



**Number 52:
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2014**

News from around the Diocese

St John's Cathedral, Oban

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The Bishop Cat with children at the Fancy Dress Crib Service

Advent and Christmas were very busy at St John's. Starting with an Advent Carol Service, there were services almost every day through Advent, Christmas and up to the New Year. There were services to suit all tastes. Some, like the Fancy Dress Crib Service, were very well attended and noisy.



The Choir process in for the Advent Carol Service

Others like Silent Night, Holy Night were quiet and contemplative, a perfect break from the pressures of everyday life. This service was taken in the East Aisle with the Crib as a focal point. Attending Morning Prayer every day was a discipline that some attempted as a preparation for Christmas.



New heaters were installed just in time for the Nine Lessons and Carols. These provide welcome warmth towards the front of the church to which the congregation is slowly migrating.

The Bishop is joined by children in fancy dress

Father Simon's First Visit to St Margaret's, Isle of Arran

The weekend of the 7th to 8th December saw the first visit of our new Priest-in-Charge, Father Simon Mackenzie, to St Margaret's (accompanied of course by Donan, who now sees our sacristan, Muriel Park, as St Muriel of the Biscuits)

It was a wonderful, busy weekend – it was amazing how much we got through. Fr Simon arrived at the church just after midday on Saturday, in time to help the congregation with the seasonal decoration of the church. About four o'clock, sufficient decking out of the building having been achieved (accompanied of course by much chatter), we all sat down to a hot meal in our very adaptable church space, after which the conversation turned more serious, though with plenty of laughter, as Fr Simon continued the process of getting to know us as individuals. Eventually we all dispersed to get our breath for the morrow.

Sunday began with our regular Eucharist at 11.00, and it was real delight after a number of years at last to have our own Priest celebrate in our little church. A cold buffet lunch followed, and then we settled down to begin the Mission Possible programme. Fr Simon's presence to facilitate our discussion was a godsend: there was so much to say that we nearly overshot the time available. We were shaken out of our deliberations, though, by the arrival of a guest for our Carol Service at three o'clock – luckily it was Father Noel from Holy Cross R.C. Church, and I know he understood! Elaine Gaman, our regular facilitator who was earlier prevented from starting our first session by stormy weather, will be back to continue the programme in the New Year (she will not be surprised by how slowly we are progressing, but I hope she will see that that means we are finding it worthwhile taking our time with it) The weekend's events concluded with our aforementioned Carol Service, at which some of the music was provided by St Margaret's little recorder group. The service was attended by a very small congregation, but I, at least, found this year's particularly meaningful.

I took a couple of photographs over the weekend, but unfortunately they have come out all fogged, so I apologise for not providing illustrations. Next time!

We really appreciate Fr Simon's presence among us, bid him welcome to our bit of the Diocese, and eagerly await his next visit to Arran.

John Roberts

AN ARGYLL PILGRIMAGE or THE CAROL TALES

*Ane doolie sessoun to ane cairfull dyte
Suld correspond and be equivalent:
Richt sa it was when I began to wryte
This pilgrim tale - the wedder richt fervent,
When Sagittarie in middis of Advent
Schouris of hale gart frae the north discend,
That scantlie fra the cauld I nicht defend.*

Robert Henryson, adapted

The Bishop's Tale

Many eyes were agog in CHRIST CHURCH, LOCHGILPHEAD when Bp Kevin climbed into the pulpit on Monday 25th December to preach at my licensing, – I being Fr Simon Mackenzie, accompanied by the faithful hound Donan. The church was packed with guests, both his and mine. Rumours of the pulpit's parlous tethering proved exaggerated, and the Bishop returned safely to shore in the sanctuary.

The doolie sessoun of Advent marked our first Carol Service, on the eve of Advent Sunday. Advent music is the best in the whole Church's year, and the darkening nights are a wonderful preparation for the mystery to come; especially out where I'm lodged on the Crinan canal, with the only light from the moon. We hope babies won't come prematurely: we really need the waiting time of Advent if we are to step fully into the mystery of Christmas.

The Patroness' Tale

Richt fervent indeed was the wedder which blew away our power, our internet, and our telephones. At last it blew itself out, so the Pilgrim took the ferry from Tarbert to Lochranza, en route for WHITING BAY and the parish of our Patroness, ST MARGARET. Her love of Our Lord and her joy in the Church are fully reflected in the small and joyful congregation which meets in the lovely little church there. We had a full weekend: a delicious lunch cooked by the parish, with five hours of getting to know one another and reflecting on the parish's spiritual life together. Wonderful, and exhausting! Then on Sunday we met again for Sung Mass at 11, followed by more lunch, the first session of Mission Possible, and the first of my Christmas Carol services; allowable, perhaps, as St Margaret's congregation will scatter for the feast. We meet again at Candlemass to complete our Christmas celebrations in triumph (with my favourite hymn: Hail to the Lord who Comes). If we will just wait for the baby to be born, we can celebrate for FORTY days.

The Chieftain's Tale

And so to ST COLUMBA, POLTALLOCH, a beautiful mid-19th Church on a grassy knoll overlooking Crinan Bay, Chapel Extraordinary to the Clan Malcolm. Bp Kevin came to the next Carol Service, in which a little touch of Advent, with the Advent Prose sung as the altar candles were lit, expressed our longing and yearning for the coming Feast:

Come, Saviour, come, like dew on the grass:

Break through the clouds like gentle rain.

Whether the prophet had a glimpse of life in Argyll, who can tell?

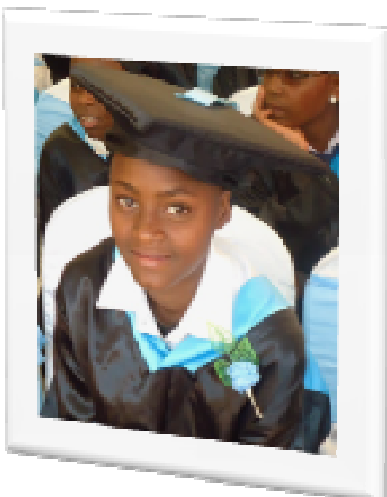
We fell to our knees to contemplate and adore the perpetual presence of Christ Among Us. And then we had mulled wine and mince pies: but the Pilgrim can tell little more, as he had to dash on through the night:

The Duchess' Tale

Onwards to ALL SAINTS, INVERARY, built, of course, for the Duchess of Argyll, a beautiful and gorgeously furnished brick chapel, just beside the famous bell-tower. This was threatening to be ane cairfull dyte: Sickness was rife, the radio prophesied yet more fervency, and key people couldn't make it. But the Community gathered there: Church of Scotland, Roman Catholic, and Episcopalian. The church gleamed from the lighted candelabra, and we had a delightful family and village (NO! Royal Burgh) celebration. It was a warm embrace.

And after so many Carols: back to the real theme of Advent: watching and waiting in gentle and wondering awe...

Fr Simon Mackenzie, Priest-in-Charge of the Charges of mid-Argyll & Arran



Sponsorship of the education of a girl in Tanzania

Through the Bishop's Lent Appeal, we are sponsoring Ester through secondary school.

An orphan, Ester has been cared for by Moshi Christian Children's Centre since she was less than two years old.

A bright child, full of fun, she will be starting secondary school in January.

We will be paying through a bank account in Glasgow to limit losses due to currency exchange.

There are no administration costs.

Primus pays tribute to Nelson Mandela

The Most Rev David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church says "To stand in the tiny cell which Nelson Mandela occupied for so many years was to wonder - to wonder how he could have emerged from such confinement with a warm personality and a generous and forgiving spirit. In the death of Nelson Mandela, the world has lost its greatest statesman. South Africa has lost a father figure, the founder of the post-apartheid nation. People everywhere who dream of peace and reconciliation mourn a person who showed that such dreams can become reality - but a reality born only of costly suffering and forgiveness.

"We give thanks for Nelson Mandela and what he taught a troubled world through the depth of his character and his humility. We share the sadness of all who mourn his loss - particularly with rainbow peoples of South Africa".

The Primus has written further about the legacy of Nelson Mandela in his blog <http://www.bishopdavid.net/>

(Reproduced from Inspiresonline)

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18-25 January

2013 was the year in which churches from all inhabited continents of the world gathered in Korea for the 10th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches. We gathered for no other reason than to declare to the world that our disunity is a scandal and that we will go on praying for and working for that unity which is God's gift to the church and to the world.

The Churches of French Canada have chosen a key biblical text of the ecumenical movement and have invited us to think about what our divisions say to the world and to each other about the Christian faith. They have also suggested that we use the Millennium Goals as a focus for our prayers for the world.

The resources for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2014 are available as downloads from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) at www.ctbi.org.uk There is also an order form to purchase the material in a published format

(Reproduced from Inspiresonline)



Annual Malcolm Goldsmith Lecture 2014

Rabbi Baroness Neuberger DBE: 'Dying Well and why it matters?'

To be held on Tuesday 11th March 2014, 2-3pm (registration from 1.30pm)
At the Roxburgh Hotel, 38 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh EH2 4HQ


To book your place at this event, please go to the website: www.faihtinolderpeople.org.uk and click on 'view event information and online booking' at the top of the blue box.

Tickets for the lecture cost £10 and this includes tea and coffee served after the lecture. Please note payment must be made within 30 days of booking and by Monday, 24th February to reserve a place.

The mailing address is:

Faith in Older People, 21A Grosvenor Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 5EL.

Tel: 0131 346 7981 Email: info@fiop.org.uk



INVESTING IN PEACE

Come and hear about – and pray for – the lives of those supported by our partners in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, as well as in Syria.

Salah Mohammad Ahmad Al-Halayqua lives in the occupied Palestinian territory. He has muscular dystrophy. Christian Aid's partner the YMCA supported him to train as an accountant and now he advocates for employment rights for other young people with disabilities.



When Friday 24 January 2014
Time 7-9pm
Where Duncansburgh MacIntosh Church, The Parade, Fort William, Inverness-shire PH33 6BA

Tea and coffee will be served.

For more information contact: Christian Aid Scotland on 0141 221 7475.

This is an open invitation to everyone in your Church and community – please pass it on through intimations and by word of mouth.

Christian Aid Scotland, the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church are committed to working together in this area and, in particular, to praying for peace in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory on the 24th day of each month, as part of the global ACT Alliance prayer initiative.

  The Church of Scotland

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Investing in Peace—future dates

Monday 24th February 7-9pm Linlithgow

St Michael's Parish Church, The Cross, Linlithgow, EH49 7AL

Monday 24th March 7-9pm Edinburgh

Palmerstone Place Church Palmerston Place, Edinburgh EH12 5AA

Thursday 24th April 7:30pm Dunblane

Dunblane Cathedral, The Cross, Dunblane, Perthshire FK15 0AQ

Tue 24th June Dundee (Venue TBC)

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The office is staffed
9.30am-2.30pm
Mon-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 **27th January 2014**.

WEBSITE www.argyll.anglican.org www.island-retreats.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

21st January	Diocesan Finance & Property Group Diocesan Mission and Ministry Board
28th January	Diocesan Standing Committee
11th March	Diocesan Conference Day & Synod Eucharist
12th March	Diocesan Synod
5th April	Lay Leadership Day
7th June	Celebration of Lay Leadership

Poverty & Homelessness Action Week 25th January—2nd February Standing with people in crisis —give, act, pray

Further information and resources from the website www.actionweek.org.uk