

# Tranent Parish Church

# Contact



Welcome to Tranent Parish  
Church

Photo: Laurie Brett

## Summer 2016

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

# Church Services

## **In Tranent Parish Church**

Sunday Morning Service is in the Church at 11 am. Children are welcome to join in at the beginning of the service before leaving for their own activities in the J-Club. However, on the second Sunday of each month there is an all-age services which is very interactive to encourage children to stay in for the whole hour, and the minister uses British Sign Language as well as English to make the services accessible to deaf people and sign language users.

Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday in February, May and September and the first Sunday of Advent.

## **In Elphinstone**

The children's Church Club meets at lunchtime every Wednesday during term time in the school.

## **In Windygoul PS**

The 'Awesome' Church Club meets every Thursday lunchtime during term time.

## **Messy Church**

There is a 'Messy Church' on the last Sunday of the month from 4.30pm to 6pm in the Church Hall during term time. It's open to all ages and includes crafts, songs, games, food and celebration for children and adults together.

## **In Tranent Care Home**

Off Coal Neuk at 2:30 pm on the third Sunday of February, April, June, August, October, and December.

## **In Crookston Care Home & Day Centre**

Sanderson's Wynd. Services usually take place on the first Sunday of the month at 6.30 pm. Check the website for dates.

## In Loch Square Complex

In the ground floor lounge at 2.30 pm on the third Thursdays of May and November. Other Tranent churches take services in other months.

**Communion** is celebrated twice per year at each of the Care Homes. The next dates are: Crookston on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October at 6.30 pm; Tranent Care Home on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October at 2.30 pm; and Loch Square on Thurs 17<sup>th</sup> November at 2.30 pm.

## Prayer Group

There is a prayer group meeting at 7 Edinburgh Road, Tranent, (Edith Roberts' house) at 8.00 am every Saturday

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### From the Editors

Special thanks to Connor for his article describing his experience at the General Assembly. Contributions for the Autumn edition should be with us by Tuesday 6th September.

Robin and Sheila

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## Facebook

Have you visited our Facebook page recently?

You might be surprised!



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

## From our Minister



Dear Friends,

I write this at the end of a week which has seen a horrific mass shooting in Orlando and now the shocking death of Jo Cox, a well-liked, rising star in the political world and a beloved wife and mother of two children. Jo would have turned 42 next week but her life has been cut short by a gunman who appears to have been motivated by hatred. When tragedies like these happen, the terrible grief of family and friends ripples out into the wider community and right across our world.

It's hard to know how to respond, beyond mourning the loss of decent, caring human beings. Perhaps we can respond by acting on the words of Jo Cox's husband, Brendan, who stated that his wife would have wanted us all to "unite to fight against the hatred that killed her".

As Christians, surely we can't do anything else but join in that struggle? The greatest commandment after loving God, Jesus said, is to love our neighbour as ourselves.

This summer, let us see every encounter, whether with a stranger or someone we find difficult, as a chance to put love into action. Let us pray for people who spout hatred and pray for ourselves, that our words and actions will bring unity and not division. Let us make that our 'summer mission'.

God bless,  
Erica.

# General Assembly 2016 - Youth Representative

I could write for hours on this year's Assembly. In fact my Presbytery report is over 3000 words long and I've only got half way through the Tuesday. So I will try my level best to give you the abridged version.

In numbers my week contained 8 days of hard work, 79 items on the agenda, 9 preparation sessions, about a thousand handshakes, 16 facebook posts and everything else I've forgotten about. It was quite a busy week!

For me it started on the Friday, after work I went to our hotel for the week where I met up with friends and got settled in. Our suitcases had barely hit the floor when we had to be in the conference room for our first prep session and then it was off to the assembly hall for orientation and a tour of the building. This was great as I had never been in the assembly hall before and it certainly made it all seem very real and very, very important. Then it was back to the hotel for another session to prepare for the following day then a quick dash to the chippie and back for a facebook post and bed. My brain was in total meltdown having been flooded with



information, but I was excited and raring to go.

Saturday came and we all had to be up, dressed in our finery, fed, watered, had morning worship and in the assembly hall by 9 in the morning. I've never run up the Royal Mile more than I did in this week. Anyway, it started with the opening which was a great insight into the formality and importance of the General Assembly, from the trooping in of the council representatives (Jim Gillies was there to represent East Lothian) to the presentation of the Queen's letter to the church and the fantastic display of importance in the election of the new moderator Russell. After the opening we moved onto the business of the day. Firstly the assembly arrangements committee report. Then on to the return of Overtures which had a fierce debate and was much reported in the news that day. It was passed by a majority. After lunch we

received the reports from the legal questions committee and the council of assembly. Both having much debate and amendments added and subtracted and motions amended time and time again these report were passed and business ended at six that evening to return at seven for the report from the retiring moderator. Then back to the hotel for half eight for a two and a half hour prep session for the next day.

Sunday's service at St Giles was fantastic. To see all those people congregated for one purpose was sensational, even if the youth reps were stuck behind a pillar and could only see the moderator's granddaughter playing on the marble floor. Then it was on to Heart and Soul a fantastic event where hundreds join together to view the work of the church at large and I encourage you all to attend at some point, it really is fantastic. Heart and Soul finished at six and a quick dart to the hotel for our session and then a very late dinner - I'm not going to lie we have probably kept people employed for some time at the local chip shop.

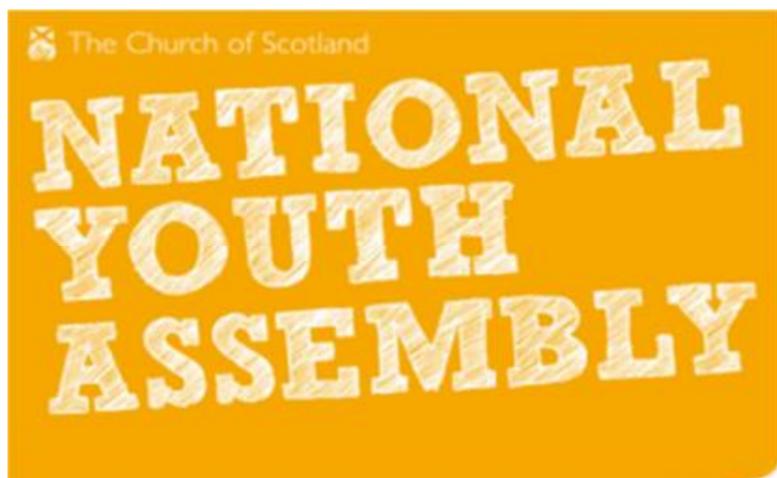
Monday. After the youth reps had had their morning session, the day at the assembly hall started with communion which was certainly a very different experience when



there are 600 people to serve however it was an excellent learning opportunity. Then it was swiftly on to the business of the day. The social care council highlighted the fantastic work of Crossreach and it was very interesting to hear how they intend to deal with their issues in light of further financial constraints. Then on to the panel for review and reform which brought some lively debate and then onto one of the many additional events we were to attend: the book launch for "Invisible Church," a fantastic insight into churchless Christians and how we can support them.

Tuesday arrived. With the hotly debated report from the Church and Society council at the top of the bill we debated, justifiable abuse of children, disinvesting church money from fossil fuels, and at this point I addressed the assembly with regards to lack of adult education outwith the traditional institutions and though I didn't get the answer I was looking for it was a fantastic

learning experience and finally we then discussed the church's stance on the upcoming EU referendum which was very controversial and it didn't seem that the committee were expecting such a response. The final report of the day was that of the Guild. Youth reps love the Guild and we had an absolutely amazing time getting up to support the work of the Guild and continued work with the Youth Assembly.



Wednesday. My favourite day of the whole assembly for one reason: The Columba declaration. Now if it was up to me I would have the Pope, the Moderator and the Archbishop of Canterbury locked in a room until they came out in agreement. Possibly a good thing I don't have that much power. Yet. So the Columba declaration is an agreement now ratified by both bodies between the Church of Scotland and the Church of England. Mainly to officially recognize each other's churches as churches but to also set up diplomatic relations for the

future between our two churches. This agreement is already producing benefits as the National Youth Assembly is looking to create links with the Church of England's Youth Council. A fantastic achievement for the Ecumenical relations committee and a credit to the church. Also to be present at the first time an Archbishop of Canterbury addressed a General Assembly was a wonderful experience.

Thursday. In terms of exhaustion the end was nigh but in terms of the rush of the event I was still very much enjoying my time and getting as involved as possible. And another fantastic day was ahead. Firstly the reports from HM Forces and the Youth Assembly where we asked the business committee to move us up the agenda as by this point in the week many of the delegates had left and we felt it important that everybody hears the views of its younger assembly. Due to the 2½ hour debate of a previous section 21 that had required further discussion we had to leave before the discussions of the theological forum which I was very disappointed to miss. However there's always next year. We had to dart back to our hotel and with only twenty minutes to get showered and dressed we were to



be at the story telling centre for our reception with the moderator and his wife and chaplains. This is an event just for the youth representatives where we got to talk to the moderator and his team and relax. It was brilliant to be able to talk to him and I had known that this year he is to visit Lothian presbytery so I told him to pop in on his way past. Then it was a rush to the Palace of Holyrood House for the beating of the retreat and the Lord High Commissioner's reception. Though it was absolutely pouring with rain we had a grand time and then played the best game ever - Dignitary Bingo. The aim of the game was to gain points by speaking to as many former moderators, foreign dignitaries, the lord and several others and you got points. As I'm sure you know I can talk for Scotland but I only managed to get second place. And alas as it does every week, Friday came. Though I was

mentally and physically exhausted having only got to my bed one night before midnight and I would like to say it wasn't because we were partying or relinquishing our duties. We were up discussing the day, praying and joining forces for arguments, amendments and comments. I was saddened that it was over though we were told to remember that we do hold our posts for the year. Friday morning was the remainder of the reports. By 2pm all 26 reports had been heard and debated and passed and it was time for the closing. It started with the anent of deceased ministers, missionaries and deacons; a very emotional affair but a great sign of respect. After the appointment of committees for next year's assembly we had the address from Lord Hope and then the National Anthem which I think showed further respect between the church and the state. The official end of the Assembly was followed by the most enjoyable ceremonial part; a thing called the Clapping which I had never heard of



before. Everybody stands in the gothic entrance arena of New College and the moderator, former moderators and the main assembly players trooped down the stairs to the rapturous applause of those delegates waiting. And then the moderator and his wife did a dance on the way back.

Faith can be a fickle thing. For many (and at several points myself) it can come and go and for others it is a constant companion through life. This is all part of our journey with Christ. My journey however, up until two years ago has been almost entirely within the walls of Tranent Parish Church where I started attending when I was 10 years old. This however will now no longer be the case. As the General Assembly of 2016 is most definitely the latest stone to be added to this path and thus far the most enjoyable. I've never concentrated so much and laughed so much at the same event. I've never experienced something that I know was history in the making. And to learn of the inner workings of our great Church of Scotland has been one of the most eye opening

experiences of my life. I've made friends I shall keep for life and I have experienced the greatest communion I have ever attended (not the assembly one but the youth representatives one). This has truly been an experience.

In closing I would like extend my warmest thanks to you all for having faith in me and electing me your youth representative and I hope that the opportunity may arise in the future. A note of special thanks to Erica for her support and advice throughout this process and whom I am sure will be glad to see a few less emails from me in her inbox and also to Bill for advising me what were the best reports to read first, and to our facebook followers for all their kind comments and likes. But above all to my three adopted grannies and guardian angels whom I will not embarrass because that wouldn't be fair but they know who they are, as do most of you. Thanks for having faith in me.

Thank You Once Again

Connor MacFadyen  
Lothian Presbytery Youth  
Representative.

## Our New Constitution

After the summer break, we plan to begin operating under a new constitution. This is subject to the approval of Lothian Presbytery at their meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016, but we fully expect to be given approval, since both the Kirk Session and the congregation of Tranent Parish Church have voted to adopt the Unitary Constitution. This is the way most churches are moving: more churches now operate under the Unitary form of constitution than under the Model form. Statistics show that during 2015, 58 congregations adopted the Unitary Constitution compared to 45 in 2014. Also, the 2016 General Assembly decided that from 2017, the Unitary Constitution should be the only form which congregations seeking to change constitution should be entitled to adopt.

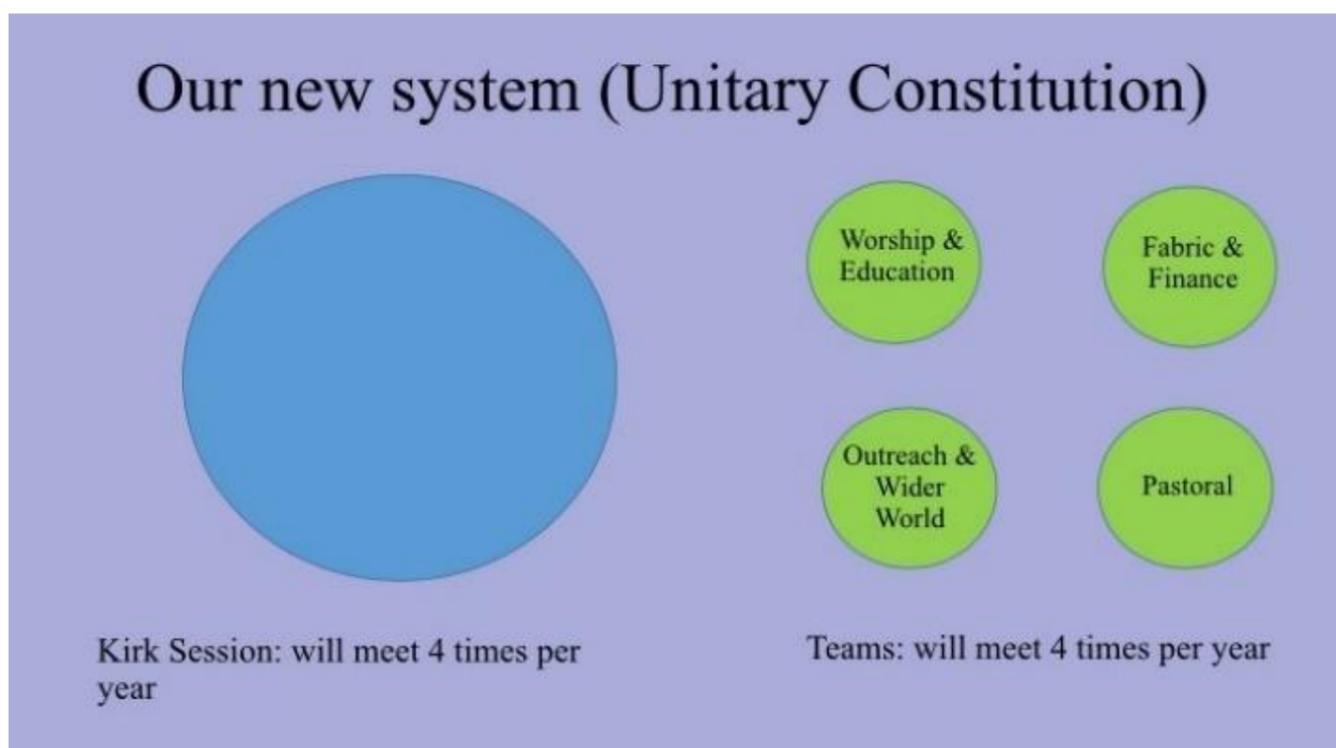
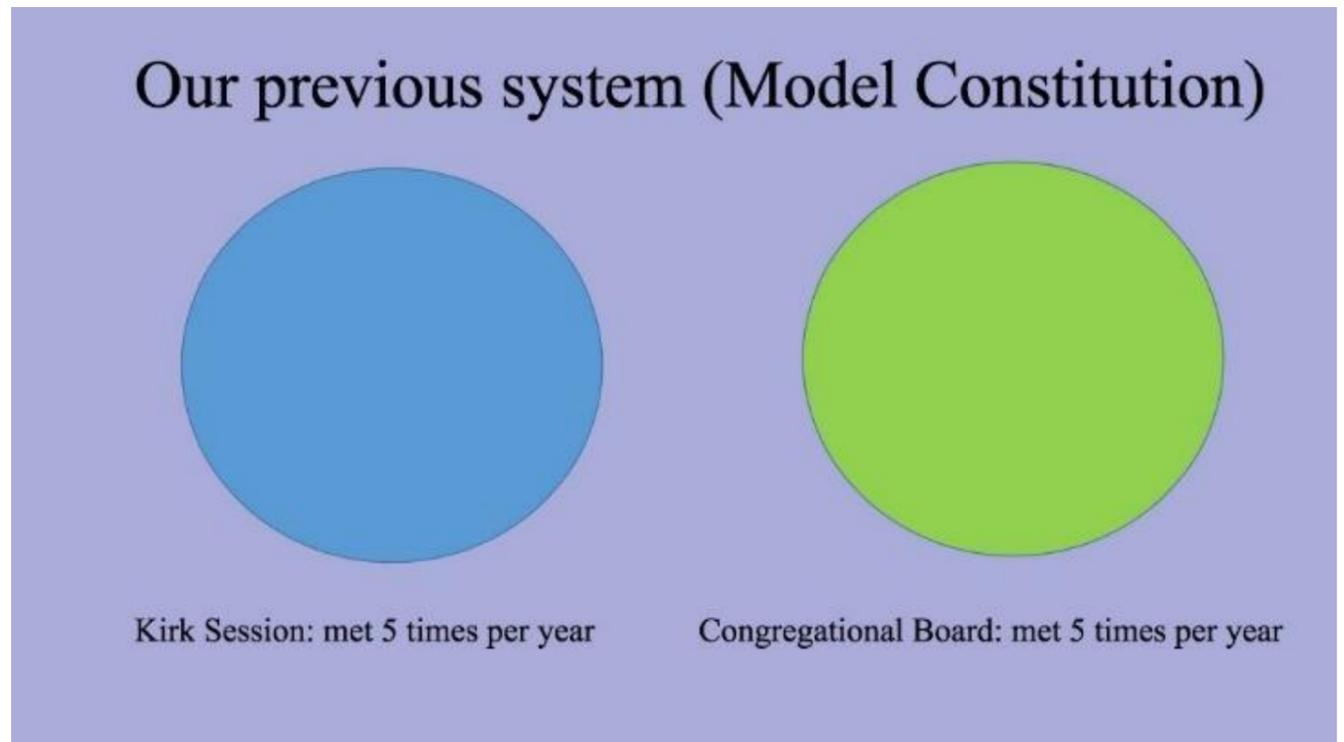
Below are some of the reasons for changing to the Unitary Constitution:

- ✓ More streamlined.
- ✓ We are 'moving with the times': General Assembly & Presbytery work this way; more and more churches are adopting this; and team structures are common in workplaces now.
- ✓ Everyone will spend less time overall in meetings.
- ✓ Less duplication of discussions.
- ✓ Easier to enlist skills & talents of congregation.
- ✓ Offers opportunities to 'grow' new elders.
- ✓ Way of developing leadership skills e.g. as Convenors / sub-team leaders.
- ✓ Empowers more people (each team is authorised to 'get on with the job' & they will have a small budget).
- ✓ Team members can focus on their primary interests and skills.

Any necessary detailed discussions happen at team meetings so Session meetings are shorter.

[N.B. Kirk Session still has final say.]

Here are 2 diagrams which show the difference between the old and new constitutions:



So after the summer break, we will have Team Meetings in August, October, February and May. The 4 teams (Worship & Education, Fabric & Finance, Outreach

& Wider World, Pastoral) will be made up of a mixture of Elders and previous Congregational Board members. Each team has a remit which will guide them in their discussions and after each team meeting, the Convenor will send a written minute/report to the Session Clerk, detailing what was discussed and listing proposals for the Kirk Session to consider. Teams can make minor decisions within the boundaries of their remit but the final decisions still lie with the Kirk Session, as was the case under Model Constitution.

This is an exciting new way forward for us which offers more opportunities for members of the congregation to get involved: teams can tap into everyone's expertise, so watch this space!

# Tranent Parish Church Guild



After a busy session we finished in April for a summer holiday, but there is usually something we can get involved with in the break till we start again in October.

This is true, we had a Big Bake for Tear Fund on Saturday 4th June involving members of the church as well. There were ovens going on all over the Parish, biscuits getting bashed and mixed with all types of sweet things to make tray bakes, fairy cakes appearing scattered with magic dust, scones, pancakes and tea loaves and it was very well supported. We had to vie with a school market at the same time, but in the end we were very successful and will be able to send £565.55 to Tear Fund.

One of our ladies, Wendy, made a lovely cake for us which was greatly admired by all who saw it.



On the 31st May we, went our annual trip. This year we went to Gretna via Moffat and had tea just outside Pathhead on our way back. The weather was gorgeous and very warm and being typically British we had a moan about that. This did not detract



from the lovely scenery that we drove through and were able to admire it in its lovely fresh colours. In the picture is our happy band .We were joined by a couple on holiday from Alberta, Canada and their relatives who stayed locally.

We will be very glad to welcome you to our new session in October so please come and join us.

Kathleen Gilmer, President, Tranent Guild.

# J-CLUB NEWS AND VIEWS

Hello folks. Hope you are enjoying you summer. We are on holiday. The J-Club recently ended with a gift-giving event for the children who played a big part in the Club over the past session. In that spirit I have drawn up my own award list. They are virtual awards. That's just a posh way of saying you don't actually get anything.



**Best Newcomer.** The whole team gets this one; the bulk of the team have come on board in the past 2 - 3 years or so. The few veterans left can share it too as every Sunday is a different experience. No matter how many years anyone has put in we are still novices.

**Best Supporting Act.** This goes jointly to Erica and Debbie. The Mission Control to our "Buzz Lightyear". No astronaut just hops in a rocket and lights the blue touch paper; they need the crew at Houston.

**Unsung Heroines.** This goes to the photocopying squad: Melanie and Diane. Preparation is 90% of success and having the resource materials to hand when we arrive to set up each Sunday makes the day go by so much easier.

**The Thanks For Your Service Award.** Kathleen Gilmer and Marion Livingstone both found themselves unable to continue after years of excellent work. Their contribution is very much appreciated. They have our gratitude.

**Most Original Prop.** The winner is a Peppa Pig stethoscope; used to illustrate the story of the Centurion's servant. This was accompanied by a 100% genuine, NHS issue, actual stethoscope (we have our sources).

**Most Novel Venture.** This goes to the J-Club's nod towards promoting healthy-eating by having a healthy snack instead of juice and biscuits from time to time. The results were mixed. The fresh fruit was mostly eaten, the carrot sticks not so much.

**The "Contact" Readers' Award for the Most Damage Done to The English Language.** Thanks.....you're too kind.

**Finally, the We Couldn't Do It Without You Award.** This goes to all of you for your encouragement and support.

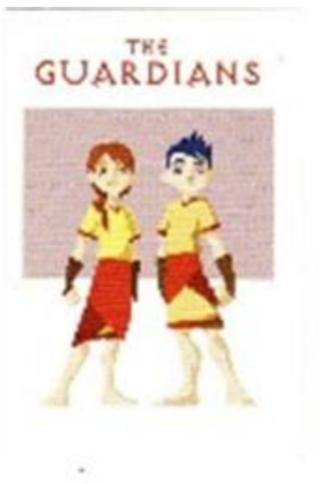
Your humble scribe for the J-Club team

## News from Messy Church

We have been having fun talking about Pentecost and Jesus calling his disciples. The families have made some great crafts, and we've welcomed some new families to our Tranent Messy Church. As this goes out we are hoping that Elphinstone Messy, which starts again, after a wee break, is as equally exciting and fun! We'll keep you posted!



## Tranent Holiday Club - Guardians of Ancorra



The team have already had one meeting in readiness for the madness and chaos and absolute blessing that is holiday club. This year looks like it may be a smaller club, due to leaders' other commitments, so please do give this prayerful consideration to see if God is calling you to help. We often need folk to help set up, take the club down and provide traybakes! Could this be you?

## School Lunch Time Clubs

Both Windygoul and Elphinstone lunch clubs are well attended with ages from 5 to 11. We will be saying goodbye to our P7s as they move on to Ross High after the summer, but look forward to welcoming new P1s at Elphinstone and P3s at Windygoul. In both schools we have been continuing with the Old Testament; the stories of Daniel, Jonah and Esther to name a few. After the summer we will be moving on to the New Testament with the stories of Jesus.

Debbie Middlemass  
Family & Youth Development Worker

## Community Organisations



### 1<sup>st</sup> Tranent Scout Group

We finish the term with our annual family barbeque at Vogrie bringing the whole Scout Group - Beavers, Cubs and Scouts - together.



We have had another busy term with a special birthday as beavers celebrate being 30 this year. We held a pool party at the Loch Centre for Beavers and they all brought a guest adult for the party. Both adults and Beavers alike had a great time.

We also had a brilliant night at Polson Park with treasure hunts, games and even some litter picking! We do enjoy using our local amenities and also enjoy cleaning them up to help as we managed 4 bags of litter from the park!

Beavers took part in the Gala parade along with the Cubs and Scouts and also had a "Net a Duck" stall to try and raise more funds for outings and sleepovers.

Elaine Thomson  
Beaver Leader



This term has seen our Cubs 100th Birthday celebrations kick off with a fantastic but rather Baltic camp in April at Meggernie National Scout Activity Centre by Aberfeldy, (it snowed whilst we were pitching the tents!) leading up to a promise renewal party in December. We have focused on tying up (partly literally - all the cubs have mastered the reef knot and clove hitch) bits and bobs of badges that our older cubs needed to complete to achieve their Silver Awards. All have sewn on a badge, taken part in team building activities, learnt about different faiths, taken part in a Pack Forum to agree behaviour rules at meetings and built a fantastic shelter that they all could fit in at Butterdean Woods.

Julie and Connor  
Cub Leaders



# Your Contacts

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Treasurer Mrs Kathleen Gilmer

Roll Keeper Dr Linda Ingham

Deputy Session Clerk Mr John Greig

Freewill Offering and Gift Aid Convener Dr Linda Ingham

Beadle Position Vacant - Interested?

Organist Mrs Doreen Mack

Family & Youth Development Worker

Debbie Middlemass

Editors of Contact Robin and Sheila Strain

For contact details see the [Contacts page of the website](#)

Your elder	_____
	

Tranent Parish Church  
Church of Scotland

Scottish Charity Number SCO17423