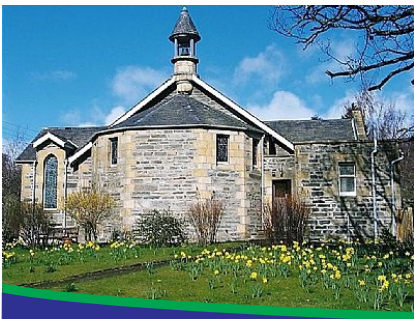


# NEWSLETTER



Church of Scotland  
Kingussie Linked with  
Laggan and Newtonmore

[www.stbrides-newtonmore.org.uk](http://www.stbrides-newtonmore.org.uk) [www.kingussie-parishchurch.org.uk](http://www.kingussie-parishchurch.org.uk)

NOVEMBER 2022

## From our Interim Moderator

As I write my message for this newsletter, it is pouring rain outside! But I was thinking how this clear water which falls from the skies, impacts our lives. Here in Scotland, it falls on the land giving us green grass and growing crops. It fills our lochs and dams and provides for hydro-electricity. It fills the reservoirs so that we can turn on our taps for a constant supply of clean running water and it fills our rivers and provides fishing and water activities.

However, in other parts of the world how different things can be- the flooding, with loss of homes and crops, the droughts where there is no rain, no crops and little food. Our world is such a precious place and one of the 'Five Marks of Mission' with which the Church of Scotland is encouraging us to engage is 'Safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life on earth' I realise that many of us recycle, reuse and repurpose items these days, but we should be emphasising that this is God's world and we should be caring for it!

Another of the Marks of Mission is 'Respond to human need by loving service' and I am heartened by the response from our Churches and congregations to action that, by providing for those less able who are struggling with heating bills and trying to keep warm. The provision of 'Warm Places and Warm Spaces' has been gathering pace and it is great to hear how churches are working together, how other buildings and places are opening their doors, extending their times of access to keep people warm and safe and providing food where possible.

As we approach Christmas, it is so important to emphasise another Mark of Mission, that is 'Proclaim the Good News', not only about the birth of Jesus, but of our lives with him, which is something we can all aim to do.

As I step down from my role as Interim Moderator at the end of December, I give thanks for all those who have helped me in this role and all those I have met at services and events. I know you will give a good welcome to Rev Christine Ritchie when she takes over at the beginning of January.

I pray that you all have a Merry and Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

*Mary Stewart (Interim Moderator)*

## From our Locum

I was privileged on Remembrance Sunday to take part in all five local war memorial services. All were well attended and the last one was at Insh Village in the gloaming. As I travelled back from Insh Village Church this evening, the temperature dropped into the minuses! It all seems too soon but alas it is seasonal.

We are approaching the first Sunday in Advent and at our joint service in Laggan, the first candle will be lit. Will we like children, then be counting how many sleeps we have until Christmas Eve? As we enter Advent there are many issues for us to consider. Many churches across the country are preparing to open their buildings as warm places due to escalating energy prices and the cost of living.

As Advent begins there will be a sense of anticipation as we travel through advent with the shepherds with their sheep and ultimately the arrival of the travellers from the East. I send Advent greetings to you all as we begin our journey to Bethlehem.

*Rev Mary Ellen Thomson (Locum)*

## Badenoch Chorale

The Chorale held very successful concerts in Kingussie and Aberlour in recent months and it was good to get back to some 'real' activity again. Last year our carol concert was cancelled at short notice due to Covid in the local community and this was a big disappointment. But all was not lost as the programme, that was to be, will be the basis for the Carol Concert in St Bride's on Sunday 18th December at 7-00p.m. All welcome. Entry by donation in support of Chorale activity and Badenoch and Strathspey Foodbank.

## 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)





## A new Minister –where are we?

We are STILL waiting to hear if we can call a minister! Following the General Assembly's decision in May 2021 to limit the number of ministers in each presbytery, Abernethy Presbytery submitted a Presbytery Mission Plan as approval of this was essential before we could call a minister. Presbytery set up a Mission Planning group to prepare the plan and set up the process following the departure of our minister and the Rev Gordon Strang at Grantown.

By February 2022, Presbytery had approved the third draft and this was submitted, only to find that an Asset Management Buildings Audit (AMBA) had to be completed for all the churches in the Presbytery before our plan could be considered! More delay! In June 2022, the recategorization of church buildings was discussed and in August the plan was submitted again. Then we had more questions from the Church of Scotland Presbytery Implementation Planning Group (PMPIG) and last month the Faith Nurture Forum approved our plan. So NEARLY there!

BUT the General Trustees were still unhappy about the buildings and wanted more buildings to be closed within five years so we could have no approval until this situation is resolved. Currently, we hope that the whole plan, including closure of buildings will be approved at the Presbytery meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> December to which congregations will be cited, with PMPIG approval following on 14<sup>th</sup> December. See 'Late News'.

We will then complete our parish profile, set up a nominating committee and start the process early in 2023. It has been a very lengthy and bureaucratic process with many frustrating delays. In the meantime, we are so grateful to Rev Mary Ellen Thomson for being our locum minister for all this time.

Beth Alder (Convener Presbytery Mission Planning Group)

## Interim Moderators

We are extremely grateful to Mary Stewart who has been our Interim Moderator since we lost our minister in the summer of 2021. Mary has acted with great diligence to the affairs of both our congregations since then and is stepping back at the end of the year to give more time to her own interests. Thank you, Mary for taking on the task!

Abernethy Presbytery have approved the appointment of Rev Christine Ritchie as our Interim Moderator from 1st January. Rev Christine is already familiar to us having taken joint services for us in recent months and we look forward to having her with us in the coming months to lead our kirk Sessions and assist with the organisation of services.

## Presbytery News

There is still an ongoing protracted debate on the formation of a Highland Presbytery and as things stand, this is not likely to happen soon. Rev James MacEwan has tendered his resignation as Presbytery Clerk with effect from mid-February 2023 and given the number of years he has carried out this task, he will be a big miss. The Business Committee have been tasked with finding a successor.

## Communion

There will be a joint communion service for Laggan and Newtonmore in St Bride's on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December at 11-30a.m. The retiring offering will be for CrossReach.

## Christmas Carols in Laggan

On Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December at 7-00p.m. there will be a 'Christmas Carols for Everyone' in Laggan Church. This will be followed by mince pies, coffee, mulled wine and soft drinks. All welcome.

## Church Services

The Worship Group will shortly be meeting to discuss arrangements for services for the three months from 1st January 2023. Our prime objective has been and will continue to be to have services in all of our three churches as often as practical and we are grateful to Rev Michael Mair, Rev Christine Ritchie and Alison Bardgett who have taken our monthly services on the last Sunday of the month to give Rev Mary Ellen Thomson some Sundays off! We have also been reliant of members of the group taking services and this will continue certainly in Laggan and Newtonmore, but some additional pulpit supply may be required to sustain our objective over the winter period.

## Christmas Services

### Laggan

24<sup>th</sup> December Watchnight 11.00p.m.

### Kingussie

24<sup>th</sup> December Watchnight 11.15p.m.  
25<sup>th</sup> December Joint Service 10.30a.m.

### Newtonmore

24<sup>th</sup> December Family service 7.00p.m.  
1<sup>st</sup> January Joint Service 11.30a.m.



# Kingussie News

## Monday Lunch

A soup and sandwich lunch is still held on the first Monday of each month (except January). Everyone is welcome. Just come along to Kingussie Church Hall at 12-30p.m. Cost £5. If you have a problem with transport or require further information, phone Jo Simpson 01540 661498.

## Kingussie Organ

The organ continues to play well. We were delighted to have an organist from the Netherlands, who was on holiday in the area, play for us. He was a talented musician and we hope he will return some time in the future. Meanwhile, an Italian organist, Giorgio Revelli is looking to include Kingussie in his June 2023 concert tour. He has recently been touring in Scandanavia and several European countries including his native Italy. Meanwhile, some of John Crombie's organ pieces featuring on the organ Facebook page have reached the Solomon Islands.

## Social and Fundraising and Craft

The recent quiz was enjoyed by the attendees who learned from the quiz questions! The Craft Group will be at Loch Insh on 18<sup>th</sup> December selling their Christmas wares.

## Warm Spaces

Plans are underway to extend the opening hours on a Thursday to 4-00p.m. providing hot drinks and snacks throughout the day with soup and bread at lunchtime. We are working closely with the local Catholic Church, the Free church, Aviemore foodbank, Kingussie High School and voluntary sector community groups. Suitable funding sources are currently being explored to assist with costs. The Free Church intends to open in a similar format on a Monday and the Catholic Church is offering volunteers to help both on a Monday and a Thursday. It is also our intention to offer a food share table so that anyone in need can help themselves. An application has gone to the Co-op to become a food share partner.

If you would like to volunteer for a Thursday, please speak to Eppy. Extra pairs of hands are needed and will be most welcome. There will be updates as this progresses.

## Flower Festival

The proceeds of the Summer Flower Festival are being distributed to Badenoch and Strathspey Transport Company and the Scripture Union at Altnacreiche. Recently our Interim Moderator Mary Stewart and Treasurer Roy Alexander presented a cheque for £165.40 to Maggie Lawson of the transport company.



*Mary Stewart and Treasurer Roy Alexander presented a cheque to Maggie Lawson of Badenoch Transport company*





## Late News

Subsequent to Beth Alder writing her article on the Presbytery Mission Plan, we received unexpected news from the General Trustees informing us, that at this late stage in the planning, they had downgraded Laggan Church to a B in the Presbytery Mission Plan which is now on the Agenda for discussion and probable approval at Presbytery on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022. Classification as a 'B' means 'ripe for disposal'. The full text of the Edict is:

Notice is hereby given that the Presbytery of Abernethy will consider and vote on the draft Presbytery Mission Plan on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December. The Plan includes Laggan Church being 'sold, let or otherwise disposed of' by the end of 2025. The congregation is hereby cited to appear for its interests at the meeting which begins at 7-00p.m.

While this is disappointing, there will be positive news if Presbytery approves the plan as we will then be able to proceed with the mechanics of calling a new minister for Kingussie linked with Laggan and Newtonmore so this will be a big step forward, though maybe not without its complications!

## Editor Comments

This news was unexpected, though to be fair, there have been some ideas in the background for the future, should this prove to be the situation. The church building has been downgraded on the basis that it did not have a kitchen or a toilet, and was currently only in use for Sunday services. The starting point for the future will be to find out the price at which the General Trustees are prepared to sell the building. Once this is known, options can be considered and appropriate steps hopefully taken to ensure that worship will continue to be available in the Laggan Community into the future.

Unfortunately, decisions on Presbytery Mission Plans are being considered on financial grounds and, without any realistic investigation, the fact that the Laggan Church building does not cost the Church of Scotland a penny, has been totally overlooked! The Church of Scotland itself may well be instigating its own decline by its current actions, but, as Christians we are empowered to spread the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, irrespective of this, and hopefully we will be able to do this.

We are not alone in this situation and the church building at Loch Insh, Kincaig has been placed in the same category as ourselves. The Church of Scotland as an organisation is asset rich and income poor and sustaining ministry has become a real challenge for the future.

## CHURCH OFFICE BEARERS

### Interim Moderator:

**Mary Stewart (Until 31.12.2022)**

Tel: 01479 810368 E-mail: maryes@btinternet.com

**Rev. Christine Ritchie (From 1.1.2023)**

Tel: 01479 873419 E-mail: gandcritchie70@gmail.com

### Kingussie

#### **Session Clerk:**

**Sandy Peebles**

Tel: 01540 661965 E-mail: sandy@ats.me.uk

#### **Treasurer:**

**Jean Munro**

Tel: 01540 661833 E-mail: munro342@btinternet.com

#### **Property Convenor:**

**Sandy Peebles**

Tel: 01540 661965 E-mail: sandy@ats.me.uk

**Charity Numbers SCO05490 | SCO21546**

### Locum:

**Rev. Mary Ellen Thomson**

Tel: 01540 667226 E-mail: marythomson835@btinternet.com

### Laggan and Newtonmore

#### **Session Clerk:**

**Alison Armstrong**

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#### **Treasurer:**

**Roy Alexander**

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#### **Property Convenor:**

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