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Summer
2025

Journeying Together by Faith - in Hope - with Love

Summer Spirituality

Followers of Jesus have long affirmed that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrew 13:8). It is the conviction that God, known so well to us in Jesus, is neither fickle nor changeable, but rather is trustworthy and consistent.

It would make little sense, then, to try to suggest that our own spirituality, our sense of connectedness to something ‘other’, waxes and wanes depending on the season. God is always with us, come Winter, Spring, Summer or Autumn. And yet, we know that our experience of the divine in our lives is not always the same, all the time. Sometimes we feel God’s presence as we curl up by a fire with friends in the midst of the darkness of winter, and at other times it can be walking in the hills as the wind swirls about us, or it can be amongst the extraordinary buzz of life in mid-summer. If you are on a walk in the

country in the middle of summer and stop for a time, it is not long before you are overwhelmed by the activity around you.

The wind’s breath ripples through the wheat fields in the distance, the air around you is full of insect life, of seeds, birds high in the air, and singing in the trees. A glance down reveals beetles and bugs, mosses and lichens, plants of bewildering variety, the distant sound of water bubbles in a burn. It is amazing, and we take it all for granted. And we are part of it.

Jesus, no doubt also looking around him with appreciation of the natural world, which is resplendent in glory during the summer season, reminded his friends that they should “look at the birds of the air... consider the lilies of the field...” (Matthew

6:26-28). We should not worry about life but enjoy it, live in the moment, and play a full and active part in this creation. Make



the most of any opportunity you have to relish the warm spirituality of summer. Energise your souls to face the challenges that the rest of the year may bring. As Jesus said, “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own.” (Matthew 6:34a)

E-News

If you would like a weekly email with news from
Devana Parish Church please subscribe at
www.devanaparishchurch.org

£4,790

Amount raised by members of Devana Parish Church in
2024 to support Christian Aid, Poppy Scotland, Friends
International, Instant Neighbour and Roxburgh House

Welcome

At last! It is finally here.

Welcome to the Summer 2025 issue of Discover Devana.

My name is Mary Thompson and I'm your new editor.

Many thanks to the contributors who, when approached by me asking for articles, didn't run away or rebuff me but willingly provided the words needed.

My thanks also go to those who took the photos that are included, the technical team who put it all together and especially to those who were praying for me during the process.

It has been a steep learning curve putting everything together but hopefully you will enjoy the result.

If there is anything you would like to suggest for future issues please let me know.

Mary T

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Christian Aid

This year is the 80th anniversary of Christian Aid which will be marked by special services in Westminster Abbey and St. Giles Cathedral to give thanks and renew its commitment to justice and hope.

During this time it has brought material aid to places in crisis due to natural disasters, fought poverty in many countries by working closely with global partners and so bringing hope and justice to those in need through a variety of projects. Its 2023-24 report shows it funded 410 projects in six areas of the world, reached 4.5 million people, met the immediate humanitarian needs of 3.2 million, all thanks to donations from 2,833 churches in the UK.

In 2024 we at Devana contributed £1,519 to Christian Aid through fundraising and our aim in 2025 is to raise at least that sum again. Thanks to members' generosity we recently also gave £794.40 to the Myanmar earthquake appeal from DEC, of which Christian Aid is a member with 14 other UK charities.

Strathspey and Reel Society Concert

17
MAY

The Spring Concert will be held on Saturday 17 May at 7 p.m. in Devana Parish Church (Fonthill Road). Tickets are £10 on Sundays, at the Coffee Shop at Fonthill, or on the door at the event itself.

1
JUN

Kiltwalk

This annual event takes place on 1 June and our own Will Rae is going to be taking on the 18 mile walk to raise money for the charity We Too! which provides information for families of disabled children. Safe walking, Will! (see page 6 for more)

Church Flowers

"What shall we pray?"
Prayer Ideas

please pray for
The Church of Scotland as it
meets in General Assembly
Ferryhill School as they prepare
for their move
Christian Aid
The staffing team of the
Presbytery of the North East and
the Northern Isles
For Peace in our world
St John's Deaf Local
Mission Church

We love to see the Sanctuaries of both our sites looking beautiful with flower displays and thank the teams in both sites for the work that they do.

As we continue the process of unifying as Devana Parish Church, we are going to introduce a single flower calendar which will have upcoming dates for the year. If you have a particular date or anniversary around which you would like to donate flowers (make a financial donation) then you will have the opportunity to do so.

We will use the date, rather than the church site, as the main identifier for any donations in memory which will help simplify organising.

Thank you to everyone who helps to contribute and to our Flower Teams.

Long Service Certificate

Many congratulations to those who received their Long Service Certificates this year.

This included Elsa Black, Hazel Clark, Derek Lawrie and Ian Lord for 30 years in eldership, Alan Brown, Shelagh Johnstone and Rita King for 40 years in eldership, and Kevin Haggart for 30 years serving as organist. A combined 270 years of service!

The certificates were presented for those who could make it to the Presbytery Service in Inverurie West Church by the Moderator of the General Assembly, Rt Rev

The Guild

The Devana Guild meets regularly during the course of the year and always welcomes new faces to come along and enjoy time together and speakers or activities that always stir some interest.

Shown below is a very happy group of people attending the Coffee Morning organised by The Guild earlier this year.

Over the summer break a monthly Monday afternoon gathering is held for a chat and a cuppa.



THE
LIVINGWELL
PROJECT
living well café

Devana Parish Church hosts one of the Living Well Cafés hosted in Aberdeen fortnightly on Thursday afternoons.

These provide a welcoming, safe and supportive place for people living with dementia and/or memory problems and their caregivers.

Each week there is helpful information available for caregivers and a range of activities from reminiscing, puzzles, Boccia, dancing and songs, often with a guest entertainer visiting too. And a fly cup and fine piece, of course!

Morning Worship including Holy Communion

1
JUN

On Sunday 1 June we will move our worship to Holburn Street with our normal celebration of Holy Communion within the service. We also are anticipating a baptism this Sunday.

2
JUN

Fellowship Gathering

An afternoon fellowship gathering at 2 p.m. in the Jubilee Hall, Devana Parish Church (Holburn Street), for a cuppa and a blether.

vice
es



Shaw Paterson, and also during worship both at our Hoburn Street and Fonthill Road sites.

Thank you all for your service to the Kirk over these many years.



Ferryhill School Open Doors

As Ferryhill Primary School prepares to relocate over the summer holiday to Walker Road School to allow the renovation of the current location an Open Day is being held for one last look inside the old school.

You are invited on Saturday 7 June between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Note that the school is also embarking on an Intergenerational Project as part of upcoming 150th Anniversary plans.



If you are a past pupil then please do get in touch with the school using the QR code to complete an online form.

St John's Deaf LMC

The union of Devana and St John's Deaf Church is now all settling down with the congregation of St John's now forming St John's Deaf Local Mission Church (LMC), meeting fortnightly for Sunday worship.

A new Team has been added to the Kirk Session as part of the union agreement: St John's Deaf LMC Leadership Team which comprises Len Mellis, Lapp Tan Hunt, Lesley Bills, Fiona Blair (Presbytery representative), with Revs Mary Whittaker, David Stewart and Peter Johnston as *ex officio* members. Mary has offered to chair the Team and Lesley will serve as its secretary, reporting back to the Kirk Session at teach meeting.

Devana Neighbourhoods

The Kirk Session formed a Pastoral Care Group last year to explore how we go about the important ministry in any church community of caring for one another and being good neighbours to each other.

This group has presented a plan to the Kirk Session which was agreed and involves a number of different levels. There is the continuation and development of specific teams to provide pastoral care for particular groups, like those who are in care homes or who are hospitalised. But the biggest new change is to develop what we are calling Devana Neighbourhoods. A flyer about this has been created and you can expect to find out more information over the summer.

Since the group reported to the Kirk Session a massive amount of work has been going on to get our church roll on ChurchSuite as accurate as possible and to do the work of arranging 'neighbourhoods'. This sounds simple, but proved quite a large task with the size of our church roll.

School Open Day

7
JUN

Ferryhill Primary School Open Day to let visitors tour the old school building before it gets redeveloped over the next year. The school will be open between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

8
JUN

Pentecost Sunday

We have a special Sunday planned to mark the second birthday of Devana Parish Church which will be celebrated both during worship as we give thanks to God and through a Soup and Sandwich lunch organised by the Friendship Team.

The Ministry Team

It has been a busy few months for the Ministry Team both within Devana and in their wider commitments.

Rev David Stewart has now been appointed by Presbytery to be the Presbytery's representative on the Management Board of The Living Well Project which has oversight over the work of both the Living Well Cafés and the Befriending Service. We also have Diane Cumming from Devana serving on the Board.

Rev Peter Johnston has recently been appointed as a Trustee on the Board of Físchy Music, whose songs are used in schools and churches across the country. He has also just presented a review of the work of the Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian as a part of his involvement in the national Presbytery Review Committee. In

the upcoming year he will be involved in reviewing the work of the Presbytery of the South West. He has also just started serving on a new Christian Aid Church Leaders Forum that will provide a sounding board for the leadership of Christian Aid in their work with the local church.

Rev Mary Whittaker continues in her role as the only minister for the Deaf Community within the Church of Scotland which carries with it responsibilities far beyond St John's Deaf Local Mission Church within Devana. She has been involved in the planning of the annual Scottish Deaf Churches Together Weekend Conference. Within Devana, following the first meeting of the new St John's Deaf LMC Leadership Team, Mary is going to take on chairing that team.

Mrs Katrina Blackwood is nearing the end of her probationary year with us under David's supervision. This has been a wonderful year for all of us in Devana to get to know Katrina, about whose other work you can read more in this issue of Discover Devana. We wish Katrina every blessing as she goes on to being ordained as a Local Ordained Minister and continues in her service to healthcare chaplaincy.

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Rev Mary Whittaker
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Property Update

There has been some major work going on in our buildings over the last few months, indeed some of that work caught the interest of the community!

A new roof has been fitted above the Small Hall in the Fonthill Road site which comes with a 20 year guarantee so should give some peace of mind for the future.

Catching the interest of passersby was the work going on to ensure the good condition of the church spire. Would you dangle from the spire like that?!

New heating units have been installed in the Main Hall at Holburn Street and the exterior woodwork will be painted over the summer.



Catch a Cuppa

We have opportunities at both church sites to meet up with folks over a cuppa and a bite throughout the summer.

The Coffee Shop at Fonthill Road is open Wednesday and Saturday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon.

The Café at Holburn Street is open on Fridays from 10-11:30 a.m.

Fellowship Gathering

1
JUL

Join an afternoon fellowship gathering at 2 p.m. in the Jubilee Hall, Devana Parish Church (Holburn Street), for a cuppa and a blether.

6
JUL

Morning Worship including Holy Communion

On Sunday 6 July we will move our worship to Fonthill Road and the service will also include Holy Communion.

The Role of a Healthcare Chaplain

In Scotland the role of a Healthcare Chaplain is to provide spiritual and emotional support to patients, families and carers, and healthcare staff. We often offer comfort and support at some of the most difficult times in a person's life, when we come alongside to be a listening and caring presence.

However, it is not simply crisis intervention we offer, but also in our interactions, we encourage and support people towards personal wellbeing. We are available to support all people no matter their particular spiritual need, or the faith background they come from. We equally support those with no faith background at all. This is part of the holistic care that every person should receive.

We work across a range of settings includ-

ing hospitals, hospices, and mental health facilities, providing spiritual care in its widest sense and religious care when appropriate. We often liaise with faith group leaders, such as ministers, or Imams, if a person has requested a visit from them whilst they are in hospital.

In NHS Grampian the Spiritual Care Department also offer a Listening Service which is based within the community. This is provided in the Health Village and some GP practices. This is a non-judgemental space where people can come and speak about their life challenges, feel heard, and in time find a way back to a place of wellbeing and resilience.

Another important part of our role is providing education and training to healthcare staff about spiritual care. Despite



Chaplains being the specialists in the field, each member of staff should provide this type of person-centred care, whilst working alongside patients. We also oversee volunteers who support us in our work.

Each day is a privilege to come alongside people in whatever situation they find themselves in.

Katrina Blackwood

We Too!

William Rae is supporting We Too! in his sponsorship as he takes on the 18 mile Kiltwalk in June.

Along the walk he will be accompanied by Chris, the We Too! mascot, a friendly wee troll. The money raised will go to support work in the Northeast of Scotland with disabled children and their families, providing time together in a supportive and caring environment.



Spill The Beans

You may sometimes hear Spill the Beans mentioned or see that a resource we have used in worship has come from the Spill the Beans Resource Team. What is that?

This is a team of folks gathered from across Scotland who work together to create a quarterly worship resource book which is published and used in churches across Scotland, the UK, and even the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It is full of ideas from folks who are working in their own church situations and giving something back to the wider church community.

You may recognise some of the folks who are part of the team: Peter Johnston is the editor, Mary Whittaker is on the team as are other local ministers such as Keith Blackwood (Katrina's husband), Tanya Webster and Shuna Dicks.

A new two year plan of bible readings for worship begins in Advent with a journey with Luke, both through his gospel and through the Acts of the Apostles, which will help steer us for 2025-27.

Morning Worship Moves

20
JUL

We shift for the last two Sundays of July to holding worship at Holburn Street at the usual time of 10:30 a.m.

3
AUG

Morning Worship including Holy Communion

On Sunday 3 August we will be back to Fonthill Road for the month and this service will also include Holy Communion.

The Friendship Team

The Friendship Team is a group of enthusiastic folks of all ages who work together to encourage fellowship, outreach and social concern in the lives of the congregation of Devana Parish Church and beyond.

Oversight of Pastoral Care

This is done by providing a channel for dealing with matters of current social and community concern and advising the Kirk Session as appropriate, including communicating with outside bodies as necessary.

The team suggests to the Kirk Session a local and international charity for seasonal special collections.

throughout the year to those in need, and make, write and distribute cards to members of the congregation unable to attend Church celebrations at Easter, Harvest and Advent.



The team organises the annual flower calendar and ensures that there are flowers provided for the church

sanctuaries each Sunday, and thereafter ensures the delivery of flowers following the services in consultation with the Ministers.

A valuable link to the Living Well Café for people with dementia and other memory issues and their carers is maintained through this team.

Refreshments

The Friendship Team provides oversight of the Coffee Shop at Fonthill Road and the Friday Café at Holburn Street plus the organising of Sunday Worship Refreshments with members of the congregation and other volunteers.

Social Events

Psalm 23

This is a reworking of Psalm 23 by the Japanese poet Toki Miyashina.

The Lord is my pace-setter,
I shall not rush.

He makes me stop and rest
for quiet intervals.

He provides me with images of stillness,
which restores my serenity.

He leads me in ways of efficiency,
through calmness of mind
and his guidance is peace.

Even though I have a great many things
to accomplish this day
I will not fret,
for his presence is here.

His timelessness, his all-importance
will keep me in balance.

He prepares refreshment and renewal
in the midst of my activity,
by anointing my head
with the oil of tranquility.
My cup of joyous energy overflows.

Surely harmony and effectiveness
shall be the fruits of my hours.
For I shall walk in the pace of my Lord
and dwell in his house forever.

Summer Switcheroo

Each May the Service Schedule for the next year is agreed by the Kirk Session from September of that year to the next.

As part of the plans that were agreed last year for 2025 we are going to have a wee switch from our usual monthly pattern of worship to move to a fortnightly pattern for the month of July. The reason for this is to shift for the year ahead which site we will be in during each month allowing us to rotate between sites for the main festivals seamlessly.

So, for the first two Sundays in July we will be in Fonthill Road and for the last two we will be at Holburn Street.

4
AUG

Summer Clubhouse Holiday Club

Running all this week, the Holiday Club is open each morning Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for Primary 2 to Primary 7 pupils in our Fonthill Road site.

10
AUG

Holiday Club Service

The Summer Clubhouse Holiday Club ends with a special service on Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. in Devana Parish Church (Fonthill Road).

The Friendship Team provide opportunities for people to come together socially and encouraging others to provide such opportunities at other times too, and last year that included organising catering for Easter breakfasts, refreshments and fine pieces for the annual Strathspey & Reel Society Evening Concert, a Summer BBQ, a coffee and cake event following morning worship to celebrate Devana Parish Church's First Birthday, a Soup and Sandwich lunch, providing tea and scones for Open Doors Event, providing Afternoon Tea for Living Well Project, and refreshments after the Remembrance Book service.

The team supports the Christmas Fair and events like the Christmas Carols by Candlelight.

It also organises an annual Thank You Tea for Coffee Shop, Friday Café and Sunday Coffee volunteers which is warmly received.

The team are grateful for the willingness of the other Kirk Session Ministry Teams in assisting with various events during the year. As you can see the Friendship Team has a large remit and are thankful and blessed to have such a great group of helpers who can be relied on to assist throughout the year. As always a warm welcome awaits anyone willing to join this wonderful and friendly team.

Albury Community Sports Hub

This community run facility is open for the summer season with a range of options for all ages and some familiar faces from the Kirk who volunteer amongst the team.

There are facilities for tennis, lawn bowling, petanque and putting in a lovely environment. It is the base for a Croquet Club, Walk Aberdeen, and a Wellbeing Group.

More information is available for either dropping in to play or for membership at the hub's website:

<https://alburyhub.org.uk/>

THE SUMMER CLUBHOUSE



Summer Holiday Club 2025

Welcome to The Summer Clubhouse, a great place to be for Primary 2 to Primary 7 pupils in this year's Holiday Club. Stories, games, activities, songs and drama, crafts and quizzes!

Monday 4 to Friday 8 August
10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
and Sunday 10 August 10:30 a.m.
Devana Parish Church (Fonthill Road)

Please visit the church website to register your child(ren) for participation in this event.

Devana Choir



Our choir leads a musical item each month during the communion service. You are very welcome to join us.

Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings, 7 p.m. Please contact our choir director, Kevin Haggart, for more information.

Sunday Club

Got kids aged 5–15? We'd love to welcome them to our fun and friendly Sunday Club with Bible stories, prayers, songs, and more!

Sundays (term-time) 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Come along and join the fun!

For more information, contact John Amalanand at 07378 777996 or on his email (see right).

Useful Contacts

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