The Link

The Newsletter of Dalriada Mid Argyll Church

(www.dalriadamidargyllchurch.org.uk)

March 2025

The Manse

Spring is here – it's true.

True?

It must be, my sister-in-law recently saw the arrival of the first of this year's lambs – mother and twins are all well!

The recent persistent grey days are at last beginning to give way to the sun and bluer skies – surely something to be thankful for.

Should neither of these facts of nature be sufficient to convince you that Spring is upon us then perhaps the fact that the clocks go forward at the end of the month will help. Then British ***Summer*** Time begins.

Seasons and times – always changing

We certainly live in challenging times. In reality, it has always been thus – "there is nothing new under the sun."

The Old Testament book *Ecclesiastes,* where that quotation comes from (1:9), is one of God's gifts to the world to help us live in it. Frequently I use words from Chapter 3 at funeral services – "there is a time for . . . " These are matter-of-fact words speaking of the reality of every day life with its joys and challenges; its starts and endings; and all that is encompassed within those "bookends." In essence nothing remains the same for ever.

The created world has a rhythmic pattern/beat to it. Some believe that the current global warming crisis is part of that rhythm, even if the current tempo is being accelerated by human activity.

Eco Congregation Scotland's Chaplain, David Coleman, might help us explore some of these things further when he visits next month.

Spring brings with it not just changing clocks and new life, it points also towards Easter and the greatest gift of new life ever imagined – the promise of eternal life which became available through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

That is another thing that some people find difficult to believe – is it true?

Yes, it is. And not because of any natural cycle.

Jesus described eternal life in the present tense. In the Gospel of John, for example, He is quoted as saying: "whoever believes in the Son has eternal life" (3:36). Eternal life isn't, then, just something of the future, but is a present possession of the believer which also continues into the future.

Eternal life begins when we put our faith in Jesus. As believers in Christ, eternal life continues with God after our physical death. And as *Ecclesiastes* reminds us there is a time for that inevitability.

Meantime, eternal life is the quality of life that results when we know Jesus Christ by experience, on a first-hand basis, and of which that Old Testament writer had this to say: "God has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end" (*Ecclesiastes 3:11*)

Enjoy a life-affirming Springtime.

Scottish Christians Take Action on the Environment

Does the environment matter?
What can we do about climate change?
These vexed questions can be hard to answer, but here in Scotland there is a movement which aims to help churches address them. Eco-Congregation Scotland is an ecumenical environmental movement made up of over 500 local Christian congregations whose vision is "a Scotland that cares for God's creation".

Registered congregations (including Dalriada Mid Argyll) are encouraged to link environmental issues to their Christian faith and take practical action in their church and local community. There are 22 local networks from Orkney to Dumfries providing support at a local level for congregations to live more sustainably.

Eco-Congregation Scotland is for congregations of any Christian tradition and is supported by many different denominations.

www.ecocongregationscotland.org.

David Coleman joined Eco Congregation Scotland in September 2018, as its Environmental Chaplain, to provide spiritual and theological support to churches. He is a United Reformed Church Minister, seconded full-time to this. He is also a member of the Iona Community and has led events at the abbey. He also visits congregations across Scotland, online or in person, with encouraging and challenging Biblical preaching.

David will be with us on Palm Sunday (13th April) at our All Together Service in Ardrishaig Church at 11 o'clock. He has asked that we bring to church that day a twig – size and type is up to you. There will be an opportunity to meet with him after the Service , over lunch, in the Church Hall. For catering purposes, please let Melanie Norman know if you hope to be there.

Transform Trade

During March, in collaboration with *Recycling for Good Causes,* there will be collection point in each of our places of worship for the range of items shown in the enclosed leaflet.
The proceeds (Dalriada Mid Argyll Church will be issued with a certificate detailing the amount raised) will be forwarded to *Transform Trade* (formerly *Traidcraft*).
The work of Transform Trade was highlighted by Janet Jardine, shortly before she died, in a previous edition of *The Link*. Janet was a keen recycle and re-purposer and sought out innovative ways of saving items from landfill. March was chosen for this special collection as it was her birthday month
From the clothes we wear, to the food we eat and the devices in our pockets, all are part of a global story. *Transform Trade* aims to transform the systems that exploit the world's producers.
Currently "the system" is such that a tiny percentage of the world is made extremely wealthy whilst producers go under-paid, under-valued and forced to work in unsafe conditions.
The 6 Hallmarks of *Transform Trade*'s approach are: 1: Sustainable Resource Use, 2: Transparent Supply Chains, 3: Shared Rewards; 4: Equal Dignity, Opportunity and Power for Women with 5: Human Rights Respected and 6: Shared Ownership.
So, please bring along your unwanted jewellery, coins and currency, gadgets and stamps so that they can be recycled, and unjust systems might be changed.

Cafe Connect – Achnamara Village Hall – Saturday 10.30am - 12.30pm

Cafe Connect, a vision of Louise and David Logue began on the 20 October 2016. The church ran it with the help of Alan and Val, Norma, Cliff (the minister then) Libby and Catherine for the community. It provides a warm place where everyone is made to feel welcome.

Tea/Coffee, Libby's legendary scones and home baking are all available at no charge. However, donations are welcome and the proceeds go to Achnamara Village Hall to help with its upkeep.

David and Louise also ran a few Alpha Courses. Some of the members re-ignited their faith, some became Christians. Five of these started attending Church and a House Group was established.

Cafe Connect has been ongoing since then (apart from during Lockdown).

When we reopened we had support from the community which helped this to grow and we now have regulars from the wider community who also come to other events which are held in the village hall. We are also joined by holiday-makers, cyclists and walkers who are surprised, when they arrive in Achnamara, that they can have a drink and cakes before moving on. It is a happy place to be with lots of chat. We do not hold Cafe Connect if there is a community fund raising event being held in Tayvallich as it is also part of the North Knapdale area. Most of our cafe regulars like to support the Tayvallich events.

Our *Second Sunday Suppers* began in 2019 and these give us opportunities to talk about subjects not usually covered at a dinner party and gave the Christians present the opportunity to share their understanding of topics in a non-judgmental way.

Shed -Na-Mara is also open on a Saturday morning. This started when a group of local men built a Skiff and laid a new floor in the hall. They have now moved on to different projects. Quite often our visitors like to visit and observe what they are doing as well as having a chat. They also enjoy their coffee/tea, scones and cakes!

This is not just a cafe! Our regulars tell us if they are unable to come the following week. If they haven't told us we can then check if they are alright. If someone is unwell and unable to come a plate of goodies will be taken to them.

Cafe Connect is for everyone to feel comfortable enough to know that there is always someone who will listen, a touch or a hug if they need comfort or practical advice if they have a problem. I don't think anyone realised when Cafe Connect began in 2016 that the initial vision would grow into such an asset for our wonderful community.

Catherine MacLennan

Journey to the Cross

I'm writing this ahead of our first planning meeting so can't report yet on how things are shaping up, but wanted to take the chance to remind you of the event which will be in Ardrishaig Public Hall from 16th - 19th April. Please put it on your calendar, in your diary, and in your prayers! You may want to think and pray about who you might bring along to the exhibition, or how you might be able to help? It would be great to build on the success of last year, and see more people from our community attend. I'll be keeping you up to date with progress as the time draws near!

Ruth Carruthers

What's On in March

Sun	2nd	All Together in Lochgilphead at 11am
Mon	3rd	Craft Club in Ardrishaig Church Hall, 2pm to 4pm
Wed	5th	The Beginning of Lent
		Not Another Coffee Morning in Ardrishaig Church Hall at 10:30am
Thur	6th	Reading Group/Book Club in Ardrishaig Church Hall at 2pm
Fri	7th	World Day of Prayer Service in Lochgilphead Baptist Church at 6:30pm
		(Prepared by the WDP Committee of the Cook Islands)
Sat	8th	Café Connect in Achnamara Hall, 10.30am to 12.30pm
Sun	9th	Services in Ardrishaig at 10am and Achahoish at 11:30am
		Teddy Bear Pancake Picnic, Church Hall, Lochgilphead, 3:30pm – 4:30pm
Mon	10th	Craft Club in Ardrishaig Church Hall, 2pm to 4pm
Wed	12th	Not Another Coffee Morning in Ardrishaig Church Hall at 10:30am
Sat	15th	Café Connect in Achnamara Hall, 10.30am to 12.30pm
Sun	16th	Services in Tayvallich at 10am and Lochgilphead at 11.30am
Mon	17th	Craft Club in Ardrishaig Church Hall, 2pm to 4pm
Wed	19th	Not Another Coffee Morning in Ardrishaig Church Hall at 10:30am
Sat	22nd	Café Connect in Achnamara Hall, 10.30am to 12.30pm
Sun	23rd	All Together Service in Kilmartin at 11am
Mon	24th	Craft Club in Ardrishaig Church Hall, 2pm to 4pm
Wed	26th	Not Another Coffee Morning in Ardrishaig Church Hall at 10:30am
Sat	29th	Café Connect in Achnamara Hall, 10.30am to 12.30pm
Sun 30th		British Summer Time begins – the clocks go forward
		Mother's Day
		Services in Achahoish at 10am and Tayvallich at 11:30am
Apr 6th		Services in Lochgilphead at 10am and Kilmartin at 11:30am
Sun 13th		Palm Sunday – Service followed by lunch in the Church Hall in Ardrishaig

Please send all submissions
for the April issue
to moirathompson176@gmail.com
by 18th March.

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