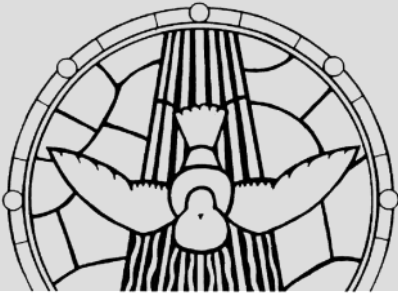


Newport-on-Tay

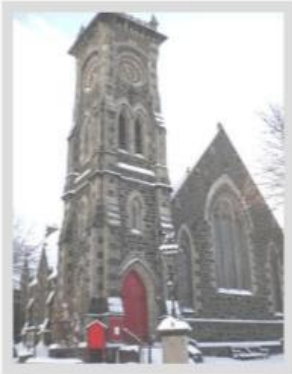
Church of Scotland Journal

March 2023



MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Matthew 6:16-18: A Wise Fasting is an Excellent Thing



From Wednesday 22nd February 2023 we begin the season of Lent, when we are expected to fast and pray as we walk this spiritual journey to the cross with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I think it would be helpful if we began every Lenten season by reflecting on how we spent the last one! Did we fast and pray at all? What aspects of our lives did we reinvent or completely disregard because those things were a hinderance to our Christian journey? How might we do things differently this year as we seek to walk even closer with Jesus? What kind of fast is acceptable and helpful for our spiritual and physical growth? The Jews were quite keen on fasting, but they misrepresented the practice during the time of Jesus by regarding it as an attempt simply, to draw the attention of God, or a representative exercise by a select few who claimed to represent the nation to force God's hand to liberate Israel from trouble. These so-called devoted people imagined that ordinary people could not fast because they were too busy doing other things in the world. For this reason, they would engage in this extra activity of fasting to counterbalance the necessary deficiency of piety in others.

The danger of interpreting fasting in that manner was that it became a sign of superior piety and a deliberate demonstration, not to God, but to those who fasted and to the audience they sought to impress. The Jewish days of fasting were Mondays and Thursdays. These were market days, when many people crowded the towns and villages, including Jerusalem, from the countryside. Many Jews walked through the streets with unkempt hair, and clothes deliberately soiled and disarrayed to show people they were fasting and to reveal their pious nature. This kind of fasting was a deliberate act of spiritual pride and not the humility Christian people should embody. That is what Jesus was condemning: 'When you fast, do not look sombre like the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting'. In other words, there is no religious value in fasting that is undertaken for its own sake, or as a demonstration of superior piety. Fasting wisely will bring both spiritual and physical benefits: (i) Fasting would improve your physical health. The lives of many people have become soft, loose, or tiring, partly because they have reached a point when they now live to eat instead of eating to live. It would be physically helpful to practise fasting a bit more so that we give food its proper place in the body and allow the spirit of God to triumph as well. (ii) Fasting is good for self-discipline. Many of us easily become self-indulgent. We find it difficult to deny anything that is at our disposal, or that we can pay for. If we decided that each week, we would exercise some restraint and self-discipline by avoiding something - some desire or craving that has held us in its grip and has become our master - it would help us a great deal. Think of habits you find impossible to avoid. Things that have become so essential that you cannot break them. Craving for things that ought to be a pleasure but have become a necessity. We find it hard to cut off from them and have become slaves to those habits! 'If we practiced a wise fasting no pleasure would become a chain, and no habit would become a master'. We would be masters of our pleasures, and not the other way round. (iii) Fasting helps us with the ability to do without things. One of the great tests of a person's character is to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials of life. The fewer things we regard as essentials, the more independent we will be but when everything becomes essential, we would be at the mercy of the luxuries of life. A time of reflection and fasting can give us the opportunity to assess the value of things and decide what is necessary and what is not. (iv) Fasting makes us appreciate things better. We often say that too much of a thing is a disease. For example, when we eat something too much, it blunts our appetite and takes away the pleasure. But when we let go of something we enjoy for some time, we would have a better appreciation and enjoyment of it when we re-engage it. Fasting can keep the thrill in pleasure because it reinvents the things we love and keeps pleasure always fresh and new. Fasting wisely will become an excellent thing indeed.

Jesus Christ fasted in preparation for his ministry, and he demands that Christian disciples should fast for their spiritual enrichment. But we must be clear that we understand what fasting means in the spiritual sense. Fasting is not to go on a hunger strike to force God to do something. The purpose of a Biblical fast is not to go on a diet to lose weight or purify one's system. Fasting is to purify our hearts; to spend time focusing on God; to learn to deny the physical in order to grow the spiritual. Fasting is for repentance, for sorrow, for purification. Fasting helps us become more sensitive to God and to draw closer to him. In all our deeds of righteousness and piety during Lent, we need to be careful to do these for the proper motive, for the audience of God, and not for the acclaim of others.

Continued overleaf...

NEWPORT CHURCH VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to be a church which inspires people with the Good News of Jesus Christ through our enthusiasm, worship, witness, nurture and service.

Minister's Letter continued...

By the special grace of God and beginning on Ash Wednesday through to Easter Sunday, I will do daily reflections including wisdom nuggets and little action steps to assist us during these 40 days of spiritual journey and renewal. These reflections would be put on our Church's website and on my YouTube channel for your edification.

Reflecting prayerfully during the season of Lent would bring so much relief to our burdened hearts at a time when natural disasters continue to disrupt our normal life's routines like the most recent one in Turkey and Syria that has left many dead, some homeless and many more psychologically traumatised. The increasing political tension among the great nations of the world, partly because of the continuing war in Ukraine and the related economic crisis that is making life so difficult for many people, requires that we find time to seek God more fully and faithfully as Jesus did when he faced the cross.

Let us draw near to God and be confident that he will come to our aid when we call on him. But now, may we take comfort from the beautiful prayer of Charles Tindley, captured in that hymn, 'Stand by me'.

*When the storms of life are raging, stand by me
When the storms of life are raging, stand by me
When the world is tossing me like a ship upon
the sea,
Thou who rulest wind and water, stand by me...*

Every Blessing,

Rev Dr Amos Chewachong



Newport Community Chest

The Community Chest Appeal supports the Rio's foodstuff collection for inclusion in their lunch provision programme or for distribution in conjunction with the foodbank.

There has been a great response to this appeal so far but as winter continues, the need of some people may well become greater so please consider supporting this if you can. Any donations, no matter how small, are gratefully received.

Two large containers are available to receive foodstuff, toiletries, good quality clothing (particularly warm winter attire) and any surplus sleeping bags which are no longer required. These items will be delivered regularly to the Rio Community Centre for their use and distribution.



Recommended items of foodstuff include tins of soup, beans, custard, fruit and meat. Our local Scotmid Co-operative store regularly supplies perishable items such as bread/rolls.

Thank You!

Thank you all most sincerely for your prayers, cards and the beautiful flowers received following my discharge from Ninewells Hospital.

Thank you also for the many offers of support given to Linda in my absence.

Every blessing,



Francis Robertson

.....
We want to thank the Church for the lovely bouquet of flowers and card presented on the occasion of our Diamond Wedding Anniversary. A lovely surprise and so very much appreciated.

Annette and Charlie Jack

Next Edition

If you would like anything included in our April edition of the Church Journal please email newportcos@btinternet.com by Sunday 19th March 2023.

The Pop-Up Post Office returns to its normal hours on Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30 - 11:30am in the Kirk House Complex.



The Boys' Brigade Update

February is a relatively short month (even without the school holiday break), and as a result there has not been much of exceptional note to report this time apart from our regular weekly activities.

We started the month with an investigation into the (huge) amount of sugar contained in many everyday food products and we managed to calculate how many lumps of sugar boys were consuming in their regular meals. This was followed by another enlightening and thought-provoking evening when we considered some material from Children's Mental Health Week.

As our boys had been showing excellent attendance, especially since the Christmas holidays, this persuaded us to meet during the recent school mid-term break and we had a games night – with the twist being that the boys themselves decided which games we would play.

Our final evening last month had as its theme "BB Around the World" when we all learned more about our organisation and how it has spread to over 70 countries. Even allowing for differences due to climate, equipment, activities, etc., we did notice a number of very important similarities.

Our thoughts will shortly be turning towards Easter with the significance of this to us all (and not just the school holidays); hopefully, our boys will learn something new about this special occasion.

Philip Owen
Company Captain

For more details you can contact Philip on (01382) 543034 or by emailing philip.owen@talktalk.net

mannna matters



First of all, following the Stewardship Fair at the beginning of February we have gained a new soup maker and a laundry person.

We have new gifts in the shop arriving in time for Mothering Sunday on Sunday 19th March. There is a lovely selection of scarves, soaps and cards to brighten any Mother's Day. As a mother myself just spending time with my children is the best gift I could wish for as life is so busy again.

Natalia, who is helping in manna, made some traditional Ukrainian soup (Broche) for us last week and this went down very well with our customers. We continue to sell cards in manna to raise much needed funds to help Ukraine.

We are collecting hats, gloves and scarves to send to Turkey and Syria where they are much needed following the recent earthquakes.

We continue to be open 6 days a week so pop in and see us soon.

mannna is open Monday – Saturday 10am - 4:30pm

mannna (01382) 542781

Diane Miller (01382) 541141 & dianemillermannna@gmail.com

Morag Rowley (01382) 541157 & moragrowley.4@gmail.com

Safeguarding

Church Safeguarding Refresher Training for volunteers/workers has been arranged for Tuesday 18th April at 7.00pm until 8.30pm. Training is mandatory for all church volunteers and Kirk Session. Neighbouring presbyteries are also invited to attend. It will be held in the Agnes Duncan Room. Please notify me if you can attend this session. If you cannot attend, please contact me as other sessions are available (<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding-service/training>). Thank you.

Lesley Gray, Safeguarding Co-ordinator (Tel: 07779 506 994)

Sunday Club Update

Teaching this year

Since we started back in January, we have been looking at a series of sessions entitled 'Encounters with Jesus' in the Energize materials. We will continue this until the start of Lent. Sessions so far this year have included such stories as encounters with John the Baptist, with the Samaritan woman at the well, and with the sick who are healed. A big thank you to all the Sunday Club teachers and everyone who has supported the children this year.



Update on Sunday Club Sponsorship of Rimberto from Bolivia

As you will know, we have committed to sponsoring through World Vision, Rimberto, a young boy from Bolivia. The children keep up-to-date with Rimberto's progress through frequent reports received from World Vision. This allows them to better understand the lives of children growing up in very different circumstances and to pray for Rimberto and his family and community in a relevant and intercessional way.

Fundraising

We continue to fundraise through the regular weekly offerings of the children and donations from members of the congregation and other friends.



General Information

For further information about World Vision and its work, do have a look at their website: www.worldvision.org.uk

Neil Merrylees
Sunday Club Coordinator

For more details on Sunday Club you can contact Neil on 07986 669 430.

Try Praying

Many of you will remember our previous TryPraying events when we as a church have joined the national campaign to encourage those who do not "do" church to "try praying".

This has taken the form of looking at some videos about the impact of prayer on individuals' lives and last year we heard from some of our own congregation about how important prayer had proved to be for them. As members of the congregation you were encouraged to take one of the TryPraying booklets, use it for a week and then try to "lose" it by keeping it handy to pass on to anyone you came across who you thought might benefit from it.

This year, in March/April there will be another Spring Campaign by the Edinburgh-based TryPraying group with ads on buses and at train stations and churches throughout the UK encouraged to put up banners outside and participate as outlined above. We have had a banner outside our church continuously since the pandemic and will be replacing the one that was shredded in the wind recently!

The plan for Spring 2023 is to have a slot in the Palm Sunday Service on Sunday 2nd April where again we will show a video and have one or two people witnessing to what prayer means for them. However, in addition to that we are planning to have a 24 hour prayer event around the same time. This will take place in the Agnes Duncan Room with a team from our own church and other Christians who live locally taking hourly time slots in twos. Included in the plans will be public sessions where people can come in and pray or be prayed with/for. There will also be opportunities for prayer requests to be submitted.

The event would be publicised within the wider community to open up participation in whatever form those interested felt comfortable with.

Alison Heywood

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www.gghandymanagementservices.co.uk

Church Weekend Away

Our Church Weekend Away is happening on 24th – 26th March. We are heading up to the Compass Christian Centre near Glenshee. We are looking forward to reconnecting with God, reconnecting with each other and reconnecting with ourselves. There will be plenty of time to relax, or if you're feeling active, there are options to do instructor led activities.

Please visit our website or scan our QR Code for more information:

<http://the-event.info/notwa2023/>

This weekend is open to everyone whether child, youth or adult.

There is also the option to join us for just a day. It's not too late to sign up - please get in touch! There will still be morning worship that Sunday in our church as usual.



Reset - A New Evening Service



Reset is a new evening service where we have modern worship music, listening to different speakers, sharing testimonies, encouragements from God and answered prayers and praying for what we feel God has placed on hearts. This service is an opportunity for you to reset yourself before God ahead of our busy week!

It is a relaxed atmosphere, with tea and coffee available throughout the service.

This service is running from 6pm - 6:45pm, come when you can, even if it means you being late, we would love to see you! During March the speakers will be 5th March – Amos Chewachong, 12th March – Philip Owen, 19th March – Graham Johnston, 26th March – No evening service due to Church Weekend Away.

Chris Cameron

Christian Aid Crisis

The following are direct quotes from a letter from Christian Aid's Chief Operating Officer, Martin Birch.

"I'm writing to you because you've been faithful supporters of Christian Aid. Because you're the kind of community who responds to the call to alleviate suffering.Your church has helped address some of the world's greatest current needs, such as supporting those affected by the war in Ukraine. I couldn't be more thankful for your kindness.

Unfortunately, Christian Aid has been impacted by the cost of living crisis. The funding we raised last year for projects across the globe is simply not enough. Christian Aid is facing a financial shortfall. This gap puts the most vulnerable people at risk. Without your help, they may not get the support they desperately need to survive.



At a time of such great need, with crisis on crisis, we cannot bear to scale back our support for those who need help and hope. Please organise a collection today to ensure we can continue our life-saving work.Your support could bring relief to one of the millions of families who are struggling in the countries where Christian Aid is working.

YOUR CHURCH COLLECTION, NO MATTER THE SIZE, WILL BE A LIFELINE TO THOSE WHO ARE MOST VULNERABLE."

I was shocked, saddened and concerned to receive this but, as indicated, Christian Aid also has been affected by the various crises of the last few years.

I am very aware that help is needed both at home and abroad and that the calls for your giving are many and continuing.

However please note the plea says ANY SIZE of collection will help. If you feel you could give even a little, then please see me or, to give online, go to caid.org.uk/shortfall

Many thanks. **Margaret Imlay** phone (01382) 543446

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Zolotarevo Update - February 2023

Newport has been formally 'twinned' with Zolotarevo since about 2013. That relationship goes back to 1999 having been established by local people mostly centred around the churches. This 'Ecumenical Group' saw the link with Zolotarevo as a meaningful way of marking 'The Millennium' and the new era of co-operation across Europe. Zolotarevo is on the western edge of Ukraine (Transcarpathia region) close to the borders with Slovakia, Hungary and Romania.

Due to its location and the military resistance to invasion it has not been subjected to direct military assault or threat so far. Soon after the invasion on 24th February 2022, people from further east moved temporarily to Zolotarevo away from immediate danger. The new arrivals placed some strain on local facilities. The Twinning Association was able to send financial support and help the community to cope. The Twinning Association has received donations from individuals and the proceeds of various activities from Church organisations. This 'humanitarian support' has been sent through Western Union and Anna Patskan to Zolotarevo.

A few expressions of thanks have been forwarded:-

From Ekaterina Reznikova "Hello! Thank you very much for your support and help. We are immigrants from Kyiv. We were pleasantly surprised by your support. We pray that the war will end soon! Your help was given to us by Zolotarevo. This is where we are. And we do not know what to do next. Thanks for support!"

From Anastasiia Gurska, "Hi from Ukraine! Thank you very much for your help. Anna Patskan provide us with compensation for my son and for medicines, we need.

Here is the most recent news from Marian Heredia (former Chair of the Twinning Association now living in Kent) and Anna Patskan in Zolotarevo.

[Marian] We understand that 19 local people (mostly men) are engaged at the front to resist the invasion. It is perhaps a hopeful sign that few casualties have been indicated but at least one had to be transferred for treatment in Kyiv. Some local families left and crossed into other countries and their children are receiving tuition remotely, much as the UK did during the Covid Pandemic.

Some of those who came to stay with Zolotarevo families at the beginning of the war have left, either returning home or going abroad.

The school reopened in September. The buildings are now heavily sandbagged. Materials are in short supply. The Twinning Association has helped purchase some teaching aids and will prioritise an expected request for the supply of some books. Locally, as can be understood from Anna's emotional message below, many are engaged in providing support to their defenders in Ukraine's armed forces.

[Anna] Our life has changed greatly for the worse. Many families left their homes and went to live abroad with hope to come back when the situation becomes better. Some pupils study both abroad and in Zolotarevo. 19 people are at the front line. All people help the front different ways, I don't know all of them. Money, food, clothes, helmets and special vests for defending the bodies. Also medicine for those at the front line and in hospitals if they need something special that is not possible to find in Ukraine. And we also donate for cars that are often crashed there.

Many families have invited refugees to their houses and some families still live here. At school we have problems with books because the publishing house was burned down by the attack last year. Total sadness and disappointment are present. But we still have hope for better times. And we are very grateful to all our friends in Scotland and in the UK as your donations and support give us hope to survive. Great thanks to all our friends!

Youth Update

Messy Church

At our February Messy Church we looked at Noah and the Ark. We made some funky Concertina Creations, built our own Ark from our Junk Modelling, played a few games like Animal Pairs, Sink the Ark (the exact opposite of what happened!) and made some sheep biscuits! (See pictures on right.)

Fun Fact: The Ark would be able to hold roughly 5 million sheep!

Our next Messy Church Event will be on Saturday 1st April from 10.30am - 12.30pm.

Youth Groups

In February, in Youth Seekers, we have continued to look at The Lord's Prayer. We are now up to 'Give us this day our daily bread', which is the first petition we make to God for us, everything before this is a petition we are making for God's Glory. It has been an incredibly interesting series where we are understanding why we pray the Lord's Prayer so often.

Youth Café

With the new evening service starting, we have changed up Youth Café slightly. We are now running Youth Café from 7pm-8pm in manna, where we will discuss the talk at the evening service in depth, play some games and drink hot chocolate. In February over the course of two weeks we watched Black Panther: Wakanda Forever. It was a good film, if a bit predictable!



Blessings, **Chris Cameron**

The Guild Newport-on-Tay Church of Scotland

Winter Food and Fuel Crisis: Community Lunches

The second winter lunch of 2023 was held on Thursday 16th February. Fourteen guests attended and enjoyed lunch with a choice of two homemade soups, steak pie, chips and veg, and coffee and tea with chocolates to finish. Thanks very much to everyone who helped and also to all those who donated chocolates.

The next lunch is due on Thursday 6th March from 12noon. Everyone will of course be very welcome and there will be a donation plate if people want, and are able, to contribute.

As explained previously these lunches are part of an initiative to support everyone in our local community with the pressures of rising fuel and food costs. They are an extension of lunches already held in the Rio Community Centre and Betty Martin has offered vital support in promoting them. Please do keep everyone who might be struggling with the financial pressures in your prayers.

If you feel able to contribute in any way please contact:

Alison Heywood: 543369/07719367347 or alisonbob@btinternet.com



Ukraine Project

~ Fundraising for Ukraine

As mentioned previously, Morag Muir, a well-known local artist, very kindly donated four prints of the 'Royal Knight' to be sold to raise funds for the Ukraine Appeal. We have now sold two of these prints. We will be arranging to sell the remaining two over the next few months. In addition, the sunflower cards (both greeting and postcards) remain on sale through manna. So far, through this initiative we have raised over £1,700. (This is of course separate from and in addition to the Harvest Appeal.) All the money we raise is transferred to the Newport and Zolotarevo Twinning Association (NAZTA) to support our friends there. On the previous page of this Journal there is an update from Stephen Rottger of NAZTA on the current situation in Zolotarevo. Thanks so much to everyone who has contributed in any way.

~ Vigil: Every Thursday evening at 7pm on the Church Green.

We plan to continue these for as long as the conflict continues.

Before the journal goes to print, we will have marked the first anniversary of the invasion. Amos had kindly agreed to lead that vigil that night but due to another commitment was unable to attend. Alastair Stark, our student minister kindly took his place. It is important that we bear witness to the ongoing suffering of the people of Ukraine and stand with them. The Vigil is one small way of doing this. Please do join us if you are around at that time. We usually have a Bible reading, time of prayer and short reflection starting at 7pm lasting 5-10 minutes. Then everyone adds more ribbons to the ribbon flag - you may have noticed that it is filling in nicely.

Return of Summer Concerts: Wednesdays@One 23 – Save the date

Following an initial series of very enjoyable concerts in 2022 another series of four concerts is planned for later this year. For more information on dates and artists please see poster on right.

Ways to support your Guild

If you have any suggestions about other projects we can start or get involved in please do let us know. Why not think about joining us? (Contact Catherine Merrylees or any Guild member for more information.)

The Guild Team

Save the date
The Guild of Newport-on-Tay
Church of Scotland presents

Summer Concerts 2023
Wednesdays@One

Wednesday at 1pm for 30-40 mins

9th August | Robin Bell | organ
16th August | Rosie McDonald | soprano
6th Sept | Joanna Stark & Max McWhirter | cello
13th Sept | Sean Smith, David Smith,
Ron Oliver and Hannah Gibson | organ

Newport Church, Blyth Street, Newport-on-Tay Fife

Scottish Charity Number - SC006758

Messy Church Pictures



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Calendar of Worship

Sunday 5th March 2023 at 11am

Service led by Mr Alastair Stark

Beadle : A Barona **Reader** : C Owen

Welcome : F Harris

Flowers : E Thomson **Delivery** : E Owen

Coffee : A Gray, L Robertson, A Waugh + P Owen

Sunday Club : A Gray, S McCowan

Youth Elder : D Miller

Sunday 12th March 2023 at 11am

Service led by Rev Dr Amos Chewachong

Beadle : L Gray **Reader** : W Berry

Welcome : D Miller

Flowers : M Heron **Delivery** : M Rowley

Coffee : F Harris, M Shiels, M Wright +
C McCowan

Sunday Club : F Hutchinson, N Merrylees

Youth Elder : S Johnston

Sunday 19th March 2023 at 11am Mother's Day

Service led by Mr Alastair Stark

Beadle : G Campbell **Reader** : J Campbell

Welcome : C Johnston

Flowers : L Robertson **Delivery** : M Shiels

Coffee : M Heron, J Johnston, Y Simpson +
G Johnston

Sunday Club : A Gray, N Merrylees

Youth Elder : L Gray

Sunday 26th March 2023 at 11am

Service led by the Worship Team

Beadle : A Gray **Reader** : F Ritchie

Welcome : M Shiels

Flowers : C Barr **Delivery** : E Thomson

Coffee : P Broadbent, M Cuthbertson, K Farquhar
+ J Cuthbertson

Sunday Club : Funday Sunday - S Johnston,
N Merrylees

Youth Elder : C Owen

Sunday 2nd April 2023 at 11am Palm Sunday

Service led by Rev Dr Amos Chewachong

Beadle : K Campbell **Reader** : R Caird

Welcome : J Johnston

Flowers : S Johnston **Delivery** : A Waugh

Coffee : J Campbell, L Hundal, L Balfour +
K Campbell

Sunday Club : Funday Sunday - K Cruickshanks

Youth Elder : A Barona

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday - Sunday 2nd April - 11am
Maundy Thursday Service (including Communion)
- Thursday 6th April - 7pm
Good Friday Ecumenical Service
- Friday 7th April - 7pm
Easter Sunday - Sunday 9th April - 11am

All these services will be held in our Church and more information will be printed in the weekly intimations and on our website. If you would like to be included in our weekly mailing list please email newportcos@btinternet.com



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