



Update from Libis

Contact was recently made with Mirek Pfann in Libis. They are still working on the photo album of their church members, similar to the one that Ian Hall took to Libis the last time he visited. Their congregation has suffered as a result of Covid and they hope that the album will be finished in 2022. This summer and in the autumn Mirek visited the Czech congregations in Ukraine and on the second visit he was accompanied by a delegation from their church. They celebrated twenty five years of the kirk in the village of Bohemka which their church helped to build and it 'was a beautiful meeting'. Mirek passes on their warm greetings to all in Laggan and Newtonmore.

Speysound

Ian Hall continues to present 'The New Normal' monthly programme on Speysound Radio on the first Sunday of every month. You can tune in to FM107.1 or hear it on the internet at www.speysound.com. The December programme is a special programme for Christmas.

Food Hub

The Badenoch and Strathspey food hub operation is run from St Andrew's Church Hall in Aviemore and it will be storing supplies of food bags for delivery throughout the area to those who need one. They are operating in conjunction with other local charities to ensure a joined up and effective service. If you know of anyone who is short of funds to buy food, please make contact on the Food Hub phone 07393718320 or e-mail info@bsfoodhub.org.uk

Newtonmore Manse

A survey of the manse in Fort William Road will shortly take place and once this has happened, a decision will be made on its future

Presbytery

At the last meeting votes had to be taken on two overtures from the General Assembly. The first had to do with the make up of the General Assembly and this was approved. The second one was to do with the solemnisation of same sex marriages. Abernethy Presbytery voted to allow ministers to make their own decisions as to whether they would conduct same sex marriages. In this, each presbytery has one vote so it will be interesting to see the conclusion as some are known to have voted against this relaxation.

The closure of Dulnain Bridge Church building was noted with regret. The congregation will still worship locally but the cost of building upgrading requirements was totally out with the ability of the small congregation.



www.stbrides-newtonmore.org.uk

www.kingussieparishchurch.org.uk

NOVEMBER 2021

Looking forward to Christmas

Are we prepared for Christmas? Have you baked your cake? Have you bought your wrapping paper and ribbon? Do you know where your decorations are? I wonder how many of us have done our Christmas shopping? I can reassure you that I have not completed mine!

We are approaching, in our liturgical year, the season of Advent, the anticipation of Christ's birth leading up to Christmas.. The first Sunday of Advent is 28th November and as always it ends on 24th December.

Will we be ready to welcome the Christ Child into our hearts once more? It is a time of anticipation for all of us. The Advent readings are themed scripture readings as follows

- Week 1 Hope (Promise)**
- Week 2 Preparation (Waiting or prophesy)**
- Week 3 Joy (Peace)**
- Week 4 Love (Adoration)**

I know that when we come to Christmas Eve, we will all be waiting the wonderful readings once more.

Take care in the weeks running up to Christmas and pace yourselves! We look forward to welcoming you to our Christmas services.

Mary Ellen Thomson (Locum)

Greetings to you all

Looking out of the window as I write this message, I am struck by the beauty of nature around me. In the distance are the faded colours of blues and purples on the hills, gradually sloping down to tightly packed dark green forests of pine, and then in front of me are the beautiful colours of Autumn. The yellow, orange, and red leaves blow around in the wind and lie in drifts beside the almost bare trees.

The wonder and beauty of God's kingdom is all around us and we should not take it for granted. We are so fortunate to live in this beautiful part of God's world and we can all help to make small changes to help this planet that God created. Climate change is now on everyone's agenda, and we are being encouraged to recycle, avoid the use of plastics, consider how we produce our food and what we eat, and reduce our air miles.

I am pleased to report that the Presbytery Mission Plan has received some positive comment from the appropriate committee at 121 but we have been asked to consider five points of Mission and resubmit.

Tom Bowker has prepared his own introduction for this newsletter. We welcome him and look forward to new ideas taking shape in the future. Christmas is rapidly approaching – the shops filled with wrapping paper, decorations and gifts of all sorts of sometimes unnecessary and useless products! Let us all remember the real reason for Christmas, the birth of Jesus Christ. And at the same time let us remember how to help others and be kind and thoughtful to each other and our earth, I pray that you all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mary Stewart (Interim Moderator)

Christmas Services



24th December	Watchnight Services
Laggan	11.30pm Ian Hall
Kingussie	11.15pm Rev Mary Ellen Thomson
Newtonmore	11.30pm Roy Alexander

25th December	Christmas Day Services
Kingussie	10.30am Rev Mary Ellen Thomson
Newtonmore	11.30am Rev Mary Ellen Thomson

26th December Sunday Service
Joint service in Laggan at 10.30am – The Worship Groups

The retiring offerings at Laggan and Newtonmore will be for The Salvation Army.

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

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New Equipment and Technology

Over £5,000 has been spent between our three churches on new equipment and technology supported by a grant of £4,000 from Abernethy Presbytery. The provision of this equipment has several purposes apart from upgrading existing out of date equipment in order to benefit church services. There is now an opportunity to add to our service experience with external contributions, but more importantly there is an opportunity to make our churches community hubs by hosting other 'events'. Some 'out of the box' thinking will be welcomed.

Thanks to Ian Hall for organising this effort and to Greig Mitchell of Renfrew Network & Technical Services for his expertise in making the installations happen.

Legacy

A recent unexpected e-mail confirmed that George Ian Main who died back in March 2019, had left £10,000 to St Bride's Church. George Ian also left similar sums to Newtonmore Camanachd and Newtonmore Golf Club, thus providing some welcome financial support to all three.

Open Gardens

This year Laggan and Newtonmore have benefitted by £159.00 from the opening of Shanvall thanks to Beth and George Alder and by £310.86 from the opening of Craig Dhu thanks to Valerie Macpherson.

Badenoch Chorale

On Sunday 19th December at 7.00pm the Badenoch Chorale will sing a programme of carols in St Bride's Church. This will be the Chorale's first public performance since Christmas 2019, and choir members are delighted to be back in action. Unfortunately, the coffee morning proposed for October had to be cancelled for various reasons, including Covid restrictions, but hopefully a coffee morning will be held in Spring 2022.

The chorale are delighted to have recruited Paul Allan as accompanist to replace Alan Buchan. Paul is a very experienced organist and a very welcome addition. Hopefully we will be able to have a concert programme in 2022!

Tom Bowker

Tom Bowker is our new Fresh Expressions worker in the south half of Abernethy Presbytery ie. the area from Aviemore to Laggan. He is a Church of Scotland employee and part of a team tasked with increasing an awareness of God. Here is his own 'introduction'.



"I guess a 'Hello' is in order. I am Tom the new Fresh Expressions worker for the Church of Scotland. I live just outside Aviemore with my wife Anna and our dog Moose who is only three months old, so there is a lot of puppy training going on!

I fell in love with this area about ten years ago. For the first seven and a half years, I was a bit like a yoyo, coming up and working here and going off to university, coming back and going off to work at another outdoor centre. I have now been settled here for two and a half years since I married Anna.

I have lots of hopes and plans for my new role. I guess my main hope is that there is a way we can connect with the local communities, build up relationships with people and tell them about our relationship with God. I have lots of plans floating around in my head, but in the interest of keeping this short and sweet, I will tell a bit about one of my plans. Doggo walks does what it says on the tin! One of the big things to come out of lockdown was the number of people with dogs. The main idea is simple! Advertise the doggo walk (Place, time etc) and go and walk your dogs and have a chat with people.

There are more plans and via the churches, we will keep you updated. I hope that as we move into this exciting time, you will join me as we move to God's call for our communities.

God Bless
Tom Bowker

Carol Service in Aviemore

There will be a carol service open to all in the Spey Valley Cinema in the Macdonald Centre in Aviemore on Sunday 12th December at 6.00pm. This is being organised on behalf of Abernethy Presbytery by our Interim Moderator Mary Stewart. Donations can be made to the Badenoch and Strathspey Food Hub.



Church Finance – Laggan and Newtonmore

One of the setbacks of COVID-19 has been the inability to have social time after the church service and as treasurer of Newtonmore and Laggan, I have found this difficult as I am well aware of 'new' people attending church and I feel guilty at being unable to make their acquaintance! If you wish to approach me about how best you can give to the church, please do. I still have freewill offering sets covering up to 31st March 2022, or if you would like to give by standing order or give by Gift Aid, please just ask me. I hope that tea and coffee will return on a permanent basis!

Presbytery Mission Plan

A Presbytery Mission Plan was finalised and presented to the church hierarchy, as our freedom to seek to call a new minister is dependent on the approval of this at 121 George Street, Edinburgh. We have been fortunate in that our original Presbytery Plan has not required much adjustment from previously, unlike many other presbyteries in Scotland which are "over churching". To date Alvie church has been sold and the possibility of Kincardine and Inveravon moving to charitable trusts is currently being investigated.

Joint Services

These are held on the last Sunday of every month at 10.30am. The next three months services are
28th November – Kingussie – Rev Mary Ellen Thomson
26th December – Laggan – Worship Groups
30th January – Newtonmore – Rev Michael Mair

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There will have been many reports on the results of the recent large conference in Glasgow on climate change. Sometimes this subject perhaps seems quite far away and does not affect us, but we all have a responsibility to protect mankind and all that it represents. A representative from the Marshall Islands recently appeared on the Andrew Marr programme, and she pointed out that much of these islands are only two metres maximum above sea level, and the livelihoods of over 50,000 people are under real threat for if climate change is not controlled, their islands will disappear – and they are not alone with this fear. We all need to make our contribution to protect our world in



our own way whatever that may be and a prayer.

God help us to change: to change ourselves and to change the world. To know the need for it. To deal with the pain of it. To feel the joy of it. To undertake the journey without understanding the destination, all for the benefit of mankind.

Concerts

On 10th November an appreciative audience enjoyed a concert by Alice Allen (Cello) and Katrina Lee (Violin). This concert had been postponed from 2020 due to Covid and it was good to get back to some normality. They will hopefully come back in 2023 to entertain us again.

The next concert, under the auspices of the Tunnell Trust, will be by the Freeman String Quartet in St Bride's on Friday 18th February 2022.

Kingussie Church News

Organ

Following the last visit from the organ builders, we are delighted to say that the organ is playing beautifully.

Thursday Drop-in

Sessions from 10.00a.m. until 1-00p.m. have recommenced with the addition of an hour of live music from 11.00a.m. All are welcome to drop in to have a coffee and a chat and to browse the craft stall and enjoy the music.

Craft and fundraising

The Craft group are busy preparing some Christmas ornaments for sale. The craft stall is going to the Craft Fayre at Loch Insh on Saturday 11th December.

Raggy Bag collections

These continue for wearable clothes, shoes, bags, hats, etc. If you are clearing out your wardrobe or drawers, why not contact Eppy if you have any donations you can make?

Virtual Pilgrimage to Bethlehem

Our journey to Bethlehem in time for Christmas eve continues with our arrival in the Middle East

Further information on all the above can be found on the 'Kingussie Parish Church' Facebook page.