

West Linton St Andrew's Parish Church

May 2026

Scottish Charity No SC003938

Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley

Conscience, how far can yours be bent?

The best poems ask the most important questions of us, sometimes aslant sometimes directly. Wendell Berry's poem below is almost brutal in its directness. Yet it asks questions that for the good for our hearts and minds and souls are worth considering. Because they ask us to think about when in pursuit of national and personal objectives, how morally 'flexible' our conscience might be. Our conscience, like all the 'muscles' we are born with, needs to be developed, and our innate sense of fairness honed often by questions prompted by circumstance or conversation.

Berry's poem reminds me of the prophet Micah's statement - '*He shown us all what is good and what does the Lord require of us...*'

MICHA 6:8. That statement is made in a socio-political context of moral and spiritual confusion. A context where the cloak of religious/political nationalism, sadly not for the first nor last time, is used to cover a multitude of moral failings. Read the poem and let the words and the questions do their work.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE by Wendell Berry

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How much poison are you willing
to eat for the success of the free market
and global trade? Please,
name your preferred poisons.

For the sake of goodness, how much
evil are you willing to do?
Fill in the following blanks
with the names of your favourite
evils and acts of hatred.

What sacrifices are you prepared
to make for culture and civilization?
Please list the monuments, shrines,
and works of art you would
most willingly destroy.

In the name of patriotism and
the flag, how much of our beloved
land are you willing to desecrate?
List in the following spaces
the mountains, rivers, towns, farms
you could most readily do without.
State briefly the ideas, ideals, or hopes,
the energy sources, the kinds of security,
for which you would kill a child.
Name, please, the children whom
you would be willing to kill.

Peace, Tony

A Celebration of Pentecost

Sunday 24th May 2026. Manse Garden, West Linton.

The festival of Pentecost, or Whitsun as it is sometimes called happens 50 days after Easter and celebrates the beginnings of the Christian Church. It's the church's birthday if you like and unlike Christmas and Easter, is not really celebrated outside the church. This year though, West Tweeddale Parishes want to change all this around and invite you to an afternoon of fun, activities and entertainment to celebrate Pentecost.

We are inviting all the organisations throughout the parishes which have a link with the church, big or small to set up a stall or activity promoting their organisation. This will include, amongst other things, games, activities, storytelling, music etc. It's a way of highlighting how the Church and organisations work together to make our community thrive. It's also giving an opportunity for these organisations to advertise what they are doing and attract more people to join them. There will be refreshments on sale, birthday cake to hand out, (after all it is the birthday of the church!), and there might be a treasure hunt or two to take part in. We'd like to end the afternoon in praise of God for the joy of Pentecost, so we'll have an open-air Songs of Praise.

Look out for posters, save the date and come along on Sunday afternoon, 24th May to the manse garden in West Linton (across the road from St. Andrew's Church) between 2.00 pm and 5.00 pm for a fun packed afternoon. And if you are interested in having a stall or helping on the day, please contact Fiona Burnett (fiona@glenholm.co.uk, Tel 07944 196234) for more details.

Kirk Session meeting

The Kirk Session will meet on 14th May at 7.30 in the New Church Hall.

Vacancy

There will probably be a delay of around six months before we will be given permission to call, but in the meantime, we have the opportunity to review our Parish Profile and discuss what abilities and characteristics we will be seeking in a new Minister.

Showcase event – A celebration of Pentecost

There have been reports of real growth in numbers embracing Christianity and attending 'Church' in all its forms. Sometimes all that is needed for people is to be invited. On 24th May there is a chance to do just that. Organisations throughout the Parish have been invited to set up a stall or an activity in the Manse gardens to promote their organisation and attract new members. There will also be a range of fun activities and refreshments. We hope it may give a chance for people to think about what the Church means for them. Sometimes an invite is all that's needs. Try - "I'm going to the church celebration. It will be good. Why don't you come too".

It's good to talk

Linked to the Pentecost event where people might want to know more about being a Christian, it would be good to know if you are happy to share your faith with the curious. It may be as simple as how you became a Christian or why you are a Christian. If you are happy to talk about your faith to someone who wants to know more please let Steven Whalley know.

Date for your diary

On **24th October** there will be a coffee morning/sale fundraiser in St Mungo's Church in aid of the Breast Cancer Institute in Edinburgh (which carries out research) and Lavender Touch (which brings relief to those living with cancer in the Scottish Borders). There will be a puppet show and the usual stalls and activities.

Help to staff the stalls, serve teas and coffees, baking and making crafts and donations of prizes for the raffle would be appreciated.

For more details please contact Catriona on 07772 788680 or Gill on 07508 202244.

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

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

** CA service at St. Andrew’s church will be on Sunday 10th 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 10th May, 1.30pm – 4.30pm

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

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

****Book Sale, Holy Corner, Morningside United church, Saturday 9th to Monday 11th May.**

All proceeds are donated to CA.

How to Donate

Ideally donate online at 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

Peeblesshire Foodbank, 1 Silverbirch Studios, Cavalry Park, Peebles

EH45 9BU 07413 484174 www.peeblesshire.foodbank.org.uk

Crisis Assistance from the Minister's Barnabas Fund 07943 509906
emergencyfoodbank@standrewswestlinton.org.uk

Guid Blethers

6th May

A fun afternoon with a variety of games

In the Old Church Hall from 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Followed by Tea, Coffee and Cake

Suggested weekly donation £1.00

20th May

Picnic at Baddingsgill (and to see the Bluebells)

(Details available on 6th May)

All welcome

For further information contact **Helen Dry**

**On 6th May we will also discuss our involvement in the
Pentecost event on 24th May in the Manse garden**

Church Flowers

Thanks for all the generous donations in support of our Church Flower Fund which are very much appreciated and provide the flowers for our beautiful church. Without your generosity we could not do what we do.

Sincere thanks to all the members of the Flower Team who arrange the flowers every week in church. Jill Green and Lillian Slater will be arranging the flowers in May and Kate Dykes in June. A special mention to and Sheila, Kate and Fiona who did the stunning Easter flowers which have been very much admired by so many people.

Ann

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 or

Jean Howat 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.

A Tour of our Linked Congregations

Some time ago, Tony, in his Reflection spoke movingly about the need for unity, not just in Church of course but naturally he was also thinking globally, given the parlous state of parts of the world. His words gave me pause to ponder. I asked myself what practical action can I take to foster unity? Without need for further thought, I both felt and knew that I was being guided to visit all the Churches in the linkage. I set about my individual “tour” of the linkage and what a time I’ve enjoyed whilst gaining enrichment for my soul.

Visiting all our beautiful Churches, meeting new people, hearing a range of reflections, singing out joyously. In one Church we even enjoyed a sung “collection” so beautiful to hear a solo voice with an organist accompaniment. I’ve attended a Lenten meeting and sung the hymn “Take My Life” in a Café.

Perhaps it goes without saying that coffee and home-made cakes were enjoyed in friendly fellowship with others. In one Church, coffee was served both before - and after - the Service.

In the words of Psalm 133:1: "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!".

Elaine Robinson

Contacts

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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)

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: Vacant

Weekly Linkage News: Christine Leith

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

Newsletter Editor: Colin Herd

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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

May			
	West Linton 11.30 am	Carlops 10.00 am	Newlands 10.00 am
3rd	Colin Herd	Colin Herd	Rev Tony Foley
10th	Peter Worthington	Peter Wiorthington	Fiona Burnett
17th	Rev Tony Foley	Rev Tony Foley	David Henderson-Howt
24th	Steven Whalley	Steven Whalley	Rev Tony Foley
31st	Patsy Campbell	Rev Tony Foley	David Henderson Howat
7th June	Whipman Service Led by Rev Nick Bowry in the Marquee at 11.00 am	Colin Herd	Julian Birchall

Door Duties	
May	
Tony Hoskins (£)	Choir
Pat Graham	Main
Robert Higgins	Gallery
June	
Ann Lyon	Choir
Colin Herd (£)	Main
Marion Moore	Gallery

Readers	
May	
3rd	Robert Higgins
10th	Robert Higgins
17th	Mary Turnbull
24th	Mary Turnbull
31st	Pat Graham
June	
7th	Whipman Service
14th	Calum Greenhowe
21st	Calum Greenhowe
28th	Neil Calvert

Material for the June Newsletter should be submitted to the editor by Monday 25th May 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 June 2026 issue will be available by 31st May 2026.