

# *West Linton St Andrew's Parish Church*

**March 2024**

Scottish Charity No SC003938

**Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley**

## ***.'Against Christianity.' (March 24)***

There is no doubt that Christianity has indelibly marked Western civilisation. And yet the New Testament never mentions Christianity. It does not contain the concept of Christianity. It does not preach Christianity. It does not encourage Christians to preach Christianity. Neither Jesus nor his apostles preached Christianity. During those early centuries when the Church was in her vibrant infancy, she did not preach Christianity. Why not? Perhaps because to preach Christianity is to preach ourselves and Jesus did not encourage us to preach ourselves.

The emphasis of the New Testament Gospel message does not lie in its advocacy of a set of doctrines, much less a specific moral and ethical code called Christianity. The New Testament is not an ideological tract it does not teach an ideology. Yes, it does present a certain view of the world and of reality. A view that has propositional content. But it is a fatal error to think that it was ever intended to be systemised with the end result being a "worldview" called Christianity. Rather the New Testament is chiefly concerned with the uniqueness of a specific person, Jesus of Nazareth.

Also contrary to popular belief the New Testament does not urge us to embrace '*religion.*' In fact, some of the best-known books in the New Testament are concerned with battling the toxic nature of 'getting religion' and its subsequent religiosity. That is why the New Testament does not represent new Christians as people who '*got religion.*' In fact, all of the early converts to the Gospel were already

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deeply religious people before they ever became followers of Jesus. All of Jesus' apostles were very devout Jews, in the stories in the *Book of Acts*, the Roman centurion, Cornelius, and the Ethiopian Eunuch were deeply religious people before ever becoming followers of Jesus. The new Gentile converts who filled the New Testament churches were in their previous life very devout idol worshippers. None of these people 'got religion' when they became followers of Jesus, they already had religion but the religion they had wasn't working.

As human beings we are always desiring one thing over another, aiming for one thing instead of another, thinking one way over another. It is not that *the stuff* inside of us is unformed but rather it is badly aimed and wrongly formed and therefore, needs to be transformed. To put it in computer terminology becoming a Christian is not a case of having our 'religious programming' updated to the latest 'Christianity version'. Actually it is more like having a whole new operating system.

In a late-night conversation in John's Gospel Jesus describes becoming a Christian as akin to rebirthing. Not unlike our first birth it is something we are involved in but for the most part it is something that happens to us. According to Jesus a person who becomes one of his followers is not someone who has adopted a certain moral and ethical code. Rather, they are a human being who has become 'human again' but in a rather unique way.

Why not take time this week to read chapter 3 of John's Gospel, and think about the story, the characters, and the conversation.

Peace, **Tony**

## Church Flowers

As the days start to get longer don't forget to look out for signs of the shoots of spring flowers starting to pop through everywhere. It always amazes me how those delicate, beautiful but hardy daffodils which line the main Carlops to Biggar road manage to

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## **Baby Brunch – ten years old in May**

As many of you may know, Baby Brunch meets in the Old Church Hall on Friday mornings during school term time.

On 31<sup>st</sup> May this year it will be 10 years since our first ever Baby Brunch session. The aim from the start was to provide a warm and welcoming place for parents and carers with babies and young toddlers to come and socialise with others. We were supported by a grant from the Church of Scotland “Go For It Fund “ to get started.

I don't know how many families we have known in that time, but I can report that in the course of 2023, 39 families came to Baby Brunch for at least part of the year. This included familiar faces from the previous year, return of families with a new little one, and well as many new faces.

We started out as a band of 4/5 volunteers, some of whom attended every week. We now have 12 volunteers and 2 more about to join us, we have a rota with 3 for the full morning and a 4<sup>th</sup> coming in to help over the busy time. Those of us who have been involved from the start, (and are now 10 years older), are delighted to have so much help! Most of our volunteers have joined us through word of mouth and just seem to appear when we have been in need! We are hugely grateful to them all for their time and commitment.

The role of volunteers is to do the” housekeeping” for the group but it is also about chatting to parents/ carers, introducing newcomers to others, holding a baby to allow the adult to get a coffee/ attend to a sibling, (or just to have baby cuddles!!)

From the start Baby Brunch was known for home baking and good coffee, and in recent years we have had a group of volunteer scone makers, who bake for Baby Brunch on a rota basis. Their contribution is very much appreciated. The scones are intended for adults with a

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choice of “snacks” for the children. I think sometimes adults end up sharing their scone with their child!

While the majority of those who come are from within our Linkage area, over the years we have had families from Lasswade/Peebles/Penicuik. Usually on a recommendation of a local user with whom they are friends.

Yes, Friday mornings can be hectic and we go home to sit quietly and put our feet up, but the reward of receiving such warm and positive feedback from those who have attended the Group makes it all worthwhile!

Seeing children around the village “all grown up “ and still chatting who families to speak of their warm memories of Baby Brunch, and the support it provided, is an added bonus as well.

***Mary Turnbull***

## **Messy Church will be meeting again this winter on the following Sundays:**

### **Sunday 17 March – Moses and the Burning Bush**

Please come and join us for our next Messy Church session on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> 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 (01968 660677)  
[howatjean@gmail.com](mailto:howatjean@gmail.com)

**Guid Blethers**

**March 13th**

**Village Souvenirs and some historical facts**

***Marion Moore***

**March 27th**

**Easter Bunnies**

Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month from **2.00 pm to 3.30 pm**. 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. ***Helen Dry 660506***

**Baby Brunch**

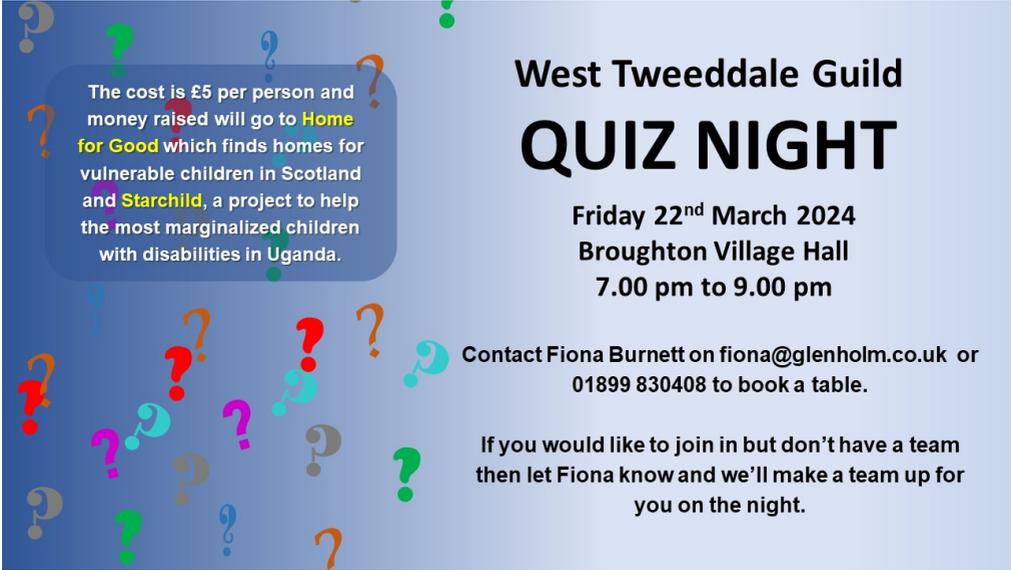
***every Friday during term-time***

***10.00 to 11.30am In the Old Church Hall***

***For parents, grandparents and carers with young children***

**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**.



The cost is £5 per person and money raised will go to **Home for Good** which finds homes for vulnerable children in Scotland and **Starchild**, a project to help the most marginalized children with disabilities in Uganda.

## West Tweeddale Guild QUIZ NIGHT

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024  
Broughton Village Hall  
7.00 pm to 9.00 pm

Contact Fiona Burnett on [fiona@glenholm.co.uk](mailto:fiona@glenholm.co.uk) or 01899 830408 to book a table.

If you would like to join in but don't have a team then let Fiona know and we'll make a team up for you on the night.

### West Tweeddale Guild

The last meeting of the session is on Wednesday 20th March in Broughton Village Hall at 2:30. This will be our AGM followed by afternoon tea. All welcome to all events

### Studies for Lent

We are running a series of studies for Lent These are running on Fridays in Skirling Village Hall from 10.30 am to 12 noon and on Mondays by Zoom from 7.00pm to 8.00pm.

The book we are covering is "The Things He Did: The Story Of Holy Week" by Stephen Cottrell. This is available from Amazon (<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Things-He-Did-Story-Holy/dp/0281076235>) and other booksellers.

The Zoom link is in the weekly news circulated by email each week and can also be obtained from your Session Clerk or Colin Herd [newsletter@standrews-westlinton.org](mailto:newsletter@standrews-westlinton.org)

## **Holy Week Services**

**Palm Sunday 24th March** - services as normal

Theme: He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey

## **Holy Week Pilgrimage Services**

**Monday 25th March**—7.00pm Tweedsmuir Church

Theme: He overturned the money changers tables - led by Fiona Burnett and David Henderson-Howat

**Tuesday 26th March**—7.00pm Broughton Church

Theme: He ate with tax collectors and sinners led - by Peter Worthington and Kevin Scott

**Wednesday 27th March**—7.00pm Skirling Church

Theme: He washed His disciples feet led by - Isobel Hunter and Steven Whalley

**Thursday 28th March**— 7.00pm Newlands Church

Theme: He broke bread and shared wine - Communion service led by Rev Dr Tony Foley

**Friday 29th March**— 8.00pm Carlops Church

Theme: He prayed that there might be another way - Tennebrae service led by Murray Campbell and the Worship Team

**Easter Sunday 31st March** - services as normal (except Upper

Tweeddale—10.00am service at the Wee Crook followed by breakfast, led by Rev Dr Tony Foley).

## **Sunday Club**

**On the first Sunday of each month  
for children in P1 to P5**

**Contact Kate Whalley or Ann Lyon  
07973 501665 or 07973 501665**

## **World Day of Prayer - Friday 1st March**

The World Day of Prayer service will be held in St Andrews Church on Friday 1st March at 2:30pm. The service this year has been written by the ladies from Palestine. After the service refreshments with a Palestinian theme will be served.

## **Carlops Eco Group event – EARTH HOUR - 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 8.30pm – 9.30pm**

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March is the day we observe Earth Hour – an annual occasion when people across the world turn off their lights.

You are warmly invited to join us in the church from 8.30pm to pass a candle-lit hour sharing music, verse and song.

Bring a poem/song/music to share as we gather together to support our planet.

## **Carlops Easter Breakfast – Easter Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March, 9am**

Join us for a simple breakfast in the Carlops Village Hall, just beside the church, on Easter Sunday morning. All most welcome.

Our usual 10am service will be held afterwards in the church.

## **Drop in Quiet Space**

St Mungo's church, West Linton are organising a Quiet Space on Saturday 9th March between 10.30am and 3.00pm.

Pop in to find peace and quiet, walk the labyrinth, light a candle, enjoy refreshments and gentle fellowship. Everyone of any age is welcome.

Do pop in for however long you want.

***Markie Woodifield***

## Important Notice

### Newsletter Distribution

At present the Newsletter is distributed by email to about 70 and by paper copy to about 80. Following a proposal from the Editor to help reduce the time printing these 80 copies the Kirk Session agreed that from the May issue distribution should, by default, be by email. If you are able to receive by email I would greatly appreciate if you select this option.

However, we do recognise that some members do not use email and would therefore prefer to continue to receive a paper copy. If you currently get a paper copy, to continue receiving the Newsletter from May, please complete the form below and return it to the Editor by Sunday 21st April 2024.

There will always be some copies placed in church for collection.

*Colin*

### Newsletter Distribution

I would like to receive the Newsletter by (please tick the appropriate box) and return as indicated overleaf.

Email

Paper Copy

Name

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Address

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Email address

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reappear every year.

Thanks to all who continue to donate to the Flower Fund which allows our beautiful church to be adorned with colour and fragrance; and for flowers to be distributed within our community to give comfort, peace and joy to those who need our support in this way. With regard to the distribution of church flowers, since January 2023 over 70 visits have been undertaken, thanks to Anne McDiarmid, Helen Bruce and Marion Moore.

I would very much like to take this opportunity to also express thanks to the flower arrangers. To Jill Green who arranged the flowers in church at the beginning of December and to the Christmas Flower Team; Helen Bruce, Kate Dykes, Fiona Hessey, Nancy Porteous and Sheila Forsyth whose time and talents did not go unnoticed over the Christmas period. It was lovely to hear so many people comment on how beautiful the church looked and to hear such a lovely tribute from the pulpit on Christmas morning. Thanks also to our flower arranger in January, Lillian Slater.

Our flower arrangers in March will be Nancy Porteous, with the help of the wider team for Easter and in April it will be Sheila Forsyth and Chris Whittemore.

**Ann**

## **Newsletter Distribution**

Please return to:

Colin Herd  
Carradale  
Deanfoot Road  
West Linton  
EH46 7DX

**or** hand to me in church

**or** by email to [newsletter@standrews-westlinton.org](mailto:newsletter@standrews-westlinton.org)

Please return by Sunday 21st April 2024.

## Church Floodlighting

Sponsorship of the floodlighting of the Church over the Festive period generated the sum of £410. Our thanks to everyone who contributed to this sum and to everyone who commented on how much they appreciated seeing the Church illuminated during the dark days of winter.

Our thanks also to Gary Ross for setting up the lights each Festive Season..

***Neil Calvert***

## Contacts

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**Guid Blethers: Helen Dry**

Telephone: 01968 660506

**Baby Brunch: Mary Turnbull**

Telephone: 01968 661737

## Services March

	West Linton 11.30 am	Carlops 10.00 am	Newlands 10.00 am
3rd	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Rev Dr Tony Foley	David Henderson-Howat
10th	David Henderson-Howat	David Henderson-Howat	Rev Dr Tony Foley
17th	Mary McElroy	Mary McElroy	Steven Whalley
24th	Rev Dr Tony Foley Communion	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Rev Chris Levison
31st	Murray Campbell	Murray Campbell	David Henderson-Howat
7/4	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Rev Dr Tony Foley Communion	Kevin Scott

### Door Duties

#### March

Ann Lyon £      Choir  
Christine Leith      Main  
Michael Knott      Gallery

#### April

Daryll Green      Choir  
Steven Whalley      Main  
Marion Moore £      Gallery

#### Readers

**Mar**    3rd Christine Leith  
          10th Jean Macnab  
          17th Jean Macnab  
          24th Kevin Scott  
          31st Kevin Scott

#### Readers

**Apr**    7th Steven Whalley  
          14th Steven Whalley  
          21st Morag Kerr  
          28th Morag Kerr

**Material for the April Newsletter should be submitted to the editor by Sunday 17th March 2024. Please include 'Newsletter' in the subject of your email.**

**The April 2024 issue will be available by 24th March 2024.**