



St Michael's  
Linlithgow

# **Welcome to St Michael's Newsletter!**



## **WHAT'S IN OUR November EDITION?**

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- **Sunday Service and Chat**



**Rev Dr Liam Fraser**

## **A message from your minister**

Dear friends

More than any other year I've known, this has been a year of waiting.

Waiting for lockdown to end, waiting to hear what restrictions the First and Prime Ministers will introduce, and now waiting for a vaccine.

That is why this coming Advent may be the most relevant for decades. Advent reminds us that good doesn't always come instantly. Instead, we must persevere, 'wait it out' until we are redeemed.

The hope of Advent, seen in the birth of Christ, is that we have good reason to wait, and to wait with hope. For God takes our waiting, and frustration, and suffering and redeems it. He steps into it, just as he stepped into the world at Christmas, and redeems it from within.

Furthermore, we do not wait alone but with our brothers and sisters. This is the great blessing of the Church, that - for all our faults - we are truly in this together, and can help each other to persevere until better times come.

You will find many opportunities to help, and be helped, in the newsletter below, from donating to West Lothian Foodbank to joining us in our virtual Linlithgow Advent each day.

More than any other year I've known, this has been a year of waiting. Yet morning is coming, and the first rays of light are breaking even now.



This year, we're unable to gather together in the way we normally would for community events, services, and nights out, and Christmas might feel a little 'flat'.

To try and recapture some of the magic of Christmas, from the 1st December, the Minister will be offering a daily virtual Advent calendar featuring well-known sights from across

Linlithgow. Each day will feature a new location and a short reflection, weaving these familiar places we know so well into the Christmas story.

Like or follow our Facebook and YouTube pages to join us on our Advent journey!

# WINTER APPEAL



West Lothian Foodbank are acquiring new clients each week, and desperately need food to cover the busy Christmas period.



**Alison Murray**

Thank you again for the amazing response to our October appeal!

We are having another collection on Sunday 29 November, at the Cross House car park between 2 and 4 pm.

If you can help, we would particularly welcome these items to help with Christmas parcels:

- Bars of soap
- Deodorant for women
- Sponge puddings (non-alcoholic)
- Tinned fish
- Savoury biscuits (oatcakes, crackers).



**Ivan Coyle**

## **Keep us communicating!**

Since Lockdown in March, our on-line presence has played a crucial role in maintaining contact and having fellowship with our friends in the Church.

Thanks to Liam and Stephen Marshall, we were on-line immediately when the Church building was closed. We soon moved onto producing and editing our weekly acts of worship.

Now, with the partial opening of the Church and the streaming of a limited amount of worship, we need to increase the number of people able to help facilitate this.

There are various ways you could help, from operating the PA or camera system to preparing graphics on a laptop. If you feel you have the time and interest and would like to join us, contact me on 0771 218 7742 or [ivancoyle53@gmail.com](mailto:ivancoyle53@gmail.com). Training will be offered.

I look forward to hearing from you!



**Alison Miller**

### **Walk and Talk**

- What?** A chance to pair up (no more than 6 people together, from 2 households) and chat while you get some exercise.
- Who?** Open to anyone.
- Why?** It's good for body, mind and spirit!
- Where?** In and around Linlithgow.
- When?** Various meeting times can be arranged to suit those interested.
- How?** Email [connect@stmichaels-parish.org.uk](mailto:connect@stmichaels-parish.org.uk) or Phone 01506 844 992



**Margaret Johnston**

### **Light in the Darkness**

Over the last 3 years, our Festival of Christmas Trees has come to mark the start of the Christmas season for many in Linlithgow. We were delighted to be able to bring more of the community into the church, including people for whom this was their only contact with St Michael's.

This year, the Fellowship team and Trish Archibald have come up with a new way to reach out to the community during this very different Christmas period. The windows at the front of Cross House will be decorated with lit-up nativity scenes, while a Christmas tree will shine in the Adam Room bay window.

Both will be up for the whole month of December, giving plenty of time for people safely to enjoy the display in this prime location. We hope this will still bring some Christmas festivity and cheer to the people of Linlithgow.





**Tom Costley**

## **Cross House Volunteers**

Many, many thanks to all who responded to my urgent request for volunteers to act as duty managers at Cross House as it opened up again for use by a variety of local organisations. Volunteers' contact details have now been included on the rota which is managed by Willie Irvine.

Thanks also to those who got in touch to explain why they could not volunteer at this time but who wanted to express their support for the efforts being made to provide this service.

Unfortunately, the introduction of the Level 4 restrictions at the end of the first week of opening has meant that Cross House has had to be closed again. We now hope to be able to re-open Cross House in January.

# **COMMUNITY NEWS**

## **Prayers for Malawi and Nepal**

Throughout Advent, EMMS International are organising weekly prayers for health and hope on Zoom. These will take place each Monday, starting from 30<sup>th</sup> November, from 9:30-10am. On 14<sup>th</sup> December the prayers will be led by Dr Arie Glas of Mulanje Mission Hospital in Malawi.

You can find further details and sign up at <https://www.emms.org/advent>.

## **Advent Calendar**

The Church of Scotland Advent Calendar for 2020 will be available online. Fittingly, the theme this year is 'Strength for Today, Bright Hope for Tomorrow', from the hymn Great Is Thy Faithfulness. While there won't be any chocolate (unless you provide it yourself!), it promises to be an excellent companion through Advent. You can sign up for email reminders at <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/advent>.



80 people in 14 teams took part in the Tearfund Big Quiz last night. Local participants were joined on Zoom by others from Jersey, Denmark, Germany and the USA. We raised £2040 for Tearfund. Well done everyone, and THANK YOU!



Thanks to all who donated to this year's Blythwood Care Shoebox appeal. In spite of the various issues we managed to collect around 2800 shoeboxes. The real issue Blythwood now have is sorting the boxes! Ours will probably be taken to Dingwall (in Tier 1) where they can maintain social distance while sorting. Then it's off to East Europe before Brexit adds more complexity! Hopefully 2021 will be simpler.

# Sunday Service and Chat



Our Sunday services continue on Facebook at 11am <https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelsparishlinlithgow/> and on YouTube from just after 11, available at <https://www.youtube.com/c/StMichaelsLinlithgow>.

Please join us afterwards for coffee and chat on Zoom!

The meeting ID: 550 085 9322

Password: kirkcoffee.

You'll be able to link direct from:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5500859322?pwd=U0lvbDFnUXdlY01lak0vNmVidjZkQT09>

The Zoom logo, consisting of the word "zoom" in a bold, blue, lowercase, sans-serif font.

**Remember that the service is also available by phone.  
Just dial 01506 306 036 and the audio recording of the service  
starts immediately.**



## Holy Communion

**Sunday 6 December at 11.45am**

Communion will take place at 11.45am with Rev Dr Liam Fraser and will be live-streamed on the church website. Have bread and wine or grape juice ready

Subject to Covid-19 restrictions, two in-church services are planned for December:

- Service + time of prayer on 13 December
- Watch-night service on 24 December at 11:30pm

### One for the diary:

Watch out in the December newsletter for details of our live-streamed or broadcast Christmas services – Lessons and Carols, Christingle and Christmas Day.

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