

# *West Linton St Andrew's Parish Church*

**April 2026**

**Scottish Charity No SC003938**

**Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley**

## ***'War, what is it good for?'***

I have of late, like many of you no doubt, been sorrowing over yet another war, that we humans have chosen to inflict on each other. Ironically the latest is termed a 'War of choice'. Aren't all wars, 'wars of choice'? Aren't all these conflicts ultimately failures of political imagination, of an unwillingness to admit that our personal perspective may be skewed. Speaking of perspectives reminds of Carl Sagan's comment on a photograph of a small blue dot caught on a picture taken from Saturn's rings:

*"Look again at that dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives. The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every "superstar," every "supreme leader," every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there-on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam. The Earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable*

*(Continued on page 2)*

(Continued from page 1)

*inhabitants of some other corner, how frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that, in glory and triumph, they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot.... There is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal kindlier with one another, and to preserve and cherish the pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known."*

Recently I came across a painting by the German artist *Johannes Matthaeus Koelz*, titled '*Thou shalt not kill*'. The work is shocking because the crucified figure is dressed as a German soldier captured on a barbed wire fence, his face covered with a gas mask and close by, in the landscape of Calvary there is another dead soldier, killed in battle. On the left are German soldiers and on the right Allied troops, praying to the same God for presumably the same peace. For me the perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the painting are the figures of bishops and priests on either side blessing the weaponry of war. For Christians war is never acceptable and peace is never simply an alternative, it is a non-negotiable necessity.

Maundy Thursday will soon be upon us. The night of Jesus's arrest, when he commanded Peter to put away his sword. His command to Peter is one of the clearest indications of Jesus's challenge to us all that even when our cause is just there is an alternative to violence and war. This Easter settle it in your mind and determine it in your heart to, '*Seek peace and pursue it.*'

PSALM 34:14

*Peace,*  
**Tony**

## ***Finance report***

The congregational accounts for 2025, approved by the Kirk Session at its meeting in February, and once again independently examined by Mrs Jean Macnab, were presented at the congregation's Stated Annual Meeting on 15 March.

The accounts record an encouraging picture, on two fronts.

Firstly, there was a welcome increase in 'core' income from congregational giving, through Freewill Offering envelopes and a combination of both new and increased standing order payments, an underlying trend which hopefully can be sustained in future years. The other key sources of income, from tax recovery under the Gift Aid scheme and rental income from both the New and Old Church Halls, continue to make an important contribution.

Secondly, expenditure in 2025 was lower than has been seen in recent years. While the 'Giving to Grow' contributions payable to the central Church to fund the costs of ministry remain a key area of expenditure, we did see a reduction in the property repair and maintenance costs. The latter is perhaps temporary though, being in part explained by delays in progressing some work needed, and we can reasonably expect higher costs to come through in the next couple of years.

For the time being though, the combination of increased income and reduced expenditure led to a welcome surplus for 2025. This has enabled a degree of 're-building' of the congregation's financial position, effectively reversing the losses that had been sustained over the previous three years.

As always, it will remain important both for income levels to be maintained or increased, remembering that inflationary increases affect many of our ongoing costs, and for expenditure to be carefully

*(Continued on page 4)*

*(Continued from page 3)*

managed. The Kirk Session is grateful to all who contribute in support of the church's financial position.

New standing order payments are particularly welcome, not least as the bank now charges a levy when cash from the Sunday offering is paid in 'over the counter'. Freewill Offering envelopes are also available for those who prefer this approach. The use of Gift Aid if you are a tax-payer provides a welcome additional boost at no extra cost to you. For more details on any of these, please just get in touch.

***Michael Knott***  
***Treasurer***

---

### ***Date for your diary - 24th May***

There will be an event on Pentecost Sunday in the garden of the Manse.

The aim is to make people aware of the range of activities in the various parishes that make up 'Church'. The hope is that it will lead to spiritual growth in or numeric growth from members of our communities. Leaders of various Church groups will be invited to have a 'stall' to promote their activities.

There will be more details in the near future but if you have any questions, please contact Julie Gamble, Fiona Burnett, Margreat Habeshaw or Steven Whalley.

***Steven Whalley***

## ***Flower deliveries from Church ... our thanks to Anne McDiarmid***

Most if not of you will be aware that part of our pastoral outreach from Church is visiting with flowers to those we know are facing a difficult or sad time in their lives, it may be a very special happy reason, or to say we are thinking of you when they are no longer able to attend Church regularly.

Many of you will know that Anne McDiarmid co-ordinated this work for many years, but you may not know she started doing so in the 1970s. Towards the end of last year she felt it was time to step back from this role. We took her a thank you card and flowers at that time but is appropriate to acknowledge and thank Anne for all she did over those years to the wider Church family.

Anne worked closely with the co-ordinator of the Church Flower arrangers group, firstly Jill Green and more recently Ann Lyon. When the arrangers were busy preparing for a flower festival it was Anne who went down to Church and kept them going with coffee and biscuits, which was hugely appreciated.

There have been many thank you cards from recipients expressing not only thanks for the flowers but also appreciation of how much the visit itself had had a positive impact. I think the words of one member of our congregation so beautifully sums up what Anne gave out over all these years. "I always knew that Anne could be relied on to bring comfort and understanding and to those she visited and would go above and beyond to help others at any time."

Anne if we had a long service medal you would be the one to receive it, it would have to be the gold one! Thank you for all you have done.

***Mary Turnbull***

## ***Bethany Care Van***

Earlier in the month the West Linton Boys Brigade raised over £200 to support the Bethany Care Van. We record our gratitude and congratulations to the boys (and their leaders) for this wonderful sum.

Many of you will know that once a month, on a Sunday evening, a team of three from the West Linton Churches take the Bethany Care Van out. They distribute food and clothing for homeless people in central Edinburgh, typically helping around 40-50 people each time.

Although there are three serving from the van there are many more who give their time and talents to make it possible. This includes the people making soup, baking, buying bread rolls fruit and crisps and importantly biscuits (chocolate or otherwise).

As well as the food, the West Linton team also provides clothing, which other teams don't. In that regard the money raised by the BB's and, as you may remember, the offering at our joint Christmas services, are very welcome. Robert Higgins has always, magically, supplied the clothes.

Our thanks go to Robert who, until recently and after many years, has headed this activity and to Peter Woodfield who has stepped in.

If you want to know more, please speak to Robert, Michael Knott, Kate Whalley or any of the other volunteers.

***Steven Whalley***

## **Christian Aid Week 10-16 May 2026**

Christian Aid Week will soon be upon us!

Christian Aid Week in Scotland raised over £780,000 last year.

Its theme is “Where Hardship means Hunger...urban farmers can grow hope”.

This year, we’re raising funds for our global work by sharing stories about Kenya. A debt crisis is trapping people in poverty. Kenya spends more paying back debt than it does on public services such as healthcare and education.

CA’s partner, Beacon of Hope, is encouraging rural Kenyans who have had to move to the cities because of drought and crop failures to use much smaller urban spaces in their neighborhoods to grow their own food to feed their families. Hardship often leads to hunger but for farmers like Fridah, gardens grow hope! For more details, explore the CA website at [caweek.org](http://caweek.org)

### LOCAL ACTIVITIES

\*\* CA service at St. Andrew’s church will be on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May.

\*\* The popular CA Scotland cryptic Quiz will be back with its theme of “Sport or Game”.

Hard copy and digital formats will be available in due course (but not the answers yet!). Optional discretionary donation welcome.

\*\* CA Car Boot Sale, Skirling Village Green, Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May, 130pm – 430pm

Saleable items needed for the CA stall. Also volunteers to help serve teas and provide home baking.

See posters locally - contact Isobel Hunter if you can be of

*(Continued on page 8)*

*(Continued from page 7)*

assistance.

**\*\*Book Sale, Holy Corner, Morningside United church, Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> to Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May.**

All proceeds are donated to CA.

### ***How to Donate***

Ideally donate online at [www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk)

All your money goes directly 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.

***Robert Higgins, CA Chair***

### ***Need some emergency help?***

These organisations are nearby: Penicuik Food, Facts & Friends

42 John St Penicuik EH26 8AB [www.foodfactsfriends.org.uk](http://www.foodfactsfriends.org.uk)

Peeblesshire Foodbank, 1 Silverbirch Studios, Cavalry Park, Peebles

EH45 9BU 07413 484174 [www.peeblesshire.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.peeblesshire.foodbank.org.uk)

Crisis Assistance from the Minister's Barnabas Fund 07943 509906  
[emergencyfoodbank@standrewswestlinton.org.uk](mailto:emergencyfoodbank@standrewswestlinton.org.uk)

## ***Guid Blethers***

***22nd April***

### ***Seaglass with Stella Lundgren***

In the Old Church Hall from 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Followed by Tea, Coffee and Cake

Suggested weekly donation £1.00

All welcome

For further information contact **Helen Dry**

## ***Sunday Club***

On Sunday **5<sup>th</sup> April** there will be no Sunday Club because of school holidays, however as it happens to be Easter Sunday that day all our families will be invited to the Easter Service and our Easter Egg Hunt in church that morning.

Our annual Prize Giving will take place at the morning services in both Carlops and St Andrew's on Sunday **3<sup>rd</sup> May**. This is a new development to accommodate our children who attend both churches.

As Sunday **7<sup>th</sup> June** falls on the same day as the Whipman service in the marquee, there will be no Sunday Club.

After the school summer holidays, Sunday Club will resume on Sunday **6<sup>th</sup> September**.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to you all for your continued support of us in what we are doing with the children and for welcoming them and their families.

***Ann and Kate***

## ***Sip and Share — Fridays 2pm to 4pm***

Cosy Coffee has restarted under a new name. It will now be known as Sip and Share (slightly less posh than Cake and conversation) but the idea is the same.

Entry is completely free, open to everyone (though under 16s must be accompanied by an adult ), dogs welcome if well behaved.

Entry is free although donations are welcome.

## ***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](mailto:TFoley@churchofscotland.org.uk) or

Jean Howat [howatjean@gmail.com](mailto:howatjean@gmail.com)

We are not professional counsellors but rather sympathetic listeners.

## **Got a problem?**

Parenting difficulties? Relationship issues? Work problems? Trouble at school/college? Etc. Whatever the problem - large or small, recent or long-standing - Solution Focussed Brief Therapy can help.

Ask for an appointment at

**THE OPEN GATE**

**Fridays 2pm to 5pm.**

Anyone who wants help for their problem is welcome, and will be seen locally and in confidence by arrangement.

**PHONE OR TEXT 07535 898 244**

**The Open Gate** uses a counselling approach which is brief, effective and future-orientated, building on your own solutions. All sessions are free and confidential, with no long waiting-list.

## 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**

Telephone: 01968 660977 email: michael.knott@talk21.com

**Property Convener: Steven Whalley**

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

**Weekly Linkage News: Christine Leith**

Telephone: 01968 660800 email: intimations@standrews-westlinton.org

**Newsletter Editor: Colin Herd**

Telephone: 07792 815953 email: newsletter@standrews-westlinton.org

**Sunday Club: Kate Whalley, Ann Lyon**

Telephone: 07973 501665 01968 661347

**Flowers: Ann Lyon**

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

**Sip and Share: 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

## April

	<b>West Linton 11.30 am</b>	<b>Carlops 10.00 am</b>	<b>Newlands 10.00 am</b>
5th	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Rev Dr Tony Foley	David Henderson-Howat
12th	Murray Campbell	Murray Campbell	Rev Dr Tony Foley
19th	David Henderson-Howat	David Henderson-Howat	Rev David Bartholomew
26th	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Steven Whalley
3/5	Colin Herd	Colin Herd	Rev Dr Tony Foley

### Door Duties

#### April

Christine Leith	Choir
Neil Calvert	Main
Mary Turnbull	Gallery

#### May

Tony Hoskins (£)	Choir
Pat Graham	Main
Robert Higgins	Gallery

### Readers

#### April

5th Steven Whalley  
 12th Steven Whalley  
 19th Moray Kerr  
 26th Morag Kerr

#### May

3rd Robert Higgins  
 10th Robert Higgins  
 17th Mary Turnbull  
 24th Mary Turnbull  
 31st Pat Graham

**Material for the May Newsletter should be submitted to the editor by Monday 27th April 2026. 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 2026 issue will be available by 3rd May 2026.**