

**The Church
of Scotland**

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The Link

The Magazine of Haggs Parish Church

Linked with Denny Old Parish Church

Spring 2022

TOGETHER WE HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE.

Isaiah 58:4-11 – Fast Food

Before you start reading this article and do anything, can I ask you to please pause and read the Scripture passage given above.

Friends, it is a season of Lent when you think about giving up something, or making a commitment with God, or with a friend or a family member or perhaps taking on some extra responsibility or fasting. If you really thinking of doing something, this article will help you to find ways or the things that you can do during this Lent in the run up Easter.

At the start of Lent, we usually give up chocolate. But let's be honest, isn't it a bit of a cop-out?

Quit the chocolate for six weeks then eat out at Easter to make up for it? It's all a bit easy. I had a friend who gave up alcohol for Lent – but he never drank anyway, he didn't even like it! Is that really what fasting is all about?

Here are some ideas for a more spiritually satisfying Lent, some 'food' for your fast.

Which one will you pick?

Giving Up – something that will have an impact on more than just your waistline.

Flower List

Flowers, by just being there in their vase, make such a difference to the chancel and remind us of the wonders and beauty of Gods world.

A few dates have become available throughout the year if you would like to donate some flowers please talk to Jean Proffit.

Innovation Group

This group has been set up to encourage ideas for social events in the Church. There are a few proposals for forthcoming activities – the first of these will be an "all age" Bunny Drive (Beetle Drive) in the Church Hall on Wednesday 6th April at 2 p.m. it would be great to see you there. Adults £1.00 children 50p.

If you have any ideas for events or would like to help when possible, please get in touch with any group member or the Minister.

Deaths

'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord'

January Henrietta McDonald Longcroft

February Archie Gallacher Longcroft

HAGGS PARISH CHURCH

DONATIONS TO CHARITIES IN 2021

VINE TRUST.....	£30.00
CHRISTIAN AID.....	£1,356.00
POPPY SUNDAY.....	£195.00
FALKIRK FOOD BANK.....	3,193.95KGS OF FOOD
MACMILLAN CANCER CARE.....	£555.00
STRATHCARRON HOSPICE.....	£425.00
BLYTHSWOOD CARE.....	54 SHOE BOXES
UNICEF.....	£222.00
CROSSREACH.....	£1,250.00
FALKIRK SOCIAL WORK DEPT...80 CHRISTMAS PARCELS	
TOTAL DONATIONS FOR 2021.....	<u>£4,033.00</u>

**THANK YOU EVERONE FOR YOUR TREMENDOUS GENEROSITY
AGAIN IN 2021 – EVEN THOUGH IT WAS SUCH A DIFFICULT YEAR
FOR US ALL.**

Give up social media / your on-the-way-to-work coffee / smoking – then spend the time / money on something useful.

Waking Up – Yes, I know, beds are warm and comfortable. But wouldn't this make a much more meaningful sacrifice than the odd chocolate bar?

Wake up ten minutes earlier (and actually get out of bed) to spend time with God.

Taking Up – always been meaning to volunteer at the foodbank / join that walking club / help out at the kids club? Now's the time!

Take up a new habit that will benefit you and your community

Looking Up – lift your eyes from the daily grind. Grab a little 'Awe and Wonder'.

Look up at the stars or clouds. Take a few moments to remember to one who created and sustains both them and you. Everyday.

Breaking Up – take a long, hard look at your daily life. Are there any things that are having a negative impact on you?

Break up with any negative influences in your life, be they places, habits, attitudes, whatever.

Building Up – You never know what effect your words might have.

Build up a random person each day with a genuine compliment or thanks. 'Your hair looks good', you could say to another mum at the school gate; 'Thanks for doing that', to a cleaner; 'You are good at that', to the person who wraps your chips.

Making Up – You might want to start by praying for the person, ask God to help you forgive whatever might need forgiving, and ask for forgiveness for yourself (things are rarely one-sided). Make up with someone you have fallen out with.

Showing Up – be there. Presence is the best gift.

Show up when your kids want to play a game, even if you hate it. Show up home early and cook (or bring!) dinner. Show up at lunchtime and sit next to the guy who is always alone.

Stumping Up – this is where it hits.

Stump up the cash. One pound a day (or more) throughout Lent will soon mount up and buy a something for a needy person, or a bed for the night for a rough-sleeper in your area.

Picking Up – Making the world a better place, one crisp packet at a time. Pick up five items of litter a day

Filling Up – we should not need foodbanks, but we do.

Fill up a box to make someone's Easter. Add some goodies every day.

1st Hagg's Boys Brigade

1st Hagg's Boys' Brigade has started back and running well boys, Girls & Officers are happy to be back. Anchor Boys (P1 – P3) Tuesday nights between 6pm & 7pm. Junior Section (P4 – P6) & Company Section (P7 – 18 Years Old) Friday nights between 6.30pm & 8.30pm all at Hagg's Church Hall. If you have a boy or girl who wants to come and want more information or want to be an adult helper please contact John Fenney (Captain) Phone (01786) 470817 or 07799145121 or Email - john.fenney72@outlook.com.

John Fenney, Captain

Transport to Church: Anyone requiring the services of the BB Minibus to get them to and from church please contact John on the above phone numbers or email.

Dates for your Diary:

Holy Week Services: These will be advertised in the Falkirk Herald, on the Church Notice Board and announced in Church as the venues have not been confirmed at time of going to press.

Easter Sunday : 17th April : Family Service in Hagg's at 9.45 a.m. All are welcome.

Banner Group: Meeting in the Maclean Hall on Tuesday 22nd March at 7 p.m. Anyone interested in making banners to beautify our church is most welcome. Contact Jean MCCheyne if more detail required.

School Visits

Over the past two years primary school visits have been stopped. Jean Duff from Denny Old and myself representing Hags in conjunction with our Minister, Raheel, have maintained a relationship with the head teachers of the three schools by sending PowerPoint presentations to be used alongside the school curriculum.

The latest one is entitled “Starting again” In the first slides we talk about learning to do something. Perhaps its learning to swim or ride a bike. We may have to go over and over it, getting annoyed at our lack of ability but practice helps.

We often have to start again from the very beginning, whether it’s in our personal life, relationships with friends or in a game of Jenga.

We can learn from our mistakes so not to make the same ones the next time.

Then we go on to tell the story of Noah.

When the ark finally came to rest on dry land, Noah and his family had to start again. They had to rebuild their lives but the first thing that they did was thank God for their safe deliverance.

We need to “start again” and bring the good news to as many people as we can, because God has called us to follow him.

Moira Martin

Messing Up – we all do it. Don’t be so hard on yourself

Mess up (OK, that was the easy part). Now admit it, and realise that it’s not the end of the world. God knows you’re a mess and he likes you anyway. Think about it.

Making Up – Make up your mind to come back to Church (if straying away).

Church is not just a building. It is a family you belong to where God is waiting to welcome you.

I hope these ideas will help you to provide some perspective to live your life during Lent and beyond.

Rev. Raheel Arif

Christian Aid – forthcoming events

Christian Aid week this year is 15th – 21st May. There will be a Big Breakfast (roll and bacon or egg and coffee/tea) after the service in the Hall on Sunday 15th May.

Also we are hoping to participate in The Kilt Walk for Christian Aid in October. Details of time, place etc. will be advised when all is decided. All are welcome to walk. Your support is always necessary.

Thank you.. Jean McCheyne

Looking to the Future.

As we move forward into 2022 I feel there is more of a sense of 'hope' in the country. Hope that the worst of the Covid-19 epidemic has passed, hope that our politicians can now focus on serious events at home and abroad and hope that the Church of Scotland can develop into a stronger force for Mission; bringing the love of God into more people's lives.

In all the doom and gloom dominating our news it is wonderful to witness the fresh new Spring life in delicate snowdrops peeping out of the winter soil, the songs of birds as they start to build their nests and the sight of a beautiful rainbow in the sky after a rainstorm. These are small symbols of 'Hope' from God to remind us that as He cares for even the smallest flowers or creatures, how much more He also cares for us, even with all our imperfections.

Later this year Falkirk Presbytery, of which Hags is a member church, will be disbanded and amalgamated into a larger Presbytery including Hamilton and Lanark that will be called 'The Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale'. This plan aims to make the church stronger and more relevant as it moves forward to play its part in the ongoing Mission of God. To make this a reality there will need to be changes, with reductions in the number of churches and the number of ministers. There is the recognition that Ministers, Kirk Sessions and Congregations will need to be consulted and included in this decision making. We will be asked to reflect on the past of our church, how it is fulfilling God's work in our communities today and how we can plan with care and innovation for the future.

The hope and challenge for the future is that our church here at Hags can become more welcoming, transforming and nurturing to

the people in our community, so we can stand in solidarity with the poor and the marginalized and challenge violence and injustice and work for peace.

God Bless you all,

Sue Storrar (Session Clerk)

The blessing of the 'WOW'!

The rainbow: a pledge of God's promise to be with us.

through the rain,

in the pain;

reassuring us that love and warmth and light return,

for always there is hope.

The rainbow: icon of God's broad love.

Welcoming all creation

in a celebration of joy.

each colour alone is beautiful and bright

but together – what a statement. WOW!

God of rainbows,

Confront the cynical.

Blow away the blasé.

Fill us with delight,

that we may celebrate the WOW!

In every person, every place.

(by Zam Walker from the Iona Community)