



NEW HORIZONS

*Innerleithen, Traquair and
Walkerburn Parish Church*

Autumn Edition

2026

Charity No:

SC001100

www.itwcos.org

Editor's Note

September is here, the schools are back, the church organisations have finished their summer breaks, and the weather has cooled down (not that we enjoyed or suffered (depending on your taste) the temperatures seen down South).

Is it just me or are the days getting shorter a lot quicker than that they got longer!, to me it seemed to take months and months for the light evening and longer days to arrive and here we are mid-August (when I am writing this) and already its pitch black by 9.30pm. Old age I reckon!

I hope that some of this edition will give you something to smile about or reflect warmly about. Talking of which, I was communicating with Brown, one of my contacts in Thondwe and he reminded me that they were in deepest winter and they were looking forward to the Banana boxes arriving, that we had sent with warm clothing donated by St Mary's school in Melrose, because it was so cold, down to 17 degrees centigrade, I could only laugh!

Dave Kerr

RVS Royal Voluntary Service

Morning care and lunch Monday and Friday in the Hall of Friendship at ITW Church.

If you have or know of someone who would benefit from some social interaction on two days a week, with lunch provided, then please get in touch. Transport can be organised to pick the person up at about 9.00am and take them home about 2.00pm. The organisers are trained and will help to involve all who attend in some of the games and activities that are laid on. There is a charge, but to find out that and more please phone 07947 881776 or 01896 754 481.

There are plenty of places available. (See page 9 in the magazine).

Meet & Eat is Back!



Meet & Eat starts after summer break on **Tues 15 September**. We look forward to welcoming you 12noon - 1.30pm in Cardrona Village Hall for home-made soup, sandwiches & delicious tray bakes. There is no charge for lunch, but donations are welcome.

Quiz Thank you

Many thanks to Janice Lees for organising the recent quiz sheet. The superb sum of £134 was raised to assist with church fabric expenditure.

Ruth Kerr won the prize as the first correct entry taken from the mailbag of correct entries.

If you enjoyed the quiz don't worry, there will be more in the future.

I know that lots of you enjoy it when Rev David Tavener fills in for Fraser, as his experience and long service is full of sparkling gems. As a perfect example a few weeks ago, David made the following reference.

"The Worship is over. Let the Service begin!"

(Said after the Benediction by Very Rev, Dr Sally Foster-Fulton)

AMEN!

New Term, New Rhythms



Dear Friends,

Autumn always brings a time of changing seasons. The children go back to school, the evenings begin to draw in, and somewhere in all of that we start speaking of “getting back into a routine”. One thing to try and keep as part of your routine is being in church on a Sunday.

It's easy to think of Sunday worship as optional but when we worship together, we're reminded of who God is and who we are before Him. It's where we understand how God wants us to live during the week and where we encourage one another simply by showing up. It's also part of what we have promised to do when we become church members.



The writer to the Hebrews put it like this “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another” (Hebrews 10:25). That encouragement is for everyone involved. You will be encouraged when you come and when you're there, you give encouragement to the people near you. Never underestimate the impact you can have on others by simply showing up. As term begins again and diaries fill up, I encourage you to make Sunday morning a priority where you can. We're at our best as a church family when most of us are there most of the time because that's part of what it means to belong to one another. Do let us know if a lift to church would help.

However, I'm also very conscious that for some of you, being there on a Sunday is not possible.

Through illness, caring responsibilities, or simply not being able to get out and about. This is meant to be an encouragement, not a pressure. You are just as much a part of this church family wherever you are, and we know that some of you join us online each week.

I hope to see many of you this Sunday, and in the weeks that follow. If you haven't been at church for a while then please be sure that there will be a warm welcome for you.

Fraser

Non-forced Adoptions

Dear Editor,

I was very interested in Andrew Quinn's report (Scotsman 3 July page 5) of Tracy Gilbert MP's adoption from a Church of Scotland Mother and Baby Home in 1972, and gratified that she is sure her adopted parents would not have wanted any child who had been forcibly removed from its mother - particularly gratified, indeed, because I served on the Kirk's Adoption Case Committee for many years and can assure her (and the general public) that the Church of Scotland's Glasgow Home took the greatest care possible of the young mothers, while our Committee employed high-minded social workers to try and ensure that the children would be placed with ideal parents. (You would not get a baby if it was to save your marriage!).

Nearing 97, and perhaps the only survivor of the prevailing circumstances, I'd like to spell out that many and possibly most of the teenage mothers came from working-class households that just could not cope and provide a good life for the child of a teenager's pregnancy. The first such distressed expectant mother - and her mother - that I met came from a mixed family in two rooms with no electricity or hot water, sharing an outside toilet, with an alcoholic father prone to violence, where the mother frequently had to pawn her wedding ring. In such circumstances, girls were glad that their mother had managed to get a place for them in the Home. There, the caring staff helped the girls make clothes to have their baby at its best for the Matron to make the hand-over. And then the girls' main concern was to get to their “secret” window and check that the new parents were not old!!

Yours faithfully, (Rev) Jack Kellet



A Pilgrims progress (the St Kentigern way)

This story starts about 1,500 years ago in the 5th century when a monk called Kentigern was called from his evangelical centre in Hoddum, Dumfriesshire to Glasgow by the King of Strathclyde where eventually the Cathedral was formed and where St Kentigern is buried.

Fast forward to 2021, when Bill & Christine Jacks contacted ITW to say they were planning a walk of 150 miles in October 2021 from Annan to Glasgow Cathedral; a pilgrim route in its infancy. The route retraces what is believed to be the route taken by St Kentigern (also known as St Mungo patron saint of Glasgow), which passes Traquair Kirk. In the 5th century Traquair came under the Diocese of the Bishop of Glasgow.

What has The Kentigern Way to do with ITW Church? Well....having welcomed Bill & Christine to our Parish in 2021, Ruth Kerr and Heather Martin, both keen walkers and both having completed pilgrim routes themselves, are not only the local contacts for ITW but they are also on the Kentigern Way Steering Group. In January 2026, the new pilgrim route was awarded accreditation by the Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum.

In an effort to promote the new pilgrim route Ruth, Heather and others from ITW Church are walking one section from St Mary's Loch to Traquair on 19 September (about 10 miles) and hope next year to complete another section from Traquair Kirk to Peebles via The Glen, along an old Drove Road.

To get ready for this longer walk Ruth & Heather recently completed three 'training' routes and invited others to join them....Venlaw Wood & Soonhope Glen in July and then tackled Hamilton Hill and Janet's Brae near Glentress in August. We have been blessed with beautiful weather and scenery for our training walks - see photos - and next up is tackling a section of The Kentigern Way on 19th September. We look forward to sharing photos and letting you know how we get on in the next magazine.

Thank you Ruth Kerr & Heather Martin.



Janets Brae



Hamilton Hill



Venlaw Wood
and soon hope
Glen 1



Three Peaks Challenge

Finished! 16.8 miles for a three peaks challenge in our local area. Joining up the three places our church meets across three peaks.

Editor (you can nearly hear the relief in that sentence, it was a tough challenge but the guys did it and were still smiling at the end!!!)

It was planned for 23rd June which is Alan Turing Day so that we can build on the work of The Turing Trust and the computer lab that has been setup in St Anthony's Secondary School in Thondwe, Malawi.

We wanted to raise money to connect St Anthony's school computer lab with the internet.



Remember Thondwe is a very rural area so the internet is not readily available. The amazingly generous church community and others helped raise over £2500 which will be used to fund a satellite dish and a period of ongoing fees helping get the school online and access to important learning material.

Thank you very much to everyone that sent a donation and sponsored us. We've smashed the fund raising target and we know it will make such a difference in Malawi to the educational opportunities that students have.



The Beginning ...



The End!!!

Everything I Need to Know I Learned from Noah's Ark

(From a book Ella found in a drawer)

One: Don't miss the boat

Two: Remember that we are all in the same boat

Three: Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark

Four: Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.

Five: Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs done.

Six: Build your future on high ground.

Seven: For safety's sake, travel in pairs.

Eight: Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.

Nine: When you're stressed, float awhile.

Ten: Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.

Eleven: No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting

From Ella.



The sum of **£1,094 34** was raised for Christian Aid, and that is a great total and thanks to Ella and Marion also for the work also done in ST James's Church

The total was made up of £648.50 from the envelopes (there were 18 Gift Aid envelopes totalling £550.00 so Christian Aid will be able to claim the Gift Aid from that)

St James's Church held an Afternoon Tea which raised £296.50 and ITW donated the collection from the May lunch which was £149.34

The message from Ella & Marion is, thank you to everyone who gave so generously and to Ruth who filled in the forms and sent the money off to Christian Aid.

Ella Muir & Marion Cameron



THONDWE NEWS AUGUST 2026

www.itwcos.org

Charity No: SC001100



EMAIL itwparishmag@outlook.com for any comments or questions

Rev Ken Ross Visit

We were blessed with a visit to Innerleithen by Rev Ken Ross, Professor of Theology at Zomba Theological University who was keen to meet with the twinning committee at the church. He is writing a book on the Church of Scotland's international involvement in recent times and believes that Twinning's are part of this, so he would like to use our link with Thondwe as an example of a sustainable partnership.



Empowering Girls from Thondwe

The Partnership team are proud to share a letter from Phalyce Solomon from Thondwe church who visited Scotland as their presbytery representative during her first year at College studying Hospitality Management. Phalyce was supported through her education and training by a member of our congregation but unfortunately faced challenges finding a permanent contract after graduation. Nevertheless she persevered gaining experience in the sector and has now secured a full time permanent job as a Safari Lodge Operations Manager at Bua River Lodge, Nkhotakota a remote part of Malawi. Congratulations Phalyce.

FROM: Phalyce Solomon

TO: Denis

SUBJECT: Empowering Girls from Thondwe

From Thondwe to new opportunity. This is the story of hope, growth and possibility. Growing up In Thondwe, many girls face challenges that make it hard to dream big. But with support, determination, and community those dreams become real. Today I'm proud



to share that I have secured a new role. This is not just me. But about showing other girls from Thondwe that education, hard work, and believing in yourself can open doors. When one of us rises, we bring others with us To every girl in Thondwe: your background does not define your future. Keep going your time is coming.

(Phalyce is the smiling woman at the left hand side of the Photo, the rest are her team)

Games Week BBQ



Fun and Fundraising for a roof on the Thondwe church manse. A St Ronan's Games week tradition was reinstated at least for 2026 bringing 55 church members together for a BBQ on a perfect summers evening. Generous donations helped realise £464 which will be of great help to our partners.



Project Switch/Light a Village

Funds raised by Elizabeth Parker and her sister on the long-distance walk along the St Cuthberts Way has now been invested in an exciting new project with a trusted partner SunnyMoney Malawi, a division of SolarAid. Called **Light a Village** it is an innovative social enterprise focusing on a Pay as you Go solar home system with the objective of reaching everyone in the Thondwe CCAP community.



SunnyMoney have scheduled briefing and training meetings with the church leadership in August and will provide the installations, ongoing after sales service and business growth support. A Customer Service Representative will be recruited from the community. We will be following and reporting regularly on the progress of this important project.

Linked Loos - Building a Period Friendly School

We have tackled part of this issue by supplying reusable menstrual hygiene kits, and that has worked well, However, a lack of dignified sanitation facilities also leads to absenteeism!

Currently Thondwe primary school has only **one** dilapidated changing room, basically a small outhouse called a Zimbudzi that has nothing in it but a hole in the ground. Girls do not want to use it during their period because there is no privacy, no water and no way to clean up properly. It is estimated that many girls miss a week of school each month and parents say if they had access to washing facilities, they would be able to change at school. This one changing room, a latrine, is used by 400 girls of menstruating age. 400! Plus 22 female teachers!!

Similarly, there are only 8 unhygienic toilets for the 871 girls plus 22 teachers!

As an important first step, we now plan to build two proper menstrual toilets providing soap and buckets plus 10 more girls toilets, more if we can!. The girls would collect water in the morning, keep the facilities tidy and follow good hygiene practices, that they will learn in a Water, Sanitation and Hygiene programme. We are looking for local businesses or individuals that would like to support an appeal to **Link their Loo** for £200, the cost of one new toilet at Thondwe School!



Samara's Aid Update

Life is still very difficult for the many widows and orphans in Syria. The outreach centres continue to provide food, education, encouragement and other sorts of aid to the most vulnerable in the country.

Samara sent us some good news – the harvest from the fields have yielded a large amount of okra, aubergines, potatoes, cabbages and chickpeas. The chickpea stalks go to feed the cow which has also been giving lots of milk in return! A heartbreaking story had a happier ending. Many of the 'older' children are sent out to work to earn a little money, especially if there are no male members who can provide for the widows and their children. One boy of about 10 years old was sent out to work in the fields but the tremendous heat during the day meant he suffered severe heatstroke to the point where he collapsed and was taken to hospital. He was on life support with a very poor prognosis and his mother was told to prepare for the worse. She contacted members of the outreach centre and, despite not being a Christian herself, asked for prayer for her son. The family is known to the team as the boy loved coming to the centre and being among his friends for the last four years. The message was relayed to Samara so she and her church prayed for this young boy. Miraculously, he started to recover. The amazed medical team saw him regain his mobility and independence. He's now home and started coming back to the outreach centre. For the full story, ask me to send you or print out the latest newsletter from Samara. He does still have some problems – some memory and hearing loss and an eye hasn't completely recovered – so please pray he will have complete healing.

The more challenging situation in the country stems from the difficulty the new government has in controlling the more violent and sectarian elements in the population. It also feeds into criminality as many families have very little to rely on. There are stories of kidnapping in order to extract money from families so it can be unsafe to wander out alone in some areas. But the outreach centres offer hope to communities longing to rebuild safely and to give their children a better future.

Please pray:-

- give thanks to our extravagant God for a good harvest and a generous dairy cow!
- give thanks to our caring God for the recovery of the little boy suffering from severe heatstroke and pray for his complete recovery.
- for the safety of the outreach teams in this continuing uncertain future for the country.

Samara's Aid Appeal (www.samarasaidappeal.org)

Heather Martin

Guild Report Autumn 2026

Although we have had a break from meetings during the summer, the committee has been busy planning our programme for 2026. At time of writing this, Shirley is planning to attend The Guild Gathering in Perth on Saturday 12th September and the committee will meet shortly afterwards when they will be bombarded with all Shirley's new ideas having been inspired by others at that meeting !!



Our first meeting will be on Monday 5th October at 2.30pm in the Hall of friendship where our first guests will be, as usual, musical. We look forward to welcoming members of the Cheyne Gang. Our second meeting will follow on 19th October when we will welcome Wendy Waldie who will give a demonstration in making, no bake tray-bakes. As many of you will know, Wendy has a close connection with our church and we look forward to welcoming her.

Shirley M Bean, Convenor



A Farewell to Bob & Betty

I like many of you will miss this pair when they move south to Englandshire, any day now. They first arrived in Innerleithen in the summer of 1997, rumour has it they followed Margaret and Douglas Watt from Penicuik, for some unknown reason. Bob already ordained as an elder soon joined the Session here and only retired in 2023 having served as an elder for 53 years in Penicuik and Innerleithen combined, funnily enough he was the only elder in Innerleithen who had done the training to be able to take a session meeting, should the Minister ever be unable to do it, unfortunately that never happened so we never got to see him in action!



Betty apparently dived straight into the life here including Scottish country dancing, she joined the Floral Art club, was a very keen Gardener and enjoyed walking, or is it hiking around our hills? Bob and Betty both liked to socialise here in Innerleithen and also kept in close contact with the friends in Penicuik, and they both enjoyed holiday cruises.

Apart from playing Golf at our local course, and joining the Probus Bob immersed himself in church life, over the years he has collected used stamps, did the Hall and church bookings, produced many quizzes, which sold well including in Jim Borthwicks sweet shop in Peebles and raised church funds. More recently but for quite a time he organised the collection of Hats and Scarves just before Christmas time and then took them into St Catharines in Edinburgh for the people sleeping in the streets. Lately he was the keeper of the temperature control regularly going round to set the radiators before the Church and the rooms were used, and for some time now he has operated the computer in Traquair for the services there, and I am sure I missed many other things that we will always remember him by.

I know this sounds a bit like an obituary, it's NOT but I wanted to show just how much our brother and sister have integrated in our lives as church family members, and how much they will be missed and fondly remembered

Editor

2026 Harvest Festival Service

This year Harvest service will be on **Sunday 4th October**. As usual we will collect donations of food or money. This will be an all age service and we will have a standard meal of bread and soup, with a wee tray baked treat, if you are lucky.

All donations of food, will go to the Peebles Foodbank, all money donated will go to the charity "Embrace the Middle East" who we supported in 2025 as well, which is an ecumenical Christian charity working to help marginalised and vulnerable communities in the Middle ...



Who is EMBRACE the middle east

As a Christian development charity, we [partner with Christians in the Middle East](#) as they work to transform lives and restore the dignity of the most excluded and marginalised communities. Where there is a need – for refuge, a home, for health care, for education, for justice and human rights – we, with our partners, respond.

Our goal is to contribute to a culture of human flourishing in a troubled region.

Ours is a vision of love in action. It is rooted in, and inspired by, Christ's invitation to care for those most in need.





ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

THINGS TO DO,
people to see

Do you find staying busy and active harder than it used to be? With a little support from one of our volunteers, you could join one of our social groups. Sometimes, that can make all the difference when it comes to staying healthy and independent.

What we do depends very much on your needs and wishes. Our centres connect you to our local communities, there are opportunities to find new and old friends and is a place to share a meal and a good giggle.

Church of Scotland, Innerleithen – Monday & Friday
10:00 – 14:00

TO FIND OUT MORE CONTACT:

07974 881 776 / 01896 754 481

Deaths

Isabel Elms	21/05/2026
Thomas Salton	26/05/2026
Margaret Jupe	14/06/2026
Christopher Hall	22/05/2026
Malcolm Noble	12/06/2026
Margaret Black	20/07/2026
Brian Hall	26/07/2026
Ailsa Fordyce	01/08/2026
Jane Bennett	06/08/2026

ADVANCE WARNING

Articles for the next magazine our Winter Edition!.... need to be submitted by **Friday 6th November 2026**. These can be sent to Karen or David at any time before this date.

Email is great if it is possible.

Who's Who?

Innerleithen Organist: Enid Wilder	MINISTER: Fraser Edwards The Manse, Millwell Park, Innerleithen Tel: 01896 490 742 fedwards@churchofscotland.org.uk
TRAQUAIR CHURCH CONTACT: Norman Donald 3 Wells View, Innerleithen, EH44 6JD Tel: 01896 830781	SESSION CLERK : Jim Borthwick 16 Gallowhill, Peebles, EH45 9BG Tel: 01721 720483 Mobile: 07799547646 james.borthwick@btinternet.com
ROLL KEEPER: Aileen Borthwick Tel: 01721 720483 james.borthwick@btinternet.com	INNERLEITHEN CHURCH CONTACT: Julia Stoddart Leithen House, Leithen Road, Innerleithen EH44 6HY Tel: 01896 830410 grahamstoddart99@yahoo.co.uk
PROPERTY CONVENOR: Tom Fraser Tel: 07957 871 837 tomfraserw@gmail.com	Safeguarding Coordinator: Marjorie Robson Tel: 07434584296 Tel: 01896 830023 Safeguarding@itwcos.org.uk
TREASURER: Ruth Kerr, 2 Waverley Mills, Innerleithen, EH44 6RH. Tel: 01896 833994. m.kerr6813@btinternet.com	PRESS OFFICER , HALL BOOKINGS: Ruth Kerr 2 Waverley Mills, Innerleithen EH44 6RH Tel: 01896 833994 m.kerr6813@btinternet.com
DEPUTY TREASURER: Moira Brown, Kirkstone Lee, 1 Kirklands, EH44 6NA. Tel: 07743 623281 **** NEW AUG 2026 ***** moirabrownkirklands@gmail.com	SUNDAY CLUB LEADER: Aileen Borthwick Tel: 01721 720483 james.borthwick@btinternet.com
MAGAZINE EDITOR: David Kerr Tel: 07711929605 itwparishmag@outlook.com Assisted by: Karen Borthwick Tel: 07790512348 karenjane247@gmail.com	CHURCH SECRETARY: Ruth Kerr 2 Waverley Mills, Innerleithen, EH44 6RH Tel: 01896 833994 m.kerr6813@btinternet.com Please send any intimations to Ruth, by 5pm on each Wednesday PRINTING: Anne Barbour Tel: 01896 870252

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.