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News from around the Diocese

Well Behaved Bears Welcome on Arran



Father Simon presided over a special service for Christ the King on 22nd November. Sadly, three members of our small congregation are leaving us to move south at the beginning of December: Dorothy and Michael Campling to be near their daughter and grandchildren in Yorkshire, Michael Collins to be with his elderly aunt in Grimsby. All three have made a huge contribution to the life of St Margaret's. Dorothy has served for several years as our Vestry Secretary, and also as Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Coordinator. Her husband Michael has looked after our music for as many years. And Michael Collins has made a great contribution through his intelligent and insightful input into our congregational deliberations; he has also been a moving spirit behind the entertainments at our public social events, playing the recorder with Dorothy, and producing and acting in the comic sketch that was part of this year's August Event. The congregation owe all three of them a great debt of gratitude. We will sorely miss them, as parishioners but above all as good friends.

To mark this occasion, those attending the service were urged in the local newspaper to bring with them teddy bears, in view of Dorothy's hobby as a bear-collector. The paper did stress that the bears should be "well-behaved", and indeed they were. They occupied their seats silently, and after the service lined up to have their picture taken at the altar rail, as can be seen in the accompanying photos. Afterwards, all adjourned to the local restaurant, Coast, for a very convivial and satisfying lunch (not the bears, who had eaten earlier, or we would have occupied too many tables).

Next week we have our Annual Church Meeting, and the sad and serious task of finding successors to those leaving. *John Roberts*

Isle of Lewis

November has been a steady month at St Peter's in Stornoway. Things are well in hand as we approach Advent and there is a different 'buzz' about the community. At the beginning of the month St Peter's celebrated 'All Saints' day and the 'All

Souls' day service the following day was both solemn and full of wonderful memories of those who had passed.

Bishop Kevin came to Stornoway for several meetings, one of which was with our Vestry. After this he attended Holy Communion at The House of Carmel, with Rev'd Sr Clare Lockhart presiding.

St Peter's holds it's AGM on the 22nd November, where we will report on all of the good things that have taken place during the past 12 months. We will also see a change of Vestry secretary as Mr Ian Coulson stands down after 3 years of dedicated service. We thank Ian for all of his hard work during this time.

The 'Soup Stop' officially opened on Friday the 20th November at St Peter's Church Hall. The 'Cream Teas' venture was such a success during the summer that it was decided to provide an alternative for the colder winter months. Soup and bread is now served for a donation and we hope that it will become a regular stop off point for anyone who needs to rest during the course of a busy day.

The picture shows those who attended the Liturgical Gaelic Course at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in the last fortnight of October. Fr Terry is wearing the hat !!

Blessings Always
Fr Terry Taggart



St Columba's, Islay

St Columba's were pleased to welcome Mrs Francis Arthur and Mrs Judith Macrae to our church in October for a 'Building the Vision' session which has given us such a spiritual uplift and focus on our future worship together. We were grateful to the Bishop for giving his permission for Frances and Judith to hold a 'Lay-Led Extended Communion Service'. This was an historic event for us as it was the first service of its kind to be held at the church. We are hopeful that the Bishop will authorise some of our members to take such services in the future.

I attended the Lay-Leaders' 'Godly Play' training day in Oban and hope that I will be able to include some of its concepts during our 'Celebration of Christmas' service on Christmas Day – a service of Carols and readings, open to all – non-denominational – and I am busily knitting a Nativity Set for the occasion and planning activities for the children who we hope will be with us.

We successfully held our Annual General Meeting on the 15th November and all that remains now is for me to advertise for visiting priests to take our monthly Eucharist services during 2016. Any offers? We pay for the car ferry/passenger costs, overnight accommodation and clerical fees (and can arrange distillery visits if required!) Please contact me: lesleyabarford@gmail.com. Seasonal Greetings. *Lesley*

Book Corner



'Walking Backwards to Christmas - an Advent Journey from Light to Darkness by Stephen Cottrell '

News from the Cathedral of The Isles

Bed & Breakfast in December *Tuesday 1 - Sunday 20 December*

We're keeping South College open for those who would like to spend a little bit of quiet away from the hurly burly for a while! Of course we can't guarantee you good weather at this time of year - but we can guarantee cosy accommodation and a hearty home-cooked breakfast. As a **special offer**, single occupancy in the South College during this period is available for the same price as a single standard room. Book online at <http://www.island-retreats.org/cumbrae.html>.

Retreats for 2016 *Booking now open*

We're delighted to announce the launch of our Open Retreat Programme for 2016 - and it's a packed one! We begin the year with a *Retreat for the beginning of Lent*, led by Canon Alec Boyd, and end it with a time of *Quiet before Christmas* - and there are another half dozen retreats in-between to choose from as well. Download the information leaflet and spread the word!

Mission Milestones – a Celebration Diocesan Conference and Synod 2016

Our 2016 Diocesan Conference on March 8th will be a celebration of Vision for Mission and indeed of the 5 years of Building the Vision. All the congregations will be invited to present their visions in a creative form of their choice. These will be woven together under the guiding hand of our facilitator Isobel MacNaughtan to create a day of celebration. The mission plans* will be offered up at the Synod Eucharist.

Isobel is delighted to be joining us again, having started us off on this journey in 2011. (It's hard to believe!) Of course this is not an end point but a milestone on our diocesan journey.

A mission plan in itself will not bring about God's Kingdom on earth. Our willingness to give serious time and prayer to thinking through our priorities is a way of giving God space to work through us.

The Diocesan Conference will be open to all clergy and lay people. Congregations will be guaranteed 4 places and any places not taken up will be reallocated. Detailed information will be sent out in the New Year.

As usual the conference will be followed by the Diocesan Synod on March 9th. Congregations are obliged to send a lay rep or alternate but as a public meeting, the Synod is open to all who wish to attend. Advance notice must be given - and updated if circumstances change - for seating and catering purposes.

* As you know, the mission plans are to be sent in to Dean Andrew and CDO (Alison Clark) by the end of January so that copies can be made available for the conference and synod.

Yet More Forms!

This is the time of year when we are all preparing for Christmas. However, some of us are also preparing for Diocesan and General Synods. As part of that preparation, we collate the services held throughout the Diocese during the year; update the lists of those invited to Diocesan and General Synod and ensure that we are doing our best to protect the vulnerable within our churches. We, therefore, ask for the return of three forms— Service Statistics which should have been received by all clergy and lay folk running Charges; Diocesan Schedules which were sent to Secretaries and Safeguarding returns which have been sent to Protection coordinators. It would be very helpful to have all the completed forms in before the end of the calendar year! If you have difficulty in completing any form, please contact the Diocesan Office in the first instance.

Lay Leadership Day

Margaret Grant and Catherine Brown presented a Godly Play 'Discovery Day'. Some of our diocese have experience of Godly Play with children but the recent session was set up at the request of lay leaders interested in its use with older people. The day was well attended and much appreciated as shown by the comments following:-

I was spellbound by the storytelling and reminded of the power of the visual and the tactile.

I was very struck by the way the storyteller focusses on the story - I was told to expect this and was amazed at how it works.

Some of our lay leaders plan to share their experience with their congregation. Whether or not anyone takes up Godly Play, I hope that at the very least they approach the bible stories with more 'wondering'. *Alison Clark*

Godly Play Storyteller and Door Person Course

6 February, 5 March, 2 April*, 7 May— Possilpark Parish Church, Glasgow

Godly Play Scotland is pleased to offer the Storyteller and Door Person training course over four Saturdays in the Spring of 2016. This course is sponsored by Possilpark Parish Church.

The course is designed to give people a better understanding of both the theory and practice of Godly Play. It covers each of the main types of story – sacred, parables and liturgy. There is a mixture of trainer led and participant storytelling sessions - so you have the opportunity to tell a story as part of the course.

This is an unaccredited course - with one Godly Play trainer, rather than two. The content of the course – stories and workshops - will be the same as an accredited course and the trainer is Alex Mackenzie. The cost is £80.

If you would like to know more about this course, please get in touch with Alex. (alex@godlyplayscotland.co.uk) To book on the course, please fill in the online form.

(<http://godlyplay.coffeecup.com/forms/SpringSaturday16/>)

* We know that the 2 April is potentially difficult, as it's in holiday season. We can agree an alternative date, as a group, at the beginning of the course

Should we be involved in the bombing of Syria?

The Most Rev David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church says: "The decision which the House of Commons will make tomorrow is one which tests to the utmost the question of how a society which has democratic accountability responds to terrorism and barbarity. Recent events in Paris were appalling in their random cruelty and complete disregard for the rights and freedoms of a civilian population. Our instinctive sense of justice demands the satisfaction of an appropriate response. Such a response, it is argued, will degrade the ability of Isis to carry out further attacks and will therefore make us safer. "But in matters of peace and war, Christians are always mindful of the question of what makes a war just. The desire for revenge is not enough. Nor is the feeling that 'we must do something rather than nothing.' Instead we think about questions such as whether a bombing campaign is likely to achieve the desired outcome and whether the means to be deployed are proportionate. Violence mirrors violence. It is likely that a bombing campaign will simply further escalate the violence and fail to challenge the heart of the dreadful ideology which makes attacks like those in Paris and other places possible. "The urge to do 'something rather than nothing' is understandable. But the view that involvement in a bombing campaign is

unlikely to achieve the desired outcome – and may indeed make our world yet more dangerous – is equally if not more compelling.” - See more at: <http://www.scotland.anglican.org/involved-bombing-syria/#sthash.YgrbcJCK.dpuf> (reprinted from the SEC website www.scotland.anglican.org)

Eco-Congregation prayer

Eco-Congregation Scotland Environmental Chaplain, the Rev Trevor Jamison, has written a Prayer for the Paris COP21 (Conference of the Parties) Meeting 2015

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
The world, and those who live in it;
For he has founded it on the seas,
And established it on the rivers.
(Psalm 24: 1-2)

O God of this earth, as nations gather to meet in Paris,
We pray for the representatives of the rich and the powerful,
And for those sent there by the poor and the vulnerable.

Give to them all gifts of wisdom and discernment,
That they might truly understand what faces your world today,
And see what needs to be done in days ahead.

Give to them qualities of kindness, justice and determination,
That they may hear creation's cry of distress,
And together take binding actions to safeguard the climate.

And stir up in us what we expect from others.
Make us wise and discerning, kind, and just,
Determined to play our part in caring for creation, now and for ever.
Amen.

(Reprinted from Inspires online. Sign up for these regular e-mails at www.scotland.anglican.org)

The Lord's Prayer

In commenting on the refusal by leading cinemas to show a short advert of the Lord's Prayer, The Most Rev David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church says: "I watched the 'Prayer is for Everyone' video which will now not be shown in cinemas. I was personally moved by it. It shows a very diverse group of people. They connect their everyday life and work to the Lord's Prayer. This is not an attempt to package or to 'sell' religion. Rather it seeks to help people to make connections between life and faith.

"We are living through a time of great sensitivity about faith issues. The terrible events in Paris last week demonstrate that religiously motivated violence is one of the great challenges of our age. This is Scottish Interfaith Week, which reminds us of the challenge and the richness of living in a multi-faith and multi-cultural context. It is not in the best interests of our society that we should cultivate excessive sensitivity about what can be expressed. We all need to be able to look at and appreciate the integrity of one another's faith. Most of all we need to be able to distinguish good religion from bad and not make the mistake of assuming that all religion must be seen as potentially offensive."

The Primus spoke about this on BBC Radio Scotland's 'Good Morning Scotland' programme on Monday 23 November at 07.55 – <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06pcz84#play> – his interview starts at 01:55:20

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Diocesan Diary

Tuesday, 18th January	Diocesan Finance & Property Board
	Diocesan Mission & Ministry Board
Tuesday, 26th January	Diocesan Standing Committee
Tuesday, 8th March	Diocesan Synod Conference
	Diocesan Synod Eucharist
Wednesday, 9th March	Diocesan Synod

Communications

NEWSLETTER

The January Newsletter (Please remember to send information to the Diocesan Office) – material to be received at the Diocesan Office (e-mail above) by Thursday **18th December, 2015.**

WEBSITE www.argyll.anglican.org www.island-retreats.org **TWITTER** Hashtag #AaTI

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

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

ONLINE INSPIRES

Sign up for the Scottish Episcopal Church newsletter or the magazine at links from the website as above.

Advent and Lent Courses

Making Room a 4-session **Advent** course for 2015 written by **Revd David Gamble** plus two CD Conversations featuring **John Bell of Iona** and Oxford Philosopher **Prof. Keith Ward**. Full details at www.yorkcourses.co.uk

Bishop Stephen Cottrell has written the new **York Course** for Lent 2016 on the Psalms.

The Psalms – prayers for today's church has **5 sessions**, which makes it **ideal for Lent** – although it can be used by discussion groups at **any time of year**.