



NEW HORIZONS

*Innerleithen, Traquair and
Walkerburn Parish Church*



Autumn

Edition

2024

SC001100

www.itwc.org

Editor's Letter

This is the Autumn magazine, as Rev Jim Wallace said a couple of weeks ago, AUTUMN! what happened to SUMMER, Well, its been and gone, and if you blinked you probably missed it. As I write this on the 13th August I realise the children go back to school tomorrow, seems a very short holiday!, I was over in N Ireland this past weekend and reminded that the kids are still off until September, the way I remember it, 2 whole months! but I am sure there are many parents and grandparents glad that the school is again going to help take the strain!

I ask this every year, but don't forget to send in any little stories or photos that you took while away, or at home to let the other readers enjoy them. Which reminds me, a special mention to all those who took part in the Fancy dress parade , there are lots of photos on the church Facebook page I am only adding one here, as a wee reminder. (Big SHOUT OUT to Julie Knox for organising this again)



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F.A.C.T. Report

Over recent months the Fellowship and Care team have been involved with two events.

The first of these was organising and serving the teas for the Thondwe Girls Project event in May. The team provided the baking for the tea and served the refreshments to those who came. The church was very busy and everyone enjoyed both the tea and chat.

The second event was lunch after communion on 2nd of June. Because we were also saying goodbye to Pamela, we anticipated that more people might stay for lunch than normal. After a lot of discussion on how best to accommodate greater numbers, a plan was made to set the church up completely differently and have everyone sitting at tables for communion as well as for the lunch. This prompted some raised eyebrows when people arrived in church for the morning service. However there was a lot of very positive feedback about the different arrangement for communion and lunch and a great time was had by all who stayed.

Finally, the Guild kindly gave some money towards buying equipment for the kitchen We purchased 2 dozen more china mugs, another kettle, two more vacuum flasks and another vacuum coffee jug to supplement the resources we already have.

Aileen Borthwick

**Diamond wedding anniversary
for John & Daphne Taylor
(10th July 1964)**

**Rita Bean will be 90 on
September 30th.**

**Linda and Rae Bruce have their
Diamond Wedding on October
20th-60 years.**

It was a special treat for the church Congregation to hear the Church Bells being rung for **Chrissie Thompson** earlier this summer for her **100th Birthday** celebration.

Message from the Minister

As I write the Olympic Games have just finished and in a few weeks the Paralympics will get underway. I've enjoyed all the different sports, and it was good to have some time off over the summer to relax and watch everything that was going on. There were so many highs and lows. You could see people achieve the results they had been training hard for. For example, the young GB climber, Toby Roberts, who won a Gold medal and said "I have been training for this moment my whole life". However, there was real sadness for others such as Jeremiah Azu who represented GB in the 100m but was disqualified for a false start. A small mistake and it was all over without a second chance. There are fine margins in elite sport and that must come with a lot of stress and pressure.



However, what I particularly loved to see was the number of Olympians who talked quite openly about their Christian faith in a very down to earth way. Diver Andrea Spendolini-Sirieix won a bronze medal and she talked about how praying with her coaches took the pressure away. Before the Olympics she said

"Every athlete will be experiencing some sort of pressure and noise, but I am ensuring my focus is directed towards the light of God. I want to dive like no one is watching, even if the whole world is."



Swimmer Adam Peaty said after winning a Silver medal in the 100m Freestyle said "I asked God to show my heart, and this is my heart. I couldn't have done more."

These athletes reminded me of two things. Firstly, that in a time of pressure and stress we can depend on God and that prayer is a special gift. Prayer can help us keep our focus on God and remind us that God is bigger than any difficulties that we face. Secondly, they weren't shy in talking about their faith, but they also didn't have sermons prepared or any clever words. It was just a natural part of their life to share the part that God played in their training and competing.

Perhaps we can learn something from them. We don't need to have big speeches or complicated words when talking about our faith. Instead talking simply about what you believe can be so helpful to someone else.

If you are someone that prays perhaps you could let a friend know you are praying for them. Even just simply letting someone know that you come to church can open up a good conversation with no need to be worried about having all the answers.



We follow Jesus who brings Good News for all so we should all be ready to talk about that Good News even in the simplest of ways.

Fraser



Church Of Scotland (COS) Moderators Visit to Malawi!

The Moderator of the COS the Very Rev Dr Shaw J Paterson is visiting Malawi this month, and as part of that visit he and his supporters are visiting the Thondwe CCAP church, and the community to witness first hand what is regarded as a shining example of mutual partnership and cooperation between the Scottish and Malawi Churches and communities.

Our ITW Partnership leader, Denis Robson is travelling to meet with the Thondwe partnership team to help prepare for the visit which is happening on Wednesday 21st August. A full programme is planned including a visit to the Church, the school, the parent council, the GET_IT Girls and of course the newly repaired bridge. Also included will be seeing the newly built-houses with new Wrinkly roofs, meeting some of the Grannies with Chickens, families with goats, and some of the people that have received our medical help, such as Lameck, Gift and Blessings. How much of this that will happen will depend on the time allowed and taken, before the visitors depart for Zomba. Denis will give us all a good report on his return and the Moderator has planned to visit our ITW church on his return to report to the congregation what he has witnessed and learned from his time in Malawi and particularly in Thondwe.



Dave





THONDWE PARTNERSHIP



ITW Bibles and Vale Sports kit

They have arrived in Thondwe but waiting for confirmation that they have been collected, with photos for a

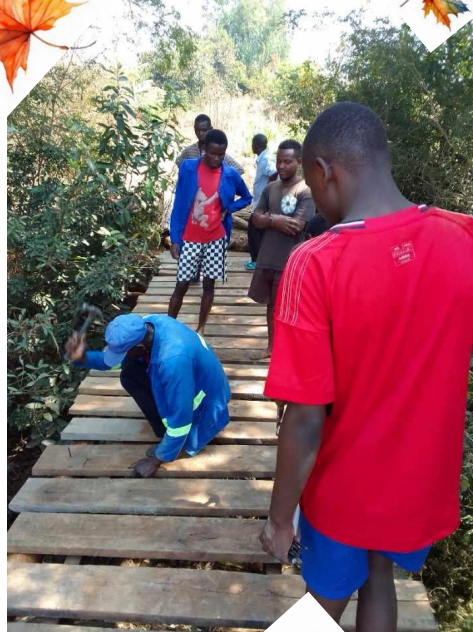
A Tale of Two Bridges

The contractor and community are celebrating the completion of two bridges across the Nawaile and Ntalikachawo rivers. Together they will allow 1400 children to cross safely to Thondwe primary school. This is one of the biggest projects undertaken by the partnership in collaboration with IWT Rotary. We now hope and pray that they will withstand the next cyclone!



This is the second bridge in Thondwe, Denis negotiated that the contractor, working on the main bridge would keep the old timbers etc (less than 3 years old) , and use them to improve this little bridge.

You can see below the Church men, using the recovered timbers to repair the bridge.



Learners need Desks

Thanks to another example of working together two Rotary clubs raised the cash needed to have another 40 desks made and delivered to Thondwe school. This lifts another 80 children off the floor making a total of 400 learners since the campaign started. The goal is #Empower500.

IWT Rotary raised the money with the Thanksgiving party last November and a Rotary eClub though all Christmas e-Cards.





Christian Aid Update

We recently received acknowledgement of our donation to Christian Aid, after gift aid has been added the total will be £700.00 Many Thanks to everyone who contributed.

Marion and Ella

D-Day Invasion

Dear Editor,

On an anniversary of the D-Day "Invasion" some decades ago, the Session Clerk of South Leith Parish Church told me of the surprise a friend got when crash-landing onto the Normandy beach. His battle-experienced unit of the Guards had been withdrawn from the Italian campaign to reinforce the first onslaught, so they had some hours, maybe a day or two, waiting. Oh, the nerves, the fear, the praying until their turn came - and then the determination as their LST set off. The sounds and smoke of war were all around them but they could not see what lay ahead. Then as the landing ship scraped its way on to the beach, the high frontage crashed down and they all rushed out just as they'd practised in Scotland, bayonets fixed, yelling at the top of their voices and throwing themselves flat on to the sand. Lifting his head to look around, there was a man saying, "Like a cup of tea and a roll? Church of Scotland Canteen....."

Jack Kellett

Jack sent this in time for the anniversary of the landings, unfortunately our summer magazine was already in print, but I thought the readers might appreciate reading this anyway. EDITOR

PS Jack has had a bad fall, so prayers for him would be appropriate.

Innerleithen Guild

Innerleithen Guild

It is hard to believe that the "summer" is almost over and our autumn meetings will soon be here. Marion Cameron our programme secretary has been busy arranging an interesting programme for our next session. Our first meeting is on **Monday October 7th at 2.30 pm** when we shall be entertained once again by The Last Resort ukulele group and catch up with other members over tea coffee and home baking.

We shall be delighted to welcome anyone who would care to join us for an afternoon of fellowship and entertainment.

Betty Scott

Friendship Beyond the Fundraising

Since my visit to Malawi in March 2023 I have often caught myself tempering my thoughts with a Malawi “reality check”. Before my visit, I really didn’t know what to expect. I knew nobody there and had no real insight into the sort of people I’d meet or the reality of their lives. I knew there was poverty and that there was ongoing need. I’d always been a staunch supporter of fundraising initiatives.

When Carol Finlay, Team leader Congregational Engagement Team, Faith Impact Forum at Church of Scotland, came to talk to us, what she said really resonated with me. She said a link should be a partnership of equals with parties, both here and overseas, willing to give and to receive. It is not a funding programme.

I have been approached directly for money on several occasions during my time in Malawi and since. It does not sit comfortably with me and I’m not sure why. I think it’s rooted in the quote from Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu ‘give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime’. I now know from firsthand experience that not every well-meaning initiative is a good fit for our friends in Thondwe, but that is not a reason to step away.

I believe in order to optimise the value of the partnership we have with Thondwe, it’s vital to develop our knowledge and understanding of their culture and values. How to achieve this is the challenge. A really useful starting point is to work on grass roots relationships and communication.

During my time in Malawi, I met dozens of people in passing and was only able to spend time with a scant few. Of these, those that I particularly connected with were Annie, Thondwe Primary School’s Headteacher, and Mervis, Session Clerk of the Thondwe Church and Co-ordinator of the Chicks 4 Grannies project. In addition, we greeted Reverend Picklen Chafulumira like an old friend when we met up with him in Blantyre at the end of our trip. Although I’d not spent a great deal of time with him then, his visit to the UK had made an impression on me and he was a familiar face.

My friendship with Mervis has continued over the months and I have learned more about the Malawian culture in general and Mervis’s journey through life in particular. I have huge admiration and respect for her and love her thirst for knowledge and learning. Whilst Mervis’ command of English is excellent, my knowledge of Chichewe is almost non-existent. We can’t speak as fluently as if we shared the same first language, so it would be disingenuous to pretend otherwise.

Our communication is almost exclusively via WhatsApp online, written rather than spoken (I don’t know if she has the connectivity for speaking, but it doesn’t matter). Sometimes there are technical problems. When I go about my daily life, I’m in the habit of taking photographs for a photo-journal I keep on Facebook. I send a selection of these to Mervis, especially when I visit places of interest including museums and galleries. Mervis welcomes my photographs and often comes back with questions, testing my understanding of what I’ve seen. I sent Mervis regular updates when on a recent holiday and, effectively, took her on holiday with us. She really enjoyed the trip to Ireland, Wales and back to Scotland.



Over the months I’ve learned more about Mervis’ family, background and daily life. I’ve witnessed her recent health issues.

She has shared photographs with me. Most recently, I’ve shared in the joy of her daughter’s wedding on 3rd August and share a couple of photographs with you now.

I’d love to see more one-to-one friendships developing over time, ideally kick-started by face-to-face contact. I’d love to see more Malawian friends being given the chance to experience UK life firsthand.



When I think of Malawi now it is of warm hospitality and smiling faces. I have enormous gratitude for a better understanding of what’s important in life and of how friendship can enrich our lives.

Jackie Couchman

Cleikum Ceremonies Speech



Good evening friends. (The speech given by DENNIS, BY POPULAR DEMAND)

My Spotlight Time has now come and I must say up front that I'm incredibly honoured to be standing here before you as the Principal Guest of St Ronan's Border Games 2024. During the week the Flag Party who I'd now like to think are friends have been offering me all sorts of advice for my speech, so I hope it does justice to them and the honour you've given me.

I'm sure that for many of us Games Week comes, and Games Week goes, and we give little thought to what is needed to make it happen, nor the fact that it's contributing to the long history of the St Ronan's Borders Games, first run in 1827, and the Cleikum Ceremonies, first celebrated in 1901. Not bad for a wee town of less than 3,500 people and we should all pay tribute to the Games Committee for the incredible work that goes on behind the scenes.

Being part of the week Marjorie and I have witnessed the tremendous effort applied by all the principals. Games week can seem a bit of a puzzle, but the rehearsals brought all the pieces together and highlighted the talent of all the youngsters involved. Our community should be proud of them.

The invitation to be Principal Guest came as a real surprise because, as my family and friends will tell you I always start each year with a list of the things I'm going to do in the year ahead - 24 things to do in 2024 – but standing in front of you tonight was not on my list for 24!! So, thank you for this opportunity.

Marjorie and I met in Galashiels of all places and spent the first part of our married life in Peebles. It took us 10 years before we saw the light and moved to Innerleithen where we've lived for the last 33 years. And boy in 33 years have we seen this town change! When we arrived here our famous textile industry which sent beautiful cashmere garments all around the world was sadly in decline, and then eventually most of it was moved overseas.

Innerleithen at that time was still a town with a strong identity but was struggling economically and looking for direction. Gradually, this town which really needed to reinvent itself, responded to local interests, and the development of outdoor activities. It's given Innerleithen a new lease of life and a new sense of purpose but somehow, we've managed to retain our sense of identity and our traditions. Innerleithen has embraced change and is buzzing. It's become a serious visitor destination and a desirable place to live.

On our High Street and Online, Innerleithen has a vibrant business community that is the envy of other Border towns. I believe the future is bright for Innerleithen and we must make every effort to shine the spotlight on our town to bring visitors from across the world to experience it for themselves.

I love travelling, spending time with family and friends, enjoying outdoor adventures and, I suppose selfishly, chasing my dreams. During my working life I've had a great many experiences through travelling and seeing the world, and in the process, meeting so many different people and their traditions.

Although doing what I want in life can be very satisfying I do try to make time each day to be grateful for everything I have and always to remember where I come from. My family often say that I need to live in the moment. So, bear with me as I take a deep breath to enjoy this moment and survey the scene in front of me. Nice to recognise so many friends in the audience.

Travelling to different places around the world has certainly opened my eyes and has given me tremendous satisfaction in life. Meeting new people and discovering how different cultures operate helps understand why people do things their way. It helps you sympathise with their situation.

My final years at work in an international development role provided me with so many experiences and when I got involved with Innerleithen Parish church's community link with the village of Thondwe village in Malawi it felt almost like a gift - a retirement present if you like – and an opportunity to make use of some of the skills learned over my working years. It provided me with a smooth transition into retirement and a renewed sense of purpose.



Continued on page 7

Cleikum Ceremonies Speech continued

Through great teamwork encouraged by Innerleithen Parish church and all the organisations involved, the school, the Health Centre, Businesses and individuals plus the enthusiasm of the twinned community in Thondwe we have accomplished much together. This link is a partnership of equals with both communities giving and receiving. Everyone has something to share as well as something to receive and certainly something to learn. One of the strengths of our community here in Innerleithen is that it looks outwards, and the Malawi project is something anyone can be involved in - no expertise is needed, just a desire to make a friend in Malawi and maybe do something together, so please contact me or other members of the partnership team if you're interested.

Looking closer to home if we can count any blessings from the Covid experience I'd have to say it took many people on surprising journeys – some of which we'd prefer not to repeat! Elbow bumping for example or marching up and down your garden to get some daily exercise. And of course, the times when we couldn't meet up with our families.

Like everyone else I had to look for adventures closer to home. So being someone with a curious and modestly adventurous mindset some of the excitement in our area satisfied my craving for something different.

I discovered the delights of the new paths around Innerleithen and the Traquair loop where you can look out over the whole of Innerleithen. I learned the joys of outdoor swimming in all weathers with my neighbour Murray Charters (and a wet suit) at 25 different amazing lochs and reservoirs within an hour of the house! And the joys of taking on 22 Peaks over 500 Metres with Stewart Wilson the Tweed Valley Blogger. So many micro adventures right on our doorstep.

Plus, I could write a book entitled "Mountain Biking Adventures with my daughter Margot in the Tweed Valley" even though she always reaches the end of the trail before me.

But for many of us Covid ignited the desire to help others. We saw an uptake in volunteering and the happiness that it can deliver. On a bike ride on the wonderful multi-use paths a plan was hatched to sign Innerleithen up for Cycling Without Age, the charity that aims to get people with mobility challenges outside into the community they know and love. So, the Trishaw we call the Cleikum Belle was bought, volunteer pilots were trained, and it's now enjoyed by many of Innerleithen's elderly citizens as well as some of the not so elderly.

If you know of someone who would enjoy a free ride in the fresh air or would like to join the fun as a volunteer, please get in touch.

On a visit to St Ronan's Care home this week several of the residents commented on what the Games Week meant to them and what did they thought of Innerleithen.

Two of our Monks Angus and Gregor volunteered to read out their comments:

Angus:

Winne Watt said: I have lived in Innerleithen since I was 12 and it is a lovely town. The folk are friendly.

Peter Anderson said: I love the Silver Band Playing. I enjoy the week. Innerleithen is quite good.

Gregor:

Ronnie Dodds said: It's a guid wee place.

Jake Gibb said: Games Week means everything to me. I have enjoyed it since I was knee high. I am the oldest Standard Bearer still alive.

And Susie Kurowski says: Innerleithen is a bonny wee toon. I like the closeness of everyone. You always meet someone to talk to.

I'd like to let all the young principals know that traditions like St Ronan's Border Games are an important part of our lives. You might ask why do traditions matter? Well, they give people a grounding – a place to belong to. You don't have to be born in a place to feel that you belong but taking part in traditions like this give everyone a sense of belonging and identity and a connection with the past. And this place is yours because you're adding to the history of it by being here tonight and by taking part.

Finally, I'd like to wish Rory and Emily our Standard Bearer and his lass all the very best for the year ahead. Thank You

Good Memories will be made tonight!

I certainly will remember to continue looking outwards but always remember the taking part, the traditions of our wee community and what makes it such a great place to live in.

Denis Robson

Finally, I'd like to wish Rory and Emily our Standard Bearer and his lass all the very best for the year ahead. Thank You





John and Daphne Taylor

10th July 1964

We are always delighted to share anniversary's or special moments with our readers its never too late to send us a picture.

Seen on the wall in a Church Cafe last week when I was in N Ireland
" Sometimes I sits and thinks, and sometimes I just sits"

GIFT SUNDAY APPEAL FOR FUNDS FOR THE DRY ROT FIX!

15th September 2024

Many people have seen the work going on over the last few months.

Many have asked if they can help financially.

We certainly need help!

Not all the invoices are in, indeed the work has not yet been completed.

But the bill to fix the DRY ROT problem is in to the thousands and may reach £15,000

We have to thank Jim Borthwick and Tom Fraser who have put many many hours into this task.

They have used local tradesmen exclusively. We have to thank 'Arron Brunton Joinery' who did most of the work.

'Smith & McMath' did the dry rot treatment and guarantee.

There's also been work from the electrician (Nick Silk), plasterer Mr James Fleming, and a painters K&R Painting and decorating, That is Keith McCudden and Ross Davidson.

New flooring still to come.

We are nearing completion, and the plan is to have an opening day (yes we will open the door!) On the 8th September , that's only 4 weeks away, when John Taylor, the leader of our finance team will explain a bit more of what has happened and our plans.

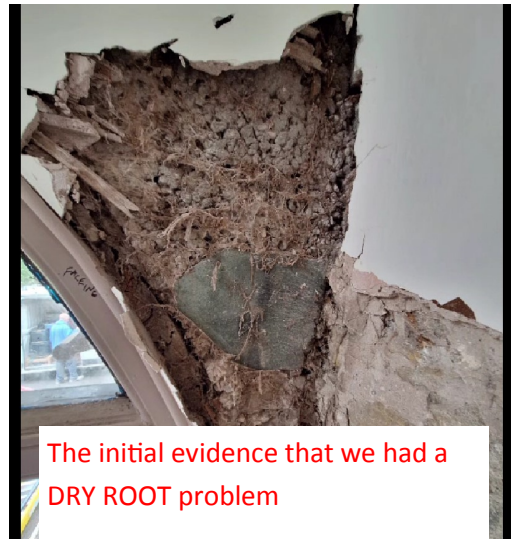
Then on the 15th September we will have a GIFT SUNDAY, when those that wish to, can help by donating money.

Of course anyone can donate money at any time by doing a BACS (Bank Transfer) to the ITW Treasurers account Sort Code 80-09-33 and account number 00458480.

As Always please remember to Gift Aid it if you can, if we don't have your details, then talk to Ruth our treasurer and she will guide you.

Finally for Gift Sunday, please put any donations in an envelope and mark it Gift Sunday or DRY ROT , or if you transfer by BACS, then please use a reference like your Name and Gift Day.

Thank you for your donations and prayers.



The initial evidence that we had a DRY ROOT problem



The Hall of Friendship



The door back in place, looks good from the outside, still work to do inside, Amazing work by Arron.

Funeral

Margaret Davidson

21/08/2024



ADVANCE WARNING!!!

Articles for the next magazine our Winter Edition!.... need to be submitted by **Friday 8th November 2024**. These can be sent to Karen or David at any time before this date. Email is great if it is possible

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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.