

The Presbytery of Lochaber

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Newsletter from Lochaber Presbytery - Winter 06/07



Christmas Dinner

Presbytery's Annual Christmas Dinner and reception for Readers was held in Caol Hall on 5th December. Many thanks to the Kilmallie ladies for their hospitality.

Two Lochs Project

This project has been awarded £42,000 over three years from the Parish Development Fund. It will fund a youth worker and youth activities for the Onich, Kinlochleven, Ballachulish and Duror areas.

Congratulations to those who worked so hard to receive this award. Now the real work begins!

Glencoe Hospital

The Rev Alison Burnside, who is the chaplain to Glencoe Hospital, reported at the last Presbytery meeting on the impending closure of the hospital. Presbytery responded by passing a motion that it affirmed its support for Mrs Burnside over this transitional period for the hospital.

Acharacle Manse

Approval has been given to a request to let Acharacle Manse on a short term lease. A request to lease the manse has been received from a new doctor moving into the area.

MacIntosh Church

Approval has also been given to a request from the MacIntosh Congregation to sell the church building. It is expected to be placed on to the market soon. The congregation is currently holding discussions with Duncansburgh Church with a view to a Union of these two congregations.

Vacant Congregations

At the December meeting, Presbytery agreed to confirm its decision to permit a full call to **Nether Lochaber** linked with **Kinlochleven**. The Assembly Appraisal Committee had asked us to reconsider this decision. Having now reconsidered it, we are telling them that we are still happy with it! The decision to upgrade **Glencoe** and **Duror** to a full charge was also sent back, having been reconsidered, and now confirmed.

The Clerk reported that he has opened discussions with the Ministries Council to try to obtain the services of an Interim Minister for **Arisaig** and **Mallaig** as they are still without a minister

Ardgour, **Strontian** and **Morvern** are still in discussion with Presbytery concerning their way forward. An offer for a locumship from a minister in Canada from February to April has been received.

Thanks to **Eric Walker**, our new Prayer Co-ordinator, for the rest of this newsletter.

And finally.....

A young family were preparing to make a long journey to stay with relations over Christmas. The car was all packed; the milk and the newspaper delivery had been stopped. A neighbour would keep an eye on the house and feed the dog. All the gifts for parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles were somehow fitted into the boot of the car. Their suitcases and clothes were in place. They were finally ready to go. The husband started out of the driveway, when all of a sudden the wife gasped, "Stop, we've forgotten the baby". *Sometimes things can get so hectic at this special time of the year that it can be so easy to forget the baby...*

May God's richest blessing be with us all this Christmas and forever more.

Prayer Section from Eric D. Walker

Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. (God with us) NIV: Isaiah 7:14

Heavenly Father we thank you for the birth of your Son Jesus Christ,
And that we may share in the celebrations;
The familiar readings, the singing of carols,
Christmas trees and decorations,
A touch of festive snow perhaps
Lights and baubles and lots of tinsel
A time to be together with friends and family;
The feast on Christmas day, the sharing of a meal with others,
The smiling faces of the children, the laughter of those around us.
May the beauty of Jesus birth be established forever in our hearts.
Lord, we have so much to be thankful for at this time of year.

Yet, our world is not perfect and the way you would want it to be.
So, we pray for an end to all conflict,
To settle the hatred and the differences between nations and communities;
To stop the loss of innocent lives through war and neglect, famine and injustice;
That all disagreements and prejudices may be resolved once and for all time
Lord we pray for peace, so that all your people may live together
In the beauty of your world, that is your creation.

Lord bless all those whose lives have been torn apart by grief this past year
Those who are alone and who have no families or friends around them;
We pray for all those who are ill, for the weak and the infirm,
for those who feel that this time of year is a real struggle to make ends meet.
Hear the prayers of those who cry to you now and help them place their trust in
you.

Lord, we are so fortunate that your love for us abounds in Christ's glory
Make us your servants that we may serve others as Jesus served us.
Let each one of us just help one extra person this Christmas
A little gift, the sharing of a meal, a special visit,
to show that we do care about others.

Lord, we pray the real meaning of Christmas will not be lost in the excitement
Help us to remember why we are celebrating this time of year
May our worship of you be heard around the world;
Let our voices sing your praises,
and let our lives proclaim the joy and hope for the future that the birth of your son
Jesus Christ will bring love and peace to all this Christmas and forever.

Amen

1 John 4:7-14 - reminds us of God's love for us in giving His son to be born and to walk among us to suffer and die so that we may be saved.