



NEW HORIZONS

*Innerleithen, Traquair and
Walkerburn Parish Church*

Summer Edition

2024



www.itwcos.org

Editor's Note

I must say that I look forward to this time of the year, the weather has finally shaken off the grip of winter / spring, actually its not been too bad, indeed we have enjoyed quite a few lovely days, but most of all there is the Borders festivals to enjoy, from our own side we have Walkerburn Service and Festival and the Innerleithen Kirkin Service and Games week, another mention to the Principal Guest, our very own Denis Robson, and Matthew Edwards (Ministers son) is one of the monks. There will be many others in the congregations involved and we wish them all the best. After the success of last year Julie Knox has stepped up again to organise a Church entry to the Fancy dress competition. There is also so many more celebrations in Peebles, West Linton, Selkirk, Galashiels and Melrose to name just a few. The towns and churches will be welcoming many visitors and it is a time to open our doors and hearts and ensure that all are made to feel the love of God through what we say and do. Enjoy what ever you do and how ever you celebrate stay safe and radiate Gods love.

Dave

Thondwe Update



Desks

Another 40 desks are being made by the Thondwe carpenter, closely supervised by Head Teacher Annie. As a condition of each new contract, he must repair any damaged during the past year and that has now been done.



Church Garden

The irregular rainfall this year with long dry spells has resulted in a poor harvest with only 38 x 50kg bags of maize harvested. This is about 50% of what might be expected!

THANK YOU FROM PAMELA

Thank you!

Thank you all so much for the incredible send-off you gave us on Sunday 2nd June. There was a real buzz as we enjoyed our all-age service together, and as a family we have been quite overwhelmed by your generosity and by your expressions of love, both written and in person. The book - featuring a verse that was core to my call to ministry - will be treasured.

What a wonderful lunch we shared (such hard work, much appreciated, and the cake was amazing!) and of course two real highlights were the guitar group and Aileen's poem. Thank you for your incredibly kind gifts too - we will be sure to put them to very good use.

It was very fitting to have been able to celebrate Communion together as a reminder of our ongoing unity in Christ. Please be assured of continued prayer...and of future visits! We would be delighted to see familiar faces with us in the Highlands at some point too so please don't be shy in getting in touch.

It has been a blessing and privilege to have been able to work out our faith together over these months and to have seen first hand all that God is doing. We will miss you very much and we're excited to hear what God has for you next.



In love

Pamela, Dougal, Roderick and Struan



Message from the Minister

In May it was great to have a visit from Carol Finlay who spoke to us about Christian Aid and also about our partnership with Thondwe in Malawi. Both of these causes have been important to ITW over the years. We hope to see Carol again later in the year when she brings the Moderator back to visit us after they have visited Malawi with Denis.

Then in June, we are due to have a visitor from Crossreach who will share about the social care work that the Church of Scotland does. Some of us may not know that Crossreach are one of the largest care providers in Scotland, with a broad range of services.

All of these things are really important as we live out Jesus call to *'Love your neighbour as yourself'* (Mark 12:31).

However, our call to live out our Christian faith goes much deeper than this too. Last month I was a commissioner at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and after a long week of debates, one of the highlights was hearing from Justin Welby, The Archbishop of Canterbury. He spoke on Luke 9:23 and recognised all the work that is done by The Church of Scotland, both nationally and in local congregations but also spoke about the importance of discipleship.

In Luke 9, Jesus says 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.'

It is in following Jesus that we want to ground our work with Christian Aid, Thondwe or Crossreach. Justin Welby said that our discipleship,

"necessitates bearing the cross into the places of darkness, as we heard in that beautiful quote about sitting with those who grieve, bearing the cross and following Jesus. A church that chooses any other way is at best a charity with pointy roofs and at worst a deception that will be corrupted."



'a charity with pointy roofs' is perhaps a comical picture but it's a good reminder that our charity is rooted in following Jesus and sharing His love with those that are in need. It is not only about helping others but about helping others in Jesus' name.

May we pray for Jesus' help to take up our cross daily and to follow Him.

Fraser

Visit to ITW Church by Carol Finlay of Faith Action, The Church of Scotland

We enjoyed a visit by Carol on Sunday 12th May when she talked on Christian Aid and delivered a sermon on her experience leading the Scottish church Twinning programme. The partnership team spent time with her discussing past activities and future plans.



Transporting Bibles and Vale Sports club kit Donation

We are testing a new method of sending items out to Thondwe using a Dundee based Scottish charity the Bananabox Trust. They have been established for 7 years and send out 3 containers each year to Northern Malawi. We have established a link with a Rotary Club in Mzuzu that will collect and store our items until we are ready to collect.



Thondwe Update



St. Cuthbert's Way Churches Together on St. Cuthbert's Day

A small group met at the tearoom standing at Old Melrose on the afternoon of 20th March 2024. We were there to celebrate the local saint, Cuthbert. He was an early Celtic saint who came to the monastery on that loop of the River Tweed to dedicate himself to following Christ. He had been inspired to do so, so the stories say, by seeing a vision while shepherding in the hills (either the Lammermuirs or at Channellkirk). He saw a bright light at night coming and going from Lindisfarne. Later he learned that Saint Aidan had died that night and Cuthbert took it as a sign to follow in Aidan's footsteps and went to the monastery based on the loop of the Tweed at Old Melrose.

Our group was led by Rev. Colin Johnston, Rev. Rosie Frew and the historical and archaeological details were presented by Dr. Margaret Collin of the Trimontium Trust. The current owners of the land have changed the public access to the estate slightly since I was last there. But they had given permission for our group to go into some of the private areas.

There is nothing of the old monastery to see on the ground nowadays - thanks, in part, to Kenneth MacAlpin, who razed the original buildings to the ground a few centuries back. Old Melrose continued to be a place of pilgrimage and home to a few or single monks who stayed to dedicate themselves to serving Christ and to offer hospitality to travellers who came to the site up until the time of the reformation. After that, the land was sold off and became a privately owned estate.

Dr. Margaret Collin showed images from the Lidar survey carried out by the Scottish Government. This technology takes the tree and large vegetation out of the aerial view. From the image of the 'loop' the course of the vallum could be seen more clearly. The archaeologists realised they had located the vallum in the wrong place! Now, from the image they could see this great ditch went from one side of the neck of the loop to the other and its exact location. This ditch may well have existed pre-Roman times and the loop was already a site of worship. The Romans took it over and the archaeologists hope to find evidence of this in the future.

As the site of Old Melrose was part of Northumbria and ruled by King Oswald, who was converted to Christianity at Iona, the site was given to the missionary monks from Iona and Lindisfarne. The site would not have looked like the medieval abbey, which is now in ruins in Melrose, but wattle and daub on stone foundations. The monks would have lived and prayed in their individual cells only coming together to eat and to worship in a basic chapel.

Cuthbert, once he was abbot, established a pattern of going out along the river and into the hills to minister and teach the ordinary folk of the Border lands. He eventually became a bishop based on Lindisfarne but he longed for the simple life he had experienced at Old Melrose. He first went to St. Cuthbert's Isle just off the beach at Lindisfarne but found he had too many visitors! Eventually he made the Inner Farne island his last home and died there. The monks brought his body back to Lindisfarne until the early Viking raids terrorised the monastery. Cuthbert's body was moved and there is a whole other story where he was finally laid to rest at Durham.

As we listened to the archaeological details we also listened to reflections and joined in prayer, not just looking back to the past but praying for us who have benefited from the faithfulness of Cuthbert and other saints of this area. As we spent a time in the walled garden (the only place I took photos) we were reminded of the many anonymous and faithful monks who prayed and served in that place - we might even have been standing on some of their bones there as it's understood this area was part of the monastery graveyard, though many bones were removed when the garden was formed in the 19th century. I've included the reflection read by Rev. Rosie Frew which reminds us that we are all part of God's building work, however anonymous or well known and we all are important in God's Kingdom. The wall surrounding the garden is made up of many reclaimed and repurposed stones. One, at least, has been identified as originally part of a Roman wall and some may have come from early medieval buildings. I wonder, as you read through the reflection, what sort of "stone" you might be and may you know that you are important just as you are but also being shaped by God to be part of His building work.

Heather Martin

Thondwe Update—Solar Study Lights

Leaners can "hire" the solar lights to study at home and improve their exam performance. It is being hailed as a huge success with many more being requested than are available. Encouragingly the lights are still in good condition with an increase reported by teachers of homework being returned. The system does provide an income generating scheme although we understand that the loan payments are not always forthcoming. The cost of "hire" is only a few pennies but the idea is that this will make sure the lamps are cared for and build up a little extra to enable lamps to be repaired or replaced over time.

Denis Robson



Stones by Tom Gordon

God, there are big stones in these walls
solid, dependable stones,
heaved into place by skilled masons,
holding these walls in place for centuries.

Thank you for these big stones,
for their strength and purpose,
and for their enduring ability
to make this place what it needs to be.

God, there are little stones in these walls,
fitted in, banged into place,
to fill the gaps, to bind with other stones
to make these walls complete;
misshapen stones,
all with an appropriate space for their shape alone;
once discarded stones, discarded no longer;
odd stones, each one with its special place.
Thank you for the little stones,
for their unobtrusive, necessary part,
strengthening these walls,
making this place what it needs to be.

God of our lives, thank you for the big people,
in our churches,
in our communities,
in our world,
carrying responsibilities,
carved out for important roles,
people we rely on,
people who are our role models,
people we trust,
people who make our lives, our church, our
world worthwhile.
God of our lives,
help the big people to hang-in-there,
because we need them so much,
to keep the whole thing going,
making our world what it needs to be.
And if I'm one of those big stones,
help me not to crumble with the weight of it all.

God of our lives,
help us not to forget the little people,



Heather Martin



Walkerburn Summer Festival 2024

**Congratulations to Festival Lass Rachel Woodcock and
Essay Winner Bailey Hunter**

There will be a full week of events starting from

Sunday 23rd June 2024

**Walkerburn Festival Service - Sunday 23rd June at
10:30am - village Hall at 10.30am**

*PLEASE NOTE, there will be no service at
Innerleithen this day and we
encourage everyone to come to the
Walkerburn service.*



Thondwe Update



Bibles

We received good news that the money raised by the ITW congregation (£377) and sent out to Thondwe bought 49 local language Bibles, 19 have been given to Deacons and the other 30 will be kept and retained in church and shared out at each service. Rev Chigoli responded: "Thank you ITW Parish because you have given us the Word of God!"

A further 20 English Bibles donated by ITW church members were sent out in a Bananabox Trust Container.



Denis Robson





A Bitter Sweet lunch



On Sunday 2nd June 2024 ITW Church had a resounding successful leaving lunch for Rev Pamela Kenedy.

It was bitter because we were saying goodbye to a very dear friend who had become much loved and respected by the congregation and the community and sweet because Pamela had finally been called to her own ministry in THE BARN part of the Culloden and Ardersier Parish Church, way up in the highlands just east of Inverness.

Fraser reminded us that Pamela joined us originally in a temporary role as an assistant minister focusing on outreach to the Cardrona area in particular, which we all thought if it lasted 2 months, we would be blest and very happy. Pamela was ordained as a minister on the 1st of September 2022 and joined ITW Parish Church as the assistant minister. Twenty months later Pamela has at last been called to her own ministry and we all wanted to wish her Gods blessings for her, her family, her work and in all that she does.

The Service on Sunday was an all age service with communion and a special lunch afterwards. The tables were set up in the main church in long rows, front to back and they were packed, every seat taken and a few more besides.



Fraser asked the family to come up to the front and offered a prayer for the family (photo) Fiona presented Pamela with a basket of flowers and an envelope containing the collection that had been made by the whole congregation for the family, she also gave something to Roderick, telling him to share it with Struan (his brother) who could not be there as he was doing some dance tests/ examinations (If I heard correctly) and finally She gave Dougal a gift and a big hug and a peck on the cheek! (photo)



Aileen Borthwick had penned a personal and funny poem, and baked a beautiful cake, the Guitar group (Pamela had created) played a lovely song, "Keep on the sunny side" which the Congregation all sang along with, the special book of thanks was passed around for those that had



missed it, to be signed by all and finally Pamela made a short but thoughtful reply.

Many congregation members had made sandwiches and tray bakes, buns, cakes and shortbread etc. The catering team had produced such a great spread and it was all served so well and efficiently to make for a fantastic send off for Pamela and her family.

PS Pamela did threaten that we have not seen the last of her and she would drop in if she was back in the area.

The nicest threat I have ever heard!

Editor



More photos on page 6

Pamela



A Selection of Photos from Pamela's Farewell Lunch

When you came to join us in 2022
You were brimming with ideas of things you hoped to do

Your remit was Cardrona, a village to the West
Stirring up some interest was perhaps your biggest test

You put your best foot forward you spoke to residents
To tap into **their** vision and plan some new events

A monthly Sunday service in Cardrona Village Hall
With music, prayers and worship and fellowship for all

On Tuesday, from all over they come to 'Meet and Eat'
For tasty soup and sandwiches and always something sweet.

And what about the 'Light Night' our 'counter' Hallowe'en
Hot chocolate, crafts, marshmallows and bright lights on The Green

Last Summer at the Village Fair saw spiritual intent
With support from other churches you hosted a prayer tent

A Messy Church at Easter was the order of the day
With fun and food for families and lots of games to play

And there's your gift for music with guitar and a song
Now we have a whole group playing and singing along

In this church we've kept you busy with preaching and pastoral care
Bible study, Alpha, Prayer Group in all things you've shown great flare

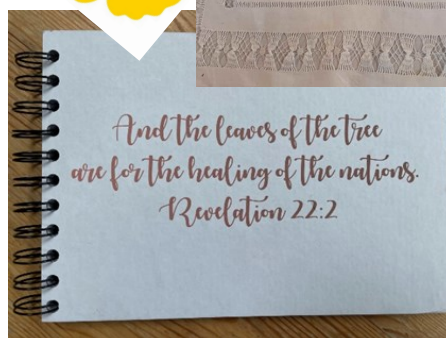
There's something I want to mention before you go away
'A no rehearsal Nativity' there's no such thing I say!

And now you're heading northwards to Culloden and Ardersier
To face a whole host of new challenges and where they will hold you dear.

We know that God will be with you in everything that you do
With Dougal, Roderick and Struan always supporting you too.

So Pamela the A9 is calling you, to the Moray Forth far, far away
With our love and prayers and blessing may God bless you in every way.

Aileen Borthwick



Samara's Aid Appeal

Last month Samara sent an update to the Appeal's supporters with a story about one of the rural outreach centres and their team. The team knew that the youngsters in the community were living out the same hostility and feelings of revenge that their parents and older relatives had during hostilities and still continue. This keeps the communities divided and violence is always a possibility. What happened during the civil war and what many of these children witnessed makes for very hard reading and I won't repeat it here. But it makes the story of reconciliation and healing so much more amazing. God is at work in this struggling land ...

I've copied below part of the story that Samara heard from one of the leaders, Mama M, of the outreach centre:-



"As most of you know, the care and attention these children receive from our team is different to anything most of them have received anywhere else to date in their lives, and that often includes their home or family environment. She (Mama M) asked the children if they can see and feel how much she and our team love and care about them. The children replied that yes, they could see and feel that they are really loved a lot by the team, and they replied that they love our team too.

Mama M then said that she now wants them to love each other the way she and the team love them. She told the children that they started out fighting with and hating the people from the other communities and religious group who they fought with, and who hurt them and who they hurt back. She talked about how they became their enemies, and did nasty things to each other, fighting with and hating each other, wanting revenge. She then changed the narrative that they have become used to, describing how after a while they instead started to fight with their own brothers and their own religious group and communities. She asked the rhetorical question why, then explained that their way of living had become based on revenge and hate rather than loving each other, which therefore creates and prolongs the suffering of all of them. She asked them again whether they could see how much she and the team loved them, and reminded them how happy they feel when they come to our centre, eat our food and how they feel cared for through the love that is shown to them through our team. She said that what is needed now is for each of the children to start mirroring the same behaviours and feelings to others that have been modelled to and experienced in them. She said that she and her family believe in mercy and forgiveness, that this is who they are as Christians, and that the children should go now and start loving others the way they have received love. She encouraged all the children she was talking to that day to go home and invite their enemies to come back with them to our centre the next day.

When they got home, they went to their neighbours who have been their enemies for years - the children they fought with, and whose families have killed theirs, and vice versa - apologised. They said sorry for the things that have been done (even though the violence was started first by those enemies), and asked them to come the next day to our centre for a celebration with them. The next day, there were double the number of children at our centre! They walked in to the centre together, some of them a number of kilometres, in their new groups - not as individuals - each wearing their best clothes for this special occasion (*it was Eid - the end of Ramadan when families and communities enjoy a special meal together*).

The team cooked cakes and pizzas with the children which they ate while our centre manager talked with them all about putting the past behind them, forgiving each other's wrongdoings, and moving forward. They listened and took the message to heart. They spent time playing, hanging out and eating together, and even dancing together! The team said it was like a wedding party (for many in this environment, a wedding party is likely to be the only kind of party they have experienced). People walking past on the road stopped to ask what was happening there with all the music, singing and celebrations. Our team replied that there was a reunion party there!"

Samara wrote:- What is remarkable for me is the willingness of these children to just accept and try. They don't over complicate it, they are just willing to do it. I'm reminded of Jesus's words that we need to receive the kingdom of God like children. Perhaps we can learn an important lesson from these little children.

Please pray:-

- that these seeds of reconciliation will grow and spread
- for the safety of the outreach teams and volunteers
- for the two new outreach centres being built
- for financial support for all the projects



Heather Martin

Thondwe Girls Project TGP



The Thondwe Girls Project (TGP) hosted two events on Saturday 25th May to celebrate International Menstrual Hygiene Day.

Twenty people walked the 5 mile trail around The Glen Estate in the warm dry weather. However the ground was a bit wet in places underfoot and there were a few streams across our path. The beautiful Loch Eddy was the perfect place to stop for an early lunch.

Many thanks to Bill Staempfli who invited us to enjoy the Estate and the private gardens. Meanwhile the FAC Team were making preparations for the Tea for Thondwe at Innerleithen Church. In the afternoon over 60 people gathered to have tea and cakes and view the cake and craft stalls.

Together these two events made a perfectly balanced day (exercise and cake!) and raised over £1200 for Thondwe Girls Project. This will enable Thondwe sewing group to make 150 Menstrual Hygiene Kits later this year to be distributed to girls at Thondwe Primary School. These kits enable the girls to attend school with dignity and progress through their education on an equal standing with the boys.

Thankyou to all those who helped organise the day, those who donated and those who attended to make such an enjoyable, successful day.

Thondwe Girls Project would like to thank Robin Tatler for his ETAP cycle in April when he raised £800 for TGP. Thanks to the E-Rotary for Southern Scotland for raising £420 at their recent conference in Inverness. Thankyou also to IWT Rotary for its commitment to gift £100 each year for the next 3 years for this project.



NOTE FROM EDITOR

This magazine cannot ever tell the whole story about all the events and news in the Thondwe Partnership, If you have access to a computer and FACEBOOK then try going to the **Thondwe Community Forum** face book page, Just go to the Search Facebook ICON at the top right hand side of the main page and enter

"Thondwe Community Forum" and press return, It should take you straight to the page and then you can scroll up and down to see all that has happened and is happening.

Crafts4U Memories Banner

The Crafts4U group in Walkerburn are planning to make a "Borders Memories" wall banner in time for their exhibition in October. The design will incorporate the Borders landscape, the past industries, the present ones, recent events (e.g. the pandemic). But Vicky, who is leading the project, would love to have input from as many local folk as possible.

You might have memories of the mills or other work you think ought to be included in some way or there may be an important event that needs to be included. There may also be the option of having a local loved one remembered. One way might be to have their initials on a flower stitched onto the banner.

If there is something or someone you think should be represented in some way, or want to make a small panel to be included, then please contact the group as soon as possible.

You can contact them via their Facebook page or via Dawn Rodger or Heather Martin.

Heather Martin

Thondwe Update—Bridge Repair!!

Now that the rainy season has ended the repair of the bridge over the river, that was badly damaged by the floods caused by CYCLONE FREDDY has started.

This bridge is a vital link for nearly half of the Thondwe community, especially the school children, who would face a nearly 2 mile detour without it, just to get to school. The Church building team, part of the twinning committee led by Brown (Session Clerk) is managing the program and have already bought nearly all the materials. Lots of cement reinforced steel bars, quarry stones and lots of wood.

The contractor has started the work, dismantling the damaged pillar and the material recovered is being saved to repair a smaller bridge on the other side of the village with the community lending a hand



Games Week 2024
13-20 July



Special congratulations to
Standard Bearer and his Lass Rory
Murray and Emily Anderson



PRINCIPAL GUEST
Denis Robson



Congratulation to all twenty four youngsters from
St. Ronan's Primary School named to take leading
roles in the Cleikum Ceremonies and other Games
Week events.



Innerleithen Kirkin'
Service is Sunday 14th
July at 11am – the later
time allows for the
parade

LADY BUSSE
Anna Leckie



For full details about Games Week 2024 or to book tickets visit www.stronangames.org.uk.

Deaths

William Sommerville—died 28/04/24
Ian Gordon—died 25/05/24
Helen Bowers—died 26/05/24

ADVANCE WARNING

Articles for the next magazine our
 Autumn Edition!.... need to be submitted by
Friday 9th August 2024.

These can be sent to Karen or David at any time
 before this date.

Who's Who?

| | |
|--|--|
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The Editor reserves the right to edit or omit letters, but only if it's really necessary! If appropriate (and there's enough room), any submissions omitted may appear in a following edition.