

1. Introduction

On 1st October 2012 the two parishes of Christ Church, Laxey and All Saints, Lonan were joined together to become the Parish of Lonan and Laxey. The Parish also became part of the Team Ministry with St Peter's, Onchan. The Team Ministry is part of the Eastern Mission Partnership Team which links in to the Diocesan wide Mission Partnerships for support, exchange of ideas and guidance.

On 1st August 2015 All Saints, Lonan was closed and ceded to the Church Commissioners. It is in the process of sale. Further details are set out below.

The PCC for Lonan and Laxey Parish is concerned for the whole Parish. Situated within the Parish is the ancient Church of St. Adamnan's.

There is the Team Vicar, Rev Josephine Dudley, who has served Lonan and Laxey since 21st September 2011. This is a half time post with a parsonage property at 56 Ard Reayrt, Laxey.

The PCC members recognise that it is their duty to secure the future of Christ Church in these challenging times. However, the congregation and the PCC are committed to keeping God's work alive in the Parish. Various initiatives have been tried but it is the financial challenge which is proving hardest to overcome. The PCC has embraced the opportunity presented by 'Visit Laxey Valley' a charitable enterprise to bring tourists and locals to the area rich in mining history.

2. The Ministry Team

Reverend Josephine (Jo) Dudley – Team Vicar

Derek Osborne – Churchwarden

Hazel Smith – Churchwarden and Treasurer

PCC Members – Alan Stewart, Tim Kenyon, Rachel Taylor, Pauline Mitchell, Ed Clague

Synod Representative – Keith Sutton

Secretary to PCC – Hazel Smith

3. History of Christ Church, Laxey

With the development of the Laxey lead mines in the late 1840s, the population in the small mining and coastal village of Laxey increased considerably. The nearest church (All Saints, Lonan) was some three miles away. Christ Church was designed by Ewan Christian on land donated by GW Dumbell, the mine owner. On 27 May 1856 it was consecrated. The design is described as 'early English', the interior being simple yet beautiful with soaring, elegant beams and rustic stained glass. It was constructed for the miners who worked in what were the deepest lead, zinc and copper mines in the world.

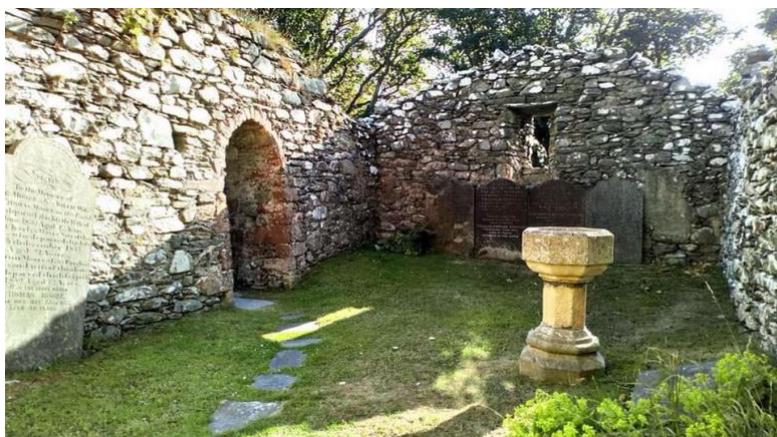


4. All Saints Church, Lonan

All Saints, Lonan was built in 1834, designed by John Taggart. There are two war memorials in the church designed by the famous artist and sculptor, Archibald Knox. Unfortunately, the church required extensive renovation with insufficient funds to complete those works. It was therefore taken over by the Church Commissioners and is about to be conveyed to a charitable organisation which will keep part of the church for Festival Services and transform the rest into a community facility.

The Lonan Burial Authority administers the churchyard at All Saints.

5. St Adamnan's Church



The church is also known as 'Lonan Old Church', originally in Manx as Keeill-ny-Traie. St Adamnan's is in an isolated rural spot, surrounded by open farmland. Built on the site of an ancient Keeill, its ancient roots and tranquility give the church an almost mystical sense of God in our Island.

It is an active place of worship. The 'Friends' organize a series of non-denominational services with visiting clergy and soloists, mainly throughout the summer but also at Epiphany and Harvest. Services draw a diverse congregation from across the Island. The church also provides occasional evening and mid-day prayers and, on rare occasions, may host the Sunday Parish Service.

In the grounds are ancient Celtic Crosses. There are plans to install interpretation boards with the help of Manx Heritage.

6. The Church Buildings

Christ Church was reordered in 2013 with disabled access, a toilet and food preparation area being added. Pews were removed from the western end of the Church to allow the space to be multi-functional. The transept was opened up and the pulpit moved to allow for an open space near to the organ (which celebrated its 100th birthday this year).

7. Lonan and Laxey



Laxey village is located on the east coast of the Isle of Man. It has a core of shops including a post office, a small supermarket, some food outlets and artisan shops and the Woollen and Flour Mills. There is a Doctors' surgery and a Dentist. Historically it was a mining and fishing village, but the village is now mainly residential. During the tourist season, the Manx Electric Railway provides welcome tourist traffic as visitors change from the MER to the Snaefell Electric Railway (55,000 in 2018) to visit the highest spot on the Island and our only mountain. In October 2019 Laxey suffered frightening and catastrophic damage when the Laxey River, which runs through the village, flooded. Many residential properties are still blighted by the flood waters. Christ Church was proud to act as a hub for the Civil Defence Service during the crisis.

Lonan is a rural parish on the eastern coast. It completely surrounds Laxey village and comprises residential and farming communities. The population has, in the last 10 years, increased with a new housing development located near to All Saints.

8. Church Activities

Christ Church holds the following services:

- (1) Every Sunday Holy Communion at 10.30 am
- (2) Alternate Sundays Holy Communion at 8.00 am
- (3) Every Wednesday Holy Communion at 10.00 am

In addition, the Church celebrates Harvest Festival with a supper, a programme of Christmas Services, an Advent course run by Rev Jo, Mothering Sunday, Rogation Sunday, a Pet Service and a very well attended Remembrance service.

Rev Jo was a school governor at Laxey School for 6 years (the maximum allowed in the Isle of Man), the local infants and junior school, where she regularly presides over assemblies. An ecumenical and Open the Book Team also visits regularly.



The Church has taken part in every Island-wide Flower Festival for the last several years and for the last two years has opened its doors to the Christmas Fayre which allows artisans and local charities to sell wares at the end of November.



Various organisations use the Church for coffee mornings such as the Live at Home charity which holds coffee mornings twice monthly.

Laxey Handbells practice in the Church and give concerts there to help raise funds. Other concerts and talks have been organised in recent years including a talk by a locally famous astronomer on the 'Star of Bethlehem', a recital by a Norwegian Choir and a very successful organ recital to celebrate the organ's birthday in January 2020.



This year's fundraising activities included a quiz night, a barn dance, catering during TT week, a Spring Supper, and craft demonstrations. These, of course, were put on hold for the pandemic lock down. This enabled a whole new way of thinking 'church'. Using Zoom, a weekly Prayer Meeting has gathered an average of 12 people including past residents now living in the UK. A weekly Click and Chat where residents past and current can gather and chat has attracted an average of 10 people. Two local services have had a 'congregation' of 20 and the Parish has been invited to lead a Zoom service with the Cathedral congregation.

9. Visit Laxey Valley

Laxey Valley has a vast resource of historical artefacts including the stunning Laxey Wheel (Lady Isabella), a water pump to drain the mines during operations. The Visit Laxey Valley initiative was launched in July 2019 and ran until the close of the

season in October. As Christ Church is situated very near to Laxey MER station, it was chosen as the Visitor Centre for Visit Laxey Valley. The Church is open for visitors to view a 'welcome' video explaining the historical significance of Laxey Valley and explaining the various trails in the village and its environs.

There are static displays at the rear of the Church. The Church congregation and local residents in historical costume take on Victorian characters to welcome visitors.



10. The Future

The Parish is struggling to raise sufficient funds to discharge its annual liability to the DBF. Congregation numbers have increased recently which is assisting, but there needs to be a drive to stewardship, particularly as the community values the Church for baptisms, weddings and funerals, but does not seem to be able to commit to the Church on a regular basis. It has not been possible to attract younger members despite attempts at Sunday Club and Messy Church. However, the Christingle Services and school/scout/brownie services are well attended.

It is obvious that there are whole generations of the community which find church attendance alien or life is too busy to find time for spiritual growth. We keep reaching out and are hoping that local residents will be drawn in on a 'slow burn' basis. Reverend Jo has been very active in the community and has provided comfort and solace to those who are self proclaimed non-believers.

Christ Church is a beautiful, spiritual haven in the heart of Laxey village. St Adamnan's is a tranquil, mystical and ancient chapel in a rural idyll. Both have so much to offer in spreading God's word in our Parish.

