



**Number 40:
January
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News from around the Diocese

Advent Carol Service

The recent Advent Carol Service that was held in St. Columba's Church, Portree was attended by about 150 people.

Conducted by Canon Robert Breaden and broadcast live by Cuillin FM. The Service was a joyful occasion in Celebrating the beginning of the Christian Year.

Representatives from St. Marys in Sleat, St Michael and All Angels on Raasay, St. John's at Caroy, St. Columba's Portree, Portree Primary School, the High School, and the YMCA, all took part in the reading of the lessons.

Neil Colquhoun, St Columba's Organist, and Rosemary Bungard, Cellist, accompanied Sr. Elizabeth Burggy singing the advent prose 'Rorate Coeli'. Soloist Sylvia Ladlow sang 'How beautiful are the feet of them that Preach the Gospel of Peace' from Handels' Messiah, and Tara Danter played 'O come, O come, Emmanuel' on the violin.

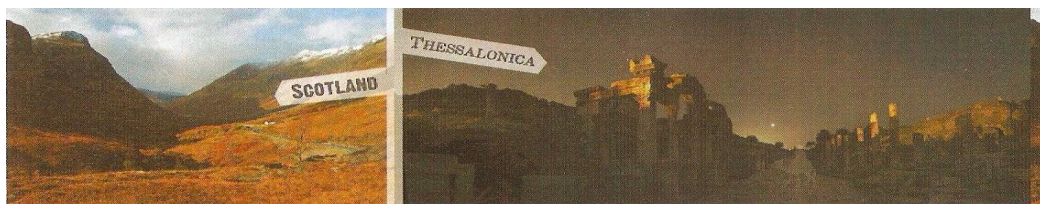
The Congregation gave a standing ovation, as Canon Breaden processsed from the Church after his final service,



Rev'd Robert Breaden

Both Robert and his wife Glen have become well known and much loved for their hard work and many successful achievements during their stay on the Isle of Skye. They will surely be missed.

Go mbeannaí dhuit, a chara.



A DAY OUT IN THESSALONICA

INVITES YOU TO EXPLORE HOW OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY RELATES TO THE EARLY CHRISTIANS IN THESSALONICA

DATE: Saturday, 2nd February

TIME: 12 Noon

VENUE: Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Oban

RSVP: provostoban@argyll.anglican.org 01631 562323

A Day Out in Thessalonica
is an initiative of The Methodist Church in Scotland (SC028088)

A Date for your Diary—26th January

26th January 2013: Installation of Dean Andrew Swift and Provost Nicki McNelly as Canons of the Cathedral of The Isles, Cumbrae. All welcome

Harvest Festival and Pet Blessing at Holy Trinity, Dunoon

It was a harvest festival with a difference at Holy Trinity this September. At the offertory, folk appeared with pans, dishes, bedding, washing up bowls, cutlery, mirrors, in fact anything that might be needed to start up in a new home. As a congregation we support the charity 'Starter Packs Plus' which caters for people beginning a new life in a new home. We decided this would be an excellent way to share God's bounty for which we traditionally give thanks at this time of year. All the goods were gathered around the side altar and come with our blessing.



And speaking of blessing, in the afternoon we had another first: a service of Pet Blessing! Many of the pets were already familiar with the church: dog-owners use the car-park to get to the Bishop's Glen and the rectory cats are regularly on mouse-duty, not to mention the occasional dog that pops in for a visit while its owners are engaged in church duties. But it wasn't just dogs and cats that arrived on Sunday afternoon; we had rabbits and guinea-pigs as well. Considering the number of pets that arrived to take part in the service, there was remarkably little chaos. Several of the more musical dogs joined in the singing, especially the new hymn the Sunday school taught us: 'I wish I were a butterfly!' We thanked God for the love our pets afforded us, for the way they teach us to care for God's creation; then Andrew blessed each animal and deceased pets were remembered. Afterwards there was a lot of socialising in the car-park as the midges had decided to give the occasion a miss.

Definitely harvest festival, but not as we know it!

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An Argyll Nativity

(As told by Tam Sinclair, shepherd to Mrs Cameron, Lochend Estate)

So I'm calling up the sheep
 "Come bye, come bye", to the dogs
 Hector is dozing by the fire, he had first watch
 I've sent the dogs out, left and right
 To bring in the stragglers, at last all settle
 I tug my plaid up round my ears and toss
 another peat on the fire

We've joined our flocks for this bit of scant grazing
 It's a dark, dark night
 The clouds came up early, extinguishing the stars
 I watch the dogs watching the sheep
 It just needs one dafty to run
 But it's the dogs that start to twitch
 They are uneasy, something has spooked them
 Sitting up, ears cocked, eyes wide
 Then I heard it too

The sky began to crackle and glow
 Hector woke with a start
 "Whit are ye at?"
 "It is'nae me, look up"
 "Och! It's yon Shiny Man thing again"
 I gaze in astonishment at Hector
 Meanwhile the sky opens
 A gigantic golden flower blooms
 I look frantically at the sheep
 The sheep are completely indifferent
 They've seen it all before
 Just me and the dogs then
 Hector is making up the fire
 "Who's the Shiny Man then?"
 "He'll be along soon, first the smell, then
 the sounds
 Then the Shiny Man"
 And do you know, I could smell honey
 Then something spicy overlaid with flowers
 And just as I was enjoying this
 Up starts the noise, well noise is unfair
 It wasn't quite music, not as I knew it
 Not Archie John, you couldnae whistle this
 It was familiar yet wondrous strange
 And then the flower blew apart
 Golden petals blew across the sky
 Showering hill and glen with magical rain
 "See" said Hector "The Shiny Man"
 Hard as I tried I couldnae see clearly
 "Dinnae bother" said Hector "He is'nae real,
 He's just here for the summoning"
 I turned blaze blinded eyes to Hector
 "Och, come on laddie, it's every shepherds
 birthright
 To go if able
 Are you not a shepherd, abiding in the
 field?
 And is the Shiny Man not saying don't be
 scared?
 We have to go and look at the baby"
 Well I was, and He was, so we did.
 Of Mistress Cameron's sheep we cared not
 Who would want them anyway?
 Up the glen, down the brae, through the
 bealich
 It was a sore journey on foot
 With folk joining in on the way
 Many I knew, and a grand blether there was
 Much was made of a star, which many were
 following

Others were just along because
 Jimmy the Post had his bag, lumpy
 with parcels
 And Mac the knife from the butchers
 still had his apron on
 And then knock me down with a spurtle
 There was the star, all twinkly and
 bright
 Beyond the standing stones, just
 hanging in the sky
 We all stopped to watch
 The Rev. Montgomery, McNiven the
 teacher
 And him from the council, pushy as
 always
 Gathered round Jimmy the post
 Sorting and swapping parcels until
 satisfied
 Hector pulled me on "Come away" he
 said "Time to get on
 "We are to be first, being called"
 And with his smiley dog capering
 before
 We pushed through the crowd and set
 off along a rough track
 "That's Sorley McFadyen's bothy" I said
 "Wisht" said Hector "Not just now it
 is'nae"
 The nearer we got the brighter it got
 Light was flaring through gaps in the
 stone
 Fingers of light reaching into the
 darkness
 Drawing us in
 I lingered in the doorway, Hector went
 in
 There was a familiar woman, with a
 baby
 In a puckle of straw in a ruckle of a box
 Standing by was another familiar figure
 I tugged at Hector as he came out
 "Isn't that Effie from over bye?
 And surely that's Wee Eck the joiner by
 the bridge"
 "Not for tonight" said Hector
 His face as peaceful and happy as I've
 ever seen
 We were pushed aside by the postie
 And the Minister and the Teacher and
 the Provost
 Clutching their parcels, their eyes wide,
 went in

"Did you see there was a donkey? Who's got a donkey?"

"There is always a donkey; I once saw a camel,

Odd looking beast that" said Hector

"And isn't that Fergie Dunlop's best cow?"

"Not tonight it is'nae" said Hector

With a big happy sigh he set off back

I ran after him "What happens now?"

"Not a lot, but one day, who knows"



With thanks to Alexander Hamilton

In touch with true Scottishness

The Most Rev David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane, and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church has written the following article for the Church Times (published 2 November). If you subscribe to Church Times you can read the article online at <http://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2012/2-november/comment/opinion/in-touch-with-true-scottishness>. With the permission of Church

*Times, the article is printed below: **In touch with true Scottishness National distinctiveness could justify independence, says David Chillingworth***

The signing of an agreement last month by Alex Salmond and David Cameron about a referendum on Scottish independence brings decision time a little closer. There will be a vote in 2014([Comment, 22 June](#)). The ballot paper will offer only the independence option. The alternative choice of enhanced devolution - more powers to the existing Holyrood Parliament - will not be presented (although the Calman Commission of 2009 established the popularity of this with the Scottish electorate). Young people aged 16 and 17 will be allowed to vote. For both Westminster and Holyrood governments, the political stakes are high. I believe that Churches and faith groups should be agnostic about issues of flags and jurisdiction. My Irish background tells me that it is profoundly unwise for Churches to become advocates or defenders of particular constitutional arrangements. But we should make a strong contribution to discussion of the values and character of any new state that may emerge. And we should be particularly alert to any tendency to shape the debate in adversarial terms around questions of identity. There are some significant issues that need to be addressed. Scottish independence has been a vision, and, as the debate proceeds, that vision will need to take concrete form in plans, policies, and proposals. One of the first signs of this has been the Scottish National Party's decision to commit itself to future membership of NATO. This has been described as the SNP's "Clause 4" moment. It is significant, because the removal of nuclear weapons from Scottish lochs has long been a uniting issue in the nationalist movement and beyond. But I wonder whether it is realistic to think that an independent Scotland that is a member of NATO can still get rid of nuclear weapons. The list of other challenging issues grows ever longer. There is financial regulation and the currency, health-care, defence, and education policy. At a deeper level, it seems not quite clear what the independence debate is about. Terms such as "national self-determination" are not much used. Scotland is undoubtedly distinctive

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in law, education, culture - and a surprising liberalism. But is that distinctiveness such that it justifies independence, or requires independence to protect it? Economic issues will inevitably be important: people will need to be convinced that they will be no worse off in an independent Scotland.



One further issue interests me. I am at present attending the Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Auckland. The preservation and use of the Maori language is at the heart of the complex nationhood of New Zealand. Yet the place of Scots Gaelic at the heart of the life of an independent Scotland is hardly mentioned. What is needed is a political debate that makes a strong case for the economic and political viability of an independent Scotland. My colours are nailed firmly to the fence; but let me offer you this picture of how it looks to me. My heart is with the self-confidence and the vigour of small and independent nations - as I believe Scotland could become. I proudly carry my Irish passport. I am not an instinctive unionist. I respond with caution to the suggestion that we can survive and thrive only as part of something bigger. Yet it does seem to me that there are two significant issues that make Scottish independence a difficult political challenge at this point. Scotland has seen itself as a place of high-quality management in the financial sector. The excesses and the bonus culture that destroyed the reputation of the City of London as a financial centre were never so obvious here; so the collapse of the Scottish banks has greatly damaged Scottish self-confidence. People worry about the ability of an independent Scotland to survive a further crisis in the financial sector. They see what has happened to Ireland and Iceland. The second significant change is the position of the European project, and the problems of the euro. Even ten years ago, it would have been possible to promote the idea that Scotland might substitute the shelter of the European Union for the shelter of the United Kingdom. It is not so now. I do not believe that the European dream is over, but I do not think that it is available for 2014 as a Scottish-independence vote-winner. Finally, I think that we in the Scottish Episcopal Church need to be careful of our identity and belonging. It is right to be agnostic about the outcome of the referendum. But that requires us to make clear that we will live comfortably with either outcome. We need to show that we are in touch with the Scottishness of our culture and history as a Church. The "English Church" jibe is still all too common. We can easily become complicit in allowing others to dispossess us of our Scottishness. This is not, however, just about our relationship with our past. It is about the future - our future in mission in the complexities and challenges of 21st-century Scotland, whether independent or not. This is our story. We are part of it, and part of it we shall remain, whatever the outcome.

Reprinted from Inspires online

Christmas Holidays

Please note that the Diocesan Office will close on 20th December, re-opening 7th January although we will check e-mails and the answer phone from time to time.

Faith in Action 2013

The *Faith in Action* leaflets for 2013 are now on the SEC website and are easily downloadable. The leaflets include prayer suggestions which could be part of your Intercessions for the month as well as ideas for actions which either individuals or groups within your congregations and communities could become involved with. By having all the topics and the leaflets available for 2013 on the SEC website it means that you can plan ahead and prioritise the topics you may wish to engage with. Feedback after you have used the leaflets is welcome, so please contact churchrelations@scotland.anglican.org with any comments or suggestions for additional resource material or contacts. There shall be a monthly reminder in *inspires* online for each of the forthcoming topics.

The *Faith in Action* leaflets are produced by the Church in Society Committee of the Scottish Episcopal Church and cover a separate theme each month.

January: Faith in Action in January asks us to remember the **Homeless** and to undertake if possible one or more of the suggested actions : you can access the *Faith in Action* leaflet for January from www.scotland.anglican.org

A prayer you may wish to use in your Intercessions in January ;

Seeing and loving the homeless Christ in the homeless

Homeless Saviour, teach us to see you
 In the pale faces we meet huddled under blankets,
 In the out-stretched hands,
 In the anger, tears and pain,
 That by recognising you in their faces, we might see their real loveliness,
 And so, by your love, love you in them. AMEN

Truly CalledTwo

REMINDER AND REQUEST

FROM THE PROVINCIAL DIACONATE WORKING GROUP

You may recall that General Synod 2012 approved *Truly Called.....Two* as a discussion document for use at all levels within the SEC.

The text for *Truly Called.....Two* can be found under the Resources section of the Ministry & Mission Board pages on the Provincial website which provides a link and brief description of *Truly Called....Two* at

http://www.scotland.anglican.org/index.php/mission_and_ministry_board/resources/

This note is a reminder that the Diaconate Working Group would be delighted to receive responses to *Truly CalledTwo* from individuals, groups, diocesan mission and ministry committees, vestries, Lay Readers, congregations, area councils, dioceses, youth networks and study groups etc.

Please feel free to advertise this request through congregational newsletters.

The Diaconate Working Group asks that written responses are sent – either by individuals or as a collation of a group’s discussion - to the Church Relations Officer, General Synod Office, 21 Grosvenor Crescent Edinburgh EH12 5EE or e-mail to churchrelations@scotland.anglican.org by the **31st March 2013**

+John Armes, Convener of the Diaconate Working Group

Diocesan Synod

Diocesan Synod will take place as usual in the first week of March with Pre-Synod Day on Tuesday 5th followed by the Synod Eucharist in St John’s Cathedral. The business of Synod will take place on Wednesday 6th March. All members of the Diocese are welcome to attend but it would be helpful if you could let the office know so that we can cater appropriately.

Information for Vestries

1 Gift Aid

The attached extract from a recent Churches Legislation Advisory Service circular regarding Gift Aid provides some useful suggestions as to action required now in advance of changes to be made in April 2013.

2 Pension Fund Consultation

Hopefully all vestries will now have had the opportunity to consider the Pension Consultation circulated to Vestry Secretaries in early October. Please note that the deadline for submission of responses is 31 December.

3 SEC Unit Trust Pool distribution rate

The second 2012 distribution (payable in February 2013) has been set at 24½p per unit. The total distribution for the year (49p) is therefore unchanged from that for 2011.

It is the view of the Investment Committee that market conditions are likely to remain challenging for some time, and there is therefore little likelihood of the 2013 distribution being increased. Indeed it may be necessary for the distribution to be reduced. The total distribution for 2013 is therefore unlikely to exceed 49p per unit and may well be less.



Wishing you all a very good Christmas.

Bridge Pastoral Foundation Scottish Conference

Being Alive: Relating to ourselves, one another and God

8-12 April 2013, St Leonards, St Andrews, Fife

Christopher MacKenna, Leader of St Marylebone Healing & Counselling Centre, London, and Chaplain and Clinical Director of the Guild of Health, will explore the conference theme in three plenary sessions, drawing on his pastoral and psychotherapeutic experience as well as the strands of Christian theology and depth psychology which keep him engaging with the mystery of LIFE.

For more details of the conference, you can [download the brochure](#) and a [booking form](#) from www.bridgepastoral.co.uk Alternatively, e-mail your name and address to the [Conference Chair](#) to have a printed copy sent to you.

In addition to the plenary sessions, there will be small group work, workshops, worship, time for socialising and for exploring St Andrews and Fife.

Who is the conference for?

The conference is open to all, whether members of BPF or not, who are seeking space for reflection and personal growth within the ethos of ecumenical Christian spirituality. While there is a Christian basis, those of other faiths or of no particular faith are valued.

The week will appeal to those the "helping" professions including those engaged in pastoral and voluntary work in local churches and communities; and others concerned about personal well-being and relationships.

CONTACT US

The office is staffed
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Thurs

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Communications

NEWSLETTER

The February Newsletter (Please remember to send information to the Diocesan Office) – material to be received at the Diocesan Office (e-mail above) by Monday **21st January** 2013.

WEBSITE www.argyll.anglican.org

FACEBOOK Please 'Like' the Facebook page for Argyll and The Isles.

TWITTER Hashtag #AaTI

THE WIDER CHURCH Find out more about the Scottish Episcopal Church at www.scotland.anglican.org

ONLINE INSPIRES

Sign up for news about the Scottish Episcopal Church at <http://www.inspires.org.uk/subscribe>

Diocesan Diary

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| 22nd January | Diocesan Finance & Property Board |
| 26th January | Installation of Dean Andrew Swift and Provost Nicki McNelly as Canons of the Cathedral of The Isles, Cumbrae |
| 31st January | Diocesan Standing Committee |
| 5th March | Pre-Synod Day |
| | Diocesan Synod Eucharist |
| 6th March | Diocesan Synod |
| 13th April | Lay Leadership' Day |
| 22nd-25th October | Diocesan Retreat |