

The Presbytery of Lochaber

Scottish Charity No: SC010199

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Newsletter from Lochaber Presbytery - Winter '08



Arisaig & Mallaig Unite

The congregations of Arisaig and the Small Isles and Mallaig St. Columbas with Knoydart are to form into one single congregation called North West Lochaber Parish Church from 1st March.

Presbytery is to hold a service to mark the union in Arisaig on Sunday 2nd March at 4.00 pm at which the Very Rev Dr Sandy MacDonald will preach.

Glencoe Aid to Tanzania

Bill Strachan recently returned to the orphanage in Arusha, Tanzania. All the 48 boxes of various items which were sent before Christmas arrived safely and were distributed to the kids and to some needy families. The centre needs to move premises and this should be done sometime this month, February.

Bill is organizing, with the aid of St Munda's and the other local churches and the community, a coffee morning & sale on Saturday 23rd February. This will be held in Ballachulish Village Hall. It is hoped to raise enough money to pay for one year's rent on new premises which Bill helped to negotiate for when he was there.

Everyone was very grateful for the gifts from Scotland and many people kept thanking Bill for them.

Church without Walls

Janet Anderson, the deacon in Arisaig and Mallaig, is trying to get at least three congregations to purchase a tent for use at the National Gathering in Ingliston in May.

The idea is that the tent is used for the weekend as a showcase for the work of these congregations, following which the tent is sent out as a shelter to a deprived area of the world.

Acharacle

At the latest Presbytery meeting Mrs Ella Gill, the Session Clerk, outlined the next stage of development in the refurbishment of the Acharacle Church. This tiny congregation increased its membership from 38 to 49 last year. Well done!

Presbyterial Council Report

Mrs Pat MacQuarrie gave a report from the Council to the last Presbytery meeting. She said that the Guild is still the biggest women's voluntary organisation in Scotland with over 30,000 members. Her report can be read in full as an appendix to the last meeting on the Presbytery web site.

New Regional Development Officer

Mr Steve Aisthrope has been appointed as the new Regional Development Officer. He is based in the North Kessock Office of the Mission and Discipleship Council. Steve will be serving as the 'first point of contact' for congregations in the Presbyteries of Caithness, Inverness, Lewis, Lochaber, Lochcarron-Skye, Ross, Sutherland, and Uist.

In the 1980's Steve served as Assistant Warden at the Badenoch Christian Centre in Speyside and more recently has worked with International Nepal Fellowship UK (INF/UK) in various capacities – in the immediate past as Executive Director. He brings to his new post a wealth of experience gained through his work both in Scotland and Nepal.

Steve can be contacted through the North Kessock Office (01463 731712)

New Presbytery Clerk

David Anderson, who has been Presbytery Clerk since 2001, informed the Business Committee in November that this would be his last Session as Clerk. To date no one has been identified as a replacement. Suggestions to David or Business Conv.

Prayer section by Eric D Walker

Heavenly Father,

We give you humble and cheerful thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness to us and to all people. We praise you for creating and sustaining us and for all the blessings of this life; but above all for your amazing love in redeeming the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, and for giving us grace and the hope of glory.

We thank you for the brightness that shines through the darkness, for the steadiness with which the seasons advance and the days proceed, we thank you for the memories of the days that are gone, for the great faith we have in you to bring a brighter tomorrow, as we claim your faith in us as our own. Gracious and loving God, who knows all our thoughts before we think them, and who knows all our words before we speak them. We come before you now in this time of quiet reflection to pray for the things that affect us, and to pray for those around us.

We pray for all your people through out the world, those of every race and every nation, for the young and not so young, for the rich and the poor. We ask that you be with all those who are in need of your gentle loving care at this time, particularly the ill and the weak, those whose hearts are heavy from wrong doing, and those whose belief in you is being tested. We pray for those who have lost their way and lost their faith in the turmoil of their lives. Bring them back into the love and mercy that only you can provide, Lord, bring them closer to you now and be with them as you touch their darkened lives.

Grant Lord that we have no other gods before you: not money or lands, position or distinction. Remind us of how much still needs to be done in your name, let us bring those whom we know to into the fellowship of prayer that all may worship you and place their trust in you. Fill us with such gratitude to you for the gifts you have provided for us that we need not desire your gifts to others. Help us live our lives to your Glory, help us be your constant servants, that through us, others may see your good works.

We are so in need of your love and guidance Lord and we sometimes find it difficult to forgive those who hurt us. Help us find it in our hearts to put aside these hurts and hold out a hand of friendship to all in need. Help us be more like Jesus as he forgave those who crucified Him.

Heavenly Father we ask these things in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen