

The Link

The Newsletter of Dalriada Mid Argyll Church

Registered Charity No. SC001002

(www.dalriadamidargyllchurch.org.uk)

November 2024

Shortly after losing a friend in Ypres, a Canadian doctor, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae was moved by the sight of poppies and that inspiration led him to write the now famous poem 'In Flanders Fields'.

The poem then inspired Moina Michael, an American humanitarian and academic, to adopt the poppy in memory of those who had fallen in the war. She campaigned to get it adopted as an official symbol of Remembrance across the United States and worked with others who were trying to do the same in Canada, Australia, and the UK. Involved with those efforts was Anna Guérin, of France, who was in the UK in 1921 where she planned to sell the poppies in London.

There she met Earl Haig, who was persuaded to adopt the poppy in the UK. The Royal British Legion ordered nine million poppies and sold them on 11th November that year.

Today, over five million Scottish poppies (which have four petals and no leaf unlike poppies in the rest of the UK) are still made by hand by disabled ex-Servicemen at Lady Haig's Poppy Factory each year and distributed by Poppyscotland.

In Flanders' Fields

In Flanders' fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders' fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high,
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep,
Though poppies grow
In Flanders' Fields.

John McCrae



Future issues of *The Link* will be out at the start of the month. We are now looking for contributions for December's issue. The cut off date is 18th November (so that copyright and permission to use issues can be checked out).

Memories from Christmas will be one of the themes. Do you have a memory you would like to share or a Christmas poem (yours or someone else's) that might be shared with a wider audience?

Articles, poems etc should be sent to: moirathompson176@gmail.com.

Safeguarding Sunday, 17th November 2024

Rev Dr Sonia Blakesley (Convener of the Safeguarding Committee of the Church of Scotland), commends Safeguarding Sunday as an opportunity to come together as a Church to explain the importance of safeguarding. “The General Assembly of 2024 instructed the Safeguarding Service to consider the vision of safeguarding across all areas of the Church and to encourage all to support and develop a positive Safeguarding culture. Safeguarding Sunday is a UK wide awareness campaign run by the Christian safeguarding charity Thirtyone:eight. Thirtyone:eight takes its name from the Book of Proverbs: “Speak out on behalf of the voiceless, and for the rights of all who are vulnerable” (Chapter 31, verse 8). This is an integral part of our spiritual mandate as Christians.

Our local safeguarding team is made up of myself, as Coordinator, and three Panel members: Janet Jardine, Laura Stone and David Logue. Each of us has a background related to working with people—from health to education to social work. We have undergone training so we can better understand what is expected and what to do if there was a situation that had to be dealt with immediately, or a concern that needed to be passed on to the professional Church of Scotland Service. Our Elders and Minister have also had awareness training as required by the Church of Scotland and the Charity Regulator, OSCR.

I have a PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) certificate due the sensitive nature of information I might have to deal with, whilst Panel members have a BDC (Basic Disclosure Certificate) which is a criminal record check. I also ensure and support members of the congregation who need a certificate to do voluntary regulated work in our church with children or vulnerable adults. My main role is to inform the Kirk Session of any changes in Church and/or Civil Law, and the implications. Next April new legislation will be implemented that will affect Dalriada Mid-Argyll Church – The Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020. The Safeguarding Team meets at least twice a year and reports to the Kirk Session. It’s a great team and one I personally appreciate.

The setting up of our new children’s work has been a busy time. Everyone working with the children has to fill in an application form, provide two referees, be interviewed by two people and go through the PVG system. That’s a big investment of time and it is encouraging to see God working in our congregation by inspiring adults to take up this work. We still require more volunteers as we hope and pray for more children and young people to be part of our congregation’s life.

As a rural church, we do not see many of the problems associated with inner city living. However, some of those issues are in our communities too. We all can do our bit to make our church a safer place by following the teachings of Jesus and to love our neighbour as ourselves and, without being over the top, we can all quietly be a little bit kinder and more thoughtful to/of each other.

Moira Thompson

For Peace

As the fever of day calms towards twilight –
may all that is strained in us come to ease.

We pray for all who suffered violence today –
may an unexpected serenity surprise them.

For those who risk their lives each day for peace –
may their hearts glimpse providence at the heart of history.

That those who make riches from violence and war –
might hear in their dreams the cries of the lost.

That we might see through our fear of each other –
a new vision to heal our fatal attraction to aggression.

That those who enjoy the privilege of peace –
might not forget their tormented brothers and sisters.

That the wolf might lie down with the lamb –
that our swords be beaten into ploughshares

And no hurt or harm be done –
anywhere along the holy mountain.

John O’Donohue