

CONTACT

MARCH 2023



The monthly magazine of
Annan United Reformed Church



Services March 202

Date	Event	Leader
05/03/2023	Communion	Revd. Nick Mark
12/03/2023	Service	Mr Allan Dodds
19/03/2023	Service	Mrs Nan Maxwell
26/03/2023	Service	Mrs Rosalind Fearnon

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Items for the April Magazine should reach Judith by 20th March 2023

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICES

Annan Churches Together

St John's Episcopal Church, Eastriggs Friday 3rd March 2pm

All Saints Episcopal Church, Lockerbie Friday 3rd March 2.30pm

Transport to the service at Eastriggs may be available but please contact an Elder for more information.

DEATH

We are sad to record the recent death of
Rita Thomson of Summervale Avenue, Annan.

Rita was a member of this church and will be greatly missed by
the church family.

We give thanks for her life and offer our sincere condolences to
her family.

Thought for the Month

Be Strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armour of
God so that you can take your stand against all the evils of this world

(Ephesian 6, 10-11)

GIFT IDEAS

Cuddly toys, skipping ropes, pens and pencil, notebooks, colouring
books, socks, scarves and knitted hats are among the ideas for items to
be put in shoeboxes for the Samaritan's Purse Appeal.

Now is the time to begin buying to fill your shoeboxes to contribute to
this year's collection.

Will you help? Please remember that your shoebox may be the only gift
the child receives.

Many shoeboxes have already been used to bring hope to children in
areas effected by war or natural disasters

Interim Minister's Letter March 2023

I write this letter at a particularly challenging time in world history. The war in Ukraine is escalating with many casualties on both sides and more countries in the world vying to supply the side they support with more deadly weapons. Not just that we have the natural disaster in Syria and Turkey with over 45,000 dead and many more homeless or injured. Where is God in all this many people are asking? God is present in all major events suffering with the victims of war and natural disaster and hoping that humankind can see a way forward to work together in the world God has created.

We of course in Annan have our own challenges with trying to cope with the problems that the war in Ukraine have created with soaring fuel costs, shortages in the shops and massive price rises but at least we are not homeless nor attending funeral after funeral as they are in Syria and Turkey. In our Church life March sees us in the season of Lent. I don't know about you, but I feel my approach to Lent has changed over the years.

If we go back to the basic teaching Jesus went into the wilderness for a period of 40 days to fast and resist the temptations offered him. First to turn stones into bread. Second to jump off the temple and be saved by Angels. Third to go to a high mountain and survey the kingdoms of the world and be ruler of them provided he worshipped the devil. Jesus resisted all that to go on to die on a cross to save humanity.

Our modern interpretation of Lent seems rather feeble with us giving up a temptation like chocolate or smoking or consumption of alcohol.

I try in Lent a rather different approach which you might like to consider taking up. Unless you are very different to me I struggle with trying to achieve the kind of perfection that Jesus exemplified to his followers. To try to achieve perfection then requires positive action rather than merely giving up something because like it or not the concept of temptations did not die on the Cross on Good Friday. We all have to beware of temptation all the time. So, for me the weeks of Lent give a superb opportunity to look at my whole life and to look at what needs reform. This year for both Janet and I it has been easy to change so far because we are seeing what we can forgo so that we can donate more to the various relief appeals for Syria and Turkey but for you in your life it may be something very different.

Lent through history has always been depicted as very bleak and solemn as we prepare for Holy Week, but I think whilst we must respect the solemnity there can be joy in transforming our lives in some way that benefits not just us but others.

With every blessing.

Nick Mark

Interim Moderator

A CONFUSING WEATHR FORECAST

The weather is putting
My plans into doubt
It started to rain
But now the sun's out

I'm wanting a walk
But what outfit will do?
It's hot then It's cold;
Sky' dark, now it blue

Decisions, Decisions,
Nothing's simple or plain
And all for the sake
Of a walk down the lane

I'll take an umbrella
As a compromise to
Whatever the weather's
Intending to do

My life's been so busy
Since I chose to retire
Spent mostly deciding
What clothes I require

Church Gardener

LENT

As this issue of “Contact” is published we are in the season of Lent which used to be a time when folk gave up a favourite food or pastime for a period. Now it is a period when we can usefully take the time to assess where we are and what we are doing, and what we still want to do.

This is just as relevant for the church family as it is for individuals. We have changed rapidly as a result of the Covid pandemic and for some the church has become irrelevant, so we have lost touch with people and the things happening in the community.

In Lent can we determine how our church family can get back to following Jesus and His teaching which is the core of our existence? We need to be able to inspire people to see that being a Christian is relevant to life in 2023. And there are still opportunities to make a difference in our communities.

Please – think – consider how we ourselves have changed – how our town and the world has changed – how we as individuals and together as part of the Church of Christ can support the people in this community to stay connected with and join with us as we move forward on God’s path for the future.

Recently at a Songs Of Praise Service in church we sang the hymn which is known as The Servant Song.

One of the verses is:

We are Pilgrims on a journey,
We are brothers on the road,
We are here to help each other,
Walk the mile and bear the load.

The following weekend we visited the beautiful Holy Island of Lindisfarne which is well known as a place of pilgrimage for many people.

Saint Aidan an Irish monk came to the island in AD 635 when he restored Christianity to Northumberland, he founded a monastery on Lindisfarne too.

In the 1950s a causeway was built to make the island more accessible to people and many walk the St Cuthberts Way marked by poles in the sand. The tide shuts the island off two times a day and earlier this month we could only manage a short stay due to the tide coming in. It was just amazing to see this amazing place again.

We are all on a journey in life, for some living through the difficult current financial times the miles must feel longer than usual and they are indeed bearing a heavy load. We think too of those in Ukraine whose lives have been changed forever and the people of Syria and Turkey having to rebuild their lives after the devastating earthquake.

Fiona Glass.



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