



**ST.
MICHAEL'S**
Parish Church

APRIL NEWSLETTER

Welcome to your April newsletter from St Michael's Parish Church! Is the weather going backwards? As I write this on Monday 15th, the Met Office tell me it feels like 2C out there. Never fear, though, as you'll always receive a warm welcome at St Michael's or any of our partner churches. And whatever the weather is doing to your plants, read on to see how God's kingdom is blossoming in our corner of the realm.



Four into One

Over 80 elders and congregational board members from Avonbridge, Linlithgow St Michael's, Linlithgow St Ninian's Craigmalen and Torphichen churches gathered in the Longcroft Hall on Saturday 13th April to discuss progress with our planned union into a single parish.

A process that started in 2022 as 'a wee chat over coffee' between John Reid, Innes Duncan and Elaine Stewart – session clerks of three of the churches – has

grown into a liaison group that brings together members of the four congregations to consider all aspects of the union.

While there's a great deal still to be done, the overall message was that together we form the body of Christ in this part of West Lothian. Continued goodwill and prayer will undergird all the hard work as we finalise plans – to be considered and voted on by each Kirk Session and congregation in due course – to join together by the end of 2024.

A Day of Celebration



This year's Easter Sunday service proved even more special than usual: in celebrating the day of

resurrection, we welcomed 9 new members. Alongside Mary Neilands, who was also baptised, Ian and Jane Burns, Jerrold Fraser, May Grafen, Margaret and Russell Hogan, Marion Prentice and Donna Swan all professed their faith during the service.

If you're interested in finding out more about membership, Liam would be very happy to have a chat: contact him [here](#).

Faith in Action

West Lothian Foodbank are very grateful for the generosity of faith in action shown one week before Easter, on Palm Sunday. From Jolly Babies to the more mature folk in the church, donations large and small came flooding in.



The equivalent of 1,077 meals was gathered - 452kg to be precise - along with financial donations of £1,010, many of which were gift aided. Foodbank clients all over West Lothian will be the beneficiaries.

Watch out for details of another collection later in the year, but remember that you can leave donations at any time in the black Foodbank box in Cross House.



Artistic Easter

Easter has been celebrated in many ways over the centuries. At the Guild meeting on Easter Monday, some members presented a thoughtful and moving performance of their version of the Easter story – to the accompaniment of hand chimes. Let the bells ring out, indeed.



Meantime, on Easter Saturday....

...large crowds gathered in Princes St Gardens for a performance of Edinburgh's Easter Play, this year focusing on The Women's Story. The weather turned kind just in time, as the very inclusive cast of 40 brought the well-known story to life from a new angle. One audience member commented "Very moving and better than Oberammergau".

Several familiar faces were involved. Alison Parkinson, taking part for the fourth time, said "As always, it's been very hard work, but always a pleasure to be with such a diverse and generous group of people. Not all the cast are Christians, but all are committed to telling the story as best we can and supporting each other".

Outdoor Again

Outdoor Church will be out there worshipping in God's wonderful world on Sunday 5th May at 2pm. Unfortunately the planned meet-up at Torphichen on 7th April fell prey to bad weather and ill health, but let's have faith that the sun will be out by the first Sunday in May (while still bringing waterproofs just in case).

Venue to be determined according to what's blossoming where and when! Keep an eye on the church website and on Facebook for updated info. All are very welcome, including children and

Outdoor Church Linlithgow



well-behaved dogs, for these short times of reflective worship that inspire by drawing on the wonders of creation.



Pray Every Day

Sunday: give thanks for the nine new members who joined us recently, praying that they will be supported in their work and witness amongst us.

Monday: Pray for the continuing safety of the contractors as they complete the work on the church spire.

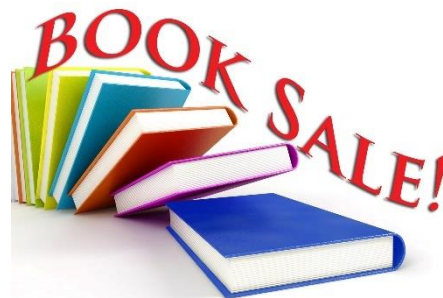
Tuesday: Pray for the developing situation in Israel and Gaza / the West Bank, particularly with Iran's growing involvement: for the people caught up in conflict, for wisdom and discernment among politicians, and for a peaceful and just way forward.

Wednesday: Pray for the Foodbank and its clients, giving thanks for the support offered by many over Easter.

Thursday: Give thanks for the recent conference for leaders of the four uniting congregations; pray for the ongoing work of the liaison group.

Friday: Pray for our elders and visitors who undertake visiting duties, that they will be a source of support and blessing to those in their districts.

Saturday: Pray for Open Church – for the volunteers who facilitate this, and for visitors to our beautiful sanctuary to have a sense of God's presence.



Look into Books

April's Aspire Linlithgow book sale saw a record turnout of around 100 people browsing, buying and bringing more volumes to donate. So there'll be a huge range of new stock awaiting you in the Kirk Hall on Saturday 18th May between 10am-12:30 – books, jigsaws, DVDs, and CDs. A perfect opportunity to bag a bargain or two!

Sales of books and other items raised £685 last month for Aspire Linlithgow's 'A House for the Town' fund to transform Cross House. Can you help us top that magnificent sum next month?

The Revolution Has Started

Not all revolutions involve chaos and violence. Some are quiet, well organised and flavoursome! Take the Linlithgow Food Revolution, now open for business every Monday and Saturday from 10am-12:30pm in the Kirkgate Room of Cross House.

Dawn, Sally and their colleagues from recovery charity 1st Step will be delighted to send you packing with supplies of excess stock, all of it still in date, from M&S, Sainsburys and Aldi. The table is laden and the freezers are full – and everything's selling at rock-bottom prices, with proceeds going to 1st Step. Revolutionary or what?



LINLITHGOW CIVIC TRUST 2023-24 LECTURE SERIES

RIBBON OF WILDNESS - discovering Scotland's watershed

Peter Wright, Linlithgow resident, polymath, and author with a passion for wild places will relate tales from his book **Ribbon of Wildness**. The book records his strenuous, meandering **745 mile walk** along Scotland's watershed from **Peel Fell** on the border to **Duncansby Head** near John O' Groats, Caithness.



7.45 pm
Thursday
25 April 2024
Queen Margaret Hall
53 Blackness Road
Linlithgow
EH49 7JA



Speaking and Cycling

Linlithgow man Pete Wright certainly loves to push past his comfort zone. He'll give the next Linlithgow Civic Trust lecture, at 7:45pm on 25th April in the Queen Margaret Hall, talking about his 745-mile walk (745 miles!) along Scotland's watershed.

Does the mere thought of that distance leave you feeling tired? Actually, this would be the perfect time to feel not tired but inspired. Inspired, that is, to sponsor Pete in his next venture: the

Cycle for St Michael, a 220km solo cycle ride between noon on Saturday 11th and noon on Sunday 12th May. Starting and finishing at the top of the Kirkgate, Pete is cycling to help 'finish the funding' for our Crown of Thorns spire. Let's give him a mighty St Michael's boost to his fundraising!

[Sponsor the cycle for St Michael](#)

Occasionally Inspired

Are the 'Occasionally @ St Michael's' concerts getting better and better? Last weekend, Alan Hastie and Glynn Eggar wowed an audience of over 100 with an hour of scintillating pianism. Next month, Alan returns but this time accompanying his wife Alison. They'll play some of their favourite works for viola and piano, including Beethoven's Romance in F – the very first piece they performed together as a duo. Expect the odd moist eye, and more beautiful music.

Entry by donation in support of the church's organ maintenance fund. The April concert raised over £500. Can we go higher still in May?

Occasionally @St.Michael's

A series of recitals by local musicians

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

Sunday 14th April 3pm

Schubert Mozart Handel Ravel

Glyn Eggar ~~~ PIANO DUETS ~~~ Alan Hastie



Admission free, donations invited for upkeep of the church organ

One for the Diary



Coffee Morning

Pin this photo to your calendar for Saturday 1st June, when the Toddlers and Jolly Babies team are holding a coffee morning from 10am-12 noon in the Kirk Hall. Tea / coffee, juice and home baking (plus a couple of stalls) will all be on the agenda. Any help with the home baking would be much appreciated – please contact Fiona McCracken [here](#) to let her know what you can contribute.

Join us for Worship



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Our worship services are every Sunday at 10am. As Covid-19 remains highly transmissible if you feel unwell please consider taking a lateral flow test before attending for worship. We look forward to worshipping with you, safely and joyfully, Sunday by Sunday.

Services at Springfield School are **at 09:45** and you are invited to enter the school hall by the main door.

Our contemporary evening services now take place weekly at 6:30pm in the Kirk Hall. Come early for a cuppa and a chat!

If you are not able to attend in person, our main church services are live-streamed:

Website: <https://www.stmichaelsparish.org.uk>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelsparishlinlithgow/>

They are available shortly after the end of the service for 1 week on the Kirk website under 'Faith'/'Worship Replay' or <http://www.stmichaelsparish.org.uk/replay>

and later on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/c/StMichaelsLinlithgow>

NB: Please note that services that are uploaded to YouTube and elsewhere on the web also remain available for 1 week after each service

CDs of the Sunday service are also available to those without internet. Please check in with neighbours and friends to see if they would like a copy and contact the office: info@stmichaels-parish.org.uk

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**St Michael's Parish Church of Scotland, Linlithgow is a
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