

West Linton St Andrew's Parish Church

April 2025

Scottish Charity No SC003938

Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley

Having faith in Faith

To live by faith is not the same as living in certainty. It is logically impossible to be certain about faith. In that sense having faith in God is different to being certain about God. Faith gives us access to the holy and transcendent in ways certainty cannot. Easter is a prime example. It marks the time of year when the Church celebrates the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, a feast day that simultaneously calls forth an act of faith and at the same time affirms that act of faith. For centuries Christians have confessed the Apostle's Creed, which begins with the words, "*I believe...*" not with, "*I am certain . . .*". Christians have never been certain. There is too much is at stake for that.

Most of the 18th-century philosophers who led the Enlightenment weren't particularly interested in getting rid of religion. They just wanted us to call it faith.

It was an unintentional gift to the Church, because it sought to keep the categories of certainty and faith separate. Our desire for certainty is very understandable especially today when it feels like politically, socially and economically the ground is shifting beneath our feet. We're desperately looking to be certain about something.

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And our relationship with God is no different. But the easiest way to destroy someone's love for us is to continually ask them to prove it. All healthy relationships are bound together by faith. All weddings are an act of faith. Our marriages and our friendships are all based on the belief that when a crisis happens we all hope and believe that family and friends will rush to the emergency room.

It wasn't necessary or certain that God would love us despite our sins or indeed forgive us. The decision to give those blessings was God's choice. As for faith, that's just our way of accessing those blessings.

Thankfully, for reasons only He knows, God keep choosing to have faith in our faith. Happy Easter to you and yours.

Peace,

Tony

Holy Week and Easter Services

Sun 13 April 2025 - Sun 20 April 2025

There will be church services around the linkage during Holy Week and Easter centred around the theme of forgiveness and based on the Lenten Study on Forgiveness:

Palm Sunday 13 April, 11am

Joint Service for Upper Tweeddale, Broughton Village Hall

Monday 14 April, 7pm

Tweedsmuir Church

Tuesday 15 April, 7pm

Broughton Village Hall

Wednesday 16 April, 7pm

Skirling Church

Thursday 17 April, 7pm

Maundy Thursday Communion Service,

Newlands Church

Friday 18 April, 8pm

Tenebrae Service - Carlops Church

Saturday 19 April, 10.30am

A short prayer wander – Glenholm Churchyard.

Easter Sunday Service 20 April

10.00am Carlops Church

10.00am Newlands Church

10.00am Tweedsmuir Village Hall

11.30am St Andrews West Linton

Report of the Annual Stated Meeting held on 23 March 2025

The Annual Stated Meeting was held in Church after the Communion service on 23 March 2025.

Kevin Scott (Joint Session Clerk) opened the meeting welcoming everyone.

Michael Knott presented the 2024 accounts, which are the subject of a separate report in this newsletter, and thanked Mrs Jean Macnab for acting as independent examiner

Steven Whalley (Property Convener) gave a property report. He reported there was less work undertaken this year compared to last year, with the main task being work on the timbers in the east shed roof of the New Church Hall. He stated the work on painting and plastering inside the Church is still outstanding. There was some damage following a recent storm for which insurance claims are being made. He stated a summer maintenance programme (mostly painting) will be undertaken and asked for volunteers. He thanked the Property Committee for their work.

Tony Hoskins reported on the music. He described how the music in Church so enhanced worship, adding so much to words. He thanked the organists, highlighted their individual skills, those who play other instruments in services (like at advent), the choir, worship leaders (for hymn selection) and those on the video desk who project the words of the hymns allowing us to keep our heads up as we sing!

Kevin then summarised the activity of the church, thanking all those involved, including

- Sunday Club – which have been looking at Moses and God's laws
- Boys Brigade – having had a great year including activity for Peebles Food Bank and the Remembrance Service
- Music – providing organ, instruments and voice

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- Church Community groups such as Baby Brunch (which has been going for over 10 years and supported 39 families this year and took a role in the nativity service, There was a special mention for Doreen Calvert, no longer with us but who had been involved from early days of Baby Brunch), Guid Blethers and Community Cafe.

He read out a statement from Early Learners/After School Club, who on a busy day can have 14 children in a day. They employ eight staff. They expressed thanks to the Church as a considerate and responsive landlord.

Kevin then thanked a long list of people, all vital to the operation of the Church.

Our Minister, Tony Foley closed the meeting, reflecting on all we do, acknowledging its tremendous scope, that we should be encouraged, and that we are noticed and appreciated.

If you would like more detail on anything in this report, please speak to your Elder.

Steven Whalley

Joint Session Clerk

Grounds Maintenance

Early Learners (committee and parent helpers) recently carried out some work to tidy up the outside space at the New Hall, including renewal of the bark chippings. This is greatly appreciated and our thanks go to all those involved.

Finance Report for 2024

The congregational accounts for 2024 were presented at the Stated Annual Meeting. Copies are available in the Church or can be requested from any elder.

Income from offerings and Gift Aided contributions was up by around 4% on 2023 levels, with hall rental income being up by around 10% following a decision to apply an increased level of hire charges. A successful grant application was made to the Kenny Paul Trust for support with the cost of improvements made to the New Church Hall primarily for the benefit of Early Learners as the main hall users.

We did see a notable increase in expenditure though, including settlement of Clelands' £14,000 invoice for repairs that were carried out to the roof and external walls of the Church building during 2023/24. Increases were also noted in St Andrew's contribution to the cost of ministry under the Church of Scotland's 'Giving to Grow' scheme, and in the level of electricity charges incurred in both the Church and the halls.

There was an overall shortfall for 2024 of around £8,000 which serves to further reduce the Church's reserves. It was noted that a reduced shortfall of around £5,000 (similar to the result for 2023) would instead have applied if delayed receipts from VAT and Gift Aid tax recovery totalling around £3,000 had been received in December rather than in January 2025.

While it is fortunate that the higher costs referred to above did not result in a much higher shortfall, it is noted that the continued 'chipping away' of reserves cannot be sustained in the longer term. It will therefore remain important that costs continue to be carefully

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managed and that income is maintained, or increased where possible. Gift Aid provides a valuable boost to the Church's income and taxpayers who have not already done so are encouraged to consider completing a Gift Aid declaration in conjunction with giving by Standing Order or FreeWill Offering envelopes – I will be happy to provide more details on request – contact details on page 11.

Lastly, on behalf of the Kirk Session, I would like to record our thanks to Mrs Jean Macnab for her diligent work as Independent Examiner in reviewing the Church's accounts once again this year.

Michael Knott
Treasurer

Sunday Club 6th April

**On the first Sunday of each month during School Term Time
for children in P1 to P7**

And pre-school children by arrangement

Contact Kate Whalley or Ann Lyon

07973 501665 or 07702 984185

**The Sunday Club Leaders are planning an activity for the children
of Sunday Club and any visiting children (and perhaps the young
at heart) on Easter Sunday.**

Come along to join in and enjoy our Easter Celebrations

Church Flowers

As we race into Spring it is such a joy to see gardens and roadsides bursting with colour as the daffodils begin to bloom. Spring is a wonderful time full of colour and new beginnings, as we marvel at God's creation in our beautiful world.

Donations to the Flower Fund are very much appreciated and sincere thanks go to everyone who contributes so generously. Thanks to your donations, we can continue to have beautiful flowers in church and give comfort, peace and joy to those in our community who need our support in this way.

As part of his report at the Annual Stated Meeting on Sunday 23th March, Kevin Scott, Joint Session Clerk, offered thanks to all in the **Church Flower Team**, this is very much appreciated. We are a group of people who work well together. The arrangers, Lillian Slater, Nancy Porteous, Sheila Forsyth, Jill Green, Fiona Hessey, Kate Dykes, Chris Whittemore and Ann Lyon who ensure that our beautiful church is adorned with colour and fragrance every single day of the year. The deliverers, Anne McDiarmid, Helen Bruce, Jill Green, Marion Moore and Mary Turnbull who spread joy and fellowship by delivering flowers to people in the community and Colin Whittemore who designs and produces the beautiful bespoke cards to accompany these flowers. If you know of anyone who would benefit from our flower distribution outreach, please don't hesitate to let me know by email to annlyon@live.co.uk or by calling or texting me on 07702984185

Our flowers in March were arranged by Nancy Porteous and in April it will be Sheila Forsyth.

Enjoy the colours of spring everyone.

Ann

Guid Blethers

April 9th

with Sarah Ewing

April 23rd

with Boyd Wild

Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month from **2.00 pm to 3.30 pm** In the Old Church Hall.

Following a talk on an interesting subject or an activity (non strenuous!) we enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and some wonderful tasty nibbles

Further information from Helen Dry 660506

The Open Gate

Just a reminder that The Open Gate is still available to offer an appointment to anyone of any age who could do with a little bit of counselling. This uses a Brief Solution Focussed Therapy (BFST) approach which is pleasant and helpful for all sorts of problems- often after only 1 session.

Phone 07535 898 244 to ask for an appointment in Newlands Centre on Friday afternoons 2-5pm. This is confidential and free.



The next Messy Church session is on

Sunday 27th April

The session starts at 4pm in the New Church Hall at West Linton.

Please come and join us for our next Messy Church session on Sunday 18th March at 4pm at the New Church Hall, West Linton. The theme is Joseph. All children from babies to P7 are welcome to come and join in the fun. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information contact Jean Howat: howatjean@gmail.com

Community Cosy Coffee Afternoon

Our hours are 2pm to 4pm on Fridays, at the Old Church Hall. Come along for a chat, cuppa, company and cake! Everyone very welcome, although under 16s need to be accompanied by an adult. Free of charge although donations welcome but not expected. More information from **Kate Whalley**.

Pastoral Group

We are a small group of people who are there to offer a listening ear in confidence. If you know of anyone who might appreciate a visit please do contact our minister The Rev Tony Foley

TFoley@churchofscotland.org.uk or

Jean Howat howatjean@gmail.com

We are not professional counsellors but rather sympathetic listeners.

Contacts

Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley

Telephone: 01968 660221 email: tfoley@churchofscotland.org.uk

Mobile: 07793 294000

Linkage Administrator: Kate Whalley

Office: 01968 733112 email: cos1560.tweed@outlook.com

Telephone: 07973 501665 email: kate@westlinton.com

(Most of the time Kate will be working from home therefore use the contact details immediately above)

Joint Session Clerk: Kevin Scott

Telephone: 01968 661744 email: kevin.scott@energrow.co.uk

Joint Session Clerk: Steven Whalley

Telephone: 07525 378187 email: stevenwhalley.westlinton@gmail.com

Treasurer: Michael Knott

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Property Convener: Steven Whalley

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Sunday Club: Kate Whalley, Ann Lyon

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Flowers: Ann Lyon

Telephone: 07702 984185 email: annlyon@live.co.uk

Cosy Café: **Kate Whalley** Telephone: 07973 501665

Guid Blethers: **Helen Dry** Telephone: 01968 660506

Baby Brunch: **Mary Turnbull** Telephone 01968 661737

Boys Brigade: **Emma Lyon** Telephone
Email: westlintonbb@gmail.com

Services April

	West Linton 11.30 am	Carlops 10.00 am	Newlands 10.00 am
6th	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Isobel Hunter
13th	Murray Campbell	Murray Campbell	Rev Chris Levison
20th	Steven Whalley	Steven Whalley	Rev Dr Tony Foley
27th	Patsy Campbell	Patsy Campbell	Fiona Burnett
4/5	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Rev Dr Tony Foley	David Henderson-Howat

Door Duties

April

K Dykes	Choir
N Calvert (£)	Main
M Turnbull	Gallery

May

A Lyon	Choir
Christine Leith	Main
Michael Knott	Gallery

Readers

Apr	6th	Steven Whalley
	13th	Steven Whalley
	20th	Morag Kerr
	27th	Morag Kerr

May	4th	Robert Higgins
	11th	Robert Higgins
	18th	Tony Hoskins
	25th	Tony Hoskins

Material for the May Newsletter should be submitted to the editor by Monday 21st April 2025. Please include 'Newsletter' in the subject of your email. All submissions should be in MS Word or equivalent. Please do not embed in an email.

The May 2025 issue will be available by 27th April 2025.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 11-17 MAY 2025

Christian Aid Week will soon be upon us! This year's theme is Abounding Hope. The campaign is centred around Aurelia who farms in Guatemala. CA is helping her push back against poverty and the effects of climate change. For more details, explore the website caweek.org

How to donate

Ideally, donate online at www.christianaid.org.uk

All your money goes direct to CA with no hidden deductions reducing its value.

If you still prefer to use the traditional CA envelope, these will be available to pick up from the church at Sunday services during May.

CA Service St.Andrew's church Sunday 11th May. Isobel Hunter will lead the service.

CA Cryptic Quiz

The theme this year is "Things that can be worn". 30 teasers for you to ponder over – optional discretionary donation welcome.

If you would like a quiz sheet, hard copies can be picked up from church, or alternatively you can request an electronic version from higfam72@gmail.com

Answers will be available on request in May.

Robert Higgins, CA Chair