

West Linton St Andrew's Parish Church

November 2025

Scottish Charity No SC003938

Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley

The Morality of obedience

'Alas for you Pharisees, for you pay out your tithe of mint and rue and every little herb, while ignoring the justice and love of God.' LUKE 11:42

A major bone of contention between Jesus and his opponents centered around the morality of obedience. Our world's recent and not-so-distant history is full of examples of how that issue is still very much with us today. Of how, often in the pursuit of State defined goodness, people can unconsciously find themselves adapting to the normalisation of cruelty towards others under the guise of 'Law'.

When the language of morality is manipulated and used to lead people to away from the '*weightier matters of the Law*' it invariably becomes a means of leading a populace to commit previously inconceivable actions in the cause of the 'national good'. This happens when the self-serving morality of a ruling party usurps the role of public and personal conscience. The subsequent 'politically responsible' moral code then becomes a means of ensnaring the populace into an unquestioning mind-set. Christians living through such eras are often faced the question: '*How does a Christian live in a society that preaches goodness but worships power and lauds compliance?*' How does one live in a society that conflates being a good person with being an obedient citizen, who is passively compliant to the new political and cultural norms?

Aldous Huxley's novel, *Brave New World* tells of a world where pleasure has replaced purpose, and an addictive desire for comfort displaces the growth pains associated with developing critical faculties. A world where life is lived out under the dictatorship of entertainment, of endless distractions that bring momentary pleasures. A world where the thoughts of its citizens are regulated by dopamine fixes wrapped up in entertainment all designed to pacify the populace and incapacitate their critical thinking faculties.

We presently live in the age of the '*Selfie*'. An image-driven era where virtue has become a performance art led by a celebrity priesthood. A time where appearance is lauded and substance ignored. A culture where overt political deceptions are justified in the service of 'lesser evils'. Where appearing good is praise-worthy but doing good can be considered subversive activity. In such a culture how do we determine whether we are actually being good or simply being compliant?

How can Christians think about the morality of obedience? We could start by being determined to never to lose sight of the '*weightier matters of the Law*', like compassion and justice. We could start by insisting on standards of truth telling in public life that serve the public good and not simply the policy aims of a political party. We could start by being leery of people who ask us to give uncritical compliance to their opinions.

"Do not conform to the standards of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is..." ROMANS 12:2

Peace,
Tony

*"There is a battle in my head,
a war behind my eyes.
On one side there is truth and love,
and on the other hate and lies.
It's for me, the one who sees,
to decide what is right
and what is wrong.
For when it comes to sight
things aren't always
what I'm told I see."*

Peace,

Tony

Advent Study

Our Advent studies this year will be based on the book by Kelly Nikondeha, ***"The First Advent in Palestine"***.

Studies will be held on **Tuesday** mornings in the **Laurel Bank Tearoom** in **Broughton**,

on **Wednesday** evenings at 7.00 pm by Zoom — the Zoom link will be available nearer the time,

and on **Thursday mornings** at **Colin's** home, **Carradale**, Deanfoot Road, West Linton at 10.00 am. (Coffee and cake)

All studies will commence w/c 24th November.

Traditionally, when we think of that first Advent, we see that Christmas card picture of Mary and Joseph huddled by a manger in a stable, the Angel Gabriel, Wise Men, and shepherds tending their flocks, and a shining star against a night sky. But our study this year draws us into the sharp reality of life in Palestine at that time and the real darkness that had to be navigated to reach the hope that shining star announced.

We'll take a fresh look at the Advent narratives of Luke and Matthew, to see the true story of resistance, abusive rulers and oppression, and the real economic hardship of the time. And throughout all this the author also weaves in her personal stories of her relationships with those living in Israel-Palestine. She contrasts the hope and joy of Jesus' coming with the very real struggles of the marginalised and oppressed.

Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal 2025

Shoe box Thank you

Many thanks to all who responded to this year's Blythswood Shoe box Appeal.

Twenty five filled boxes, as well as two boxes and one bag of fillers (extras) were donated and donations of money were also received.

Pat Graham

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

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.

Guid Blethers

In the Old Church Hall at 2.00 pm

The programme for November

Wednesday 12th - Christmas Memories

Anna Marshall

Wednesday 26th - Scottish Country Dancing

Margie Stevenson

Followed by Tea, Coffee and Cake

Suggested weekly donation £1.00

For further information contact **Helen Dry**

The theme for this winter is Meeting Jesus



Dates for your diary: Sunday 9 November

Sunday 14 December

Sunday 11 January

Sunday 8 February

Sunday 8 March

Our first Messy Church Session is on Sunday 9 November.

The topic is The Wedding at Cana when Jesus turns the water into wine.

The session starts at 4pm prompt in the New Church Hall at West Linton and finishes at 6pm.

All children from babies to P7 are most welcome to come and join in the fun!

We will start with a Bible Story and a song and then the children will do a range of craft activities. We will say a prayer and finish off with a meal together. All children **MUST** be accompanied by an adult.

Please do consider joining us for an afternoon of fun activities and a family meal together.

For more information contact Jean Howat howatjean@gmail.com

West Tweeddale Guild

The next meeting of The Guild will be on

Wednesday 19th November at 2.00 pm

In Broughton Village Hall

Videos will be shown of the Guid Projects for the next cycle with a view to deciding which one(s) our Guild will support

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.

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

November

	West Linton 11.30 am	Carlops 10.00 am	Newlands 10.00 am
2nd	Patsy Campbell	Patsy Campbell	Rev Chris Levison
9th	Rev Dr Tony Foley Service starts at 10.45 am	Rev Dr Tony Foley Service starts at 9.30 am	David Henderson-Howat
16th	Fiona Burnett	Fiona Burnett	Rev Dr Tony Foley
23rd	Sheen Livingstone	Kevin Scott	Fiona Burnett
30th	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Murray Campbell
7/12	TBA	TBA	Rev Dr Tony Foley

Door Duties

November

T Hoskins	Choir
M Knott	Main
M Moore	Gallery

December

K Dykes	Choir
P Graham	Main
C Herd	Gallery

Readers

Nov	2nd	Kirsty Crick
	9th	Kirsty Crick
	16th	Fiona Hessey
	23rd	Fiona Hessey
	30th	Pat Graham

December

	7th	Pat Graham
	14th	Tony Hoskins
	21st	Tony Hoskins
	28th	Mary Turnbull

Material for the October Newsletter should be submitted to the editor by Monday 24th November 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 October 2025 issue will be available by 30th November 2025.