



Newport-on-Tay Church of Scotland Journal

November 2021



MINISTER'S MESSAGE

'The Crisis of Ecology and Christian Faith'

Does not the unfolding of creation itself with a scope beyond human imagination, and a rich history of millions of years of life preceding humanity, present a revolution that centres on God's glory, and mocks human pretensions to control and define the centre of values for the life of the universe?

When Wesley Michaelson-Granberg raised that poignant question, he was responding to Christians' irresponsibility towards creation and our propensity to destroy ourselves by exercising unhelpful control and authority over the natural world, based on assumptions that we are created in the image of God to lord it over the rest of creation. The increasing ecological devastation and the threat to human life has resulted from the destruction of the environment through

deforestation for commercial and agricultural purposes. The erosion of the fertile topsoil by torrential rain, wind, and sun, and the resultant limited life-span of the crops, including the poisoning and depletion of the soil, by the massive use of pesticides, insecticides, and herbicides are human activities that have endangered our world.

Apart from poverty, malnutrition, and the spread of diseases, we all face the prospect of cultural extinction if the forces that are causing these crises are not curbed. No wonder, the countries that signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) - a treaty that came into force in 1994 - are meeting in Glasgow in what has been described as COP26, to discuss possible ways of stemming the ecological devastation that the world is experiencing. So far, some initiatives have been taken towards solving the problem, including:

- The former Bank of England governor Mark Carney is looking to move trillions of dollars of private capital towards supporting clean technology. He has gathered 450 organisations controlling 130 trillion dollars, or around 40% of global private assets, and they plan to shift finances to activities that help the move towards zero carbon, such as renewable energy.
- More than 100 countries have promised to reverse deforestation by 2030. The pledge includes almost £14bn (\$19.2bn) of public and private funds.
- There is a pact to cut emissions of the world's second-warming gas, methane, by 30% by 2030, even if big emitters like China, Russia and India are still to sign the agreement.
- Forty nations led by the UK and including China, India, and the USA, will impose standards, incentives and rules to create markets for new technologies. The partners might, for instance, agree a date by which a certain percentage of steel is made without using coal. This would give investors the confidence that markets for innovative technologies would be available and could radically lower the price of clean tech worldwide.

While world leaders continue to seek solutions to the current climate change problems, Christians also need to think about the theological implications of the ecological crisis. For example, how have Christians historically interpreted the creation narrative in Genesis 1:26-28? Has the raping of the earth not been sometimes associated to Christian traditions which propagate the idea that only human beings are created in the image of God and so are given the authority to exercise 'dominion' over the rest of creation? According to such traditions, dominion means the power to lord it over the lesser creatures of the earth. But dominion means stewardship and God requires human beings to exercise responsible stewardship or care over the other creatures of the earth. The exercise of power by those in authority in which hierarchy is the presiding ideal and where the tendency is always to lord it over others is called domination and not dominion. Usually, the power dynamic in domination makes the one to grow and the other to diminish. However, in the case of climate change both human beings and the rest of creation are likely to diminish. We must not see dominion as domination - a control, authority, and absolute power with unlimited freedom to do as we please because 'the appropriation of a right without fulfilling a corresponding responsibility will inevitably lead to the perversion of privileges.' Although humanity exercises sovereignty over the rest of creation, there is no suggestion of exploitation.

(continued overleaf)

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Minister's Letter continued ...

As Daniel L. Migliore rightly suggests, 'let your faithful ordering of the world image the way in which the gracious God exercises dominion'. The Bible shows that God, people, and the natural world are deeply interconnected. If one aspect of those relationships is broken, then everything will be impacted. It is the breakdown of such relationships that has led to racial injustice, gender inequality and environmental breakdown. God, who cares for his good creation, challenges human beings to offer care and protection to the environment. Therefore, in every part of the world, humanity needs to discover a new, less-exploitative relationship with the natural world.

As a faith community in Newport-On-Tay, we can begin by putting rubbish bags into the right bins, switching off lights and appliances when not in use, turning down heating by even 1 degree, driving less and cycling or walking more, cutting down on plastics, and always keeping in mind the 5 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refuse, and Rot. Refusing to purchase additional products or items that are single-use or are very carbon-heavy means we are using our purchases to vote against practices that are harmful to the environment. Rot is about providing goodness back into the soil and helping build up soil health which captures carbon.

As we move into the festive season of Christmas with all its pomp and grandeur, our prayer is that we would employ caution and due diligence in whatever we do, be it in areas of general purchases or our eating habits, so that we can cut down our carbon emissions and save our world from natural and cultural extinction.

Every Blessing,

Rev Dr Amos Chewachong

Pastoral Cover

Our minister Amos will be in Cameroon from 16th November to 8th December. During this time, anyone requiring a minister or Pastoral Care should contact Rev Dr Jim Connolly on 07711177655.

manna matters

Our soups have been very popular this month. We don't have as many soup makers as we used to. This has resulted in me making soup this week for manna; baking has been more my thing! My daughter Laura makes a lovely carrot and coriander soup. So on our recently holiday in Arran she took me through it step by step. The result went down well with Tuesday customers so it looks like I'm a manna soup maker. If anyone has a large pot they no longer require I would be grateful. One of my large pots has seen better days. It won't be up to the challenges of making soup weekly in such large quantities.



If you have been inspired by my soup tales and would be interested in making soup for us I would be happy to hear from you. There are guidelines I would be happy to give you.

Our gifts and Christmas cards are selling well. We have a lovely selection of scarves, socks and gloves. We also have the increasingly popular shampoo bars and conditioning bars as we become more aware of the damage plastic does to our environment. We also stock nature shampoos, body washes and liquid hand soaps. Well worth popping in and having a browse.

If you are visiting manna just a reminder that our door is regularly open to help with the recommended ventilation. We also still require you to sanitise your hands and wear a face covering unless you're exempt. We do our best to keep our volunteers and customers safe.

Diane & the manna team

manna is open Tuesday – Saturday 10am-4pm

manna (01382) 542781

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

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

Worship / Covid Update

Whare hae ye been sae braw, lad?
Whare hae ye been sae brankie, O?
Whare hae ye been sae braw, lad?
Came ye by Killiecrankie, O?

"Yes" I can honestly reply - "that's the very route we came by and what a 'braw' treat it was!" A kaleidoscopic blaze of colour, with reds, bronzes, greens and golds weaving a beautiful autumnal tapestry as we entered the Pass of Killiecrankie on a bright and sunny November afternoon.

The experience was so surreal, the sun illuminating and portraying every aspect of nature at its very best. Red deer clearly visible in large numbers having migrated to the lower slopes in response to the first dusting of snow and red squirrels darting in and out of the pine trees lining our walk frantically building up their winter nut stores. For a moment we felt that we had been transported to a different world - 'colourful and care-free'.

Yet only ten minutes earlier we had, with masks donned and hands fully sanitized, queued to pay with the obligatory bank card for petrol. A sharp reminder of the not-so-distant pandemic from whose grasp the human race is finding it so difficult to escape.

Even as I type this article, medical scientists are calling for a resumption of tighter control measures to curb an anticipated increase in Coronavirus cases and associated rise in hospitalisation numbers following the onset of winter. That is the underlying reason why we as a Church have chosen to remain at 'Level 0' with 1m distancing and all our other mitigation measures. Then, should a potential local community outbreak arise, this intermediate footing will allow us to respond more readily to the reintroduction of 'Level 1' (or above) measures.

We can however, as congregational numbers have stabilised, withdraw the need for weekly registration and allow our congregation, now wholly familiar with our processes and seating arrangements, to access and leave in an orderly manner. It is now time to fall back on our normal welcoming arrangements.

With regard to our Remembrance Day Service, I have received several e-mails from Stephen Rottger, Secretary of the Newport, Wormit & Forgan Community Council, who has confirmed that there will not be a procession to the War Memorial. Organisations and other representatives however have been asked to meet at the memorial where Amos will lead the act of worship. Stephen has been informed of our enforced seating capacity and to date has not received any indication of any organisation or other representatives who may wish to attend our morning service.

With a thought to the future - let us all continue to pray for God's Blessing, a safe release from the pandemic and a return to a world that is 'colourful and care-free'.

Francis B Robertson
Session Clerk



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Harvest Thanksgiving Appeal — Update

Just a few words to update you on the excellent response to our Harvest Thanksgiving Appeal last month.

In addition to the large amount of food which was handed over to the Tay Bridgehead Foodbank, we have received the marvellous total of £2,056, which will be increased once the Gift Aid enhancement has been calculated.

The funds will be split between this year's two beneficiaries – World Vision and our own Church's funds. Many thanks to all who have supported this appeal.

Philip W Owen
Finance Convener



Prayer

With the COP26 UN Climate Summit running in Glasgow, this prayer comes from a member with that in mind.

Love all creation
The whole of it and every grain of sand
Love every leaf
Every ray of God's lights
Love the animals
Love the plants
Love everything
If you love everything
You will perceive
The divine mystery in things
And once you have perceived it
You will begin to comprehend it ceaselessly
More and more every day
And you will come at last to love the whole world
With abiding universal love.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky
Russian Novelist and philosopher (1821 - 1881)

Pop Up Post Office

Following the closure of the Post Office in Spar, we are pleased to say that the new Pop-Up Post Office will be open in the Agnes Duncan Room every Wednesday and Friday morning starting this week (10th November).

Access for this service will be through the front door of the Kirk House to the Agnes Duncan Room.

This service will run at the following times:

Wednesdays 9:30 - 11:30am

Fridays 9:30 - 11:30am



Magazine Fund Appeal

Sorry, we're asking for money once again!

At this time of year, we have traditionally sought financial donations to support the costs of producing and distributing our "Journal". As with many other "non-events" during the pandemic, we did not hold this appeal last year – so we are now playing "catch-up".

We have managed to produce an edition in most months, only missing out when the Covid restrictions were at their most severe. It has been brought to our attention by a number of members and others how much they valued the regular updates and, indeed, this was often the only communication we could achieve with our readers at the time. Hopefully you have similar appreciation and are happy to show this in a monetary way.

We shall be placing appropriate envelopes in the pews for a few weeks from 21st November and would ask you to return these in the normal manner into the offering plate. Of course, donations direct into our bank account are also welcome; if you do not have a note of our bank account, please contact me (see the back page of this "Journal" or on the Church's website – www.notchurch.co.uk) and I shall give you the relevant information.

Philip W Owen
Finance Convener



Church Gardens

It's that time of year once again when we need to tidy up and prune the gardens surrounding the church. All through lock down Graham and Jane Johnston have been diligently looking after things which is a huge task and they so deserve our gratitude. We cannot always 'leave it up to them' and take advantage of their willingness so I'm proposing many hands make the task a lot easier. If we could gather together on Saturday afternoon at 2pm on the 13th November with gloves, secateurs and garden bags we could make a difference! Please prayerfully consider this as something you know you could help with and mark the date in your diary. Thank you!

Now that we have cleared the back of the church and hall we need to replant with ground cover and shrubs. At this time of year we often split plants to create new life so if you have any cuttings or pots with young growth that we could use, please bring them to church any Sunday with a label on them so that we know what we're planting.

I look forward to seeing many of you on the 13th November.

Thank you,

Sheila Johnston



Some months ago I highlighted Christian Aid's Global Hunger Appeal.

Members were encouraged to donate online via a dedicated page for our church. Over the weeks the total gradually rose until it now stands at £710 which is a magnificent amount.

Some people may not be aware that they have helped with this appeal. I put money coming in to the Penny Bucket into the Appeal and calculate that altogether this accounts for £103 of the total. So often I am handed a bag of small change with the comment "It's not much". Many "not muchs" fairly add up! Keep the pennies coming, please!

On behalf of Christian Aid can I thank everyone who has contributed to this amount.

Margaret Imlay



Festive Craft Fayre

- Jewellery • Brooches • Peg Dolls • Wreaths • Candles • Cards • Wood Turning • Christmas Crafts and Gifts •

Refreshments and Cake available to purchase

Saturday 27th November 2021
10am—3pm
Newport-on-Tay Church Hall

Free Entry!



Thank You

Thank you to all at Newport-on-Tay Church of Scotland for the beautiful flowers which were delivered to me recently. They were a tonic to both Kathy and myself and the kind thoughts are very much appreciated.



Sincerely,
Graeme S. Farquhar

Vinorah Caird wishes to thank the church for the beautiful flowers received while recovering from a broken arm. She also appreciates the kind expressions of concern from members of the congregation.

COP26 Special Supplement

Life and Work have produced a FREE four-page COP26 Special Supplement available now at <https://www.lifeandwork.org/resources/cop26-special-supplement>. The purpose of this publication is to enable congregations to engage before, during and after COP26 and also signpost resources. Also, the November issue of the magazine is out now and has a focus on COP26 and Remembrance. Anyone that is not a subscriber and interested in this particular issue can purchase a single print or digital copy at <https://www.lifeandwork.org/subscribe>

Youth Update

This month has been another great month in terms of our youth ministry here in Newport-on-Tay. We have had our youth groups up and running now for about two months. We even met during the October holidays! In October we looked at the Creation and Fall, where even though we are flawed, we should look at ourselves how Jesus sees us. Through him and his death and resurrection we are made flawless! We also looked at the question Would Noah's Ark float? We concluded that the Ark would float and be able to hold over 2.1 million sheep!

We have also looked at the media's influence over our lives and decision making and at the time of writing this, about to look at what God says about those influences!

From the first Sunday in November – we are back to running two groups: details of which are down below:

Youth Seekers - 11am - 12:15pm - Sunday Mornings - Youth Room – This is the group where we focus predominately on teaching with a few ice breaker games thrown in for fun!

Youth Café - 6.30pm - 8pm - Sunday Evenings - manna – More relaxed atmosphere where snacks, drinks (including hot chocolate available). We do a mixture of teaching, games, prayer and worship.

We are going to be starting our Interactive Workshops back up again. Our first one of this session is happening on Sunday 5th December where we are going to be looking at the climate crisis! Below are more details on this event!



What would Jesus Say about the climate Crisis? Guest Speaker Andrew Bennett! Sunday 5th December

A workshop to explore how we respond in a biblical way to the climate crisis, what we can do and how we can respond.

Andrew Bennett has worked in youth work for over 30 years working with Scripture Union, and then as a minister. Andrew now works for Youth for Christ nationally in a pioneering role and developing Dundee Youth for Christ as a local centre. Andrew's first degree was Geography at St Andrews where he specialised in looking at how human's affect the natural environment. This environmental interest has been a passion from teenager years. Andrew loves to be active - walking, running and cycling around Tayside.

Blessings
Chris Cameron

Appeal : Help send our Young People to Camp!

During our first year we managed to send a handful of young people together onto a Summer Camp back in 2019. Everyone had an amazing time, participated in lots of activities and ultimately drew closer to God. After not being able to go onto camp together for nearly two years, we are now starting to see more opportunities to send our young people onto camps. However, there is a cost involved for the families.

I would like to be able to offer a discounted rate to those families to help with costs especially after everything that has happened in the last couple of years. To give you an idea of what costs are I have listed the price for a weekend and a week away.

Weekend Camp: £82 per person

Week Camp: Approx. £300 per person

This is a lot of money especially for families that have more than one child in the targeted age group. Scripture Union Scotland does provide a bursary for those families who wouldn't be able to send their child onto camp, but there is a small number available per camp. I would like to be able to give a discounted rate to our families, so that we are able to take as many young people onto camp as possible.

Camp is a life-changing experience for many people. It gives everyone the opportunity to connect with God, try new and exciting things in a safe environment, and builds up relationships between each other and God. There is nothing else like it and I would like to ask if you would consider donating money to this appeal. As said, the money that we raise would be given to families to help send as many young people onto camp as possible, to give them this life changing experience!

If you are interested in finding out more or wish to donate to this appeal, please speak to myself or Philip Owen.

Chris Cameron

Sunday Club Update

Teaching

During the October school holidays we did not have Sunday Club. In the past you will no doubt remember that we usually had Funday Sunday activities when Sunday Club was not running. We didn't manage to restart these in time but hope to start them again during the next holidays.

On Communion Sunday the children took part in a Godly Play story which was led by Jane Campbell and assisted by Gillian Campbell. I am very grateful to them for doing this.

Nativity

We are now starting to think about Advent and Christmas and will be talking to the children about the significance of these in the weeks to come.

Jane Campbell is once again writing the script for the Nativity. This year it will be held on the 19th December. We will plan to have rehearsals on the 28th Nov and 5th and 12th December. We want to encourage as many children to take part in some way. However, they do need of course to be present on the Nativity day itself and also about 2 out of 3 of the rehearsals. I'd be very grateful if parents could let me know if their children are likely to be able to take part.

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. In fact we have just received an update for this year. 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 other 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



Next Edition

Our next Journal will be the Winter edition covering December and January.

If you would like anything included in that edition, please email
newportcos@btinternet.com by Sunday 21st November 2021.

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