



St. Matthew's Church Perth

e- Newsletter No. 36

Fri 19th February

Dear All

This week's Meditation by Marjorie Clark was a reflection for Ash Wednesday and Lent.

The word Lent comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word meaning "to lengthen" or "swell", because it occurs at the time of the year, Springtime, when the days lengthen- as I have noticed thankfully over the last few weeks.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday which was on Wednesday 17th February – not a day which figures hugely in the Scottish Presbyterian Church but it is an important day for Anglicans, Episcopalians and Catholics when it is a day of prayer and penitence and fasting.

As Marjorie said "Lent – the forty days leading up to Easter- can be seen as a gift. It is a time for us to look at ourselves and at our relationship with God and with one another. Most of us long for our lives to be deeper and richer than they are at the moment, and this time of Lent gives us a discipline and a focus. It's often seen as a time of abstinence – but we do well to take heed to what Ambrose, Bishop of Milan in the 4th Century AD said:

"Do not limit the benefit of fasting merely to abstinence from food, for a true fast means abstaining from evil.

You do not eat meat, but you gobble up your brother. Loose every unjust bond, put away resentment against your neighbours, forgive them their offences."

Marjorie asked how each of us will use Lent this year. She is going to read a book written by Peter Graystone entitled "Detox your spiritual life in 40 days."

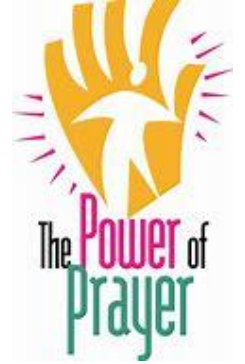
For other ideas please also see the "Lent Legacy" mentioned later in our Newsletter and, of course, join our Lent Studies over the next few weeks.

Henri Nouwen's prayer at the beginning of Lent

Dear Lord Jesus

Today the Lenten season begins. It is a time to be with you in a special way, a time to pray, a time to fast, and thus to follow you on your way to Jerusalem, to Golgotha and to the final victory over death.

I am still so divided. I truly want to follow you, but I also want to follow my own desires and lend an ear to the voices that speak about prestige, success, human respect, pleasure, power and influence. Help me to become deaf to these voices and more attentive to your voice, which calls me to choose the narrow road to life.



I know that Lent is going to be a very hard time for me. The choice for your way has to be made every moment of my life. I have to choose thoughts that are your thoughts, words that are your words, and actions that are your actions. There are no times or places without choices. And I know how deeply I resist choosing you.

Please Lord, be with me at every moment and in every place. Give me the strength and the courage to live this season faithfully, so that, when easter comes, I will be able to taste with joy the new life which you have prepared for me.

Amen

(From The Road to Daybreak)

St Ambrose's prayer (adapted)

This Lent –

Let your door stand open to receive Christ
Unlock your soul to him
Offer him a welcome in your mind
And then you will see the riches of simplicity,
The treasures of peace,
and the joy of grace.



DIARY

Sunday Worship from 10.45

ID 953 7532 1288 Pass code 058724

Monday: Coffee and Chat 11.00

ID: 930 1458 2081

Wednesday: Meditation 9.00

ID: 977 1495 2443

Thursday 18th (onwards for 7 weeks) Lent Study

ID: 983 7963 5054

All the above can be accessed using the telephone by dialling : 0131 460 1196 And enter ID, and Pass Code where required, above when requested.

To Unmute yourself press *6

Quick link for Sunday Worship

<https://zoom.us/j/95375321288?pwd=Z0ZQckF2dEVpcmNUTWtPdmZxeUhgQT09>

19th February Consider — Who is it that God wants you to see with new eyes?

20th February Reflect — Who is it that you need to back off from in order that God's grace can be encountered? Who is it that you could give hidden support to?

21st February Try baking a rainbow cake and share it. Find a rainbow card and post it. Perhaps just be a little more colourful for the rest of your life?

22nd February Reflect — If God is faithful, who do we need to be more faithful towards?

23rd February If you have been baptised — lift a glass of water, drink it and thank God for your baptism even if you can't remember it, it's grace received. If you haven't been baptised — lift a glass of water, drink it and reflect upon how you too are invited to the waters of baptism.

24th February Consider — What are the temptations that come with introspection?

25th February Reflect — What signs of God's presence might we revisit and wonder at? If you have been baptised, find out the date you were and celebrate it every year with friends.

26th February Take part in an online communion service at some point during Lent.

27th February Believe a promise God made to us. Fix it with a sign. It could be a stone, a gift you give yourself, or a gift you give to another.

28th February Reflect — Who is it God is inviting you to draw back into the fold?

1st March Ask God's forgiveness for the times that we have by our judgemental attitude socially distanced ourselves from others.

2nd March Ask God if he will help you examine your heart.

3rd March What risks would you take to bring harmony back into your family, your church, your neighbourhood?

4th March What would a letter of gratitude look like written to God? What would a letter of gratitude look like written to a friend who is a key worker?

5th March Consider — What part could you play in getting new wine into new wineskins? **(See Matthew 9: 16-17)**

6th March What practices in church life have to die in order to let new things flourish?
(See John 12 v 24)

(Taken from Sanctuary 1st)



In the last Newsletter we gave information on our weekly Lent Studies on Zoom, commencing Thursday 18th February 7-8pm for 7 weeks with a Maundy Thursday Communion

conducted by Rev Barbara Quigley on the last week (1st April) also at 7pm. The Zoom details are as given in our Zoom Diary.

It would be good if you could join us at the Lent Studies.

Each day during Lent take some time on your own to follow one of these legacy moments:

17th February Think about one injustice that it is in your power and will to do something about and leave the legacy.

18th February Reflect — What part of you needs to be rehabilitated?



Isaiah 58:11

And I will always guide you and satisfy you with good things. I will keep you strong and well. You will be like a garden that has plenty of water, like a spring of water that never runs dry.

Here we are again back in the garden with Spring just around the corner (we hope)! We have certainly had a winter this year which is always a good thing for the garden I think. Maybe the snow will have melted by the time you are reading this. There has been plenty of time to tidy out the potting shed and disinfect the greenhouse.

There are lots of things you can do to prepare for the season ahead. My favourite one is sowing seeds but there are a few chores to do before you can start that. Plan what you would like to grow and have a good look at the garden in the winter to see where you think you might need structure or more plants or even just more tubs on the patio. Is there an area you could use for growing your own veg? Or are you looking to make the garden easier to manage with low maintenance shrubs and lots of bark mulch to keep the weeds down? Have a think about these types of things before you start buying seeds and plants.

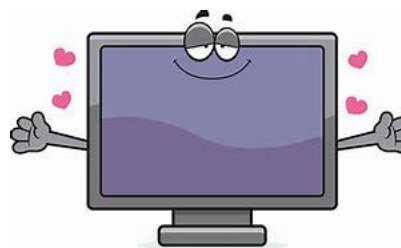
If you are growing from seed they will need a warm space to germinate. I end up with my window sills covered with pots of seedlings because it is too expensive to heat the greenhouse and I don't have a propagator. One method I use is to start the seeds off in small square pots of moist multi-purpose compost (you can fit more square pots together on a tray than round ones) and put them in next to the boiler just to get them to germinate. Don't forget about them or you will have lots of white straggly seedlings on your hands. Take them out as soon as they have germinated and make sure each pot has a label. If you are sowing a lot of seed you could write

the labels in advance one evening in front of the TV, saves a lot of time. It's still very early for a lot of seeds but I am starting things that need a long growing season like chillies, peas and sweet peas. As soon as the seedlings are up they will need plenty of natural light and an even temperature of about 15-20 degrees C.

Just starting off a couple of things now can get you in to the growing groove for the year and there is plenty of time to sow further batches of the same seeds later in the spring. I hope you'll have a go at growing something this year!

Nicola MacNee

SITCOMS QUIZ



Unfortunately I received no answers to the Sitcoms Quiz- either your mind doesn't work the same way as my husband's - or you haven't spent as much of your life watching TV!

Here are the answers:

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | A Maplins Greeting | Hi-de-hi |
| 2 | Dropping Aitches in France | 'Allo 'Allo |
| 3 | Breakfast in Prison? | Porridge |
| 4 | A quick look at the Stage Performance | Peep Show |
| 5 | Affirmative Boris | Yes Miister |
| 6 | I'm staying in | Not Going Out |
| 7 | Get more than just the basics | Extras |
| 8 | I don't know what became of the smart Alocs | Whatever happened to the Likely Lads |
| 9 | One of Cliff Richard's hits | Young Ones |
| 10 | More than one of these in the series | Episodes |
| 11 | Can I help you sir/ madam? | Are You Being Served |
| 12 | A star of colour | Red Dwarf |

Fiona Bruce

NOTICES

It is with sadness that we note the recent death of three of our long-standing members:



Evelyn McKinnie and
Lily Clark on 30th January
2021

And **Douglas Ford** on 17th
February 2021.

We send our prayers and condolences to their families.

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

To **Mary McIntosh** and **Betty Bridgeford** on
26th February

And belated birthday wishes to **Nan Murie**

ESOLPERTH- RETIRAL COLLECTION after Communion

I am delighted to report that our Treasurer has
already received donations of £390 for the above
charity

THANKS

to **Mark
Crichton** for
repairing the
burst pipe at
our new Manse!



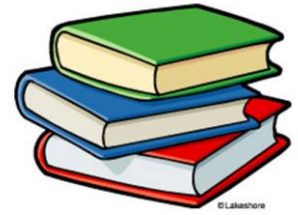
The Treasurer
St Matthew's Church
34 Craigie Road
Perth
PH2 0BH

OR by BACS To:
Bank: Royal Bank of
Scotland
Account Name: St.
Matthew's Church
Sort Code: 83-47-00
Account Number: 00760133

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

This week Fiona Bruce writes about –
“Motherwell: A Girlhood” by *Deborah Orr*

I recently read this
book which is a
memoir by journalist
Deborah Orr, who
sadly died last year
from breast cancer
just before publication.



Orr partly based the book around the bureau
which her brother and she cleared after her
mother, Win's, death and the various items which
had been kept in it. But it is also a wider
examination of motherhood (she did not consider
Win to have “mothered well”) and Scottish life in
an industrial town in the 60's and 70's, living as
she did in the shadow of Ravenscraig (which I
remember when I was at school being described
as the great industrial hope of the time!).

Her descriptions of a now-vanished way of life
built on industry and new council housing estates
and, dare I say it, regular churchgoing are vivid as
is the destruction which is wrought to people and
a town when its industry goes.

There is bleak honesty and reflection of the joys
and miseries of childhood as, for example, she
describes being bullied at school for being seen
as “a snob” and then, conversely, also being
bullied at St Andrew's University for being the
opposite!

Orr describes the deep ambiguity of her
relationship with her parents and, in particular, the
difficulty of having a mother with a “narcissistic”
personality whose main trouble was a
“pathological inability to understand at all that I
was a separate entity from her”.

This led to the mood of the book darkening as, for
some unfathomable reason, her parents bitterly
opposed her progress to university.

I was glad that the many tributes to Deborah Orr
on her death showed how, rather than be defined
by her troubling adolescence, she forged an
impressive career working as a journalist for
many august newspapers and it is a source of
regret that she will not have the chance to write
the story of the next chapter in her life.

A prayer From Andrew:

Let us pray
Dear Lord Jesus
Roses, chocolates and
wine at this table
and dinners being served
At this time I know
Valentines day is a sad
day for a few people they
hear and not able to
celebrate it with others
at the moment but people
who we love the most
I pray for our friends,
communities and countries
too at this time so I
remember this poem
Now violets are blue
Red is for roses in the
world and love is for
peaceful and togetherness
as we pray. I hope if
we can seek your
supernatural Jesus for
your people too as
Jesus name and have
happiness Amen.

Dear Tom,
Thank you very much for Our invitation to join the
Sunday services. We would be delighted to have the
visual contact. Our vaccination dates are way out in
the future, as it is just started in homes and for people
over 80. So we didn't dare to book the ferry yet. But
we are still not caught by the virus. Our church and all
activities are still closed and since Sunday we are also
in a flockdown (Flocke is the German word for
(snow)flake) and here was a ,download' of an unusual
amount of snow. If you like to see the evidence go to
<https://www.nordwestgemeinde.de>.
Please give our best wishes to all the people we know
in St. Matthew's in case our equipment or skills
muddel up.
Bleibt gesund und viele Grüße
Angela und Wolfgang

Janet Martin sent in some “chuckles” to
lighten “lockdown”.

These words were invented to describe
words that no other word seems to cover:

Wordplay

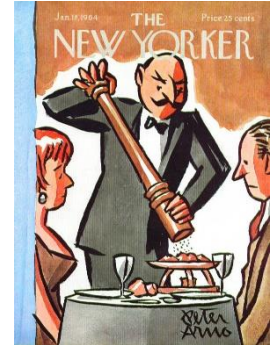
Wurfing – the act of surfing the
internet while at work.

Furgle – to feel in a pocket or bag
for a key or small obstacle.

Peppier – a waiter, usually Italian,
whose sole job is to offer to grind
pepper from a giant pepper mill.

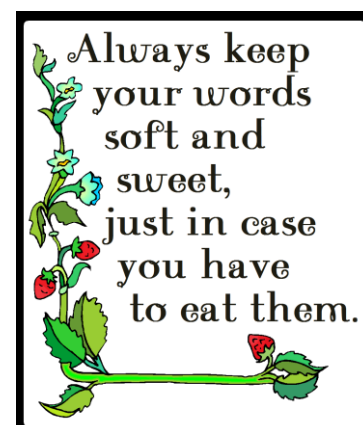
Optoxical – A look that could kill –
normally from a parent or a
spouse!

Whinose – A term for the language
spoken by small children on
lengthy trips. “Are we there yet?”



Paraprosdokians

- ❖ I've had a perfectly wonderful evening, but this wasn't it. – Groucho Marx
- ❖ He taught me housekeeping; when I divorce I keep the house. – Zsa Zsa Gabor
- ❖ I haven't slept for 10 days, because that would be too long. – Mitch Hedberg
- ❖ Standing in the park today, I was wondering why a frisbee looks larger the closer it gets...then it hit me. – Stewart Francis
- ❖ When I was a kid my parents moved a lot, but I always found them. – Rodney Dangerfield
- ❖ There are three kinds of people in the world – those who can count, and those who can't. – Unknown
- ❖ I'm a very tolerant man, except when it comes to holding a grudge. – Robin Williams
- ❖ I always remember my grandfather's last words: “A truck!” – Emo Phillips
Going to church doesn't make you a Christian, any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
- ❖ Where there's a will, I want to be in it – Unknown.



Vacancy Update

I am pleased to report that there was a very clear vote of 178 – 1 in favour of appointing our new Minister on a 5 Year Reviewable Term. A good % return!

The next stage is for Presbytery to appoint a Vacancy Advisory Committee to meet with our Kirk Session in March, hopefully.

Fiona Bruce
Session Clerk.

Founder's Day

This Sunday the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts would have hopefully been at church to celebrate Scouting and renew our promises. We commemorate the history of Scouts and thank everyone who makes or made it possible. The 22nd February was Robert Baden-Powell's birthday which is why we celebrate on that day.



We very much hope to be back with you soon. In the meantime we continue to meet on Zoom, have just had a Bake Off competition and have another virtual camp coming up.



Congratulations to Lucy who produced the winning entry which was "THE COOKIE MONSTER CAKE."

Sarah Ruse

The next edition of the Newsletter, No. 37, will be on **Friday 5th March 2021**. All contributions to FMBruce6@googlemail.com by Wednesday 3rd March