

# HERE TO SERVE



## Inverness Presbytery Church Support (IPCS)

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### To the church...

“Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” John 1:46

The London Oratory is a massive catholic church of international renown in Kensington, London. The building is big, majestic and full of colour and atmosphere. Yet, most of us might not have heard of it. Next to the church is a small wooded lane, it leads away from the main road to a secluded dead end area with a small church set behind the giant. This place many of us have heard of; Holy Trinity Brompton, home of the Alpha course.

A main promoter of the Alpha course was a man from the rural hills in Moray. He became the mentor of Nicky Gumbel. His name is Sandy Millar, one of the most influential and respected Anglican vicars of his generation. His conviction has brought many to faith.

God uses people and places we would not have chosen. Jesus was born on the fringes in Bethlehem, grew up on the fringes in Nazareth and died outside of a main city.

God’s presence is often not found in what we might perceive as the limelight, instead, He uses the fringes; outlying people and outlying areas. If you feel like you are far away from the centre, where everything seems to happen, be assured that God operates perhaps even more powerfully where you are. Because surely, where He is, is the centre of all that matters.

### Moray to Inverness Presbytery Transfers

On Friday October 1st, four charges officially moved from Moray to Inverness Presbytery. We very warmly welcome them.

Alves & Burghead linked with Kinloss & Findhorn,  
Dallas linked with Forres: St Leonard's linked with Rafford,  
Dyke & Edinkillie and  
Forres: St Laurence.

To mark the occasion, on the evening before, there was a transfer service. Around one hundred people from both presbyteries gathered at St Leonards in Forres. Moray Presbytery moderator Jaco Boonzaaier encouraged those present to take heed of the Guild motto: Look Forward in Faith, acknowledging that God’s journey with all of us is far from over.

May we pray for unity among us and recognise that for some in Moray this transition will encompass a feeling of loss. May God take us on a journey beyond simple geography, where He carves out a common future where He will be our Rock and King.

**Verse of the week** Being Christ’s disciple; be steadfast.

**memory verse 39**

**1 Corinthians 15:58**

‘Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm.

Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.’

## **Green Matters**

*'The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it' Ps 24:1*

'The 2021 UN climate change conference (COP26) is a crucial moment for efforts to address the climate crisis.' Chatham House is an independent policy research institute. Here some sobering words taken from various sections in the report

'As climate change accelerates, extreme weather events – heatwaves, heavy rainfall and tropical storms – are increasing in intensity and frequency. The summer of 2021 has provided a bitter foretaste of what lies ahead. The scale of the task is breathtaking, global emissions must halve by the end of this decade and reach 'net zero' by the mid-century. At COP26, delegates from around the world will discuss how to address climate change collectively. The talks in Glasgow have been described in the media as the last chance to save the planet. Substantial progress must be made in three areas: raising the ambition of national climate plans; supporting climate-vulnerable developing countries; and advancing the Paris Agreement's Rulebook.'

Find a lot more info and detail by searching online for 'Chatham house risk assessment'

During COP26, we will have a fortnight of eco events in and around our churches in partnership with Ecocongregation Scotland. A full programme of information will be accessible in the next edition of this newsletter and be sent out to each congregation.

*This Thursday, October 7 at 7.30pm*, any and all can find out more about the ideas from our local eco reps about their churches' involvement and many events you can participate in. Ask Paul (see details at bottom) for a Zoom link.

To start the fortnight, on Sunday Oct 31 at 5pm there will be a united service at Hilton church that will be live streamed.

## **A painting and a wheelchair**

In a Church of Scotland in Fife, congregation members discovered a large painting of Jesus in the church. It was covered in dust and had probably not moved for fifty years. It was decided to give it away, so a lady agreed to take it to a charity shop.

She placed the painting in her car and drove to the shop. She got out of the car with the painting and immediately heard a voice asking for help. It was an older man in a wheelchair who couldn't manage to push the chair. She knew right away that this was a God-ordained moment. She asked if she could help and the guy replied "yes if you could just push me up the road, that'd be fine". She started pushing the chair, still struggling to carry the painting. So she asked if the man would mind holding the painting. "Aye, give us it here" he said. He stopped and looked at the painting. "Is that Jesus?" he said. "I thought that was him". So they proceeded to cross the busy road with the man holding the painting while telling the lady all his problems. On saying goodbye, while pointing to the painting, the lady said "you know, whatever happens you know he'll be travelling with you." "Aye, I know" he said. On recounting this story to her Christian friend, the friend was so inspired that she started to ask God who He wanted her to connect with. God called her to go to three people and all three people opened up to her.

A lady in Stranraer is part of a pastoral care team. She asked the Lord whom He wanted her to connect with. Upon hearing a name she phoned someone, who, unknown to her, had just been bereaved. Through her, God was able to bring much goodness, peace and love into that situation.

Isn't it wonderful to know that we serve a God who hears, a Jesus who is for us, and a Holy Spirit who convicts people of His presence?

## **Bag of Hope**

Designed for children aged 7-10, the Bag of Hope from UCB (United Christian Broadcasters) is a great resource to give away at church events, or you might even want to give them to Trick or Treaters too. The bags are carbon neutral, and each bag includes a Biblically-based full-colour story booklet, along with an A5 flyer with more information about UCB's resources. They are available for the cost of postage and packing. You might want to add a donation to help UCB with costs, too (but this is optional). Find out more at <https://www.ucb.co.uk/bagofhope>.

## **Care for our Families**

Care for the Family has got a plethora of, what looks like, great events lined up, with topics like

- Setting loving boundaries in children's early years (see Boundary lines)
- Building our children's emotional wellbeing (see A Mind of Their Own)
- Raising Teens with tough issues and questions (see Raising Teens Off Script)
- Growing resilience for women (see Deep Rooted)
- Perseverance and recovery for men (see Run the Race)
- Bereavement support for young widows & parents

And much more. Very worthwhile having a look on <https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/events/events-online-2>

## **Toddler Group Tips**

Toddler groups might be starting up again this season. Well over a third of all under 3's regularly go to one. Many churches put hard work into these. They are a great place to nurture faith journeys of wee ones and parents. When done well, they provide the church with an opportunity to impact and transform lives, families and community. When practicing Christians are asked when they came to faith, 40% said it was under the age of 5.

There are five steps you could explore to enhance:

- a- Support the toddler group leaders
- b- Love and serve young families
- c- Be distinctively and helpfully Christian
- d- Nurture the faith journeys of people
- e- Create link for faith at home

Full info on this topic [here](#)

Helpful resources for support: <https://1277.org.uk/> and <https://kitchentable.org.uk/>

## **If anyone needs help with benefits/council services**

The single free helpline number – 0300 303 1362 – will connect callers to relevant Council specialist teams and will operate Mon to Fri from 8am to 6pm.

## **Children's ministries**

Scripture Union reports they have never seen such speed and numbers of booking before to their in-person children's and youth camps. Very encouraging to see a huge uptake and hunger for connecting young people with God activities.

Inverness CYC, 12 Bank Street, is a safe place where young people can meet up and enjoy a variety of sporting and leisure activities. They ran a sport week at Merkinch Primary School, and some of the children have gone on to attend the after school club at the CYC. They are looking for new board members.

## **Streetpastors Prayers**

The Streetpastors prayer letter says that Inverness City Centre has been very busy at night since the restrictions have been lifted. There have been incidents of aggression and frustration, often drink and drug related. And they ask for prayer for some of the city centre cafes/food outlets with a Christian identity that also offer opportunities for social interaction, support & faith input: Foodstuffs, Ness Bank; Café at former Dunbar Centre, Church St; Cathedral Café; and The Bike Shed, Grant Street, the Lighthouse at Hilton. We can pray for peace, friendships, inclusion, nutrition and encouragement. For their wider work, they ask for strength, energy, wisdom, good teamwork & safety for the patrols & the teamleaders – as well as being in the right place at the right time, as God leads. Anybody considering Streetpastoring or prayer partnering with them can always reach out by contacting Marilyn Archer on 01463-417971.

## **Coming this autumn**

### **National Giving Day**

The Moderator of the church challenges us to take an opportunity to express our appreciation and gratitude through giving generously ourselves. Churches can designate a Sunday in September or October for a special thanksgiving service and offering to bless others.

### **Harvest by Christian Aid**

Find various resources on their website. Including Harvest Appeal, Worship Resources, Fundraising information and COP26.

### **The biggest hurdle to making disciples**

Thursday 28th October, 8pm-9:30pm. This is an open Zoom event run by Scotland and Ireland Navigators, thinking about what we believe to be the biggest hurdle to our disciple-making... our confidence in God. We so often struggle to believe that God can use us to impact others. Tim Forester, a Navigator rep in Manchester, will be helping people to delve deeper into who we truly are in Christ, focussing on the Truth that can truly set us free to love and see God use us powerfully in the lives of others. With time to network and discuss this topic with other people in our region who are also seeking to live their lives for Jesus. More info from Paul Haringman. Free sign up [here](#)

### **Acorn roadshow comes to Inverness**

Michael Harvey, instigator of Back to church Sunday, Weekend of Invitation and Acorn is coming to interview *Bart Buell* about the Acorn process at Culloden-Balloch Baptist church on Thursday November 4, 7-9pm. Booking will open soon online. If you are unable to book online but want to attend, contact Paul (details at bottom).

## **Gospel goodness**

*We would love to post more news about your church & parish in this newsletter, but you'd need to let us know what is happening.*

Correction: Here to Serve nr 42 mentioned there are 6 local guilds, but our Guilds Together Convener gave us an update there are actually 10 guilds (not including our new Moray charges).

At the recent Songs of Praise service at the Old High church £289 was donated for Mikey's Line, the local charity that helps people struggling with severe issues around social isolation, mental wellbeing and crisis .

L'Arche is an international charitable organisation that helps people with disabilities to live their lives to the fullest. They are looking for new volunteers. That cup of tea, chat or walk in the park can make a whole world of difference. Contact them on 01463 239 615.

Fiona King has completed her training as a Reader. She is due to be set apart by Presbytery in a service on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October at Boleskine Church at 7pm.

Here to Serve was born out of a desire for greater communication among us and the potential to help resource mission. The newsletter might continue after mid November, but no longer under IPCS oversight. If anyone is interested in considering joining an editorial board, Paul would love to hear from you to explore this.

## **IPCS**

Please contact us with great stories and signs of hope, or for further help or info.

IPCS consists of Mission Development Worker Paul Haringman with support from Adrienne Dempster, Russell Lees, Kathleen Mackinnon, Linda Cook and Sheila Murray.

You can contact Paul on 01463 795428 or 07837 903277 or IPCS on 07932 690856.

**We are hopeful the next edition of Here to Serve will come out in two weeks.**