

LINLITHGOW & AVON VALLEY CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

MAY NEWSLETTER

Welcome to your May newsletter from Linlithgow and Avon Valley Parish Church! With Spring in full bloom, let's talk gardens... fertiliser... chatty walks... recycling... building a wall... building the Kingdom through prayer... and even how to eat sweets in space!

Seven days to Make a Difference

This week (11th-17th May) is Christian Aid Week 2025. You can help make a difference worldwide for farmers like Aurelia from Guatemala. Supported by specialist agricultural training from a local organisation funded by Christian Aid, she and other farmers in her community have adapted sustainable practices such as producing their own organic fertiliser



Despite climate change, the community has demonstrated huge resilience to transform their output. As [Christian Aid](#) say, Aurelia is now holding hope in her hands. You can bring hope as you donate online through the Linlithgow Christian Aid envelope.



Connect Locally and Globally

Did you know that Linlithgow and Avon Valley Parish is a Gold Award eco-congregation? Working with organisations such as Christian Aid, [Eco Congregation Scotland](#) is an ecumenical programme that helps make connections between Christian faith and environmental issues.

Eco Congregation Scotland supports churches in areas such as worship resources, practical action and advocacy. The annual gathering takes place this year in Glasgow on **Saturday 14th June from 10am-4pm**. Come along and be inspired! Contact [Sarah Young](#) for more information.





Key Points from Kirk Session

Our Kirk Session met this week in the delightful surroundings of the St John's Hall in Torphichen. These are a few key points from a wide-ranging agenda:

- The congregational annual meeting will take place at 7pm on **Tuesday 24th June** in the Kirk Hall at Cross House, Linlithgow. Come along to hear what's going on and to meet fellow members from around our enlarged parish!
- Session agreed that communion bread should always be gluten free, and that a non-alcoholic alternative to wine should always be available.
- A memorial to Linlithgow munitionette workers who died in a wartime factory explosion will be installed next to the Linlithgow war memorial in St Michael's in time for this year's Remembrance Sunday.
- The communications team are developing a new cross-parish magazine, with the first issue expected over the summer.
- The fundraising team are applying to the Church of Scotland General Trustees to help fund phase 1 of 'Project 600' (works to remove damp and woodworm issues in the church), and to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support major works on Cross House.
- Financially, we have a significant challenge to ensure our income keeps pace with increasing costs.

The King of Instruments

Occasionally @St.Michael's

A series of recitals by local musicians
in St. Michael's Parish Church, The Cross, Linlithgow

Sunday 18th May, 3pm

Dr John Willmet
Organist of St Michael's Parish Church

Admission free,
donations invited for upkeep of the church organ

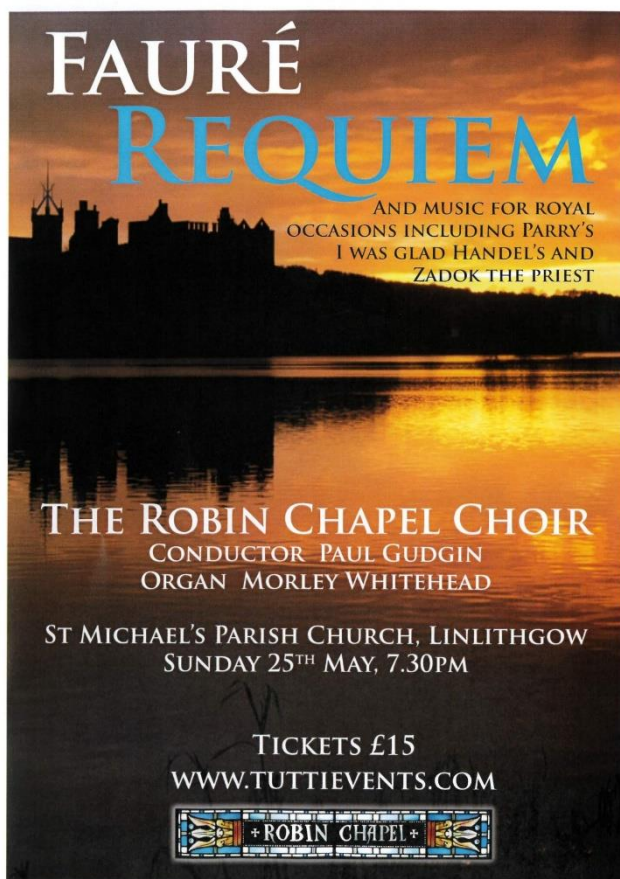


The next Occasionally@St Michael's concert – on Sunday 18th May at 3pm - is a treat, as St Michael's own organist Dr John Willmet explores the splendours of our Henry Willis organ in a varied recital that includes Elgar, Mendelssohn and J S Bach.

It's astonishing now to remember that this wonderful instrument mouldered quietly in a Yorkshire barn between the closure of the school in Harrogate for which it was built and its transfer to St Michael's in 2001.

Entry is free with donations invited for upkeep of the organ.





Linlithgow String Orchestra in Training

In its 10th year, the Linlithgow String Orchestra has embarked on its most ambitious project to date. Working with Edinburgh-based composer Deborah Shaw, they will create a new bespoke composition to mark the bicentenary of the railways' birth in the UK. While details remain under wraps until the world premiere in Linlithgow on 9th November, the piece promises to capture the breath, hiss and heartbeat of steam in motion.

Composer Deborah Shaw is a real steam enthusiast!

In the meantime, the group's upcoming concert will be full of beautiful tunes including Ronald Binge's "Sailing By" (aka The Shipping Forecast theme) and a special arrangement of Johann Strauss's "Roses of the South". It's such a good programme that you can enjoy it twice: at the Priory Church, South Queensferry on Saturday 7th June at 7pm, and in Linlithgow Burgh Halls on Sunday 8th June at 2.30pm. Full steam ahead!



Buggy Walking

Jolly Babies do indeed fill St Michael's Kirk Hall with jollity every Wednesday morning. But a partnership with Linlithgow Community Development is helping to start the fun even before arrival at the Kirk Hall, with a sociable buggy walk.

LCDT would love to recruit new volunteers to help lead more of their "Move for Good" plans for short and easy group walks around Linlithgow. Full training, expenses and support will be provided. Please email walking project coordinator [Magali Redding](mailto:Magali.Redding@linlithgow.gov.uk), or message her on [07769 223166](tel:07769223166).

Global Prayer

[Thy Kingdom Come](#) is a global ecumenical prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. The focus is on the period from Ascension to Pentecost: this year, that's **29th May-8th June**.

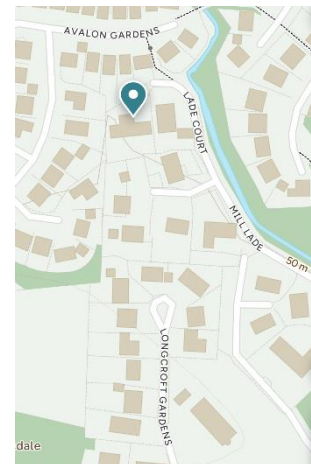
One of the many inspirational resources Thy Kingdom Comes offer is [this leaflet](#) 'The Lord's Prayer: How to pray. How to live'. The leaflet is one of several very helpful resources that are free to download from the website.



Inspirational Garden

Church member Susan Denholm is holding an open garden event on **Saturday 21st June from 1.30pm-4.30pm** as a fundraiser for Aspire Linlithgow's Project 600 campaign to address major fabric issues in St Michael's church. The garden at Lochmill House, 3 Lade Court is beautifully laid out: amongst other attractions, it includes 36 varieties of clematis to ensure at least one is always in flower!

The house is found just beyond the large brick house at the end of Mill Lade, and can also be accessed via the path from Avalon Gardens. (Sorry – no parking at the house.) Entry is £5 and tea, coffee and home baking will be available for a modest charge.



Build That Wall

That famous parable about building on strong foundations has recently been re-enacted in our midst. The wall at the Longcroft Halls by St Ninian's Craigmalen has been dismantled and comprehensively re-built. While removing the risk of collapse, the project undertaken by Stewart and his team from Stonemasonry Scotland has also generated many positive comments for the quality of their work.

The project was managed by Bert Laing and Jim McFadyen from St Ninian's Craigmalen. Bert was even allowed to assist (briefly).

Don't Discard: Recycle!

Discarded electricals are the fastest-growing source of waste in the UK: we bin over 100,000 tonnes every year. Electrical items, many of which contain rare metals, can be recycled at most local authority recycling centres.

In addition, at Linlithgow Tesco in Linlithgow, Lidl Bathgate & Dunelm Mills, Falkirk you can recycle many electricals, including air fryers, doorbells, hair straighteners, flat screen TVs & more. Vapes can even be recycled at VPZ in the Regent Centre, Linlithgow.

A further option is to use a website like [Freecycle](#) or [Freecycle](#): it's amazing what people are delighted to take off your hands. Make someone's day while you declutter.



Happy Birthday

St Michael's choir recently surprised minister emeritus Rev Ian Paterson with a birthday treat comprising a private performance of his favourite anthem, O Thou, the Central Ord by Charles Wood. Needless to say, 'Happy Birthday' and birthday cake, baked by Lorna Paterson, also featured.



Pray Every Day

Sunday. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland opens on Saturday 17th: pray for Thom and Liam as they attend, and that the assembly will know God's guidance in the matters before it.

Monday. Pray especially that the Assembly will be given real wisdom as they consider the difficult topic of Assisted Dying.

Tuesday. Pray that peace may prevail in the escalating situation between India and Pakistan.

Wednesday. Pray for our Kirk Session and Tom Costley, Session Clerk, as they lead the continuing development of our new parish.

Thursday. Although to human eyes it looks unachievable, pray for a fair and just resolution to conflict in Israel and Palestine.

Friday. Pray that our house groups and prayer groups, some of which are very new, will draw people closer to God and to one another.

Saturday. Pray for our elders and others who visit members locally, that they may know God's presence and guidance and be equipped to support those they visit.

Online Prayer Underway

An online prayer group open to all in the parish is now up and running on **Mondays from 12.30-1pm**. If you'd like to join others in praying for the needs of our world locally and internationally, please email [here](#) for the Zoom link and for any further information.



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

- Also available on the church [website](#) and on [YouTube](#)
- Next quarterly Communion on 25th May
- Contemporary evening services in the Kirk Hall have returned on the first Sunday of each month – next service 6:30pm on 1st June

St Michael's at Springfield 10am

- Every Sunday except 25th May. You are invited to enter the school hall by the main door.
- Last service before the summer break is on 8th June

St Ninian's Craigmalen 11am

- Next quarterly Communion on 29th June
- 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](#)



What's Your Story

Many thanks to all contributors to this month's newsletter. Our next edition will find its way to you around 26th June. Please contact editor [Alan Miller](#) by **Sunday 22nd June** if you have something recent or upcoming to share that's relevant to our parish.

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, and other Data Protection information can be found at: [Data Protection | St. Michael's Parish Church](#) or [Torphichen Kirk - Privacy](#). We hope to update the Facebook pages for St Ninian's Craigmalen, and Avonbridge in due course

This information is for church use only and is not shared with any third parties

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