

West Linton St Andrew's Parish Church

May 2022

Scottish Charity No SC003938

Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley



'Everyone is the friend of one who gives gifts.' Proverbs 19:6

Is there any point in arguing with someone who disagrees with you especially when it comes to matters of faith? Presumably, you would like them to change their mind. But that is easier said than done. Experience shows that trying to get people to change their minds especially if it involves changing beliefs that are linked to their sense of identity, is extremely difficult. As one writer put it, any kind of conflict involving a person's personal attachment to their belief system be it religious or political invariably encourages *"competitive personal contests rather than collaborative searches for the truth."*

When we engage in the kind of *'mine is better than yours'* approach to dialogue it often makes things worse. Disagreements can begin to feel like a war in which the opposites sides dig the trenches of their religious and political convictions even deeper. The result is that each side then begins to use any issue as an opportunity to launch their beliefs, positions, and convictions back and forth like verbal hand grenades. All the while failing to realise that people are never likely to change their mind when feel like they are being subject to an attack.

These kinds of conflicts might give everyone involved the temporary satisfaction of —*'that just proves that I am right, and they are wrong.'* But the odds are that neither camp is winning the argument; on the contrary, attacks make often make opponents dig deeper trenches.

Jesus brought the Gospel to us as a gift not as a demand. If we want to change hearts and minds, we could start by refusing to use our values, and the convictions that go with them, as weapons, and start offering them as *a gift*.

Peace,

Tony

Church Activities ...

It is now 2 years since we had to stop all our activities due to Covid. Now that most of the restrictions have been lifted we are able to begin to think about what activities we can restart.

One of the major obstacles to restarting activities is the availability of volunteers to organise and run them. In the first instance we need to consider Baby Brunch, Guid Blethers and Cosy Café.

If you feel that you would be able to help with any of these activities on a regular or occasional basis, please send an email to sessionclerk@standrews-westlinton.org or speak to Mary Turnbull.

Broadband Connections to Church and Halls ...

Our broadband has now been installed in the church and halls and by the time you read this our new audio visual equipment will have been installed. There will be new things for the team to learn. Please bear with us as we learn how to use the new equipment.

With the cameras in place, there are privacy implications that we need to make known to all who may attend services. Not everyone wishes to have their image transmitted over the internet. Not everyone wishes to have their image potentially visible to those joining over Zoom. If anyone has concerns about this, be assured that there will always be areas in the church which are not covered by the cameras. If you have a concern, ask those on door duty to direct you to an area of seating not covered by the cameras.

Those of you who have already seen what we have been doing may have realised that we need a technical team to run this each week. If you are interested in helping please speak to Tony Hoskins, Kevin Scott or Colin Herd. We have all had to learn over these past few months and we will be glad to help with any training required.

Christian Aid Week 15- 22 May 2022

Last year, £5.5million was raised in CA Week, an incredible achievement in difficult circumstances during the ongoing covid pandemic which still hinders traditional local fundraising events.

This year's theme is "Help Jessica turn hunger into hope".

Drought starves. It robs women of the power to farm and grow food for their families. In rural Zimbabwe, seven out of ten women rely on farming to earn a living and provide for their families. But with no rain, women can't grow enough food.

For Jessica drought means every day is a struggle for survival. She toils on her farm, but little food grows on her ashen dry land.

Jessica is at the mercy of the climate crisis. Drought makes women like her hungrier, poorer and robs them of the chance to earn a living with dignity. She shares her heartbreak: "My children crave a good meal, but I can't provide it. We often go to bed with empty stomachs".

Your CA Week donations will help women like Jessica grow drought-tolerant crops that survive better and help her develop skills to preserve and store food safely for the dry season. Love gives Jessica the strength to stand strong against drought and hunger. Will you stand with her? Read more online at www.christianaid.org.uk

WAYS TO DONATE

For covid safety reasons, there will be no door to door collection in the linkage this year.

1. If at all possible, donate online at www.christianaid.org.uk Your money goes directly to CA with no hidden deductions reducing its value.
2. If you still prefer to use the traditional CA donation envelope, these will be available to pick up at Sunday church services in May – return to

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your church CA representative.

3. By post, send personal cheque to CA, 41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EL

CA QUIZ SHEET

Paper copies of this year's cryptic quiz on "Food and Drink" will be available from your church CA representative in May.

Local Linkage Event

Skirling Car Boot Sale—Sunday 15th June

Skirling Church is hosting a car boot sale on Sunday afternoon 15 May in support of Christian Aid. After a two year gap due to covid, this popular Skirling tradition is being relaunched. Everyone in the enlarged linkage is warmly invited to come and buy for a good cause. Cars and the contents of their boot are welcome; if you sell for CA, entrance is free; otherwise, £8. There will be stalls selling home baking, plants and other items; all contributions will be welcome, as will helping hands to sell. And there will be teas, ice cream and other goodies in Skirling village hall.

More information from organiser Isobel Hunter, to whom enquiries should be directed. Contact: Isobel Hunter, Firknowe, Skirling, Biggar ML12 6HD; Email isobel@skirlinghouse.com ; tel 01899 860274



Mother Earth - a reflection from a Grandmother

Oh God, please help me with this challenge to write about our planet Earth. I am a Grandmother, deeply concerned about the future of the planet with an uneasy feeling that whenever I mention the subject people are weary and no longer wish to listen or engage, after all, they've heard it all before, from those much greater than I, (think Sir David Attenborough, Greta Thunberg) and, in addition to the awful news on the war, they can access information about the climate emergency, climate change, the environment and ecology, anytime, 24/7. Planet saturation equals climate fatigue and we all know the portentous predictions.

I used to think information is power and yet, despite freedom to access information, people seem rendered powerless. When we feel powerless we then tend to blame the powerful; others, our leaders, governments both national and local, churches, heads of organisations, it is all too much for little old us. After all, we do our thing, don't we? We reuse, recycle, reduce and renovate. We turn our heating down, some of us stop flying and driving, some of us have stopped buying plastic. We eat less meat. We walk, we cycle, we turn off the lights, we wash and squash, we litter-pick, we might vote Green. We help plant an orchard, sow a bee bomb, build bug and bee hotels, feed birds and hedgehogs and re-wild. All to the good. Yet still, that nagging voice, yes but could you do more? Well yes, we say but not unless 'they' do more and make better rules for us to follow and live our lives by. Really. We fiddle whilst the planet burns.

Saving the planet is a complex and disturbing topic. The problem does not go away and with every passing year, every war, every flight, every

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vehicle driven and every kettle boiled, it gets worse. Sometimes the threats to our future sound so impossible we think it is just too big to handle. Do we then give up? Do we appeal to the Almighty in prayer? Faith or no faith, whatever we believe, or wherever we stand, we, collectively, have made this mess and we must clear it up. As a friend (Dorothy) said, it's a cop-out to blame God. Another friend (Hilary) said God is in all of us but you may find it easier to substitute Good for God. I believe there is good in all of us and I believe we can all do more and must never get weary of exposure fatigue. We must continue to take personal ownership in every way possible, continue to learn and to do our best to take positive action. The old phrase "think global, act local" used to work, now it's "act globally, act locally". The planet is in peril and needs to be always in our hearts and minds and on all our lips whilst we play our part; what we do, what we buy and how we behave. We have exploited, consumed and benefitted from this wondrous earth, we must seek to do the equivalent in cleaning up, making sacrifices, helping to save our precious species and our beautiful blue and green planet, our Mother Earth.

Elaine Robinson

Weekly Intimations ...

Now that we are using our new technology we are able to project intimations in church and over Zoom before the service starts. If anyone has an intimation that they would like shown please email to intimations@standrews-westlinton.org marking it "For PowerPoint".

Services May			
	West Linton 11.30 am	Carlops 10.00 am	Newlands 10.00 am
1st	Steven Whalley	Steven Whalley	Isobel Hunter
8th	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Rev Dr Tony Foley	Kevin Scott
15th	David Henderson-Howat	David Henderson-Howat	Rev Dr Tony Foley
22nd	Colin Herd	Colin Herd	Peter Worthington
29th	Mary McElroy	Mary McElroy	Isobel Hunter

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

Door Duties			
May		June	
Kate Dykes	Choir	Tony Hoskins	Choir
Pat Graham	Main	Neil Calvert £	Main
Michael Knott £	Gallery	Mary Turnbull	Gallery

Readers		Readers	
May		June	
1st	Helen Dry	5th	Pat Grham
8th	Robert Higgins	12th	Pat Graham
15th	Robert Higgins	19th	Christine Leith
22nd	John Dykes	26th	Christine Leith
29th	John Dykes		

Material for the Jun Newsletter should be submitted to the editor by Monday 29th May 2022. The June issue will be available by 5th June.

Copy to Colin Herd: email: newsletter@standrews-westlinton.org.

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