



Newsletter February 2025

St Columba's Presbyterian Church Mutare

A word from the pastors

The Ropes That Tie You

The story is told of a farmer who took three of his donkeys for sale to the market. On the way he saw a river and decided to have a swim. Since he had only two ropes to tie the donkeys to a tree, he looked around wondering how to tie the third one.

He saw an old man and sought his help if he could give him a rope to tie the third donkey. The old man did not have a rope but had a suggestion. He told the farmer, "Let the third donkey see you tying the other two donkeys to a tree. Then you pretend to tie this one also". The farmer did as he was told and went for a dip in the river.

Calendar highlights

Sat 8 Feb		Family Fun Day Hillside Organised by Youth
Sun 9 Feb	9 am	Communion Service Handfull of Rice
Fri 14 Feb		Valentine Dinner Organised by GILLs
Sat 15 Feb	10 am	Session Meeting
Fri 28 Feb - Sat 1 Mar		Presbytery Meeting With visitors from Denver, USA
Sun 2 Mar	9 am	Communion Service Handfull of Rice

Accommodation and Transport needed for Friday 28 February.

If you are able to offer this for one or two people please speak to Esther or Oni.



Coming back, he thanked the old man and saw that the donkeys stood exactly at the same spot where he had left them. He untied the two donkeys and patted the third one to start moving. After going a little distance, imagine his surprise when the third donkey stood still at the same spot. Pushing, kicking or talking did not help with the donkey, and it refused to move from the spot.

The farmer went back to the old man, who told him, "Untie the third donkey". The farmer protested, "But I have not tied him". The old man asked, "YOU know it. But does the DONKEY know that?" And sure enough the farmer went back and went through the motions of pretending to untie the donkey. The donkey moved immediately as though released and walked over to join the other two donkeys.

The devil uses the same strategy, he knows he doesn't have enough ropes nor are they strong enough to tie us down as Christians, thus he uses deceptions, he creates problems around us to make us think that we are tied down. He creates difficulties, unfair criticism, bad treatment, poverty, and even diseases to tie us down and crowd our judgement. Today we encourage you to open your spiritual eyes and see who you are. Untie your mental blocks using the word of God and believe what it says about you. "It is for freedom that Christ has set you free. Stand firm then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." Galatians 5:1

Yours in Christ,
Pastors Paul and Lydia

Acknowledgements

Pastors Paul and Lydia Neshangwe,
Pastor Chris Muzodziwa
Kudakwashe A Musanhu,
Ashly Mususa,
Mazvita Machinga,
Hillary Chakonda.
Tafadzwa Muchena,
Iyana Maramba,
Iris Shiripinda,
Rob van Steensel,
Wietske Mushonga

all contributed to the production of this newsletter.



Building Healthy Relationships - A Four Part Series

February is said to be the month of love. There is a lot of excitement as there are feelings of anticipation to find new love or rekindle old love. Relationships however are not a month's affair. As much as they are a source of joy and fulfilment, relationships can be a source of pain and turmoil as well. As we do relationships, we need to be wary of certain aspects in these relationships because they can either break or build us.

The 4 C's of Unhealthy Relationships

In this 4 part series of building healthy relationships, we are going to first of all identify the 4 C's of unhealthy relationships namely criticism, contempt, complaints and comparison.

Criticism

Criticism involves pointing out a partner's perceived flaws, mistakes or shortcomings by attacking their character. It involves blaming, use of sarcasm or mockery, belittling and bringing up past mistakes as an ammunition in arguments.

Contempt

Contempt in a relationship is worse than criticism. It is a form of disrespect and involves an attitude of superiority. When a partner uses contemptuous language, they are constantly putting the other partner down. It can include name calling or insults, use of disrespectful humour especially in public, dismissing a partner's feelings and ridiculing them. Contempt leaves the partner in such an emotional state where they have to question their own self-worth.

Complaining

Complaining to your partner does not help in building that relationship. Unlike criticism and contempt which target the person, complaints focus on behaviours and unmet needs. Complaints might not be inherently harmful but they can have a negative impact on the relationship.

Comparison

Comparison in a relationship refers to evaluating your partner, yourself or your relationship against others. Frequent and negative comparisons can be damaging to the relationship.



All the 4 C's we discussed can cause several mental health issues like low self-esteem, feelings of resentment, guilt and shame, anxiety and depression. These mental health issues will eventually take a toll on the relationship itself in that there will be breakdown of communication, increased conflicts, loss of intimacy and in some cases separation or divorce. If we find ourselves in relationships that are filled with criticism, contempt, complaints and comparisons please seek professional help as soon as possible.

Hillary Chakonda.



Celebrating Recovery with Faith and Community

We were honored to welcome pastors Paul and Lydia Neshangwe to the graduation ceremony of two clients who successfully completed our 90-day intensive recovery program. Their presence highlighted the vital role of community and faith in the recovery journey.

The pastors shared words of encouragement and blessings, inspiring our graduates who worked tirelessly to overcome addiction and reclaim their lives. This moment celebrated not only their achievements but also the power of spiritual growth in recovery.

We deeply appreciate the pastors' support and look forward to strengthening our partnership in serving those on the path to healing and renewal

For more information our mental health and recovery services please contact Dr Mazvita Machinga on +263771754519 or chihwama@gmail.com

In my anguish I cried to the Lord and he answered by setting me free. Psalm 118:5



The Significance of Baptism in a Believer's Life

Scripture Reference: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19, NIV)

Baptism is a profound sacrament symbolizing the washing away of sins, rebirth in Christ, and entrance into the Christian community. It marks a pivotal moment in a believer's life, reflecting their commitment to follow Jesus. Baptism is not only a personal declaration of faith but also a communal act that binds us together as the body of Christ. It is an invitation to participate in the life and mission of the church, witnessing to the world the transformative power of the Gospel.

We are delighted to share that St. Columbus Church had two baptisms last year, on Sunday, 24th November, and Sunday, 29th September. These events were joyous occasions, celebrating the transformative power of faith.

As members of St. Columbus Presbyterian Church, we are called to embrace the significance of baptism in our spiritual journey. If you have not yet been baptized, we invite you to come forth and receive this sacrament. Let baptism be a testament to your faith and a celebration of God's redeeming love.

We warmly invite anyone interested in baptism to consult with Pastors Lydia or Paul, or any of the church elders. This is a blessed opportunity to take a significant step in your spiritual journey

BAPTISM CONGRATULATIONS

- Ethan Boka
 - Chloe Mahachi
 - Kayla Mahachi
 - Charleton Makonde
 - Deon Mususa
 - David Shiripinda
 - Samuel Shiripinda
 - Miguel Saruwaka
 - Nicholas Masvango
- (Baptized in November)



The heart that matters.

I believe that in one lifetime, every one of us gets a moment which becomes the star point of everything in life. More than a moment, it might even be an entire phase but the chaos within it is enough to redefine everything, to change the narrative of the so called normal and you start feeling God's presence within you.

Growing up, I have questioned a lot of things that happened to me, the pain, the loss and even my very existence. There was a time when I would sleep and even doubt the fact that I would wake up the next morning and because my life is a living example of how God uses the bad, the good and the ugly to make a beautiful story, I have the courage to share my encounter with Jesus.

Many of us love reminiscing our childhood but I grew up in rather painful circumstances, being rejected by those very people that are supposed to protect you often leaves a mark in the heart and that mark is trauma.

When I came to Mutare, I felt like an outcast because for years I had been made to believe that I don't belong. It was difficult to try and fit in, at the same time I got so sick that even I started to doubt the fact that I would survive and I was just a young boy, confused and searching for answers. Until I started attending kids church, and there they taught me that **MEETING JESUS CHANGES EVERYTHING!**

Deciding to follow Jesus was the best decision I made for myself. Life sometimes presents you with challenging encounters and sometimes they can even become life threatening, but Matthew 11 vs 28 tells us that we should lay all our burdens on Jesus and He will give us rest.

I was tired, but at that moment, when my light was diminished, God threw me a lifeline through Jesus Christ and He showed that I am never alone. Sometimes it even felt like God was silent, but now I know, all the pain I once felt was nothing compared to the glory He showed me.

My life is a living testimony that God works even when we feel like He isn't and that's the most beautiful thing about serving the God who can move mountains.



In closing, I would like to encourage every person who is facing challenges and say that in this storm, God will hold your hand and He will never allow you to drown. More often than not, life gets overwhelming, but we serve a God who can make everything possible.

Hallelujah

My name is Tafadzwa Muchena. I am very happy that I have graduated from the program of rehabilitation of Dr. Machinga.

Let me explain to you how I became hooked to drugs. It all started with the loss of my father when I was in Grade 3. Then I lost my mom when I was in Grade 4. We then suffered the loss of our eldest sibling. Our relatives did not want to look after us. It is not clear to us why. I separated with my surviving sibling.

I got married but it was difficult. I ran away leaving the child with the granny. Started living in the streets - doing anything - drugs included. I was arrested and spent time in prison, I would get out and get arrested again for different offenses.

In 2018, while in prison, I was advised by one prison guard officer to join a program offered in the female section. Initially I refused to join, but they counseled me. They convinced me that I would be able to look after my child. I joined the program, Gogo Leafy. I am happy that I did. After the program I started working at Gogo Oliver life, but my employer realized, that I was backsliding. Going into drugs again.

My employer convinced me to go for therapy / counseling at Dr. Machinga. Dr. Machinga helped me a lot. My employer had been paying for my rehabilitation.

Today I have graduated. I want to thank God for sending me the prison officer, who advised me, my employer who cared for me, Dr. Machinga and the Presbyterian church, namely Pastor Lydia and Paul Neshangwe and the whole parish, that always treated me with love.



love it!

" My name is Iyana Maramba. I am
12 years old. I started coming to
" this church about 3 years ago.
I love this church because it has
" a good Praise and Worship team, and
I enjoy singing. I like sitting in
" a big church because I get to hear
Pastor Paul preach the word of God.

I wish that I could bring along all
my friends to church with me.

I think the church can improve by
having more activities where the children
can be involved. Change is always
good and you never know, if the
church starts doing more activities
for children, maybe the more children
will come to Sunday School. I love
coming to church because that
is what God wants us to do.
God bless you all.

Iyana Maramba

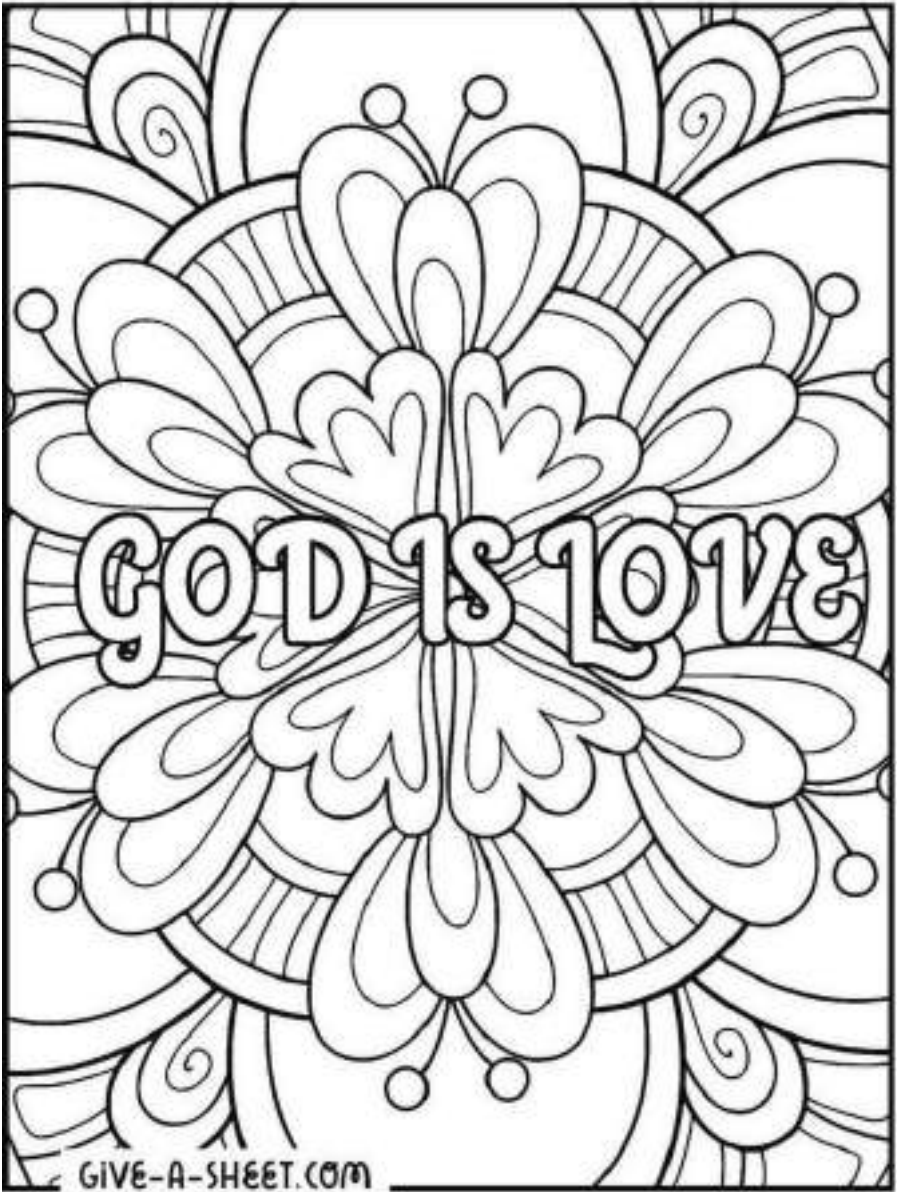


If
you
also want your
letter and
picture in the
Newsletter
talk to Jenny.



Coloring Competition

*Just write your name and age
at the right corner and hand it in at
church*



List of Ministeries

MINISTERS: REVs PAUL AND LYDIA NESHANGWE
Email: paneshangwe@gmail.com, lydianeshangwe@yahoo.co.uk
Tel: 0717 654008, 0782 964362

SESSION CLERK: MARIE SACCONI

CHURCH OFFICE: Mon – Fri 8am – 12:30pm
Tel: 02020 60628, 0717 459312
Email: mupresby@gmail.com

CHURCH SECRETARY: KATIE BOWEN

SERVICES: Sunday Service 9 am
Communion Service and ‘Handful of Rice’ - 1st Sunday of the month
Kids Church - Sunday 9 am

BIBLE STUDIES: **LADIES BIBLE STUDY** Mon 10am, Contact Jenny Paterson
THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY 10am - Marie Sacconi
HOMEGROUP Wed 6.30pm - Mark and Jenny Paterson

CHURCH MINISTRIES:

- **CALLED 2 CARE (Skills Training Outreach)** Daily, Onie & Wendy Mususa
- **GILLS (Growing In Love Ladies)** *Last Saturday of the Month, 9am – Lys Sheiky*
- **FELLOWSHIP OF WOMEN** *Monthly - Esther Mususa*
- **MEN’S MINISTRY** Every Saturday, 7am - Colin Brandt
- **BOYS & GIRLS BRIGADES** Every Saturday at the church, 2pm - Fiona Botes
- **YOUTH MINISTRY** Every Saturday, at the church, 2pm -
Munya Kamunda and Ashley Mususa

CHURCH BANKING DETAILS: STANBIC BANK RTGS 914 000 2833 696
FCA 914 000 4484 346
ZB BANK RTGS 4532 104335 200
FCA 4532 104335 405





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Max shopping complex,
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Greetings, friends.

The Newsletter Team is appealing to all who would like to advertise their businesses, practices and trades in the monthly church newsletter.

You can take a full page, half page or a quarter page for a small fee.

We want to know about and support your "hustle."

Contact Wietske or any member of the Newsletter Team.

