



Columcille

**The Bishop of Argyll
And The Isles' Newsletter. No 36**

January 2009

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Dear Friends,

You will be receiving this January newsletter in advance of Christmas! So let me take the opportunity to wish you, your friends, your family and the communities to which you belong a delightful and blessed Christmas! May the Christ-Child be born in you! Although the news both domestic and international on one level is hardly encouraging, nevertheless I do feel a lot of our assumptions are being called into question by force of circumstances. This is hopeful! We will be faced in the coming years with an inevitable change in lifestyle which may have the effect of wakening us up spiritually. My prayer is that all of us in the Diocese will deepen our attitude towards prayer and to each other and so create high standards for others to witness and be challenged by.

As you will know by now, Chris Todhunter our Diocesan secretary and treasurer will be leaving us as from the 31st of December. The contributions from across the Diocese towards his leaving gift are testimony to the respect in which you hold him. We were able to purchase a Bose Wave Radio and CD player which is of a very high quality and easily transportable. Thank you for your support of Chris's work. We were also able to take Chris and

his wife Rosemary for a "thank you" dinner along with all of the Diocesan staff. Peter Kemp will be taking over the Diocesan secretarial work. He has already begun to spend some days understanding the work and getting to know the staff. Peter has been living in the Oban area for some time and comes to us with a lot of experience of administration and finance in the Province. He has also considerable skills and experience in management and IT communications. The financial aspect of the Diocese's life will be managed by Jean Ainsley. Jean, as many of you will know, is Managing Director of Island Retreats Limited and an accountant. I ask that you give them support and encouragement as you have been doing with Chris. I will be writing a letter to all charge secretaries with more information on these arrangements. In the meantime all enquiries should continue to be made to the usual telephone numbers and email addresses.

A letter from Chris:

Rosemary & I were enjoying a quiet farewell dinner the other evening with Bishop Martin and Elspeth when they produced a box wrapped in shiny paper. Upon opening it I was amazed to find a BOSE wave system radio/CD. I am no hi-fi expert, but even I know it is a system to be dreamed of. Either I have been working amongst the wealthy or this was no mere office whip-round. The Bishop confirmed that there were indeed one or two others from around the Diocese who had contributed in their relief at my departure. It didn't stop there, of course. Rosemary was then presented with the most beautiful necklace and ear-rings of jet set in silver. We were both utterly overwhelmed by the generosity and kindness of the people of this Diocese. We should have known better, of course: generosity and kindness are indeed the hall-marks of the people of this Diocese. Rosemary and I thank you all for your kind gifts, and for the privilege of having been able to work amongst you.

With kind permission of the Office Manager, I am planning to lay on a few hot sausage rolls and a glass or two of something cheering one lunchtime in the Diocesan Centre. This will be on Tuesday 27th January, immediately following the Standing Committee meeting; it would be a great pleasure to Rosemary and me if those of you who were passing or otherwise coming in to Oban on that day for shopping or whatever were able to join us for a glass of good cheer.

With kind regards to you all.
Chris

Diocesan Synod – 4th March 2009

- A) Accommodation** – Once again there will be members of St John’s Cathedral in Oban will be offering accommodation. If you wish to take this up for the next Synod please get in touch with Mrs Sarah Campbell at 01631 562397.

Those who wish to book a bed and breakfast please remember that the limit is £35 per night. If you have difficulties making such arrangements please get in touch with the Diocesan office (01631 570870). Further information will be available in the Synod papers.

- B) Pre-Synod Day – 3rd March 10am for 10.30am.** i) The focus of the day will be on two subjects. “Lay Learning” with the Provincial Lay Learning Officer David Liddle. ii) Administration development in the Diocese and our charges.
- C) Synod Eucharist – 3rd March 5.30pm.** St John’s Cathedral, Oban.
- D) The Synod Dinner – 3rd March 7pm for 7.30pm.** The Gathering Hall, Oban.
- E) THE DIOCESAN SYNOD – 4th March at The Diocesan Centre.** Further details will be sent out with the Synod papers.

- F) The Post Synod Day 5th March–** for all Ordained Clergy in the Diocese, The Diocesan Centre.

PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE 2009 – “Living Well” – 2nd- 4th October Aviemore.

Register by the 14th of February!

The conference liaison person for our Diocese, Margaret Dineley writes: “Preparations for the Provincial Conference are well underway. May I encourage you to join in the stimulation, spirituality and fellowship which this event offers?”

Location – The MacDonald Highland Resort, Aviemore.

Theme: “*Living Well: Proclaim, Discover, Respond*” The underpinning Bible passage is St John 4: 3-43; the Woman at the Well narrative, which tells of the transformation in the woman by this encounter with Christ. The five Marks of Mission are also addressed and the speakers are The Right Rev’d Stephen Cottrell, Bishop of Reading; Annabel Goldie, MSP and The Rev’d Erik Cramb of The Church of Scotland.

Cost - £295 per person for single occupancy, £265 for double occupancy. The costs will be split three ways – between the participants, their vestry and the Diocese. If anyone is prevented from applying by their own or their vestry’s financial difficulties they should contact the Diocesan secretary.

Registration Forms – These have been sent to the Clergy of each charge. They should be returned to the Diocesan Office by 14th February 2009. There are only 300 places for the whole Province. Any further questions contact Margaret Dineley, The Coach House, Toward, Argyll, PA23 7UB, 01639 870073. Email

margaret.dineley@googlemail.com

Sunday School – Junior Church

It may seem sometimes that this Diocese does not have many young people or children associated with the SEC. However I have come across in my travels some examples of creative practice with regard to Sunday School and Junior Church. Recently I was at St Columba's, Portree on Skye and was once again impressed by the Sunday School teachers Fiona Towers and Meike Schmidt. If your charge is looking for inspiration and advice please do get in touch with Meike at meikle@hotmail.com

Homelessness Sunday – 1st February 2009

Scottish Churches Housing Action have asked our congregations to help raise funds on Homelessness Sunday with their "Cup of Tea" appeal. We are asked to hold a "Cup of Tea" day after the normal Sunday service on 1st February where everybody pays £1 or whatever they can afford for their tea or coffee. This money is then sent to SCHA for projects to help homeless people throughout Scotland. For more information contact Valerie Sparling on 0131 477 4500. Email – val@churches-housing.org

Royal School of Church Music – Sing Columba! 7th March 2009

The first Sing Columba! event will take place in Dunblane Cathedral from 2.30-5.30pm. For details contact Pat on 01620 892228.

Companions Together Worldwide

A Day for exploring Companion Links – Saturday March 21st 2009 at The Albany Centre, Glasgow G4

This day conference will be hosted by the Provincial Overseas Committee of The Scottish Episcopal Church, to explore International Companion links and to share experiences and information. For details of the day please contact gill.young@ukonline.co.uk

Planning For Lent -

1. The Bible Reading Fellowship have a simple course for individual use or for groups which you might like to consider for Lent. See the website www.foundations21.org.uk

2. In the last newsletter I mentioned "Now You Know Media" This organisation produces courses of audio CDs on themes of basic importance to all Christians. Brian Daley a Jesuit Priest has recorded one course called "Early Christianity and The First Christians". There are 18 topics on six audio CDs. Perhaps your charge would be interested in buying a set of these CDs and a small group perhaps listen to them together. You can order the CDs from www.NowYouKnowMedia.com

If you are going to use them please do let me know so that I can share the process with you and be of whatever help I can.

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE DIOCESAN MAGAZINE "ARGYLL AND THE ISLES"!

Please send me articles and photographs for the next magazine. Closing date - February 30th 2009.

To save time it would be helpful if you would proof read them yourself and have something of the editor's hat on your head!

Back to Church Sunday 27th Sept. 2009

For the last few years in England there has been a successful ecumenical process of inviting new people to come to church or indeed those who have left it for one reason or another. Some Diocese in Scotland have already participated. However every denomination in Scotland will be participating on the 27th September 2009. The basic idea is that each member of a congregation invites one friend to come to church on that Sunday. The service itself is not expected to be special. Our Diocesan Board of Mission and Ministry will be providing resources in preparation for the Sunday in the New Year. Please put the date in your diaries.

Cumrae Retreat, Music and Conference Programme 2009

14 March -Messiah from Scratch, £25

18-22 March – Retreat, Bishop Alan Smithson.

26-29 March -Art for All (Catherine Drain: for beginners and the more experienced alike with lots of practical work in a variety of mediums), £165

30 March – 2 April - Celtic Retreat (The Warden), £120.

2-5 April –Photography Break. For details contact Steve McGonnell

(stevemcgonnell@yahoo.co.uk)

5-13 April Holy Week and Easter (£55 per day/£330 per week)

For more information please contact the warden 01475 530353.

(The Friends of The Cathedral of The Isles also have a website with useful information –

www.cumbraecathedralfriends.com)

Reflection

The Weight of Glory.

C S Lewis

At present we are on the outside of the world, the wrong side of the door. We discern the freshness and purity of morning, but they do not make us fresh and pure. We cannot mingle with the splendours we see. But all the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with the rumour that it will not always be so. Someday, God willing, we shall get in. When human souls have become perfect in voluntary obedience as the inanimate creation is in its lifeless obedience, they will put on its glory, or, rather, that greater glory of which nature is only the first sketch. We are summoned to pass in through nature, beyond her, into that splendour which she fitfully reflects.

In the Love of God, +Martin, Oban

The February Newsletter – material to be received by Wednesday 14th January 2009

THE BISHOP'S January Diary

5th Jan – Writing and reading week.

10th/11th St Columba's, Islay.

13th – Diocesan Synod planning meeting, Diocesan Office.

15th – Provincial Home Mission Committee (telephone conference).

16th – Church in Society Committee, GSO.

17th/18th – Holy Trinity, Dunoon.

20th – 10.30am Diocesan Finance Committee, Diocesan Centre.

20th-25th – On holiday in Brussels.

26th – 2.30pm Diocesan Festival planning meeting

27th – 10.30am Diocesan Standing Committee, Diocesan centre.

28th – 2.30pm Diocesan Board of Mission and Ministry, Diocesan Centre.

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