



DORNOCH PARISH MAGAZINE

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The west aisle of the Cathedral

Contacts

Interim Moderator and Locum Minister: Carol Anne Porter
Email: <ca.porter76@icloud.com>
01862 892292

Session Clerk: Mrs Liz Manson
Email: <dornochcathedralsessionclerk@gmail.com>

Treasurer: Kim McCarthy
Email: <treasurer@dornoch-cathedral.com>

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Minister's Thoughts

Dear friends

Is it too late now to wish you a Happy New Year? Och, there's still loads of it left so I'm going to do it anyway! A very Happy New Year to YOU! I hope it brings much that is good your way - love, joy, compassion - and I hope it brings opportunities for you to be these things to others.

This year is going to be one of change for the cathedral congregation. There will likely be a union with neighbouring congregations, a merging of leadership, perhaps new ways of leading. There will, we hope, be opportunity to call a permanent minister to serve the united charge. And, through it all, we will seek to be love and joy and compassion wherever we can and as often as we can to whoever we can. Because that is what we are called to as disciples of the carpenter from Nazareth.

Some say change is slow in the church, that we are resistant to it. And sometimes some of us want it to be that way because it makes us feel safe when everything else threatens to unsteady us. But, this congregation has really shown great capacity to manage change since the turn of the year, moving out of the cathedral for this coldest part of the year to worship in the warmth and comfort of the West Church Hall. Does everyone like it? Probably not. Do some people prefer it? Maybe they do. Either way, attendance is strong and even those who didn't choose it are there and part of it. And we would be so much less without them.

I wonder if you might think of joining in on Sunday? Because the truth is, we're so much less without *you*. We miss the spark only you can bring. Miss the question only you think to ask. Miss the cry only you dare to voice. Miss the story only you can tell.

As with God, church is nothing if not a place to be yourself. Come and be at home here. The door is wide open! Come and be the change we need, the change we never *knew* we needed but cannot be without. Come and be your honest self. And love and joy and compassion will become us all.

Blessings and peace to you,

Carol Anne



Dates for your diary

Friday 27th January at 10.30am – 12.00pm
COFFEE MORNING – WEST CHURCH HALL

Tuesday 7th February at 7pm
DEACONS COURT

Friday 24th February at 10.30am – 12.00pm
COFFEE MORNING – WEST CHURCH HALL

Monday 6th March at 7pm
KIRK SESSION

Sunday 19th March
MOTHERS DAY

Friday 24th March at 10.30am – 12.00pm
COFFEE MORNING – WEST CHURCH HALL

Sunday 26th March
CLOCKS CHANGE – FORWARD ONE HOUR

Thursday 6th April at 7pm
DEACONS COURT

Friday 7th April
GOOD FRIDAY

Sunday 9th April
EASTER SUNDAY

Monday 10th April
EASTER MONDAY

Life Events

Funeral

Mrs Helen Kruger - Died 7th December, Funeral held on 14th December

Baptism

12th December - Cailean George Sutherland Burnett, son of Louisa and William Burnett

The Guild

On Tuesday 6th December we welcomed a good turnout of members and friends to our Christmas Afternoon Tea. The committee had decorated the hall and tea tables and provided and served a delicious selection of goodies. Roddy Maclean had organised the entertainment, a selection of poems, duets and of course some favourite Christmas Carols which were sung with much gusto. This was followed by a Christmas reflection read by Anne Barclay and Margaret Macrae thanked all who had taken part then closed with a prayer and a blessing. We all enjoyed our special afternoon.

On Tuesday 10th January the Guild met as usual at 2.30pm in the West Church Hall. It was a rainy afternoon but there was a good turnout of members.

Trish Geddes and Morag Macaskill led the devotions and Morag introduced our speaker for the afternoon. Carol Anne Porter needed no introduction as we have come to know her each Sunday morning. Carol Anne sang some songs she had written, with beautiful words and melodies. She shared some stories of her childhood, love of music, to teaching and her final calling to the ministry. She is one talented lady and Gwen Muir thanked her for brightening up our cold and damp afternoon. After the blessing we all enjoyed a welcome cup of tea.

The next Guild meeting will be on Tuesday 24th January at 2.30pm when Corin Macleod will sharing her Floral Skills with us. All are very welcome.



Cathedral Coffee Mornings

Please come along and enjoy company and home baking in the West Church Hall at our regular Coffee Mornings which run from 10.30-12.00 on Fridays.

Dates for your diary:

Friday 27th January	Friday 21st April
Friday 24th February	Friday 26th May
Friday 24th March	Friday 16th June

Can you spare some time to help on Fridays? We would like to invite anyone who has some time to join our social committee to help organise a range of other social events throughout the year.

Contact Una Reid on une.reid@icloud.com



Stay for a Blether

With Sunday Services in the West Church Hall in January and February we are enjoying a cuppa after the Service. There is home baking is definitely an attraction. Thanks are due to the Women's Group giving of their time to providing the goodies that allow us to share time together.

Getting your copy of the Parish News

- Paper Copies (£1) will be available at Sunday Service
- Digital Copy - £5 for the year (but you pay £1 for each paper copy you uplift from the Cathedral)

You are encouraged to email the digital copy to friends and family, to keep them in touch with our Cathedral news.

Payment – 2 methods

1. Put £5 in an envelope and mark “Parish News” with your name and email address and it will get to me from those on door duty.
2. Use electronic banking and say it is for the Parish News.

Bank details are Dornoch Cathedral, 80-06-36 and account number 06002380.

All items to be included should be emailed to me, using newsletter@dornoch-cathedral.com

Thank you,

Willie MacKay

Seeking Aliveness

Listening is probably the single most important thing we as followers of Jesus can do in these days.

Though the church feels to be a rather fringe event and a fragile thing to boot, God is not done. God is speaking still, calling us to share God's mission in and to the world. And God's mission is far from fringe or fragile. It transforms the world. It transforms us.

Over the last few months I have been inviting you to get your hands on a copy of this book, 'Seeking Aliveness' by Brian D McLaren, which I hope might help us listen and listen together. It features a key verse for each week of the year (printed in the book), three fuller readings from Scripture to look up, and a few thoughts to ponder and dig into as each week unfolds.

My thought was, my hope is, that in reading Scripture together between Sundays, in praying and thinking together, in listening together each day, we might sense what God's mission is in this place and what God is calling us to here and now.

If you haven't joined in yet, don't worry, it's not to late, each week is a new beginning. And if you're on the journey, don't forget to chat to me about how it's going, I'd love to know. AND, if you feel there is benefit in gathering small groups to listen and talk together, again, I'd love to hear from you.

Go well,

Carol Anne



Meeting The Bible again for the First Time

The Rev. Graeme Muckart is planning to offer a short series of meetings under the above heading, to start at the beginning of February. We would look together at such topics as “What is the Bible?”, “How did the Bible come to us?” “What is included and what isn’t? – and how was that decided?” etc., and whatever else you might have wondered about which emerges from discussion we share in.

This is open to everyone. *It would help with planning to decide when and where to meet, if anyone interested would let Graeme know by Sunday 22nd. January. Email: <gw2m.kildale@gmail.com> Mobile/text 07737 424565.*

News from the Pews

Just before Christmas you may have noticed steeplejacks working on our tower. For safety reasons we had to close the Cathedral until they completed their work. It has been necessary to repair the gallery walkway to allow access for work required to the clock faces. Materials had to be hoisted from ground level to the outside walkway.

We did receive good news from the architect when he inspected the tower. He commented that the structure of our Cathedral was the best he has seen. However, we still need to maintain the building and that is costly.

Cathedral grounds

As a congregation we have benefitted from a generous offer from staff at The Carnegie Club, Skibo Castle. The trees around the boundary wall had become very untidy with many young shoots growing from the base and also the hanging branches stretching below the outer walls

The Club arranged for their forestry and estate team to clear around all the tree roots and take away all the cut wood leaving our grounds in much better condition.



Steeplejacks hoisting materials from ground level due to the narrow twisting staircase.





Cathedral Youth Theatre Group

Originally planned for April 2020, the Cathedral Youth Theatre Group finally performed the Covid-delayed “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe” to two packed houses on Saturday 10th December in the Cathedral West Church Hall. So full was the hall that some spectators were even sitting on the stage!

The young cast, with ages ranging from 8 to 13, entertained the audience with many outstanding performances. There were several surprising and entertaining diversions from the original well-known tale as the four children left London as war evacuees in a train accompanied by Kylie Minogue’s “Locomotion” with the whole cast for company. The faun, Mr Tumnus, also took to the stage tap-dancing to the strains of “Singing in the Rain” - skills never before seen in Narnia!

Part play, part musical, the tale was told through dance, song and scenes of high drama climaxing when Aslan (the King Lion) was sacrificed to save the wayward child, Edward. At this point, the song “Make You Feel My Love” was deeply moving as was the Angel’s evocative dance which brought about Aslan’s resurrection.

The overwhelming consensus was of children truly having fun and enjoying themselves.

The production squad and music maestro Roddy Maclean were suitably thanked for a great team effort as were Stephen Mackintosh’s sound and lighting crew.

The next show is planned for the summer 2023 with sessions recommencing in February. (Details will be posted on the group’s Facebook page.)



Natter & Nosh Christmas Lunch



It was a sell-out Christmas Lunch with “no space at the Inn” for those not quick enough to book a seat. What a terrific feast our chefs, Trish and Liz, and their energetic team of “elves” provided for the regular attendees. I’m sure all will agree they deserve a short break. Lunches have now commenced in January with the Natter every bit as important as the Nosh, especially for those that live on their own.

The dates for Natter and Nosh for the next 6 months are as follows:-

January 16th and 30th
February 13th and 27th
March 13th and 27th

April 17th
May 1st, 15th and 29th
June 12th

Boys’ Brigade

The Junior Section and Anchor Boy groups of the Boys Brigade had a busy lead up to Christmas. Both sections start the new term with their New Year parties and then the Junior Section Boys will be busy working on their figure matching skills for the annual competition in March. The Anchor Boys will be starting to learn basic drill along with all the usual games and activities. We have a few new boys due to join us so we look forward to welcoming them.

Edible Christmas Gifts & Welcome Table

Congratulations to the Social Committee, who sold all of their Edible Christmas Gifts with the £250 going to the Cathedral funds.



The Welcome Team also had their sales table available for after Services so the congregation could see what they might buy for stocking fillers.

Labyrinth

Nearly 150 people came into the Cathedral on the afternoon of Hogmanay to enjoy the calmness and peace of walking slowly round the labyrinth.



January Fund Raising Concert



A very successful concert was held in Dornoch Cathedral on the 2nd of January, featuring a variety of talented musicians including Jennifer Port, Strathfleet Buttons and Bows, Niamh Mercer and Cody Thomson.

We are very thankful to those who performed for us as without them it wouldn't have been possible. The concert's sound and lighting were provided by Stephen Mackintosh who did an amazing job at creating a great atmosphere for the evening and we are also grateful to him and also to the Cathedral who allowed us to use the beautiful building for our concert.

Thanks to those who attended and donated. We managed to raise over £700 which will be put towards our funds for our World Challenge to Morocco where we will be learning how climate change affects different parts of the world. Morocco is particularly affected by the rise in sea level so during our trip we will be building flood defences for a school amongst other activities.

Thank you everyone, from Isla & Lucy.



(L to R) Isla & Lucy Robertson who organised and compared the concert.



Jennifer Port played the clarsach

Cathedral Welcome & Sales Team

Despite a shortened period of opening and a reduced number of shifts, we are delighted to say that during 2022, the Sales and Welcome Table achieved a profit of just under £2,500! An enormous and sincere THANK YOU goes to all our volunteers - you know we couldn't have done it without you.

For those who are unsure how we work, our friendly team operates between May and September each year, based in the centre of the Cathedral. However, we are always looking for more volunteers to join this established group. Training can be given and duties include selling items from our Sales Table as well as offering a welcoming smile to the hundreds of visitors who come in to marvel at the beauty of our Cathedral, its history and its stained glass windows.

Could YOU spare 2 - 3 hours once a fortnight to help?

Volunteers work in teams of 2 - so it is an ideal opportunity for friends, couples or partners to spend time together as well as helping to raise funds towards the maintenance of the Cathedral.

If you would like to learn more - please contact Sue on 01862 810415, Anne on 01862 811520 or Lisa on 01862 810973.

We'd love to meet you!



No Tree Christmas Tree

There was a wonderful response from the whole community for the No-Tree Christmas Tree in December. We had 22 'trees' for this 2022 display which were displayed in the Cathedral. The imagination and creativity involved were much admired by all who saw them.

The Womens Group greatly appreciate the thought and work that people gave to the displays.



The Chemists



The Cathedral Choir



Highland Hospice



Womens Group

Prayer Group

Sundays 9:50am to 10:40am at the West Church Hall

You've heard the saying "the family that prays together, stays together"..... how can we apply that within our cathedral family?

Do you value the power of prayer? Does your prayer life need a reboot, a bit more discipline? Are you looking for some fellowship in prayer? For these, and a variety of other reasons, we started a Cathedral prayer group some years ago, which meets on a Sunday morning before service.

We pray for issues important to us as individuals, for people we have been asked to pray for, for the life and work of the cathedral, for God's hand on national and international events. Some of us pray aloud, others join silently, there is no right or wrong way.

Matthew's gospel tells us that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there among them" and we feel His spirit and leadership with us in our prayer fellowship. We would love more people to join us. We meet in the west church hall little upstairs room on Sundays at 9.50/10.00am and pray together until about 10.40.

Make this one of your New Year resolutions?

"My own, my dearest, beloved child

I see you.

I see you wrestling with all of your hopes and your doubts,

Please know that I love you beyond all measure.

So tell me about all of it - talk to me - so that I may listen."

Lord, teach us how to pray....

Contact Alison or Debbie for more information.

<ak_bartlett@btinternet.com> or <debbie.miller205@gmail.com>



Prayer Tree

We don't light candles in the Cathedral but we do have a prayer tree where visitors can place a prayer, a memorial, or a reflection. The Prayer Tree is situated on a table near the West door of the Cathedral.

The prayer tree is well used with prayer labels written in a range of different languages by visitors of all ages. Children often leave a message, a thought, or a drawing and those too young to write 'scribble-write' or draw their message.

It has been great to see things getting back to normal since the Cathedral re-opened to visitors post pandemic, and the summer months were particularly busy, with 100 labels put out each week.

The last full year before the Covid pandemic saw over 1600 visitors to the tree.

The Prayer Tree has had candle shaped prayer tabs throughout Advent and into January.

It sat alongside the wonderful display of 'alternative' Christmas trees and had a number of memories and prayers placed by visitors, some from afar.

Amongst these tabs were prayers for:

- *all those in want this Christmas*
- *peace and harmony throughout the world*
- *a more Christian world*
- *finding joy in every moment*
- *for us to know God's love in each and every one of us.*

Anyone who is spending some time in the Cathedral, should take a look and read the prayer labels there.



Poem

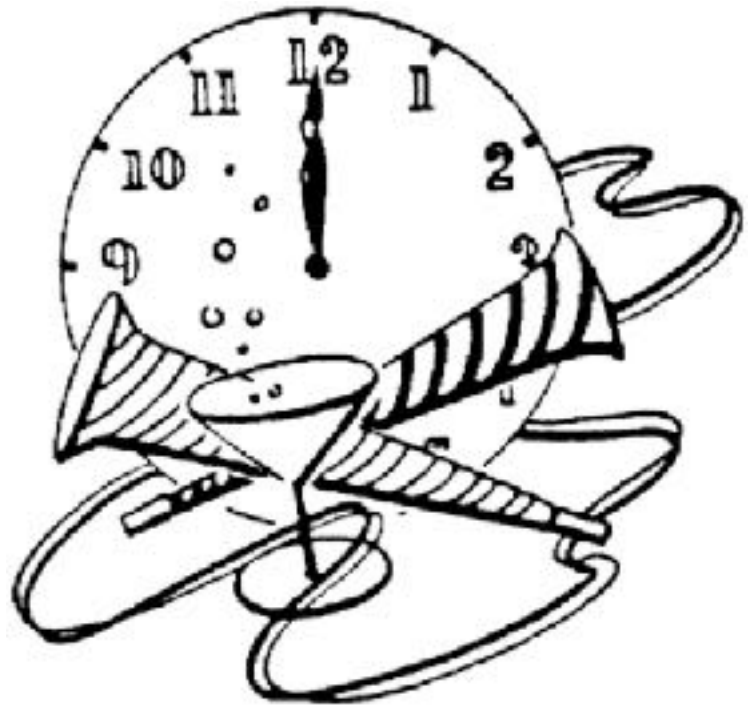
Rev John Chambers used this poem by Rev Stephen Brown in his New Years Day Service.

*It's just another moment,
When the clock strikes twelve,
But it brings a New Year to be;
Born out of the cradle or the ashes of the old.
And you, good God, remain:
Redeeming failure and fulfilling hope.*

*And the clock strikes:
Another moment chiming change but bringing still
The need to gaze on heaven's heights
And back to earth to our short span
And realise your care for all
Is boundless.....*

*.....and timeless: every moment weighted with love:
A blessing from your shining face
To everyone in every place
A promise from eternity.*

We thank you.



Dornoch Fibre Fest

Keep time available for the weekend 11th & 12th March for a very varied programme of activities. Annette Clunas starts the weekend with a talk in St Finnbarrs Church on Friday 10th at 7.00pm on the History of Fair Isle Knitting. The full programme can be viewed at www.fibrefest.org.uk Bookings are arriving quickly since opening in early January.



Visitors

Visitors to the Cathedral come from across the world. Many will be part of a coach tour with some of these also on a cruise liner. There is page after page of comments at the time of Queen Elizabeth II's death and funeral. What also stands out is the number of visitors that enjoy a prayerful and peaceful moment in our Cathedral.

A sample of comments from the Visitors Book:

The Young Family, Froickheim, Angus – *Rest in Peace now. There will never be another Queen like you. Thank you for your commitment to us all.*

Declan Sheerin, Dublin – *A Uachtarain agus a charade – go raribh maith agat. “Dear Queen and friend. Thank you very much.”*

Dana, Sophie & Mandy Dart, USA – *“Bless you and God keep you. RIP Queen Elizabeth.”*

Barbara Sacuatore, Torino, Italy – *“Rest in Peace”*

Karen Cormack, Buckie – *“Thank you Ma'am. An amazing woman.”*

Antony Ross James – *“Emotional visit realising that my Ross family ancestors must have worshipped in this marvellous House of God.”*

David, Owen & Owen Petherick, Arbroath – *“Our grandson, Owen, really liked your Cathedral, especially the stained glass window. Amazing. The words of a four year old.”*

Jennifer Smith, Kirkcaldy – *“Used to holiday in Dornoch when very young in the sixties. Happy memories with my Mum and Dad.”*

Emma Wickham, Australia – *“Always been fond of the Cathedral. A Dornoch landmark. Just beautiful.”* (Emma's father was our Chemist for many years).

L. Broadley & A. Londale, travelling south from Orkney – *“Beautiful and peaceful. Exquisite windows, delightful Prayer Tree. Prayerful atmosphere. Many Blessings.”*

Marc, Elysia & Emily Smith (on holiday from North Carolina) – *“Gorgeous Cathedral. We love the historic building and Christmas trees from the Community. So clever.”*

Sally Sutherland Tirado, California – *“Home of my ancestors. So grateful to share this history with the people of Dornoch.”*

Hannah Sinclair & Sharon Rose – *“Beautiful Cathedral. Tranquil and refreshing experience.”*

Patrick Vischjiger, Holland – *“Marvellous stained glass.”*

From two young children: **Oscar D. Price** – *“Plenty of fun preaching to my Mum and Dad saying what my Church Leader would say.”* **Rhea Price** – *“Very beautiful place. Love the history and stain glass.”* **Rhiona Price** – *“Very peaceful Church. Beautiful windows.”*

Lorraine & Vi Faulkner – *“Beautiful and so peaceful. It's been a while since we've been back to the Cathedral, always make a point of coming in.”*

