

DORNOCH PARISH MAGAZINE

£1.00 (to cover costs)



Sunday Morning Services returned to the Cathedral on 5th of March when we celebrated Communion. We are having tea and coffee after Services, when we can share time and enjoy a blether.

Contacts

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

As this reaches your hands (or your screens), the week the church calls Holy will be just around the corner. It's a week filled with more lows than highs, it feels. And sometimes, honestly, it's hard to tell which is which.

Jesus, the itinerant teacher, has only been on the scene for three years. Think on that. The movement which has, for centuries, ignited hearts for love and minds for justice, lasted just three years. And it came to an end in the most horrific way with Jesus, the man who said, love your enemies, nailed to a tree and left to die. It's about as big a low as you can get... but the story isn't over.

Standing near the cross, is John the fisherman and a huddle of women: Mary (Jesus' mother), his aunty and another two Marys including Mary Magdalene (the one whose presence so affronted others but whom Jesus loved). And it will be Mary who, two days later, will come, quietly, while it's still dark, to the tomb where Jesus' broken body is laid... and find it empty.

Mary. Not even death can stop her wanting to be present with Jesus. Frantic to

know what has happened, she stumbles into a

man she mistakes for the gardener. If you've taken him, just tell me where. You can hear her desperation. The words not said. It's all I have left. He looks at her... and loves her. This man, he knows her and loves her. And when she hears her name on his lips, Mary knows it is her Lord, risen from death.

Presence is perhaps an underrated gift. But presence, being with someone, even or perhaps especially in tough times, is about as precious a gift as you can give to another. Mary surely knew this, stood at the foot of the cross and in the darkness before she heard her name. And, of course, when she recognised her Lord and held him as if she would never again let him go.

Presence is the very heart of the Easter story. It is perhaps the low and the high. Jesus, loving us to death and back so we might know him with us in all we face. Jesus, risen and present, bringing life from what feels to be dead

A truly joyful Easter to you when it comes. The story is still being written. And it is yours to live...

Peace to you,

Carol Anne



Dates for your diary

ANNUAL STATED MEETING - WEST CHURCH HALL Wednesday 19th April at 7.00pm

DEACONS' COURT MEETING - WEST CHURCH HALL Tuesday 28th March at 7.00pm

HOLY WEEK EASTER IN THE CATHEDRAL Monday 3rd to Thursday 6th April at 6.00pm Good Friday 7th April at 7.30pm EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE - BEACH CAR PARK 6.10am - sunrise expected at 6.24am then breakfast in West Church Hall

EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE - CATHEDRAL 9th April at 11.00am

EASTER COMMUNION EVENING SERVICE - CATHEDRAL

Sunday 9th April at 6.30pm

Blessing

On Sunday 12th February, after worship, Sue and Roger gathered together some friends and neighbours to celebrate their Silver Wedding Anniversary. Carol Anne was pleased to be part of the celebration, giving thanks for their years together and blessing the years to come.

Warmest congratulations to you both.

Carol Anne



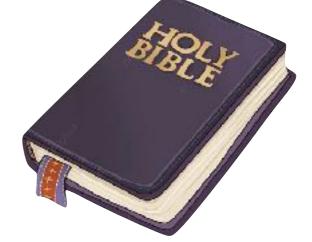
Bible Study - On-line

A Presbytery wide Bible study will be held on Tuesday evenings at 7, by Zoom, over the coming months. Each block of four weeks will be led by a different minister who will lead the study on a topic that interests them - and which will, hopefully, interest us!

11 April - 2 May **Doctor John Sterrett**

6 - 27 June The Reverend Lorna Tunstall
 5 - 26 Sep The Reverend Hilary Gardner
 7 - 28 Nov The Reverend Andrea Boye

To get the Zoom link sent to you nearer the time please email <fay@ecosse.net>



Life Events

Funeral

Mrs Eileen Cowan, Died 16th January, Funeral held on 1st February **Mr Peter Austerberry**, Died 12th February, Funeral held on 20th February

...'those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint...'

Finance update

Firstly a huge thank you to all who have given to the Cathedral this past year whether through regular offerings or one off donations. All are very much appreciated.

Although I can't yet give you the end of year accounts, there are some figures and facts that I can share with you. These will be available before our Annual Stated Meeting on Wednesday 19th April.

We've held several special collections and, as a result, have been able to send cheques away to Christian Aid £504.35, Poppy Scotland £345.93, and we have raised through our Smartie Appeal £1051.42 for the Pakistan Disaster Fund.

Carols for Christian Aid raised £583.43. This money will be split between Christian Aid and Moray Firth Radio Cash for Kids appeal. Our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day collections raised £869.88

Gift Day this year raised £6740 and this has been a welcome contribution to our Tower Repair Fund.

Offerings are down on 2021 which probably reflects a smaller congregation and less summer visitors attending services. However, it has been enough to keep us solvent despite rising utility bills which are significantly more than last year.

You can donate to Cathedral funds through the donate button on the new website <<u>https://www.dornoch-cathedral.com/</u>> - all donations are welcome.

Property - the Cathedral tower

With the weather looking up Northern Steeplejacks are looking in detail as to what works they're required/ allowed to do. They have been in touch with James Roy, the Conservation Architect overseeing the tower repairs, who is now going to contact Robert Lee, Church of Scotland Project Surveyor, to setup a zoom meeting with all of them to discuss other areas in need of attention that were identified in their inspection report e.g. pointing of coping stones around the walkway, painting of louvre windows, etc.

This only took place recently so it may be sometime before we get a further update!

Property Convenor

World Day of Prayer

We held two World Day of Prayer Services in Dornoch on Friday 3rd March . The Service had been written by the women of Taiwan and it was entitled 'I have heard about your Faith.'

Our first service was held in the morning at Oversteps where we were joined by many of the residents. It was a very pleasant Service led by a member of staff and included well known hymns. After the service we enjoyed tea/coffee and a good chat with the residents.

In the afternoon we held a Service in the West Church Hall, which was well attended and the readers represented our different local Churches. It was a very pleasant Service. One of the hymns was new to many but Roddy guided us through it.



One hundred year old, Eric Dawson read the lesson from Ephesians with Fay Wilkinson and Monica Dargie the Leaders.

After the Service we all enjoyed a tea provided for us by members of the Cathedral Guild which gave us all the opportunity for a chat and a 'catch up'.

Cathedral Welcome & Sales Team

even the tiniest thing helps so much...

Did you know ... that over the last five summer seasons 1,615 Cathedral Mice were purchased by our visitors?! Just imagine all those little mice (many in children's pockets) travelling around the world as happy reminders of a visit to a small Highland town where the discovery of the "unexpected gem" of our beautiful Cathedral was made.

Did you know ... that over the last five seasons **2,082** Crosses in Pockets were purchased by visitors? People from all over the world who were intrigued and delighted by these colourful, hand made little tapestry pockets with their matching crosses and hidden printed insert, quietly declaring the Christian message. Some of those of who buy the crosses confide: "I don't usually buy this sort of thing, but I know my mother/Granny/friend would love to have one of these to keep with her" ... and then they often buy more than one; we wonder ... do those extra ones actually remain with the purchaser?

Did you know ... that over the last five seasons, sales of those two items alone, (out of over 50 others), raised £7,681 towards the upkeep of our Cathedral? So ...

Please could YOU spare 2 - 3 hours once a fortnight from May to mid-September to help us?

Our lovely Volunteers work in teams of 2 - so it is an ideal opportunity for friends, couples or partners to spend time together, whilst also raising funds for the Cathedral. This year we desperately need several new Volunteers to swell the team. Please could you help us?

The 2023 Season will open on Monday, 1st May 2023 ... Please get in touch!! Training will be given and we'd love to meet you! Please contact: Sue (810415), Anne (811520) or Lisa (810973).



"...we really need your help ... squeak, squeak..."

Women's Group

The Cathedral Women's Group have been meeting monthly as usual and welcome fresh faces which is demonstrated by one newbie.

Having recently moved to Dornoch and settled into the Cathedral, I was asked one Sunday morning, if I fancied coming along to the Cathedral's Womens Group? I thought I'd give it a try! What fun! We've been on walks, had a games night, made Christmas wreaths and served tea/coffee after Sunday Services. It's a great way to meet others and have fun. Like I thought – why not give it a try!

Daffodowndilly

She wore her yellow sun-bonnet, She wore her greenest gown; She turned to the south wind And curtsied up and down. She turned to the sunlight And shook her yellow head, And whispered to her neighbour: "Winter is dead".

Cathedral sketch



This sketch was drawn by Hannah Graham, Granddaughter of Rev. John and Anne Chambers. The artistic genes from Grannie Chambers are clearly visible.

Dornoch Guild

Tuesday 24th January

Margaret Macrae led us in worship and then introduced Corin Macleod from Floral Creations. Corin told about environmentally friendly products that are used in floral decoration, limiting the use of plastic. Most products are easily obtainable. There were a lot of questions from the group and Corin was a fund of information on the care of cut flowers and house plants. She then demonstrated how to make a beautiful hand tied bouquet. All agreed that it had been a lovely afternoon surrounded by nature.



Tuesday 14th February
Anne Barclay led us in
worship and welcomed
our organist and
choirmaster, Roddy
Maclean.



Roddy introduced favourite hymns, old and new. These were sung with great gusto by all present and some were sung by members of the Cathedral Choir. Roddy introduced a few of the hymns giving details of how they came to be written. It was most interesting to discover that some of the most beautiful words were written by people who had known great personal tragedy or heartbreak in their lives but showed their faith had triumphed over adversity. All in all it was a joyful afternoon.

Tuesday 28th February

Liz and Trish led the worship and then welcomed one of our Guild member, Sue and her husband Roger Boyce.

Sue and Roger had planned a trip to Canada in 2019 but after 3 cancellations due to the Pandemic they finally set off in April 2022. Roger introduced the photos shown by Sue with some entertaining stories and commentary. It was lovely to see the beautiful photos of the stunning Canadian scenery on their trip from Calgary, through the Rockies to Vancouver then on the cruise from Vancouver to Juneau, Alaska.

It was a delight to share their memories and personal anecdotes.

Morag Macaskill thanked them very warmly on behalf of the Guild.



Sue and Roger on Sulphur Mountain, above Banff, Alberta, with Cascade Mountains in the background



Sue & Roger with sled dogs at a "mushers" camp near Juneau, Alaska

Easter Poem

After playing the role of Barabbas in the town Passion Play in Essex, I watched as the story played as if Barabbas himself was watching from the shadowy corners. It was then I that became convinced that Barabbas could not be left an unchanged man by what he witnessed. Some may have reservations about this but I am equally sure that without the hope of salvation for Barabbas there is little hope of salvation for me.

What follows in an imagined testimony by Barabbas, or perhaps the Barabbas within me. May you find hope in the promise of the cross as I have.

Barabbas - A Testimony to Love

I thought my life was over When they dragged me from my cell; At Pilate's word the cross would Surely end this living hell.

But presented to the angry mod It was my name I heard them cry, And for the Man they'd called Messiah They shouted "Crucify!".

I may have felt hard done by Within those walls of stone, But I had been no angel – I had crimes to be atoned.

Yet this Man was a good man Still they sent Him to the cross; He was to be the sacrifice, This world would know the loss.

They set me free from prison But He set me free from sin, And only He can free my mind From the demon powers within.

The prison gates are open, The path to life is free. No longer death within those walls For Christ has died for me.

Easter blessings, Alasdair MacKay



Womens Group Evening in the Cathedral

Although this missed Issue 2 and we are nearer Easter than Christmas it is worth finding space this time. To the reader it misses the special delivery Mike Hemming gave during the special evening the Women's Group organised before Christmas.

Nativity Play

Oh Miss, I don't want to be Joseph,
I really don't want to be him,
With a cloak of bright red and a towel round my
head.

And a cotton wool beard on my chin.

Oh miss, please don't make me a shepherd. I just won't be able to sleep. I'll go weak at the knees and wool makes me sneeze, And I really am frightened of sheep.

On Miss, I just can't be the landlord, Who says there's no room in the Inn. I'll get in a fright when it comes to the night, And I KNOW that I'll let Mary in.

Oh Miss, you're not serious – an angel? Can't Peter take that part instead? I'll look such a clown in a white silky gown, And a halo up on my head.

Oh Miss, I am NOT being a camel, Or a cow, or an ox, or an ass. I'll look quite absurd and I won't say a word, And all of the audience will laugh.

Oh Miss, I'd rather not be a Wise Man, Who brings precious gifts from afar, But the right part for me, - and I hope you'll agree In this play - can I be the STAR?



Meeting the Bible Again for the First Time

The Rev. Graeme Muckart shamelessly plagiarised this title (from a book with a similar name) for a series of relaxed meetings with the aim of 'doing what it says on the tin.'

All of us in the Kirk are familiar with the Bible to a greater or lesser extent. We hear passages from it read at every service of worship; we probably all have copies of it at home; we hold it in particular regard as "Holy Scripture" and the foundation of our faith. Questions we have been exploring are the sort which we perhaps overlook, yet which have an important bearing upon how we approach the Bible and how we understand what we find there. Questions such as "What is in the Bible?", "Where did it come from?", "How has it reached us?"

In our meetings so far we have looked at the first part - the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible - noting its rich variety of literature. Attention has been paid to the complex processes of selection, transmission and editing of the text, and to the historical framework within which it arrived at its present form. We have seen, for example, that it is not a firmly fixed collection of books. There are some popular stories told and incidents portrayed by many artists from writings not found in our Bibles, but which are included in those used by the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches (and incidentally give us popular names like Susan and Toby!) Such topics as the nature and purpose of prophecy, and the retelling of some accounts of Israel's history which don't 'match' have been looked at.

Recognising the obvious importance of the fact that the Bibles we read are all translations, and from ancient languages, we have traced in outline at least the journey from the sources to the versions we read, with a brief history of the English language Bible. Taking a closer look at the Psalms, so important to both Jewish and Christian worship, highlighted the particular challenge of translating poetry.

We now move on to the New Testament. Please feel free to come and join us on Thursdays, 10.30 a.m. in the West Church Hall meeting room. The present series will end on 30th. March.

Cathedral Youth Theatre Group

After a well-earned break, our theatrical youngsters are up and acting again! Their excitement was palpable when told that the next performance is to be "The Lion King".

Everyone seems to be keen to audition for every part! We're in the early stages at the moment but the acting, singing, dancing (and enthusiasm!) so far shows great promise for a performance to remember in June.

Meeting in the West Church Hall on a Monday after school during the school term, all youngsters from P6 upwards are warmly invited. Hakuna Matata!!





Boys' Brigade

Both the Anchor Boys and the Junior BB Section have been working hard on their drill in the last few weeks. The Anchor Boys are working on standing to attention, at ease and marching in a "nearly" straight line!

The Junior Section Boys are taking part in a Highland Battalion figure marching competition later this month. Postman Archie MacDonald has been very kind at coming along to help smarten up their techniques and we wish them good luck for the competition.

The last competition was held in early March 2020 and Dornoch won that year so there is absolutely no pressure on this year's team! We will let you know how we get on in the next Parish News.

Morag & Isabel





Quiz Night

Once again, John Mackenzie as quizmaster entertained us with a varied selection of questions that often provoked discussion in the teams as they settled on what the answer they would finally write down. From General Knowledge and History then to Sport and Food & Drink, John had us stretching our grey matter but also having great fun.

The winning team were consistent in all sections and as you see from the photo were "Heroes" for the night. For those that did not know that skin is an organ – you know NOW. Don't you worry A.M. we had it wrong as well and that was after out voting Mr. M (junior).

L to R: Elspeth Sim, Moira Mackenzie, John Mackenzie, Trish Geddes, Fay Wilkinson.

Thank you Una and Social Committee and John Mackenzie for an excellent evening and as well as laughter and fun we raised over £170 for the Cathedral. John is thinking of selling the answers for a tenner next time!



L to R: Elspeth Sim, Moira Mackenzie, John Mackenzie, Trish Geddes, Fay Wilkinson.

Cathedral Coffee Mornings - update

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 24th March

- * Friday 28th April Friday 26th May
- * Friday 23rd June
- *Please note change of dates

Can you spare some time to help on Fridays? Could you spare a

little of your time to join the social committee to run or even help organise some of our social events throughout the year. It is a fun group. Please contact Una Reid on <une.reid@icloud.com>

Operation Orange

This has been set up by one of the CofS Mission partners, Fiona Kendall, who works in Rome with Mediterranean Hope, a refugee project created by the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy (FCEI).

The Mediterranean Hope programme works directly with refugees and migrants including those trapped in the chain of exploitation in the fruit growing area of Calabria in the south of Italy. Having built trust through a

range of social initiatives, Mediterranean Hope has now opened a social hostel providing decent accommodation to workers who would otherwise be forced to live in inhumane conditions.



SOS Rosarno is one of the co-operatives FCEI is helping. By actively marketing citrus fruit direct to the consumer, bypassing the large supermarkets, they can set their own prices and pass on some of the profit directly to the workers, improving all aspects of their lives. Sutherland Presbytery was part of a pilot project last year when some of us bought boxes of their wonderful organic oranges. This year we had ordered 21 boxes just from members and friends of the Cathedral. However, due to complications with importing the fruit, the orders from all over Scotland were cancelled.

On Sunday 26th Feb we had a fundraising toast and marmalade breakfast after church and raised the amazing amount of £513 to send to Mediterranean Hope. Many thanks to all who contributed generously.

School visit to the Cathedral

Mr Hepburn took his Primary 3 class to visit the Cathedral as part of their Local Studies. Carol Anne and Morag explained about our Cathedral and the children enjoyed searching for answers to their questionnaire. Which adult was asked how older they were when the Cathedral was built?

Lucia thought, "I liked to search for pictures on the stained glass windows".



Lily said, "It was an amazing time because it was fun" and Olivia also enjoyed the morning, "It was fantastic because it was fun".

Caitlin enjoyed... "I liked looking for the gargoyles outside".





Sunday Prayer Group

Over the last few weeks the suffering caused by the terrible earthquake in Turkey/Syria and the continuing devastation and pain of the war in Ukraine, have focused our hearts and minds.

Life is so full of tragic uncertainties that we felt humbled as we came before God in prayer asking for help, healing, wisdom and peace.

We also thank God for the ministry of the different groups and people in the Cathedral and wider presbytery.

Often we cannot understand where God is leading but we know that we are loved and heard by Him.

A Celtic prayer of blessing

May the Father of Life pour out His grace on you; May you feel His hand in everything you do And be strengthened by the things He brings you through: This is my prayer for you.

The Cathedral and me

A few members of our congregation were asked if they would consider sharing their thoughts about what did they miss about Church during COVID and what they enjoy about worshipping in the Cathedral. Here are a few of their comments.

March 21st 2020 - Dornoch Cathedral shut its doors to the public for first Covid lockdown and I buried my husband. It was such a loss not finding solace in a spiritual place and meeting up with Cathedral friends when it was most needed.

As it was not too long before Easter, all Lenten meetings, Holy Week, our dawn service and Easter Day cancelled and what a miss that was.

The Sundays that followed were strange but with amazing technology, prayers and short sermons aired on YouTube and Zoom what a difference that made for me.

We were also very fortunate to follow our Moderator, Martin Fair on his walking spiritual journeys round parts of Scotland which I have never visited.

I did wonder how communion would be celebrated that first lockdown and it was great that so many members of the congregation recorded themselves receiving and passing bread and wine on line. It was good to see so many familiar faces after being in our own homes alone for weeks.

Now three years on we are now back to worship, fellowship, welcome table, concerts in the beautiful building and it is so special and meaningful to say The Lord's Prayer again together.

Covid has made a major impact in all of our lives. Some appreciated the time of quiet whereas others became affected by "cabin fever" feeling cut off from normal living. As Christians we are encouraged to gather together for fellowship regularly, but this became restricted and even against the law. An experience many Christians live with day in day out in far flung countries across the world, but at least we were able to connect online with others.

For me I missed hearing about how people were doing. Who had their family increased by the birth of a child and who had their family diminished by the passing of a loved one. Hearing who needed more assistance during those strange times of being alone. I missed the opportunity to see groups of familiar faces, nods, winks and other gestures of recognition of each other. Hearing stories of what is happening locally.

When I attend the Cathedral I enjoy the space and the memories it brings to the fore. I enjoy the music and being able to join with others to sing. In particular I appreciate the sermon or talk and look for something to take away to ponder on for the rest of the week.

Like many folk I joined the virtual service via the internet, initially listening to Susan bring her creative "thoughts for the day" and continued after she had moved on to watch the services because our household was still protecting themselves from Covid. There was a limit to the connection I felt when watching the service on my laptop. The feeling was more restricted. On Sundays I ended up watching two or three services, including those from other churches I had previously been a member of. It became important listening to the announcements hearing who were getting married, celebrating anniversaries, were ill, or had passed away. Watching all this in my comfy clothes and a cup of coffee in hand became quite a tradition!

Dornoch Firth Group

DFG started in 2007 by local churches and was originally called the Dornoch Firth Group of Churches. DFG became a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) in 2011 they could apply for funding and develop projects to help local people in the area. Many projects were started over the years helping local people with several gone on to be self-sufficient or taken over by other organisations .

DFG played a large part in helping Dornoch residents through the recent pandemic by raising over £150,000 in grants and donations to help local folk in a variety of ways. We continue to develop projects to enhance the lives of local people.



The DFG Outreach Worker is Charles Minall with details available on www.dornochfirthgroup.com and can be contacted on 07533 518 399 or 01408 641279 and by Email: charles@dfgcommunity.com>

The following projects are running at the moment for the Dornoch area:

Tuesday Tots

Operates from the West Church Hall every Tuesday morning during term time. 10-11:30. Ages 0-5. £1:50 donation per family. Contact: <eilidh@dfgcommunity.com>

Buggy Walks

Alternate Mondays, fun and chat in the woods. contact: <eilidh@dfgcommunity.com>

Dornoch Community Resilience

Our local Emergency Resilience project linked with Highland Council and NHS now looking for new steering group members. Any volunteers who would like to help please contact: charles@dfgcommunity.com

Knit and Natter

Crafting operates from the West Church Hall every Tuesday morning contact: <<u>eilidh@dfgcommunity.com</u>>

Natter n Nosh

For a lovely lunch fortnightly at the West Church Hall £5.00. Look on our website for dates: <www.dornochfirthgroup.com>

Sutherland Cares Counselling Project

This confidential service is funded by Highland Council and provides free counselling sessions to anyone living across Sutherland. Check our website: www.dornochfirthgroup.com or contact <<u>charles@dfgcommunity.com</u>> for access.

The Community Men's Shed

Free to anyone...regular or just occasional visits... hot drinks and a warm chat or use the workshop and tools for your projects. Contact: <<u>charles@dfgcommunity.com</u>>

The Academy Bakery

This is for pupils at the Academy and Dornoch Primary where pupils come and cook their lunch and share with others. Our tutor is Naomi and we operate in the kitchen at Dornoch Hub every Wednesday.

The Food Hut

Open every Tuesday and Thursday morning 10 - 12 for donated fresh veg, meat tins and groceries. Open to all, for more details go to our website: <<u>www.dornochfirthgroup.com</u>>

The Pottery

A pottery workshop with throwing wheels, a kiln, slab roller etc and a ceramics tutor, contact Jaen at <<u>jaen@dfgcommunity.com</u>> to get on our wait list. We can only have up to 3 people at each session but its great fun ...give it a go. Make stuff....meet people.....bring a friend.....£10 a session.