

# INVERKIP CHURCH

## NEWSLETTER

### Winter 2023-24



# ADVENT SERVICES

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December – 10 am**

**First Sunday in Advent**

*Gift Service Please bring an unwrapped gift for  
a child 0-10 years for distribution by the Salvation Army*

**Light Night 5 – 7 pm in Inverkip Church grounds celebrating the Light  
that came into the world at Christmas. An opportunity to add a  
prayer disc to our Christmas tree and light a prayer candle in memory  
of a loved one. Gifts can be brought along at this time too.**

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December – 10 am**

**Second Sunday in Advent**

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December – 10 am**

**Third Sunday in Advent**

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Eve**

**Fourth Sunday in Advent**

**10 am Morning Service**

**7 pm Family Service with Nativity with the Sunday School**

**11.30pm Watch Night Service**

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Day**

**10 am A short Family Service**

**\*Online Services recorded at Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay Church can  
be found on Youtube each Sunday morning after 11.30 am for those  
unable to attend church -**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CN62RoTDe4w>**



## **INTERIM MODERATOR**

**Karen Harbison**

Dear Friends

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023 was an important day in the life of the congregation of Inverkip Parish Church, as the congregation met to vote on the basis of union which would move us from a linkage with our friends at Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay Church, into a union with them. Both congregations voted at the same time on the same day and the result of the votes was overwhelmingly in favour of the union. Thank you for your willingness to take this important step and to become one congregation with a place of worship in both centres. We await a date for the service of union which will mark a new stage in the life of the congregation, celebrating all that has been and looking forward to new possibilities. A lot of discussion, discernment and prayer has already gone on and more of each will be needed as we seek how best to be the church at this time and in this place. We look forward to Advent, a time of preparation, of wonder and of hope as we come ever closer to the birth of Jesus.

### **Advent Prayer**

Awaken us, O Christ, to your coming

Open our eyes that we may see you.

Open our ears that we may hear you.

Open our lips that we may talk about you.

Touch our hearts that we may love you.

Surprise us, O Christ Child and bring us to worship at your manger.

Amen

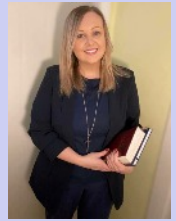
In this magazine you will be able to find out about many of the events and activities planned in the church and community over the next weeks. Together may you have a blessed Advent and Christmas

With best wishes

**Karen**

## PASTORAL ASSISTANT

**Lynsey Graham**



A few weeks ago one of my sisters had a lovely baby boy. The whole family is thrilled to welcome wee Magnus to the fold and I am loving being a proper Auntie at last! Please keep Magnus in prayer and I hope to be able to bring him along one day to visit you all.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the Service of Loss and Renewal a success. The feedback was excellent and we welcomed along people from both our own congregations, our friends at St Josephs and St Patricks and people from other churches. We also welcomed visitors who have no church connection at all. It was lovely to welcome back past clergy from our church and see folk who perhaps struggle to get out but who made a very special effort to attend. I'm sure you'll all agree the singing group were absolutely perfect and not to mention the fellowship and cuppa in the hall afterwards. There was just such a great atmosphere and I could really feel the presence of God come down and minister to so many individuals that day. It was very moving to see and I look forward to running another similar event in the future. Our

story even made it onto the Life and Work website and social media the next day and will feature in the magazine in the new year. Hopefully by now you will have received a gift bag from the day: They contain a bulb to plant in honour of a loved one to let your love for them continue to blossom. There is also a candle for you to light, perhaps on a birthday or other special occasion when you miss someone you love. There is also a scavenger hunt, perhaps if you feel like getting out into nature on a nice dry day, with a list of things to look out for and practise gratitude for. All of the bags themselves are biodegradable too! Lastly there is a lovely bookmark with all the Bible verses that we had read during the service.

It was brilliant to have a chat with some non church-goers that day as that's really what being a missional church is all about. Hopefully it plants the seed for some to delve deeper into their faith and find the love and comfort that we have in knowing Christ.



With Christmas just around the corner, the Sunday School are busy making some candy cane treats for people in the village and preparing for the upcoming Nativity on Christmas Eve. I'm trying to convince my sister to let Magnus star as a real life baby Jesus but I think she needs a bit more persuading! Sarah and I would like to wish you and your families every blessing for 2024 as we all look forward to forming our new unified congregation.



With Love and God bless,

**Lynsey** *"The angel said to them: Do Not Be Afraid. I Bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people"* Luke 2:10

### **Café Church**

The Café Church continues to meet on the last Thursday of the month in the Wemyss Bay station café. Our promotional video is now ready to be viewed and is available on the Church of Scotland's YouTube channel. Thank you to Rob Rawson at Faith Action for making this possible. Our ultimate hope is that others will see this and be encouraged to try something like this in their own parish.

In August we were joined by our guest speaker Linda Fox who spoke about God calling her to mission work in Peru at the age of 67! Linda was an excellent speaker and everyone is looking forward to hearing Part 2 of her story in the near future.



In September we welcomed Alison Blair who talked about the importance of understanding the truth in God's word. Gloria read for us from the book of James and we reflected on how we are called to be 'do-ers' of the word, not just 'hear-ers' of the word. Alison gifted me with her book that she has written all about her own walk with God and it's an inspiring read!

In October we focused on the theme of 'Love' and Gloria read us her beautiful new poem 'The Twinkling of an Eye' inspired by the service of Loss and Renewal. In addition, Ewen sang 'To God Be The Glory'. There is a brilliant line in that song: 'so loved He the world that He gave us His son'. What better thought to ponder as we approach

Christmas? With so much unrest in the world, we must hold on to the promise of God's unflinching love and the gift of our saviour Jesus Christ.

We will be taking a break in both December and January and in that time the Café itself will be undergoing a bit of a makeover. Lynne and Eric assure us there may even be room for another table! So if you've never been to Café Church before, or indeed it has been a while since you attended, you will find a warm welcome - there is always room for more folk!

Thank you to my team of helpers, I couldn't do it without you! From publicity to poetry, photographs, readings, musical contributions and much more. God continues to bless us as we keep Him at the centre of all that we do and I feel we really have something very special that keeps us all coming back time and again. Thank you for continuing to keep Café Church in your prayers as we bring God's love out into the community. I look forward to seeing what 2024 has in store.

"Do not shine so others can see you. Shine so that, through you, others can see Him" CS Lewis

## **SESSION CLERK - Ewen Cameron**



The winter is upon us and the long dark days are upon us.

Working in Glasgow it always seems that the shops have the trees and decorations up earlier every year. Hopefully we can have a dry winter with as little snow as possible.

I look forward to celebrating Christmas and having a break over the festive season.

Abigail is returning to spend Christmas in Inverkip and then we are going to Malaga to celebrate Epiphany in January.

The news that both congregations voted for the Union is good news in my opinion and we have been having discussions with the liaison group and I have been in talks with Rita, S&WB Session Clerk. We had to provide the Charities board 48 days' notice that we are joining together and hope that all is in order by 1st January and we can have a service of Union in Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Church in January.

Our new combined Session will be looking for people from the congregation to come on to the nominating committee for when we are in a position to look for a minister. If you would like to be involved, please let either myself or an elder know.

I am looking forward to the services in December and hope that the Light night is as successful as last year. We are down on numbers of Children attending Sunday School but I am sure the Nativity play on Christmas Eve will be very special.

I pray for Peace in Ukraine and Gaza this Christmas and for all those people who have been affected by the Wars.

I pray also for those who have lost loved ones this year in our community and pray that they are supported by our Church.

Have a wonderful Christmas and thank you all for making Inverkip Church such a lovely place to celebrate Jesus and the word of God.

Best wishes for 2024.

**Ewen**

## Settling into the Spanish Culture

As most of you know I am studying French and Spanish at the University of Strathclyde, and I am currently in my 4<sup>th</sup> year. This year is a compulsory year abroad since I am a languages student and I decided to come to Spain to teach English in two schools rather than studying in a Spanish university. I have been placed in the city of Pamplona, which is the capital of the Navarre region, it is a relatively small city but famous for the San Fermín festival, known as the running of the bulls in English.

Can you believe I have been in Spain for nearly two months now? How time really does fly when you're having fun! I am so blessed to have been given this opportunity to live and work in such a wonderful country for nine months.



Not long after I arrived here, I managed to find a small Anglican Church which I have been welcomed into. The congregation is much smaller than back home in Inverkip, every Sunday there is only around two or three people in the congregation and the minister. It's not a usual church building, it's essentially a hall and the minister plays his guitar for the hymns. The service is entirely in Spanish and everyone else who attends are native Spanish speakers so it's a great opportunity for me to improve my

Spanish language. When my Dad came to visit me we went to church together and sang a duet of "To God be the glory" which was a nice surprise for the congregation. Right beside the church is the most famous churros shop in Pamplona, it's only open on Sundays in October and during San Fermín, therefore during October we frequently had churros before the service, but they don't compare to Jim's bacon rolls on Easter morning!

I am really looking forward to seeing how the Spanish celebrate Advent and experiencing it in another country for the first time. I'm sure there will be many similarities to how we prepare for the arrival of Jesus in Scotland, but it will be interesting to see how another culture prepares. In saying that, I will be back in Scotland for Christmas and hopefully I'll get to see the Sunday School perform the Nativity which I'm thoroughly looking forward to before heading back to Spain for the three Kings celebrations.

¡Hasta luego!

**Abigail** (Ewen's daughter)



# Shoe Box Appeal



Many thanks to all who donated to this year's appeal. A wonderful total of 95 boxes were delivered to the collection point in Largs on Wednesday, 1 November.  
Margaret Vallance

## Crossreach Christmas Cards

**CROSSREACH**  
Care you can put your faith in

Thank you to all who purchased cards and calendars this year. A total of £190.15 was raised for Crossreach [www.crossreach.org.uk](http://www.crossreach.org.uk)

### Lily is on her way to the worlds!

As you may have seen or read online, Lily Brown has been selected to represent Scotland at next year's World cheerleading championships in Florida! Lily held a fundraising event at the church hall in October and raised over £800 towards next years adventures. Also we managed to raise over £100 running the tuck shop at the recent Silent Disco. We just wanted to take this chance to thank everyone who donated raffle prizes, bought raffle tickets and came along on the day. Without the help and support of everyone this opportunity would simply not be possible.

**Gordon Brown (Lily's Dad)**





## **The Guild**

This Christmas our local Guilds are supporting Crossreach- Waterfront Campus Erskine. This is an Educational facility for children with Special Educational Needs. There are 37 children at the moment aged between 8 and 18. It caters for both residential and day pupils. We are having a special retrieval offering to help fund outdoor play equipment.



On 23rd of November there is a meeting in Westburn Church with a speaker from Vine Trust, which is one of our projects this year.

On 27th of November our meeting will include Morag and Shirley giving us a demonstration on Bell Ringing. Visitors welcome.

On 4th of December we are having our Christmas Lunch at Clyde Kitchen. Finally to end the year on the 11th of December we are hosting the Local Guilds Christmas Celebrations. A busy end to the year.

If you need any information about any of the above, please contact me.

**Kathleen Miller, Tel: 07850047198**

## **Scottish Women's Institute**

It was lovely to welcome our members and guests since our September opening and everyone has enjoyed our speakers. The ladies from Save the Children were very appreciative of the money raised from the sale of Christmas cards.

We look forward to our Christmas party on 18 December and wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

**Kate MacPhail, Secretary**



## TREASURER'S REPORT



The church accounts were approved by Presbytery and submitted to OSCR in October. Doesn't seem like that long since we did 2022 but we will be starting 2023 soon!

The church's revenue is still doing well compared to 2022. We received a further £4.1k from the consolidated fabric fund although this may be last claim for a while as the manse does not have tenants anymore. We received a donation of £5k for church building maintenance. I'm sure Susie and the property group will put this to good use soon! And a further donation from the badminton club in October which is much appreciated. We are planning to prepare a gift aid claim early December which should end the year nicely (last year we claimed £8.8k). We also collected £304.42 for Inverclyde Foodbank in October and £432.38 for Poppy Scotland in November.

The church's payments are similar to last year. Our biggest expense since last newsletter (excluding recurring ones like Ministry & Mission allocation) was for our CCLI coverage. This is our music licences.

Thanks again to you all for supporting the church's financially and making my job easy.

I hope you all have a lovely Christmas and best wishes for 2024!

**Jacqueline Seggie**  
**Treasurer**

## Soul Searching

Soul searching was back on 12th October after a slightly longer than planned summer break. Before we got started we enjoyed fellowship together and cake for Jennifer's special birthday. You know it's going to be a good night when the opening hymn is "When the Saints go marching in". Our theme was "Who is going to the Kingdom of God?". Siona wasn't too happy initially with being the cleaner in the skit but then she realised that she was the one going to heaven! The Director (Jac) and teacher (Morag) had no chance lol. Thanks to our special guest detective Holly Kyle for solving the case!

In November it was a more somber affair as we came together to remember with thanks those who have given their lives in service of others. The greatest love that people can show others! Ian and Graham told the real life stories of two brave soldiers through a short drama. And we created a cord of love within the group and committed ourselves to making sure that we don't break it. It was a really moving moment and no one seemed to want to be the first to let it go so we stayed there for our final hymn "Joy to the world". A bit early for Christmas carols but the perfect end to emotional evening.



We will be taking a break for Christmas holidays but will be back on 8th February 2024 in Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay church hall. Hope you can join us.

**Jac, Morag, Ian, Siona, Graham, Muriel, Jennifer and Lynsey**

## Foodbank and Starter Packs

Your continued support for these wonderful organisations is even more important with rising costs which will hit the poor harder than ever. A Huge Thank You for all of your support over the past year.

Here are the final dates for this year's collections at the Church Hall

<b>Tuesday 12 December</b>	<b>6 - 7 pm</b>
<b>Wednesday 13 December</b>	<b>1 - 3 pm</b>

On these dates we can also take **Newspapers/magazines/envelopes** for recycling by White House Products, **Old Spectacles** and **Stamps**.



**Foodbank-** Tinned Fruit and Meat, Rice Pudding, Custard, UHT Milk, Breakfast Cereals, Soup, Rice, Pasta Sauce, Tinned Veg, Beans, Coffee, Tea Bags, Sugar, Biscuits and Snacks.

**Starter Packs** - Ladies, Gents and Children's Toiletries, Kitchen and Bathroom Cleaners, Kitchen and Toilet Rolls, Dish Cloths and Scourers. Good quality bedding and towels but only new duvets. Dishes, pots and pans. Hats, gloves and Selection Boxes would also be appreciated at the December collection.



## **SENIORS KEEP FIT**

As you can see from the photo, it is not always necessary to be on your feet to exercise. This exercise stretches, tones and improves mobility of the upper body, and can relieve tension. The red bands? They are to add a little bit of gentle resistance to the exercises.

By the time you read this, classes will almost be finished for the year, though we still have our Christmas Party to look forward to! Classes recommence in January so, if you would like to come along and join us on a Friday morning from 10-11am in the Church Hall, you will be made most welcome. We really are quite friendly!

With our best wishes to all readers for a wonderful Christmas time and a safe and healthy 2024.

**Anne Skedd**



## **Country Dancing**

December is fast approaching. Country Dance class will probably have 14 December as our last night before Christmas. Festive fayre will be provided. Any questions call me on 07866347981

**Gaye McIntyre**



# WORLD'S BIGGEST COFFEE MORNING



You're the icing on the cake!  
Thank you for everything you did  
to make the Coffee Morning a  
huge success, together we raised  
£800 to help Macmillan do  
whatever it takes to support  
people living with cancer.

Joyce Brown

## Macmillan Coffee Morning 2023

This certificate is presented to  
**Inverkip Church**  
& friends

For your kind contribution of  
**£803.30**

To help support those affected by cancer. Thank you.

*Celine*

Celine & the Coffee Morning Team

7 Nov 2023

## BADMINTON



If you fancy a game of Badminton just come  
along on Mondays at 7.45 pm to the Church  
Hall. Everyone 15 years and over will be most  
welcome, no experience necessary, and some  
rackets available. The aim is to get a wee bit  
of exercise and have fun.

Carole Gordon 7967846449



**KEEP  
CALM**

AND

DO NOT TOUCH THE  
THERMOSTAT

## CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS

Can all scheduled hall users please notify me when they are not meeting. Thank you.

**Joyce Brown - 01475 521215**

[joycekbrown@hotmail.com](mailto:joycekbrown@hotmail.com)

If you experience any problems with the heating in the Church Halls please contact-

**Douglas Vallance - 07599074579**



## CHURCH FLOWERS

Once again, thanks to all who contribute to putting flowers in the Church, Sunday by Sunday, and to all who help deliver them. If you would like to help by putting flowers in the Church please let me know as they are always greatly appreciated by anyone who receives them.

**Joyce Brown**

## BOOK BASKET

Please come and have a look at our good selection of second hand books in the church hall. Books can be kept or returned.

Donations will go to support the BUTTERFLY Project (ARDGOWAN HOSPICE)

who support children and young people who are going through a difficult time eg if someone close to them has been diagnosed with a life limiting illness or they have been bereaved. **Joyce & Anne**



## Family News

### Congratulations on a New Arrival

Isla, Daughter to Robert and Kayleigh McKnight,  
Granddaughter to Jan & Robert McKnight and Great  
Granddaughter to Lila McKnight.



### Special Birthdays

**Caroline Balsillie**

**Jennifer Kyle**

**Catriona MacPhail**


### Enjoy Your Retirement

**Caroline Balsillie**

**Catriona Cameron**







Sat 16th December, 7.30pm

# CHRISTMAS

with **Greenock**  
**Philharmonic Choir**

**Conductor - Nicholas Wilks**

With special guests - **Riverside Youth Band**

Tickets £12, includes festive refreshments. Under-18s free.

Lyle Kirk, Union Street, Greenock, PA16 8DD.

For tickets, contact - 07847 250529 or email  
[info@greenockphilharmonic.co.uk](mailto:info@greenockphilharmonic.co.uk)

Tickets also available at the door.

Registered Charity Number: SC031326

## KATE, LILA & ARDGOWAN



**TWO** close friends who met while living and working on Ardgowan Estate in the 1950s say they look forward to seeing it become ‘a hub of activity’ again as the new distillery project progresses.

Lila McKnight, 83, and Kate MacPhail, 81, were recently invited back to Bankfoot for a tour of the site.

Kate first arrived at the estate in 1958 when her father secured a job as a butler. Her mother was then asked to take over the cooking at the site, with Kate eventually taking up a similar role. She went on to marry husband Jim – a joiner who worked in the estate’s sawmill - at Ardgowan House.

Lila and her husband John, who served as head tractor man, came to live at Bankfoot in 1959. Having stayed there for another 58 years, she admits she was nervous about the plans for the distillery initially.

Lila said: “At the beginning, I was a bit apprehensive but now, when we see the work getting done, we wish everybody the best.”

“We hope that it’s a success.” “It’s nice to see the change and to see things getting done.”



Kate & Lila with CEO Martin McAdam

Kate added: “It’s quite nice to see the joiner’s shops being retained – it’s now where the gin still is. “That was the sawmill and the joiner’s shop was up the stairs.”

Despite not being whisky or gin fans themselves, the pair agreed their late husbands would be delighted to see the work being done at the estate. They also hope the new distillery will help draw visitors and whisky enthusiasts to Inverclyde.

Kate said: “For somebody that doesn’t drink whisky, I counted it up and I have been at just about every distillery from Orkney right down through Caithness, Sutherland, and Inverness-shire. “My husband enjoyed it – he got my share of the drink as well. “Jim would’ve thoroughly enjoyed this, and so would John.

“In spirit they’ll be here toasting it.”

Ardgowan Distillery recently awarded a £7million contract to Muir Construction for the initial phase of the distillery building. This phase is expected to last around 12 months and will see the completion of the main production elements.

It is hoped the site will then be able to produce spirits from 2024.

## The Scouts

The Scouts have been busy this autumn, with some taking part in the Hardie Webster camping competition at Everton, and more having a great time at Laser Station in Braehead. Groups of them helped collect donations for Poppy Scotland at Tesco Greenock ahead of Remembrance Day.



at Tesco Greenock ahead of Remembrance Day. Look out for them at the same venue on 2nd December when they will be collecting food donations as part of Inverclyde Foodbank's drive to provide food to those who need it at Christmas this year. They have a Christmas Camp in Angus coming up along with a trip to the local pantomime at the Beacon, and you'll see them again in Tesco helping to pack your bags just before Christmas.

## Andy Yarr

**I. Scout @ 85th G&D**

Mob: +44 7747 457 320



## CUBS

So far this term we have been covering our Local Knowledge, Hike, Emergency Aid, Disability Awareness, Environmental Conservation and Scottish Thistle badgework. Cubs from both Sections completed the Greenock Statue Trail, built models using recycled materials, practised their first aid skills on each other and our Young Leaders and took part in Litter Picks.



Looking ahead for the remainder of this term, we are looking forward to running our Christmas Stall to raise funds for next year's summer camp/days away, Christmas Crafts, night hike and attending the Panto at the Beacon.

Leaders are currently planning the programme for next term which we envisage will be busier and fun filled as ever with at least three camps planned.

We want to express our thanks to families, Leaders and volunteers who make these experiences possible. We would also like to thank Inverkip Church for their continuous support.

If you are interested in finding out more about our Cub Pack and getting involved, please contact Janice or Heather at the contact details below.

Yours in Scouting

Janice McAdam

GSL/CSL/ADC (Cubs)

85<sup>th</sup> Inverkip Cubs – [85thinverkipcubs@gmail.com](mailto:85thinverkipcubs@gmail.com)

Heather Lenno

Cub Section Leader

85<sup>th</sup> Wemyss Bay Cubs – [85thwemyssbaycubs@gmail.com](mailto:85thwemyssbaycubs@gmail.com)



## Guides & Brownies

Unfortunately Inverkip Guides and Brownies have been unable to get a volunteer to help with the running of the units, so I regret that both unit will have to close.

Any girl that is of Brownie or Guide age can apply to join the nearest units which are

Brownies: Ailey Mill Primary School or St Andrews Primary School The nearest Guide unit is also in Ailey Mill Primary

School - to find other units check out the girlguiding website. To register their interest please do so using the following link: <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/> then click on the 'register' button. Then Stephanie will get in touch.



Thanks to Heather and Amy Stacey, (Brownies) and Fiona and Kirsty (Guides) who kept them going for as long as they could.

**Jenny Scott**

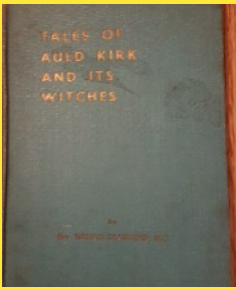
Leader

If you have any news, pictures, comments or suggestions for the next newsletter we would be delighted to hear from you.

[inverkipchurchnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:inverkipchurchnewsletter@gmail.com)

# Remembrance Day - 12 November 2023





## TALES OF AULD KIRK AND ITS WITCHES

*By Rev William Crawford, MC*

Continued from the previous issue:

### **The Good Old Days**

We are all familiar with the phrase. To the younger generations the words convey little meaning. In the mains of those who can look back forty years and more, the call up of vision of peace and plenty, shops crowded with everything one could desire and at what seems to us now, such fabulously low prices. Happy days they were, indeed, carefree, with no cloud to overshadow them. These days seem far away now; and alas they are likely never to return.

A hundred Years ago, when Victoria had been Queen for ten years, Scotland was already sharing in a great wave of prosperity which continued to increase till it was Rudley shattered by the outbreak of the first World War in 1914.

The old days, with which I am concerned now, we're not 100 but 200 years ago. Days when the old church still stood in the graveyard and folk came to worship in it from beyond the moors, across the Roman bridge and up from the village of Daff. How did the people of the village live then? What where their social surroundings like? Where the better off than we are today with all our boasted advantages? Were these good old days.

Scotland, at the beginning of the 18th century, was a land of poverty. From 1697 to 1704 there had been a succession of disastrous harvests. The summers we're cold and wet; and the winters had come soon. The snow was falling as the grain was ripening; and the sodden stooks where left to rot in the fields.

The winters we are so severe, the cold so intense, that cattle, sheep and poultry died wholesale and countless birds perished. The people, when the crops failed, we're compelled to mix what grain they had with roots and herbs. When the meal was exhausted, they killed the cattle that were left, eating the flesh without bread. Near the coast many managed to sustain a spark of life and their bodies only by eating whelks and limpets varied by a diet composed of nettles and snails.

In the counties of Renfrewshire and Ayrshire, we are told, bodies were frequently to be found under high thorn hedges. The victims of hunger and cold; and the dead became so numerous that the living could hardly be found to bury them.



One can easily imagine the effect of these hungry years on the stamina of the people and the health of the children. The scarcity of food was felt most in the Highlands. For long months of the winter people were marooned by deep snow in the straths and Glens. It was the usual thing then for a family to number 10 and sometimes 15 children. Adam Smith, and his wealth of nations, states "it is not uncommon, I have frequently been told, in the Highlands for a mother to have 20 children and not to have one alive!"

Scotland remained a poor country for most of the 18th century. In the year 1773, the great doctor Johnston made a tour of the Hebrides. The impressions that the tour left upon him where the bareness of the countryside, hardly a tree was to be seen; under great poverty existing among the people. When he came to publish his dictionary shortly afterwards, he gave his definition of the word Oats," a food given in England to feed horses but, in Scotland supports the people!"

The chief reason for these distressing conditions is to be found in the primitive agricultural methods still in vogue. The custom of using oxen and only scratching the soil was prevalent. Drainage of the land was rarely attempted. The land itself was held on the precarious system of yearly tenure. The seed sown was over very poor quality; and even in a good year, only returned a bare three instead of thirty-fold. So that there was, according to the common saying," ane to gnaw and ane to saw and ane to pay the Laird withaw."

As a direct consequence many poor people were driven to support themselves by begging. Some years the number of beggars was very large indeed. Fletcher of Saltoun rates in the year 1698:" There are, at this day, 200,000 people begging from door to door living without regard to the law of the land or even the commandments of God."

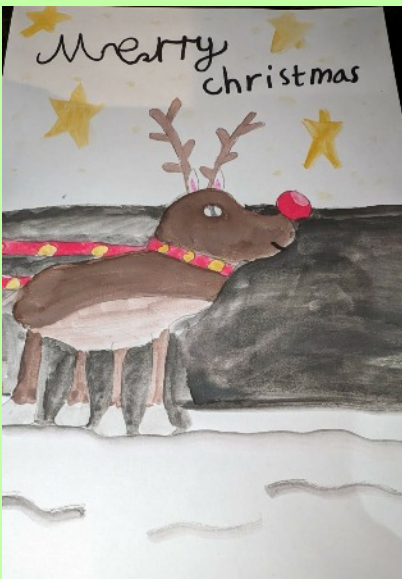
Taking the words of this usually accurate observer as no wild exaggeration, it may be computed roughly that of Scotland's population of a million people, nearly a quarter were compelled to support themselves by begging." They went from door to door in one continuous stream," writes one," visiting alike the House of the Laird and the home of the peasant, holding out their meal- pokes and seldom were they turned away, for none refused to put into the wallet a handful of meal or barley.

**Thanks to Jim Brown for transcribing the text from the original publication.**



The Mission and Outreach team put on a Silent Disco for Primary 6 and under children on Saturday, 11 November in the church hall. There were 45 children dancing and singing and having a great time, although not so silent! It was another opportunity for Lily to add to her fundraising for her trip next year with the proceeds from the Tuck Shop. Thanks to all of the families who came along and supported the event and also all of our helpers.

## CHURCH CHRISTMAS CARD



**Congratulations to Faye Holmes of Inverkip Primary School P6/5 for designing this year's Christmas Card.**

## ECO GROUP

The eco group has continued to organise monthly litter picks each month. In October we were delighted to welcome once again, the Cubs of 85th Greenock & District Scout Group to help out with cleaning the beach, they did a fantastic job!



The last pick of 2023 takes place on Saturday 18th November, and resumes again on Saturday 20th January . All are welcome to attend and help keep our lovely community clean and prevent litter making its way into our precious marine environment.

Representatives from the eco group continue to liaise with other litter picking groups within Inverclyde to discuss both local and wider environmental issues.

Litter picking equipment is always subject to breakage, so it is great to be able to replace when necessary, made possible from the money received back from White House Products for the paper collections from the church over the course of the year. Thanks to Jean for continuing to facilitate this and for all who support each week with their old newspapers, magazines and junk mail!

The group would also like to express their thanks to Inverclyde Council Environmental Services for their ongoing support with litter picking equipment, bags and the collection of waste afterwards.

**Lynne McBain**



## AT THE BIRDTABLE

Like it or not (mostly not!) Winter is upon us although the end of Autumn was, to my mind anyway, pretty d\*\*\* wintery (apologies to readers of a sensitive disposition). But hey! This is Scotland and we don't really worry about a few torrential rain/sleet/snow showers and almost hurricane force winds do we? Of course not, there's no such thing as Global Warming! "DON'T YOU BELIEVE IT." I tried to find a "deep scary voice" font for that last comment but couldn't find one so you'll just have to do one yourselves.

In all seriousness however I was really shaken watching the news footage of the storms which lashed, not only these islands but much of Europe, wreaking havoc. Hopefully not a foretaste of what we might experience as the season moves on.

Enough of doom and gloom, after all, Christmas will soon be with us and, as the song goes "tis the season to be jolly."

If you're stuck for ideas for gifts this Christmas, then how about nesting boxes – different types for different species. Or bird feeders (there lots of varieties for various types of bird foods). You can really brighten winter days by encouraging birds into your garden while you're helping wildlife and you may be surprised by the appearance of species you haven't seen before.

Talking of surprises, my wife called me to look out to the back garden the other morning as she had spotted a Roe Buck casually curled up on top of the garden wall in the cover of some vegetation. I grabbed my camera and managed to get a few photos thinking he would soon move off. Not so! He remained happily there till late afternoon.

I have photographed this fellow before, and he has also been seen, and photographed, in other gardens within the village. Hopefully we'll see more of him in times to come.

Keep your feeders and water dishes topped up throughout the winter and hopefully you'll attract some of our winter visitors such as Waxwings, Redwings and Fieldfares.

Enjoy your birdwatching and I hope you have a peaceful and joyful Christmas.

**Dunnoch.**

P.S. The Roe Buck came back again and dined on our garden plants – during his first visit he must have been "casing the joint". Cheeky blighter!



## Property Group

The Property Group have put the church grounds to bed for the winter, but not before making a pergola for the memorial bench seat. Some climbing plants need to be sown around it by next spring. Any suggestions?

It has been an unusually quiet period for the Property Group this autumn. We could do with some fresh blood! Please give us thought when you make your New Year's resolutions. You can commit for as little or as much time as you want. Come along on Tuesdays and learn new skills, get well-exercised, and enjoy the company. Your help will be much appreciated.

Many thanks to current and past members, and seasonal greetings to all!



## Susie Gemmill Property Convenor





## Inverkip War Memorial Project

After a 3 year break, I am delighted to advise that the Inverkip War Memorial Project is back!

When I moved from Inverkip 3 years ago, the project was put on hold but it was always the intention to restart it but moving house, changing jobs etc made the break slightly longer than anticipated.

Since the last update and the original booklet was printed, more research has been undertaken and the really exciting news is a website is currently being built. This will help collate all the findings in one central location and I aim to develop a forum where people can comment and hopefully leave any contributions towards the research.

Although the website is still being built, anyone who would like to find out more can register their interest so they will be notified when content is uploaded: [www.theiwm.co.uk](http://www.theiwm.co.uk)

A new Facebook page has also been launched as Facebook unhelpfully swallowed up the last one!: Inverkip War Memorial Project.

Hilary Fyfe  
[theiwm@outlook.com](mailto:theiwm@outlook.com)





The Church of Scotland



Firmly Planted -  
collect your  
stamps to  
support Malawi  
project



Help the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) improve nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, create youth employment and mitigate the impact of the climate crisis. The CCAP project, Firmly Planted aims to establish self-sustaining tree nurseries to nurture and protect the environment and protect livelihoods for households and communities.

Please pass on your used stamps to Joyce Brown,  
leave them at Church Door, or in the Church Hall.

Scottish Charity Number: SC011353

[www.churchofscotland.org.uk](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk)

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Interim Moderator:	Rev. Karen Harbison	721048
Session Clerk:	Ewen Cameron	07394 970150
Depute Clerk:	Morag Cowe	521455
Treasurer:	Jac Seggie	529614

## **SERVICES**

Sunday - 10am

Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday in February, June and October.

## **CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

**Sunday:** Creche - 10am  
Sunday School - 10am  
Soul Searching - (monthly, with S&WB Church)

**Monday:** Badminton  
Rural (monthly)  
Guild (monthly)

**Tuesday:** Property Group

**Wednesday:** Scouts  
Cubs & Beavers

**Thursday:** Country Dancing  
Cafe Church (monthly in Wemyss Bay Station Cafe)

**Saturday:** Messy Church (Not restarted as yet)

Website:	<a href="http://www.inverkip.org.uk">www.inverkip.org.uk</a>
Facebook:	Inverkip Parish Church
Charity No.:	SC001079