



The Church of Scotland

Clèir Eilean Ì:
Highlands and Hebrides

THE WEEKLY WORD

A Weekly Newsletter by Clèir Eilean Ì

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BUILDING CONNECTIONS AND NEW BEGINNINGS

This week the Gaelic Lego pilot launches in our rural and urban areas. These past couple of weeks have been about building new beginnings and seeking new connections....

Pupils from Dingwall area will be invited along to participate. As well as incorporating elements of the national curriculum, with focus on STEM subjects, this is a huge opportunity to engage pupils with the bible, connections with God and their spiritual pathways.

Once the data and findings have been analysed we will be holding an evening event to discuss Lego roll-out pathways for Ministers, churches, Sunday schools, community groups and anyone who would find this useful - watch this space for updates and help us to continue building that connection closer to God!

THE WEEKLY WORD

Message from.....

MESSAGE FROM OUR CLERK

“A dh'aindeoin sin, airson 's nach toir sinn oilbheum dhaibh, thalla chun na mara is tilg dubhan innte, agus gabh a' chiad iasg a thig suas; is nuair a dh'fhosglas tu a bheul gheibh thu bonn airgid. Gabh sin is thoir dhaibh e air mo shon-sa agus air do shon fhèin.” Mata 17.27

Latha a bha siud, thill Ìosa gu Capernàum far an deach iarraidh airson cìs an teampaill. Rinn e deasbad le Peadar ma dheidhinn agus aontaich iad nach robh e feumail dhaibh. Ge-tà oidich Ìosa gum bu chòir Peadar dol air adhart a-rèir na briathran os a chionn. Abair sgeulachd annsach iongantach! Nach seallaidh e dhuinn gu bheil tuigsinn air àbhachdas aig Dia? A bharrachd air sin, nach nochd e ùghdarras Ìosa air a' chruthachadh agus toileachas Ìosa ar fiachan a phàigheadh? Abair Slànaighear fialaidh mar sin!

We talk about pulling rabbits out of a hat. The Bible is replete with stories of how God produces answers to situations that defy expectations. Indeed the narrative stream of scripture is about how God redeems the whole of creation despite humankind's hopeless failure as stewards of that creation and despite the malevolent intervention of the Devil. At every level and in every place God is transforming apparently futile situations into transforming experiences of healing, grace and hope.

And he is still at it! Examples continue to abound of the Holy Spirit bringing the love of God into the darkest and most unlikely corners of life and of the world.

Should this not encourage us in our struggle to make sense of a chaotic world, in our bewilderment over the state of our church and the indifference of society to the voice of God? Of course it should.

We are resurrection people, witnesses to the fact that Jesus died our death and then overcame the power of death, so that we who believe and trust and follow him can share in his inheritance of eternal life.

Let that promise fortify us in our personal struggles, when tragedy hits or in ordinary moments of self doubt, and as we wrestle to live faithfully through the restructuring of the Church of Scotland in the Highlands & Hebrides. Last night I attended the ordination of the first OLM in the neighbouring Presbytery of Lewis.

Today I joined the faithful of Upper Cowal for the swansong of our oldest serving Minister of Word & Sacrament. God is good as life goes on...



THE WEEKLY WORD

Congregation in focus

Each week we will welcome a congregation and give them the spotlight - a chance to perhaps:

- tell us some historical facts and information
- welcome the Minister and larger congregation
- tell us about your role as “session clerk” or “fabric convener”
- fill us in on upcoming changes
- give us days and times for services and special services
 - upcoming
- share photos
- offer prayer
- provide some quotes
- get the children involved
- links to social media accounts
- clubs and gatherings

Give us an insight to your congregation, the community and the people that bring joy and hope each and every day!

Would you like to be the next Congregation in Focus?

To feature your Congregation please contact Amanda Anderson via email **AAnderson@churchofscotland.org.uk** with stories, information, pictures.....

THE WEEKLY WORD

Creich Church

FINAL SERVICE

A huge presence was evident for the final service at Creich Church on Jan 26th 2025 as the closure brings hope and faith for the new chapter.

The Service was led by Rev Doug MacRoberts, Moderator of Clèir Eilean Ì, Highlands & Hebrides Presbytery. It was also an opportunity for many to listen to the Rev Carol Anne Porter, who will soon become the minister for Dornoch Firth Church of Scotland, having been the Locum Minister during the reconstruction of Sutherland Presbytery boundaries which created the new Dornoch Firth Parish in January 2024.

The colourful, yet emotional service was celebrated by the Moderator of Clèir Eilean Ì, Ministers, the congregation, church Elders, the larger community, local school children & teachers and the new owner of the building Duncan MacArthur, an artist and sculptor. Duncan said *"What a surprise - I don't really deserve so much print, when all you folks have worked so very hard, most of your lives, to make the church such a wonderful place to be in. I hope and pray that I can do it justice, once I'm in there - and look forward to opening it up to the community from time to time, once I'm settled in. I felt so very honoured to be invited to such a meaningful event and to witness the love you all obviously have for the building"*

Former Session Clerk, Jeani Hunter, as well as Irene Chisholm, Valarie MacKenzie Harris and Morag Miller all took part in the Service with Organist, John Brosovsky.

Rev. Carol Anne Porter writes, *"We all thought Sunday 26th January would see the last act of worship in Creich Parish Church. However, with the help of the weather, the ACTUAL last service turned out to be for local primary school pupils, their families and staff, as severe winds caused by Storm Eowyn made it unsafe for the children to attend the week before as originally planned. It has been a painful time for church members, saying goodbye to the building they so love. But, in the end, we came away thinking perhaps there is something rich and wonderful about the fact that the final farewell in terms of worship included what looked like a game of How-many-kids-can-you-fit-in-a-pulpit and lots and lots of cake! There is much work for the church to do going forward, supporting the school community - and the community at large. But the church is willing and has its sleeves rolled up ready."*



NORTHERN NEWS



'Final service ushers in new chapter for church'
news story by The Northern Times

'SOUND' GUYS

Orchestrated marvel...

A special thanks are extended to Stephen MacIntosh and Willie MacKay for their tech support.

For the last 3 years Stephen has worked on the audio, sound and live streaming systems in the church and the closing ceremony was attended by over 700 viewers.

And also to John Brozovsky for his contribution to music and his organ talents.

THE WEEKLY WORD

Local, National & Global News

DOING THEOLOGY FOR AN ECONOMY OF LIFE

From Rev Professor Ken Ross in Malawi

You don't need a degree in economics to understand that things are not going well in the global economy. Here in Malawi the lives of many are being crushed by forces beyond their control. On Friday 31st January, Zomba Theological University launched a new Masters programme that is based on the idea of countering an "economy of death" by promoting "an economy of life." Our particular job is to do the theology that can inspire such a movement. This means not only generating new ideas but also forming the people who can be agents of such transformation.

Our first cohort of ten students will start their programme on 10 February. In another first for ZTU, the programme delivery will be online, with students based not only in Malawi but in several other countries. In a context where many are in despair about economic conditions, our "Theological Education for an Economy of Life" aims to offer hope and to empower transformative action.



RESTORE SCOTLAND

A group of church members from different churches have been praying together, asking the Lord to save Scotland. They have booked the impressive Caird Hall in Dundee for 14th and 15th February, 7-9pm.

There will be a gospel message, and a worship group will lead the singing.

Please pray for its success, get the word out!

ORDINATION

THE WEEKLY WORD

Training & Events

TRAINING

Throughout Presbytery we try to offer as much training as possible and we are opening up more places and methods available to accommodate all - please continue to check in and have a look at upcoming training and opportunities that are coming up. **If you have any training or events that you would like to share just let us know.**

CRUSE SCOTLAND



A friend from Cruse Scotland will be popping in on 24th Feb 2025 at 4pm for a wee online Zoom call - a 30 minute session to tell everyone about what bereavement support Cruse offers and a chance to ask any questions you may have. Link to follow.

INTERIM MODERATOR TRAINING

The next round of training is on Saturday 15 February 2025 from 10am-12.30pm (online). Secure your place [HERE](#)

ONLINE SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Cleir Eilean I



SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

FEB & MAR 2025

Day	Date	Training	Time
Monday	17-Feb	Introductory	7.00pm
Wednesday	19-Feb	Introductory	7.00pm
Saturday	22-Feb	Introductory	10.00am
Monday	24-Feb	Trustee	7.00pm
Thursday	27-Feb	Trustee	2.00pm
Saturday	01-Mar	Trustee	10.00am
Wednesday	05-Mar	Advanced	7.00pm
Saturday	08-Mar	Advanced	10.00am

[BOOK NOW](#)

Please email Annette Clunas, Safeguarding Online Training Contact

 AClunas@churchofscotland.org.uk

MAGNITUDE

[BOOK HERE](#) or contact our Under 40's advisor Lizzie Brayshaw for more information

EBrayshaw@churchofscotland.org.uk



THE WEEKLY WORD

Training & Events

WORSHIP LEADER TRAINING

Book your place [HERE](#) - please remember to bring a packed lunch. Venues that have still to be confirmed will be relayed in due course.



Worship Leader Training

This training is for those wishing to lead worship within their own congregation. Further dates and venues will be released in February 2025. Please ensure you have the agreement of your parish Minister prior to signing up.

WORSHIP LEADER TRAINING
Sat 11th Jan 2025 | Strachur, Argyll - venue TBC
10.30AM - 3.30PM | Please bring packed lunch
ARRIVAL FOR 10AM

FUNERAL TRAINING
Sat 15th Feb 2025 | Dunbeg Church, Oban PA37 1QA
10.30AM - 3.30PM | Please bring packed lunch
ARRIVAL FOR 10AM

FUNERAL TRAINING
Wed 5th Mar 2025 | Inverness - venue TBC
10.30AM - 3.30PM | Please bring packed lunch
ARRIVAL FOR 10AM

Register [HERE](#)
or contact AAnderson@churchofscotland.org.uk

www.cei.presbytery.org.uk

LEADERSHIP SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Here are the dates and links to book:

- ~~Wednesday 22nd January - 9:30am - 2:30pm~~ [BOOK ~~HERE~~](#)
- ~~Wednesday 5th February - 9:30am - 2:30pm~~ [BOOK ~~HERE~~](#)
- Tuesday 11th March - 9:30am - 2:30pm [BOOK **HERE**](#)
- Wednesday 19th March/Thursday 20th March - 2 EVENING SESSIONS (7-9:30PM/7-9:15PM - both must be completed for certification) [BOOK **HERE**](#)
- Wednesday 30th April - 9:30am - 2:30pm [BOOK **HERE**](#)
- Tuesday 6th May - 9:30am - 2:30pm [BOOK **HERE**](#)

Individuals must have attended Introductory and Advanced training prior to this module which is the last in the training pathway. Refresher training thereafter is mandatory every 5 years.

FACE-2-FACE SAFEGUARDING TRAINING



Face-to-Face/in person training
Safeguarding Training



Trustee Training 11am Sat 15th Feb
Induction Training 2pm Sat 15th Feb

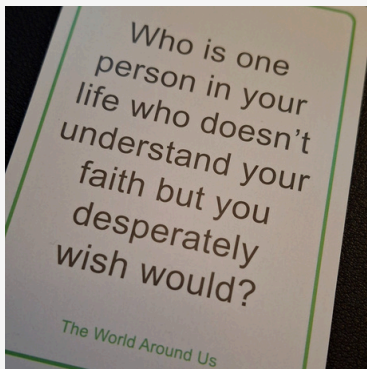
- United Free Church Hall Isle of Bute • Trainer - Janet Buchanan
to book email Janet innishaelcott@gmail.com or call
07979140355

THE WEEKLY WORD

Prayer & Reflection

MISSION IN MIND

This weeks mission card - what's your thoughts, let us know in confidence [HERE](#)



This weeks card was selected from the **green** category 'The World Around Us'

Talking Point Cards click [HERE](#) to order

ONE STOP SHOP SWAP SHOP

Something old, something blue, something borrowed, something new?

We now have a place to add offerings and items on the website....perhaps you have some bibles or chairs that you no longer use but want to find them a good home...

... drop me an email with info

AAnderson@churchofscotland.org.uk

POETRY INSPIRATION

'For a new beginning' is by Celtic philosopher John O'Donohue. It speaks of Courage in transition, Letting go of the old, listening to promptings, hope and possibility.

It also seems to resonate with Clèir Eilean I's need to trust the promise, awaken the spirit of adventure even though the destination is not clear...

For a New Beginning

by John O'Donohue

In out-of-the-way places of the heart,
Where your thoughts never think to wander,
This beginning has been quietly forming,
Waiting until you were ready to emerge.
For a long time it has watched your desire,
Feeling the emptiness growing inside you,
Noticing how you willed yourself on,
Still unable to leave what you had outgrown.
It watched you play with the seduction of safety
And the gray promises that sameness whispered,
Heard the waves of turmoil rise and relent,
Wondered would you always live like this.
Then the delight, when your courage kindled,
And out you stepped onto new ground,
Your eyes young again with energy and dream,
A path of plenitude opening before you.
Though your destination is not yet clear
You can trust the promise of this opening;
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning
That is at one with your life's desire.
Awaken your spirit to adventure;
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk;
Soon you will be home in a new rhythm,
For your soul senses the world that awaits you.

THE WEEKLY WORD

Prayer & Reflection

FEBRUARY PRAYER

Our Presbytery Prayer has been kindly submitted by Mrs Jeanette Henderson.

Loving and caring God, we give thanks for your care as a loving parent.

Some times we have strayed from the path you choose for us, a word spoken in anger, a task ignored, a kind word unspoken to give hope to the lonely, bereaved and the sick. Lord we are sorry that sometimes we have let you down and filled with our own selfish ways we take the easy way out by putting aside the teachings of Jesus to live our lives in His name and by His example. We pray for our churches, ministers and all who administer service to the people of Cleir Eilean I. The worship and fellowship in the setting up of warm places in the cold weather within our communities, helping to alleviate the loneliness of the dark Winter months. Lord, we ask that all may be comforted by the clergy and elders of our churches throughout the Presbytery.

As half term approaches we pray for our young people. May they take advantage of the holiday to refresh their thinking and to return to learning with new impetus and a keenness to learn and to face exam time calmly. Thinking of their future and how their lives will unfold in their community in the years to come.

Lord we pray for peace in the places in conflict now. We hope that the fragile peace in the Middle East can be strengthened by working together to rebuild families and properties damaged by War.

We pray that the tenacity of the people of Ukraine can be awarded a peace agreement to suit the needs of the communities who have lost family and possessions in the invasion of their country. Lord there are so many places of conflict throughout your world and we pray that peace can come through the love we have for one another.

We pray for all in our communities who are finding life difficult just now. Those who are grieving, those who are lonely, those who are having to make choices due to the economic situation and those who long for Winter to turn into Spring when the shoots coming through the cold soil can blossom and colour our world and trees provide shade and shelter to all.

Lord we long for peace and the blossom of Spring and ask blessings on all who work to broker peace and gardeners who are tending tender plants to give colour to your world. We pray as a presbytery who cares and who works to praise your Name. We ask that the Spirit is moving in this place and that we become the loving caring people of Cleir Eilean I.

In Jesus' name we pray these concerns.

Amen



THE WEEKLY WORD

Presbytery

PRESBYTERY MEETING

The next meeting of Presbytery is **Tuesday 11th March at 7pm 2025** - zoom registration links and all paperwork will be available in due course, HUB info will also be updated.

PRESBYTERY NOTICES

Formal Presbytery Notices and updates can be found online in the web space, you can access this space directly by clicking below.

[Notices](#)

VACANCIES

Our vacancies can be found [here](#)

<https://cei.presbytery.org.uk/one-stop-shop/detail/oss-vacancies>

As you may be aware the Parish of NW Lochaber has a Vacancy for a Minister, have a look at the Parish profile and please share.

COMMITTEES

Our Committee Conveners contact details and team members can be found online, click [HERE](#) to view. You can also use our contact form if you wish to send a message. Click on the box below to send a message.

[Contact](#)

OUR HUBS

- Duncansburgh Church, The Parade, Fort William, PH33 6BA
- Oban Church Centre, Glencruitten Road, Argyll, PA34 4DN
- Clachan Church Hall (North Uist)
- Fort Augustus & Glengarry Churches Church Hall, Fort Augustus
- Alness Church of Scotland, Perrins Road, Alness IV17 0SX -
- Thurso West Church, 10 Sinclair Street, KW14 7AJ
- Pulteneytown Church, Argyle Square, KW1 5AL
- Alvie & Insh church hall
- Inverness Crown Church
- Culbokie
- Aviemore, St Andrew's Church Hall
- West Church Hall, Dornoch
- Portree Church/Church Hall
- Tarbert Lochfyne HUB, Church Hall, Tarbert, PA29 6SX



will operate at next meeting



will NOT operate at next meeting

CONGREGATIONAL STATS

Session Clerks/Roll Keepers have been issued with the annual request for 'cong stats' - guidance to help explain why the research questions are vital for the Statistics Department at 121 George St, Edinburgh. The deadline for completion was **7th Feb 2025**, blank copies for completion are on the web [HERE there are still congregations outstanding](#). If you have any questions or queries please contact Amanda Anderson AAnderson@churchofscotland.org.uk