

# Tranent Parish Church

# Contact



Welcome to Tranent Parish Church

Photo: Laurie Brett

## Winter 2016

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

# 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 service 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 service accessible to deaf people and sign language users.

Holy Communion will be celebrated on the 5<sup>th</sup> March, 4<sup>th</sup> June, 3<sup>rd</sup> September and 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2017.

## **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.

## **In Loch Square Complex**

In the ground floor lounge at 2.30 pm on the third Thursday of May and first Thursday in December.

**Communion** is celebrated twice per year at each of the Care Homes. The next dates are: Crookston on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May at 6.30 pm; Tranent Care Home on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June at 2.30 pm; and Loch Square on Thurs 7<sup>th</sup> May 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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## **Christmas Services**

**Sunday 18 Dec, 11am:** Nativity Service. Our J-Club children will be guiding us through the Christmas story, interspersed with carols.

**Saturday 24 Dec, 7pm:** Christmas Eve service with Tranent Churches Together. Clark Community Choir will be singing. All ages welcome.

**Sunday 25 Dec, 11am:** Christmas Day service - bring a toy/gift for "show and tell"!

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### **From the Editors**

Contributions for the Spring edition should be with us by Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March.

Robin and Sheila

## From our Minister



Dear Friends,

The big question on everybody's lips at this point in the year always seems to be "Are you organised for Christmas?" Even the question stresses me out! As someone still quite new to ministry, the run-up to Christmas in a big parish like Tranent & Elphinstone seems overwhelming (though very enjoyable too!). I'm thankful that I have a husband who likes shopping, is very good at choosing gifts for people and makes a mean Christmas dinner, so he makes sure that everything is on track in terms of our family preparations, while I climb the steep learning curve of ministry!

With all of the frantic running around, it's easy to lose sight of why we celebrate Christmas in the first place. There's a really good song by Ian White, a Scottish Christian songwriter, that reminds us what it's all about. We'll be singing it in church on Christmas Day but here's a preview of some of the words:

Everyone's out shopping late every night,  
For candles and presents and Christmas tree lights.  
This is the Christmas that everyone sees,  
But Christmas means more to me.  
It's somebody's birthday, I won't forget  
As I open the things that I get.  
I'll remember the inn and the stable so bare,  
And Jesus who once lay there.



Let's not forget why we celebrate this season in the first place: God loves each one of us so much that he sent Jesus to earth to show us personally how much we mean to Him.

May you feel His love this Christmas,  
Blessings for 2017,  
Erica.

## Communion At Tranent Parish Church: It's For Everyone!



"This is the Lord's table: it is open to *all* who love Jesus." You will hear those, or similar, words spoken at services of Communion in many churches now, and Tranent Parish Church is one of them. This is the great invitation that is offered to *everyone*. Isn't it a relief

to know that you don't need to be perfect or pious or even on the membership roll of the church to participate in Communion? You just have to want to be in the company of Jesus, like those first disciples who shared the Last Supper with their Lord in the upper room in Jerusalem about 2,000 years ago.

The Communion tokens from two centuries ago which were on display at our Open Day in April were an interesting piece of history. They were also a reminder of the times when the Elders of the Kirk Session could - and did! - decide who would be given a token and was thus allowed to take part... and who was excluded.



That was *then*... this is now: thankfully, no one needs any cards, tokens or pieces of paper. If you have some understanding of the significance of what you are about to participate in, and you have in your heart a desire to accept Jesus, then you have a place at the table.

In Tranent Parish Church, we now celebrate Communion as a family, all ages together. The children have been taught in church, in J-Club, and at Messy Church what Holy Communion is about and they participate with a sense of excitement and respect.

It's not the sombre occasion that it used to be in times gone by (and maybe still is in some churches!). We don't all wear black, nobody processes up the aisle, rather, it's a celebration of what Christ has done for us! There's joyful singing and bright colours and laughter...as well as some quiet moments for reflection as we remember Jesus and the many believers who are now part of that great Communion of Saints. It's such a special experience to share the bread and wine, knowing that in some deep way we share it with Christ Himself, with those who have gone before us into Heaven and with our brothers & sisters all over the world who are taking Communion at the same moment. Amazing!

So if you've thought about coming to a Communion service but are hesitant, for whatever reason, please put your doubts aside and join us.

Here are the words our Minister, Erica, said at the recent Advent Communion: *"This is the table, not of the church, but of the Lord. It is for those who love Him and who want to love Him more. So come, you who have much faith and you who have little; you who have been here often and you who haven't been for a long time; you who have tried to follow Him and you who have failed. Come, not because it is I who invite you; It is our Lord who invites you. It is His will that those who want to be his friends should meet Him here."*

**Will you come and meet Him? Our next Communion services will be on the following Sundays at 11am: 5th March, 4th June, 3rd September and 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2017.**

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## **Tranent Parish Church has a new Session Clerk!**

At our Kirk Session meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> November, Mr John Greig took the oath to become our new Session Clerk.

We paid tribute to our outgoing Session Clerk, Mrs Wilma Hannah, at that meeting and again, with the whole congregation, during the Communion service on 27<sup>th</sup> November. Wilma has given us many years of faithful and diligent service: the tasks she took on went way beyond what is usually expected of a Session Clerk and she was an invaluable help during the time of vacancy and in assisting Erica during her first two years as Minister.



Thankfully, Wilma is staying on as an elder and will continue with some of the extra jobs she did, such as buying baptism cards and gifts and organising bread and wine for Communion. We offer Wilma our heartfelt thanks for all that she has done and wish her every blessing as she enjoys this new stage in her life and a new home with Bob. To John we offer our thanks also, for being willing to step up and accept this vital role.



Let's keep both John and Wilma in our prayers as they move forward.

# Tranent Parish Church Guild



Our new session has got off to a good start with both old and new members joining us for our meetings.

The Ladies from Gideon's International came and shared stories and talked to us about what they do and also gave everyone present a New Testament .

We also had Margaret Tooth from Blythswood talking about her work and she took all the shoe boxes that had been donated by members of the congregation back to their head office. There were over sixty in all, a great effort from everyone.

With a change of tempo for our Guild Week afternoon we had the Reverend Robin Hill and Bill Wishart come and entertain our members and visitors. The theme was centred around Advent and had a programme of songs and readings. It was really appropriate for time of year for this and was enjoyed by all.

Our celebration of Guild Week was continued in our Dedication Service for the Guild at Church on the following Sunday. Reverend Wishart started off with a talk about Joy, and Guild members then led the rest of the service. Long service certificates were presented to one member who had been over twenty years in the Guild, two who had over twenty five years, one over thirty years and there were seven who had over fifty years service.

Of the seven, three were unable to be presented with their certificate as one unfortunately was unable to come to the service, one had moved away and another had passed away recently.

Comments afterwards said that it was a relaxed and warm service. It was good that we were able to recognise the work that members had done and indeed are still doing in furthering the work of the Guild nationally and working on the Projects for the coming three years, showing that we are actively serving "Whose we are and Whom we Serve."

Kathleen Gilmer, President, Tranent Guild.

## J-CLUB NEWS AND VIEWS

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. Yes, as you read this the day is getting closer, less than 2 weeks now. When you are the age of our J-Clubbers that feels like an eon and although adults realise that Advent is season of waiting, sometimes they too feel time is dragging.

Well this article is a bit like that. We will get to the festive subject eventually but first other news. In the Autumn issue it was announced the J-Club was about to add another leader to the team but you were left dangling as we had to wait until it was official before giving details.

In the words of Call Centres up and down the country, "Thank you for waiting", not that you had any choice. We can now reveal we have not one but two new leaders. Yes, like buses, you wait for ages and two come along at once. Diane Marshall offered her services, joined the team in September and has already got seriously involved. Then, just recently, Elise Brown who was already a helper, agreed to make the transition to be a leader as well. This takes us up to four, the most we have had at a single time. Both are highly experienced in working with children and we are delighted to welcome their participation. The J-Club also thanks Charles Spencer for his contribution over the past few years. He has stood down so he can concentrate on his new role as Church Treasurer, a very demanding task. He will still be in demand for his popular turns during "sharing together". We suspect he will still be our "go to" man for playing any imposing bearded characters. Let's face it, the O.T. is full of them.

Charles' last service to the J-Club, in collaboration with his daughter Hannah, was to find for us a Nativity Play which is both original and suitable to our purposes. This timeless and familiar story has been told from the point of view of most of the characters at one time or another as dramatists seek a fresh angle. Even the donkey has had his chance, the cartoon narrative we used at the recent Holiday Club had the story of Abib from Nazareth's down-town animal dealership feature. Guess who bought him.

This year it will be the star's chance to shine as we tell the story of "The Star Who Couldn't Twinkle". Why it lost its sparkle and what then happened to get it back in to the light you will see on the 18th December at the morning service. (Hint, it has something to do with events in Bethlehem.)

The kids are always stars but in 2106 there will be lots of actual astronomical type stars in our play. Importantly we have proper ones this year. No repeat of 2015 with one of the (alleged) grown-ups trudging round wearing star-headgear several sizes too small. Yes, that did get some laughs ... well a lot, actually.

This year we have a really charming story with a thought provoking message about the light of God and the importance of keeping it bright in our lives. If you are able please come on the 18th.

Have a good Christmas, may the comfort and joy of our Lord be with you.

THE J-CLUB Team.

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## The Church Family

As there hasn't been a note of new members and deaths in Contact since Autumn 2015 there's quite a long list.

### Deaths

Ian Smith	4/15
Evelyn Ritchie	7/15
Margaret Laidlaw	5/16
Catherine Hood	6/16
Margaret Cornwall	6/16
Agnes Henderson	7/16
Euphemia Baird	7/16
Jessie McNeill	8/16
Elizabeth Kidd	10/16
Christina Watson	10/16

### New Members

Iris Smith	9/15
Helen and Morna Mulgray	9/15
Christine and Bill Young	9/15
Nicola and John Frew	1/16
Diane Marshall	2/16
Audrey and Ewan Ritchie	3/16
Karen Masterton	4/16
William Macarthur	6/16
Margaret Dack	6/16
Linda Blackley	11/16
Jane and Hugh Smith	11/16

### Baptisms

Faith Willow Hannah Jolly	8/16
William Forrest Bradshaw	12/16

## **News from Messy Church**

Our Messy Church family continues to grow in faith as we regularly welcome our families who come to praise God. As well as having regular families at Tranent Messy we now also have Elphinstone Messy Church. We have a willing, but small team to help with setting up, tea and ideas; however if you could spare anytime that would be much appreciated as this team is still very small and would much benefit from input from the wider church community. Please come and speak to me if you would like more information on what we do at Messy Church.

### **Tranent Holiday Club**

We had 33 children at the last club! The children enjoyed the story of the Nativity, some of them perhaps for the first time. The newspapers you donated were put good use in a 'snowball' fight; the children love this messy, active game. We were very much blessed again by our youth leaders this year, with 3 new young people helping for the first time. So a HUGE 'Thank You' to them; as well as to everyone else who was so generous with their time and skills in so many ways. Please give prayerful thought to helping at the next one, as the Holiday Club needs people of all abilities and ages to give of their talents to make sure this resource, so relied upon by the community, can continue to grow and flourish. If you don't feel that God is calling you to work directly with the children there are still so many ways that you can be part of the wider team.

### **School Lunch Time Groups**

These are very well attended at both Elphinstone and Windygoul. At Elphinstone we regularly have between 10 and 15 children listening to the stories we share of Jesus. At Windygoul our P3-5 group has been growing and we know have around 20-25 children attending. The primary 6 & 7 group is smaller but very focused on reading their Bible and talking about what we have been reading. A HUGE 'Thank You' to the ladies who make these groups possible. It is such a privilege to be allowed into the schools to share the Good News about Jesus with them, and a real blessing when you see them beginning to understand and also to ask questions. If you think you would have time to join either of these groups (Elphinstone Church Club is on a Wednesday and Awesome at Windygoul on a Thursday)

please either speak to the minister about Church Club or myself about Awesome.

## **Youth Fellowship**

YF continues to meet regularly. It is a small but dedicated group who have grown in faith over the last months; however I would encourage you to share with any young people you may know of high school age, about this group. We are a friendly, informal bunch who enjoys discussing the bible and chatting to get to know each other better.

Debbie Middlemass  
Family & Youth Development Worker

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## **Hall Improvements**

Last year we decided to point the masonry at the front of the Hall and have the leaded glass side windows repaired as they were bowing and badly deformed. We obtained prices for the work and when we were about to appoint the contractors East Lothian Council launched the Tranent CARS project. This scheme gave grants of 70% of the cost of repairs to Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area. We made enquiries and it was confirmed we would be eligible for grant assistance. We had to get additional quotations and complete various application forms and also get the contractors to complete forms on their experience. The repair costs were £10,630 and following completion we received a grant of £7,448 which was most welcome.

It had also been decided to upgrade the kitchen and this work was undertaken early in the year.

There had been a long established trust fund administered by the Kirk Session. However because of all current legislation the Kirk Session had been unable to make use of this fund for a very long time. A change in charity law allowed us to apply to the Scottish Charity Regulator to change the fund conditions and use it to upgrade facilities at the Hall. This was granted and the upstairs kitchen and all toilets were refurbished, the stair and entrance hall decorated and new seating to be provided for the hall. Most of the costs for these works have been met from the fund.

## Blythswood Care

As you have read in Kathleen's Guild report, over 60 shoeboxes were collected from the church. Many thanks to all concerned.



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## A Few Comforting Words

With every passing day we come closer to seeing our Lord  
All hurts worries and cares will cease as we have followed His Word  
Our hearts will beat as one when to His Kingdom we come  
So fight on with faith and in His strength  
    you will reach those Heavenly gates  
All will be well and you will be  
Forever happy and forever free

Catherine Findlay

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## A Light for Aleppo

On a cold November's evening, beacons were lit around the country to show solidarity with the people suffering in Aleppo. Tranent and Longniddry members lit their fire on the beach at Longniddry.



## The Boy Who Lived In The Arctic.

The heat-robbing wind whips across the knee-deep snow, and the arctic chill bites his nose, but the little boy is unconcerned. His thoughts aren't fettered to the icy chains of the wind or the cold, but they are stretching adventurously to his next step. Mustering strength and unfrozen hope, he coils like a spring and soars from his spot. He lands his two feet into the one footprint left in the snow by his father. His squeals of joy and delight and contagious laughter fill the air, drowning out the wind. Sheer elation fills his heart for he has followed in his father's "footsteps".

Lord, it would be nice if adult life were like that, carefree and fun. The trouble is that we've grown up and the world has changed, faster than I could ever have imagined.

Adult life, Lord, seems to be full of crisis and dramas, health problems, financial worries, stress and anxiety, we read the news or watch it on telly and all we get is war, famine, poverty and politics, and politicians, it seems to get worse. I get the feeling that there is nothing I can do. And yet, Lord, in the quiet, I still feel that inner sense, which I can only say is You, using me or, telling me softly that I can win the race, fight the good fight, and that I am up for it, and I am not a failure, and that I can face the storm, and that You care for what I do and who I am.

Lord, grant me Your serenity that I can muster the courage to dive below the surface that is the trials and tribulations of life and accept the things I cannot change and in doing so realise that by turning to You for help I can change the things I can and discover that You make all the difference.

And Lord, more than anything else, make me feel like that little boy, surrounded and protected from all of the storms of life, by Your Holy Spirit and to make me feel bigger than the sum of the parts and to follow Your footprints.

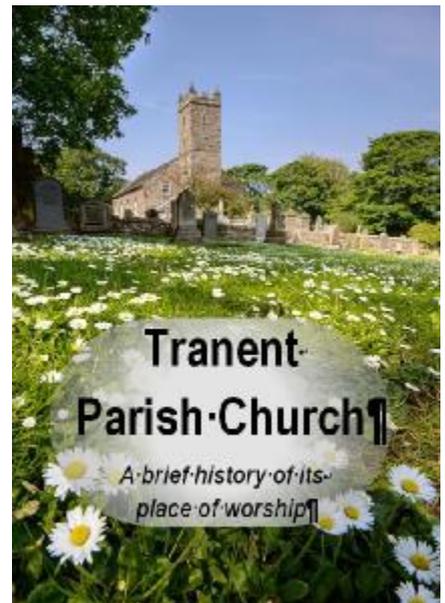
Amen

Douglas Findlay (prayer group)

# A History of Tranent Parish Church

How much do you know about the building?

The booklet compiled by John Greig and Rev Tom Hogg has been out of print for a number of years, but has just been revised and reprinted. Each booklet costs £1.50 and would make a wonderful present for your friends and relatives who have memories of Tranent.



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## Other news

A lot has happened recently but there is no space to include it here.

Go to our [Facebook](#) page to read more about the Guild service, A Light for Aleppo, Messy Church, Remembrance Day.

And, not mentioned here at all -

- The Pilgrimage to the Holy Land
- Switching on the Christmas Lights
- Winter Wonderland in the Church Hall
- National Youth Assembly.



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## Colour?

This is a reminder that a full colour version of the magazine is available on the website. (You are looking at it!)

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

## Community Organisations

### 3rd Tranent Rainbows

We have 15 Rainbows at the moment with four leaving to go to Brownies after the Christmas holidays.

The girls have had a busy time over the last few months with different crafts, making pizzas and playing lots of games. We are looking forward to the Centre Stage pantomime and our Christmas party on the last night.



Wendy Waldie    Rainbow Leader

### 2nd Tranent Brownies

2nd Tranent Brownies have had a busy 2016

We started the year by going on our first sleepover as a unit to Space is the Place (a Guiding sleepover in the Glasgow Science Centre). The girls enjoyed their time away, despite a lack of sleep, and came back really enthusiastic.



In terms of the community we went for a night to the food bank and took along a variety of tins for the bank. The girls listened to all the volunteer had to tell us and even managed to weigh the food they had brought.

March saw us completing the Mexico badge that we had helped to create and we finished this off with a Mexican themed party after all the leaders had been away to Mexico!

We had an exciting time in August when we organised and ran our first Brownie pack holiday. We went to Allison Cargill House and did a farmyard theme so went to East Links Family Park on the Saturday and a walk to the Yew Tree on the Sunday. We were also joined by Wendy's Rainbows on the Friday night and all helped each other take part in crafts. The Brownies claimed the beds and the Rainbows stayed in the hall. All the girls had a fab time (not one girl was homesick) and they are all really keen for the next pack holiday!

We have now just had our 2nd birthday party as a unit and are finishing off the year with a movie night, sessions on the Free to be Me badge and a Christmas party... and, of course, it wouldn't be December without a Panto!

Kirsty Gunston    Brownie Leader



# Your Contacts

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Treasurer	Mr Chas Spencer	
Roll Keeper	Dr Linda Ingham	
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