

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Spring Quarter Newsletter. As I write this article March is only around the corner and in the manse garden we have our first daffodil of the season.

This month we gear up to celebrate Easter again for 2024. More importantly, this like most years is the month of Lent. It seems every year March is taken up with Lent. During Lent we are encouraged to think about what Jesus went through as he journeyed towards Easter. In the early church it was a time when new Christians were prepared for their baptism which traditionally took place on Easter Day. So, for them, it was a time when they learnt more about what the faith really meant and how they might respond to it.

Lent is also a time when we remember the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness in preparation for his ministry after being baptised by John. We might recall how he was tempted by the devil but was able to resist all his offers and did not succumb. This is because he walked closely with God his Father and was filled with God's Holy Spirit.

Sometimes we try and emulate Jesus - who went without food for those 40 days - by giving up something ourselves during Lent. This is meant to help us concentrate on the sacrifice that Jesus made for us. If you're anything like me all you end up thinking about is Chocolate! Not really the idea. So how about taking up something new. Lent may be a couple of weeks old when you read this but it's never too late. If you're not sure what that could be look around and I'm sure something will come to mind. As I type on one side of the computer screen adverts bombard me on the other. As I grew up in the 80's it seems that the Christian Church had a slogan for everything. Do you remember 'Live simply so that others may simply live,' or 'If you were accused of being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you?' Recently I heard a saying which was featured on a television advert for Kenco Coffee which was - 'We rise by lifting each other.' Why not, this lent, do one thing a day to lift someone else up? Hope you have good lent and a happy Easter.

God Bless

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John' or similar, written in a cursive style.