

## March 2025 Notices

### SERVICE TIMES FOR MARCH

**10 am The Strathdearn Hub, Tomatin - Croy Church at 12 noon**

#### MARCH 2025:

**Sunday 2nd:** Preacher - Vivian Roden

**Monday 3rd** - Monthly Afternoon Tea in The Strathdearn Hub, Tomatin from 3-4pm.

**Thursdays 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th:** Bible Study (Lent) at Daviot Church from 2-4pm.

**Fridays 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th:** Crafts, Coffee and Chat at Daviot church - 10.30am - 12 noon.

**Friday 7th** - World Day of Prayer. Croy Church at 2pm - All Welcome.

**Sunday 9th:** Preacher - Rev Edward Andrews

**Monday 10th** - Strathnairn & Strathdearn Guild (Croy) meet at Croy Church at 2pm.  
Margaret and Liz will talk about Malawi. All Welcome.

**Tuesday 11th** - Gaelic Service in Daviot Church at 7.30pm. (Rev Callum Iain Macleod.)

**Wednesday 12th:** Guild meet at Daviot Church at 2.30pm. A day in the life of a Vet with Christina Lewthwaite.

**Sunday 16th:** Preacher - Joyce Mitchell

**Sunday 23rd:** Preacher - Rev Edward Andrews

**Sunday 30th:** Elder Led United Service for the 5th Sunday in the Month at Daviot Church at 11am. Bring and Share after the Service. - This Sunday will also be our regular monthly collection for the Highland Foodbank. You will find a list of the items they would most appreciate in March on the back of this sheet.

**EVERYONE WARMLY WELCOME AT ALL OR ANY OF OUR SERVICES OR EVENTS**

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**Thursday 13th & 27th:** Cawdor Knit & Natter group meet at Cawdor Bowling Club at 2.00pm. Everybody welcome to bring ANY Craft or just to come along for a cuppa and chat. Donation for heating, tea and biscuits - £3.

#### REGULARS

Bible discussion group meet at Daviot Church 2.00pm on Thursday afternoons.

Every Thursday morning at 10:30am in The Strathdearn Hub - Prayer Meeting.

Every Friday morning from 10.30am to 12.noon - Coffee & Crafts at Daviot Church.

## **BLYTHSWOOD FOODBANK ITEMS - MARCH**

**Please help Foodbank by donating the items we are short of in MARCH 2025**

**Tins of potatoes / smash - Packets of penne pasta - Tins of mince**

**Long life juice / diluting - Oatcakes / Crackers - Shampoo.**

### **Spiritual Journeying**

*Thomas Baldwin traces the history of Lent and its place within the Church of Scotland*

LENT - The 40-day period of preparation between Ash Wednesday and Easter, traditionally marked by fasting and reflection has been part of the Christian calendar since the very first days of the Church.

It commemorates the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert and enduring temptation (as recorded in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke) which in itself echoes the periods in the wilderness of both Moses and Elijah.

In modern society, even among people who have no idea of the theological significance, Lent is still widely known as a period of abstinence, for giving up chocolate or alcohol, even if the motivation is more worldly than spiritual.

And yet, well into the second half of the 20th century, if you asked a Scottish Presbyterian about Lent, you might well have received a blank look in response. Likewise, a search through pages of early Life & Work for any mention of Lent would be mostly fruitless.

This is a legacy of the Reformation, at which Lent was rejected as not based on scripture, and the resistance of subsequent attempts to reintroduce it to the Scottish liturgical year.

"In essence, the Reformation wants to quash anything that's not biblically founded," says Scott Spurlock, Professor of Scottish and Early Modern Christianities at the University of Glasgow. "So when the Reformers were looking at the Calendar, they can see a justification for marking Christ's birth and Easter - although they will minimise the significance of those. They would have Communion once a year and Easter was the date for that. But Lent was seen as being and unnecessary invention.

The first Book of Common Order (written by John Knox in 1556) has a calendar, which includes Lent, but there's no emphasis on doing anything to recognise it. It's just a historical understanding of the year.

In 1556, the Church of Scotland was asked to look at the Heidelberg Catechism, which recognises some of the traditional liturgy. But the Church pushed back. It asks 'what is central to us?' And the answer is the Sabbath. Other things are played down because of the historical significance they have for Catholicism."

Further attempts to reintroduce traditional holy days were resisted during the disputes with King James VI over Church governance, which ultimately led to the foundation of the Scottish Episcopal Church. "The claims for an episcopal (ruled by bishops) form of church government include a liturgical tradition that's richer in terms of its historical legacy, and that includes Lent," says Scott. "But that just caused more push back from Presbyterians."

In fact, Lent (and other seasons including Holy Week) wasn't widely observed among the Presbyterian churches for at least another 250 years, and the reforms of the later 19th century. Even then, it remained obscure outside of the Catholic community until comparatively recently.

"I had never heard of Lent until I became a minister," says the Rev Roddy Hamilton, minister of New Kilpatrick Church in Bearsden, who writes a worship column for Life & Work and is one of the writers of the worship resource Spill the Beans.

"It's still not huge, it's not taken over. But it's certainly a lot more popular and a lot more credible that it used to be in the Church of Scotland. Spill the Beans has resources for Lent, Ash Wednesday and Holy Week. It's all part of the liturgy.

"And it's positive ecumenically as well. You can share the experience of journeying towards Easter with other denominations. The traditions are as ancient as the faith itself."

Roddy says that Lent is 'a perfect length of season' for a period of spiritual journeying or reflection.

"Psychologists say it takes six weeks to change a habit, and Lent is exactly that length of time. It's ideal for a journeying time or travelling through something.

"At my church we do quite a lot with art, with changing colours in the church. The colour of Lent is purple, which is quite a vivid colour, and we have changing shades of purple through the season. We also do different activities to help people focus on the biblical passage each week, and we invite people to create a space in their home, where there is the opportunity to lay things down."

He adds that this is something the Church can offer to wider society. "With Christmas, and the approach to Christmas, people are bound up in secular celebration. But with Lent and Easter it's not such a secular thing, and we can be more religious.

"That's a positive thing the church can offer secular society. People are so stressed, and anxious, and worried and afraid. We can invite them into this six-week space where they can reflect on this, and that can lead to a lot of conversations.

"We're inviting people to just be reflective. It's not a case of asking people to give something up, it's a time to reflect, to consider the questions. To allow yourself to be more present in this season, to let go of things so you are a new person at Easter - unburdened and set free."

Lent this year begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5th.

*Life and Work, March 2025.*

### **PRAYER FOR THE VACANCY**

Heavenly Father, you have welcomed each one of us in Jesus and called us to be his body in this place.

We give you thanks for all that has been and all that will be. We ask for your guidance as we work together in this time of vacancy: guidance to be light in our community; guidance to love and encourage one another; and guidance to draw to us the person that is right for us and our community. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.