

UCB News

Autumn 2019



Help save the planet.

Leave your car at home and come to church by bus!

493 Sunday Timetable (part)

10.40 - Port Bannatyne Marine Road

10.42 - Port Bannatyne Bus Depot

10.49 - Guildford Square

10.55 - United Church of Bute

Return bus leaves UCB at 12.35

Dear Friends,

These are uncertain times. Huge issues are about to be resolved, and as I write, none of us has any idea how. When you read this, the likelihood is that that they will have been - but there's more than an outside chance that they won't.

Perhaps we imagine that Christians shouldn't speak of "chance" - does it sound like an area of existence that's somehow outwith God's control, God's power? Or is that too small a picture of God? Shouldn't we rather see even "change and chance" as cradled in God's hands?

It's a strange experience to write a letter out of uncertainty into a future in which certain things will have been decided and new uncertainties will be there to be wrestled with. I hope that doesn't sound too grim! It isn't meant to. It's just life - although amped up to a vastly bigger scale than usual. We are uncertain, don't know how things will go, look into the future, and wonder what it will hold - and then, we get there! We are beyond those uncertain things! We crest a ridge, regain our view of our journey - ***and see the next ridge beyond.*** It's the human condition.

But from the perspective of faith, it's also our walk with God.

I'm currently tidying my study. I wish I hadn't started! But sometimes, you unearth a gem. There's a letter in my study, from my very earliest days as a preacher, in a North Wales crammed with chapels, all of which were desperately short of preachers, and happy to let a young lad, only just a candidate for the ministry, take a service - or several.

This letter is from the secretary of a little Methodist church in Rhosllanerchrugog (don't worry about the name! Even Welsh speakers just call it "Rhos"!). He was asking if I could take a Sunday in the autumn, a Sunday in November of the following year, and one the November after that!! "Two years seems an awfully long time," he admitted, "but the date will get here eventually!" It was written in 1976!!

We've been looking at the prophecy of Jeremiah recently. It's a very human collection of writings, deeply troubled by the woes of a society, yet also touched, and more, by the understanding that there's a "beyond" to all this, if only the people trust in God to get them there. He condemns power politics, and the ploys by which human beings assume that they can shape

events vastly bigger than they can even imagine. He is even imprisoned for what the powers-that-be see as defeatism and surrender. But the core of his message is that *if only we trust...*

If only we trust, God will bring us through all things. From where we stand - and from where I write - even the immediate future seems utterly unpredictable. And so it is. Apart from this: God is already in it, and God will bring us to it, and then through it, and its problems, and onward. That's something to sustain us in our daily lives, and to steady us in uncertain times.

Yours in the Adventure of Christ...

Owain

BALLIANLAY OUTING

Edith Forrester extends grateful thanks to all who helped to make the August outing to the Ballianlay Tea such a happy success in spite of less than wonderful weather – the Minister for organising, the drivers for transport and the Ballianlay ladies for their care and hospitality.

If you have never come out to Ballianlay with us or you have never offered to drive, you will have the opportunity next summer. This is one outing nobody wants to miss!

UNICEF JARS OF GRACE

A donation to Unicef means you really are making a difference to children's lives – buying things like life-saving vaccine or school books.

On average over the last five years, for every pound spent by UnicefUK, 70p went towards its work for children around the world, 29p was spent on raising another pound and 1p was spent on governance of the charity.

Please fill your jars to the brim with as much money as you can spare and they will be collected in at Christmas so that we can send the proceeds off to Unicef by the end of the year.

Edith Forrester
Unicef Co-ordinator

SAFEGUARDING AND THE CHURCH

Harm or abuse of children and adults at risk can happen anywhere – even in church communities. We have a duty to Ensure a Safe Church for All. This means protecting children and 'adults at risk'. The Church aims to minimise the risk of harm occurring. If harm or abuse does occur, with appropriate support and training, it will be recognised and reported. If it occurs we will work with the Police and Social Work services if appropriate.

Following the church guidelines, elders and volunteers have been trained in safeguarding practices.

However anyone can report their concerns. This is how to respond when a child or adult at risk tells you about a harmful situation.

Recognising: listen and take what they say seriously. If appropriate you can ask who, what, where and when questions to establish the basic facts. But don't ask why questions. Do not investigate- where needed that is the role of the police or social work services.

Reporting: tell the person that you will have to share this information with your safeguarding coordinator.

Recording: as soon as possible write down everything the child or adult at risk told you.

Referral: concerns should be referred as appropriate.

The church policy statement and 'who to contact' notices are posted in various places around the church buildings.

The Church of Scotland lives the Gospel message which declares that the least, the last and the lost should be at the heart of what we believe and how we respond in our faith. Safeguarding underpins this theological imperative to care for the most vulnerable people we engage with in our life and work. Everyone has the right to feel safe and cared for in the Church and it is also

the responsibility of everyone in the Church.

Good Safeguarding tries to ensure that the risk of harm and abuse is as remote as it can be. It is important that there is not only a theological underpinning to Safeguarding, but also clear policies and procedures for everyone to know and practice to ensure that we practice what we preach.

Davina Smith (Safeguarding Coordinator)

MESSY CHURCH

At the time of printing we have not finalised the arrangements for Messy Church. We have decided that it was not working to its full potential and the committee are making changes to the format. Messy Church is for all the family and we have found that parents and other siblings are reluctant to take part in Messy Church as it is described on their web site. The new way of working will be on 'in service' days and will be for the whole day (9.00 am – 3.00pm) using the Messy Church Craft information in the morning and after a light lunch we will be showing an appropriate film (faith through Pixar cartoon films) with choc ices and popcorn being supplied. We hope that this will be met with a good number of young people attending and that they will be enthused by what we offer - understanding of the Bible and the power of prayer. The first new 'in service day' Messy Church will be 9.00am to 3.00pm on Monday 25th November.

Enquiries to Janette Henderson.

LIGHTHOUSE

As you may be aware Lighthouse has not started this session. I am hoping for a revamp in the near future once discussions are complete. If you have children who would be interested in attending please contact me, Anne McGhie. My email is amcghie11@btinternet.com

THE EVENING GUILD



As we embark on a new session and a new journey, we invite you all to journey along with us.

Our 3 year Guild theme is One Journey Many Roads and the 2019/20 theme is Companions on the Road. We will explore not only our journey but endeavour to form lasting friendships with those who travel with us.

Douglas Allan will open the Guild on Thursday 17th October, providing words of support and encouragement for our journey ahead.

We have an entertaining and varied syllabus for this year, covering a wide range of topics - such as Marathon running, the Ambulance service, Ornithology and the History of Whisky. Talks on Russia, Cambodia and the Mafia Islands will certainly give our journey an international theme.

Our usual in-house entertainment offers a Beetle drive, Burn's Night, and Valentine's Tea, to name just a few. Of course on St Andrew's night we will be entertained by the Bute Ceilidh Band - you are all invited.

Our Joint Meeting, when our fellow Guilds and the Woman's Fellowship join us, is on the 14th of November when our guest speaker is Jane Williams, her topic is Kidney Dialysis and the progress being made on the Island.

The Morning Market is on Saturday the 23rd of November. This is our main fund raiser so we hope to see you all there when you can sample the famous Guild hospitality.

I hope I have whetted your appetite with just a sample of what will be on offer at the Evening Guild. Each talk will be announced on the Sunday before so if a topic piques your interest please join us. We were delighted to welcome some gentlemen on several occasions last year, and we look forward to enjoying their company again.

The Guild Information Board is continually updated with both national

and local events, so keep watching that space.

Fun, Fellowship and Friendship are in abundance at the Evening Guild and a warm welcome awaits you. So why not come and join us on our exciting journey? Hoping to see you there.

Morag Allan
President UCB Evening Guild

ADVENT CHRISTMAS CAROLS

The Evening and Afternoon Guilds are getting together to have an afternoon of Carols in the Church on the 1st December. Tony Spencer will be accompanying us. More details will be available nearer the date. This is just a notice to keep the congregation informed about what is in the pipeline. Keep the date free as it will be a great start to our advent and the promise that Christmas is on the way.

THE AFTERNOON GUILD



We are preparing to start up our programme of speakers for the 2019/20 session. A group of us have met over the summer for tea and chat once a month, these are always fun times as we hear of travels and summer activities with a few laughs in between. Our session starts on 14th October with a talk from Sandy McPherson to tie in with our theme of 'Companions on the Road'. We meet on a Monday afternoon at 2.00pm and it is usually the 2nd and 4th Monday in the month. Everyone is welcome to come along - take a look at our Syllabus which is on the notice board in the Church Centre for church members to choose what they would like to join in with. A lot of our dates are what we call 'Do it yourself' meetings and these can be a lot of fun so do try to come along and see what the Guild gets up to on a Monday afternoon .

Janette Henderson
Afternoon Guild

I hope you have all had an enjoyable summer, and are now looking forward to the “Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness”!

Over the summer months, the Kirk Session has again been very active, convening on six occasions since the last issue of UCB News – three “ordinary” meetings, once for Communion, once to deal with some urgent business, and sadly, for the funeral of the late William Glen, who was a faithful and diligent Elder in the High Kirk.

The various committees have also continued to meet regularly, dealing with the day-to-day business of our congregation, but also working on a range of exciting projects as we look to the future and plan the shape of the church on Bute, and beyond, in the years ahead.

Space constraints mean I can only give a brief outline of the business which has been discussed in recent months. Please have a word with me if you’d like more information on any topic, and I’ll do my best to help or, at least, point you in the right direction.

Finance Committee – in addition to their ever-vigilant watch over the congregation’s finances, significant additional work has been undertaken recently to apply to OSCR to re-purpose some of the historic trust funds in the care of the Kirk Session to enable them to be used to support the relief of 21st century poverty. Their original purposes had, in many cases, been superseded by changing circumstances.

Stewardship Committee – a Stewardship Campaign is being planned, with a launch date in early March 2020 (Lent). More information will follow as the date approaches.

Mission and Outreach and Pilgrimage Committees – these committees have co-operated closely in recent months on the planning and delivery of the Pilgrimage Weekend in August, which was a great success, despite the rather wet Sunday afternoon, which truncated the Pilgrimage Walk to St. Blane’s and resulted in the service there being cancelled.

Alongside this, there is much activity going on to prepare a funding application to Historic Environment Scotland for assistance with the harling repairs. The aim is to have the application ready by the end of November.

Property Committee – the repairs to the Church roof were completed satisfactorily during August. Over the summer, painting of the toilets and upper corridor was carried out, and the flower cupboard shelved, generously funded by our Guilds.

Hall Committee – the Centre continues to be busy with regular and occasional users, all appreciative of the excellent facilities on offer.

Fund Raising Committee – the Graveyard Quiz in August was most enjoyable. The deluge while everyone was out and about didn't detract from the fun, or make finding the answers to Ian Sinclair's posers any easier!

20th Anniversary of UCB – At Communion on the 3rd November we will be marking the 20th Anniversary of The United Church of Bute and the 10th Anniversary of the opening of the Church Centre. The service will be conducted by the Rev. John Murning, first Minister of the UCB, who has kindly accepted our invitation to preach on that day.

James, Session Clerk

MODERATOR UPDATE

As many of you know I was installed as Moderator of Argyll Presbytery on the 4th June 2019 at a service held in UCB followed by lunch and then an ordinary meeting of Presbytery. Many of you were kind enough to be present that day along with some friends from Trinity Church and I was enormously grateful for all the support and good wishes. When I was at the Presbytery Conference in September at Portavadie, people were still commenting on the superb hospitality they received that day here in Rothesay. Thanks have already been expressed to those responsible for the arrangements on the day but I also wanted to add my thanks through these pages as well.

I explained in the last Newsletter what the duties and responsibilities of the

Moderator were and now I have had a chance to see how this manifests itself in practical terms. One of the tasks involves moderating meetings of Presbytery and I very quickly discovered that you can't allow your focus to drift on these occasions. There is much in Church Law and the practices and procedures thereof that need to be fairly applied to the conduct of meetings (as Moderator I have to remain neutral in all these discussions) and for me that can be a bit of a challenge! Notwithstanding all this I think I have discharged that responsibility in a reasonable manner.

One of the other tasks is officiating at Church Services that are called in the name of Presbytery from time to time, the most recent of these being the Ordination and Induction of Janet MacKellar to the Ordained Local Ministry. This took place at Kirn Parish Church followed, of course, by hospitality and was a lovely occasion with a packed church full of supporters, well wishers and family to celebrate this important event.

I also had the pleasurable task of speaking at the 'Guild Little Big Sing' held at Tarbert Parish Church and organised by South Kintyre Guilds Together when we enjoyed a lovely afternoon of praise and readings. One of the Ministers who was participating that afternoon and whose Induction I had the pleasure of officiating at turned up with a face painting of the Guild logo on his cheek!

You will see from this brief account that as Moderator I lead a very varied and interesting life at the moment, not knowing what might come up next in my diary. This is a vitally important time in the Church at the moment and I am grateful for all your prayers and support as we grapple with the implications of the Radical Action Plan.

Douglas Allan

Parish Register

New Member by Resolution of the Kirk Session

Mrs Margaret Clark 24 Eden Drive, Rothesay 2.06.19

*"May you feel welcome and at home with the congregation
of The United Church of Bute."*

Removed by Certificate of Transference

Mr David McFie St Kanes Manse, New Deer, Turriff 6.06.19
Mr Stuart & Mrs Lesley Scott, Kelham Brae, Thornhill, Dumfries
Mr Paul Scott Kelham Brae, Thornhill, Dumfries 2.07.19

"We wish you well in your new congregations."

Deaths

Mr James McAlister Kerrytonlia Cottage, Kingarth 28.05.19
Mr Wm. Glen Merino Court, Drumfrocher Rd, Port Glasgow 3.06.19
Mr Alistair Finlayson 48 Crichton Rd, Rothesay 15.06.19
Mr Robert Gordon Beaver Lodge, Kingarth 14.06.19
Mrs Mary McDougall 16 Academy Rd, Rothesay 29.06.19
Mrs Marion Rae Kathray, Eastlands Rd, Rothesay 1.07.19
Mrs Margaret MacKenzie The Old Schoolhouse, Kingarth .08.19
Mr Archie Robertson East St Colmac Farm, North Bute 3.09.19

"I am the Resurrection and the Life."

Changes of Address

Mr Finlay & Mrs Janette Martin
Mrs Tara Timms Mrs Gillian Tipping
Mrs Margaret Ferguson Mrs Cathie Ballantyne

"We wish you well in your new homes."

LOST PROPERTY

- Many folk arrive at church in pouring rain, bowed down beneath their umbrellas.....lonely ...low ...not seeing anyone else....
- The umbrella is closed and left at the door....
- While greeting people at the door for a recent funeral a visitor commented to me “It’s always raining in Rothesay”. I replied “I will chat to HQ and it will be fine after the funeral.” and it was ... including a rainbow.
- Sadly sometimes folk have suffered ghastly wind, rain and terrible cold at the funeral of a loved one. This surely can add greater sadness to family and friends who are already greatly grieving their lost one.
- However the rainbow also shows that you know that coming back to church, desperately still needing an umbrella will not be a problem but an opportunity to be in a place where our loving Minister and congregation are here to share God’s love and comfort and support for all who need it....
- Similarly we come to Church needing to have our Spirits lifted to get us through our upcoming week and so through prayers, beautiful hymns, meaningful Bible readings, reflective or inspiring music along with a thoughtful sermon from our Minister and a chat with a cuppa after the service....we do...
- We now have many umbrellas in a “LOST PROPERTY” zone by the front door....if you know someone who needs to receive the blessings of an umbrella take one to them....it can be used to protect someone from rain, and also, like a parasol, from hot sun....

Mary Spencer

MONDAY DISCUSSION GROUP

Would you like the opportunity to explore your faith in a friendly and supportive way?

We meet on a Monday evening to discuss aspects of our faith in a small friendly group. You don't need to have an intimate knowledge of the Bible as the main purpose is to explore our faith from a practical point of view. We share our views and opinions in a supportive atmosphere and listen to what others are saying.

A typical evening comprises of reading a selected passage from the Bible and then reflecting on some questions to inform our discussions. There aren't always right or wrong answers and we often end up with a variety of responses to a question which reflect our personal faith experience. Importantly, we respect other points of view even although we may not always agree! There have been times when people have commented about a useful insight to their understanding of the Bible which influences new understanding for them. Very importantly we always start with tea and coffee!

We meet at 7:30pm on Monday evenings at the home of Morag and Douglas Allan and our topic for the first few weeks will focus on the Transforming Trinity, a series that looks at practical aspects of the Trinity and we would be pleased to welcome new members. Please feel free to come along and sample a discussion (without commitment) to see whether this would be something you might be interested in. Naturally we would be delighted if you chose to come back the following week but if you feel that the group is not for you then that is okay.

If you would like to talk to someone about the group, please feel free to contact the Minister or Morag and Douglas Allan.

LOCAL CHURCH REVIEW

Every five years, Presbytery reviews each congregation within its bounds, and produces a report outlining their findings, identifying any areas for improvement, and, equally importantly, good practice which could perhaps be shared with other congregations.

Until recently this process was known as the Quinquennial Visitation, but it has recently been significantly changed and is now the “Local Church Review” (LCR).

A key part of the process is the self-completion of an extensive, in depth questionnaire, prior to the visit of the Presbytery LCR team. This covers all aspects of the congregation’s life, and gives congregations the opportunity to “showcase” their achievements and identify areas of concern they may have.

I would like to thank all the committee Conveners and others who contributed to the preparation of our responses to the questionnaire.

The three-strong LCR team visited us on 10th September. They were led by Rev. Hilda Smith of Lochgilphead Parish Church, whom many will remember from her days as a probationer with the late Rev. Ronnie Samuel at Trinity. The meeting was open to any member of the congregation who wished to attend.

A full and thought-provoking discussion took place, and some interesting ideas and thoughts were shared, as we worked our way through the various topics.

At the time of writing, we are awaiting the LCR committee’s report on their visit. This will help to inform the formulation of our 5-Year plan for the congregation, which the Kirk Session looks forward to taking forward at their forthcoming conference. Watch this space for more news as this piece of work progresses!

James McMillan



WARM WOOLLIE HATS

The members of the Afternoon Guild, their families, the Evening Guild and members of the congregation have been busy knitting hats for the Seamen's Mission (which is one of the Guild's projects this year) and we have knitted 46 hats for them. I look forward to handing them over later this year and would like to thank everyone concerned for their efforts. Sandra Lindsay

STROLLERS AND STRIDERS

It only feels like yesterday since I was writing that Strollers and Striders were starting their season of walks for 2019 and now the season is over for another year.

We accomplished most of the walks apart from one or two weather induced cancellations and those who attended expressed their enjoyment of the time spent together on the walks. We concluded our season with our traditional dinner at the Victoria Hotel in Rothesay and a good time was had by all including Tommy Howat who managed to arrive late to thunderous applause. Morag was also thanked for providing home baking throughout the season.

We now hibernate for the winter and look forward to 2020 when the season starts again. There will be two changes to next year's schedule; firstly, we have decided to abolish the £1 fee and so all of the walks will be free and secondly, we are seeking to rejuvenate our programme by introducing some new walks. Any and all suggestions are welcomed even if you don't plan to walk with us. The walks are typically 2-4 miles, tend to be circular and not overly strenuous in terms of ascent. Whilst the main activity is walking an equally important part of this is fellowship and camaraderie. This is a social walking group and to that end we aim to include people of all abilities and all of the walks can usually be shortened and taken at a more leisurely pace. Please let me have your suggestions so that time can be left to check the walks before the start of the new season. Douglas Allan

FUNDRAISING

The Fundraising Committee would like to thank everyone in the congregation and our wider community who have supported the events we have organised in 2019.

The soup and sweet lunches were a great success. The sound of lively chatter bringing people together while sharing food. This would not be possible without the help of a great team who give of their time and donate. Our grateful thanks to everyone who makes soup, sweets, bakes, provides raffle prizes and produce for the baking stall.

Our thanks to Ian Sinclair who very kindly agreed to organise a Graveyard Quiz. This was another very happy event, despite the torrential downpour outside and some soggy returned quiz sheets. Once again a lovely supper awaited everyone, while drying out and enjoying food and company.

As a committee, we thank you for your continued support, and look forward to welcoming you to more events next year.

The United Church of Bute
Townhead, High Street
Rothesay
PA20 9JH
Scottish Charity No SC030563
www.unitedchurchofbute.org.uk
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.