



April 2025
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.com/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 As you're reading this, Holy week and Easter Sunday is fast approaching. It's still my favourite part of the church year, even more so than Christmas. This year, Easter falls on 20 April, not quite as late as it can be – the latest Easter can fall is 25 April – but still late on in the possible range of dates. Our first Easter in the Highlands was 2016, where it fell on 27 March. I remember making a wooden cross for the church which we decorated with daffodils from the church garden. I'll not be doing that this year, as I think the daffs will have passed by then!

However I do remember that cross, knocked together from scrap wood in the garage, became a sign of new life as it turned from rough lumber to something pretty.

After lent, and the associated self reflection which many engage in, Easter is a time of renewal. Easter is far more important than the symbolism attached to it, be that bunnies, chocolate eggs. But these symbols associated with Easter have links with newness of life. As I was writing this, I was looking at other people's writings, and what surprised me was a blog from someone who worked in Human Resources, explaining why in business you should use Easter to re-invent your career, and from a fitness journal on how you should use Easter to change your exercise habits.

So it seems like the message out there is sinking in, and that renewal is good. But that renewal started 2000 or so years ago, with the ultimate renewal, of Jesus going down into death and returning to newness of life. We're reminded at Easter that we are part of that renewal, because he's gone on ahead of us. Easter is a season of new beginnings, and in your own way, may you come out of it renewed.

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I just thought I'd give you an update on all that I'm doing just now. First of all, I had my 6-month review last week and the church thinks I'm OK to continue training. This means that in a few months I could start looking at vacant charges and make tentative approaches to becoming their Minister. But if there isn't a vacant charge, well officially I have been, and will continue to be, an Ordained Local Minister, and in that role it's expected we do Sunday worship alongside our regular day jobs. That's what I was doing before I joined Old High St Stephen's, and if there's no church work in the short term, it's what I'll continue doing. I'll be fine!

I'm continuing to spend time at the hospice as part of my training. I've now had my official induction where I found that they have 200 paid staff plus a further 900 volunteers in the hospice, the shops, and out in the community. And all of them are absolutely wonderful people, especially Norma the Hospice Chaplain, who has been very supportive.

And there's the usual round of church conferences and online sessions to go through. Joy! On top of this, Susan and I are off to London for the marathon on 27 April. Thanks to all who have supported as we fundraise for Maggie's – so far we've raised over £4,000. Hopefully in May we can put our feet up! If you'd like to donate, please visit www.justgiving.com/page/revsrunlondon

NEWS FROM THE CONGREGATION

MISSIONAL USE OF ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH The joint (OHSS/Crown) property group have met on three occasions and have put together considerable information on the St Stephen's and Crown buildings and their current use.

However, we do need to find a strong missional use for St Stephen's going forward. To that end the group have asked me to gather information from St Stephen's members on possible missional use. We need to have this information by Monday 21 April to take to our (Property) meeting on 22 April. Hopefully we will then have something to take to the joint OHSS/Crown Kirk Session Meeting on Wednesday 7 May. The OHSS representatives on the group are:

Colin Craig
Joan Darcy
Christine MacKenzie
Stuart MacKenzie
Linda Philip

Please speak to any of the team or leave a note in the offering plate.

We look forward to receiving your suggestions. A member of our congregation has already volunteered to assist with writing a business case to send to Presbytery in due course. Christine MacKenzie, Session Clerk

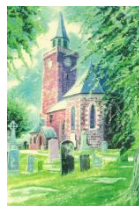
REVIEW OF CHURCH ROLL There is a need to review the church roll in preparation for the vote on the union. After discussion at the last meeting of the Kirk Session it was agreed that a letter be prepared, together with a copy of a data protection form, and that elders would visit members to have these documents completed so that the roll could be updated. It was agreed that this should be dealt with very soon. There is a need to update information held under data protection regulations on a regular basis. Once this has been completed a copy of the roll will be available for members to review. Any one, who attends worship on a regular basis at OHSS and is not a member of another congregation, can be added as an adherent or by resolution of the Kirk Session. Members on the supplementary roll do not have a vote. Only in-person voting is permitted.

Anyone not wishing to remain on the roll can request a certificate of transference. Christine Mackenzie, Session Clerk.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING The next meeting will be held in St Stephen's Church on **Wednesday 30 April at 7.30 pm**. All are welcome. Christine Mackenzie, Session Clerk

OHSS KIRK SESSION The Kirk Session will next meet on **Tuesday 29 April** in St Stephen's at **7.30 pm** (note later time of meeting).

SALE OF THE OLD HIGH CHURCH



I am afraid there is little to report on this. Recently there was a very successful public meeting and a steering group will take things forward.

There was a recent article in the Press and Journal about the organ and the fact that Andrew Stevenson is looking after it with great care.

We have had a number of viewings, none of which have resulted in any offer being made. Christine MacKenzie, Session Clerk.

SERVICE AT SOUTHSIDE NURSING HOME there will be a short service in Southside Nursing Home on Sunday 6 April after our morning service. All welcome to attend.

EASTER SERVICES



Maundy Thursday 17 April - Crown Church 6.30 pm - soup and pudding meal and service, including the sacrament of Holy Communion at 7.30 pm. All welcome

Friday 18 April - Good Friday Gathering, arranged by Inverness Churches Together, in the city centre (outside M&S at the Farmers' Market location). Meet at 11.00 am for Good Friday hymns, readings, silence and prayer.

Sunday 20 April - 6am - Doug and Lesley McRoberts will once again be leading an Easter Sunday Sunrise celebration service at Ness Islands, and everyone is welcome. There will be singing, Easter readings and prayers, and a sharing of bread. This will start at 6.00am - just a few minutes after official sunrise! Afterwards, there will be the option of breakfast at Crown from 7.30 am, with bacon rolls and other good stuff. If you'd like to come to the breakfast, please let Lesley know so that those catering can ensure there's enough for everyone! Christine Mackenzie, Session Clerk.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2024 11-17 MAY The red 'door to door' envelopes this year again are for delivery only. Then they are to be dropped off by the recipient at the Drawing Room, or at St Stephen's 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 an internet giving page again for those who are comfortable with the convenience of online giving.

Saturday 10 May

10am to 12 noon Coffee and Cake morning with baking and plant stalls at St Stephen's church.



Plants and baking can be donated by leaving at the hall door on Friday evening 7-8pm or Saturday morning from 9am.

To volunteer to help at the Coffee and Cake morning contact Val Cantlay (01463) 231298

val.cantlay@btinternet.com

For more information about envelope distribution please contact me deb.macrae.10@gmail.com Deborah Macrae (01463) 230882

OHSS MARCH WALK The first outing of the year took our group to Muir of Ord. A short walk in Clash Wood on the Marybank Road was through pleasant coniferous woods still showing the after-effects of recent storms, with a large number of sizeable trees having been blown over. A light rain shower did not dampen the spirits and we were joined at the Ord Arms Hotel by another half dozen of the congregation for a tasty afternoon tea.



A Summer outing is proposed for June and suggestions for venues are welcome.

Malcolm Steven mmsteven1@btinternet.com 07773017928

Derick Robertson roderick43r@btinternet.com
01463790372

Iain Russell iainrussell01@gmail.com 01463 239344

MEMORABLE MELODIES

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.

*Sounds of the
60's*



Join Us on
Friday 25th April at 2pm
in
St Stephen's Church Hall
For further information contact
Joan Darcy 241042 or Val Cantlay 231298

ST STEPHEN'S COMMUNITY CHOIR

ST STEPHEN'S
COMMUNITY CHOIR
Presents
A SHORT VARIETY
TEA & CAKE CONCERT

IN AID OF
THE MEN'S SHED

SATURDAY 26 APRIL
AT 2.30PM
**ST STEPHEN'S
CHURCH**

DOORS OPEN 2PM

SUGGESTED DONATION OF
£12



The Garden Of Eden The children seemed to enjoy the story of Adam and Eve, the snake and the forbidden fruit. With interesting questions about where they lived when they had to leave the Garden of Eden? Fun games including relay races with

looking for apples followed and when the games were over Jack highlighted the temptations we can all feel to do the wrong thing at times. Pizza and fruit were eaten with great enthusiasm as were the miniature Easter eggs at the end. Some of the children attended church the following day.

The next Sweaty Church is scheduled for June; more details later. Deborah Macrae.



MAGGIE'S CENTRES FUNDING EVENT

All best wishes to James and Susan as they take part in the London Marathon in aid of Maggie's Centres on Sunday 27 April. You can support

them online at www.justgiving.com/page/revsrunlondon

FLOWER ROTA A simple vase of flowers or floral arrangement brightens our church each Sunday and plays a part in our ministry, as giving these flowers brings cheer, consolation or celebration to someone in our congregation.

We are looking for volunteers to help with the flowers. If you feel you can help, please add your name to the rota on the noticeboard at the back door. No experience is necessary and there is a fund available for reimbursement of the cost of flowers.

You may also add your name to the list if you wish to donate flowers to commemorate a special date. Our flower team can help display them if required. If you have any further questions please speak to Jill or email jillrus@hotmail.co.uk

FUNERALS

Mrs Betsy Downie Boswell Road

David Boyd, Inverness

CROWN CHURCH COLLABORATION

BOOK SALE The Launchpad book sale held on Saturday 22 February at Crown Church raised the wonderful sum of £1,048. Sincere thanks to everyone who donated books, and also those who came along and purchased some more reading material. Much appreciated. Sandy Cumming.

ORIGINAL DESIGN WORKS ART EXHIBITION entitled Show me Easter from Monday 14 to Friday 18 April from 12 Noon to 5pm.

All Entries to reflect something of the Easter Story - and in your own words.

Entries can include Photos, drawings, paintings, poetry, needlework, models, garden in a shoebox ... and more welcome.

Prizes for Best in Section

Categories : Under 16; Adult; Family/Group

Contact Jackie at Crown Church Office for an Application Form

Closing Date 13 April 2025

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION Crown Church is open during Holy Week and they are having an exhibition of photographs taken by Professor Bill McBride on how the alterations to the church, to include the new Crown Nursery, took place. Bear in mind that these alterations were done during COVID so this photographic history is of great significance. If you have time, please visit the exhibition. Christine MacKenzie, Session Clerk.

AFTERNOON TEA

in aid of Maggie's Highland

Come along for a fun afternoon in support of the work of Maggie's Highland. There will be home baking, raffle prizes and the chance to chat with James and Susan who are running the London Marathon for Maggie's.

2-4pm

Sunday 13th April

The Good Craic Cafe
41 High Street, Inverness

For more details and if you'd like to donate home baking or prizes, please contact James on 07764 196278 or email james@kirkyard.net

Proudly supporting



Family Support Worker

Hilton Family Support
Inverness
35 hours per week
£28,500 per annum



Hilton Family Support is a charity established to serve all families who are in need of support and who live within the Hilton area.

We are seeking a caring and dedicated Family Support Worker to join our team. The successful person will provide a range of support to families, including parenting education, practical assistance, and emotional support.

For more information or to request an application pack contact the project administrator on 07395 053977 or admin@hiltonfamily.support

Closing date for applications: 25th April 2025

Hilton Family Support is an independent charity registered in Scotland (SC048719)
Hilton Lighthouse, 4 Tomatin Road, Inverness, IV2 4UA

INVERNESS CHURCHES TOGETHER

GOOD FRIDAY GATHERING

Friday 18th April 2025

11am

Gathering in the city centre- outside M&S at the Farmer's Market location
[///busy.entry.model](http://busy.entry.model)

All are warmly welcome and encouraged to walk from their respective churches to the gathering place in the City for a shared time of Good Friday hymns, reading, silence and prayer



