

West Linton St Andrew's Parish Church

March 2022

Scottish Charity No SC003938

Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley

In Praise of Holes ...

Is a hole something or nothing? Looking into a hole one is often tempted to wonder why they became nothing instead of something. The truth is holes, although empty can be full of potential insights just ask an archaeologist. For example, archaeologists use soil analysis to identify the postholes that marked the boundaries of ancient settlements. Archaeologists know that empty spaces often enable us not only to project backwards in time but sometimes forwards in time. In other words, empty holes can contain the answers to the questions of what once was and what might yet be.

The paradox of an empty hole is that absence often points to importance. The poet William Pope L. in a poem about holes makes this observation

*Hole Theory presupposes
That there is possibility
Even in the face of nothing ...*

The Economist magazine recently carried an article entitled: '*Religious fervour is migrating into politics.*' The article noted that while contemporary society continues to reject the role of religious institutions it still maintains an innate religious urge. There is it seems an inherent yearning in human society for moral certainty and communal identity. The writer's observation reminded me of a quote by the French philosopher Blaise Pascal in his book *Pensées*.

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*There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every human being
which cannot be filled by any created thing,
but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus.*

Now there is a 'hole' to look into and wonder about what once was and what might yet be.

Peace,
Tony Foley

World Day of Prayer ...

There will be a service for The World Day of Prayer in Broughton Village Hall on Friday 4th March at 2.30 pm.

The theme for this International service "I know the plans I have for You" has been prepared by Women from England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

This International day of prayer began in 1910 in Edinburgh following the World Mission Conference which brought many years of ecumenical partnerships together. More information can be found www.wdpScotland.org.uk

Helen Bruce

Stated Annual Meeting ...

The Stated Annual Meeting of the congregation will be held following the morning Service on Sunday 6th March 2022.

The accounts for 2021 will be presented. As usual here will be an opportunity to ask questions on the accounts or on any other aspect of church life.

Thanks from Bethany Christian Trust ...

Thank you very much for the recent donation of £500.04 from St Andrew's Church West Linton, linked congregations of Broughton, Skirling and Tweedsmuir, as well as the parishioner's personal donation, all received by cheque on 6/1/21, towards the work of Bethany Christian Trust.

As requested, these gifts have been assigned to the Rapid Re-accommodation Welcome Centre (formerly known as the Winter Care Shelter) and they will be a great help and blessing for us in our work, providing this life saving service for people facing homelessness this winter, so please pass on our sincere thanks to the whole congregation for their prayerful support and kind generosity.

To show just what your church's gift could do, I thought you may want to read a recent story from a young woman's stay at the Welcome Centre:

Sam is a young woman who came to the Welcome Centre after being asked to leave her family home. She had nowhere else to go. A Link Worker did a provisional homeless assessment with her and identified that there were cultural issues involved in the family dispute and so she was referred to appropriate support. Sam was given a support worker and also received support from a young person's charity. She is working with family mediation and looking to get back on track with school. She has moved to a supported accommodation for young people and is looking to a more stable future.

Thank you again for your partnership and support, and best wishes to all at St Andrew's Church this New Year. If you would like to have any further information about our services or ways to support our work, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

With Blessings and Thanks,

Rachael Gilfillan
Churches and Communities Fundraiser

Join the Lent conversation on Zoom ...

Lent will soon be upon us and as a group of churches, we will again be hosting Zoom faith conversations centred around the two books over a 6-7 week period. I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to join in the conversation. Our studies are intended to be grace spaces where you get an opportunity to explore not only the story of the crucifixion but also to talk your own understanding of the Christian faith in an unfiltered open context.

The books are ***The Nail - & The Things He Did***. They are both by author Stephen Cottrell. Each book includes 6 stories told in the first person from the perspective of those who were there that week. You can check them out on Amazon. We will be hosting the studies / conversations on separate nights. Each study is built around one of the chapters of a book and lasts approximately 45mins. If you wish you are welcome to join us for one session just to sample what they are like. You can also drop in and out as your schedule allows or you can stick around for the 'whole 9 yards'. These studies are designed with the hope that they will be of use to you. So why not give it a try. If you are interested, please get in touch with myself, or your Session clerk and we will answer all your questions and queries about times etc.

The Things He Did -

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Things-He-Did-Story-Holy/dp/0281076235/ref=sr_1_5?crid=2L7B8OI29VATG&keywords=stephen+cottrell+books&qid=1643737302&s

The Nail –

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Nail-Being-part-Passion/dp/0281066353/ref=sr_1_11?crid=2L7B8OI29VATG&keywords=stephen+cottrell+books&qid=1643737750&s

Tony Foley

Church Flowers ...

Thanks to all who continue to donate to the Flower Fund which allows our beautiful church to be adorned with colour and fragrance and for flowers to be distributed within our community to give comfort, peace and joy to those who need our support in this way.

If you would like to donate to the Flower Fund you can use the (yellow) FWO envelopes if you have them, or look for the Flower Fund envelopes available in church, or you can put your name and 'Flower Fund' on any plain envelope. Envelopes can be put into the offering on a Sunday or passed on to any of the Elders on duty. Our Church treasurer, Michael Knott has made arrangements to make it possible to pay directly into the Flower Fund using the details below:

Account Name: St Andrews Kirk Session

Sort Code: 80-09-39

Account number: 00817827

It would be helpful if you could include the reference 'Flower Fund' and if you are a taxpayer please consider to 'Gift Aid' your donation. If you have any questions, or would like further information, please email treasurer@standrews-westlinton.org, call 01968 660977 or write to 9 Tarfhaugh Brae, West Linton EH46 7DP.

The flower arranger for March is Nancy Porteous and for April it will be Sheila Forsyth.

Ann Lyon

General Kirk Session News ...

At the recent meeting of the GKS Dr Foley set out a very broad-brush vision for West Tweeddale which he described as a garden with the individual churches as 6 raised beds in harmony but different. He wants to build strong foundations for growth. He quoted the saying that you can build a house on the foundations for a skyscraper, but you cannot build a skyscraper on house foundations.

Part of this foundation building is the creation initially of three teams; a communications team which has already started to meet; a pastoral team looking to recruit congregation wide with a learning session organised for the 1st and 2nd April with Rev Ken Jeffrey; and an existing group of teaching elders with planning for a stimulating awayday in the early summer probably again led by Rev Ken Jeffrey of Aberdeen University.

Another part of foundation building is underway with the creation of an office in the church halls in West Linton and plans to recruit a part time administrator for a period of 12 to 24 months.

If you are interested in joining the pastoral team please contact Jean Howat howatjean@gmail.com or Isobel Hunter isobel@skirlinghouse.com

There are two events are occurring this summer which it is hoped can be supported across the linking. Skirling is planning the return of the Christian Aid Village Green Car Boot sale on the 15th May which is the first Sunday of Christian Aid week. A celebration for the Queen's Jubilee is being planned by Newlands for the weekend of 4th/5th June. Dr Foley suggested thinking about a Songs of Praise type of service on the village green in West Linton.

The information in this article was taken from an email from the Scottish Bible Society.



The world has been shocked and saddened by the unfolding situation in Ukraine. Our colleague at Bible Society of Ukraine, Rostyslav Stasyuk has asked, “Please continue praying for peace in our country, for the governments on both sides that their hearts are influenced by the Holy Spirit, pray for our soldiers who are sacrificing their lives to protect their homeland.”

The Ukrainian Bible Society is receiving an unprecedented number of requests for Bibles. Churches are begging for Scriptures to give to those overwhelmed by fear: soldiers and their families, people living on the frontlines and displaced communities.

I am writing to you today with a special request for solidarity to help our Bible Society meet the spiritual need in our nation by providing access to the Bible at this time of fear and uncertainty.”

“A few days ago, a pastor visited our office, asking for Bibles. When he heard that we had none left, he pleaded for Bibles that were damaged or even copies with pages missing. He said, ‘these Bibles would be of immense value to my congregation and the community!’ It was heart-breaking.”

“God’s Word can help bring comfort, peace, and reconciliation to our nation.”

Donations can be sent to:
The Scottish Bible Society,
7 Hampton Terrace,
Edinburgh, EH12 5XU,

| Services March | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| | West Linton 11.30 am | Carlops 10.00 am | Newlands 10.00 am |
| 6th | Rev Dr Tony Foley | Rev Dr Tony Foley | Mary McElroy |
| 13th | Steven Whalley | Steven Whalley | Rev Dr Tony Foley |
| 20th | Kevin Scott | Kevin Scott | David Henderson-Howat |
| 27th | Rev Dr Tony Foley | Rev Dr Tony Foley | Peter Worthington |
| 3/4 | Colin Herd | Colin Herd | Rev Dr Tony Foley |

All services are now in church. Carlops and St Andrew's services will also be available on Zoom.

| Door Duties | | | |
|--------------------|---------|-----------------|---------|
| March | | April | |
| Daryll Green | Choir | Kevin Scott £ | Choir |
| Colin Herd | Main | Ann Lyon | Main |
| Helen Bruce £ | Gallery | Christine Leith | Gallery |

| Readers | | Readers | |
|----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| March | | April | |
| 6th | Christine Leith | 3rd | Mary Turnbull |
| 13th | Jean McNab | 10th | Steven Whalley |
| 20th | Jean McNab | 17th | Steven Whalley |
| 27th | Mary Turnbull | 24th | Helen Dry |

Material for the April Newsletter should be submitted to the editor by Monday 21st March 2022. The April issue will be available by 27th March. Copy to Colin Herd: email: newsletter@standrews-westlinton.org. Please include 'Newsletter' in the subject of your email. To stop receiving the Newsletter by email please send an email to : newsletter@standrews-westlinton.org with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.