

EDITION 1



WINTER 2024

BLACK ISLE EAST CHURCH DIGEST



Scottish Charity Number: SC004472

WELCOME!

At the beginning of the year our church's identity changed – we became Black Isle East Church of Scotland. This was a new designation for the union of churches from the villages of Avoch, Fortrose and Rosemarkie and, in the east, Cromarty.

As can be seen from our website, church life has begun to change: we now have a joint weekly service in Rosemarkie on Sunday morning; we have regular activities in the western and eastern villages of Avoch and Cromarty; and some groups like the Bible Study, the Crafts Group and MAJN (our music group) are based in Fortrose and Rosemarkie.

The “Church Digest” aims to keep us aware of all that's happening in the church – especially at this time of transition as well as 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.

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

- 2 BIE VALUES & HISTORY
- 3 WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?
- 4 SING A NEW SONG
- 5 FAITH IN SCOTLAND
- 6 KIRK ON THE FIRTH
- 7 LOOK TO THE HILLS
- 8 JUST 10
- 9 CHRISTMAS IS COMING
- 10 CARE HOME SERVICE



BIE VALUES & HISTORY

We aim to be a welcoming and caring fellowship, a Christ-centred community that shares the good news of the kingdom of God and seeks to live out the values of the kingdom in our daily lives.



Christians have been coming together in the Rosemarkie area to worship God together since the sixth century A.D. The current church building dates back to 1821 and has witnessed over two hundred years of church life and activities.

In 2024, members from a variety of local Church of Scotland congregations from the villages of Avoch, Fortrose Rosemarkie and Cromarty joined together in Black Isle East to become a new expression of Christianity in this region.

We have a long history of living out and sharing our faith in Jesus Christ in this peninsula - we warmly welcome others to come and share with us in our worship and activities week-by-week.



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

Culbokie and Munloch Church of Scotland

Following the impact of the Mission Plan in the Church of Scotland, the shape of the church and its locations is changing - into the future there are going to be only three congregations in the Black Isle.

Here is an update on our nearest neighbour – now called **Culbokie and Munloch Church of Scotland**. On the 4th September 2024, this recently united charge celebrated its new identity. The Rev Terry Burns was “introduced” as the Minister of the united charge which brings together the former congregations of Resolis & Urquhart and Knockbain. The Clerk and the Moderator of Clèir Eilean ì (the church of Scotland in the Highlands and Hebrides) were both in attendance at this notable occasion!

According to the website, the congregation seeks to be “a church that points people to God and shapes people’s lives in a way that emulates Jesus’ life and ministry!” Taking inspiration from a comment by Dr. Kosuke Koyama (an Asian theologian) who notes that in the time of Jesus people moved at a walking pace - around “three miles an hour” – the congregation stresses the importance of having “time for conversations with those around them” in the expanding village of Culbokie.

“a church that points people to God and shapes people’s lives in a way that emulates Jesus’ life and ministry”

This new church community is primarily located in the Culbokie Church Centre which has transformed the space of the former school into a multi-use building that includes space for Sunday worship and large gatherings, another meeting room and a Church Café area. The congregation has weekly Sunday Services and mid-week activities include the Church Café and the Walking Group as well as regular gatherings of the Senior Citizen’s Friendship Group and the Women’s Fellowship.



<https://www.culbokiechurchcentre.org/index.asp?pageid=678639>

SING A NEW SONG

Robert S Moore

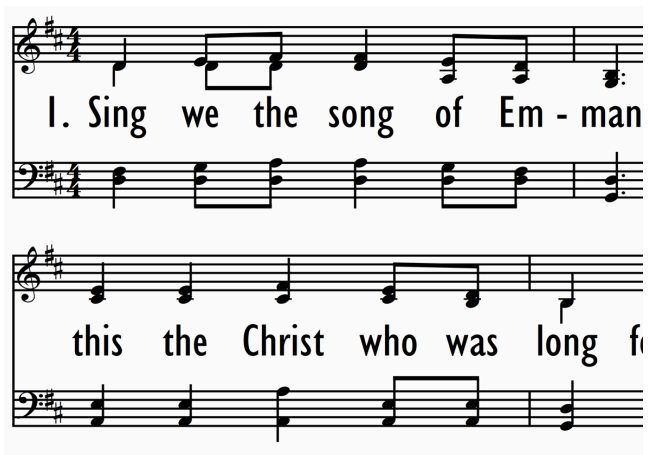
“Sing We the Song of Emmanuel”

There are six instances in the book of Psalms where we are encouraged to “sing a new song to the Lord.” With this in mind, I would like to introduce a hymn we will be singing over the Advent and Christmas season, namely, “Sing we the song of Emmanuel” written by Matt Boswell and Matt Papa in collaboration with Keith Getty and Stuart Townend.

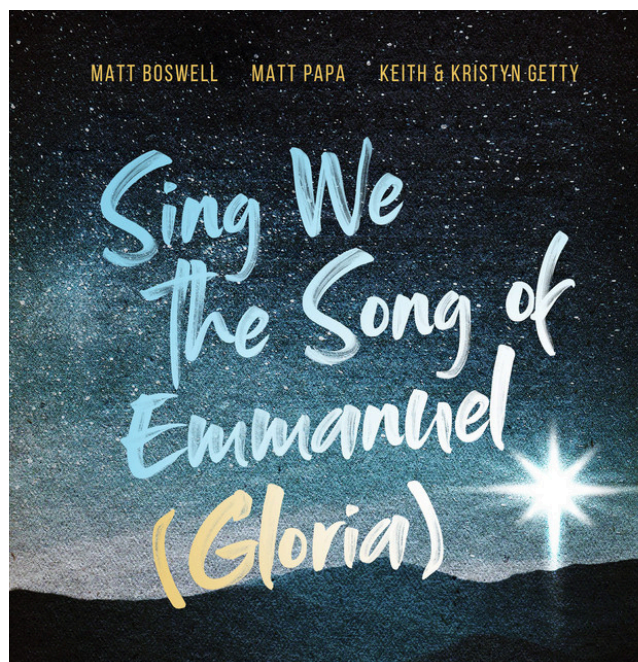
It took the group three years to write - so a lot of thought has gone into its composition! Matt Papa and Matt Boswell were asked to tell the how and why of writing this hymn - here's what they said:

Interview with Matt Papa:

“This hymn was written in 2014. We were inspired by verses in Colossians 1. We built all the words together for verse 1 and 2 with thoughts from Colossians 1. But then Stuart Townend helped us take verse three to a beautiful place where we remember that Christmas is not just something to KNOW but is something we must TELL the world!”



The image shows two systems of musical notation for the hymn. The first system is for the first line of the hymn: "I. Sing we the song of Em - man". The second system is for the second line: "this the Christ who was long for". Both systems include a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on the treble staff, and the bass line is written on the bass staff.



Interview with Matt Boswell:

“Just as the big story of the Bible is told the hymn follows the same pattern – the ‘good news’ being first promised then finally arriving with the Lord Jesus and then being shared with others. Many of the best carols also send us as messengers who continue to ‘let the gospel ring’.”

You can watch the full interview at Hymn Partial:
<https://hymnpartial.com/2021/12/13/sing-we-the-song-of-emmanuel-with-matt-boswell-episode-67/>



I hope you enjoy singing this carol – here's a link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gj0qphQD4qk>

“Go spread the news of Emmanuel
Joy and peace for the weary heart”

FAITH IN SCOTLAND

Rev Dr Warren Beattie

The Rural Project: Highlands 2024 Conference

The minister recently went to a Highlands 2024 Conference in Culloden-Balloch Baptist Church hosted by "The Rural Project" a network set up to encourage evangelism, revitalisation and church-planting in rural areas. The event was hosted by Kenny Rogan the minister of Hope Church in Aviemore - with representatives from other churches in the area - including Cromarty, Inverness, Nairn and Moray.

Dr Daniel Strange, the Director of a centre for cultural engagement and mission called Crosslands Forum based in North-East England was the key speaker. The conference had three sections using the idea of "magnetic" as a metaphor for "attraction":

1) **Magnetic Foundations** - Orientate to Post-Christian Cultural Context: understanding faith and the way people think and function in the 21st century

2) **Magnetic Points and the Magnetic Person (Jesus)**: this introduced five key felt needs and biblical responses – Totality – finding significance; Norms – rules for life; Deliverance; Destiny – becoming active players in God's world; Higher Power – looking beyond ...

3) **The Magnetic People and the Magnetic Spaces** - how our church might build Magnetic Points: the final section considered how the church can attract a hearing both in its own "gathered spaces" but also through points of contact in the community.



THE RURAL PROJECT

The idea of "porches" (from an idea by Tim Keller) – "spaces" where Christians can interact naturally with their wider community in the 21st century was inspirational and led to a useful analysis of projects that we do already and consideration of what else might be possible going forward.

(See Dan Strange - <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/five-inescapable-questions#3-deliverance-is-there-a-way-out>).

KIRK ON THE FIRTH

Douglas Willis

“Dinna shift the aul mairch-steen set up bi yer fadders.” (Saaws 22:28)

The words are from the Book of Proverbs but in the language of my North-east upbringing from *The Aul Testament - rendered into Doric* by Gordon M. Hay (Peterhead, 2023)

They stress the importance in Old Testament times of respecting the old “march” or “boundary stones” that marked off the limits of all-important, food-producing land. To shift the boundary stone between yourself and your neighbour was in effect to rob a family of part of their life support.



“Dinna shift the aul mairch-steen”

To me, the idea retains a relevance today, speaking of a need to keep respect and fairness in a world of blurred boundaries between right and wrong. We look at our own northern history and rail at the injustices of the Highland Clearances where people were literally cleared off the better, food-producing places in straths and coastal areas. Yet we often remain ignorant of social injustice in our present-day world where land grabs from the poor are taking place even now, fuelled by the might of big businesses. The dispossessed then have to make what they can of life, often in overcrowded urban areas with the poorest of living conditions.

Supporting the “Fairtrade” movement is an example of how we can remain aware of the lives of those working in distant places to produce things we eat and drink. In that way, we can do a little to ensure that the old moral boundaries of fairness and justice are firmly maintained. “Loo yer neeper as ye loo yersel” (Mark 12:31) has never been bettered as a way of putting it.



LOOK TO THE HILLS!

William Mather

My wonderful American grandmother from New Hampshire had an amazing view of Mt. Monadnock from her kitchen window. She wrote on the sill the opening words of Psalm 121: "I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

That was 50 years ago and I was a teenager! But those words got to me. So when my sister Gillian and I had an exhibition of paintings recently at Eden Court, we called it "Look to the Hills." I have always loved to paint and both Gillian and I had lots of paintings of hills, so it was a logical title and we had a great exhibition.

For me there have been many glorious times painting outdoors – looking to the hills - being overwhelmed and blessed by sights, sounds and impressions. How I long for the skills and experience to communicate such wonders in paint!



Gillian Pattinson and William Mather with paintings before the exhibition, 2024.



William Mather on-site with easel and oil paints on Sanna Beach, Ardnamurchan, 2023

**"I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth."**

Psalm 121: 1-2

Yes, that's what it is – 'wonders' and the Bible talks about 'signs and wonders'. Often this refers to miracles that the Holy Spirit does as we try and go the way of Jesus.

Yet, as we look to the hills the Holy Spirit helps us see signs and wonders in God's handiwork! So, for the artist there is a great challenge and joy to try and communicate such wonders.

Perhaps such visionary work can enable many more of us see, like my grandmother, that our ultimate help and comfort is in the one who made it all.

William Mather
www.wiliammatherart.com

just10 IN CROMARTY

Stuart Tickner

Stuart Tickner shares his reflections on this challenging and thought-provoking subject as an encouragement for others to join the next scheduled “run” early next year.

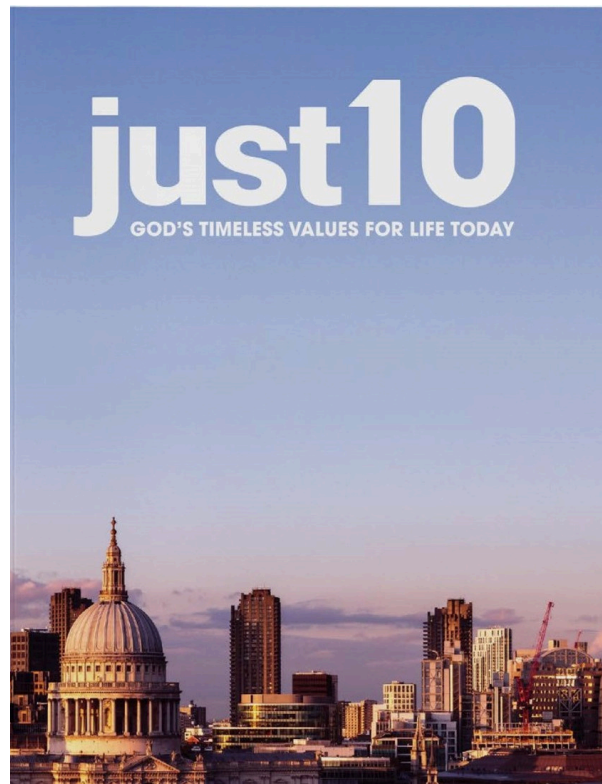
From the 3rd July 2024, we ran four weekly sessions, followed by a further six in September and October, exploring just10 – The Ten Commandments Re-imagined.

just10 is a ten-session series to explore the Ten Commandments and their relevance in today’s world. By kind permission of the Episcopal congregation, we met in St Regulus Church, Cromarty. Across ten sessions, we were invited to consider the issues at the heart of each of the Ten Commandments. Using contemporary wording and placing each commandment in a 21st-century context, just10 unpacks how each of us can live by these timeless principles today.

Each session is structured by a short video introduction and an initial explanation of the modern approach to each commandment by J. John, the charismatic and engaging evangelist who led us through each topic of the course. This is followed by further short periods of video expansion by J. John, interspersed by an opportunity for, often quite lively, group discussion on the issues raised.

I think it fair to say all those attending the course found it interesting, stimulating and very relevant to a Christian approach to being modern disciples. To quote J. John:

“The Ten Commandments are not obsolete. They are absolute. They are not rules to restrict our freedom. just10 helps us to embrace the Ten Commandments so that each of us can live life to the full.”



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2024



ADVENT SERVICES

1st December - 1st Sunday of Advent

8th December - 2nd Sunday of Advent

15th December - 3rd Sunday of Advent

22nd December - 4th Sunday of Advent (All-Age)

Throughout Advent we will focus on themes connected with the coming of Christ Jesus from the Old and New Testaments and sing a wide range of traditional and contemporary hymns and carols for this season of the year.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Thursday 12th December - Carol Service

“Christmas Carols, Crafts and Craic” – preceded by seasonal refreshments from 2-4 p.m. in Avoch Church Hall

Tuesday 24th December - Christmas Eve

Watchnight Service of Carols and Readings – preceded by seasonal refreshments from 10:45 p.m., community carol singing 11:15 p.m.

Wednesday 25th December - Christmas Day

All-Age Service for Christmas morning – preceded by seasonal refreshments from 10:00 a.m., starting at 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 29th December

Seasonal Service of Carols and Readings

Make a Joyful Noise will be supporting the congregational singing throughout the season and sharing musical items from Christmas Sunday onwards.



Every Sunday morning the service is followed by a time of tea and coffee.

CARE HOME SERVICE

Jack Kernahan

Monthly Service in Eilean Dubh Care Home

It is now nearly five years since the 40 room Eilean Dubh Care Home was opened in Fortrose by Parklands Care Homes. Since the opening, Christian worship has been regularly provided by local churches including Black Isle East. A service of worship is held each **Sunday afternoon at 2.30pm and lasts for around 30 minutes.** Initially our services (on the third Sunday) were led by Rev Graeme Bell and Sandra, but now by the minister, Bob Moore and Jack Kernahan.

Praise is a major aspect each week, with up to five hymns being sung, ably accompanied by Maggie Wynton on an impressive baby grand piano. A list of around fifty favourites has been prepared by the residents with a few favourites requested more frequently than others! Two short prayers, bring residents and staff to the Lord; the 'address' is limited to around five minutes – but offers an opportunity to bring a short word of comfort, encouragement and hope to the residents, but also to visitors, and the staff.



WORSHIP WITH US
Sunday Afternoons at 2:30pm
Followed by Afternoon Tea
with residents

Following the service, afternoon tea, perfectly presented in beautiful fine crockery and with delicious home baking, is served - giving a good opportunity for church visitors to chat with residents.

It is a privilege for the local Churches to bring Good News to the folk at Eilean Dubh, and we are grateful to management and staff for encouraging us in this outreach and for practical help like bringing residents to the meeting and preparing the hymn-sheets. Anyone in the congregation who would like to come along will be made most welcome!



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 [Asad Iqbal](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Scottish Charity Number: SC004472