

CHURCH NOTICES – Winter 2022

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|----------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Baptism | Lochlan Lyle Bunyan | | 24 th December |
| Deaths | Mandy Basford | Brodick | 10 th October |
| | Rosemary Voice | Brodick | 13 th October |
| | Ian McLellan | Montrose House | 16 th October |
| | Alexander Roberts | Glensherraig | 24 th October |
| | Grace Dickson | late of Brodick | 25 th October |
| | Isa Wilson | Brodick | 10 th November |
| | Campbell Russell | Brodick | 20 th November |
| | Ian Sillars | Brodick | 9 th December |
| | Mary MacKinlay | Brodick | 11 th January |
| | Harry Davidson | Brodick | 20 th January |

DATES for your DIARY

13th Feb **Sacrament of Holy Communion** at 10.30am
Names will be taken at door- cards will not be given out on this occasion.

St Bride's Ladies are hoping to meet again soon.

Dates to be announced in church as and when arranged.

23rd Feb **World Vision Coffee mornings** will restart last Wednesday in month.

23rd Feb **Service of Prayers for Health and Healing** will be held in Transept at 12noon.

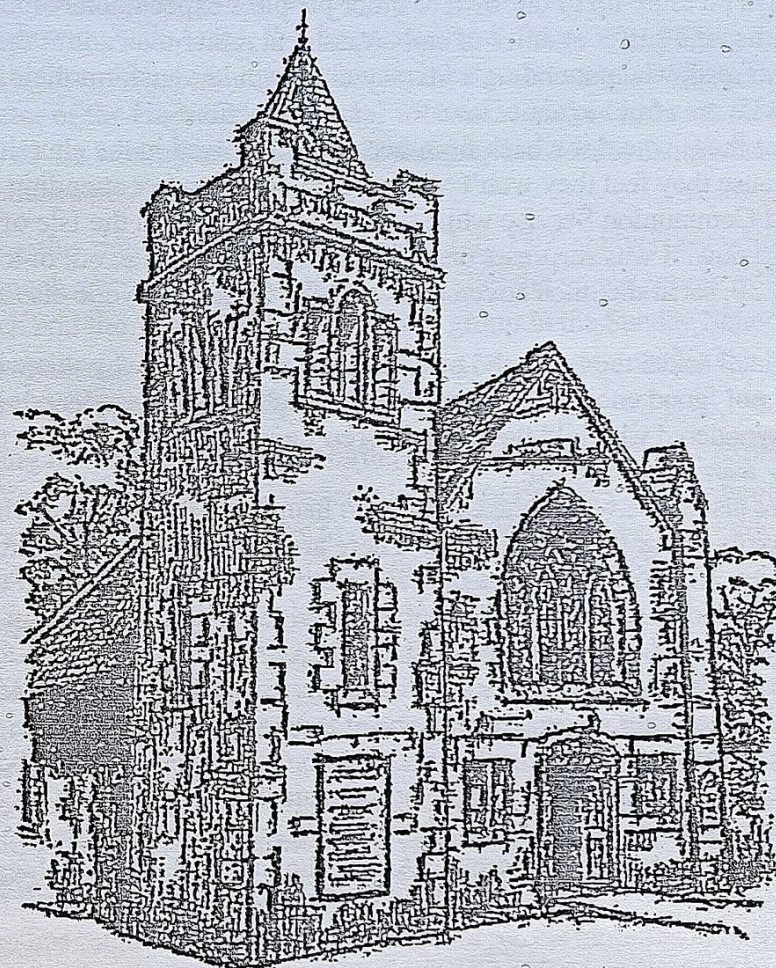
EASTER

Maundy Thursday- Communion 14th April 7pm at Shiskine Church

Good Friday- Walk of Witness 15th April 2pm at Holy Cross Church
3pm St Bride's Church

St Bride's Church Brodick

February Newsletter



Winter 2022

Happy New Year to you all! (even if it's a bit late!)

In my last charge, I was phoning an elderly lady in the parish to arrange to go and visit her. 'You can come any time except Wednesday morning', she said. 'I always have to get up early that day to tidy round before the carer comes.'

It's a bit like cutting your toenails before going to the chiropodist.

Why do we have this compulsion to put our house in order before accepting help?

It is probably something to do with the pride that will not let us admit that we do not always measure up to our own or other people's expectations of us.

Like adults who suffer agonies of embarrassment rather than admit they have never learned to read, when attending a literacy class would transform their lives. Or people who are afraid to show love for fear of rejection.

There are those who draw back from becoming involved in the church and church-life, because they feel they won't 'measure up'. I remember attending a Church of Scotland Communion Service while we were on holiday on the Isle of Skye many years ago now. I was surprised that only a handful of people, out of a congregation of about 30, sat at the linen covered pews at the front. Everyone else sat at the back.

When I later asked the lady who owned our rented cottage why this was so, she said 'We are not 'good enough' to sit at the Lord's table.' This saddened me and I have always wondered who told them they weren't good enough, and who told the *few* that they *were* good enough!

There are also those within the church who hang back from volunteering, or getting really involved, for the same reason. There are many who are afraid to call themselves 'Christians' because they fear their lives can never match the pattern set by Jesus himself. And so we wait until we feel ready for commitment - and sometimes it can be a very long wait indeed,,, or even too late.

We all must be ready to venture into the unknown, to become involved in changing society for the better, to go where the need is greatest and to 'rekindle the flames of love where the fire has gone cold'. Faced with the changes that are about to come in our churches this would be a good place to start. Winning people for Christ begins with reaching out to wherever people hang out. I am sure there are people of goodwill in the communities around Arran who may feel drawn to help the mission of the church.

In the life of the church, and in the life of faith, *all* are welcome, and especially *beginners*! God does not expect us to move mountains by ourselves, but he does offer us the use of his fork-lift truck!

And so, before we begin to re-arrange the dust, maybe we should just open the door and let God in - to turn our lives around.

Tom Macintyre, Minister

Rainbows over Arran!

On my first visit to Arran as your temporary minister, rainbows appeared in the skies almost throughout the entire day, and a complete bow spread over the harbour at Brodick - glimpses of God's promise of long ago.

Now, a wee bit about myself and what I've been up to as a minister. I have come to help, advise and support the churches in the north of Arran. My wife Marian came with me on my first visit and we renewed our acquaintance with Arran, this beautiful island that is your home. We had been before, during the time when we lived in Stevenston where I was minister of the High Kirk (1976-1988). Our 3 children grew up there and enjoyed the country and coastal life and they have many happy memories of holidays on Arran.

During this time the High Kirk celebrated its 150th anniversary when there was much community engagement, involving the young people of the church and the 'Music Makers', a music group in the Sunday School. It was in this period that I was able to experience 'team-work' within the Kirk Session which had a Unitary Constitution.

Moving to Paisley: Wallneuk North (1988-2006) brought new experiences of 'Team Ministry', with 2 projects in a 'joint parishes arrangement' - a project to help single mothers to reach their potential in education/work and a youth project in an area of deprivation. As part of a sabbatical spent in downtown Toronto, Canada, I learned of innovative 'ministries' directly responding to peoples' needs 'on the ground', one example being the 'bike ministry': bikes were made available to those seeking work, allowing them to travel to interviews all across the city. I also spent a few months on Iona as part of the resident staff in the Abbey - mostly in the kitchen making bread and porridge! The communal life, work and witness of the Iona Community has greatly inspired me, especially in terms of worship.

I was for 4 years Convener of the Church of Scotland Ecumenical Relations at the General Assembly, also work-shadowing at the World Council of Churches in Geneva, and attending the WCC in Harare, Zimbabwe as part of the Scottish delegation.

In Shetland (2006-2021) I served rural communities on the Westside of the Mainland, including the islands of Foula and Papa Stour; one reached by air (7-seater plane), the other by ferry, so I am very familiar with the vagaries of island life and travel!

After retiring in 2011, I continued to serve as locum in various Shetland situations, but also in ALT churches (Lochcarron). No two situations are the same – although there is always the challenge of how the Church addresses its mission! It became clear that the churches in Shetland could no longer continue as they were, with 31 buildings, 7 charges all with linkages and some ministers having retired. In anticipation of this ‘looming crisis’, the Presbytery invited the Ministries Council to help.

Over the last 4 years, conversations with Kirk Sessions, congregations and the community at large took place, with the help of Assessor Ministers and Place for Hope. Listening to one another was vitally important! This process enabled the church folks to realistically come to terms with what would be radical change: ie 11 church buildings deemed to be fit for purpose and a new model of ‘ministry team’. Shetland Churches became one parish (100 miles north to south, with several islands reached by ferry). The finances were combined and this resulted in a pool of money to resource ‘well-equipped spaces in the right places’ and more importantly the mission of Christ.

As you will begin to realise, Arran, along with every other part of Scotland faces similar, if not the same, challenges. At present the Kirk Sessions are involved in a process to survey the current situation of our churches and how to respond to the future mission in a changed church landscape and in an ever-changing society.

We will then be asked to consider our future as the Church of Scotland on Arran. What we have to work out, like our forebears did, is what the mission of the church is in today’s world. This will inevitably be uncomfortable and rigorous, BUT I am confident that together we will be able to reach a solution that will enable the churches to thrive once more.

Now...back to rainbows! You will remember that this was a sign to Noah that all would be well. And like all the journeys in the Old Testament, there was hardship and trial, doubt and fear, but like Abraham, Moses and the others – we will get there with God’s help!

Let there be rainbows over Arran!

Tom Macintyre

“is he not the carpenter’s son?” Mathew 13:55

Nails

Let the boy play here,
Mary my wife;
Nails are good toys for him,
Mary my own.
Tools are beyond his reach;
Later their use I’ll teach;
Nails cannot hurt him.

Lay the boy by the bench,
Mary my wife;
See how he grasps the wood,
Mary my own.
Look at the cross he’s made -
He’ll quickly learn the trade.
Wood cannot hurt him.

Leave your high dreams of him,
Mary my wife;
Flesh of my flesh is he.
Mary my own.
Woodworker’s son is he;
Woodworker will he be,
Nails in his hands.

He’ll be a carpenter,
Mary my wife
Just like his father is,
Mary my own;
Woodwork his daily bread,
Woodwork his dying bed -
Nails in his hands.

Donald S Ching

Hello everyone

Are you a “glass half full” or a “glass half empty” sort of a person? We human beings are great creatures of habit, so every weeknight John and I sit down at 6pm to watch the BBC news and Reporting Scotland. We don't take a newspaper, so this is how we keep up with what is going on in the world. Since the start of this pandemic our attention to events has become more focused as we attempt to follow the changes in the lock down rules and advice – changes that seem to happen at least once a day and vary depending upon each country. And then there are the natural disasters which seem to be growing in number and magnitude every week. And what about wars, conflict, political tensions, racism, murder etc, etc, etc!

I like to think I'm a “glass half full” person but it can be hard sometimes to find a positive comment to make or to keep an upbeat mental attitude. However, I have noticed that at the end of the news there is usually a wee cameo story with a happy ending or perhaps a photo of eg, a young polar bear ie a short but sweet “cheer up” item.

It is easy to be negative these days, but it only needs a small thing to cheer us up. John and I walk along Blackwaterfoot beach as often as we can – just before sunset when there aren't many people about. The sound of the waves and the wind blowing away the cobwebs is all we need to bring a smile to our faces.

And speaking of smiles – just greeting someone you bump into by chance with a smile is enough to lift the spirits. And, yes, it is possible to tell from the eyes even if we can't see behind the mask, that the person is smiling at you.

A kind word, a word of encouragement goes a long way to cheering someone up. How many of us seek out the company of a person who is always moaning and negative?

There is the story of a member of a congregation who always had a complaint about the service when they shook hands with the minister at the end. Eventually the minister asked that he try to find something positive to say each Sunday. The person took this to heart and the comments became much easier to listen to. However, one Sunday, the person was really struggling to find anything positive to say and when he got to the minister, the words that came out were “I liked the amen!”

Who remembers the Morecambe and Wise theme tune?

Bring me sunshine
In your smile
Bring me laughter
All the while

In this world where we live
There should be more happiness
So much joy you can give
To each brand-new bright tomorrow

Make me happy
Through the years
Never bring me
Any tears
Let your arms be as warm
As the sun from up above
Bring me fun
Bring me sunshine
Bring me Love

So let's all keep being “glass half full” folk because that is spreading God's love in the world.

Every blessing,

Liz

Editor's Remarks

A very Happy and (it is to be hoped) a Healthy 2022. Again 2021 turned out to be another tough year for everyone. Rather than the return to normality that we were all looking forward to we found ourselves still living under the yoke of Covid when a new variant popped up along with an unprecedented number of ferry cancellations which proved challenging for everyone living on this island. The experts tell us that we have reached the peak of the latest wave and the country is now moving into the stage where we have to learn to live with the virus. Let us hope that their predictions are correct and this coming year will be a better one for us all.

With many restrictions now being lifted the after church teas and coffees can resume as can many of the other activities like the Wednesday coffee mornings and St Bride's Ladies meetings.

Mrs Liz Clarke continues to do a sterling job as Locum minister along with the help of the Rev Dr Ian MacLeod.

As always, my thanks to all those who have contributed to this magazine with special thanks to John who is an invaluable help to me in producing the magazine.

I can be contacted on 01770 303579 or sheenamcl4@gmail.com

The Wee Shop, Foodbank and Household Fuel Support

The Wee Shop opened in March 2021 providing subsidised food and household items for those experiencing financial hardship as a result of the pandemic.

At its peak The Wee Shop had 13 customers but by November 2021 the numbers had fallen to 6. The customers who no longer were using the facility had returned to work. The majority of those who were still using the shop were working again or were back to their pre-pandemic position. We feel it's important that we support households as effectively as we can, offering the foodbank and subsidised shop as a temporary solution providing support in times of crisis but not used as a permanent solution.

After some discussion amongst the shop volunteers, it was agreed that the shop would close on December 24th 2021. The customers were given notice of this.

During December we again worked with Social Services making up and delivering Christmas boxes.

On behalf of Arran Churches Together, thank you to Brodick Church for allowing us to use the small hall for the subsidised shop.

The foodbank continues to run from the vestibule in Brodick Church and is open 24/7. This is available to anyone experiencing financial difficulties without need for vouchers; it is unmanned allowing customers to help themselves to what they need.

Donations continue to be left in the collection basket at the big Co-op or in the vestibule of the church. If donations are left in the vestibule, it would be a help if they were left near the stairs rather than put on the shelves; this allows us to continue to keep a tally of number of items being used – these figures are forwarded to North Ayrshire Council which gives them an indication of need on Arran.

Arran Churches Together also provides financial support for people who are struggling to make household fuel payments. Referrals are either from Social Services or self-referred. Jean Hunter is currently the treasurer of ACT and facilitates these payments.

Arran Churches Together (ACT) are very grateful for all donations, both food items and money.

Arran Churches Together (ACT)

John Lauder and Susan Dobson are the Brodick Church reps. on the ACT committee. We usually meet 4 times per year, however the pandemic put paid to most meetings throughout the last couple of years. Our last meeting was able to take place in Shiskine Church Hall on 21st October '21 and the next planned meeting is 3rd February '22. At the October meeting we discussed the annual events organised by ACT and whether these would be able to happen.

- St Andrew's Night/ Christingle – it was agreed that these events would not take place this year.
- Carols at the Coop – this should have taken place at 11am – noon on 11th December '21. *Unfortunately, this event was cancelled due to increased cases of COVID on the island.*
- Service of Christian Unity – this took place in Lamlash Church at noon on 16th January '22 and was led by Vince Jennings and Noel Colford.
- World Day of Prayer – will take place on 4th March 2022 at 2pm in Whiting Bay Church.
- Good Friday Walk of Witness – will start at Holy Cross and finish at Brodick Church on 15th April 2022.

NB All of these events will only take place if COVID restrictions allow.

Property Report

With Christmas, New Year and Omicron there is very little to report. I have asked a local electrician to carry out a P.A.T. test in the church and hall. The fence is going up between one of the adjoining properties and the manse but we have discovered that one of the fences already up is leaning over partly because the supports are rotten and the overgrown bushes on the manse side have pushed it over. This will require to be sorted and I will try to get estimates for this work to put to the Board for approval.

Colin MacKenzie

THANKS.

Despite restrictions, it was great to see the church decorated for Christmas. The lovely windowsill decorations and Christmas flower arrangements were again provided by Alison Bilsland and Elaine Duncan. The beautiful Christmas tree was erected and decorated by Janet and Bert Ramage. As always we had our lovely crib scene set out to remind us of this special time in our church year. We thank all who were involved in any way to make our advent season so special.

We were unable to hold some services last year, but when we did meet together a number of folk were involved in ensuring that all the necessary arrangements were put in place, and we thank them for their willing help in so many ways. In particular we thank Liz Clarke who continues to take services each week, recording one every fortnight for transmission on the church internet site, and dealing with pastoral oversight of our five church linkage – all this in her well-earned 'retirement'. We are fortunate in having a very capable group of people who ensure that all the churches have someone to lead worship every Sunday. We are indebted to those who donate the church flowers throughout the year. The flower calendar will be on the church hall noticeboard shortly and Ann Lauder would be grateful for all offers of help by way of donating and or arranging flowers in the year ahead.

Finally, we are very grateful to the diligent team who continue to operate the daily stocking up of the food bank, and to all of you who donate to this vital piece of community service.

Thank you all.

Blythswood Christmas Shoebox Appeal 2021

A huge thank you to everyone who helped this year, from the ladies who knitted, to those who collected and wrapped boxes, checked full boxes or filled boxes with the many individual items donated by our supporters.

122 Christmas shoeboxes were sent off to needy men, women and children in Eastern Europe. We are grateful to all those who managed to fill a box as well as those who donated cash. Over £739 was collected which helped towards transport costs which in this year of record increases in fuel prices was much appreciated. A big thank you to the ladies of the shoebox team and to Susan and Alastair Dobson who kindly transported all the boxes to the mainland.

I Was A Tree.

I was a tree in Galilee,
My green leaves grew abundantly,
There birds did sing as they flew free,
And children laughed as they climbed on me.

Men cut me down and stripped me bare,
No sound of birdsong filled the air,
They made a rugged cross of me,
Carted me to a hill called Calvary.

Day by day men died on me,
They cursed the air, they even cursed me,
It was a dreadful place to be,
That evil hill called Calvary.

Men took me down from Calvary,
There a blood-stained man awaited me,
With his touch I remembered I was a tree,
Together we stumbled towards Calvary.

They nailed that broken man to me,
A false Messiah they claimed was he,
A crown of thorns adorned his head,
'Father forgive them' were the words he said.

All day he hung there nailed to me,
A dying man for all to see,
He bowed his head and as he died,
A spear was thrust into his side.

They took us down, this man and me,
Friends bore him away from Calvary,
They left me there, as his blood dried,
A dying thief on either side.

Some three days on, the word was spread,
That he had risen from the dead,
I know it's true, it's plain to see,
Someone Divine was nailed to me.

I'm ashes now, no more a tree,
Men made a cruel cross of me,
But my spirit cried to the heavens above,
I'm now the sign of the Saviour's love.

Hamish G. Smith, Letham, Angus.