

EDITION 2



SPRING 2025

BLACK ISLE EAST CHURCH DIGEST



Scottish Charity Number: SC004472

WELCOME!

We are now in Spring 2025 and here is the 2nd edition of our Church Digest.

At the beginning of 2024, the local churches united to become Black Isle East Church of Scotland. This was a new designation drawn from congregations in the villages of Avoch, Fortrose and Rosemarkie and Cromarty.

The “Church Digest” aims to keep us aware of all that’s happening in the church – especially as we develop as a new expression of church. It also reminds us of opportunities to connect to mission-related activities happening around us in the Beaully Firth area and organised by the new Presbytery of Clèir Eilean ì - the church of Scotland in the Highlands and Hebrides.

Other information can be found on our website – especially the information about “Activities” that let’s us know what church groups and events are happening each week in the church.

We hope that you will enjoy reading about the joint life of our congregations in the east of the Black Isle!

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BIE - WORSHIP WITH US

Sunday Services - we meet at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings in Rosemarkie Church of Scotland. The church gathers as a community who seek to worship informed and encouraged for life and service around the Word of God.



Services and Teaching - from Advent to Epiphany and from Lent to Easter we follow the Church of Scotland's suggested bible readings - at other times we have thematic series that cover a range of books and topics from both the Old and New Testament.

Current focus - Series on "Acts 15-16: 'Good news' across cultures"

All Ages Welcome - we use modern versions of the bible and each week there is an All-Age focus around a contemporary reading and song: other elements of worship also reflect our modern context.

Music - our music includes traditional and contemporary hymns and songs drawn from the Church's two hymnbooks, with wider and global music, as appropriate.



We gather to respond to God's goodness



We seek to be witnesses in our era



We look outwards to the society around us



We aim to follow the inspiration of our Creator

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

Rev Dr Warren Beattie

Urray and Kilchrist Church of Scotland at Muir of Ord

Muir of Ord – Urray and Kilchrist Church of Scotland, now meets in the East Church in Seaforth Road.

The church has a dynamic home page which shows that on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, there is worship at 10.00 a.m. in the Hall – followed by brunch at 10:30 and then worship continues at 11:00 in the church. This explanation comes complete with a flowchart to help you know exactly what to do (!) – see <https://www.muiofordcofs.co.uk/>

The church mission statement underlines their focus: “Our purpose is to bring glory to God through Jesus Christ by committing ourselves to regular worship, prayer, and bible study. We offer a warm welcome to all and aim to reach out to each other, our community, and the world with the love of Christ.”

Rev. Monika Redman the minister has been at the church since August 2022 and is currently the Convenor of the Presbytery Mission Planning Committee, a challenging, but necessary task, that takes in a large part of the Highlands, the Hebrides and Argyll.

**“We offer a warm welcome to all
and aim to reach out to each other,
our community, and the world
with the love of Christ!”**

Current ministry looks to the present and the future: in addition to Sunday mornings, with an inter-generational focus at worship, the Church connected to secondary pupils with a “Burgers off the Bus” project on Fridays and continues to run a Bible Alive course (SU) taking all the P6 pupils in the village school all the way through the Bible – interactively! Other weekly activities include Prayer and Bible study on Wednesday and Friday mornings; and there is also a Men’s Group on Thursday evenings.



Urray & Kilchrist CofS - <https://www.muiofordcofs.co.uk/>

SING A NEW SONG

Robert S Moore

Rescuer (Good News)

Recently, “Rescuer (Good News)” has been added to our repertoire of Hymns and Contemporary Christian Music Songs, so I thought that it would be interesting to learn something of the background to the composition. The lyrics and music of the song were written by Rend Collective and released in 2017. Rend Collective is a Christian band from Northern Ireland.

Interview with Gareth Gilkeson

Bandleader, Gareth Gilkeson explained how they arrived at the unusual name: rend “is an old English word that means to tear.” He referenced two Bible passages that use the word: 1) Isaiah 64:1 “rend the heavens and come down” — basically, a prayer for God to tear open the heavens and to change their lives”; and 2) Joel 2:13, in which God commands his people “to rend their hearts and not their garments.”

(if you had done something wrong, in that era, you tore your clothes to show you were sorry). Basically, what God was saying was, “I don’t want you to tear your clothes - I want you to be sorry, actually, to repent and change.”

“Yes, there is a lot of bad news, currently, in the world but we need to balance the bad news - remembering the Good News of the Gospel”

Song Title

Regarding the title, “Rescuer,” Gilkeson suggests that: “the whole idea for the song was that we wanted to write a song about Jesus being our Rescuer, another way of saying Saviour.” The sub-title of the song is “Good News”! “Yes, there is a lot of bad news, currently, in the world, but we need to balance the bad news with remembering the Good News of the Gospel.”



FAITH IN SCOTLAND

Rev Dr Warren Beattie

Vivid Vision - Church of Scotland - 2025

Introduction

A senior leadership group in the Church of Scotland has recently produced new materials around the idea of a “Vivid Vision.” Considering the future of life in the Church of Scotland they aim “to create a picture of what this future might and could look like.”

The Video

Their “Vivid Vision” is captured in a film that offers: “a picture of what might be as we follow the promptings and guidance of the Holy Spirit in witnessing to Christ in our nation and beyond.”

=> the film can be found on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBkhgo5QDkw&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.churchofscotland.org.uk%2F

The Leadership Team

The group whose formal name is “The Faith Action Programme Leadership Team (FAPLT)” describe this “Vivid Vision” as follows: “a picture from their perspective” having “spent time discussing and praying, sharpening and clarifying”.

The “Vivid Vision” film is connected to other materials that are being produced to help congregations and the wider church think about where we are headed in the next few years as a denomination.

Overview of materials

=> an overview to the “Vivid Vision” project on the internet is found here:

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/departments/faith-action-programme-committees-and-departments/faith-action-programme/vivid-vision>



Engagement

At the heart of this project is the question of how this view towards the future affects the realities “on the ground” in the Church of Scotland:

=> what does this vision look like from your perspective and in your context?

The past few years have seen significant change in the church - over the next year or two, many Church of Scotland congregations will be thinking about their “vision for the future for the future. For some congregations - Vivid Vision may well provide a springboard for discussions towards the future.

KIRK ON THE FIRTH

Douglas Willis

“ ... a time tae scatter steens, an a time tae gaiter them up.” (Ecclesiasters 3:5)

[Bible verse from The Aul Testament - rendered into Doric by Gordon M. Hay (Peterhead, 2023)]

When I look at the words of this quotation rendered into Scots, they seem to have a really direct connect with our local, rural scene.

There was a time in the Black Isle’s past when the good folk of Cromarty, Avoch and Rosemarkie Parishes looked to the common ground of the higher, and rougher parts of the Black Isle along the Mulbuie Ridge as a source of fuel, building materials and the like.

“an a time tae gaiter them up”

The quotation above comes down to us from a distant past, but it may contain a useful reminder for our times, when we find ourselves in an age where so many of society’s things appear to be worthless at best or harmful at worst: perceived to be of little or no use, like the scattered stones - the rejects of the Mulbuie crofters ...

For those long-gone Black Isle folk, the *gathered stones* took on their own value in the context of community life.

There is much in our present-day society that deserves rejection but so much potential also for sound community living.



BIE - “Gathered stones in a dry-stane dyke “

MAKING A GOLF-BALL 'FLY'!

William Mather

We can't fly, but ...

My brother Peter, a keen golfer, once told me, "We can't fly - but we can hit a golf ball and make it 'fly' for hundreds of yards." This, for him, is part of the appeal of the amazing game of golf. I am not really a golfer but as a boy I did hit and lose quite a few golf-balls ...

And the game has certainly been around a long time: we are blessed in having a local golf-course that has been going since 1793 – that represents a lot of golf!

So, when invited last year to do a big painting of the golf course for charity, I thought, "Let's go for it!"

The result joined a whole lot of other items for auction at the Fortrose and Rosemarkie Golf course to help raise around £17,000 for Macmillan Cancer Relief.

In fact, there were two "results" – one, in charcoal and watercolour, for the auction and another, in oils, a gift for the club-house.

" ... when invited last year to do a big painting of the golf course for charity, I thought, "Let's go for it!"



William Mather - oil on canvas, 2024

My wife Libby and I also have a lovely spaniel, so this, in part, was a thank you for the many hours of dog-walking that we have been able to do around the golf-course.

To put it mildly, the paintings took a lot of preparation and prayer: there were about 14 days of work, including no less than 130 sketches of golfers, 18 photos, 8 computer print-offs and a lot of time behind an easel ...

That said, it was a privilege and a joy to do this, to share in the Cancer Relief Appeal and to understand, at least, to an extent, the joy of making a golf-ball fly!

William Mather
williammather@gmail.com
www.williammatherart.com

EXPLORE IN CROMARTY

Stuart Tickner

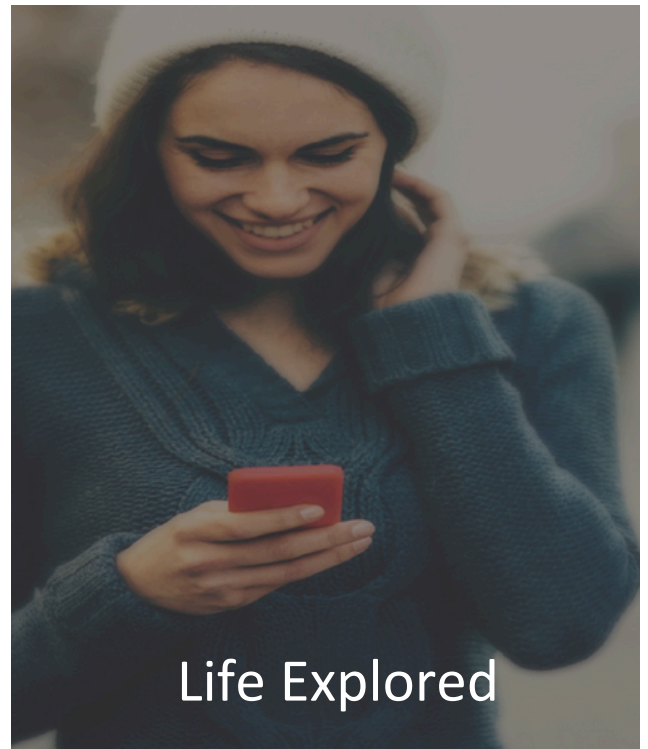
Explore - Last year we completed the Just 10 series, exploring the Ten Commandments and their relevance in today's world. For our 2025 Cromarty activities, by kind permission of the Episcopal congregation, we will again meet weekly in St Regulus Church on Wednesdays at 3.30 – 5pm. Free tea/coffee and a generous slice of Cromarty Bakery cake on arrival to stimulate those drowsy brain cells!

This year we have been studying **Life Explored**, which offers the opportunity to consider questions that help us understand our search for fulfilment, and Jesus's offer of life in all its fullness. In essence, 'What does the Bible say about the big questions of life?'

The seven interactive sessions centre around a collection of silent films, featuring people from across the world, which help us uncover what we are really living for and how God can meet our deepest desires for happiness.

Each session focuses on a different way we try to find happiness, and asks whether it brings the satisfaction we long for and is linked to a related Bible passage which points us to the relevance of God's written word to the challenges we face in our modern world.

next **Life Explored** session - 21st May 2025



Life Explored

We will complete the 2025 program with three further sessions entitled, **Hope Explored**.

Over three sessions, **Hope Explored** presents the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and provides an opportunity to discover how he fulfils three great longings we all experience: the longing for hope, peace, and purpose.

Perhaps, like me, you find that these questions and answers, fundamental to the foundations of our Christian faith, so often lurk in the back of the mind rather than ride at the forefront of our daily life.

Why not join these three sessions and refresh your awareness of God's constant presence in our lives, and of the hope for peace and purpose in life that Christ's death on the cross offers to us all?

Hope Explored - 28th May, 4th & 11th June 2025



PASSIONTIDE & EASTER SERVICES 2025

PASSIONTIDE & EASTER SERVICES

Many thanks to all who helped prepare the church, music and services in the period leading up to Easter Sunday and for all the visitors who joined with us!

PASSION WEEK & EASTER SERVICES 2025

Black Isle East Church of Scotland
In Rosemarkie Church

Palm Sunday
Sunday 13th April - Morning Worship
10:30 a.m. - with All-Age elements

Passion Week
Tuesday 15th April -
Service of Reflection
5:00 - 5:45 p.m.
led by Jack Kemahan

Maundy Thursday
17th April - Service with Communion
5:00 - 5:45 p.m.
led by Warren R. Beattie

Good Friday
18th April - Service of Meditation
5:00 - 5:45 p.m.
led by Bob Moore

Easter Sunday
Sunday 20th April - Morning Worship
10:30 a.m. - with All-Age elements

SC 004472 W.R.Beattie <https://www.blackisleeastchurch.com>

Thanks to William Mather for the 2025
Passiontide and Easter poster!

WOMEN'S BREAKFAST

Linda Simpson

The Women's Breakfast - is an idea from one of the ladies of the Free Church to offer an opportunity for Christian women in the local area to share in friendship and fellowship and to learn about what is happening in each other's churches.

We meet four times a year in the Free Church hall in Fortrose and different churches take a turn at hosting. A small steering group is responsible for booking the hall and advertising the event. As well as enjoying coffee and croissants we get a short talk about activities or charities related to the host church and a short time of prayer linked to that talk.

At the most recent Women's Breakfast, Black Isle East Church of Scotland were hosting. Stroma Beattie, a local GP, was asked to share on the Challenges and Plans facing our church today. She started by looking at how a woman solved a chronic medical problem by reaching out to touch Jesus, where she found the solution to her needs, a dramatic story found in Luke's gospel.



WOMEN'S BREAKFAST
Saturday Mornings at 9:30 am
Free Church Hall in Fortrose

She then went onto ask how we can do the same and show to our very needy world the ways in which Jesus offers the answer to our problems.

This led to prayer for those present and the wider community.

Although this is sometimes advertised as the Christian Women's Breakfast we are very keen that it is open and welcoming to all women.





BLACK ISLE EAST
CHURCH
DIGEST

**Join us on Sunday Mornings at 10:30 a.m.
and throughout the week**

For more information visit:

Website: blackisleeastchurch.com

Facebook: Black Isle East Church

Email: blackisleeastchurch@gmail.com

Location: High Street, Rosemarkie, IV10 8UF

Minister: Rev Dr Warren Beattie

Cover Photo by BIE

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