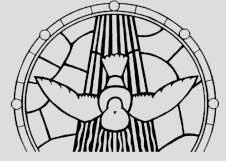




# Newport-on-Tay Church of Scotland May 2025 Journal



## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

### *"To Be Free Is Not Merely to Cast Off One's Chains"*

**Scripture Test : Micah 6:8** *"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."*

After Easter, Florence and I travelled to South Africa for the first time to celebrate the golden jubilee of my elder sister, Dr. Mrs. Patience Akih. It was a joyous reunion, but also a deeply reflective journey. During our time there, we visited some of the most significant sites tied to the country's painful past and its struggle for justice.

On Monday 28th April we visited Soweto. We walked through the streets that shaped the lives of two towering moral figures: Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. We toured Mandela House at 8115 Orlando West, where Nelson Mandela lived after his release from prison. The house, now a museum, is more than just bricks and mortar - it is a living testimony of resilience and faith under fire. On its walls are inscribed words that cut through time and politics. One quote in particular struck me: *"To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others"* (Nelson Mandela). This is not just political philosophy. It echoes the deep moral responsibility that Micah speaks of, *"to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God"*. Mandela's life, like that of many prophets and reformers, stands as a reminder that true freedom involves lifting others, not just securing comfort for ourselves. Though we were unable to enter the Tutu residence, now occupied by his family and grandchildren, the presence of these homes in a single neighbourhood speaks volumes. It is as though Soweto itself preached a sermon that day: a call to justice, memory, and moral courage.

On Tuesday 29th April, which happened to be my birthday, we visited the Union Buildings, the seat of South Africa's presidency. That moment alone was meaningful, but the day after became even more memorable later that evening, when my sister and her husband, Rev. Dr. Akih Abraham, hosted a celebration in my honour. Rev. Dr. Abraham, who pioneered the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC) in South Africa, continues to serve its congregations across Pretoria, Johannesburg, and Cape Town. Being surrounded by family, members and leaders of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon in South Africa, and the legacy of freedom fighters, reminded me that our Christian witness must stretch beyond worship on Sundays. It must echo in public life.

Back home in Scotland and the West, the challenges may look different, but they are no less real. We face rising political polarisation, indifference to the suffering of others, and the temptation to privatise our faith. But the gospel does not permit such detachment. The Church is called to be salt and light, not in abstraction, but in the real grit of public life. What struck me most about Mandela's quote is its relevance to our context. Freedom here is often framed as personal choice or independence. But biblical freedom, and Mandela's kind, is always relational. It demands we ask: *Who is being left out? Whose dignity is being trampled?* As Christians, if we are truly walking humbly with our God, then we must also walk *publicly* with the oppressed, the voiceless, the marginalised. The Western Church today must recover its prophetic voice. Like Mandela and Tutu in their time, we must speak against structures that degrade human life, whether it is poverty, racism, unchecked capitalism, or the exploitation of the earth. Not with anger alone, but with hope and conviction.

Mandela endured 27 years in prison, yet emerged without bitterness, choosing reconciliation over revenge. This represents a kind of freedom rooted not in ideology but in deep moral courage, and for us, grounded in the cross of Christ. If we do not act justly, our worship becomes hollow. If we do not love mercy, our theology becomes noise. South Africa taught me that justice is costly, but silence is costlier. My prayer for our church is that we would have the courage not only to remember the past but also to live in the future, a future where justice is not merely an idea but a way of life. As Mandela put it, freedom is not just casting off chains. It is building a world where everyone can breathe.

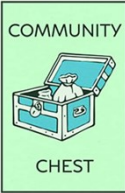
Every Blessing,

*Rev. Dr. Amos B. Chewachong (PhD)*

# OUR CHURCH'S VISION STATEMENT

*Our vision is to be a church which inspires people with the Good News of Jesus Christ.*

## Community Chest



We are continuing to collect foodstuff for our Community Chest Appeal to support three different appeals during the year - the Rio's foodstuff collection (for inclusion in their lunch provision programme or for distribution in conjunction with the local foodbank), the Tay Bridgehead Foodbank and St Salvador's Food Cupboard in Dundee.

During May we will be supporting The Rio.

There continues to be a great response to this appeal and as the cost of living is still high, the need of some people may well be greater, so please consider supporting this if you can.

A large container is available each Sunday to receive foodstuff, toiletries, etc. and any donations, no matter how small, are gratefully received.

Suggested donations include (but are not limited to) pasta, tins of fruit, tins of soup, beans, UHT milk, tea/coffee, biscuits, toiletries, household products (washing up liquid, laundry detergent, etc.), sanitary goods, diluting juice.

Many thanks for your support.



## Monthly Prayer Request

*"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks the door will be opened."*  
Matthew 7:7-8

This passage emphasises the importance of persistent and earnest prayer, promising that those who seek God's help will be answered. (What a promise!)

We encourage our church family to join with the Prayer Group to:

- Give thanks to God for the Holiday Club, praying for continued blessing for those who attended and for Chris and all his helpers.
- Prayer for a Pastoral Care Team.
- Pray for those who are finding life difficult at this time and that God will bring peace and comfort.

With every blessing in Jesus' name.

Thank you.

### Newport Church Prayer Group

Ann Barona, Nancy Pong, Neil Merrylees, Diane Miller, Jane Campbell, Catherine Johnston, Chris & Katie Cameron and Alison Heywood



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A reminder that our Church Prayer Room is a lovely quiet space available for reflection and prayer. It is available whenever the Church is open and you are encouraged to make use of it.  
Why not drop in before the Church Service for a quiet moment?  
Some may wish to pray out loud but there is no pressure to do so.  
Not sure where it is - just ask!

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# MANNA matters



MANNA has had a busy spell over the past month despite the Easter Holidays when it can be a quiet period for us. Many of the volunteers have had a holiday over this time so busy on both sides of the counter. The Holiday Club which ran the second week of the holidays definitely impacted footfall. Our Easter cards sold out on Good Friday. We didn't have any Easter Eggs as the Fairtrade ones are very expensive and the big supermarkets do them so much cheaper.

On a personal note we as a family are grateful that Gordon is recovering well from having been unwell and then fitted with a pacemaker!! Feeling blessed that all has worked out well. We look forward to getting away in late May on our holiday to Tenerife.

We are still happy to welcome new bakers, soup makers and volunteers to our MANNA family. So if you find yourself with some spare time consider supporting MANNA.

God bless



**MANNA** is open Tuesday – Saturday 10am - 4:30pm

MANNA (01382) 542781

Diane Miller (Manager) (01382) 541141 & [dianemillermanna@gmail.com](mailto:dianemillermanna@gmail.com)

Morag Rowley (Assistant Manager) (01382) 541157 & [moragrowley.4@gmail.com](mailto:moragrowley.4@gmail.com)

## Thank You!

Thank you for the flowers I received and the lovely visit from Mairi.

**Ann Barona**

**Diane & Gordon Miller** would like to say thank you for the lovely flowers received following Gordon's recent trip to Ninewells Hospital. Gordon is recovering well.



Grateful thanks for the very colourful flowers and rather special card received on my 90th birthday.

**Ron Caird**

Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers. How very kind of you.

**Sheila Ritchie**

*Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything.  
Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.  
Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand.  
His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.*

*Philippians 4:6-7*

**Steven Stewart**

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## Evening Service

Our next Evening Service will be a Communion Service on Sunday 18th May.

It will be led by our minister in the Church at 6:30pm and all are welcome.

**EVENING SERVICE**

## All my hope on God is founded

I was fortunate enough to participate in our Sunday morning worship service on 27th April (for those who may have missed it you can listen to it here [http://www.notchurch.co.uk/files/2517/4578/6865/Sunday\\_Service\\_27-04-2025.mp3](http://www.notchurch.co.uk/files/2517/4578/6865/Sunday_Service_27-04-2025.mp3)).

There were two key themes that ran throughout the service. We heard from our Prayer Development Team about their work and the **trypraying** initiative. This included two members of our church family sharing their experience of what prayer means to them. This theme was picked up and developed alongside the gospel reading from John 20 where Philip encouraged us to reflect on how we can counter doubts in faith.

The content of the service and the testimonies that were given prompted me to ask myself what prayer means to me and how do I challenge my doubts when my faith is shaken. In thinking this through, alongside the comments made by the two Catherine's during the service, a light bulb moment occurred.

In November 2019 my Mum unfortunately passed away suddenly without warning. This was a massive shock to the family as it was so unexpected. At the time I kept questioning why God let this happen. Roll forward a month and news was beginning to break of a pandemic spreading across the globe. I'm sure that we can all remember the need for social distancing, wearing of masks, and in some cases shielding. Due to my own health this involved being admitted to a specialist hospital in Edinburgh for over a month with no family visits.



As my Mum had passed away unexpectedly an inquest was needed. However, due to the lockdown rules the coroners office took months to issue the report. When we finally received the report we discovered that my Mum had a number of underlying, undiagnosed health conditions.

Looking at the timeline of events I could see that my faith at the time was significantly challenged and I found myself doubting. However, on receiving the inquest report I was able to reconcile that God had seen something that I hadn't and the circumstances around my Mum's passing happened for a reason too.

John 3 v 16 '*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life*' illustrates that our prayers are not always answered in the way or at the time we would expect.

Philip's comments during the sermon about countering doubt with certainty ring true, as do the words in Hymn 192 :  
    'all my hope on God is founded,  
    all my trust he will renew;  
    safe through change and chance he guides me ...'.

Prayer for me is being able to speak to God, safe in the knowledge that someone is listening who will not judge me or try to fix the problem, but will provide unconditional love.

### Kirsteen Cruickshanks

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## Daily Reflections

Our minister, Rev Dr Amos Chewachong, is continuing his series of daily reflections. These are uploaded to the church website ([www.notchurch.co.uk/index.php/reflections/](http://www.notchurch.co.uk/index.php/reflections/)).



**Please remember** to get in touch with any questions, comments, suggestions or items for future editions.

Postal address on back page

email: [newportcos@btinternet.com](mailto:newportcos@btinternet.com)

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# The Guild Newport-on-Tay Church of Scotland

## **Guild Projects 2025—2027**

As we mentioned in the last few Journals, the National Guild strategy for the next three years is 'Let us build a house'. There are four new 'Guild Projects', which run from 2025 - 2027.

Each month we have been giving information about each of these projects. In the February Journal we highlighted '**Bibles for Bairns**', partnering with the Scottish Bible Society. In March it was '**Build My Church**'. In April it was '**Operation Hope**'.

This month we highlight '**Let's build a house**' a life enhancing and life saving partnership between the Guild and CrossReach.

*Working together for these three years, let's build a house lays a strong foundation for vulnerable families. Together we will support families at Sunflower Garden in Edinburgh and Daisy Chain in Glasgow. A child's early years can have an impact that lasts a lifetime. The Guild's support will ensure infants have the best possible start in life by developing strong positive relationships between parents and children. With the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, parents are presenting to us with more trauma and distress than at any other time. Demand, and the need for your help, is greater than ever.*

*Research shows that parents who attend to their own emotional and psychological needs are in a better position to respond to their infant's cues and engage with them in positive ways. The Guild will support specialist perinatal therapy with crèche support at Sunflower Garden. The team there delivers Parent and Infant Relationship therapy. Parents can access their counselling sessions while leaving their baby in trusted hands.*

*Daisy Chain is a community based, inclusive, early intervention project for children under 12 and their families. With your support, the team will work to improve children's health and wellbeing through play and nurture. Your help will strengthen family relationships and support families to become more resilient. Children with disabilities, from deprived backgrounds and facing home challenges can thrive here.*

Guild Information

For anyone wanting to know more about the National Guild have a look at the pages on the Church of Scotland website: <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve/the-guild>

## **Wednesdays@One Concerts return**

Four concerts have now been arranged for this year, starting on the 30th July. The dates are as follows:

30th July	A Choir'd Taste (Choir)
6th August	Ferryport Fiddlers
13th August	Sarah Elgin (flute), Kirsty Elgin (cello/double bass), Susan Sneddon (piano), Cameron Maclean (percussion)
20th August	'The St Mary's Team in Concert' Featuring on the organ - Robin Bell, Ron Oliver & David Smith



We hope you can join us.

## **Ongoing Activities ...**

### **~ Wednesday Afternoon Club**

**This runs from 1.30pm to 3pm each Wednesday in the Agnes Duncan Room.**

Everyone is welcome. Many people who come are regulars who appreciate the refreshments (tea/coffee and biscuits, usually with home baking) and company (with plenty of opportunity to chat). There is no charge, however if anyone wishes to make a donation, there is a collection plate.

There is now only one volunteer on each week and that seems to have been working fine given the numbers. Anne and Brian Griffiths help almost every week and Margaret Wright looks in on many occasions. A big thank you to Anne and Brian for their commitments and Margaret for co-ordinating everything. If you would like to help please get in touch with Margaret Wright: Tel (01382) 543007.

### **~ Fundraising for Ukraine**

Sunflower greeting cards remain on sale through manna. All the money we raise is transferred to the Newport and Zolotarevo Twinning Association (NAZTA) to support our friends in western Ukraine. Thanks so much to everyone who has contributed in any way.

### **~ Vigil for Peace (in Ukraine and other conflict areas)**

**Every Thursday evening at 7pm on the Church Green and on Zoom.**

This is a perilous time for many affected by conflict around the world. We continue each week to bear witness to the ongoing suffering of such people affected by conflict wherever that may be and to pray for peace. Please do join us if you are around at that time on a Thursday. We usually have a time of prayer starting promptly at 7pm lasting 5-10 minutes.

If you don't feel able to come in person, we are continuing to Zoom the Vigils. If you would like to join please ask me (Neil Merrylees) or Claire Owen for the link.

## **Ways to support your Guild**

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

## **The Guild Team**



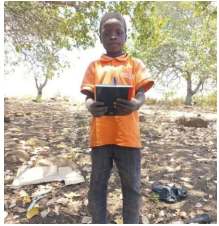
# Sunday Club Update

## Teaching in April and May

Normal Sunday Club activities were replaced by Funday Sundays at the beginning of April. We are very grateful to all members of the church family who regularly help with Funday Sundays. This is an opportunity to share an activity with the children, with some ideas being board games, origami or other craft activities, baking, a sport or a scavenger hunt. It's really positive for the children to have the opportunity to meet different adults in the church family. If you would be willing to help support Funday Sundays over the summer holidays, please let Fiona Hutchinson know (email: [fionah2208@gmail.com](mailto:fionah2208@gmail.com)).

Following the Holiday Club and Easter Service on 20th April, the last Sunday of the month was Godly Play. At the heart of Godly Play is God's Word in the form of a special story during which a calm, reflective atmosphere is promoted. This is followed by a "feast" of fruit, biscuits and juice, which is served and shared. The children then choose for themselves ways to respond by participating in a variety of crafts.

In May we will be starting a series on the story of Samuel, with sessions on Samuel the baby, Samuel the prophet and Samuel the judge. We'll then finish the year with some sessions about Paul on mission.



## Update on Sunday Club Sponsorship through World Vision

As you know, we have committed to sponsoring a child through World Vision. Subair is 9 years old and lives in Mozambique. The children keep up-to-date with his progress through frequent reports received from World Vision.

For further information about World Vision and its work, do have a look at their website: [www.worldvision.org.uk](http://www.worldvision.org.uk)

## Fundraising

We continue to fundraise through the regular weekly offerings of the children and donations from members of the congregation and other friends. We will also be holding regular bake sales this year.

## **Emma Wisher**

On behalf of the Sunday Club Team

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## Christian Aid

This is just a reminder of Christian Aid Week which runs from Sunday 11th May to Saturday 17th May. This year Christian Aid is focussing on Guatemala which is one of the top countries rated as being most affected by climate emergencies.

The usual red envelopes will be available in the pews for those wishing to donate. If you prefer to donate digitally then google "Christian Aid Week 2025" and follow the links to donations. This year you can link your donation to our church, if you wish. Either give the church's name or submit our Christian Aid identification number which is OR223065. However you donate please consider adding Gift Aid. This has no cost to you but can increase the giving to Christian Aid tremendously.

Finally just a reminder that this is a special year of celebration for Christian Aid as it is 80 years old! During the year a number of special church services will be held to mark the occasion, including one in St Giles Cathedral on 17th May. This service is open to all and you are most cordially invited.

As always, many thanks for all the support you give.

**Margaret Imlay**



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## Joint Service - Date for your Diary!

As you will be aware, we are planning to have more joint services with our cluster neighbours - Balmerino & Wormit and Creich, Flisk & Kilmany.



The next Joint Service will be held on Sunday 15th June in Creich, Flisk & Kilmany Church. This will be a further opportunity to worship in another beautiful local church and share worship and fellowship with others.

Although a little away this date can be put in your diary now!

This service will take the place of our 11am service that day.

## Youth Update

Hi Everyone,

Hope you have had a lovely Easter Holiday! It has been a really busy month for our Youth and Children Ministries especially with Holiday Club at Easter which is what most of this article will be about!

### A Tale of Two Kings Holiday Club

Firstly, I wanted to say a huge thank you to all our volunteers, young people and those who donated items and money. We couldn't do it without your contribution. Thank You.

Thank you as well to Scripture Union Scotland for their incredible support, resources and training they've provided.

Secondly we had 45 primary school children attend and 6 Under 16's, which takes our total to 51 children and young people who heard the good news of Jesus!

We had some great feedback from children, who thoroughly enjoyed crafts, games, drama and the messy challenges (in particular the ice cream challenge!).

We are looking forward to hearing more stories from Holiday Club.

Next month we will share more about our other Groups and events as we start to return to normality from our Easter Holidays.

Blessings

**Chris Cameron**  
Children and Youth Worker

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## Digital Detoxing and Doomscrolling

One of the many joys of being at church on a Sunday is being able to switch off - from the digital world. I love nothing more than a 'digital detox'. Why? I feel the Internet is an insidious black vortex that adds a lot of unnecessary stress to daily life. Social media, fake news, doomscrolling\*, the list goes on. Sometimes I'm tempted to throw my phone in the Tay but I talk myself out of it by saying, 'I need it'.

I asked why I need it and the response comes back round to 'what if someone needs to contact me', 'emergency, eek!', 'what if I miss something', etc. And then I contemplated this: a true and genuine connection comes from real relationships, not 'likes' or watching influencers.

And, how often are we interrupted by our smartphones day to day? I suspect the answer is more often than we think.

This is in no way a call for you to throw away your smartphone as it is a lifeline for some. Instead, I invite you to evaluate your dependency on it and to remember, if you were born early enough, what life was like before all this. There was certainly nothing bad about it: we survived using landlines, bulky computers with funny dial up tones and using cassettes to listen to music.

When my daughter was born, I hastily threw my phone in a drawer and left it there for nearly a month. It was glorious. I didn't have a clue what was happening in the world and I finally had the peace and stillness I was longing for. Since then, I've practised putting it away for longer periods during the day, signing out of social media accounts now and then, and stopped spending long periods doomscrolling when I could be doing something more meaningful.

My digital detox has been a positive experience and I recommend it for the purpose of your wellbeing and focusing on real human connections. If you need time, space and stillness, do consider it, even if it's for one day.

**Hannah Chan**

\*According to the Cambridge Dictionary, 'the activity of spending a lot of time looking at your phone or computer and reading bad or negative news stories'.



## Calendar of Worship

### Sunday 4th May 2025 at 11am

Service led by Rev Dr A Chewachong

**Beadle** : C Owen                      **Reader** : L Robertson

**Welcome** : F Harris

**Flowers** : J McKendrick              **Delivery** : C Barr

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

**Crèche** : D Miller

**Sunday Club** : S Kent, F Hutchinson

**Young Persons' Elder** : M Wright

### Sunday 11th May 2025 at 11am

Service led by Rev Dr A Chewachong

**Beadle** : E Owen                      **Reader** : A Wilman

**Welcome** : F Robertson

**Flowers** : A Heywood              **Delivery** : F Durward

**Coffee** : J Campbell, L Hundal, F Hutchinson + K Campbell

**Crèche** : C Johnston

**Sunday Club** : A Gray, S McCowan

**Young Persons' Elder** : C Owen

### Sunday 18th May 2025 at 11am

Service led by Rev Dr A Chewachong

**Beadle** : F Robertson                      **Reader** : W Imlay

**Welcome** : A Barona

**Flowers** : Mrs Whyte                      **Delivery** : A Gray

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

**Crèche** : J Johnston

**Sunday Club** : J Wylie, F Hutchinson

**Young Persons' Elder** : F Ritchie

### Sunday 18th May 2025 at 6:30pm

Communion Service led by Rev Dr A Chewachong

## Next Edition

If you would like anything included in our Summer edition of the Church Journal (covering June, July and August), please email

[newportcos@btinternet.com](mailto:newportcos@btinternet.com)

or have it in the hands of Claire Owen

by **Sunday 18th May 2025.**

### Sunday 25th May 2025 at 11am

Service led by Mr F Robertson

**Beadle** : F Ritchie                      **Reader** : C Wilman

**Welcome** : M Shiels

**Flowers** : D Miller                      **Delivery** : A Heywood

**Coffee** : A Barona, K Cruickshanks, Elaine Thomson + D Macleod

**Crèche** : F Harris

**Sunday Club** : S Kent, S McCowan

**Young Persons' Elder** : G Johnston

### Sunday 1st June 2025 at 11am

Service led by Rev Dr A Chewachong

**Beadle** : P Owen                      **Reader** : A Heywood

**Welcome** : K Cruickshanks

**Flowers** : A Wilman                      **Delivery** : M Imlay

**Coffee** : F Durward, A Heywood, M Rowley + F Ritchie

**Crèche** : J Taylor

**Sunday Club** : A Gray, E Wisher

**Young Persons' Elder** : C McCowan

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