

Newsletter

Crown Church, Inverness

NOVEMBER 2022: No. 785

Parish Minister: Rev Douglas Robertson



SUNDAY SERVICES

We are now back meeting regularly for our two Sunday Morning Services. Douglas is however continuing to broadcast 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 6th November | Morning Worship 9.30am and 11.00am followed by special prayers |
| Sunday 13th November | Remembrance Sunday Morning Worship at 9.30am and 11.00am. Please be seated by 10.50am |
| Sunday 20th November | Morning Worship at 9.30 am and 11.00am |
| Sunday 27th November | Morning Worship at 9.30am and 11.00am |
| Sunday 4th December | The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at 9.30am and 11.00am followed by special prayers |



Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends

John 15:13

From the Minister

Recently, for the first time in more than 30 years of ministry, I was asked to conduct two funerals on the same day. Imagine my surprise then, when a different Funeral Director called me and added a third on the same day.

I am extremely grateful to have qualified and willing ministry team members in Crown Church who were happy to step up and help me out; but my reason for mentioning this is that I have often been very moved and challenged by words that are frequently read at funeral services, from John's Gospel chapter 14.

I imagine you are all familiar with the phrase, "In my Father's house are many mansions" (to quote the old King James Version), but it's the end of that reading I want to speak about. The normal selection of verses would begin with verses 1 to 6, and then skip forward to finish with verse 27, which reads:



Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (NIV)

It is a word of comfort for people whose hearts are troubled by grief and sorrow, but the words "I do not give to you as the world gives" often lead me to reflect on what the world means by "peace", and how the world achieves "peace".

This has been even higher in my mind this year, as the war in Ukraine rages on and Alison and I, and other folk in our congregation, host refugees who have loved ones still there, in the midst of war zones, some of them in the army fighting a war they neither asked for nor are trained for.

The world's peace is absolutely necessary. Jesus said, "blessed are the peacemakers", and the Apostle Paul, when he wrote to Timothy, urged him to pray for "kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness."

We are indeed fortunate in our generation and geography to have enjoyed lives that have, for the most part, been peaceful, with stable government that is not oppressive, and laws and law officers protecting us from the worst of human sinfulness. But we also know how fragile it is, how easily a family can be torn apart by petty squabbles, lives made stressful by difficult neighbours, and on a much larger scale, how seemingly easy it is for nations to send armies into lands that are not their own.

And once many thousands have died, when peace is finally secured, it is often a very fragile peace, maintained by rigid borders being established to keep enemies apart, while pointing their guns at each other across no-man's land. The world's peace is absolutely necessary, but it is peace without reconciliation.

The peace of Jesus is different. At its heart, it makes friends out of enemies. "While we were yet enemies of God", says Paul in his letter to the Romans, which we've been looking at recently in our 11am Sunday services, "we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son."

Let your hearts be at peace – even if the world around you is in turmoil – because you know God loves you, and his love for you is so great that he would not withhold even his only Son, but offer him to us and for us.

This, then, must surely be our goal, our mission, in human relations too, within our own community, at a national level, and trans national as well. Jesus tells us to "love your enemies" and even to "pray for those who persecute you", in the same Sermon of the Mount passages in Matthew chapter 5, in which he had already said, "Blessed are the peacemakers".

Here is true peace, not the establishment of rigid borders to divide us, but the breaking down of these borders to live peacefully side by side, a community characterised by humility, mercy, grace and love.

This, surely, is our calling, our mission to the world.

May God richly bless you,

Douglas

Union with Old High/St Stephen's

I thought it might be helpful to bring everyone up to speed with what has been taking place regarding the forthcoming union with Old High/St Stephen's.

What has happened so far?

Following the General assembly last year, all Presbytery plans were cancelled and Presbyteries throughout Scotland were instructed to prepare new plans based on a restricted number of ministers in each Presbytery. Without going into detail, this, of necessity, meant that there would have to be a substantial number of unions throughout the country since there were (and are) many churches in vacancy and, put bluntly, there were not enough ministers to go round.

Insofar as we are concerned, the Inverness Presbytery plan directed a union between Crown church and Old High/St Stephen's.

Both Crown and Old High/St Stephen's made representations regarding the retention of the Old High/St Stephen's buildings and the original draft was amended to permit their retention but only up until the end of 2024. The unified church will be able to apply to Presbytery to retain the buildings for a longer period but will have to put forward what will effectively be a "Business Plan" to justify their retention. That is, however, another story for another day. The important point now is that Presbytery have approved the draft plan and have sent to both churches a draft "*Basis of Union*" setting out the basis upon which the union between the 2 churches will take place.

While all of this has been going on, recognising that a union was inevitable, both churches have been meeting regularly in what we are calling a "*Joint Ventures Group*" to plan activities jointly. Examples of these joint ventures are the online "*Advent Calendar*" last Christmas and the "*Lent Reflections*" last Easter. Similar projects are already at the planning stage.

Mairi Main is heading up the Crown delegation to that group assisted by the Reverend Morven Archer, Struan McRoberts and Bill Mein.

In addition, another, quite separate group, is now also meeting regularly which we refer to as the "*Union Enabling Group*". The Crown representatives on that group are the minister, the Reverend Douglas Robertson, Heather Beck and myself. We are meeting to discuss all the constitutional issues which will require to be resolved before the "*Basis of Union*" can be agreed. This includes such things as the structure of the Kirk Session and its committees, the use of buildings, office bearers, employees, services and, of course, a name for the new church.

So what happens next?

I anticipate that there will be a gradual integration of the activities of the 2 churches. To some extent, this is already happening since we are striving to support each other's activities. You will see posters advertising events at Old High/St Stephen's appearing in our wayside pulpit in Kingsmills Road and on the Crown church website. Pulpit exchanges between our own minister and the Reverend James Bissett at Old High/St Stephen's are now being planned, the 2 choirs are in close contact with each other and we now have a new member on Young Crown from Old High/St Stephen's.

The union enabling group will now strive to reach agreement across a range of issues which will then have to be put to both Kirk Sessions for approval in order to agree the final terms for the "*Basis of Union*".

When will the union take place?

Good question to which, at the moment, there is no particularly clear answer. A number of different factors come into play but, overall, it is anticipated that the union will take place sometime next year.

It is well recognised that it is important that both congregations are kept fully up to speed with what is taking place and I anticipate there will be further, indeed regular, articles in the newsletter and would encourage everyone to keep an eye on the Crown church website where any important developments will appear on the "*Latest News*" section.

This is an exciting development which presents a golden opportunity to the 2 churches to come together to make the "*5 Marks of Mission*" a reality in our own community. I have been greatly encouraged by the very positive attitude and responses from both churches who clearly now relish the opportunities which this union will present.

Bob Forrest

Session Clerk



Many of us will have been delighted by the fact that the church garden has kept its lovely colours right through to the end of the season. This will partly be due to the mild weather but perhaps more importantly, due to the care and attention which Doug and Jane Wilson and their helpers have devoted to the garden throughout the season. Much appreciated.

Bob Forrest

Session Clerk

Prayer Diary

November 2022

This prayer diary has been prepared by the Discipleship Team. We hope that you will find it useful. You may like to detach it from the newsletter and use it to pray for our church and community

November 5-12

Lord Jesus, You come to us as Prince of Peace. Teach us to know Your reconciling way. Help us to be curious about others' stories. Give us the courage to be present. Inspire us to reimagine what's possible – finding hope by glimpsing You at work. Amen

Give thanks to God for the beautiful autumn days. Father, we praise You for the beauty of the world You have created, and we thank You for the mountains, rivers, seas, fields and animals You have given to us to enjoy. We are sorry for when we take creation for granted, and thank You today for the amazing earth. Amen.

Pray for peace in so many parts of the world where there's conflict, particularly the ongoing Ukraine-Russia war. Lord, we lift up the people of Ukraine and Russia to you right now. We pray that you would take hold of them and help them walk through this fearful time. Protect them under your wing and help them feel the comfort and peace that only comes from your powerful presence.

On Remembrance Day, pray for all the lives lost in conflicts and the impact on loved ones. Pray for peace, hope and healing for all those affected by conflicts.

November 13-19

Pray for the ongoing process involved in merging and uniting of the congregations of our two churches, OHSS and Crown Church.

Pray today for people who have recently suffered bereavement – particularly those who are mourning a family member. Ask God to give them His comfort, strength and hope as they grieve, and to know He is their comforter.

Pray for love, peace and hope in every home and family. Pray that God's presence be felt in the lives of our families, friends and neighbours; that His guidance be the driving force in our decisions and choices we make.

Pray for unity among our political leaders and our nation. Almighty God, we bring before you the elected representatives of the UK Assemblies and parliaments, and members of the House of Lords. Please enable them to work together honourably for the highest interests of each of our nations and be guided by the truth of Your Word.

November 20-26

Pray for the NHS and all its staff especially during this challenging winter period. Loving God, please strengthen Your people who have responsibility to care for the sick and frail. Continue to uphold and lift them up as they work to provide care and healing.

Pray 1 John 4:18-19. 'There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been in perfect love. We love because He first loved us'.

Pray that just as God loves and cares for us, we would also similarly love and care for others. Help us to be loyal to those who need us.

Praise God for sending Jesus! Praise Jesus for the hope we have because of His sacrifice, for the joy we have in knowing that we are free to live life to the full because we have the security of eternity. Pray that we won't ever take salvation for granted.

November 27 – December 3

Give thanks for the Advent season; for hope as we look forward to the birthday of Christ, for the experience in the joy of salvation and celebrate the feast with love and thanksgiving.

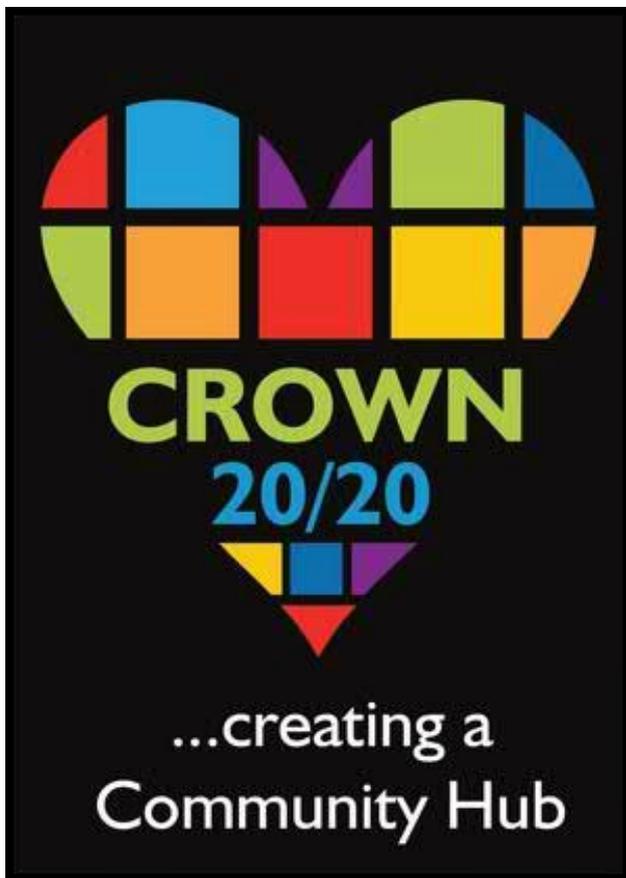
Pray for God's light and love to shine into the minds of all who are depressed, anxious or suffering from dementia. Pray for opportunities, resources, and new and renewed relationships which help and support people with mental health challenges in healthier ways.

Give thanks for the continuing progress and success with the ongoing work in our church, including the lighting and AV facilities. Pray that the new facilities will provide a welcoming atmosphere for everyone using the facilities and for joyful worship and meeting. Pray for God's blessings over the Crown 20/20 group for their leadership and for all those contributing.

Pray for all elderly people in our community, for those living in their own homes or nursing homes and care homes. Pray for strength, resilience and peace among them, their families and staff who support and help look after them.

If you have particular prayer requests for the next two months (December 2022 and January 2023) please do send them to our *church secretary, Gloria* who will pass them on, or e-mail Jude Madeleine; judedmond@yahoo.co.uk





Update from Crown 20/20 Group

“Crown Church aims to invest in a major upgrade of our church buildings to provide a warm and welcoming home for worship, equip us with modern and accessible Facilities to support Christian outreach into our community and to help our church meet the needs of that community.”

Dear Members of the Congregation

This will be the final report – for the meantime anyway - from the Crown 20/20 Group as our work over the past three years on the first phase of the major upgrade of our church building concludes. It is a chance to reflect upon, indeed celebrate, the delivery of the main aims of our ambitious project in meeting the future needs of our congregation and the local community. The achievement is all the more remarkable when one considers the huge challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. Our work is clearly not finished as we dearly wish to create a more welcoming entrance to the church and reduce our carbon footprint by cutting our energy use, but we feel this is an appropriate time to take a break, not least because of the forthcoming linkage with St Stephen’s Church. The input from our neighbouring partners in the future development of Crown Church is vital.

One wonders where we would have stood with Presbytery when they were considering their Presbytery Plan had we not taken the bold decision to invest in the upgrade and reconfiguration of our historic building?

Our story began in 2019 when Crown 20/20 was formed after a church conference to tackle the challenges of falling attendances at church services, an ageing congregation and a building in very real need of care and attention. Standing still was not an option. We wanted to create a warm and welcoming home for worship with modern and more flexible facilities. A lift to the upper hall had been talked about for many years but lack of resources always stood in the way of progress.

Just as we were discussing a plan of action, The Highland Council made an approach to use the lower hall for a nursery unit for the neighbouring Crown Primary School. Since the decision to partner the Council in the nursery project, all areas of the church have been the focus of refurbishment.

The lower hall is now home to 64 three and four-year-old pupils who moved into their new two-classroomed home on Wednesday 17 August.

As part of the partnership, the Council has upgraded the kitchen and toilets on the ground floor and installed an 8-person lift to the Upper Hall. The benefits of a comprehensive asbestos removal programme conducted by the Council cannot be over-emphasised. Overall, we now have a much better understanding of our building structure and the supply services for what may be required in the future.

In a separate contract, the upper hall has benefited from a £150,000 refurbishment to accommodate many of the church and community groups who formerly used the lower hall. These include the Breakfast Club, Corner Club (After School), BBs, and Guides. This investment makes better use of space, improves heating, lighting and insulation, provides greater storage and features a new kitchen, new toilet/showers and enhanced audio/visual facilities.

In a third project, a more flexible use of the sanctuary has been created by the replacement of pews in the main area with individual seats. Examples of the new more flexible use was the successful wedding exhibition held during the summer, a second hand book sale in aid of Launchpad, and sessions for the Toddlers groups.

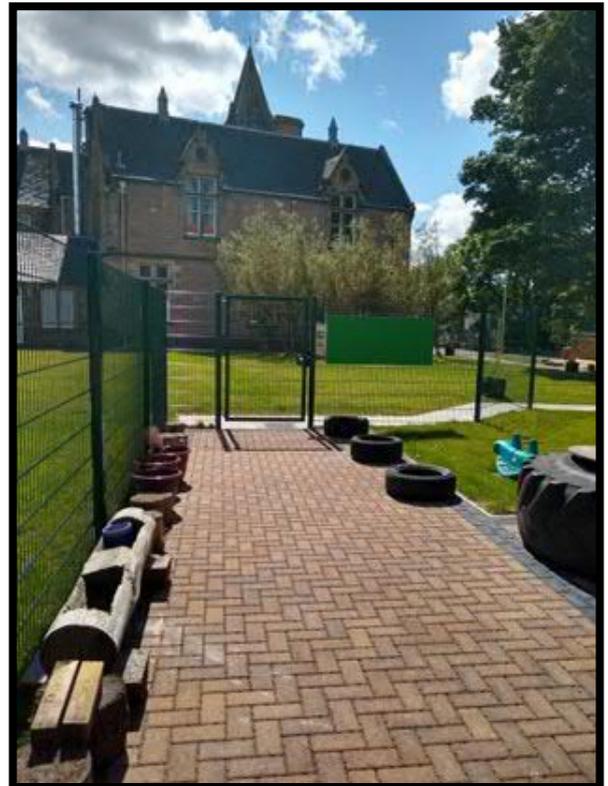
The major upgrade of the lighting and audio/visual system in the sanctuary is almost complete. A grant of £74,343 from the Place-Based Investment Programme - administered by The Highland Council on behalf of the Scottish Government – is helping deliver on this element of the community-led regeneration.

The space available in the church is augmented by a facelift of what was the small hall, and is now the dining room for the Nursery and a meeting room for smaller group meetings at other times. The lounge has been re-imagined and redecorated by members of Crown 20/20 and friends at minimal cost and hosts the Olive Grove tearoom on Wednesdays and Thursdays and is available to be booked at all other times for small group meetings.



An open day was held on Saturday 13 August to showcase the new Early Learning Centre for Crown School to the congregation and community before the children started term, and to highlight all the work which had been completed on our premises.

We would like to pay tribute to the congregation for gifting £33,600 towards the costs of the upper hall upgrade and the Council's Inverness Common Good Fund for a £30,000 grant, Millburn Ward for £9,500, the Scottish Government for a £10,000 grant for improved insulation through their Climate Communities Action Fund and £32,500 through the Adapt and Thrive Programme.



The main contractor for the Highland Council on the lower hall conversion was Morrison Construction while I and K Ferguson carried out the upgrade of the upper hall and removed the pews from the main area in the sanctuary.

In conclusion, the investment in our church building has allowed us to provide our congregation and the wider community with more modern, accessible and flexible space in which to worship and meet. We are delighted to welcome the nursery pupils from Crown Primary School into our building and there is scope for many other community groups to make use of our enhanced facilities. We are committed to outreach with a very clear sense of Christian purpose and to establish the church, the school and the community facilities as the hub of the Crown community.

Crown 20/20 Group

Daily Bible Readings for November

Sunday, November 6, 2022, 2 Kings 5:1-15a, [15b-19] Elisha Heals Naaman

Monday, November 7, 2022, 2 Kings 2:13-18 Elisha Succeeds Elijah

Tuesday, November 8, 2022, 2 Kings 2:19-25 Elisha Performs Miracles

Wednesday, November 9, 2022, 2 Kings 4:1-7 Elisha and the Widow's Oil

Thursday, November 10, 2022, 2 Kings 4:8-37 Elisha Raises the Shunammite's Son

Friday, November 11, 2022, 2 Kings 4:38-41 Elisha Purifies the Pot of Stew

Saturday, November 12, 2022, 2 Kings 4:42-44 Elisha Feeds 100 Men

Sunday, November 13, 2022, Micah [1:3-5]; 5:2-5a; 6:6-8 Micah

Monday, November 14, 2022, Micah 1 Judgment and Doom

Tuesday, November 15, 2022, Micah 2 Social Evils Denounced

Wednesday, November 16, 2022, Micah 3 Wicked Rulers

Thursday, November 17, 2022, Micah 4 Peace and Promise

Friday, November 18, 2022, Micah 5:1, 5-15; 6:1- 5, 9-16 God's Challenge

Saturday, November 19, 2022, Micah 7 Prophecy of Restoration

Sunday, November 20, 2022, Isaiah 36:1-3, 13- 20; 37:1-7; then 2:1-4 Christ the King: Swords Into Ploughshares

Monday, November 21, 2022, Isaiah 36:4-12 Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem

Tuesday, November 22, 2022, Isaiah 37:8-13 Hezekiah Consults Isaiah

Wednesday, November 23, 2022, Isaiah 37:14-29 Hezekiah's Prayer

Thursday, November 24, 2022, Isaiah 37:30-38 Sennacherib's Defeat and Death

Friday, November 25, 2022, Isaiah 38:1-22 Hezekiah's Illness

Saturday, November 26, 2022, Isaiah 39:1-8 Envoys from Babylon Welcomed

Sunday, November 27, 2022, Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4; 3:[3b-6], 17-19 Advent I: Faith as a Way of Life

Monday, November 28, 2022, Habakkuk 1:5-11 The Prophet's Complaint

Tuesday, November 29, 2022, Habakkuk 1:12—2:1 The Prophet's Complaint

Wednesday, November 30, 2022, Habakkuk 2:5-14 The Woes of the Wicked

Thursday, December 1, 2022, Habakkuk 2:15-20 The Woes of the Wicked

Friday, December 2, 2022, Habakkuk 3:1-7 The Woes of the Wicked

Saturday, December 3, 2022, Habakkuk 3:8-16 The Woes of the Wicked

Sunday, December 4, 2022, Esther 4:1-17 Advent II: Esther

Monday, December 5, 2022, Esther 1:1-22 King Ahasuerus Deposes Queen Vashti

Tuesday, December 6, 2022, Esther 2:1-23 Esther Becomes Queen

Wednesday, December 7, 2022, Esther 3:1-15 Haman Undertakes to Destroy the Jews

Thursday, December 8, 2022, Esther 5:1-14 Esther's Banquet, Haman's Plans

Friday, December 9, 2022, Esther 6:1-14 The King Honors Mordecai

Saturday, December 10, 2022, Esther 7:1—8:17 Esther Saves the Jews



Church "Halloween Drinks and Gingerbread Party"

Congratulations to Lesley McRoberts, Chrisanne Robertson and Liz and Charlie Forbes for doing the honours at the Halloween pitstop for guisers and their supporters. Hot drinks and gingerbread were being given out to all-comers and they were very well received by everyone. It was a lovely idea, much appreciated and a great way to become involved in the local community in a relaxed and informal way





This very fetching Womble and a large variety of other 'famous' soft toys, are to be on sale for £5 each at the

Bring and Buy Christmas Stall

which will be held at the

Soup and Sandwich Lunch
being run in aid of Launchpad on

Sunday 20th November
after the 11am service.

Please plan to come and support us.

Launchpad has been offering small grants for almost 35 years to people who have been unemployed for at least six months, to allow them to use their time to pursue a hobby. Some people use the grant to have a bicycle or a laptop which might also help them find their way back into work. Others ask for sports equipment, or a camera. A small boost which encourages recipients during difficult times.

Candles for Christmas

There is still a good supply of the lovely Church Window candles. These will be available later this month in time for Christmas shopping. They depict both the McGilp and the Rose window and are available in the medium size at £12 and small size at £10.

All proceeds in support of Young Crown.





Our first meeting of the new session was held on 4th October in the lounge. We welcomed over 20 members including some ladies from St. Stephen's Church.

We decided this would be a friendship evening to give us time to catch up with everyone. After completing a Scottish knowledge quiz we enjoyed a welcome cup of tea and home baking.

Our next meeting was held in the upstairs hall as we required the use of the projector. Morven Archer came along to test our local knowledge of

Inverness and the surrounding area where she has walked over the past couple of years with her friend. She had some lovely photos some of which were more recognisable than others. She was congratulated on her ability to do some of these walks which involved long distances and steep ascents .

In November Alastair Munro comes to talk about one of our projects run by the Vine Trust. The Vine Trust is an international development charity which enables volunteers to provide medical, home-building and care support to communities living in severe poverty in Tanzania. This project will help develop a multi- faceted and sustainable village on the southern side of Lake Victoria supporting vulnerable children by providing homes and loving families. It will enrich the life of the village through the development of a community hub, a primary school, health centre and vocational training centre.

On Tuesday 22nd November we have Christmas Crackers led by Heather Beckthe content of which is yet to be decided!

On December 13th we are holding our Christmas meal in the Redcliffe Hotel.

As ever we issue a warm friendly welcome to anyone in the church to come and enjoy our fellowship.

Dorothy Mein

Guild Correspondent



The Olive Grove – a cosy and comfortable meeting place on

**Wednesdays and Thursdays
(10am-3pm)**

Teas, coffees, wonderful baking and light lunches for a donation.

Enter by the Garden Door.

INVERNESS CHORAL SOCIETY

A Journey of Song

from Classics to Showtime

Conductor GORDON TOCHER
Accompanist SHEILA BRUCE
Guest Soloist CATRIONA CLARK

Saturday 19th November 7.30 pm

Ness Bank Church, Inverness

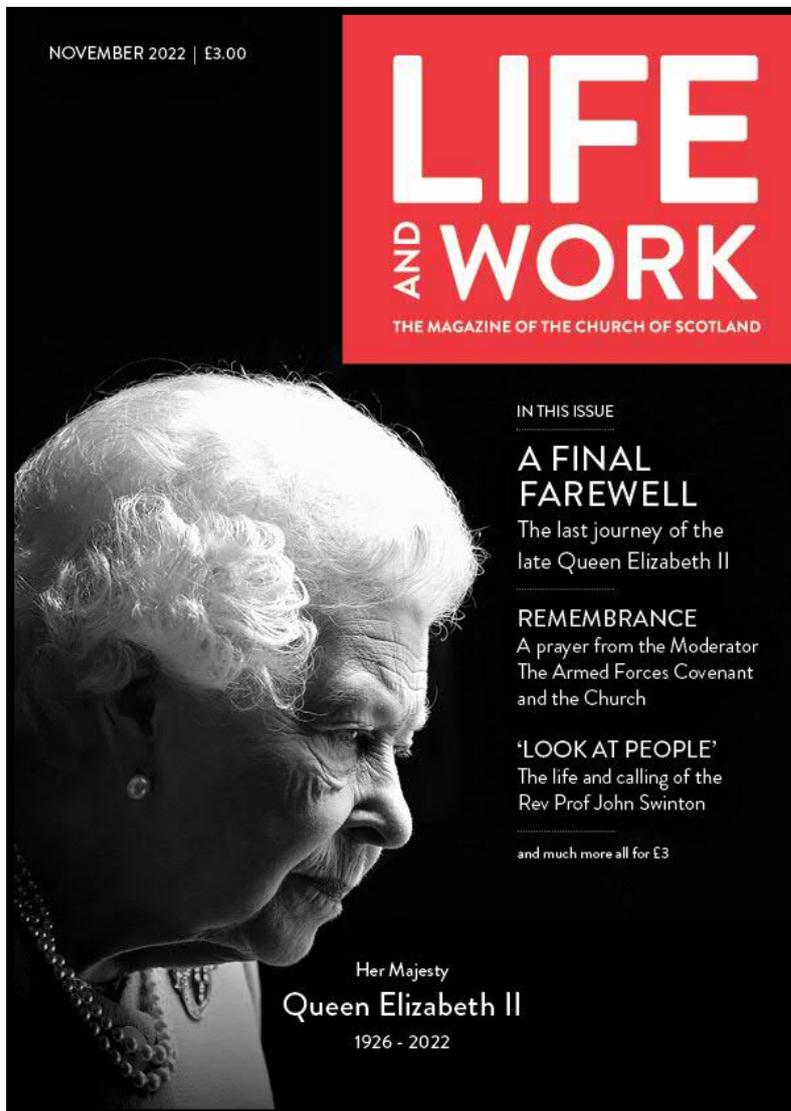
Suggested Donation £15 (children free)



www.invernesschoral.org.uk



'Enjoy a varied selection of music from classical, opera and modern from composers such as Grieg, Verdi, Puccini, Mozart, Bernstein and Jerome Kern. Catriona Clark will perform a number of items as soloist and with the choir. This will include the magnificent Easter Hymn from Cavalleria Rusticana by Mascagni and Mozart's Laudate Dominum'



LIFE AND WORK

NOVEMBER

A Final Farewell

Lynne McNeil reports on the days following the death of Queen Elizabeth II, and the unexpectedly significant role of the Church of Scotland.

Tributes and memories from former Moderators, chaplains and the Queen's parish ministers.

Dianne Sanderson tells of her experience queuing to pay her respects at St Giles' Cathedral.

'Look at People'

Jackie Macadam learns about the life and calling of the Rev Professor John Swinton, whose journey has taken him from mental health nursing to the ministry, academia and King's Chaplain.

Support Armed Forces

In the month of Remembrance, churches are invited to consider how they are responding to the Armed Forces Covenant, five years since the Church of Scotland signed up.

A New Chapter

The Church of Scotland's ministers in the Holy Land reflect on the importance of the Church's presence in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.

Faith in Action

Official monthly update from the Faith Action team

Plus

News, letters, readers' pictures, crosswords and registers

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/lifeandwork or on Twitter @cofslifeandwork and now on Instagram.

Welcome Team

6th November Ruby Coe, Ann Johnston, 2 members of the BB

13th November Ruby Coe, Ann Johnston, 2 members of the BB

20th November Ruby Coe, 3 members of the BB

27th November Ruby Coe, Ann Johnston, 2 members of the BB

4th December John/Marion Barbour, Sheena Ferguson, Jean Smith

As we look forward to enjoying our newly refurbished premises, perhaps now more so than ever it is 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

6th November Donald MacKenzie

13th November Douglas Young

20th November Brian Macgill

27th November Irene Whyte

4th December Jean Smith

NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

Congratulations

To Adrienne and Eddie Adie who celebrated their Diamond Wedding on the 8th October.



Deaths

Miss Martha MacLean, Argyle Court, 1st October 2022

Miss Olga Levy, Drynie Terrace , 12 October 2022

Mrs Marie MacLeod, Kingsmills Care Home, 27th October 2022

Items for the December and January newsletter by Sunday 27th November 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](mailto:office@crowns-church.co.uk) 01463 231140

Session Clerk Bob Forrest: sessionclerk@[crowns-church.co.uk](mailto: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.crown-church.co.uk