



Columcille

The Bishop of Argyll
And The Isles' Newsletter. No 44

September 2009

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Dear Friends,

This is my last 'Bishop's Newsletter' to you. It is difficult to articulate my own feelings about the Diocese at this point, some of which are of gift from God and some of challenge. There are, however, three images which will remain with me, which perhaps are emblematic of my overall experience. One is of standing by the little church of Christchurch on Ensay, looking across the Sound of Harris and sweeping round to Leverburgh, there is not only the breathtaking raw beauty of the scene, but a sense of landscape and seascape that still lies beyond human control. Here is a necessary reminder of the utter dependence we have on Creation that continues to 'groan until now' as St Paul's puts it. That groan, remember, is not a negative complaint! It is deep in the gut: wonder and expectation. The second image is of the remoter congregations of our Diocese, where a little band of struggling Christians, some of whom might be Episcopalian and some not, find ways to pray and worship and as a consequence look out for each other. Their faithfulness, I suspect will remain 'unsung', but nevertheless the reality of their love will resonate in the depths of God. The third image is of so many of you who have lay leadership of our congregations.

Bob Eaves, was a Lay Reader of the little congregation of St Moluag's, Tong on Lewis. Sadly he died recently after living with illness for several years, with

characteristic gentleness and concern for those close to him. Bob touched me personally not only through his unassuming humility but through his 'untrumpeted' inner conviction. For me, his humanity and leadership are signals of the astonishing quality of lay people in this Diocese. Please pray for the soul of Bob and also pray for his family, particularly his wife Margaret.

Then there is that other 'Bob' – Bob Collyer – who also, as a layman, shared with his wife Stella in the nurturing and care of the little congregation at All Saints' Invereray. This Bob was a passionate man, but like his name-sake, struggled to live with an illness for some time without complaint or broadcast. We pray for his soul also, for his son Gavin and for his wife Stella.

Thank you to all of you who are Lay Leaders, Lay Readers and Lay Chaplains. To the clergy both stipendiary and non-stipendiary, thank you for your commitment, love and straight hard work for your congregations. This Diocese is not an easy one in which to be a priest or indeed a Lay Leader because finding significant support and advice can be difficult given the distance and resources. For your tolerance, understanding and challenges to me, thank you.

So Elspeth and I thank all of you in the Diocese for your generosity, hospitality, challenge, support and indeed for your useful criticism and guidance.

Please, if you can, keep in your minds and hearts, the Diocesan Prayer and use it regularly in your liturgy. My parting request!

**Christ of the Word, you come to us
In the compassion and love of God.
You come to us in the ancient and ever
present beauty
Of this land and its people.
You breathe on us the strength and
confidence of the Spirit.
You renew us in the vision of holiness of
the island Saints.
In the sacrament of Your Presence
We open ourselves to live your life
amongst others
With generosity and courage.
Come to us Christ of the Word. Amen**

The Bishop's Communications.

As from September 18th, my own email address will not be available for use (alexandermartin.shaw@virgin.net). The following week, I will be focusing on moving. Obviously I can no longer address emails relating to the Diocese or the Province from that point. The bishop@argyll.anglican.org address will be monitored by the Diocesan Office. If you have enquiries relating to the Diocese or Province, normally attended to by me, please get in touch with the Diocesan Office office@argyll.anglican.org 01631 570870. or the Dean, the Very Reverend Norman MacCallum. ProvostOban@argyll.anglican.org 01631 562323.

The Diocesan Office will be sending out information that continues to arrive for your use, in a Newsletter.

The Episcopal Election.

I would draw your attention to the Electoral Process for a new Bishop of this Diocese which begins after I leave. However, all members of the Diocese might do some thinking of who might be nominated for the Preparatory Committee to consider. Nominees can be ordained priests from any part of the Anglican Communion. Anyone in the Diocese can nominate! There will be an invitation to all charges in the autumn.

The Lent Appeal 2009

You will be glad to know that, as a result of the Lent Appeal for Zimbabwe which was an initiative of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, considerable resources have been raised for various projects in Zimbabwe. If you would care to know the details of the outcome, please get in touch with the Church Times office in London www.churchtimes.co.uk.

Farewell Eucharist. Saturday 5th September 2.00pm.

As you know by now, Elspeth and I are leaving the Diocese at the end of September.

Details of the Farewell Eucharist have been sent out to each charge.

Peace – Services and Events.

September 20th. International Day of Prayer for Peace. [World Council of Churches]

September 21st. United Nations International Peace Day. [UN Year of Reconciliation 2009]

If you are interested in holding an event related to the above, or wish to include material for your sermons, addresses or liturgy, please call 0131 446 9545. You will then receive some useful material.

Godly Play. Introductory Workshop. Saturday 26th September.

9.30am to 12.30pm. Kilmore and Oban Church Centre, Glencruitten Road, Oban.

Godly Play is an exciting resource whereby through simple miniatures and through natural interaction, Biblical and Gospel narratives can come alive in an enjoyable [Playful] way. Both adults and children find this freeing and deepening of their faith.

The Introductory Workshop costs £5 including coffee on arrival.

Please contact Margaret Grant by September 18th, if you would like a place. Mgpresb-godlyplay@yahoo.com 0131 220 6509

DIOCESAN RETREAT. November 2nd– 5th. The Cathedral and College of the Holy Spirit, Cumbrae.

The retreat is open to all in the Diocese (and beyond!) whether lay or ordained. Please note that this is one day shorter than previously advertised. Prices have been subsidised by the Diocese but further help is available (contact Diocesan Office). This year the Silent Retreat will be conducted by the Reverend David James, who will have a contemplative approach. The Chaplain for the Retreat will be the Reverend Ian Walter. Further details will follow. If you are interested, please book your place... 01475 530353 or e-mail: cathedral_cumbrae@btconnect.com

Dr Guthrie's Association.

The Association gives grants to support organisations devoted to the care and welfare of children and young people with a preference for supporting smaller charities. If you feel that in your congregation there might be a project in which you are involved that might find a small grant helpful please see the Scott-Moncrieff website: www.scott-moncrieff.com

Homelessness.

You may have seen on the television items about television stars who have lived 'rough' on London streets and elsewhere. What struck me was the sheer desolate looks on their faces as they realised how being ignored, rejected and frightened is hugely damaging not only to the homelessness but to our culture. *Scottish Church Action are staging a conference on Homelessness on Thursday 24th and Friday 25th September at Westerwood Hotel, Cumbernauld.* One of the speakers will be **Hardeep Singh Kohli**, the comedian, who was one of those who tried living on the streets. For more information and booking please email info@churches-housing.org or phone 0131 477 4500. Please remember that there are homeless people who roam around Argyll and The Islands, who can often be more ignored than those in cities!

Transforming Ministry - making a difference as women.

A day with Christina Rees. We invite women within the Scottish Episcopal Church to participate in this interactive day where we will be exploring and sharing our thoughts and experiences.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 7th - 10:30 – 4:30 Venue: General Synod Office

Booking: There is no charge for the day but booking is essential as numbers are limited and lunch will be provided. Please contact Marion Chatterley

marion.chatterley@blueyonder.co.uk (07771 982163) or Elaine Cameron elaine.ging@gmail.com (01821 650482) to reserve a place.

Christina Rees is a writer, broadcaster and speaker. She is a member of the General

Synod of the Church of England and sits on the Archbishops' Council. She speaks and preaches widely, both within the UK and overseas.

Christina's published books include: 'Voices of this calling; experiences of the first generation of women priests' and 'The Divine Embrace: Discovering the reality of God's love'.

Care for the Family.

This organisation has developed as a result of the experience of families who have had sudden bereavement or other traumas which have put huge pressure on family life. Since then CFTF has developed its resources to help families in less difficult times. I would urge you to dedicate one Sunday to a special collection for CFTF and to be creative about your intercessions in that direction. www.cffdonate.org or call 029 2081 0800.

Volunteering in your Charge.

Volunteering is now a prime resource for caring in communities throughout the UK. 'Volunteering in Parishes' is an organisation that helps promote volunteering among members of Christian churches. On 31st October, they are staging 'Make a Difference Sunday' along with Community Service Volunteers. If you would like to know more please contact: www.volunteeringinparishes.org.uk

Energy Assistance Package.

Helping vulnerable people prepare for a warmer winter is a process that can take several months. I encourage you to be aware of this package and make its resources known as widely as possible. [Energy efficiency; Benefit and tax credit checks; low cost energy tariffs; Insulation; Improved heating systems.] Anyone wishing to access the EAP should call their local Energy Saving Scotland advice centre on 0800 512012. If you wish to receive email updates, please email: energyassistancepackage@ess.org.uk

HARVEST. 1. Self Help Africa. Celebrate harvest with a charity that is helping families

in rural Africa cope with climate change.
harvest@selfhelpafrica.net

2. Celebrate the Bounty of Trees. Trees as food and as key elements in what is happening to the climate, particularly in Africa. Tree Aid is offering packs, posters and activities for this Harvest-tide, for those interested. lynne.knight@treeaid.org.uk – 0117 909 6363.

Diocesan Lay Readers, Chaplains and Leaders Conference. 7th – 9th May 2010.

Scottish Police College, Tullieallan.

All those involved in Lay Leadership in the SEC are invited to participate in this conference. Among the keynote speakers will be the Primus, +David Chillingworth and Dr Christina Baxter. For more information, email Brian Woodburn: woodburn@homecall.co.uk – 01556 610519.

THE BISHOP'S August Diary

Sunday 30th August. Oban Music Society recital with Madeleine Shaw and Eamonn Mulhall. St John's Cathedral, Oban.

Monday 31st August. Cathedral Chapter Meeting. Oban

Tuesday 1st - 3rd September. Edinburgh.

Saturday 5th September. Farewell Eucharist. 2.00pm. St John's Cathedral, Oban.

Sunday 6th September. The West Highland Region.

Monday 7th to Monday 14th September. The Outer Hebrides.

Tuesday 15th September. The Installation of the Reverend David James as Chaplain of Cumbrae. 6.30pm The Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Cumbrae.

Sunday 20th September. Holy Trinity, Dunoon and St Paul's, Rothesay.

A.M.D.G

<p>The October Newsletter (Please remember to send information to the Diocesan Office) – material to be received by Monday 21st September 2009</p>
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"Contemplation has nothing whatever to do with states of feeling, what we experience or don't experience at prayer. It is not an achievement. It has nothing whatever to do with me except that I receive it; it is absolutely God's work, his taking possession of me. The Eucharist is the supreme expression of prayer because it holds, for me, at this moment, the mystery of Jesus himself, in his surrender to his Father, and the Father's response to that surrender. Here we see that it is God who does everything. I can only be there, saying my 'fiat', and surrendering with Jesus."

Ruth Burrows.

**+Martin. Bishop of Argyll and The Isles
August 26th 2009. AMDG**

**Reflection for September.
The Eucharist and Contemplation.**

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