



# Arrochar Parish Newsletter

## Spring 2024



### The Future of our Parish

On Sunday 25th February the parish churches of Arrochar, Luss & Rhu & Shandon all voted in favour of becoming linked. This means that the three churches will share resources like a minister, currently Rev Ian Millar, whilst retaining their own autonomy with regard to finance etc.

Going forward we are now looking at the steps to be taken to move toward a union of the three churches to form the Three Lochs Parish which will reduce administration whilst still retaining weekly worship in the individual churches. We will be also looking at the actions we need to take to allow us to call a permanent minister.

### Easter Services

#### Easter Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March

There will be an early morning service in the churchyard of Rhu and Shandon Church at 7am, followed by breakfast. All are welcome.

The 10am service in Arrochar Parish Church will, again, be followed by a walk to the cross at Glenloin, laying of flowers and a short prayer, after which we are invited to share light refreshments at the *Olive Branch*. Lifts can be arranged.

### Church Services

#### Arrochar Parish Church

Sunday worship is at 10am.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated on 24<sup>th</sup> March. All are welcome.

#### Live streaming

Our services are now streamed live every Sunday at 10am, so if you can't get to church you can still share in our worship as it happens.

<https://arrocharparishchurch.org/streaming.html>

#### St Peter and St Paul

Details of services to be confirmed.

## **My Journey of Faith**

### **Rev. Ian Millar OLM**

One of the things that drew my wife and me to Arrochar was the Church and the worshipping community which we found warm and friendly. I had been a lay minister in the Anglican church but accepted my days of leading services were probably over. My plans, however were not what the Lord was calling me to and shortly after we arrived Rev. Sherrard announced his retirement, an announcement which set me on a path that led to my ordination, in 2020, as an Ordained Local Minister (OLM) in the Church of Scotland.

The path was long and not always easy.

My preaching skills were exercised over a few months, guesting at Arrochar and Luss. During this time, I attended a vocations conference run by the Church of Scotland. Realisation dawned that I would need the support of Presbytery if I were to fulfil my calling. Fortunately, Presbytery felt there would be a rôle for me within the Church of Scotland and a lengthy period of training, encompassing many aspects of theological academic study, doctrine and scrutinisation of my faith ensued.

Throughout my journey of faith, my sense of call slowly evolved. Initially this was to the people of Arrochar and Luss, but as I became more involved with, and understood the role of Presbytery better it seemed that more experienced people led by the Spirit would have a better sense of where my developing skills would be of most benefit. I was placed with the Rev Christine Murdoch in the Lochside Linkage, comprising Craigrownie, Garelochhead and St Modan's Parish Churches. It was exciting; school visits, pastoral visits, ecumenical meetings, and then very shortly after there was the COVID lockdown. How were we to be a Church, how were congregations to come together to worship God and provide support for each other?

In the Church we quickly learned how to use existing technology to ensure services were available on-line. I learned so much about recording, editing, and publishing short services to Facebook and YouTube and how to update Web sites. A whole new area of learning.

During these four years, thanks to Dr Grace Rogerson, Interim Moderator at Arrochar and Luss I was able to retain a limited link with my home parish conducting funerals and weddings. As the Presbytery Mission Plan took shape I was asked if I would consider returning to Arrochar and Luss with the addition of Rhu and Shandon. Of course, I said “Yes!”

### **A Reflection for Easter** **Rev. Ian Millar OLM**

Worried, troubled, not sure where life is leading you?

There is so much going on in the world that might cause us to question what is happening.

I am fortunate to have lived in a country led by a strong monarchy and strong political leaders. The information we got was through newspapers, radio, and television, broadcast at set times. We did not suffer information overload. I am not mourning the passing of halcyon days when the sun always shone, it didn't. There were scandals then, as there are now.

The biggest difference seems to be the way and frequency ‘news’ is reported. I wonder how Jesus driving out the sacrificial animals and money changers from the temple would have been reported. It would certainly have been a talking point and that's how the news was spread, by word of mouth, a slower pace. We know from the epistles (letters) that news also spread through the written word, these were read to a group of people and then potentially forwarded to another group. It gave people time to think and consider before making comment.

This Lent, I have had a stronger sense of a fresh start than I can remember in any previous season. It is closely aligned with the final years of the life of Jesus, compressed into the Lent and Easter period. It began with the Gospel of Mark and the urgency it evokes, the brief details of the baptism, the immediate urge to go into the wilderness, (Mk 1:9-13). The end of one chapter in the life of Jesus and the start of another, a fresh start, and miraculous things followed.

Amid these miracles, Jesus alerts his disciples to his impending death, he is preparing them for change, another beginning. Peter wants things to stay the same and is rebuked by Jesus, (Mk 8:31-33). The third week in Lent took us to the cleansing of the temple (Jn. 2:13-16). Another new beginning brought about by Jesus. The final readings for Lent – The light coming into the world (Jn. 3:16-21), the plant that grows from the grain (Jn 12:20-25) and the Passion (Mk. 15:37 -39), all speak of a fresh start. Taken together, the Lent readings lead us to the greatest fresh start ever, the resurrection of Jesus, the Christ, (Mk 16:1-8).

Christ died for us, for you and for me. He conquered death, rising on the third day and returned to God the Father where he intercedes on our behalf. In Jesus, we have someone who listens to our worries and our troubles and always offers us a fresh start. A start full of hope and promise as we are guided by the Holy Spirit. This Easter, take the chance of a fresh start, leave your worries and troubles at the foot of the cross and enjoy a fresh start in the risen Lord.

May Christ our Saviour always attend you, bless you and lovingly guide you.

May the glory and the promise of this joyous time of year bring peace and happiness to you and those you cherish.

Ian

## What's happening in our communities?

### Parish Church Spring Fair

The Spring Fair will be held on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April from 10.30 – 12 noon at the Three Villages Hall.

Donations of raffle and tombola prizes are most welcome.

Please come along and support this event.

### Parish Church Plant Sale

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June 10.30 – 12 at the Three Villages Hall.

### Coffee Mornings

The Three Villages Hall hosted a coffee morning on 9<sup>th</sup> March. To coincide with Mother's Day there was a sale of scarves, handbags and costume jewellery in aid of Breast Cancer Research.

Thanks to everyone who supported this event.

The next coffee morning will be on 13<sup>th</sup> April.

### Craft and Chat Circle

The Craft and Chat Circle meets every Wednesday in the Church Hall.

Everyone (and their dog) is welcome. Crafting is not compulsory.

Are you interested in learning how to knit, crochet or use a sewing machine? Would you like to join a small group on a Saturday morning at the 3VH or one evening in the church hall? If so please email [ccc.arrochar@gmail.com](mailto:ccc.arrochar@gmail.com) with your preferred day.

### Three Villages Hall

Monday mornings are again proving to be a well-attended gathering for the local community which has now been extended from 9:30 to 1:00pm. There are regular exercise opportunities for those involved in the Walk in the Park programme, with Strength & Balance sessions along with introductory Tai Chi for those wishing to participate.

With Mel Tonks and Gillian Campbell providing catering support those attending have had some tasty baking treats to accompany a hearty soup and sandwich lunch.

All locals are welcome to join in the exercise sessions or just sit and catch up on local news and interests.

Suggestions continue to be welcome on topics for further activities, discussion or visitors and guests to provide information and facilitate activities. Councillor Paterson, now returned to his role has advised he'll drop in to catch up on Council and National Park issues.

We are also exploring with local Health & Beauty specialist Cherry MacTavish the provision of Mani/Pedicure treatments over the morning, along with Fun-Bingo for those wishing to sit and enjoy a few cards and some friendly banter.

Open Doors has been funded by the Community Hydro Scheme along with the Hannah Stirling Loch Lomond Trust, who have also funded the rebuild of the Tarbet Burn "Faerie" Bridge that was destroyed by a falling tree during this winter's storm force winds.

**The 3VH** continues to welcome any suggestions or requests for Hall group use, please call 01301 702669 or via Email through Village Hall website: <https://threevillageshall.scot/>

Keep an eye out for all the upcoming music, drama and events at the Three Villages Hall on our Website: <https://threevillageshall.scot/whats-on/>

### **Upcoming events at the Three Villages Hall**

20th July - Steve Jinski - Singer song writer with international credentials

10th August - Woo Town - fun filled tunes from Blue Grass favourites to original compositions

27th October - Harcourt Players bring live music and a silent film - Alfred Hitchcock's "The Lodger"

TBC - Dunbartonshire Concert Band

### **Thank you**

Once again, we acknowledge the generosity of the **International Clan MacFarlane Society** for their support enabling us to live-stream our services.