



REFLECTIONS FROM THE LOCUM MINISTER

TO WEST MORAY PARISH

I greet you all in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. My name is Cleopas Takavada, the current locum Minister responsible for the urban part of the West Moray Parish of the Church of Scotland. Having stepped into this role of locum minister during this interim period, I really appreciate the warm welcome I have received from each of you. Serving in this capacity is both an honour and a unique opportunity to walk alongside especially the urban part of West Moray as we navigate a season of transition together. In the life of any congregation, periods of change are inevitable. They come with a mixture of emotions, maybe excitement for new possibilities, nostalgia for what has been lost and sometimes uncertainty about what the future holds. All the same, in these times we are reminded of God's enduring presence with us. The Scriptures are full of stories of God's people on journeys often into the wilderness or into the unknown yet always under God's guidance.

During my time with you, I hope and pray that I will be able to support and encourage you in continuing the vibrant ministry that defines the Forres community. We should always remember that whether it is in worship, in service or simply in the way we care for one another, we are all called to embody Christ's love in all that we do.

I am here to listen, to pray with anyone and to work together to ensure that the church remains the beacon of hope and faith in the Forres Community. I am available for any pastoral care issues especially on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays in the Portacabin at St Leonard's Church between 10 am and 4pm and also available on the last two Sundays of every month when I will be leading the Sunday morning services.

I invite everyone to please engage fully in the life of the church during this time. Your participation, whether in worship, small groups, outreach efforts or simply through your prayers is very important at this time. We meet for thirty minutes of prayer in the Portacabin every Wednesday from 12 noon to 12:30pm. Everybody is welcome to join us for prayer during those thirty minutes. Let us use this time to deepen our faith, strengthen our relationships and prepare our hearts for a new chapter that God is preparing us for.

As we move forward together, I am of good cheer because I believe that the Spirit of God will guide us just as the Psalmist declares, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me besides still waters. He restores my soul" (Psalm 23:1-3). I pray that we may find peace and restoration in God's presence, trusting that God is leading us into a future filled with hope in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Thank you for allowing me, a stranger from another culture, to serve with you during this season. I look forward to more good times together and to the work that our God will do in and through this congregation.

Blessings

Cleopas Takavada (Locum Minister in Forres).yugyug

Finding A Way Forward for St Laurence

Minutes of meeting held in St Laurence Church on Thursday 22nd August

Presenting Speakers;

Edward Fitzell, Development Officer from tsimoray

Rev Thomas Bryson, St Ninians Church, Nairn

Onie Tibbit, Support worker, Development Trusts Association Scotland. DETAS

Edward welcomed everyone to the meeting and began by acknowledging the strength of emotion generated by Presbytery's decision to release St Laurence as a place of worship. He stated the purpose of the meeting was to invite, explore and discuss ways for the building to continue to be used as an important part of the community.

Rev. Tommy Bryson, began by explaining the process of change, Presbytery took between 2016 - 2018 which resulted in the situation we are presently faced with, that is, unless an acceptable alternative use for the building can be found, Presbytery could close the building on 31st December 2024.

A discussion followed where strong opinions were expressed.

Rev Bryson once again explained, the purpose of the meeting was to generate ideas for how to prevent this from happening, by encouraging a partnership with the community to save, maintain and keep it open.

Onie Tibbit explained what the role of Development Trust Association is in supporting community ownership projects. She outlined a number of churches who have already successfully found alternative uses for their buildings;

Portobello Old Parish – now a successful community hub.²⁴

Kilmum in Argyll – now a visitor centre.

Coats Memorial – wedding venue, theatre, music, performances, film shoots.

The Pyramid Glasgow - community hub for business rental.

The Grange, Kilmarnock – a climbing wall facility.

She recommended a brochure on DETAS website “ 101 Examples of how to repurpose buildings”.

Edward invited ideas from the body of the meeting, with the following being given;

Venue for musical events.

Invite Glasgow School of Art's involvement.

An all inclusive wedding venue.

Stained glass workshop.

Arts events and exhibitions.

Indoor bowling.

Museum working in partnership with Falconer.

A place for special services of worship.

Mr G. Alexander asked for clarity about how any future project would fit with all the other development projects going on in the town ie FACT at the town hall, Forres Heritage Trust, The Erskine Trust and Leancoil Hospital.

Another question was asked about the ownership structure of the building and grounds. These issues will be addressed at a follow on meeting to be held in September.

Rev Bryson explained that time is tight, as he has only three months to write the proposal as a Case Study stating the vision and challenges to be presented to Presbytery by the end of the year.

Edward closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and interest, reminding everyone to submit their email address, if they wish to be contacted about the next meeting.

Date of next meeting: A September date will be announced asap. The purpose of which will be, to invite possible stake holders and members of the public to submit their ideas, then select a favourite.

Mrs Christine Lanningan

Findhorn Bay Arts Festival

**Wednesday, 25th September at
7.30pm**

Iona Lane with Shirley Barr

**Saturday, 28th September at
2.00pm**

The Mariners Daughter

**Sunday, 29th September at
6.00pm**

In the Round Public Sharing

All happening in Kinloss Church Hall

North East Open Studios

Saturday, 7th September through to

Sunday 15th September 2024

10.00am - 6.00pm

Califer room Kinloss Church

St Leonard's Hall

Soup and Sandwich Lunch

Tuesdays 12.15pm—1.30pm

Bite and Blether Lunches

Thursdays at 12.30pm

SOUP AND SWEET LUNCH

@ St Laurence Church

Tea, Coffee, Juice, Various Homebakes

SATURDAY, 5th OCTOBER 2024

11.00am - 2.00pm

**Donations welcomed to help create sustainability of the Warm
Space Initiative but not necessary - just happy to see you**

**DOORS
OPEN
DAYS 2024**

St Michael's Mission Church Dallas

September 7th 9.00am - 5.00pm

**DOORS
OPEN
DAYS 2024**

The Moray Sax Quartet will be playing
2.00pm - 3.00pm

Children's Colouring Corner

Refreshments - Tea/Coffee



Kinloss Church

Knit and Natter

Meetings held every Friday

2.00pm - 4.30pm

Culbin Room in Kinloss Annexe

Everyone Welcome



DOORS OPEN DAY@ ST LAURENCE

**DOORS
OPEN
DAYS 2024**

Saturday, 7th September 2024

1000 - 1600

**DOORS
OPEN
DAYS 2024**

*Bacon Rolls, Sausages in a Bun
10.00 - 12.00 noon*

**DOORS
OPEN
DAYS 2024**

*Teas, Coffees & Home Bakes being
served throughout the day.*

All Welcome

Musical interludes by Catherine Urquhart

Free Entry - All Welcome



Veronica's Coffee Morning

In aid of Marie Curie

Saturday, 7th September

10.00am - 12.00 noon

Kinloss Church Hall

Home Baking, Teas & Coffees

Stalls, Tombola

Entry by Donation

Join

The Culbiners

On

Friday, 20th September 2024 at 7.00pm

In Kinloss Church

An evening of Gospel and Praise Songs

All Welcome

**MAN TO MAN
@
ST LAURENCE
MEETING AREA**

**This group meets
the 1st and 3rd
Thursday of the
month.
09.45am - 11.45am
Refreshments**

**Online
Worship**

**Join in
our weekly
worship on
You Tube
also
accessible
via
Facebook**



Harvest Thanksgiving Service for the Urban and Rural congregations will take place on Sunday, 6th October in St Laurence and Kinloss. We encourage you all to donate Tinned or Dried Foods to support Moray Food Plus.



120 years St Laurence – A weekend of celebration

Our weekend of celebration in August was an unqualified success. The cream tea on the Saturday was unequalled. If any of those involved need a reference I am more than willing to provide one! Alistair's playing provided a perfect musical accompaniment of pure fun and enjoyment for everyone present. We thank you God for those who created this.

Sunday morning worship, led by Cleopas was refreshingly different. We thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated the choir's renditions in conjunction with our skilled organist. Where would we be without Alistair and the choir! Entertainment was by Cleopas's children – a skilled family indeed. The readings were both thought provoking and meaningful. We left the service with a feeling of peace.

The Songs of Praise in the evening was a triumph. It was an evening filled with joy and happiness. I'm sure our singing reached the heavens above! Hymn No 120 @Praise my Soul the King of Heaven' (Pat's choice) was a fitting opening. As the service unfolded I found it quite moving. The hymns chosen by various members of the congregation were gentle, reflective and joyful, interspersed with readings and verse. A very informative talk was read by Alan James, Depute Lieutenant of Moray. Douglas's chosen hymn No 512 'To God be the Glory' was a triumphant reminder of God's love for us.

Heavenly Father we give thanks for our Church, our congregation, and for the community in which we live. We are here together safe in the eternal care and everlasting love for all of us. Amen.

Mrs M Laird

Calendars for Sale

Illustrated with Photographs of St Laurence

All profits going to Alzheimer Society

Created and sold by John Sutherland

WELCOMING YOUNG PEOPLE



Twenty Forres Cubs and their leaders visit in June. They were treated to a tour of the several parts of St Laurence building including the vestry, up-stairs gallery, font area and alter. They were

given a brief history of the building and the magnificent windows by members of the congregation.

Earlier in June we also welcomed Dyke school pupils who also got a tour of St Laurence and given insight into the history of the building.



The Forres Bookworm Club have been steadily growing in numbers since their initial get together in April. They meet in the St Laurence meeting area on the last Tuesday in every month 2.30 to 3.30 where a book per month is chosen by one of the members and discussed over a cuppa and biscuits. New members are always welcome. The next meeting will be on the 24th September. The book for this month is *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman.



The West Moray Urban Walking group meet at St Laurence twice a month 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month 2.30 to 4pm. Various routes have been walked and enjoyed around the Forres area and are always followed with a cuppa and refreshments in the St Laurence meeting area. New members always welcome.

St Laurence Open Church

April - end of September

Monday, Wednesday & Friday

1000 - 1200

Tuesday & Thursday

1400 - 1600

Thankyou Margaret for the ongoing support and organisation of the above groups. This is very much appreciated.

CrossReach

CrossReach, as many of you will know, is the social arm of the Church of Scotland where every penny raised goes towards being there for others who are in need. This may be due to poverty, mental health issues, substance abuse, alcohol dependence and homelessness.

CrossReach supports those with complex health needs, the frail, sufferers of dementia and with multiple learning disabilities. They extend a helping hand to the abused, people living in difficult family situations and those trying to rebuild their lives, to enable them to live a full and enriched life.

To aid them in this task we will again be placing envelopes in the St Laurence pews during the month of October as part of Harvest Thanksgiving. Please take one and give what you can to support CrossReach. Remember to fill in your details if you are a UK taxpayer, to enable CrossReach to claim Gift Aid to be claimed against your donation.

Together we can make a difference so that Christ's love is known by all in a true and living way.

Mrs Fiona Grant

May the Lord answer you when you are in distress, may he give you the desire of your heart, and make all your plans succeed.

A NEW BEGINNING

In July 2020 we were sitting having lunch after spending all morning in our large garden in Annan Dumfriesshire, we both decided it was time we moved up to Forres to be near our daughter Judith who had been trying to persuade us from years to move nearer to where she lived. Our house sold within ten days without going on the market so we had to get somewhere to stay we now live on an apartment in Mosset Grove and just love our life here in Forres. We had both been very involved with the church, Willie had been Session Clerk for 24 years and I had been involved with Sunday School, Guild and before we left I was in charge of pastoral care in the congregation. Being 2020 we were in the middle of lockdown but our church in Annan opened for the first time three days before we left so we were able to go one last time. Once in Forres the churches were still closed but we were able to watch the service from Annan on line; it was nearly a year till St Laurence opened up again. On our first Sunday there we felt really welcome and sitting in the church we felt a nearness to God. We have made many friends through the church and we must thank everyone for making us welcome, it is not easy at our age to uproot and move to a new place but through the fellowship we have found in St Laurence this has been made easier for us. Once again our thanks to everyone for the kindness shown to us.



A hand of friendship

RECIPE FOR HAPPINESS

Ingredients

4 Cups of Love	2 Spoons of Tenderness
2 Cups of Loyalty	4 Quarts of Faith
3 Cups of Forgiveness	1 Barrel of Laughter
2 Spoons of Hope	1 Spoon of Friendship

Method

Take love and loyalty and mix with faith.
Blend in tenderness, kindness and understanding.
Add friendship and hope.
Sprinkle abundantly with laughter.

WEST MORAY CHURCH GUILD



With the coming together of St Laurence and St Leonards Guilds under the name of West Moray Church Guild we will have much bigger membership to carry on the work of the Guild. Our combined Membership at the end of last session was 34.

The Church of Scotland Guild is so much more than it appears at a glance. Fellowship is probably the main reason why most people attend Guild Meetings. Yes, we go to learn more about the Bible, to pray, to worship and to learn from speakers but mostly it is because of the friendship and support we enjoy with other members.

The Guild has a 3-year strategy (2024 -27). This is the start of a new 3-year strategy called 'Let us Build a House' – each year has a different theme - 2024 theme is 'Sure Foundation'.

During this year we will be having speakers and discussions relating to this theme. As it is getting more difficult to get speakers, we have a lot of in-house discussions and quizzes organised by the members. We have lots of fun and interesting talks. So, I am sure there would be something of interest there for everyone.

Over the 3-year session we also collect funds for 4 projects chosen by Edinburgh – Crossreach/Scotland, Operation Hope/Egypt, Scottish Bible Society, Build My Church/ Bulgaria. We raise funds for this through our offerings and bring and buy sales. Over the past 3 years we managed to send £600.00 to fund the projects.

New members are always made very welcome. At the beginning of a meeting, we have a hymn, a bible reading and a prayer and at the end of the meeting we close with a hymn and a prayer. To finish the afternoon, we have a cup of tea and fellowship. We now have several male members but we are always looking for more new members both male and female. All are welcome.

The new session will Start on Monday 16th September at 2.30 in St Leonards Hall. We look forward to seeing you all then

Team Leader
June Machray

LOCKDOWN

Why do I have to stay in the house?
I'd promise to be, as good as a mouse,
Is it because there's a bug in the air?
I don't care, it's not fair.

I only want to go outside,
If I see someone I'll go and hide,
When the rain stops and we see the sun,
We'll have some fun, me and my mum.

When we all go back to school,
And I've done my homework, so I'm no fool,
I'll meet my pals and we can say,
Let's all go out and play, all day.

We can run, and jump, and try some sport,
Football, or on the tennis court,
I could do whatever I like,
Play on my bike or go for a hike.

Cheer up, think of the good times ahead. I.M.

This poem was written by one of our members during covid, set as a wee challenge which led to a competition, so more to come...



'Seated one day at the organ.....' By the time you have received this edition of the Newsletter we will have had our celebration marking the laying of the Foundation Stone of St Laurence Church (18th August 1904) There were several special events and services held during the weekend of 17th and 18th August beginning on the Saturday afternoon with a Cream Tea organised by Ann Rossiter and her indomitable team of helpers. Over 90 people attended and they enjoyed an afternoon of scones, cakes, tea and chat while the resident pianist entertained with a selection of Victorian and Edwardian tunes together with a few golden oldies (I'm not referring to our audience). Everyone had a good time and I do believe there were a few folk who could join us in the choir, judging by the enthusiastic singing. On Sunday morning Rev Cleopas Takavada welcomed a large congregation of over 80 people to a service of celebration which included a tribute to those who built the church together with hymns and anthems celebrating the laying of the foundation stone.

As a reminder of the original occasion I played 'How lovely is thy dwelling place' as an introit. Apparently this was sung at the laying of the stone, a fact which we learned from John Sutherland just prior to the service. Thanks John for that insight. The church bells rang out in the evening to welcome everyone back for a Songs of Praise in which all the hymns had been selected by members of the congregation. Each hymn was introduced by the person who had chosen it and they gave their reasons for their choice. It was wonderful to hear the rafters ring once again with the congregation in full voice praising God. Also present at this occasion was the Deputy Lieutenant of Moray, Mr Alan James and his wife. He expressed his great pleasure at being invited to the service and gave a concise history of St Laurence Church from its ancient beginnings in the time of Alexander III. At the end of each service there was time for fellowship and a very welcome cup of tea and cake, especially welcome after the tremendous efforts put into the singing! The choir had a very busy weekend leading the congregational singing and deserve our thanks. They practice hard learning new material for worship, rehearsing regularly most Sunday mornings before the service - we still have room for more. At the morning service they sang two new hymns from CH4 expressing our hope for the future and we are currently preparing to sing special songs for Harvest and Christmas. It is often said 'Never judge a book by its cover' well time for a confession! My first reaction to the new supplement to CH4 called 'God Welcomes All' was a disappointment but having spent several days playing my way through the book cover to cover has revealed some gems and we will let you hear our efforts at Harvest and Christmas. Meantime I'm still seated at the organ.... and listening...

Yours
aye



Another talented member wrote this poem as she enjoyed the nature in her garden during covid lockdown.

The Blackbird's Song



The blackbird 's song soars around me
Apple blossom, flowers and trees surround me
So how can I let fear for those I love
And cannot be near overwhelm me ?
These times will pass! And with thanks
I will be near to those who are dear
And the blackbird's songs will still soar around me.

**WEST MORAY
RURAL WORSHIP**

10.00am start

KINLOSS

29th September - Joint service with Dallas in St Margaret's Church Dallas at **10.30am**.

6th October - Kinloss Harvest Thanksgiving.

3rd November - Communion at 10.00am in Kinloss.

10th November at 9.45am Findhorn War Memorial, 10.00am Remembrance Service at Findhorn Church

24th December 11.30pm Watchnight Service at Kinloss Church.

25th December 10.30am Christmas Morning Service

**WEST MORAY
MISSION CHURCH**

St Margaret's Church Dallas

10.00am - Teas and Coffees

Service starts 10.30am

Starting 1st September there will be a morning service every Sunday.

29th September - Joint service with Kinloss at 10.30am in St Margaret's Church Dallas.

When anxiety is great within you,
may the presence of the Lord bring you hope and joy.

Ps 94:19

**WEST MORAY
URBAN WORSHIP**

10.30am start

September - St Leonard's

October - St Laurence - this will include Harvest Thanksgiving on the 6th October and Communion on the 27th October.

November - St Leonard's— this will include Remembrance Sunday on the 10th November.

December - St Laurence. A separate newsletter with the Christmas Service Programme for West Moray will be put out nearer the time.

Remember all Order of Services and 'What's On' information is placed on the website on a weekly basis as well as provided at Sunday morning worship.

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