

Mission Statement

Our purpose is to honour and enjoy God, proclaim Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, serve our community in Jesus' name, strengthen one another in our spiritual life, and influence our world through prayer, witness, truth and grace.



**And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
Luke 2:10**

Need prayer or someone to pray with you?

Email Mary Fennell:

prayercoordinator1995@gmail.com

Need to talk? Questions about the Christian faith

Contact the Session Clerk, who will find the right person to speak to you. Details are on the last page.

Website: www.sschurch.co.uk

Notices: lesleyinskye@yahoo.co.uk



From the Minister

The editor of the church newsletter suggested I might give a little introduction about myself, for those who have not met me yet. I come from the Isle of Lewis where I was minister in Cross Ness. But this is not my first time in the Isle of Skye. I was an associate minister in this parish from 1997 – 2003. It was here that I met my wife, and our son was born here. We moved to Portree for a few years, and then Canada for 10 years. When we were in Canada, we believe that God was calling us to come back to Scotland; so, in 2017, we packed our bags, and we moved back in July 2017. Faith is always an adventure with God, we had no idea where we were going, all we knew was that He called us. Faith in God isn't always about big leaps of faith, often, it is the small steps of trust and obedience to Him daily.

We moved to my homeland, the Isle of Lewis, and God opened a door for us to be in the Church of Scotland, I worked part-time with the local presbytery and part-time in a church in Stornoway. We were called to Cross Ness in 2019, we were there for about 6 months, and then the Covid pandemic hit our community. We served there for 5 years, and then we felt God was calling us to come to Skye, to Strath & Sleat. After 27 years, the wheel has turned full circle, and we are back here in this parish. This is a very brief part of our story of following Jesus.

As we come to this first Christmas together as minister and church family, I would encourage us to spend our time studying the revelation of the birth of Jesus in the Gospels, it is such a significant event that changes everything. The writer to the Hebrews in Chapter 1 verse 1 says this:

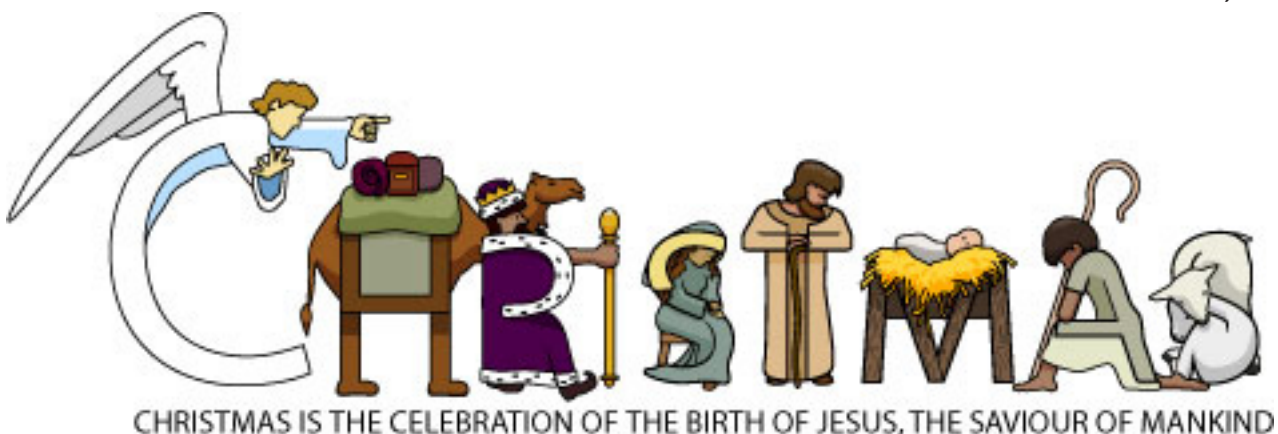
Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power.

What a powerful word this is, the revealing of the Son of God to mankind. He is the ultimate Word, He is the life giver, He is the best teacher, He is the good shepherd for our hearts.

The Incarnation of Jesus into this world to become flesh, to become like us, is absolutely astounding. That the God of heaven would become like us, to live a life like ours, to know joy and sorrows like us, to be tempted like us, and yet to be without sin.

If there was no Incarnation of Jesus, there would be no Gospel story, to share. I love the Christmas season, because it is His story, it's all about Him. Let us approach this Christmas season in the knowledge and assurance that God still speaks to us today, that He is with us.

John M Nicolson, Minister



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What's On This December

SUNDAY 8th DECEMBER

3pm Gaelic Carol Service in Broadford Church

SUNDAY 15th DECEMBER

11am Family Nativity Service in Kyleakin Church

SUNDAY 15th DECEMBER

3pm Holiday Club - Christmas Theme in Kyleakin Village Hall

SUNDAY 15th DECEMBER

6pm Area Joint Carol Service in Kyleakin Village Hall (to be confirmed)

SUNDAY 22nd DECEMBER

11am Kilmore Family Christmas Service

SUNDAY 22nd DECEMBER

3pm Gaelic Carol Service in Kilmore Church

SUNDAY 22nd DECEMBER

4pm Skye Chorus invites you to a Christmas Carol Celebration including some excerpts from Handel's Messiah in Broadford Church

SUNDAY 22nd DECEMBER

5.30pm Carols in Free Church, Kyleakin (to be confirmed)

TUESDAY 24th DECEMBER

5pm Christmas Eve Carol Service in Broadford Church

TUESDAY 24th DECEMBER

7pm Christmas Eve Carol Service in Kilmore Church

WEDNESDAY 25th DECEMBER

11am Christmas Day Service in Kyleakin

*What does Santa suffer from
if he gets stuck in a chimney?
Claustrophobia!*

*What do you call a cat in the desert?
Sandy Claws!*

*What do crackers, fruitcake
and nuts remind me of?
You!*

John's Induction Service

Our new minister's Induction Service, led by Doug McRoberts, Moderator of Clèir Eilean Ì Presbytery, was held on 5th October in Kyleakin Hall. Fortuitously, our old minister, Rory MacLeod, also took part in his new role as Presbytery Clerk for Clèir Eilean Ì.

A presentation was also made to our interim moderator, Fred Vincent – a book token for himself and flowers for his wife – by our Broadford Church elder, Mairi Dick.

The hall was full and our thanks go to Jean MacKay, Lesley Jones, Alison Graham and Jean Gillies (in the photo), others on the day and the many more who contributed baking for the refreshments, and our worship team for the music.



Image by Freepik



Final Reflections from the Presbytery Development Worker

Three years ago, I took on the role of Development Worker with Lochcarron Skye Presbytery - a calling over 30 years in the making. In the early years God gave me both a burden and a passion to help people break free from whatever held them back - spiritually, emotionally, or mentally - so they could become who He intended them to be. This meant helping people overcome spiritual doubts that kept them disconnected, heal emotional wounds that held them in pain, and break through mental barriers clouding their sense of purpose and self-worth.

Over time, this calling took shape through learning and development work, supporting people in gaining new skills and building community infrastructure to enable them to thrive. I was fairly content with this until 2017, when I found myself leading emotional intelligence coaching for individuals on community payback orders. I soon realised that many of these people had been deeply affected by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and, as I got to know them, I was deeply impacted by their reality - they were broken people with so much more to offer and live for, yet with little hope of change. I understood the system and the help available, and I believed only God's power could bridge this chasm and truly heal the depths of some of their wounds.

As the project neared its end, I kept seeing an image of a crossroads. Its meaning was clear: I could turn right and continue with secular development work or turn left and follow where God was leading me. Though I didn't know exactly where that would lead, I felt certain God was saying it would lead to something that would help these people. It was uncharted territory, but I'd come to welcome that. The decision was easy - I had nothing to lose by taking the path to the left, so I did.

Unsure of where to begin, I spent the next few years studying theology and innovation, exploring how the church, amidst a crisis, might offer meaningful support to these people. During this time, I also entered a Period of Discernment with the Church, seeking a deeper understanding of how this path might unfold. Near the end of this period, the role of Mission Development Worker opened within the Presbytery, but the timing couldn't have been worse. The application deadline was 1st May, but with exams looming and a summer full of B&B bookings, I didn't have time to apply, let alone take on the role. So, in faith, I closed the application and prayed, "Lord, if this job is meant for me, make it come back in September." I thought no more of it - until 1st September, when the application reappeared in my inbox. The original candidate couldn't accept due to accommodation issues, so the post was re-advertised.

Over the past three years in this role, I've been involved in many development projects, each of which I enjoyed. But from the start, I yearned for something to help these people. I shared the vision with various churches including Xcel Church in Portree. It was there in 2023 that I was introduced to Anne Harley. Anne had a deep burden for those impacted by addiction and life-controlling issues and was eager to start a project. This led me to share with them about a project called KEYS I had been involved with. KEYS form partnerships with churches to give them the capacity, expertise and support to set up ministry centres to help individuals break free from addiction and other life controlling issues through a blend of 3 Keys: Community, Spiritual, and Medical.

Anne and her team have worked hard this last year to get this up and running and, in October, a KEYS centre opened in Portree, led by Anne and running out of the Skye Gathering Hall.



This centre has become a beacon of hope, with its first recovery group meeting in October, marking a new beginning for Skye's community.

At the launch, Anne shared, "Our vision at Xcel is to create a community that reflects the heart of God - a place where all are welcomed, the lost are found, the broken are made whole, and the sick are healed. Scotland faces the highest number of drug-related deaths in Europe and, even here on Skye, addiction remains a significant challenge. Our mission is to reach out to those seeking freedom from addiction and provide a safe space for healing."

I am filled with gratitude to God for His love, care, and compassion for those whose lives have been broken by difficult experiences, and for His faithfulness in bringing this vision to fruition. Though I didn't know exactly where the path would lead, I trusted it would bring help to those in need - and it has, entirely by His grace. Led by Him, strangers came together, wholly at His direction, to create a beacon of hope for those seeking inner healing and restoration. I look forward to continuing to see Him work in power, healing and restoring people to become who He always meant them to be.

Working with all of you over the last three years has been a joy. Above all, I've cherished the deepened friendship I now have with God.

Please join me in praying for Anne, her team, and our community here on Skye as they embark on this journey. If you know someone who could benefit, they can contact Anne at 07759 450343 or email northskye@thekeysproject.org. The recovery group meets on Mondays from 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm at the Skye Gathering Hall in Portree, and an alternative one online for those who can't make that day. Further help is available, but a chat with Anne and attendance at the recovery group is the first step.

If you're exploring a calling with the Church of Scotland, consider the Period of Discernment process. Details are available at www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve/vocations/application-and-assessment-process. For more on KEYS or to get involved, visit www.thekeysproject.org.



Anne Sikorski, Mission & Ministry Development Worker | Clèir Eilean Ì: Highlands & Hebrides

What goes Ho Ho Whoosh, Ho Ho Whoosh?
Santa going through a revolving door!





Reflection and Prayers for World AIDS Day

*And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another
and for all, just as we abound in love for you*

1 Thessalonians 3:12

1st December is World AIDS Day – the day we remember the lives of the over 40 million people worldwide who have died from AIDS and AIDS-related conditions. It is a time when we can give thanks for the memory of a relative or friend who we loved, or to pray for those who are not remembered. In the early days of the AIDS pandemic, stigma and discrimination at all levels meant many people lived and died alone and unloved.

With me, remember the father of Anisa in India, who died of AIDS in 1990 – emaciated with tuberculosis and struggling to breathe; he died knowing his family would not be able to ensure education for his daughter. He died unaware he was HIV positive and unaware his wife would die and Anisa would become an orphan.

But it is also a day to give thanks for the 39 million people who today can live a long and fulfilled life with HIV, thanks to medical science and to education about the condition.

With me, remember Mary, who is HIV positive and now 62 years old. She was devastated on receiving her diagnosis over 30 years ago. Her life was over, or so she thought. Thanks to antiretroviral drugs she is healthy and her virus is undetectable. She wishes she had had faith in scientific research and had put more money into her pension!

Finally, give thanks for those who cared enough to support the many orphaned and vulnerable children – the grandparents, the aunties and uncles, the older siblings – and for those who cared enough to support the carers. For the educators who continually sought to keep young people AIDS-free. For the campaigners who continue to fight for access to antiretroviral medication for all.

With me, hear from William, orphaned as a child and supported by Ekwendeni Hospital AIDS Programme through school and into adulthood. “My life changed after I was lucky enough to be supported through my education. I am now a successful farmer and I can stand on my own feet. And can you believe it – I even have my own car! From being a child with no one to care for me I am now a married man with children.”

The Church Of Scotland HIV Programme has for 23 years supported people infected and affected by the virus both in Scotland and around the world. World AIDS Day is a day for us to remember. Please wear a red ribbon to signify this. HIV remains the number one cause of death in many countries around the world. Much has been learned and acted on but much more remains to be done. Although the landscape of the pandemic has changed, the need for love, care and compassion remains. On World AIDS Day, we can remind ourselves that God’s love is for all.

Prayer

God of all, Your love abounds. Your love shapes our lives. Help us pour out that love to those in our world, known and unknown – those who live with memories of loved ones who have died from AIDS, those who live because they are cared for by family and friends, those who live because of continuing scientific breakthrough, those who live because others speak out for them, those who live because we are praying for them and You hold them in the palm of Your hand. Amen

Hope and Faith School, Zambia

The following are a few pictures showing some of the special events that happened at Hope and Faith School recently:

- A visit to the school by a charity that screens children for eyesight problems and provides glasses if necessary
- The children dressed up to celebrate Zambian Independence Day, October 24th
- The opening of the library in the new building which has been stocked with secondhand books donated from the UK

The pictures demonstrate some of the big strides the school has taken in recent years and also the enthusiastic way the school community embraces its national identity and culture.

Jean Gilles





Our 2025 calendar and gift cards are available to purchase from Tony (strathandsleatworship@gmail.com) or Jean (jeangillies@btinternet.com). Each calendar costs £10 and gift-cards cost £5, with all proceeds going towards the school feeding programme.



*What do elves post on social media?
Elf-ies!*

Easter Newsletter Deadline: Monday 24 March 2025

Please send anything you would like to have included in the Easter newsletter to me at alisonorr1@gmail.com. News, upcoming events, book review, poems - anything you think might be of interest to others. We especially love to hear how God is moving in your life.

Alison Orr, Newsletter Editor

Kyleakin Sunday School

In Sunday school we have been looking at shepherd stories in the Bible. We started with learning about Cain and Abel, and how Abel showed he was a true follower of God. He gave God the very best of his flock, whereas Cain's vegetables were only second best (and we saw how that affected what happened next!). We looked at Jacob and his spotted sheep, Psalm 23 – The Lord is my shepherd, and the shepherd-boy David being chosen by God to be king, because of his good heart, not because he looked kingly. Then we looked at how Jesus called Himself "The Good Shepherd" and what that meant, and how Jesus often used shepherds and sheep in His teaching.



Making shepherd's head-dresses

**How did one shepherd
make the other shepherd
laugh?**

**He played a sheep trick
on him!**

**What do sheep say at
Christmas?**

**Wool-tide Bleatings! or A
Merry Christmas to Ewe!**

So, in our Family Nativity Service we are going to be telling the story of the first Christmas, from the shepherd's point of view.

Kyleakin Family Nativity Service is on Sunday 15th December at 11am.

Lesley Jones



The True Story of Christmas Word Search



Read the story below. Find and circle the words that are underlined. The words can appear in any direction: horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backwards.

The True Story of Christmas

More than 2000 years ago, there lived a young woman named Mary. She was preparing to be married to a man named Joseph.

One day, an angel appeared to Mary and said, "Listen! You will soon have a son, and you will name him Jesus. The baby will be holy and will be called the Son of God."

Around the time for Jesus to be born, the Roman rulers ordered everyone to return to their hometown to be counted.

Joseph and Mary had to travel to the town of Bethlehem. When Joseph and Mary arrived at Bethlehem, the town was very crowded. They had to stay where animals were kept.

While they were there, baby Jesus was born. Mary wrapped him with pieces of cloth and placed him in a manger.

That night, in a field near Bethlehem, shepherds were looking after their sheep. An angel appeared to them and said, "I bring you good news of great joy for all people. Today in Bethlehem, a Savior has been born. He is Christ the Lord!" Then many more angels appeared, praising God for the birth of Jesus.

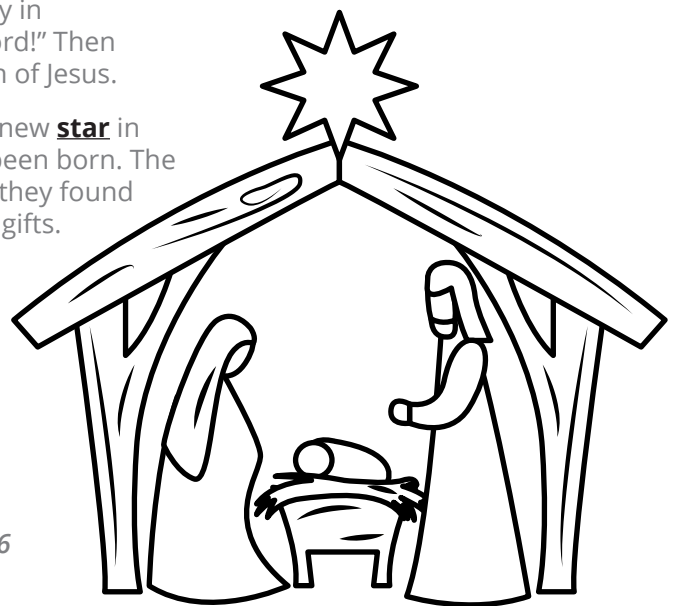
Sometime later, wise men from the east saw a bright, new star in the sky. They knew it was a sign that a great King had been born. The wise men followed the star to look for the child. When they found Jesus, they bowed down, worshiped him and gave him gifts.

This is the true story of Christmas. Christmas is the day we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

God sent his Son, Jesus, to be born on earth because he loves us very much.

For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16



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Free Online Advent Resources

Advent in a Jar Download

This is a fun activity to do with kids that provides a context in which to talk to them about Advent and the coming of Christ. Also great for adults! This is a downloadable packet that will walk you through the steps of creating your own advent jar and printable “sticks” to cut out and use that have a variety of activities on them for your family to enjoy as you prepare for the nativity of Jesus.

godspacelight.com/shop/advent-in-a-jar



*Why was the Advent
Calendar afraid?
Its days were numbered!*

The Advent

Dark winter days and nights call for tales from ancient times.

A 20 part audio drama series about the fulfilment of long awaited promises, about light in the darkness, presence in the loneliness, and hope in despair. Because everyone needs a story about light in these dark days.

www.scottishbiblesociety.org/resources/the-advent

50 Faith at Home Ideas for Christmas

This list is a collection of ideas, one or two of which might be just right for your family this year.

godventure.co.uk/50-faith-at-home-ideas-for-christmas



Rites of Passage

Funerals

Balmacara Cemetery

13 September 2024

Heidi MacKenzie (David Knowles), graveside service

Broadford

11 October 2024

Caitriona Maclean (Rev John M Nicolson), Dignity, Portree

16 October 2024

George B. Neil (Rev John M Nicolson), F Macleod



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Services and Meetings



OUR CHURCHES

Broadford

High Street
Broadford
Isle of Skye
IV49 9AB

Kilmore

Kilmore
Sleat
Isle of Skye
IV44 8RG

Kyleakin

Meuse Lane
Kyleakin
Isle of Skye
IV41 8PH

SUNDAY SERVICES

All three churches have an 11am Sunday morning service

NB Except 4 times a year when the whole parish meets in one church to celebrate Communion (please see weekly notices for dates)

Kyleakin 4.30pm **Nourish**, 1st Sunday of term-time months
6pm **Fellowship**, on the other Sundays

Gaelic Services 3pm **Broadford**, 1st Sundays
3pm **Kilmore**, 3rd Sundays

MID-WEEK MEETINGS (please contact one of the elders for more information)

Mondays 10.30 -12.30 **Make It Count Sleat** - babies with parents/carers - in the Sleat & Strath Free Church, Teangue
11am **Prayer for Revival** (on Zoom)

Tuesdays 10.30 -12.30 **Make It Count Broadford** - babies with parents/carers - in Broadford Church
7.30pm **Kyleakin Prayer Meeting** in Kyleakin Church hall

Wednesdays 7.30pm **Buidheann Bhiobail** ann an Seòmar Eige, ACC, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig
7.30pm **Broadford Bible Study** - in Broadford Church

Thursdays 1.30pm **Ladies' Group Meeting** in Kilmore Church - all ladies welcome - please speak to Jane or Jean for further info

Contacts

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