

# NEWSLETTER



Church of Scotland  
Kingussie Linked with  
Laggan and Newtonmore

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FEBRUARY 2023

## From our Interim Moderator

Dear Everyone,

As I write this, the sun is actually shining outside my study window and workmen are laying a new path outside the gate. This is my first Newsletter contribution to you as your Interim Moderator so perhaps I should start by telling you a bit about myself.

I am a retired minister who was an auxiliary minister (similar to Mary Ellen's OLM) before becoming a paid minister. I am married to Gordon and have two sons, a daughter in law and two granddaughters. Before marriage I was a qualified Assistant Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. Later before going to New College, Edinburgh University to study for my B.D. Hons and postgrad Dip. Min, I was for ten years a special needs auxiliary in a Primary School helping children with learning difficulties with their lessons.

I have met with the Kirk Session of Laggan and Newtonmore and by the time you receive this, I will also have met with the Kingussie Kirk Session. I hope to get to know as many of you as I possibly can so to achieve this, I am aiming to lead worship at least once a month at your joint services and preach in each church on a rota basis. In January I led worship in Newtonmore and on the last Sunday in February, I am due to conduct the service in Laggan and all being well, I will lead worship in Kingussie at the end of March. At these services, I hope to get to know you and hope and pray that we can work together through the vacancy so that when the time comes for you to call a minister, we will have worked together to make this charge one in which a minister will be interested and be excited to come to lead you in the future and you will be fully ready to welcome him or her. As is explained elsewhere in this newsletter the Presbytery Plan has not yet been accepted and this process could take some time.

My door is always open and I am happy to have a chat with you and if anyone wishes to speak in confidence, I am available to help in any way I can. The hymn says: Father I place into your hands the things that I can't do, Father I place into your hands the times that I've been through, Father I place into your hands the way that I should go, for I know that I always can trust You.

May we place in God's hands the things we cannot do and be

open to His guidance, and work together for the furtherance of His work within the Parishes of Kingussie, Laggan and Newtonmore. May you feel and know God's blessing.

Christine (Ritchie) *Interim Moderator*.

## From our Locum

Church duties have been busy over the last few months taking church services and funerals. Sadly, we have said goodbye to many well-known members from our churches and our communities. In recent weeks we have had a number of joint services and it is always enjoyable when we all gather together in one building.

Many of you will have seen of the recent joint visit of the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland Rt Rev Dr Ian Greenshields to South Sudan where they were given a rapturous welcome before a congregation of 16,000 when they visited as part of a peace effort. More recently a Church of Scotland matron who died in Auschwitz after refusing to abandon Jewish girls in her care, was honoured with a stone memorial in Edinburgh. It is always encouraging to have news of all that is done in the name of the Church of Scotland or to hear of the visits our Moderators make abroad.

I wish you all a pleasant Spring. Easter will be with us again in a few weeks!

Rev Mary Ellen Thomson OLM (*Locum*)

## Newsletter By E-mail

If you would prefer to get your Newsletter (and any other communications) by e-mail please contact your Session Clerk – Alison Armstrong or Sandy Peebles with your e-mail address. This would be more eco-friendly and save delivery time.

## FOLLOW THE NEWS

If you are unable to attend church and have computer access, you can see all the news and the sermons on [www.stbrides-newtonmore.org.uk](http://www.stbrides-newtonmore.org.uk)





## Interim Moderator

Rev Christine Ritchie took over as Interim Moderator for Kingussie and Laggan and Newtonmore at the beginning of 2023 and we are pleased to welcome her. Christine is more than willing to take some of our joint services and has now conducted a service in all three churches. We are very grateful for her support.

## Badenoch Chorale

The Chorale thank you for the support at the Christmas Carol Concert. A donation of £250 was given to Badenoch and Strathspey Foodbank. The Chorale are now practising for a concert in Ness Bank Church Inverness on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and following this there will be local events over the Summer, and in the Autumn, there will be a coffee morning.

## Donation to Scripture Union

The presentation of a cheque to Scripture Union from the Flower Festival eventually took place. Mary Stewart handed it over. See picture.

## Warm Spaces and Films

At the beginning of February, Laggan Church as part of the Warm Spaces projects, hosted their first film afternoon when the excellent film Sister Act was shown. The Secret Life of Walter Mitty has subsequently been shown and there are plans for two more films before a review is held. On Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March at 1-30 p.m. the film is Sully, the Miracle of the Hudson and on 15<sup>th</sup> March the film is Focus (2015).

Kingussie Church has been more active welcoming a growing number of people each Thursday for tea and coffee and fruit and snacks with soup and bread provided at lunchtime. Craft activities are also available and John Crombie plays the organ for an hour or so and there is plenty of time for friendly chat between 10am and 4p.m. and everyone is welcome. This initiative is supported by both the Catholic and Free Churches who provide volunteers on a weekly basis.

## Church Flowers in Newtonmore

After a gap due to Covid, a calendar for donations towards church flowers is now being placed on the noticeboard at the back of the church. We are very grateful to Anne Hay who provides and looks after the main displays and to the elders who then supplement the displays in the church with additional flowers. Donations can be given to Anne or to the treasurer.

## Presentation

On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2023, a presentation of a gift token and flowers was made to Elizabeth Thomson, acknowledging a recent big birthday and the fact that she had played the Laggan organ for more than half of her life! Liz does of course now double up on most Sundays at St Bride's and we are very thankful for this service to the two churches.



## Church Services

The Worship Group will be meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> March to arrange the church services for the three months to the end of June. Since the start of 2023, Rev Mary Ellen's role as Locum was curtailed for winter and domestic reasons and she has only been taking one service on most Sundays. However, the large number of recent local funerals have taken up a lot of her time. It is anticipated that on most Sundays from the beginning of April, apart from the last Sunday in each month, an effort will be made to have a Sunday service in all three churches, but again this is dependent on the availability of the elders who have been taking services and the availability of pulpit supply.



## Church Accounts

The Laggan and Newtonmore Churches accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 do not really show any positives and there are some future niggling doubts in the financial picture until the future of the manse becomes clearer. In 2022 the manse cost us £15,036 due mainly to surveyor's fees, the removal of large dangerous trees and a cost to make the manse wind and watertight for this last winter. Kingussie Church may retrospectively contribute to some of these costs but there has still to be a meaningful discussion between the Kirk Sessions as to how major costs might be split. There is a quote for further essential external works to be completed once it is possible to erect scaffolding and when we are allowed to call a minister, there will be internal costs to make the manse habitable. Fortunately, we currently have the financial reserves to cover this work. Laggan Church also had a fair bit of fabric expenditure in the year, some of which had required attention for some months.

Our income for the year showed a drop possibly for two reasons. These were a lack of the visitors we used to get in church before Covid and the fact that some who were regular attenders have not been able to return to church post Covid due to family illness. Like other congregations, we are faced with an ageing congregation which in due course will have a major impact on income.

Fortunately, the money we pay to 121 has dropped for 2023 but in spite of this, it will still be difficult to meet all our commitments this year unless our income increases and it is up to every member and adherent to do their best to help! Our bank balance at the end of 2022 still stood at £60,004 but we cannot afford to have too many years where expenditure exceeded income by £18,395!

## Diary Dates

Joint Services at 10-30a.m.

26 <sup>th</sup> February	Laggan <i>Rev Christine Ritchie</i>
12 <sup>th</sup> March	Newtonmore <i>Rev Mary Ellen Thomson</i> (Communion)
26 <sup>th</sup> March	Kingussie <i>Rev Christine Ritchie</i>

## Kingussie News Organ

The organ required a minor repair in December but is now fine. Music by John Crombie continues to be posted on the Facebook page Kingussie Parish Church Organ Sc021546.

## Craft and Fundraising

The Craft Stall attended the Christmas Fayre at Loch Insh on a dreich and bitterly cold day, when due to the inclement weather, there was a roaring trade in knitted woollen hats, many worn before leaving the building!

The group were also delighted to attend the Kingussie Food on Film Festival, serving soup, bread rolls and scones and raising £202.02 for Church funds.

## New Treasurer

Kingussie Church has a new treasurer. Peter Cooper has taken on the task following the retirement of Jean Munro from the position after many years of service for which the church is extremely grateful. Peter's contact details appear on the back page.

## Winter clothing and Foodshare

27 gift tags have been given to local families who needed a helping hand to purchase waterproof shoes and winter jackets for their children and this is thanks to the funding providers. The food items collected on a weekly basis under the Co-op's Foodshare scheme are placed on the church food share table in the vestry. All the items provided have been used and none wasted.

## Monday Lunch

There is a Monday lunch on the first Monday of most months in Kingussie Church Hall at 12-30 p.m. soup and pudding available at a cost of £5. All welcome. If more information or transport required, please phone Jo Simpson on 01540 661498.





## Abernethy Presbytery

Discussions are still ongoing regarding the formation of the new enlarged presbytery for the Highlands and the Hebrides but hopefully it will be in place for 1st January 2024. Our own Beth Alder and Rev Christine Ritchie our Interim Moderator will be two of the four presbytery representatives at the General Assembly in May 2023. Ian Hall has been appointed Interim Moderator for Cromdale, Dulnain Bridge and Grantown as they too are without a minister. The Union of Dulnain Bridge and Grantown is about to be given full approval. The church itself at Dulnain Bridge has been sold.

The Presbytery Plan which needs to be agreed before we can call a new minister is still in limbo! The representations made in respect of Laggan and Insh church buildings were not accepted and even though this decision was made in December, there has been no further consultation which is really disappointing giving the urgency of our own situation.

## Laggan Glebe

In 2021 there was a request for a survey of trees on Church land in Scotland and our elder Graham Grant, in spite of illness, eventually completed this task. There were many trees to record and with some 'approximation' the tally came to 2591 in 16 groups and species. Not surprisingly, this was the largest number of trees associated with a church that responded. Graham says that he enjoyed creeping through the woodlands from the island in the Spey up to the top of the Glebe above the old Manse and he took lots of photos. Well done Graham!

## Leading Prayer in Worship

Abernethy Presbytery has arranged training days with Rev Linda Walker for Saturdays 4th and 18th March in Boat of Garten Church Hall. Places can be booked by e-mailing [abernethy@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:abernethy@churchofscotland.org.uk)

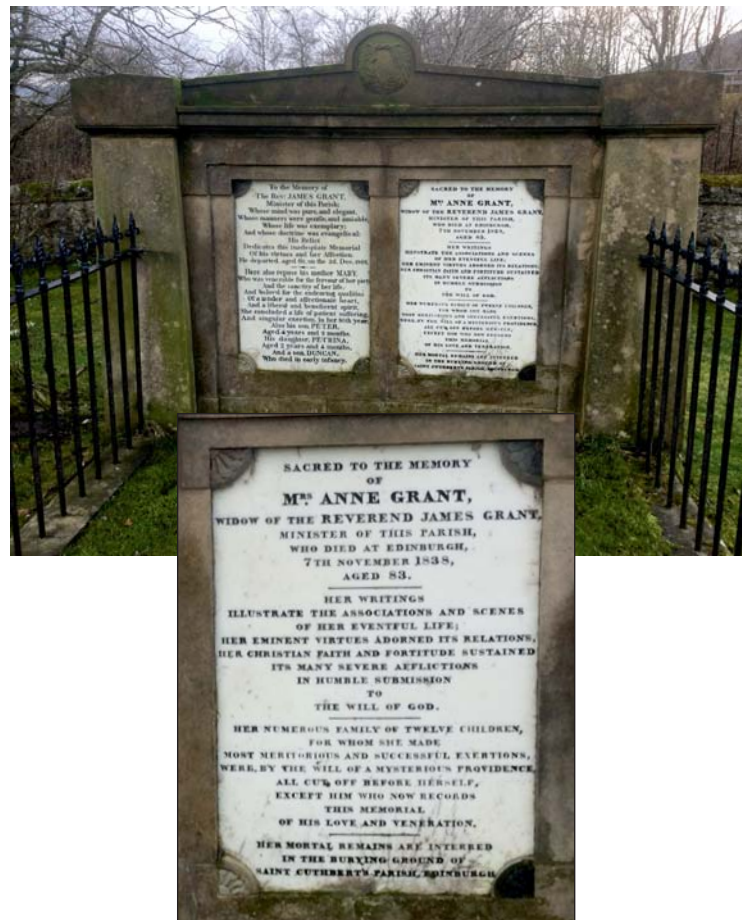
There is a maximum of 12 places.

From our Interim Moderator

## Concerts

The Trio Doyenne will be giving a classical music concert in St Bride's on Thursday 27th April at 7-30 p.m. The trio consists of Lithuanian pianist Monica Masanouskaite, Belgian violinist Michelle Dierx and American cellist Shannon Merciel. They are an excellent trio who played in Inverness last year and we will not be disappointed.

A ceilidh concert is also planned in Laggan Village Hall for Saturday 13th May to celebrate the repair of the Anne Grant Memorial in Laggan Churchyard, when members of the family will be visiting from America. This concert will be a thank you from Laggan Heritage for the generous donation from Rebecca Forrester towards the costs. The concert will include Feis Spe, Roger Sharp and Dr Margaret Bennett.



SACRED TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
MRS ANNE GRANT,  
WIDOW OF THE REVEREND JAMES GRANT,  
MINISTER OF THIS PARISH,  
WHO DIED AT EDINBURGH,  
7TH NOVEMBER 1838,  
AGED 83.

HER WRITINGS  
ILLUSTRATE THE ASSOCIATIONS AND SCENES  
OF HER EVENTFUL LIFE;  
HER EMINENT VIRTUES ADORNED ITS RELATIONS,  
HER CHRISTIAN FAITH AND FORTITUDE SUSTAINED  
ITS MANY SEVERE AFFLICTIONS  
IN HUMBLE SUBMISSION  
TO  
THE WILL OF GOD.

HER NUMEROUS FAMILY OF TWELVE CHILDREN,  
FOR WHOM SHE MADE  
MOST MERITORIOUS AND SUCCESSFUL EXERTIONS,  
WERE, BY THE WILL OF A MYSTERIOUS PROVIDENCE,  
ALL CUT OFF BEFORE HERSELF,  
EXCEPT HIM WHO NOW RECORDS  
THIS MEMORIAL  
OF HIS LOVE AND VENERATION.

HER MORTAL REMAINS ARE INTERRED  
IN THE BURIALING GROUND OF  
SAINT CUTHBERT'S PARISH, EDINBURGH.

## CHURCH OFFICE BEARERS

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