

LINLITHGOW & AVON VALLEY CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

Welcome to your first newsletter of 2025 from Linlithgow and Avon Valley Church of Scotland. An especially warm welcome to nearly 200 new subscribers joining from all around the parish! We hope you'll find the newsletter keeps you up to date with what's going on across all our worship centres. And if you don't see what you're looking for, please tell us: contact newsletter editor Alan [here](#) to share your ideas for future articles.

So what do we have for you this month? Everything from a ministry team update to opportunities to mix faith and fun, prayer news, lots of events and even an astronaut approaching. It's all here – enjoy.

Our Ministry Team

The plan for our new parish that Edinburgh and West Lothian Presbytery agreed last autumn provided for a ministry team of 2 full-time paid ministers and 2 volunteer local ministers. So what's happening about recruiting a new full-time minister and a new ordained local minister (OLM) to join Liam and Thom?



Session Clerk Tom Costley explains "The Church of Scotland has rigorous procedures for appointing ministers, and there are no short cuts! It may be possible to recruit a new OLM relatively quickly, but this decision rests with Presbytery rather than our Kirk Session. Finding a new full-time minister, however, will involve undertaking the full process: having an interim moderator appointed... agreeing the manse location... deciding (twice) whether we will accept applicants who are in a gay marriage... preparing a parish profile... electing a nominating committee... etc!"

Please pray that Kirk Session can find ways to move things forward quickly, and for Liam, Thom and all our worship leaders in the meantime.

Surrounded by Prayer

Do you feel in need of prayer, or could you help pray for others? The Prayer Chain is a group of people who respond to anyone asking for urgent prayer for themselves or someone close to them. Requests go first to Ruth Middleton or Sheila Rae, who then pass them down the chain quickly and confidentially – either by phone or by email.



Over the years, Prayer Chain people have been delighted to hear of many answered prayers and of the difference their prayers have made. To find out more about this quiet but loving ministry, please contact [Ruth](#) (phone [07530 974692](tel:07530974692)) or [Sheila](#) ([07719 966273](tel:07719966273))



Exploring Together

A good cup of tea and a natter is all part of growing in faith together! House groups (also called small groups or connect groups) provide support, connection, and opportunities for learning and friendship. They play an important role in our church, as in many churches. And they're as varied as the people who are in them: meeting in person or online, in the evening or by day, weekly or fortnightly.

You'll find a list of current groups on St Michael's website [here](#). For more information or to discuss what group might suit you best, contact [Alison Miller](#).

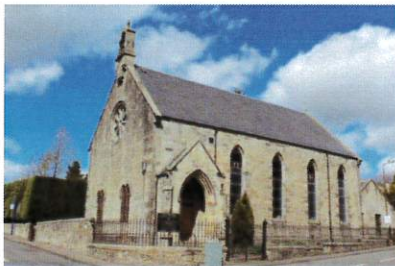
BREAKING NEWS: a new in-person house group in the Springfield area will meet from 7:30-9pm, starting on Wednesday 26th February. Further details from Alison.

Fun and Friendship at the Girls' Brigade

Our 1st Linlithgow Girls Brigade company would love to welcome new members, in P1 - P7 for Explorers & Juniors, and S1 upwards for Brigaders. Entertainment is the focus for this year, which means lots of fun each week doing crafts and activities, playing games and learning new songs.



The Brigade meet every Wednesday during term time in Longcroft Halls from 6.15-7.30pm for the Explorers & Juniors, and 6.30pm-7.45pm for the Brigaders. For more info please contact the Captain, Andrea Smith on [07572 686588](tel:07572686588), or email [here](#). Or simply come along and see for yourself!

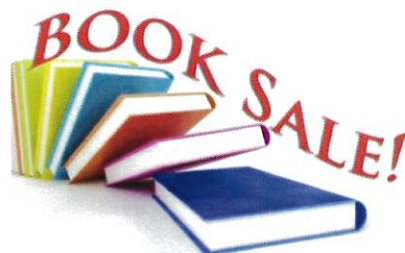


Avonbridge Update

That old saying "When one door closes, another opens" pretty much describes recent events in Avonbridge. Although the local community hall was sadly closed, Avonbridge Church folk were delighted to help the hall team move essential equipment to the church so that community activities can not only continue but flourish in their new setting. The Wednesday Lunch Club now happens every week from 10:00am until 1:30pm, with Take Centre

Stage Academy Dance School hosting their dance classes in the hall on a Wednesday evening.

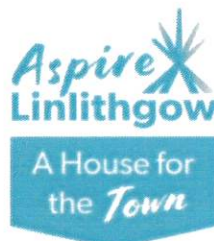
We're excited to see what the rest of the year brings as we progress with our project to transform the church building into a real hub for the community, as well as a warm and welcoming worship centre - watch this space!



Books... DVDs... CDs... Jigsaws...
and more books!

Take as much as you like
Donate as much as you want

Saturday 8 Feb
10am-12:30pm
St Michael's
Kirk Hall



Musical Fireworks

On Sunday 9th February at 3pm, the first concert of 2025 in the Occasionally@ St.Michael's series takes place at 3pm. Gemma O'Keefe and her brother Donal McCrisken present a lovely programme of violin and piano music, including classics by Fritz Kreisler, fireworks from Manuel da Falla, and the glorious Violin Sonata in A by Brahms. Gemma is a member of the Orchestra of Scottish Opera. Entry by donation toward the upkeep of the church organ.



Occasionally @St.Michael's

A series of recitals by local musicians

In St. Michael's Parish Church,
The Cross, Linlithgow



Sunday 9th February 3pm

Gemma O`Keefe *Violin*

Donal McCrisken *Piano*

Kreisler ~ de Falla ~ Chopin ~ Brahms

Admission free, donations invited for upkeep of the church organ

Quiz Night

As this pic shows, Aspire Linlithgow nights at Linlithgow Rose Club are never dull! Come along for our next quiz night on 14 Feb at 7pm for a 7:30 start. Bring a team and test your wits. Entry £5 per person, payable on the night.



Friday 14th February 2025

7.30 PM

**£5
Per Person**

**TEAMS
of 4/5**

LINLITHGOW ROSE CLUB

Prestonfield Gardens, EH49 6HF

Quiz Master David Paterson (Deep Sea)

Coffee Morning

Saturday 15th February 2025

10:00 - 12:00hrs

Funds raised for Youth & Local Community benefit.

Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange

St. Michael's Parish Church
Kirk Hall EH49 7AL

Come and join us for some good cakes and great conversation!

Pay at the door
Adults £5
Child £2

Faith, Friends and Fizz

The next meeting of this group for women will take place on Thursday 27th February from 7.30-9.00 pm in the Adam Room, Cross House. We're looking at 'The Bible Course' from The Bible Society, and this month begins at the very beginning. The course consists of videos and a chat, with a couple of readings in between meetings. It's very accessible and we would be delighted to have you join us. Contact Agnes, or Fiona on [07717133862](tel:07717133862), for more information.



Ladies, please join us on
Thursday 27th February
at 7.30pm in the
Adam Room, Cross House.

E: FaithFriendsFizz@outlook.com
M: Fiona on [07717133862](tel:07717133862)



World Day of Prayer

Everyone is welcome at the joint World Day of Prayer service on Friday 7 March at 7pm. Linlithgow and Avon Valley: St Michael's is hosting the service this year, on behalf of Linlithgow Churches Together. Refreshments will be served afterwards in the church.

The service has been written by Christian women of The Cook Islands in the Pacific. The theme, "I Made You Wonderful" weaves together Psalm 139 with stories of three women from the Cook Islands to reveal that God knows us, is always with us and made us unique and special.

Astronaut Approaching

Coming soon: Dr Kathryn Sullivan – astronaut, oceanographer and global role model for women in science! Tickets go on sale this Saturday for 'An Audience with Dr Kathryn Sullivan' in St Michael's Church at 2pm on Tuesday 1 April. Get yours in Far From book shop or The Line Gallery (both cash only), or from [Margaret Henderson](#) or [Alan Miller](#).

Could you help sponsor 4 school pupils to join Kathy at a private dinner? Would you or anyone you know like more information about a gala fundraising dinner with Kathy at Hopetoun House on the evening of 1 April? If so, please contact our fundraising team [here](#) for more info.

An Audience with Dr Kathryn Sullivan
St Michael's Church Linlithgow

2 pm Tuesday 1st April 2025

Tickets £20

Available from
Far From The Madding Crowd
The Line Gallery

Aspire Linlithgow
Project 600

Aspire Linlithgow is the major projects fundraising campaign of Linlithgow and Avon Valley Church of Scotland
(Scottish charity no. SC016185)

Pray Every Day

Here are suggested topics for daily prayer this month.

Monday: pray for Liam and the ministry team to know God's support and guidance as they lead our new parish.

Tuesday: pray that our new Kirk Session and its teams will quickly develop good working relationships and rise to the challenges we face.

Wednesday: pray for our Session Clerk Tom Costley to be well supported and know God's blessing and guidance in this important role.

Thursday: pray for the work of [Sunflower Scotland](#), set up by Torphichen member Oleg Dmitriev, and for safety for Oleg and Elvira on their regular visits to the front line with aid.

Friday: give thanks for our house groups, and pray that more people will join and benefit from the support and fellowship they provide.

Saturday: pray for the range of social care ministries that [Crossreach](#) provides on behalf of the Church of Scotland, remembering its CEO Viv Dickenson and all the staff who offer care in Jesus name.

Sunday: as we worship freely, give thanks but also remember the work of [Open Doors UK](#) supporting Christians in countries where they are persecuted for their faith.



PEWS NEWS

Worship with Us

Avonbridge 10am (except the second Sunday)

- 10:30am Agape Breakfast on the second Sunday of each month

St Michael's 10am

- Next quarterly Communion service on **23 February**
- Services are available for 1 week on the church [website](#) and on [Facebook](#)
- Contemporary evening services in the Kirk Hall resume later this month – check [Facebook](#) for further info

St Michael's at Springfield 10am

- Sundays during term time (but no service on 23 February or 30 March)
- You are invited to enter the school hall by the main door.

St Ninian's Craigmalen 11am

- Also available on [Zoom](#)

Torphichen 11:15am

- Evening services at 7pm on Zoom – click [here](#) from 6:50pm.

CDs of St Michael's Sunday services are also available for those without internet access. Please check in with neighbours and friends to see if they would like a copy and then contact the [church office](#)



Next Newsletter

Our next newsletter will land in your Inbox on or around Thursday 6 March. Do you have something recent or upcoming to share that's relevant to our parish? Please send your thoughts to newsletter editor [Alan Miller](#). The deadline is Sunday 2 March, but the earlier the better!

We take our members' privacy seriously, and the information provided will be retained by us for as long as it is required for the purpose for which it was collected or unless you tell us otherwise. A copy of our full Privacy Notice can be found on our website <http://www.stmichaelsparish.org.uk>.

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