

Churches along the Spey area: invitation to a Christian Aid week challenge

I'm writing with a plea for help/advertising/involvement for an event a group of us have cooked up for Christian Aid Week (10th-16th May).

This year Christian Aid Week's focus is on how Climate Chaos is affecting access to water for communities around the world, in particular focus are communities in Kenya. You can see the resources for this year at <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

What am I talking about?

The idea is this: that these communities across the world are struggling to access Water *for* life; and yet those of us who live in the vicinity of the Spey enjoy the water on our doorstep. For many communities on the Spey, the association with whisky -or *usquabae*, water *of* life- is vital for employment, income, tourism, and leisure. On top of that, I can't think of any single source of water in the world which is exported as widely as water from the Spey is in the form of whisky. Maybe through Christian Aid Week we can do a little more to ensure access to Water *for* Life across the globe, as well as our export of 'water of life'?

The invitation is this: Churches, Congregations, and Christian Aid supporters along the length of the Spey, from source to sea are invited to take part in a massive sponsored crowd effort to walk/run/cycle/otherwise traverse some portion of the Speyside way in Christian Aid week. The idea is that the whole route will have been travelled by at least someone walking it for Christian Aid that week. Those taking part will also be invited to use their walk as a time of prayer and reflection about climate change and access to water through the Christian Aid Week resource: [The River of Prayer](#)

On top of the group effort, I'm going to travel the whole 172km length -source to sea- of the Spey in a single day: running from Loch Spey to Garva Bridge; cycling from Garva bridge to Fochabers; paddling from Fochabers to Spey Bay. It's a Spey-in-a-Day challenge! Meanwhile, the Rev Jenny Adams of Duffus, Spynie and Hopeman is taking a different approach and will walk and run 172km throughout the month of May ("the Spey in May"). There may be other creative connections to the river and the challenge of water for life, particularly for those further from the Spey – so if you have other ideas for taking part, please be in touch!

How will it work?

Logistics: I've split the length of the Spey up into 'chunks' that have parking at each end. These vary in distance from 1.7miles to 7.2miles (one-way) with people being welcome to either split the chunks to turn back halfway, or to do multiple chunks – whatever they feel is appropriate for them. At the moment the chunks are in 'draft' form – but to give you an indication, I've attached a table in this email. All those taking part will do so at their own risk and should prepare accordingly. And all participants must adhere to the appropriate Covid restrictions in place at time. I'm asking that anyone taking part should let me know (or perhaps a local Christian Aid co-ordinator) know, and I can keep a central record of who all is doing what so that we can all see how we are contributing to the challenge!

Fundraising: At Christian Aid's suggestion, the fundraising will be done online through JustGiving. We've set up the challenge as a JustGiving event which means individuals can join our 'team' and can set up their own wee sponsorship pages under the umbrella of the big event, or they can simply

share the big event.

Our team page is at: <https://www.justgiving.com/team/Spey-Challenge>

Will you help?

Please do! Whether spreading the word in the next few weeks, signing up for a 'chunk' of the way yourself, or helping find sponsors and raise funds – I'd be delighted to see what we, who live in and around the Spey, can achieve for communities in real need for the basics of life this Christian Aid week!

Right now, it'd be really helpful for me to have replies indicating whether you'd be interested, and to pass me details of who I can be in touch with for further information: my details in email signature.

Thank you for taking the time to read this – please pass it on to anyone whom you think it might interest!

With every blessing to you and yours,
Andrew

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