

# Tranent Parish Church

# Contact



Welcome to Tranent Parish Church

Photo: Laurie Brett

## Spring 2026

[www.tranentparishchurch.co.uk](http://www.tranentparishchurch.co.uk)

[www.facebook.com/tranentparishchurch](https://www.facebook.com/tranentparishchurch)

# Church Services

## In Tranent Parish Church

The Sunday Morning Service is in the Church at 11am. Children are very welcome. They join in at the start of the service before leaving for their own activities in the J-Club during term time.

Services are held regularly in Tranent Care Home and Crookston Care Home.

## Prayer Group

The weekly Saturday Prayer Group meets at 8am in the Church Gathering Area and all are welcome.

A monthly Prayer Sheet is available in the gathering area at the back of the church, on the church website and by email from Douglas Roberts.

## Church Family

### Deaths

Mr Alexander Smith	12 December 2025
Mr Robert Small	23 February 2026

The next edition of Contact will be out in June. Notices about contributions will be in the church intimations and emailed to regular contributors, but anyone is welcome to send us articles at any time.

Robin and Sheila

## From our Minister

Dear Friends

The Fraser Centre in Tranent held its first Reuse Fair this spring. The idea was to reuse, share and borrow items to give them a second life. Clothes offered for reuse were beautifully presented, hanging on rails and packed in attractive, sturdy, patterned bags. They were from a project which currently operates from a container in East Linton. There are plans to bring one to Tranent too.



Then there was the opportunity to reuse school uniforms and sports equipment too, with a big pile of brightly coloured running shoes waiting to be uplifted from the floor. The local library was there - of course offering a perfect opportunity to share and reuse books, time after time. Not only that, though, the library was offering free digital access to thousands of newspapers and magazines in over sixty different languages. Then there was a clarinet sitting in its box, with the lid open, so that everyone could see it. Why was that there? The answer is that there is now an option to borrow instruments through the library too. Like a book. Who knew? There were so many opportunities and invitations in one space. Giving not just the items offered the chance of a second life, but offering new possibilities to the people in the Fraser Centre that day too.

The offer of new life is central to the Christian faith. It is an offer for everyone. I write to you in March as we look forward to celebrating Easter Day on 5th April. We will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It is a wonderful mystery, the reality of which has been spoken to through the lives of people, from the very first of Jesus' followers to those of today. What the resurrection of Jesus means in our daily lives, is the presence of hope in all the challenges we meet. We share life together, knowing that we are loved by God and that this love will never leave us. It means that we can trust that ultimately, love is stronger than hate and peace will overcome the violence and conflicts in our world today.

This Easter, /

This Easter, if you have not been in the church building for some time, I invite you to come and celebrate Easter Day at the service at 11 am. Perhaps you have never been - then come and try something new. You will be most welcome.

Every Blessing,  
Katherine

## Regular events

**Open House** - takes place on Tuesday mornings in the Church Hall between 10am and 12 noon. Free tea, coffee and biscuits are served. All are welcome.

**Pool Group** - meets on Wednesday mornings in the Upper Hall from 10am to 12 noon. All are welcome.

**Knit and Natter** There is a article later in this Contact about this new group which also meets in the hall on Wednesday mornings.

**Fair Trade Stall** We have a Fair Trade stall on the last Sunday of every month. With supplies from the Fair Trade shop in Portobello, there is an opportunity to buy various goods - cash only.



## Church Coffee Morning

Keep Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April clear. Find more details in church, on the website or on Facebook.

# Easter Events

**Easter Activity Day - Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>**

March, Church Hall, 10am - 3pm

**Palm Sunday Service - 29<sup>th</sup> March**

11am.

**Good Friday Walk - 3<sup>rd</sup> April, meet**

12 noon at the church, light lunch afterwards in the Church Hall.

**Good Friday Service - Friday 3<sup>rd</sup>**

April 7pm

**Easter Day Service - Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>**

April 11am



**Come and meet Chris, Joy and their friend Gizmo as they travel back in time to the first Easter.**

**Join them in their adventure with Tranent Holiday Club**

**When? Saturday 28 March**

**Where? Tranent Parish Church Hall,  
Church Street**

**What time? 10 – 3pm**

**Who? All current P1-P7 children**

**How much? A donation would be welcome...  
and bring your lunch!**

**Contact Debbie on 07475273480  
or tranentholidayclub@gmail.com**



**Tranent Holiday Club is run by Tranent Parish Church**



Scottish Charity Number: - SC011353

# Tranent Parish Church Guild



Our syllabus has remained varied and we appreciate the speakers taking time to come and share their information and stories with us.

In January our first meeting was about The Pachamama Project ([www.thepachamamaproject.org](http://www.thepachamamaproject.org)), a charity making reusable period pads for refugees and vulnerable people around the world who experience period poverty. Volunteers Kay Ross and Linda Ingham spoke and demonstrated the items their group makes.

Our next meeting was a musical afternoon, when we had visitors both from other guilds and the congregation. "Glenkinchie" supplied the music, led by Alan Taylor (our organist) and Robert, an exceptional singer as regulars and they were joined this time with Calum on the accordion and our own Laurie Brett on guitar. A good time was had by all.

In February Laurie once again came and showed us some of his excellent photographs he had taken on his visits with his friends abroad. We had this meeting in the church as the screen is much better there and did justice to his pictures. We all enjoyed this very much.

March meetings started off with a change from the planned programme as one speaker had to change their date due to work commitments.

However, Tim Porteous, a Scottish Storyteller, managed to change his date with us and came to speak to us. Tim writes every week in the East Lothian Courier and he brought to life a local tale that we all enjoyed.

This year we are having a "Brew for the Crew" on the 24<sup>th</sup> March at 1.30 pm in the church hall in aid of the Scottish Air Ambulance Service. We hope this will be well attended.

We still have meetings covering Bibles for Bairns from the Scottish Bible Society on 14<sup>th</sup> April and on 28<sup>th</sup> April a stained-glass demonstration and talk, so everyone is most welcome to attend.

Kathleen Gilmer, Convener  
Tranent Parish Church Guild

## Congregational Roll

In the last edition of Contact there was an article about membership and the Congregational Roll.

At Tranent Parish Church, all are welcome to attend Sunday worship. Parish marriages and funerals are available to families regardless of their church connection. Contact is available for everyone too, online and at the library.

Is your name on the Congregational Roll? If you would like it to be added, because you would like to become a member, or removed, perhaps because you have moved away or are worshipping regularly at another church or you are not sure whether it is on the Roll or not, please get in touch with John Greig, our Session Clerk, who will be happy to help. His email address is [john@tranentparishchurch.co.uk](mailto:john@tranentparishchurch.co.uk).

Katherine

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## Pastoral Care Team

**Who are we?** We are currently a team of five: Cath Brett, Ann Harris, Dorothy Menzies, Wendy Waldie, Christine Young.

**What do we do?** We visit (usually in pairs) anyone in our congregation who would like some company, offering general chat and fellowship. Our visits are informal and can last as short or long a time as the recipient feels comfortable with, usually lasting an hour or so. It is always a privilege for us to be invited into your homes sharing stories of your lives as well as church family news and events.

**What do you do?** If a visit is something you think you would be interested in please speak to your Elder or contact a team member directly.

Cath Brett

## 2026 Income and Expenditure Estimates

Those of you who have had the opportunity to look at the estimates of Income and Expenditure for our 2026 Financial Year on our website ([www.tranentparishchurch.co.uk](http://www.tranentparishchurch.co.uk)), will see that this year the Fabric and Finance team is estimating a loss of approximately £90 (all figures have been rounded).

This does not seem much but it is the first time that we have budgeted for a loss.

Our income over expenditure of £10,500 in 2024 reduced to £2,500 in 2025 - a trend which gives rise to concern.

Our contribution to the Church of Scotland has increased from £37,000 to £41,000. Fabric outlay of £13,000 on the Church and Hall, of which £5,000 was in respect of painting work in the Hall, is not expected to be repeated this year, however, the Church boiler will need to be replaced. The expected cost of this is £25,000 (it has to be a commercial boiler) and we can call for this amount from the Consolidated Fabric Fund which the Church of Scotland holds on our behalf.

One thing of note is that, although our income in general in 2025 is down from 2024, the amount given by you, the Congregation, has increased. This is heartening as we know that not only are costs to the Church increasing but those of our members too.

Recoveries from the Gift Aid scheme are a very important part of our income (£12,500 in 2025) and we would ask, yet again, that if you are a tax payer you complete the necessary forms to enable the Church to collect this.

Thank you for your support in the past year and we hope that you can continue to contribute to the wellbeing of our Church on 2026.

Fabric and Finance Team

N.B. If you cannot view the budget on our website, please ask Pamela McGowan for a paper copy

## Debbie

I said I would tell you about the dress rehearsal of the children's Christmas show at Elphinstone I attended. It was magnificent, considering the children were having to practise with some absent pupils due to illness, they all did a marvellous job.



I've been busy sharing the Life of Jesus, His Miracles, Parables and now the Easter Story at Windygoul and will be at Elphinstone again to share the Good News of Easter in the coming weeks both in the primary and the nursery. ABC Nursery on Bridge Street will also be sharing in this Good News. It's always such a privilege to share this with the children.

The weekly Church Club at the primary in Elphinstone is going well, and we regularly get 6-8 children attending the weekly Kids' Clubs.

Prayers for the upcoming holiday club on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March will be most welcome. We are hoping that the families trust us to tell The Good News of Easter to their children.

Looking forward to warmer, drier weather for the Picnic in The Park event at Polson Park on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, do drop in and see what is happening.

It's been a busy term since Christmas and I'm looking forward to what God has in store for Tranent Parish in the summer term.

Blessings,  
Debbie

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## Easter

Can you find these words?  
Angel Betray Bread Calvary  
Cross CrownOfThorns  
Crucifixion Disciple Donkey  
Easter Empty Gethsemane  
Hosanna James Jesus John  
Judas King LastSupper Palm  
Peter Resurrection Risen Silver  
Stone Tomb Wine

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## Looking Forward

The Church of Scotland has asked each congregation to do a new thing. In the past, the work of a congregation was reviewed every five years. The review involved looking backwards at what had been done. Now, congregations are being asked to look forward instead. We are each to develop and shape our own five year plan, to run from 2026 to 2031. We are to work out together what we need to do to support the values which matter to us most. Our remit is to encourage growth of the church and to be a local church for all.

Much work has already been done. Leaders in our congregation have been reflecting on this in recent months and held a special meeting in January. With support from the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders, we decided that the values of Welcome, Community and Inclusion were the ones which we wanted to move forward with. The congregation has been involved too, with a meeting held after a recent service for the exchange of ideas.

The next step is to agree a TPC vision, development aims and actions to support those. You will receive an update in the next Contact and in the meantime, if you have ideas to share, please get in touch with me.

Katherine

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## Games Afternoon

In March our Growing Young team held a Games Afternoon in the Church Hall. It was a lovely, all age event. It started with board games of any type. Snakes and



Ladders was a favourite. Then came refreshments with sausage rolls, pizza and top hats. After that we enjoyed a Tranent Parish Church Generation Game. Teams had three challenges. Firstly, to build a bridge with play dough and spaghetti. Secondly to put together the different coloured Olympic rings with rich tea biscuits, icing, jam and sweeties. Thirdly to identify the tunes from various TV shows over the years. It was interesting to realise that the younger folk

weren't even born when some of the tunes were current. We finished with the Conveyor Belt. Two people from each team had to remember as many items as possible as they sped by on a trolley. It was great fun. Many thanks to the Growing Young team, Diane Marshall, Cheryl Punton and Joan Ramsay and the Catering Team, Anne Andrew, Ann Harris and Wendy Waldie.

Katherine

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## Knit and Natter

The Tranent Parish Church knitting (and crochet) group met for the first time in January and have been getting together each Wednesday from 10am until 12noon in the main Church Hall.



We share conversation and knitting tips over a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit while working on our own projects or joining together to support charity knitting campaigns.



Operation Christmas Stocking (find them on Facebook) provides blankets which are distributed by Crisis at Christmas to homeless people in Edinburgh and our group has been busy creating the 12" squares which make up the blankets.

Another project we're supporting is the Simpson's Special Care Baby Unit, for whom we knit and crochet blankets, jackets and hats to be taken home with babies when they're discharged ([www.sscb.org](http://www.sscb.org)).

If you'd like to support these charities but can't make it to the group on Wednesday mornings, Linda Ingham can let you have a copy of the patterns we use.

Whether you're an experienced knitter or crocheter or would like to learn, come along and you'll be very welcome. We have needles, hooks, and a growing stash of donated yarn!

If you have any questions, please ask Wendy Waldie or Cath Brett.

Linda

# Eco Action Group Update

Every few months, representatives from Tranent Parish Church's Eco Action Group attend a meeting with similar groups connected to East Lothian churches. On Saturday 7 March, we gathered at North Berwick St Andrews Blackadder.

Tranent Parish Church hosted the first of these gatherings a little over a year ago and we've since toured to Musselburgh, Dunbar and Longniddry to move around the county and connect with new congregations.

We opened in prayer and sang a couple of creation-focused worship songs together. We then proceeded to introduce ourselves to new attendees and share what we had all been up to since the last meeting.

Russell and I updated on the success of a small circular clothing offering at this year's Winter Hub and our upcoming community art project in the church hall.

We enjoyed hearing from Our Lady of Loretto's group who are encouraging their congregation to take part in a "carbon fast" during Lent, sending suggested daily activities, lifestyle tweaks and swaps to a WhatsApp group.

The North Berwick attendees also talked us through their various building projects and gave us a tour of their sanctuary.

Fintan Hurley, who kindly coordinates the East Lothian Network, also provided an update on behalf of Eco Congregation Scotland.

The formats of these meetings are evolving and we hope the next one will comprise a mixture of the usual connecting conversations alongside a practical workshop reviewing the resources Eco Congregation Scotland have created for their bronze, silver and gold awards. Tranent Parish Church currently holds a bronze award.



We closed our gathering singing the Doxology, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow...". These meetings truly are a blessing, connecting with like-minded Christians across East Lothian who sense a particular call to care for God's creation, and encourage those in their community to do the same.

Fiona MacFadyen

# WINTER HUB @ TRANENT PARISH CHURCH HALL



This year the Winter Hub entered its 3<sup>rd</sup> season. With an expanded team of volunteers across even more weeks than last year a real sense of community and genuine care has grown. The hub has for many become a staple of the winter months providing a much and increasingly needed space within our community for people to gather, spend social time together and be in a comfortable space.

Highlights this year included a number of new volunteers, all of whom commented on the warmth and joy of the experience. There was a regular increase in the number of attenders, averaging about 15 a week and there were a number of craft projects including knitting and mors bag making and carol singing at Christmas.

Our aim is a simple one, to offer space, lunch and somewhere to be. Once again I think we achieved this in abundance. The users greatly appreciate the time we take, the people who volunteer and the genuine pastoral care we offer to all who join us. Yes, over 300 bowls of soup were served, but we did something so much more, we did it with care, joy and a good laugh in the process.

I want to say an ENORMOUS thank you to all the volunteers, without you this project would not function as well as it does.

Thank you  
Connor



# Marrakech - A Wonderful Trip

It is said that "travel broadens the mind" and I have always believed this to be true. Travel gives us the opportunity to learn about different customs and cultures.

George and I have just returned from Marrakech in Morocco, where we spent a week during Ramadan: It was a fascinating time and a privilege to witness the way religious beliefs and traditions merge into everyday life. Customs and practices which are centuries old still shape the daily routine and lifestyle.



You probably know the main beliefs of Islam - The Six Articles of Faith. Muslims believe in:

1. One all-powerful God called Allah
2. Angels (created by God)
3. Holy Books - especially the Qur'an
4. Prophets - including Abraham, Moses and Jesus
5. A day of Judgement when people will be judged by God
6. God knows and oversees everything (the Divine Decree)

There are also five core practices known as The Five Pillars of Islam:

Declaration of Faith, Prayer, Charity, Fasting and Pilgrimage (to Mecca)

Of course, there are some similarities with Christianity. One main difference is the Adhan, the call to prayer which is announced five times each day by the Muezzin from a mosque.

Our holiday enabled us to share something of the experience of Ramadan with local people. We did not fast ourselves, but we spoke with many people and learned about their customs. For one month, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset eating or drinking nothing at all. Both men and women fast and children begin when they reach puberty. There are very few exceptions - medical reasons, menstruation or breast feeding. Breaking the fast at sunset is called Iftar.

We spoke to hotel staff and those serving us food and asked how it felt to be working while fasting. They all said they were used to it and it was not a problem and we were "not to worry". They very much enjoyed our

interest. There was no sense of complaint or rebellion it was simply part of life. It was fascinating.

We spoke to women about their head coverings. Many women wear the Hijab or the Niqab as an expression of faith and modesty, removing it only and only when with a mahram - a close male relative whom they cannot marry.

We visited the souks and medinas and a special place called Madrasa Ben Youssef. This architectural masterpiece, built around 1564, has been beautifully restored. It was once an important centre of learning for Muslim scholars. There we also learned about the eight doors to Paradise (Jannah) - a fascinating idea describing the different ways people may enter paradise.



The main mosque in Marrakech is the Koutoubia Mosque, a symbol of Morocco's rich Islamic heritage with its impressive 77metre high minaret. We happened to be there (outside the mosque) during Friday Prayers. It was truly remarkable to see the large square gradually fill with men dressed in everything from suits and work clothes to the traditional djellaba. Hundreds entered the mosque while many others prayed outside on the rolled-out carpets. Shoes were removed, prayer mats placed on the ground, and the words of the Imam were relayed over loudspeakers. The devotion and dedication were both moving and very visible. What a privilege it was to witness.

We also travelled up into the Atlas Mountains, where we learned much about the Berber and Bedouin people. The poverty in Morocco is clear to see, yet we were told that rich and poor live side by side and it is haram (sinful or forbidden) to boast about possessions.

Marrakech will remain forever in our hearts. It truly broadened our minds.

Val Henry



# Your Contacts

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Your elder \_\_\_\_\_



Tranent Parish Church  
Church of Scotland  
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