

St Kieran's, Campbeltown

In St Kieran's there are some families who regard us as their second home. The Barbers come every year from England and throw themselves enthusiastically into the life of our little congregation when they are here, this time helping out with Christian Aid collecting and counting. We also appreciated having our regulars, Archie and Iris Campbell from Stevenage, the Warrs and the Bingemans.

Our discussion sessions once a month have continued, and we have surprised ourselves at some of the topics we have covered - nationalism, Islam, Judaism, colour prejudice, sin, creationism and the Bishop's blog. We have been pleased that visitors have been happy to contribute to these sessions and we particularly appreciated the visit of a Quaker to our meeting in June.

Topics covered in church services have included a tutorial on Anglican chant, the role of the priest and the laity in a congregation, the Holy Spirit in the 1982 Liturgy, long distance running and its relation to Christian experience, mental illness, the use of art in religion.

Special services have taken place. In June the St Columba Conventicle was held at Southend, and the midges were out in full force to celebrate this open-air event. The midges' favourite hymn was sung with its memorable chorus - "Feed me till my want is o'er"! In July a service for pets was held in the church garden on a Sunday afternoon and this was greatly appreciated by all those who took part. In August we marked the Mull of Kintyre Music Festival and the Highland Year of Culture with a service that included some Gaelic input. In September we were delighted to have a baptism in the church. Eunice Hunt's great grandchild James was baptised. This was a very happy family occasion and the large number of people present enjoyed a wonderful congregational lunch.

In June, the Rev Hugh Lee and his wife, Christiane, visited us, providing us with a helpful sermon and spiritual sustenance. In late September the Bishop and Elspeth were with us for our Harvest Festival. Once again the church was tastefully decorated and the Bishop sang a solo by Vaughan Williams as a post communion. A congregational lunch was held and the Bishop gave us a stimulating presentation entitled "Visions and Challenges for the Diocese of Argyll and The Isles".

Our church was part of "Doors Open Day" and a good number of people came to see the building and some of its ornaments, including the St Kieran's chalice and the priest's vestments etc. While visitors assembled, Jillian Ogilvie, a senior pupil at the Grammar School, played some music on the clarinet and the organ and this was greatly appreciated.

During the last three months, another pupil from the Grammar School has been playing the organ with great aplomb. Megan Hill has deputised for services on three occasions during the summer and has been a regular part of the worship at St Kieran's, being at the organ console for the 1982 Liturgy and also Morning Prayer, and taking the intricacies of Anglican Chant in her stride.

In May we were pleased to be able to support a coffee morning in aid of the Nepalese Children's Trust. One of our members, Pam Francis, is heavily involved with this worthwhile cause and over £700 was raised for its ongoing work.

The united Christian Aid Week service was held this year in Springbank Evangelical Church and it was great to be able to use their facility for Powerpoint presentations and make full use of the DVD issued by the charity.

David O McEwan