

Dear Friends,

Lent can be the time when we remember our New Year resolutions and attempt to make another new start at giving up all those things which we ought not to be doing – as the Prayer Book says: “O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders”. Lent can be seen as an appropriate time for some navel gazing, a positive turning inwards to examine our relationship with God. On the other hand, we are continually encouraged to “Lift up our hearts to the Lord”.

It is right to spend time in private moments between ourselves and God, thinking about the way we live our own lives; to read Scripture on a daily basis, mining its riches for God’s word to us as we accompany Jesus on the way to the Cross. (see separate notice about the book “Sacred Space for Lent 2016*”).

But what is as important during Lent is that we not only lift up our hearts but lift up our eyes and open our ears to what is going on in our city of Aberdeen. The city will be welcoming about 100 refugees from camps in Syria over the next few months. With a city population of around ¼ million, we may never meet these people or we might decide to become more actively involved in making them welcome but their arrival will be reported in the press and talked about within our communities. The faith communities are working together with Aberdeenshire Council and the Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations to ensure a warm welcome which offers long-term sustainable help. There are some local voices who say: “We’re not getting what they will be getting” as some Aberdeen residents struggle to make ends meet and the newly unemployed stand in queues for food banks but one reply made the point that “yes, but they have been given experiences that we would never want for ourselves and our families”.

So rather than beating our breasts before God about our sinfulness, let’s pray positively for the courage to live out Jesus’s commandment that we love one another as he has loved us, to speak the truth in love and to offer a gentle and loving reply against all those words which can so easily divide us. Jesus gave himself for us that we might find life in him. We do not act alone but in the strength of Jesus Christ.

God bless you as you take the way of the Cross this Lent.

Rev'd Joan

*Sacred Space for Lent 2016 – a small book of Daily Reflections - Throughout the Lenten season, each day includes a Scripture reading and points of reflection, as well as a weekly topic enhanced by six steps of prayer and meditation. With its small size and meaningful message, *Sacred Space for Lent* is a simple way to build a richer relationship with God and embrace the Lenten season as a sacred space.

Joan has ordered 10 copies which will be on sale for £2.80 each. This is also available as a Kindle download from Amazon.

ST NINIAN'S CRAFT CLUB

Meets every fortnight in the church for fellowship and crafting.

Tuesday, 2nd and 16th February, 2-3.30pm

ST NINIAN'S YOUNG ADULT GROUP

Meets Weekly on alternate Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm. See Jaime for details.

STEPS CHILDREN'S GROUP

Meets during the service, children welcome at all our services.

Come along and join us.

YOUNG ADULTS' MEETING ON ASH WEDNESDAY 10 February at 7pm
“Pancakes and penitence” – a time for bodily and spiritual sustenance.

CONFIRMATION/REFRESHER COURSE 6 Sunday evenings in Lent beginning Sunday 14th February 7pm – 8.30pm. Leaflets and sign-up sheet available in church.

“BOOKS AND BAKES” Saturday 27 February from 3-5pm
Book sale organised by our Young Adults Group.
Please bring BOOKS for sale to church in the next two weeks.
Help requested for BAKES. Speak to Rachael or Jaime.

CHILDREN'S EASTER ACTIVITY – an invitation to our children and their friends to come and build an Easter garden on Easter Saturday 25 March. Please bring some small flowers, stones and shells.

FUTURE DIARY DATE Coffee afternoon Saturday 30 April.

WHAT'S ON @ St Ninian's?

FEBRUARY 2016

SERVICES AND EVENTS

Tuesday, 2nd February – Craft Club

2.00pm: Craft and fellowship at St Ninian's (every fortnight).

Sunday, 7th February – Sunday before Lent

10.30am: Holy Communion with Rev Joan Lyon

Ash Wednesday, 10th February

12 noon: Service of Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes

7 pm: For Young Adults' Group: "Pancakes and Penitence"

Sunday, 14th February – Lent 1

10.30am: Holy Communion with Rev Joan Lyon

3.00pm: Lord Hay's Court

7-8.30pm: Confirmation/Refresher Course

Tuesday, 16th February – Craft Club

2.00pm: Craft and fellowship at St Ninian's (every fortnight).

Sunday, 21st February – Lent 2

10.30am: Holy Communion with Rev Joan Lyon.

Saturday, 27th February – Books and Bakes

3-5pm: YAG Book Sale. Entrance free. Refreshments £2.

Sunday, 28th January – Lent 3

10.30am: Holy communion with Rev Joan Lyon.

Please pray for:

Members who are ill, in hospital or unable to come regularly including:

Chris and Jean; Hilda; Isobel; Betty; Irene and Elizabeth.

Our Confirmation/ Refresher course and those attending.

HARK

FEBRUARY 2016

Lent



HARK is the newsletter of St Ninian's Church

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