



NEWSLETTER

Church of Scotland
Kingussie Linked with
Laggan and Newtonmore

www.stbrides-newtonmore.org.uk www.kingussie-parishchurch.org.uk

MAY 2020

FROM THE MINISTER'S DESK

It has become a commonplace to say that we are living in unprecedented times. But it is still true. In fact, all times are unprecedented, it is just that some are more obviously so than others-like this time of coping in the face of an invisible virus. Some of what is asked of us at these times is not too hard, though that will vary from person to person, but all of us are affected in one way or another. And of course it is a great sorrow that we can no longer meet together as a church to worship God.

Of course that does not mean that we cease to worship. Our own services are on the church websites, the Kingussie and Newtonmore Events Facebook pages and can also be accessed on the phone (see the details in this newsletter). And I know that some of you are also taking the time and enjoying the refreshment of tuning in to services on the television or radio, or of surfing the net to find other online church services of which they can be a part. As these weeks of closed church buildings go by, with no idea of how long this will last, maybe we will learn things that will have an impact of how we take church out into the community in the long term. I would like to record my gratitude to Ian Hall who puts the various recorded segments into a seamless whole and to Alison Armstrong, Eppy Mackay and Helen Peebles who make sure the finished service is available.

"God is our refuge and our strength" says the Psalmist (Psalm 46) and we find this day by day as we wake not knowing what the day will ask of us. God carries us through the troughs of depression and boredom, and through the desire to be frenetically active: God carries us through the times when the news is not good and we are tempted to despair; God carries us through grief and loss – and all of us have had our losses and griefs in these times.

It has been heartening to see how our local communities have stepped up to care for the most vulnerable in these days. One Kingussie and CAN Newtonmore (Corona Action Newtonmore) have both recruited more volunteers than people who have needed help, which is a far better imbalance than the other way around. There is no one who needs to worry about how they can isolate and still get shopping or prescriptions or animal care or simply a daily phone call. The contact details for the whole area are on this Newsletter.

One thing that many of us have just now is time. And it is no bad thing that we have to stop the frantic rush of our days and listen to the pattern of our lives. It is no bad thing that we have time to take our concerns to God in prayer. As we pray, let us pray not only for ourselves and our families, but for our neighbours, remembering difficult this time can be for those who live alone and worry. And although we may not meet in person just now, we can take our time to phone each other or even to write letters that will help and encourage.

Your minister, **Catherine Buchan**

PRESBYTERIES NEWS: Abernethy Presbytery has not recently met due to the current meeting restrictions, but the Presbytery Business Committee did manage successfully to meet on Zoom. At the virtual meeting it was confirmed that Rev Gordon Strang of Inverallan Church in Grantown on Spey would be the new moderator in succession to Mary Stewart. Gordon is due to be installed at the end of June, but his formal installation could be unusual if meeting restrictions are still in place.

On the wider presbytery front, the Commission of Assembly which will meet in lieu of a General Assembly, will confirm the creation of three new, larger presbyteries in line with the decision at the General Assembly in May last year that the number of presbyteries should be reduced from 45 to around 12 as part of a three-year Radical Action Plan.

The proposed new presbyteries are:

Presbytery of Fife to include the existing Dunfermline, Kirkcaldy and St Andrew's presbyteries.

Presbytery of Aberdeen and Shetland being a merger of these presbyteries.

Presbytery of Clyde merging Dumbarton and Greenock and Paisley.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY: The annual meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland which was due to be held in May has been cancelled for the first time since 1689! A lowkey Commission of Assembly (including your minister) has instead been planned. The Rev Dr Martin Fair from Arbroath will be installed as the new Moderator and at the same time the Commission will also agree to streamline the governance of councils such as CrossReach and various committees and trusts. In the current circumstances, Dr Fair will continue as minister of St Andrew's Parish Church in Arbroath and will be available for Moderatorial duties as required.

HELP IN THE LOCKDOWN: Do stay at home and stay safe! Badenoch is full of people who want to help you with shopping, prescriptions, pets and chats. Here are the numbers you need

One Kingussie for Kingussie and Kincaid 01540 372101
CAN Newtonmore for Laggan and Newtonmore 01540 372102
Dalwhinnie 01540 372103

CHURCH SERVICES IN THE LOCKDOWN: Go to either of the church websites shown on this Newsletter or the Kingussie Parish Church Facebook page to find the church service and daily devotions. You can even listen to services by phone by dialling the full number 01540 210322.

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KINGUSSIE NEWS: In the main the Kingussie craft team have settled into a routine, albeit not a routine they could ever have imagined. As well as cleaning, gardening, shopping and exercising they are still finding time to sew, crochet, and knit. They have also been diligent at keeping in touch and sharing anecdotal stories over the weeks.

The KPC Facebook Page provides a Daily Devotion, a reading and message provided by Rev Catherine, Over the weeks, it has had an increasing number of followers and has been much appreciated during this difficult time. The Sunday Morning Service, with readings, hymns and both the written and spoken word, has also ensured we can share in a regular worship service with our minister. Our church has no walls. Work continues on the new KPC web page, though at a slower pace due to 'social distancing'... no meetings allowed!

CHRISTIAN ENGINEERS IN DEVELOPMENT: Angus Armstrong has previously spoken in church about his involvement in this charity and has now provided this update.....Like so much else for everyone, our work overseas has been impacted by the Covid19 issue. Overseas visits have come to a halt and where we have active projects, they have been suspended as people in Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Bangladesh and elsewhere try and protect themselves in challenging environments.

We publish a Newsletter four times a year and the April issue has just come out. As I cannot place copies in Church for collection, here is the link where you can catch up.....

<https://ced.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CED-April-2020-newsletter.pdf>. The website address is <https://ced.org.uk>.

NEWTONMORE OUTREACH: Sadly, there are no soup and pudding lunches meantime. There will be no church presence at the Newtonmore Games which are cancelled, and no immediate plans for the Church and community picnic at Loch Laggan. However, keep an eye on the website and of course our new notice boards outside Laggan and Newtonmore churches.

Many of us are volunteering to help the community and keeping in touch with our congregations by phone. We hope and pray that we will be able to see one another soon.

POSTAGE STAMPS: Stamps are not just for Christmas! Please save your stamps until we can collect them again. This year the stamp project proceeds will benefit The Women's Development Centre in Kandy, Sri Lanka which runs a project to support women and girls who have been victims of rape and sexual violence. The WDC gives them somewhere to stay and supports them in caring for their children, helps them to return to education if they wish and trains them in skills

they can use to make a living when they leave. It is impossible not to be moved by what they do.

PRAYER: THY KINGDOM COME is an ecumenical prayer movement, started by the Church of England in 2016 and it now attracts Christians from around the world. It is being promoted by the Church of Scotland from 21st to 31st May. Christians are encouraged to pray for more people to come to faith and the hope is that those who take part will deepen their own relationship with Jesus, pray for five friends or family to come to faith and become more effective in their witness. More information including prayer resources can be found at www.thykingdomcome.global.

CHURCH FINANCE: As you can appreciate, this is a very difficult time for church finance as we are not meeting Sunday by Sunday to collect weekly offerings. Unfortunately, we are only able to make minor savings to our expenditure in respect of our use of our churches, but we are still paying Ministries and Mission contributions, insurance and expenses relating to our minister such as council tax, telephone and travelling expenses. Paying these out without matching income is currently eating into our resources. Fortunately, some of our income is guaranteed through standing orders and certainly in Laggan and Newtonmore, there have been some conversions from envelopes during the current pandemic, and if you would like to convert, there is a standing order form available on each of the church websites. Based on 2019, Laggan and Newtonmore had income from envelopes and open plate of just under £800 per month and Kingussie a little bit less. However, much of this income was also eligible for Gift Aid under the provisions for small donations so without this benefit there be a further loss to our income.

The purpose of freewill offering envelopes is to enable participants to put away their money for the church "weekly" (not weakly!) and hopefully we can look forward to a bumper harvest when our congregations are able to meet again!

The Church of Scotland is worried that all congregations will not be able to continue paying their Ministries and Mission contributions of which 86% is required to pay ministers so it is important that we continue to pay. The Church of Scotland also needs support at this time for CrossReach which has been badly stretched in many ways by coronavirus. They have made a special appeal and cheques may be sent to the Covid19 Emergency Appeal, Charis House, 47 Milton Road East, Edinburgh EH15 2SR or if you wish to contribute by card you should phone 0131 434 4374.

We all pray for an end to the current situation so that life can return to whatever a new normal is going to be and it will be nice to be able to return to worship God in our churches.

CHURCH OFFICE BEARERS

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