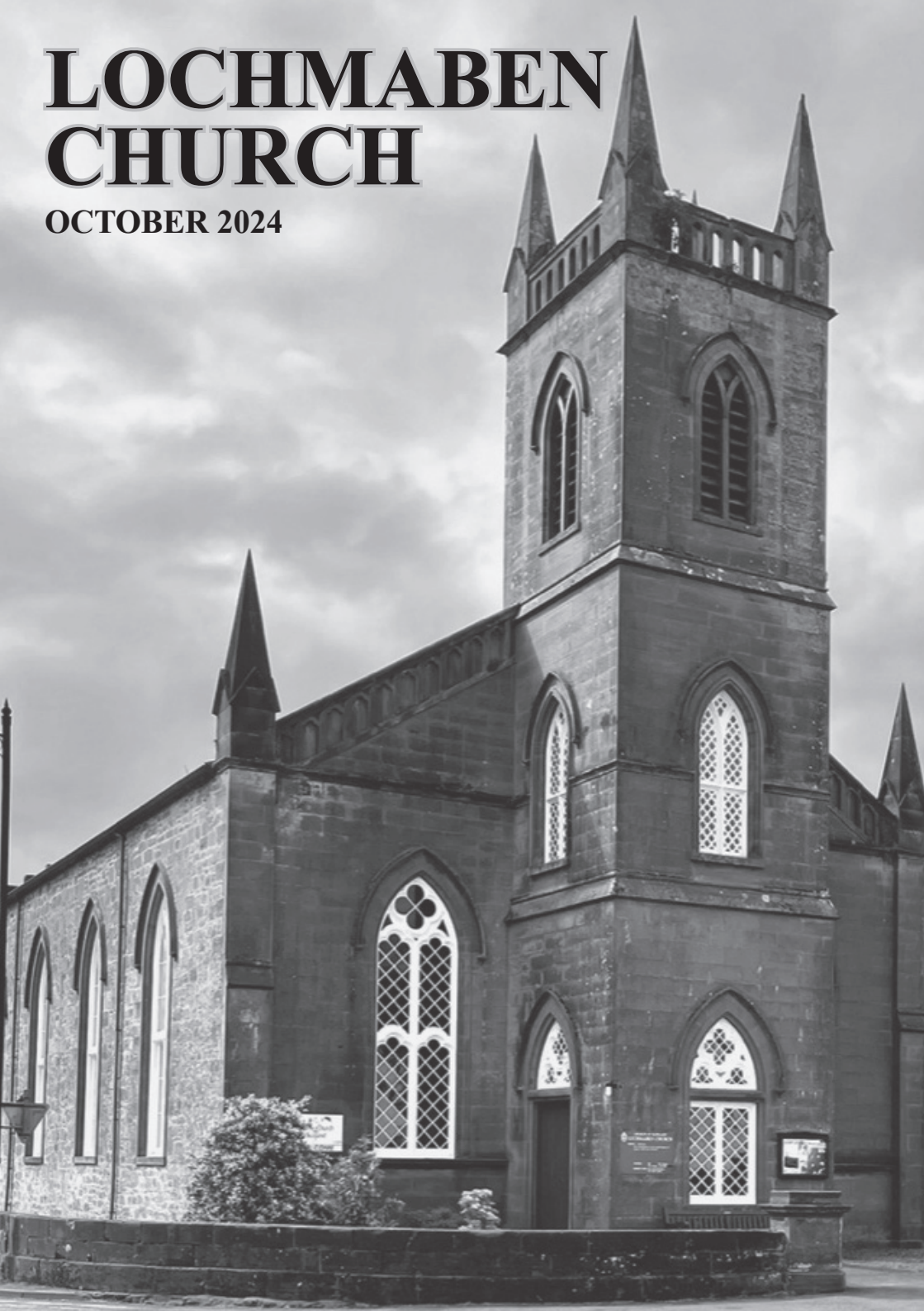


LOCHMABEN CHURCH

OCTOBER 2024



OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Rev Frances Henderson	01576 207379
Session Clerk	Mrs Winifred Dickie	01387 810713
Treasurer	Mrs Nancy Hannah	01387 810725
Property Convenor	Mr Alistair Brown	01387 811842
Organist	Mr Ian More	07949 721239
Guild Convenors	Mrs Christine Warner	01387 810459
	Mrs Sheila Grant	01387 810487
Life & Work Magazine & Food Bank	Mrs Margaret Mackay	01387 810951
Flower Convenor	Mrs Maureen Reid	01387 811376

*The Lord fills the cup of every believer's life
with the blessing of salvation.
The cup is free to humanity,
but it cost Jesus everything!*

Dear Friends

As I write this, we have just had the first frost of the autumn. The leaves are turning red and yellow and brown; the hedges are full of brambles; and at Eskrigg the red squirrels are busy stashing away their winter hoards.

There's a saying – no one knows who said it first – that 'Autumn shows us how beautiful it is to let things go'. I love that. It echoes the kind of deep acceptance that the Bible teaches, as when in Ecclesiastes 3 we read, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens." Here we are encouraged to tune into the natural rhythms of life – the turning of the year, the turning of the generations, the turning of our lives through 'childhood, manhood, age, and death', as the old hymn puts it. That way we will find serenity.

Likewise, when Jesus taught his disciples, he frequently directed their attention to the natural world around them. The seeds growing into wheat, or mustard plants. The birds of the air. The lilies of the field. Fig trees and vines. Foxes. Sheep. From all of these he drew lessons that pointed to God. For the Creator has left his fingerprints all across our natural world, and when we look with eyes of faith, we can see God's wisdom at work even in the fall of the leaves.

So as the cold grips, why not use the coming winter to think and to pray? Let every leaf that falls stand for something you need to let go – old habits, old sins, old resentments, old guilts. Let them fall to the ground and be buried in the tomb with Jesus.

Then when spring comes, buried seeds will burst forth into new life. That is the natural order of things, and we can find God in that. But above even the rhythms of this world, there is a still greater, more beautiful rhythm: the rhythm of miracle, of resurrection, of love, of eternity – the rhythm of the beating heart of God.

May God bless and prosper you this autumn.

Fran

*As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat,
summer and winter, day and night will never cease.
Genesis Ch 8, vs 22*

Getting to know our new Minister

1. Tell us about your background.

I grew up on a farm outside the village of Crawford, just 30 minutes up the motorway from here. My dad farmed while my mum kept the home, and later returned to work as an Occupational Therapist for the Council. I went to Primary School in Abington and then to Biggar High School.

2. Did you always go to church?

Yes. My two sisters and I would be there most Sundays in our kilts and Arran sweaters, and our little legs in white socks and buckled shoes dangling off the pew! We used to do an hour of Sunday School followed by an hour of church. Then we graduated to Youth Fellowship and Bible Study. I always believed in God from when I was a child, but at the age of 13 I made the decision to commit my life to Jesus – and it stuck!

3. When did you feel the call to ministry?

After university, I became a secondary school teacher of English and Drama in a school down in Worcestershire. Being a teacher was a calling too, and I loved it. But after a couple of years, I knew suddenly that God was calling me next into the ministry. I returned to Scotland to teach in Newton Stewart and became involved in my local church at Minnigaff. From there I applied to be a minister and was delighted, and terrified, when the church confirmed my calling!

4. What happened next?

At the age of 31, I started my Divinity degree at New College, Edinburgh. I did various church placements around the city, and a whole summer providing cover on Shetland. My probation period was at the parishes of Upper Tweed. But then, instead of going straight into parish ministry, I returned to New College to study for a PhD in Theology.

5. What was your PhD about?

The theologian I studied saw the Resurrection as central to how we read the Bible and understand God. It took me four years to do my doctorate, during which time I spent a semester at Tuebingen University in Germany, and another at Princeton Seminary in the USA. It really opened up the world for me. After finishing my PhD, I stayed two more years as a very junior lecturer at New College.

6. And then Parish Ministry?

And then parish ministry! I started at Hoddom, Kirtle-Eaglesfield and Middlebie in 2013, and had nearly six wonderful years there. I left only because I was asked to go to Shetland as a Transition Minister to help turn 13 parishes into one! This was a very difficult job, as it involved the closure of 20 churches, but it was also a huge privilege to work with such brave and visionary people.

7. What brought you to Lochmaben and Lockerbie?

Transition Ministry posts last for 5 years only, so the post in Shetland came to an end. At the same time Lochmaben and Lockerbie were looking for a Transition Minister, so everything came together at the right time, as it always does with God's plans. I miss Shetland, but I am happy to be closer to family, and to be back among farmers again. Coming here really does feel like coming home, and I am so grateful for the warm welcome I have received. I am very excited about what God has in store for us all here in Lochmaben.

Session Clerk's Reports – Winifred Dickie

Welcome Fran!

It is hard to imagine that we were in a vacancy for over three years. That is 167 Sundays! The three-year vacancy came to an end in August when we welcomed our new Minister, Rev Dr Fran Henderson, to the joint charge of Lochmaben Church with Lockerbie Dryfesdale, Hutton, Corrie and Applegarth. Within days Fran had hit the ground running! She has organised services and meetings, made pastoral visits, learned lots of names and introduced herself to the local schools. She also must have listened to many parishioners tell how they remembered her aunt/grandfather/mother or purchased progeny from the famous Friesian herd at the market! We do hope you will be very happy in your new charge, Fran, and that you will soon feel very much at home with us.

Welcoming our Probationer

From 1st October we were delighted to welcome a Probationer Minister to our parish. Andrew Johnstone lives in Dumfries and is on his final year of training for Church of Scotland ministry. Andrew will be working closely with Fran and will be taking a full part in worship and all parish activities. We look forward very much to getting to know him and to hearing the story of his journey of faith.

Special thanks

During the vacancy we were so blessed to have the services of our two resident ministers - Michael Bands and Dave Maylor - who both gave tremendous support, sometimes filling in at very short notice. We were also grateful to Jeff Brown, David Dick, Mervyn Poore, Vikki Pounder, John Ronnie and our own worship team members, Ann Wilson, David Powell and Nancy Hannah. We were challenged, nourished, uplifted and encouraged by each one as, in their own individual style and in their own way, they expressed the word of God and the love of Christ.

These visiting preachers, on several occasions, all spoke of the wonderful warmth of response they received from the congregation. What a difference it makes to a speaker to feel that love and encouragement from an audience. Thank you Lochmaben Church members!

In 2008, when Rev Jack Brown was minister, it was decided to produce an information leaflet about the Lochmaben Church that could be made available to visitors. Since that time we have removed the pews and redecorated and, consequently, we needed to update the leaflet. Alan Guthrie from Nethermill Road was asked to take photographs and we are most grateful to him for the time he devoted to this task. The layout and the photographs show off our lovely church to full advantage. (Sample photos below) Leaflets are available at the church – please take one.



Thank you, Alan!

The choir is very happy that, after much cajoling, Joyce Watson has decided to join them! Her knowledge and experience of music is very helpful. It is also a joy to see new faces in our congregation. We hope they will continue to worship with us and that they, too, will soon feel quite at home.

Changes Ahead

What could have been a contentious issue - the church service times - was resolved very graciously when a Dryfesdale member suggested that they move back an hour to 10.15 am, thus enabling us to offer to move forward to 11.45 am. Rev Henderson will then be able to preach in both Dryfesdale and Lochmaben each Sunday. The Lochmaben Unitary Kirk Session (UKS) will meet three times per year and twice as part of the joint Kirk session with Lockerbie.

Rev Dave Whiteman - an update

We have been pleased to have Rev Dave Whiteman and his wife Doreen worshipping with us since he officially retired on health grounds after a serious illness. Unfortunately, Dave has recently experienced a bad bout of shingles and it may be a while before he is well enough to return. Please remember Dave and Doreen in your prayers.

What have we been up to?

In April, All Saints Church, Lockerbie (the Episcopal Church) held a table-top sale at which the Session agreed to take a table to raise funds for the leprosarium we support in Ghana. The colony who lives there are cured of the disease but remain unable to return to their families due to the continued stigma of the disease.

Every inch of the two trestle tables, the floor surrounding and the pillar in front, was laden with bric-a-brac. Accepting what the customer was prepared to pay raised over £200 which was later increased to £540 by donations from Lochmaben Church members. The surplus bric-a-brac was gratefully received by the Greyhound Rescue Charity shop.

In May, David Rothwell was “walking the walk” round the Castle Loch. This is the second time David has participated in the Rotary event in aid of our Church and, in doing so, raised the wonderful amount of £460 which was added to by way of Gift Aid donors. Thank you, David!

When Fred Prise offered to bring the Border Strathspey & Reel Society to Lochmaben Church to give a concert in May, it was accepted unanimously. And what an enjoyable evening it was! There was a very good attendance which included quite a number from Lockerbie. The Society very kindly donated the income from the event - £450 - to the Church. Our own Fred Prise and Charlie Carr are both members of this illustrious group of musicians. Before they left we expressed to them all, “Haste ye Back”.

Two joint Songs of Praise services were held during the summer, one in each Church. They were greatly enjoyed and were a very comfortable way for our two congregations to get to know each other. We look forward to other occasions when we can sing God’s praises together.

Praising God in song is also a form of prayer.

The Annual Sale and Coffee Morning was held in September. Whilst attendance numbers were down compared with previous years the support, nonetheless, raised £1005 for Church funds. We are so grateful to everyone involved.

As in previous years, summer coffee mornings were held in the Meeting Room at Church on Fridays during July and August. Despite many wet and windy days, folks turned out in support and the numbers were swelled by the regular drop-in by the Walking Group.

Food continues to be collected for the foodbank and delivered every fortnight to Kate's Kitchen in Annan. We are extremely grateful to the small army of drivers who transport the donations. They get to see first hand how much our contributions are appreciated. The foodbank is already experiencing greater demand as winter approaches. Our harvest gifts this year will go to Kate's Kitchen. The Pupil Council at the Primary School have organised a food collection – "Take a Tin" – and have requested that their donations be added to ours and divided between Queen of the South foodbank and Kate's Kitchen.

Compassion is love in action.

So what's next?

The Warm Hub has become a very important and necessary part of our mission and it resumed on 4 October. Everyone is welcome to come along to this in the Church Hall on Fridays between 12 noon and 2.30 pm. Friendships which blossomed over the last two years will be renewed and all the volunteers have agreed to return. We are delighted that Joyce Watson and Carol Taylor will be joining the teams. Offers of a pot of soup will be most welcome – please speak to Margaret or Tina regarding this.

*The warm fellowship of the Church
will keep your heart from growing cold.*

It is wonderful that, once again, the Primary School and Jaybees are contributing to our Shoebox Appeal. Last year, we had more shoeboxes filled online that we have had in previous years. This is a straightforward method via www.shoeboxonline.samaritans-purse.org.uk and not any more expensive than filling an actual shoebox. Sheila Brown will be giving more details but it is likely that the collection date will be the beginning of November.

Letter to the Editor

I write to express my thanks for all, and to all, who have enabled our church to thrive during these testing few years. The warm ambience that embraces us all each Sunday and enables Sunday mornings to be the highlight of many a person's week, is often commented upon by visitors.

We are blessed with a wonderful organ, organist and choir which enhance our worship and preachers whose thoughts and prayers inspire.

Thank you to all who share their gifts and play their part as members of the church family - being there, seeing what needs to be done, listening, caring. May you grow in faith and in the love of God through prayer and the Holy Spirit!

Blessings, Vanora Rankine

Message from Viktoria in Ukraine

Thank you very much for your messages of support and care.

Yes, I started my second year of my PhD and I also continue to work in the theological department and assist professors. This year I am helping with seminars and evaluation of students in such classes as patrology (study of early Christian writers), church and politics, soteriology (the doctrine of salvation). Also I continue to teach English in orthodox seminary. (I have three groups of students.) Besides these responsibilities I also have classes that I have to attend and I have started again to learn French. (I was studying it at school but I have forgotten the grammar.) Since my research concerns the History of Medieval Gaul and the role of Caesarius of Arles in it, improving my French will be very useful to me.

I am living in Lviv which is where the university is. However, I am thinking about applying for an exchange programme for the next semester because it was so difficult to stay focused when I feel permanently anxious because of the war. My mother is fine but she is very occupied with her work. She is currently in Lviv, helping soldiers to compile all their documents and do health examinations.

I always remember you and all the church members in my prayers. And I hope to see you all again! How is the new Minister? Send my love to all! My family and I are very grateful for all your support and help.

*Hold fast to Christ and He will give
the will to see you through;
and if you keep on keeping on,
Your strength He will renew.*

Property Convenor Report – Mr Alistair Brown Church

- The work on the belfry-top flat roof was completed recently at a cost of £1860. This means no more emptying buckets of leaking water!
- For Health & Safety purposes, handrails were fitted at the entrance to the gallery space on each side. The cost for this was £268.
- The work to repair the rendering on the belfry top stonework is still to be done. Hopefully this will be undertaken soon.
- The outstanding electrical work mentioned in previous reports has now been completed.
- Bell pull ropes are yet to be extended down to the old vestry space.

Other items identified as needing attention include :

- The rough cast harling around the Meeting Room external wall at gutter level.
- Flagstones at the main entrance to be relayed closer together to help prevent weed growth.
- The Meeting Room areas to be redecorated. Several volunteers have offered help and now that the gardening season is coming to a close, a start will be made to refresh this area.

Hall

- The tree and shrub growth along the left side of the hall has been cut back and cleared away. Thanks to volunteers for help with this work.
- The floor area in the kitchen was repaired recently. The cause necessitating this was a long standing and unknown leak from the dishwasher. The floor repair cost £293.
- The dishwasher is undergoing repair and we await source and delivery of spare parts.
- Outstanding electrical work, as mentioned in the past, is still to be carried out.

Manse

- Repairs to a faulty electric shower unit carried out at a cost of £165.

Treasurer's Report – Mrs Nancy Hannah

The Quarter 2 finance report for 2024 was distributed to all Session members in July and all the figures therein were healthy. Following the slump of recent years, unit prices for investments are increasing.

An application for Gift Aid for the April-June 2024 period was submitted and £2739.70 received. Natalie Anderson has applied to HMRC to become the named official for Lochmaben Church to submit future applications. We are very grateful to Natalie for taking on the post of Gift Aid Convenor, a job I am sure she will do extremely well.

Regards Gift Aid, it is important to remind you that you have to tell us if your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax. This is vitally important and is your responsibility.

The Free Will Offering envelopes are now to hand and there are a few spare should anyone wish to receive these. Also, we have White Boxes in which many folks kindly save their spare change – this reflects the true saying “look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves”. It is a great way of supporting Church funds. The other way of giving is by Standing Order. Forms are available should you wish to give to the Church in this way.

The Financial Sub-Committee (FSC) met on 23 July 2024 and was brought up to date with the following points.

1. Farries Kirk McVean to commence as Church accountants with effect from 1 August 2024
They will undertake:-
 - Monthly infill of spreadsheet.
 - Annual Accounts preparation.
 - Independent Examination of accounts.
 - Annual return and upload of accounts to OSCR.
2. Increases in charges for the Church and Hall took effect on 1 April 2024. A comparison against utility bills will be done later in the year.
3. Further to Bishop Liverson's visit to Lochmaben Church earlier in the year, £600 was sent to Kenya (via Dave Maylor) from Church funds. An email confirmed receipt of the money which will be used for their housing project.
4. An updated report (01/01/24-30/06/24) of funds held by the General Trustees on behalf of Lochmaben Church was tabled and discussed.

5. The arrival of Rev Frances Henderson and Rev Andrew Johnstone will affect finances. The Giving to Grow amount sent to the Church of Scotland over 10 months of the year will be adjusted further to the loss of vacancy allowance. Telephone and travel charges will be shared between Lochmaben and Lockerbie Dryfesdale churches.

The Guild – Mrs Christine Warner

The new session of the Guild opened in September with Rev Fran Henderson giving a very interesting and illustrated talk entitled “A Shetland Experience”.

The two local charities we are supporting this year are The Castle Loch Community Trust and the local branch of Alzheimer’s Scotland. The proceeds from our Soup and Sandwich Lunch in November will be shared equally between these two worthwhile charities.

We have a loyal membership of 22 but are always delighted to welcome new members- male or female.

Flowers in Church - Mrs Maureen Reid

Our thanks to those who helped decorate the church for Harvest Thanksgiving on 13 October. It is always a joy to see the plinths attractively decorated.

We have some empty Sundays on the calendar list. Could you provide a vase of flowers (garden flowers are just as nice) or a flowering plant on one of these empty Sundays? You are of course entitled to do what you want with your flowers after the service but the pastoral care team often know of someone who would be cheered by knowing they are not forgotten. Flowers that have been part of the worshipping community seems to make them extra special. A quote from a recent “thank you” letter states, “Thank you for the lovely flowers you sent me after my operation. Just looking at them in the vase made me smile.”



*Mrs Margaret Wilson
with her flowers.*

The Church Library

Our bookshelves in the meeting room have had some very welcome additions recently. Dr Jack Wilson, as most of you will know, was a Lochmaben GP after the war and an elder in our church. He was also a local historian who wrote books and pamphlets on the history of Lochmaben, its people, its castles and its churches. Myra Turnbull has very kindly donated a complete set of his books and they are on the bookshelf for us to enjoy. If you wish to take a copy away to read at home, please complete details in the pink file on the shelf.

We wish Myra well as she prepares to leave Lochmaben to make her home near her family in the south and thank her for this thoughtful gesture.

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 15 October	2.30 pm	Guild in Church Hall – speaker from Loch Arthur
Sunday 20 October	11.45 am	The Sacrament of Holy Communion
Tuesday 29 October	7.00 pm	Kirk Session meeting in Church Meeting Room
Sunday 10 November	(time tbc)	Service of Remembrance

Tuesday 19 November	2.30 pm	Guild in Church Hall - Speaker from the Savings Bank
Sunday 24 November	1:00 pm	Guild soup and sandwich lunch in Church Hall
Monday 9 December	7.00 pm	S4F Christmas Concert in Church Hall
Sunday 15 December	7.30 pm	Rotary Carol Concert in Church
Tuesday 17 December	2.30 pm	Guild Christmas Celebration in Church Hall
Sunday 22 December	11.45 am	Nativity Christmas Service
Tuesday 24 December	6.00 pm	“Carols round the Tree” in Church Hall
Tuesday 24 December	(time tbc)	Watch Night Service in Church
Sunday 29 December	11.45 am	Joint service of lessons and carols with the Lockerbie congregation in Lochmaben Church

Further information will be shared through the Order of Service sheet prior to events.

The Sacrament of Baptism

When we start children off with an awareness of Jesus and His power, we are giving them a place to return to if they stray and a foundation for spiritual growth throughout their lives.

28/04/2024	by Rev Dave Maylor - Dalton Nicholas Ashley Tasker, Lochmaben
28/04/2024	by Rev Dave Maylor - Bobbi Jean Brown, Lochmaben
09/06/2024	by Rev Dave Maylor - Lochlan William Stewart Muir, Lockerbie

The Service of Christian Burial

“God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more”.

30/04/2024	Mrs Linda Spence, 4 Johnstone Court Lockerbie
22/04/2024	Mr Martin Rankine, 3 Halliday Terrace, Lochmaben
25/06/2024	Mr David Edwards, 9 Sherwood Crescent, Lockerbie
23/07/2024	Mr Robert Newman, Lochduhar. Dumfries (formerly Kincaig, Vendace Drive Lochmaben)
15/08/2024	Mrs Marlene Currie, 16 Grummel Court, Lochmaben
08/10/2024	Mrs Ella Dickson, Dundoran, 12 Marjoriebanks, Lochmaben

*In his hands is the life of every living thing
and the breath of all mankind. Job 12, vs 10*

Would you like to contribute to the newsletter?

Would you have any interesting items you would like to share with us in the newsletter – a poem, something amusing, something historical or a memory from past Church times? If you can think of something that you feel would be of interest to our readers, please let us know by contacting Winifred Dickie or Nancy Hannah.

New Church Members Welcome!

If you would like to be included in our membership roll, please speak to
Winifred Dickie or Nancy Hannah.

MISSION STATEMENT

We believe that our worship should be God-glorifying, relevant and Christ-centred, leading people of all ages to be brought to a saving faith in Jesus Christ; that unity and prayer are essential to the life and witness of our Church; and that all should receive a warm and caring welcome to our Church; and help and comfort be given to those in need.

Lochmaben Church of Scotland
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