

UCB News

Spring 2019



It is not jealous
it does not seek its own interests
endures all things
it bears all things
is not pompous

1 Corinthians 13

believes
Love is patient it does not brood over injury
believes all things

bears
Love is kind but rejoices with the truth
rejoice

endures
truth
it is not quick tempered
hopes
Love never fails
it is not rude

it does not rejoice over wrongdoing
it is not inflated

Dear Friends,

One of the besetting failings of Ministers is the belief that we can say anything in words.

One of the besetting weaknesses of human beings is the belief that any question should receive an instant answer. "I don't have words" is an uncomfortable thing to have to admit. "I don't know..." is something most of us find almost impossible to say, at times.

I think that most of you will know that I'm currently doing, as Study Leave, a course on Counselling Skills. It's every Thursday, at Strathclyde University, and it's exhausting!! And the most exhausting thing of all is the central thing the course is about. **Listening.**

We hate silences. We are taught from a young age that silence is impolite, and that my silence might make you uncomfortable. We're taught that silence between people is something we should attempt to fill, to put the other person at ease. Usually, that's perfectly OK.

But sometimes, it can make listening really attentively to others practically impossible. Really listening...

Giving the other person our complete attention, REALLY listening, is very hard to do, without "putting them at their ease", or thinking what I'm going to say next isn't usually how we are. And yes, usually that's fine.

But sometimes, what each of us needs is to be listened to - heard.

It's not surprising that that's how we are. Isn't it so with God?

Our worship can be full of words, good, edifying words, words of praise and joy, penitence and thanksgiving. But how much do we listen to God?

We can express our love and affection in chat and conversation, and it shows how at ease we are with each other in God's house. It's lovely to hear. But how much do we listen to God?

I've started to use much more silence, especially in the prayers. Could I make a suggestion?

An opportunity for shared listening for God comes at the Offering in the

service, when Tony plays beautiful and carefully chosen music, sometimes to accompany Lorna or John, on flute or cornet.

Why don't we think of this as a time of shared waiting on God, of listening attentively for God's presence?

And - something to take home after the service - it may remind us of how much of our own private prayers could be and should be listening, not speaking.

Sometimes, the words won't come. But that's OK. God listens in the silence, and speaks in the silence.

And anyway, as Jesus taught us in the Sermon on the Mount, we don't need lots of words to talk to God. It isn't as though God doesn't know what we want to say...

Yours in the Adventure of Christ...

Owain

Parish Register

You will notice an article in each Newsletter entitled 'Parish Register'. This is to give the congregation information about changes to the roll of our church. It lets people know if we have any new members, or if a member has died, or perhaps moved house or moved away from Bute. There could also be a section on baptisms, marriages and information about elders.

In recent months I have listed those of our members who have moved house but without their addresses. This is because the Data Protection Act now forbids us to disclose addresses. If however you move house and would like the members of our congregation, those who read the Newsletter, to be made aware of your new address, please tell me and I will include it. I can only do this if I have your permission.

I hope this helps you to understand the reasoning behind the change in the way this article is printed.

Edith Forrester
Roll Keeper

Now Available Seven Days a Week

We're open! The UCB has always aspired to be a seven-day-a-week church, and from Easter Sunday, we've taken another step along that road. The Kirk Session has agreed that over the summer the church sanctuary will be open to everyone from 9.30 am until 5.30 pm each and every day. Already, we have had several visitors grateful for the chance to come into the church, and admire our beautiful building. One lady I spoke to said she regularly came to Bute on a personal pilgrimage but had never been able to see inside the church before. She was delighted she could now view our stained glass windows from the right side as it were. We have also welcomed over 60 pupils from S1 at Rothesay Academy, who came down to visit us during Easter. We were able to explain a little of the history of our church and allow them to explore the sanctuary in their own time, as they searched for answers to a quiz we had devised.

Personally, having spent a little of my time opening the doors and preparing for visitors, I feel that the building is much more welcoming now. I know I can come in and sit quietly, at a time that suits me. In so many different ways today's world is intrusive, having this space in which to rest and reflect can be a great help.

In addition to opening the sanctuary, we aim to do more over the summer to encourage us all, local and visitors alike, to make use of our church. Watch out for a growing number of information leaflets, giving insights into our worship and our history. We are also in the process of creating audio presentations which will feature a well-known elder, who has immense knowledge of times past.

Our ultimate aim is to make Bute a place of pilgrimage for all. We will develop pilgrimage routes, with associated maps and information, which lead to St Blane's in Kingarth and to St Ninian's point at the Straad. These will commence at the UCB and in conjunction with access to the sanctuary will provide excellent opportunities to reflect and recharge. Come in and see for yourself how relaxing a place the church can be. Oh! Watch out for my friendly robin who keeps an eye on everything that happens.

Malcolm Alexander

The Evening Guild



Our Theme for the 2018-2019 session was Seeking the Way - highlighting the journey we are all on, both in our everyday Life and in our Faith.

We enjoyed a mixed programme, with all our speakers embracing the journeying theme. Beginning with the Rev. Jones and his travels through Italy, we also heard the personal journeys of a Police Inspector, a Puppeteer, an Oncology nurse, a Recycling expert and a Physio.

We were then taken behind the scenes of Holyrood Palace and embarked on a trip down the Clyde from Greenock to Ailsa Craig. Many childhood memories were recalled as we enjoyed an evening of old Rothesay photos - evoking much laughter and many stories.

Our St Andrews night was a great success with visitors from fellow churches increasing our numbers to over 30. With music from the Bute Ceilidh Band a good night was had by all.

Grateful thanks must go to the ladies of the committee who work tirelessly to provide the hospitality for Burn's Night, St Valentine's Night and St Andrew's Night . They provide the entertainment for our In-House nights with quizzes, poetry and games, and cater the excellent Christmas lunch we all enjoy; and we include a special thanks to the lovely gentlemen who are our waiters on this day.

Through our fund-raising events the Guild supports many charities. This session the Evening Guild's chosen project was Crossreach and their "Join up the Dots" project which tackles loneliness and isolation.

The summer outing this year will be afternoon tea at the Glenburn Hotel which we are all looking forward to. Fun, Fellowship and Friendship are in abundance at the Evening Guild. We were delighted to welcome new members this year, but we always have room for more. Remember a warm welcome awaits you.

The Guild Information Board is continually updated so why not check it out for Guild information and updates of our activities both in our own church and nationally. Wishing you all a wonderful summer and enjoy wherever your journeys take you.

Morag Allan
Evening Guild President

KIRK SESSION REPORT

April 2019

The Kirk Session and its committees have had another busy winter period, dealing with the many and varied issues which have to be addressed for the benefit of our congregation and the work of the Church here on Bute and further afield.

Much of the business is fairly routine, but no less important for that. Alongside the day-to-day work, there is a lot of exciting and innovative activity going on behind the scenes to equip us for the challenges and opportunities which lie ahead, some on our radar, and others which will undoubtedly emerge in time.

Two meetings of the Kirk Session for ordinary business have been held since the last issue of UCB News, with several additional meetings convened to deal with specific issues or emerging business. Here's a flavour of the wide range of business dealt with since the turn of the year:

Finance Committee – monthly management accounts are prepared and circulated to all Trustees (i.e. members of the Kirk Session). The Budget for 2019 was also prepared for consideration and approval by the Kirk Session. In parallel with this work, the 2018 Accounts and Trustees' Report were prepared and signed off by our Independent Examiners, before submission and approval by the Trustees. All-in-all a busy and productive time for the Committee. *[See page 8 - Ed]*

Stewardship Committee is now... the **Pilgrimage Committee** – following a review of roles and responsibilities, the **Stewardship Committee** has been

re-constituted as the Pilgrimage Committee, and asked to take forward the on-going project to replace the harling on the main church building, together with the associated development of pilgrimage trails and the opening of the church to the public on a daily basis throughout the summer months. A new **Stewardship Committee**, to assume the “ordinary” Stewardship functions, will be formed shortly.

Mission and Outreach Committee – members have been very active, and among the work undertaken is the preparation of a comprehensive Mission Plan, part of which has been the organising of successful visits to the Church by S1 pupils from Rothesay Academy, besides much else.

The Kirk Session recently had a visit from Rev. Peter Atkins of the Baptist Church, to discuss how we could contribute to the on-going challenges of providing suitable space and activities for local teenagers. We already work closely with other local congregations on activities such as Messy Church and Holiday Clubs for primary-age children, and we will continue, via Mission and Outreach, to explore how we can support and develop activities for young people from S1 upwards.

Property Committee – the work of the Committee goes on week by week, to ensure that our buildings are maintained in the best possible condition, and we are grateful to Ian Sinclair, Master of Works, for his diligence and attention. I am also pleased to report that Gordon Sutherland has agreed to take over the role of Convener, in succession to Stewart Shaw, and wish Gordon every success in his new position.

Hall Committee – as always, the Church Centre is busy with users, both congregational and external, and is a much valued and appreciated community facility.

Fund Raising Committee – the first fund-raising event in 2019, a Soup and Sweet lunch, in February, was another great success. Please look out for details of forthcoming events, and if possible, support our hard-working team! *[See back page - Ed]*

Safeguarding Committee – by its nature, not a high-profile activity, but

always looking out for the best interests of the most vulnerable among us, for which we are immensely grateful.

I hope this brief summary is of interest. Please let me know if you have any queries and I'll do my best to answer them, or at least point you in the right direction.

One final reminder. We are always on the look-out for people to join the committees. You don't have to be an Elder, or a member of the congregation, just an interest in our activities. If you would like more information, please have a word with me.

Best wishes
James, Session Clerk



Those of you who have donated to the fundraising activities of our local Macmillan Cancer Support Committee will be delighted to learn that the ladies have won the coveted National Fundraising Committee Award for exceptional achievement through teamwork. Over the years more than £280,000 has been raised and the current Committee are keen to stress that the award is not just for them but for all past members who have devoted time to this most worthy cause.

They also hope that you will continue to support their latest fundraiser which is a Fashion Show by Glens to be held in 292 Club on Friday 24th May, 7.00 for 7.30 pm. Tickets £6.

"Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others."

Philippians 2 : v4

2018 Congregational Accounts and 2019 Budget

The Finance Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their continued financial support.

2018 Congregational Income

- Overall Income in 2018 at £83,555 was £3,343 lower than received in 2017 (-3.8%)
- Regular Giving at £62,375 was down across all categories
- Overall income from other activities at £21,180 was very slightly up on the figure for 2017

2018 Congregational Expenditure

- Overall Expenditure in 2018 at £77,425 was £5,541 lower than in 2017 (-6.6%)
- Ministry and Mission costs were lower by £2,632 relative to 2017 (-5.5%) due to our reducing income trend
- Property costs were down by £2,859 relative to 2017 (-18.6%) due to reduced spend on the church and manse. Refer to the 2019 Budget below
- Most other ongoing expenditure has been controlled around budget estimates

The outcome for the year was a balance in the General Fund of £22,033 (2017: £28,888) and in the Restricted Fabric Reserve £16,950 (2017: £12,457)

2019 Congregational Budget

The budget assumes an overall income of £79,249, a reduction of 5.1% compared with 2018. The first three months are consistent with this assumption.

Expenditure of £85,131 is assumed, 10.0% higher than in 2018. This is driven by necessary repairs to the church roof and the manse, and will result in a deficit for the year overall.

The budget excludes expenditure connected with the harling repairs and associated fundraising.

As it was then

The following article was part of a talk given some fifty years ago by the late Mrs Grace Duguid. Many will recall Grace, one of the oldest and respected members of the congregation, who with her husband John, lived for long years at Ashtree Cottage, opposite the swimming pool. Her childhood home was the police house in the County Buildings where her father Alexander Stewart, Deputy Chief Constable of Buteshire Constabulary, had responsibility in the policing of Bute, Arran and Cumbrae.

“When I was a child my minister was the Revd. Dr. Hewison. He lived with his maiden sisters in the manse in Minister’s Brae. My Sunday School was in the Bishop Street Schoolroom, now the Guide Hall. My first teacher was Miss Kate Whyte, aunt of Mrs David Rodger, then Mrs Georgina Gillies, though she couldn’t have been much older than myself. Dr Hewison was an exceptionally handsome man, dressed in his frock coat and tile hat. In 1902 he was appointed Clerk to the Moderator of the General Assembly and in honour of the occasion was presented with new robes and Court Dress. The reception was held in the Public Halls, catering done by Mr McCord of the Albion Restaurant. Before the presentation Dr Hewison had conferred on him the honour of Doctor of Divinity by Edinburgh University so the purple hood of the doctorate and the antique John Knox Cap were also presented, and believe me, there was still money left and he was given a purse of sovereigns. All had been collected by the ladies of the congregation.

Some years later the Kirk Session treated him to a trip to the Holy Land. In gratitude he brought back bottles of Jordan water which babies could be baptised with. My brother received this as did I.

The Beadle, Mr Cunningham, a painter to trade, lived at the top of Barone Road. The Caretaker, Mrs Christina Baxter lived in the cottage opposite the church. It was beautiful then with trellis work round the door, climbing roses and honeysuckle. It was the duty of the Beadle to ring the Town Bell on Sunday at 10.30 am and again at 6.00 pm to prepare folk for Church, many set their clocks by it. Poor Mr Cunningham had very flat feet and fallen arches, walking from the Church to the Town Buildings was torture. My elder brother David was about 13 years old and had joined the Scouts. My father said he was old enough to ring the bell, it could be his good deed for Mr Cunningham. He did it willingly and it was an adventure for us getting up the tower and ringing the bell. One Sunday afternoon my father took us for a walk round Loch Fad ending up at Woodend. Mrs Duncan coaxed us

to stay for tea, late in getting back to town the Town Bell wasn't rung, many were late for Church. Dr Hewison asked Mr Cunningham why the bell had not been rung. He had to confess he hadn't rung it for two years. My father was an Elder and was summoned to the Vestry and gave an assurance that it would not happen again.

My next minister was the Revd. W. T. Smellie, much loved by everybody and an outstanding preacher. He could not tell the difference between my brothers Robert and Alistair, often scolding the wrong one for not being in church. The brass lamp above the pulpit, known as the Lamp of Sacrifice, was presented by my Bible Class. We had to sacrifice some of our pocket money to install it, mostly 2/-. If this had been given to you by your parents Mr Smellie asked you to return it and make the sacrifice yourself.

The Revd. Hay Hamilton followed Mr Smellie, thereafter Revd. Dr Norman Robinson.”

Ian Sinclair

Easter Event

The 8th April was chosen as the date for the Bute Churches Together ‘Easter Event’ – an important time in the Christian calendar and a school holiday (this helps with child care for some families).

The day was very successful with 23 children attending, mainly primary 5,6, and 7. We started with a toast and juice ‘breakfast’ and then into Easter bonnet decorating. Building on what we had learnt from last year’s event, specifically the children’s questions about the sanctuary at St Paul’s Church, we went on a pilgrimage to all six of the local churches, telling the Easter story in each one. The children and adults were divided into two groups to visit three places of worship. In each group a nominated person took notes enabling them to report back to the entire group later. In each church one Holy Week story was related and the children were given two questions about the sanctuary. The young people had to answer or find something and were given the opportunity to ask further questions. When we were all back at UCB we enjoyed a very welcome snack lunch and the children then left with a ‘goodie bag’ with items relating to the Easter story.

Janette Henderson

Parish Register

Baptism

Calvin Robin Taylor in the United Church of Bute 2.12.18

“May the Lord bless you and keep you.”

Deaths

Mrs Marjory Kirkwood	2 Creek Dr, Port Bannatyne	5.12.18
Mr Donnie Matheson	99 Barone Road, Rothesay	10.12.18
Mrs Florence Lee	Marchmont House, Port Glasgow	10.12.18
Mr James Kirkwood	2 Creek Drive, Port Bannatyne	22.12.18
Mrs Elizabeth Johnston	Adelaide House, Mountstuart Rd	1.01.19
Mrs Catherine McKay	Palm Court, Rothesay	14.01.19
Mrs Margaret Murray	5 Argyle Place, Rothesay	21.02.19
Mr Jack Reynolds	Woodlea, High Craigmores, Rothesay	14.03.19
Mrs Sarah Martin	Amisfield, Gowanfield Terr, Rothesay	26.03.19
Mrs Isabel Martin	Ardnahoe Farm, Kingarth	27.04.19

“I am the Resurrection and the Life.”

Changes of Address

Mrs Norma Towers	Mr Douglas MacDonald
Mr & Mrs Peter Ferguson	Mr Harry Milligan
Mrs Helen Martin	Mrs Violet Dixon
Mrs Tara Timms	Mr Alan Ewing
Mr Tommy Howat	Mrs Anne Jardine
Mr & Mrs Ian Buckeridge	Mrs Gertrude Reynolds
Mrs Anne McAlister	Miss Patricia Howat

“We wish you well in your new homes.”

Argyll Presbytery - Douglas Allan - Moderator Designate

You may well have heard by now that I have been nominated to undertake the role of Moderator of Argyll Presbytery in June 2019. Some people have been asking what this means and what will I have to do during the 12 month appointment.

The Church of Scotland is, of course, Presbyterian in nature and this in turn determines how it is governed, resulting in a hierarchy comprising of different courts each of which are inferior/superior to each other (uncomfortable terminology for me but this is how a hierarchy works). Each of these courts have a Moderator and Clerk and the role of Moderator, regardless of which level of court, is described as someone who presides over the meetings of the court, much in the way a chairperson would do but moderating is seen as a more open and inclusive role rather than a directive one. The authority of the court is vested in the court and not any single individual member including the Moderator. Other parts of the role would include representing the Presbytery at events outwith Presbytery and conducting special services at churches and other locations, e.g. celebrating a special anniversary or event.

My term of office commences on the 4th June 2019 when Presbytery convenes at the United Church of Bute for a church service followed by a regular meeting of Presbytery. At this service my predecessor, the Rev Dr Roderick Campbell, will remit the office and I will then take over. Part of this procedure includes passing on a beautiful preaching stole which was designed and created to reflect the spiritual landscape and culture of Argyll. If you have the chance, take a closer look at the stole so that you can fully appreciate the intricate work that went into it.

It is an enormous privilege to be invited to take up this office and now that I have got over the initial shock of being asked, I am looking forward to my year in office. I would ask for your prayerful support during this time so that I might fulfil my duties in a dignified and respectful way worthy of our Christian faith. I also seek your prayers for those other members of

Presbytery who will be supporting and guiding me at this time including of course the Clerk, a certain Stewart Shaw! Please do feel free to come and ask me what I am doing and how things are going and I will be happy to share this with you.

Douglas Allan

FROM SANDY MacPHERSON : AN INTRODUCTION

Dear Friends,

As my training for ministry continues, ‘One Church, one Faith, one Lord’, words from Edward Plumptre’s great hymn of discipleship, strike me more than ever as being key to our worship and belief.

Having completed a six-month placement with the four congregations of Upper Cowal (Strachur, Strathlachlan, Cairndow and Lochgoilhead), I am delighted now to have embarked on a nine-month placement here in the United Church of Bute, and to have renewed my friendship with Owain and Carolyn. Thank you for making me so welcome.

When I was in my early twenties I felt called to ministry, but at that relatively young age I was conscious of lacking ‘experience of life’, and therefore about my ability to minister to people pastorally, and so I took things no further than an initial enquiry stage.

My business career then intervened and became very demanding. I spent all of that career in the travel, transport and tourism sector, working with a multinational organisation, then owning and managing my own business, and latterly becoming a main Board director of ABTA and President of the Scottish Passenger Agents’ Association.

Coupled with my ‘extra-curricular’ work, including membership of the

Childrens Panel, serving as a bench-sitting Justice of the Peace, being Chairman of the Visiting Committee at HMP Greenock, substantial involvement in the Rotary movement, and my 50 years as an organist and choirmaster (latterly at the High Kirk in Dunoon), this meant life moved on apace,

However, the call to ministry had not gone away; it had merely lain dormant before returning rather more forcefully. I decided to return to studying, took a theology degree in the University of Glasgow, and came through the Church of Scotland's selection procedures as a potential candidate for Ordained Local Ministry (OLM) - so here I am!

Every congregation has different customs, habits and characteristics, but underlying it all is our worship of the same God and, at this Eastertide, our exultation in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In some ways, we live in a troubled world, many of the accustomed norms of which are being challenged, and in a society whose pillars seem nowadays to be less firmly fixed than they once were.

Easter is a time which reminds us that light always overcomes darkness. Yet it is more than that. It is the time when in his rising victorious over the grave, Jesus opened the way to God's kingdom for all believers, and brought us the promise of life eternal.

That is not a transient gift. It does not wax and wane at the whim of society. It is God's infinite covenant, a promise on which we can rely totally.

The changes we see all around us can make us uncomfortable, but our God is unchanging, his love and care for us is constant, and I personally find it hugely encouraging that, no matter whether we worship in tiny country kirk, large urban church, or mighty cathedral, we are all one church, we share one faith, and we worship the one Lord.

Sandy.

Fundraising

The Fundraising Committee would like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of the Soup and Sweet Lunch in February. This was a very happy event, allowing the congregation and wider community the opportunity to socialise, whilst enjoying a delicious lunch. As a committee we received some lovely feedback on how much the lunch had been enjoyed.

We have another Soup and Sweet Lunch planned for Saturday the 25th May 2019. Tickets will be £6 and lunch will be served between 12.00 and 2.00. There will be a baking stall and a raffle. The Committee will be selling tickets for this event shortly and we would ask for your continued support and help to ensure another successful day.

Looking further ahead, later in the summer there will be a Graveyard Quiz compiled by Ian Sinclair. Date still to be arranged.

We would once again like to thank everyone who continues to support and encourage the Fundraising Committee. We have a lot of fun working together, and your support helps to lighten the load.

Fiona Shaw
Fundraising Convenor

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This Newsletter can now be viewed
in colour on the Church website.

Thanks to all who have contributed to this Newsletter, and thanks to the generous organisations and individuals who provide financial support.