

LAGGAN PARISH CHURCH NEWSLETTER



SUMMER 2018

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From the minister's desk...



As many of you will be aware, there are changes afoot at this end of the presbytery. (At the other end too, but let's concentrate on here!) There is a growing shortage of ministers in the Church of Scotland (and other denominations as well, but let's concentrate on here!).

In addition, many congregations in the church are at best holding steady, numerically. Because of this, the way that a minister's work is shared out is having to change.

The plan for how we will arrange ministry in this area, which the presbytery agreed to, asks the Laggan and St. Brides congregations to move from being a linkage to a union, and then to prepare to be linked with Kingussie church, with one minister and a part time person overseeing the churches. In the normal scheme of things, this would all happen over a period of time, maybe a year or two to prepare for union, to start with. Linking with Kingussie would only happen when one of the two current ministers moved on.

However, it now looks very likely that the Rev. Alison Burnside in Kingussie will be moving on this summer; and so, although there are still the requisite consultations (meetings!) and agreements to put in place, the time scheme for all of this is rather more accelerated than we might have expected. Changes are coming quite soon!

Now, change is not a bad word, or at least I don't think so. Change means a chance to do things differently – better, even. But I know that the idea of change, especially in the church, alarms people. There is enough that changes in the rest of life, or so it can seem, and the church is the one place where there should be eternal verities. And so it is and so there are. The letter to the Hebrews assures us the “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8) That is *the* eternal verity. But how we do church is not so set in stone, and indeed has changed a lot over even the last century, never mind since the days of the first Christians.

Some of the coming changes are things with which we are already becoming familiar. For instance, if the minister has three

churches to cover, she can only realistically do two of them on any given Sunday morning, so that the churches will have to take turns at having someone else – maybe people from the congregations - lead the service. That is not strange; it has been happening already, if not so frequently. (In fact, I like this idea and would want to grow it even if there was no necessity, because already I see people in the congregation finding that they have gifts to share which they did not know they possessed. And seeing others serving in this way reminds us that we all have something to contribute.)

What is *not* planned is for any of the three churches to close or to have less frequent services; we just have to be a bit more creative in what we do and how we do it. Moreover, I would hope that all of us will try to remember that being a Christian and part of the church is about being a blessing every day, not just about the Sunday service.

The Kirk Sessions of our churches have had a little more warning that these changes are coming, and in discussion we can see ways that, working together, we can help each other better serve as disciples of Christ. My hope is that you will bring these matters to your prayers and find God's inspiration and peace in it all.

COMMUNION

The sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated at our morning service, 10.00 a.m., on Sunday 3rd June. All followers of Christ are welcome to join us around the Lord's Table.

On Communion Sunday it is our custom to take a retiring collection for a charity. On this occasion, we will give to Christian Aid.



PICNIC!

Plan now to be hungry and eager for the annual Laggan Church and Community picnic, to be held on Ardverikie beach on Sunday 12th August from noon.



NEPAL

The Church of Scotland collected £310,000 for their Build a House initiative following the earthquake in Nepal, where our Missio Partner Joel Hafvenstein and his wife Fiona continue to work, nearly three years ago. The initial target was just £25,000. Recently an eighteen person delegation visited Nepal to see some of the work undertaken. Laggan and St Bride's contributed £500 to this initiative, the cost of one house. In the meantime, however, it was found that there were problems using the money to build houses, as doing so would have meant that the people using church money would not be eligible for Government grants, and so, after consultation, the money is being used to re-build schools and so set communities on a forward-looking path again.

Church Office Bearers

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