



Columcille

**The Bishop of Argyll
And The Isles' Newsletter. No 41**

June 2009

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Dear Friends,

By far the majority of charges in our Diocese consist of small congregations. The level of loyalty to the worshiping and pastoral life of these charges continues to astonish me, given that most members have to travel considerable distances to their local church let alone to any local meeting for education or social life. This of course has fragility to it. On the one hand, you might expect that being part of a tiny congregation might lead you to being very protective of its life. On the other hand you might conclude that the congregation is so small and vulnerable that taking adventurous risks with vision and ideas is the only way forward. In my time as your Bishop it seems to me that the reality lies somewhere between the two. When I speak of local leadership of such congregations, I am aware that that is stretched sometimes to the point of exhaustion. For that reason alone the more that local charges can work collaboratively the more adventure will be thought through and realised carefully. As this Diocese slowly moves into a new way of thinking and acting strategically, many of you perhaps are feeling isolated from educational and creative resources to support your work. Please get in touch with me if you have any response to this issue of congregational development so that I can do my best to ensure Diocesan and Provincial support for you.

**I draw your attention to the details of
The Diocesan Festival on the 7th of June.**

*****The Diocesan Festival – The Year of
Homecoming, Sunday 7th June 2009 at
St John's Cathedral, Oban 12noon-
4.30pm. The Festival Eucharist is at
3pm. *** Homecoming Scotland 2009
celebrates the 250th anniversary of Robert
Burns' birth with a year-long programme
of events across the country. The date I
have chosen is the nearest Sunday to the
Feast of Saint Columba. If you are coming
to the whole event as from 12noon please
let me know as soon as possible for
catering purposes if you have not already
done so. The service itself is open to
everybody.**

The Ordination of Joyce Watson

Please pray for Joyce as she prepares for Ordination to the Diaconate on Sunday the 28th of June at 1.30pm in St John's Cathedral, Oban. Joyce lives on Iona and for many years has been intimately involved ecumenically in the life of the Church. She was some years ago warden of Bishop's House, Iona. She sees her Ministry as very inclusive not only of the island as a whole but towards tourists and pilgrims along with the other faith communities on the island. If you are a Lay Reader or Lay Leader or Ordained and you would like to robe please get in touch with the Provost The Very Rev'd Norman MacCallum 01631 566912 or email ProvostOban@argyll.anglican.org

Sing Columba!

The RSCM is mounting a number of events in Scotland to mark the year of Homecoming. The triennial festival will be held at St Columba's Cathedral, Oban on June 6th. Coupled with the Diocesan festival on the 7th of June at St John's Cathedral, you could make a weekend of it. Website: www.rscmscotland.org

Back to Church Sunday – 27th

September *from Catriona Beel*

Do you know a family member, friend, work colleague or someone recently arrived in your community who doesn't go to church? Well this September gives members of congregations the opportunity and encouragement to invite friends and members of their community, who might want to go to church but are unsure of making the first step by themselves, to join them in worship.

The idea is that each charge in the diocese will choose a Sunday in September (not necessarily the 27th – but whichever Sunday is best for your church) and members of the congregation will invite people to come along to the service with them. Afterwards, an opportunity of friendship and fellowship over cups of tea, coffee or even a bring and share lunch will help break down any perceived barriers and make for a special day where we show just how warm and welcoming we piskies are.

More information will be going out soon to all clergy and vestry secretaries in the diocese. Alternatively contact Catriona Beel on catriona08@btinternet.com or phone 01546 602082.

Day of Listening Prayer – Sunday May 31st 10am-4.30pm, Glencruitten House, Oban - An Ecumenical Quiet Day will be held at Glencruitten House led by Mrs Pat Bullamore, chair of The Fellowship of Meditation. This will be an opportunity for those with little or more experience of Listening Prayer. There will be a chance to walk in the beautiful woodlands and gardens of the house. Contributions will be gratefully received for lunch and for the leader's expenses. Tea and coffee will be provided. In order to book a place or to make any inquiries, telephone Evelyn Isaac on 01631 569453.

Zanzibar

For those of you with a particular connection with the Diocese of Zanzibar or who have an interest in its life please check out the excellent website www.zanzibarfriends.org

Children and Church

Children in the Church Community Group is part of Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS). It is inviting you to join the conversation about what is happening for children in our churches; how we use their gifts and then asking the question – do children feel part of the Christian community? For those who have a concern for children in our Diocese there is a regional consultation on the subject on June 20th starting at 10am at The Episcopal Cathedral Halls, Kenneth Street, Inverness. Contact – tommoyes@acts-scotland.org or 01259 222363.

Flu Epidemic

The World Health Organisation is closely monitoring the occurrence of "Swine Flu" globally to watch whether it becomes a pandemic and more importantly the virus mutates to one of a more serious nature. Recently I sent to all the congregations some guidelines that are in place if a pandemic is declared. Please ensure that you keep in touch with the various links and broadcast news items on this issue. In particular see website www.nhs24.com or call 0800 151 3513.

"Argyll & The Isles" – the Diocesan magazine

The Reverend Ken Skipper, the priest with charge on Islay has kindly agreed to take over the editorship as from this Summer. The deadline for the Summer edition is Friday 26th June. Please send your contributions and photographs in good time to: Rev'd Ken Skipper, 18 Elder Crescent, Bowmore, Isle of Islay, PA43 7HU. Email: kgsbow@tiscali.co.uk

**The Cathedral of The Isles, Cumbrae -
Retreat, Music and Conference
Programme 2009**

15th to 19th June – Art for All (Catherine
Drain)

10th to 13th July – Guitar Master Class.
Residential participation fully booked, but
to register an interest for non-residential
participation or possible cancellations
contact Matthew McAllister
info@cgetreat.com

18th July – Gala and Open Day at College
and Cathedral

24th to 26th July – Celebrating the
Bosendorfer (keyboard weekend led by
Alastair Chisholm)

For further details telephone 01475 530353
or see www.island-retreats.org

**Palestinian Christians and the
challenges of today, 22nd July - 2nd of
August.**

The Sabeel Young Adults Conference
2009 aims to bring together young
Palestinians and young Internationals to
learn together and be equipped to promote
justice and peace for all in the Holy Land.
If you know of anyone between the ages of
18 and 30 who you feel you would like to
nominate to attend please get in touch with
the office through this website
www.friendsofsabeel.org or get in touch
with Jennifer Oldershaw 01453 544655
Bursaries of up to £250 are available.

**Scottish Episcopal Church Youth Weeks
2009 GLEN '09 at Glenalmond College,
Perthshire. Week 1 (Sunday 2nd -
Saturday 8th August). Week 2 (Sunday
9th -Saturday 15th August).**

These weeks are important and successful
resources for young people and are open to
anyone in secondary education up to 18
years old. For more details contact The
Right Reverend Mark Strange of the
Provincial Youth Network (PYN) on
revmarkstrange@btinternet.com

Download the application form from
www.scotland.anglican.org

**Protection of Children and Vulnerable
Adults**

Leo Lanahan the Provincial Officer is now
producing a newsletter with information
about training and frequently asked
questions (FAQ). The nearest training
event for this Diocese will be on
September 12th in Inverness. For more
information email:
protection@scotland.anglican.org

THE BISHOP'S June Diary

Saturday 6th – Preach at the RSCM
Festival: St Columba's, Oban 4pm.

Sunday 7th – Diocesan St Columba
Festival for "Homecoming" 3pm St John's
Cathedral, Oban.

Thursday 11th to Saturday 13th General
Synod, Edinburgh

Sat 13th Cambridge University 800th
Anniversary, (King's College) 7pm

Sunday 14th Preach at Aldeburgh Music
Festival Eucharist

Tuesday 16th to Friday 19th - Friends
Week, Bishop's House, Iona

Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st – Skye,
Raasay and Sleat

Tuesday 23rd and Wednesday 24th –
Dalriada Region consultation

(Lochgilphead)

Sunday 28th – Ordination of Joyce Watson
to the Diaconate

Tuesday 30th – Diocesan Finance
Committee 10.30am.

The July Newsletter – material to be
received by Tuesday 23rd June 2009

Reflection

For the Festival of the Holy Spirit.

"When obscure mysteries are presented to your timid nature by your faith, take courage and say; "How have these things emerged?" Don't ask in an aggressive way, but with the love of a disciple. Let your question become your prayer, your love, your piety, your humble desire for God; not seeking to plumb the depths of God's majesty, but looking for your salvation in the healing activity of the One who comes to save us. If, when he comes to your soul, he finds you humble and still and receptive to the words of God, he will rest upon you. So for those who wish to learn from him or know him, it is only in the Holy Spirit that the understanding of the faith, and the perception of the pure and unadorned truth can be sought. The Holy Spirit is the love which draws us to God, the sweetening presence, our very approach to God in prayer, the love we experience in loving, devotion and piety. He reveals to the faithful the justice of God which issues from faith and ends in faith."

From William of St Thierry: "The Mirror of Faith"

In the Love of God, +Martin, Oban

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