaming

Streaming the Sunday morning Services started in March 2023 and after some initial issues with broadband speed this is now in place and much appreciated by those unable to attend the morning services. A live stream of the service can be accessed by Facebook and a link for the recording is circulated by e-mail after the morning service.

Worship

A Lent Calendar was shared with Crown Church, including their Mission Partner in Jamaica. An Advent Calendar was also shared with Crown Church. We are grateful to those who participated in the readings and to James for his editing.

We have a long-standing and continuing association with the residents of Southside Road Care Home.

A short act of worship, led by a member of our congregation, is held in the Care Home after St Stephen's church services on the first Sunday of the month.

A small informal prayer group meet by Zoom on a Thursday morning.

Property

The Old High hall is under lease to TFX. Graham and Sibbald were appointed to act as Factors for the lease and this has worked well.

The Manse continues to be rented to a local family. This will continue in the short term at least.

The disabled toilet in the church hall was refurbished. The car park was extended at the front of the church and this provides an additional five spaces.

Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31st December 2023

The Old High Church was placed on the market by the Law Department in Edinburgh in August 2022. There were many viewings and a closing date of November 2023 was set. Four offers were received but conclusion of the deal is still outstanding. Due to the building being a Class A Listed building there are many restrictions on future use. The graveyard surrounding the church is owned and maintained by Highland Council. The regimental colours and memorial books had been taken to Cameron Barracks for safe storage.

Presbytery Mission Plan

The draft plan was issued on 30 July. There was much disappointment that the plan included the disposal of St Stephen's Church at the end of 2023. After deliberation by the Kirk Session and the Presbytery Mission Planning Committee this was extended to 2024.

A joint conference was held with Crown Church on 21 January 2023 and this was open to all members of the two congregations. Good discussions were held.

The Kirk Session agreed to move towards a union with Crown Church. The congregation were given due notice of the meeting and a large number of questions were raised prior to the meeting and on the day. This then went to a vote with the congregation on 17 May 2023. The voting was as follows:

For the Union 28
Against the Union 44

As Crown Church already had a Minister in place and he had indicated to the Presbytery that he was willing to be the Minister of the new charge members at OHSS had to vote to accept Douglas as their Minister.

for the Rev Douglas Robertson 31
against the Rev Douglas Robertson 38

OHSS is now in a deferred union with Crown Church which could last for several years. OHSS are not permitted to call a Minister.

Going forward OHSS need a mission plan. Letting the hall or church to community groups is not mission. OHSS needs to play its part with Crown and make a mandate to be God's people in the area. Both churches have a shared boundary including the Raigmore Estate.

Interim Moderators

We were sorry to note that Rev Scott Polworth was stepping down as our Interim Moderator on 1 March 2023. Scott gave considerable support to the Kirk Session and congregation through many difficult times. Scott and his family joined us after a morning service to receive a cheque and wooden bowl made from a surplus pew from the Old High. We are grateful to the Mens' Shed for designing and making the bowl.

Rev Duncan MacPherson was appointed Interim Moderator but stood down after the rejection of the basis of union with Crown Church.

Rev James Bissett was appointed Interim Moderator in June 2023 and continues in this post as well as being our locum.

Meetings with Crown Elders Council

Despite the vote OHSS continue to work together with Crown where possible.

Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31st December 2023

Sandie Craig joined the Board of Young Crown. Sandy Cumming joined the board of Launchpad at Crown. This charity provides small grants to assist people back into work and in other circumstances.

Outreach

James has a close relationship with the Cafe 1668 in Church Street. The congregation now have a monthly collection of food for their clients. They provide a free hot meal to anyone in need on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Customers using the cafe can pay forward for a meal or coffee. Many of their clients are living in bedsits in the city centre with little or no cooking facilities.

We have now started Sweaty Church (sport, bible story, and food) and this will be held on a regular basis. We are grateful to Jack and Kirstie Simmons for and for their enthusiasm and support.

Regular joint meetings of OHSS and Crown Outreach and Events groups take place during the year under the convenership of Deborah MacRae.

Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care team all work hard throughout the year ensuring that we keep in contact with the sick and bereaved. The team continue to provide cards to the housebound, sick and bereaved and remember those recently bereaved with bulbs at Christmas. At Christmas a plant was given to those housebound and cards sent to those in nursing homes.

A cruise on Loch Ness through the Seagull Trust was arranged jointly with Crown. An afternoon tea for members was arranged in June.

The joint pastoral care groups of OHSS and Crown organised an afternoon tea on 26 August to support the work of Cameron House. This was very well supported by members and friends and the total raised was £2,235.

The Flower Ministry continues to be an important part of our weekly service. We are grateful to the ladies in the Flower Team who provide such lovely flowers each Sunday which are then taken to the sick, bereaved, housebound or those in Nursing Homes. We were sorry to note the death of Annette Stoker who organised the flower rota for a number of years and used her considerable artistic talent within the Church.

An exercise class (Fit as a Fiddle) continues to flourish. This is designed for older members of the congregation and has been well supported. The class is held fortnightly. A craft class is also held fortnightly.

The group organised a Christmas appeal for Cafe 1668, Highland Homeless Trust and Prisoners' Children raising £1025 and split as follows:

Cafe 1668 - £350

Highland Homeless Trust - £350

Action for Children (Prisoners' children) - £325

Once again we were able to support Highland Homeless Trust 'Food for Families' project and we are grateful to the ten members who provided almost 100 meals.

Safeguarding

Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland

**Report of the Trustees
for the year ended 31st December 2023**

Refresher training for volunteers and training for Trustees was carried out by Annette Clunas and Mike Ronaldson on behalf of Inverness and West Moray Presbytery.

Staff

We wish to acknowledge the good work done by Finlay Hamilton and Elsa Sylver on the streaming each week. We are grateful to Graeme Watt for his technical assistance, particularly with the installation of streaming and for training the young people.

We are grateful to Pat MacLeod for all the work she does as our administrator, not least for the considerable work arranging zoom meetings and editing the newsletter.

To Pam McCulloch for her considerable work with the choir and community choir and for the inspirational music she brings to us.

To our organists for their faithful service each week.

Charity

Christian Aid

A coffee morning and plant stall was held on 13 May. This was well supported by the congregation and surrounding community and raised £1351.

Medical Equipment for the Gambia

The congregation supported the work by assisting with finance to get equipment to the hospital.

Harvest Fun Day and Flower Festival

A harvest fun day and Flower Festival was held on 30 September/1 October. We wish to record our thanks to Linda Philip and her team who decorated the church so beautifully for the Flower Festival. The £1811 raised was donated to Maggies Highland. Food collected was distributed to Cafe 1668 and the Highland Foodbank.

The community and church choir once again held very successful concerts in the Church during Christmas week. These concerts raised £4500 for two local charities.

Other

We were delighted to accept a model of St Stephen's Church from the family of Jim MacLean. This model had been made by Jim and is now displayed in the transept. Jim has now moved to residential care.

Members continue to provide some support to the Toddlers Group who meet in the hall on Mondays. This helps to give the parents/carers a chance to have a coffee together. The group held a coffee morning after church and this helped them purchase new toys and provide an outing for the children.

Thanks

To Rev James Bissett our Interim Moderator and Locum who works hard for our members but also with Cafe 1668 and the Air Cadets.

Thanks to the choir, readers, beadles, tea and coffee makers, organists and all who assist in keeping our congregation running throughout the year.

Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland

**Report of the Trustees
for the year ended 31st December 2023**

Financial review

Financial position

Total income for the year was £143,429, (2022 - £132,935) with total expenditure being £138,517 (2022 - £137,354).

Reserves policy

The charity trustees have considered the reserves required and have taken into account their current and future liabilities. It is the Trustees' policy to hold reserves for at least six months expenditure including designated funds. At the year end, the church held unrestricted funds of £510,155 (2022 - £493,767). The trustees are aware of the need for major property repairs and improvements and may use the additional reserves for this purpose.

Copies of the annual accounts are provided to members at the appropriate time. However we continue to run at a loss year on year despite considerable reserves. Giving reduced during the year, partly due to the closure of the Old High Church.

Due to the long delay in the sale of the Old High Church insurance premiums have now increased from £5,790 to £24,292 per annum.

Staging was purchased for use by the church/community choir. It is stored in the church and easier to move than the previous staging used for concerts.

The Church of Scotland energy deal comes to an end in 2024 and energy costs are likely to double in the new deal.

Structure, governance and management

The congregation is a registered charity, no SC035073 and is administered in accordance with the terms of the Deed of Constitution (Unitary Form), signed in 2013, and is subject to the Acts and Regulations of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Members of the Kirk Session are the charity trustees. The Kirk Session members are the elders of the church and are chosen from those members of the church who are considered to have appropriate gifts and skills. The minister, who is a member of the Kirk Session, is elected by the congregation and inducted by Presbytery.

The Kirk Session normally meets six times a year and is responsible for all affairs within the church. There is a leadership team and six action teams designated to specific areas of the church - worship and education, finance and stewardship, pastoral care, social fund-raising, property, outreach and communication.

Reference and administrative details

Registered Charity number

SC035073

Principal address

The Farr End
Culduthel Road
Inverness
IV2 4BH

Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland

Report of the Trustees
for the year ended 31st December 2023

Trustees

Jim Alexander
Isobel Allan
James Bissett
Christina Cameron
Ken Cantlay
John Clarkson - resigned 21 November 2023
Colin Craig
Sandie Craig
Rosemary Cumming
Joan Darcy
Gordon Harvey
Rachel Hutcheson
Fiona Kelly
Roberta MacKintosh
Christine MacKenzie
Stuart MacKenzie
Susan MacLeod
Rev Duncan MacPherson - appointed 1 March 2023 resigned 16 May 2023
Deborah MacRae
Malcolm MacRae
Etta Malcolm
Ruth Martin
Margaret McAleer
Frank McCubbin - resigned 30 May 2023
Rosa McDiarmid
Flora Milne
Jennifer Morrison
Margaret Neville - appointed 19 November 2023
Linda Philip
Rev Scott Polworth - resigned 1 March 2023
Andy Pyott
Jaye Rankine
Iain Russell - appointed 19 November 2023
Andrew Stevenson - resigned 22 August 2023

Independent Examiner

Jillian Munro, M.A., C.A.
Frame Kennedy
4th Floor Metropolitan House
31-33 High Street
Inverness
IV1 1HT

Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland
Report of the Trustees
for the year ended 31st December 2023

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 20th August 2024 and signed on its behalf by:


Ms C MacKenzie - Trustee

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland**

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023 set out on pages ten to twenty.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity's trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1)(a) to (c) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under Section 44(1)(c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention :

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements
- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with Regulation 8 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met; or

- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Jillian Munro, M.A, C.A.
The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland

Frame Kennedy
4th Floor Metropolitan House
31-33 High Street
Inverness
IV1 1HT

20th August 2024

Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland

Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31st December 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Endowment funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
Income and endowments from					
Donations and legacies	2	64,037	-	64,037	75,649
Charitable activities	5				
Charitable activities		1,785	-	1,785	950
Other trading activities	3	60,133	-	60,133	48,736
Investment income	4	17,474	-	17,474	12,847
Total		<u>143,429</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>143,429</u>	<u>138,182</u>
Expenditure on					
Charitable activities	6				
Charitable activities		138,517	-	138,517	142,601
Net gains/(losses) on investments		8,903	-	8,903	(56,227)
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		<u>13,815</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>13,815</u>	<u>(60,646)</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		496,340	-	496,340	556,986
Total funds carried forward		<u>510,155</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>510,155</u>	<u>496,340</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Old High St Stephen's Church of Scotland

Balance Sheet
31st December 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10	4,354	5,442
Investments	11	402,553	393,650
		<u>406,907</u>	<u>399,092</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	12	4,196	11,326
Cash at bank		107,011	92,580
		<u>111,207</u>	<u>103,906</u>
Creditors			
Amounts falling due within one year	13	(7,959)	(6,658)
		<u>103,248</u>	<u>97,248</u>
Net current assets			
		<u>103,248</u>	<u>97,248</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>510,155</u>	<u>496,340</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>510,155</u>	<u>496,340</u>
Funds	15		
Unrestricted funds		510,155	496,340
Total funds		<u>510,155</u>	<u>496,340</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 20th August 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:


Ms C MacKenzie - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

CROWN AND OLD HIGH ST STEPHEN'S

PARISH GROUPING

The Presbytery of Clèir Eilean Ì (CIE) have agreed a parish grouping for Crown and Old High St Stephen's (OHSS) as part of the wider Presbytery Mission Plan and to work together to achieve a union of the two congregations by December 2025.

A copy of the document, sent by Rev Monika Redman, Convener of the Presbytery Mission Planning Group had been circulated to both Ministers and Session Clerks. This document is the first stage to bring the two congregations together with the final union being achieved by December 2025.

There is a need to document what we do together and ensure that the process to union is not protracted.

To achieve this going forward a joint meeting of the Crown and OHSS Leadership Groups was held on Tuesday 6 August. Considerable progress was made at this meeting. The Parish Grouping document was tabled and populated at the meeting and the following draft prepared:

BASIS OF PARISH GROUPING

The congregation of Inverness Crown (SC0108159) and the congregation of Old High St Stephen's (SC0035073) (shall form a Parish Grouping for a period of up to 18 months from the XXXX day of _____XXXX_____, and that on the following terms and conditions:

1. **Name:** The name of the Parish Grouping shall be Midmills Church Parish Grouping.
2. **Territorial Responsibility:** The bounds to be served by the Parish Grouping shall be as already advised by the Presbytery of Inverness and West Moray - now part of CIE or as the Presbytery may determine.
3. **Property and Funds:** The property and funds belonging to or held on behalf of each congregation shall remain the property and funds of each congregation as at present.
4. **Kirk Sessions:** The Moderator of the Crown Church Kirk Session is Rev Douglas Robertson. The Moderator of the OHSS Kirk Session is Rev James Bissett. The two Kirk Sessions will come together to discuss specific issues as and when required. Currently Crown meet 6 times per year and OHSS 8 times per year. A joint meeting of the two Kirk Sessions has been arranged for November 2024 and will continue quarterly if required.
5. **Congregational Management:** The temporal affairs of each congregation shall be administered as at present.
6. **Ministry Team:** The Ministry Team shall be:

Crown - Rev Douglas Robertson

OHSS - Rev James Bissett

Jackie MacKenzie - Youth Worker - note that Jackie is locally funded by Young Crown which is operated as a separate charity.

7. **Ministry Team Support:** The stipend of the minister(s) shall be payable in terms of the National Stipend Scheme.

8. **Manse(s):**

The Crown manse is currently occupied by Rev Douglas Robertson and his wife. The OHSS manse is currently rented out.

9. **Areas of Co-operation:** The following areas are currently shared:

A	Sweaty Church (OHSS) meets every two months
B	SNAC (Crown) meets monthly
C	Friendship Club (Crown) meets fortnightly
D	Memorable Melodies (OHSS) - meets monthly
E	Alpha - to meet in September
F	Fit as a Fiddle - meets fortnightly
G	Advent/Lent Calendars/Parish Newsletter
H	Other charities such as Blythswood, 1668 cafe, Giving trees at Christmas
I	Young Crown - set up as separate charity but Trustees from both congregations
J	Launchpad - set up as separate charity but Trustees from both congregations.

Going forward it may be possible to combine both newsletters.

Crown have contact with North Street Church, Kingston, Jamaica and an invitation to visit Jamaica is likely to be given in 2025 with a reciprocal visit to the UK in 2026.

10. **Power to Adjust:**

While the articles and terms shall form the Basis of Parish Grouping for the congregations now agreeing, the congregations shall be free, like any other congregation, to adjust arrangements under the authority of the Presbytery as need may arise.

Going forward the procedure is as follows:

It was agreed that a small group with representatives chosen from Crown and OHSS chosen by the Session Clerks should meet to prepare a Business Plan for Midmills Parish Church. They will bring back to the joint group a consideration of possible options determined by considering the state of the properties, the finances of both congregations, and the current activities which are carried out by both churches, making a case for which should and can be retained. The group should consider if a missional case can be made for the retention of St Stephen's church and hall (and Old High hall). In the interest of moving swiftly towards union, the group should also consider the promotion of meetings between people with defined roles in each church (e.g. Flower arrangers, socials teams, those organising rotas etc, and between similar groups - e.g. The Guild, the choirs, the Care Home services.

This **DRAFT** Parish Grouping document has been sent to Rev Monika Redman who will consult with the Legal Department at 121 and then confirm if the contents are acceptable and thereafter each Kirk Session requires to approve the document and then members of each congregation will be required to approve the document.

There is considerable work to be done going forward, especially by those looking at the cost and use of all properties held by both congregations and this will take some time but we will keep you informed of developments and ask for your prayers for those doing so much to bring us together.

Christine MacKenzie
Session Clerk