

# Tranent Parish Church

# Contact

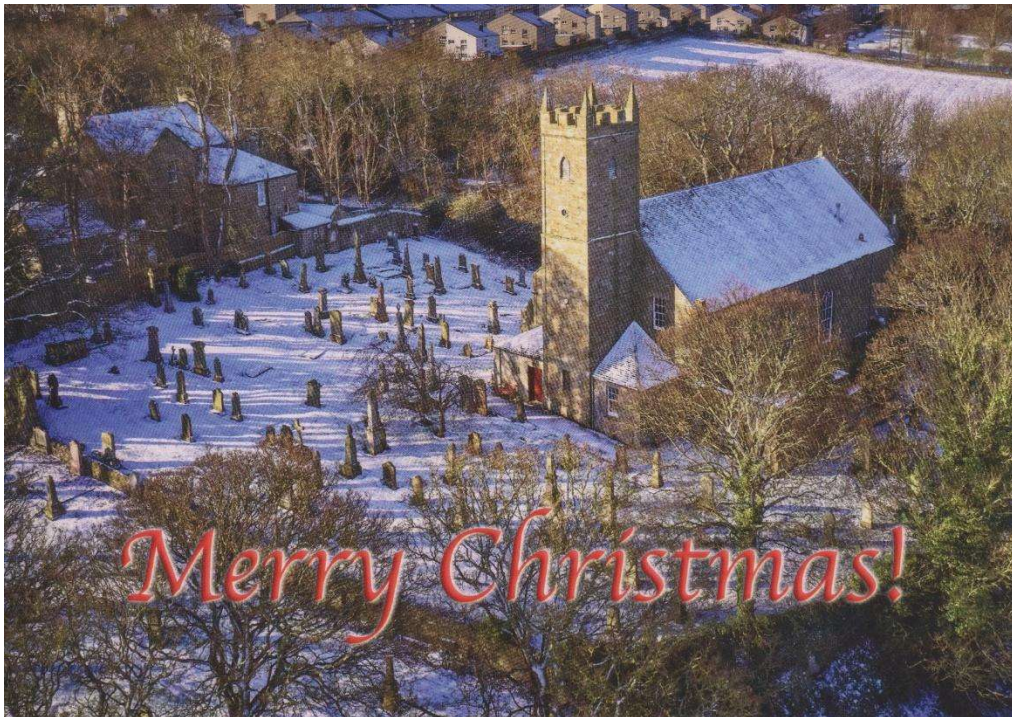


Photo: Laurie Brett

## Winter 2024

[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.

The next edition of Contact will be out in March.  
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,

A small group of us were clearing out a cupboard in the church building this autumn. It was a good effort. Many things were put out or rehomed to the right place for use. We also found the church knitted Nativity. A lot of care had been put into making the characters from the Christmas story.



I remember as a child the cardboard box one made by my mother from a kit in the 1970's with coloured paper shapes to cut out for the figures. It isn't at all fancy but it still comes out every year and sits in the same place on top of a bookcase. It is part of the family's Christmas.

This year we are borrowing twelve Nativity sets or creches from countries all over the world to display in the church building. They will be part of the congregation's Christmas too. Did you know that Poland has a tradition of making beautiful ones from sweetie papers and foil? Or that in Kenya, the dried fibre of the banana plant is used and that Native American Nativities include husky dogs and a buffalo instead of a donkey? In having them in the church building, we are reminded of the Christians all over the world who celebrate the birth of Jesus. In noticing the differences between them, we learn how the Christmas story speaks to people in a particular place and culture. The story becomes alive in new ways.

A couple of years ago, our children's Nativity imagined stars leading folk down Tranent High St to the baby Jesus. There was a coffee stop on the way at the Church Hall. There were road works to be navigated! Jesus was found, with Mary and Joseph, at the number 26 bus stop at the bottom of Church St, a modern day stable. Nativities are not just Christmas decorations. They are at the centre of Christmas and point us to its heart, which is the unshakeable love of God for us all, especially in times when we are uncertain and insecure, and in real need of His care and compassion.

Jesus wasn't born in a rich, safe, comfortable place. Mary and Joseph made do with the rough and ready place they found themselves in and found that it was enough for what they needed. They were visited by shepherds, ordinary folk who knew a bit about hardship, and their worship was enough too. As we open the Church Hall for the third time for the Winter Hub, we hope that a simple lunch of soup and bread, with tea, coffee and biscuits, will be enough too, to provide a warm welcome to all of us who may appreciate a place to gather together on a cold Saturday in winter. Making the Christmas story come alive in a new way too.

May you know the peace and love of the presence of Jesus with you this Christmas.

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 & Table Tennis Group** Both meet on Wednesday mornings, Pool in the Upper Hall, Table Tennis in the main Church Hall from 10am to 12 noon. All are welcome to either / both.

**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.

# Tranent Parish Church Guild



We have had a successful start to our session.

Our first meeting, on the 8th of October, was different this year. Katherine, our Minister, came and spoke to us and then celebrated the sacrament of holy communion with us. It really was a special time. Many of our members were quite moved by the service.

We have to thank David Menzies and Laurie Brett for installing audio equipment we can use for the meetings and it really has enhanced the participation for our members.

Our next meeting was a film show, arranged by one of our members, Christine Young. This was a very pleasant afternoon, and we also enjoyed the popcorn and sweets she kindly provided for us.

For our first meeting in November we had Lisa, a member of the staff at the Local foodbank. This was a very informative meeting indeed. Lisa explained the work that goes on under the umbrella of the foodbank. Not only do they supply parcels of food but provide almost a wrap round service to ensure the people who come along are not missing out in other ways. A representative from Citizens Advice visits on a weekly basis to help anyone with the problems some may have. They have a fuel bank to help with heating costs, and have recently started a breakfast club.

When you consider the size of the area that comes under the remit of the foodbank, from Innerwick to Craighall it is tremendous the work that is being done.

Lisa told us that last year they had distributed over 14,000 food parcels and that Tranent Parish Church was one of the main contributors helping with their work, something that we should be very proud of and thank God that we are able to do this.



Our Guild members also brought some donations for Lisa to take with her and they were very generous donations indeed. She had to call one of her colleagues to come and help carry everything up to the warehouse.

On 26th November we have Calum Strang, from Age Scotland, coming to speak to us and all are very welcome to hear how Calum can help in any way.

Kathleen Gilmer  
Convenor, Tranent Parish Church Guild

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## Advent & Christmas at Tranent Parish Church

Sunday 1 December - 11am, Holy Communion

Sunday 8 December - 11am

Sunday 15 December - 11am, Nativity Service

Saturday 21 December - 4pm, Christingle  
Service in Church Hall

Sunday 22 December - 11am

Christmas Eve Carol Service - 7pm

Christmas Day Family Service at 10am

All Services at the church unless otherwise  
advertised. ALL ARE VERY WARMLY WELCOME

Also

Sunday 15 December

3.30pm Longniddry Parish Church  
Advent Sing-Along Service

## Growing Young News

Over the last eighteen months we, as a congregation, have been taking part in a Growing Young initiative, together with several other congregations in Lothian and Borders. Each congregation has been inspired to try new things, depending on their unique context.

In November, we made use of the Church Hall garden and held a Light Event for families with young children late on a Sunday afternoon shortly after Halloween. The garden was transformed with fairy lights, a fire pit for toasting marshmallows, glow sticks and sparklers. There was a glow in the dark treasure hunt, hot chocolate and other activities to enjoy. It was a very special afternoon.

Later on in November, we held a ceilidh in the Church Hall to mark St Andrew's Day. The idea of holding the ceilidh came from a couple of teenagers at the Youth Club. We got together with the Explorer Scouts who meet in the Church Hall on Friday evenings. We booked a ceilidh caller, Caroline, from CeilidhKids in Portobello. The Scout leader, Mike Watson, did an excellent job with the catering. He cooked up haggis, neeps and tatties as a very substantial snack and it was ably served by the Scouts. The attendance was about fifty from toddler age upwards and it was a wonderful evening of dance, music, food and fellowship.

The formal part of the Growing Young project, when we receive support and training together with other congregations, has ended and we will continue with it informally. We plan to grow the team and are looking forward to what lies ahead in 2025.

Katherine

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## Quiz answers

Here are the answers to John's musical quiz which you will find a few pages later. NO cheating yet!

1: 1978, 2: 1990, 3: 1982, 4: 1957, 5: 1976, 6: 1973, 7: 2015, 8: 1963, 9: 1994.
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# A Christmas Star

How did a plant which was native to the semi-tropical climates of Mexico and Guatemala become a Christmas favourite?

A member of the Euphorbia family, mainly found on higher ground on west facing slopes and distinctive in its striking deep red foliage it was prized by the Aztec's who knew it as Cuetlaxochitl. They used it for medicine, cosmetics and extracted a beautiful purple dye from it.



It also may have had some ritual significance which may be why Spanish Missionary Monks in Central Mexico added it to their religious processions. The star like pattern got it the name Star of Bethlehem and, because it flowers in December, it was a popular decoration in nativity scenes. It became known as the Nochebuena (Christmas Eve) flower and still is today there. Enter US politician (and former medical student in Edinburgh) Joel R. Poinsett who in 1825 was sent to Mexico as the USA's Minister (*Ambassador*). Botany had been one of his interests as an amateur scientist. While there he took cuttings and sent them home to grow on his estate. Later it was named in his honour by American Botanists.

Jump to last century and a canny farmer called Paul Enke saw a chance to sell flowers in winter; seizing a gap in the market to promote it as a Christmas flower. (Today the Enke Ranch still has about 50% of the globe's Poinsettia trade).

Some years ago; we began giving gifts of a house plant to members of the church family whom *we thought would particularly appreciate it at Christmas time*. The first one we chose was this Christmas Star as a small reminder of the hope that was born at Christmas.

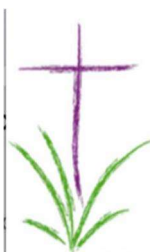
John Greig

# Tranent Church Eco Action Group

## Creation Time

### 1. Garden twinning

As you will remember we raised over £480 at our post service lunch in September in order to



**eco**  
congregation Scotland

twin our garden with others in rural Africa. We have received a letter of thanks, a plaque which we shall display at the church garden and a packet of seeds. Families in the six countries where Ripple Effect works are struggling to grow enough to eat as the climate crisis worsens and they experience longer periods of drought and heavy rainfall. By gardening together we are helping farming families with three years' training in sustainable organic farming. Starting with small kitchen gardens, families can grow enough to eat, set up small businesses, send their children to school and go after their dreams.



You can read about Ripple Effect on their website, [rippleeffect.org](http://rippleeffect.org)

### 2. All age service and study nights

On Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, an inter generational service based on 3 themes, beauty, suffering and hope in creation was held in the church. On the following 3 Wednesdays, study nights based around the aforementioned themes were held in Thomsons in Winton Place. This proved a positive experience for those who attended.

### Fair Trade Stall

The next Fair Trade stall will be on Sunday 26th January. The stall continues to be popular and over the last 15 months over £2280 has been raised.

## Litter picking

Tranent Parish Church wombles continue their monthly Saturday litter picking as well as supporting the eco group at Windygoul Primary School with their Friday morning litter picking.

## Douwe Egbert Coffee Jars

I currently have someone who uses these for an art type project. They are keen to obtain as many as possible. Please leave them at the church and I will pass them on. Good to re-use!!

As usual, if you have any tips, or ideas please let me know.

Ann Allison

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## What Was the Year ??

Thanks to John Greig for another quiz, this time with a festive twist.

They say it is not Christmas until Maria Carey and Noddy Holder have come out of cold storage. Not all Christmas chart hits are about Holly, Mistletoe, Snow or Robins; some did remember the reason for the season.

Which year were these Advent-themed Christmas Crackers first a hit?

- |                                      |                           |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Mary's Boy's Child/O My Lord.     | Boney M. version          |
| 2. Saviour's Day                     | Cliff Richard             |
| 3. Peace on Earth/Little Drummer Boy | Bing Crosby & David Bowie |
| 4. Mary's Boy Child                  | Harry Belafonte version   |
| 5. When a Child is Born              | Johnny Mathis             |
| 6. Gaudete, Christus est Natus       | Steeleye Span             |
| 7. Silent Night                      | Michael Bublé.            |
| 8. Little Town of Bethlehem          | The Osmond Brothers       |
| 9. Ava Maria                         | Lesley Garrett.           |

Some were much longer ago than I thought! (Ed)

## Walking Group

We have just started a walking group, meeting every fortnight at 10am on a Thursday morning. Our aim is to go for a walk in or around Tranent for roughly an hour. We have done a couple of circular walks so far, covering Brickworks Road, Polson Park, Fa'side and the Heugh. We hope to discover many more walks and have really enjoyed sharing fresh air and good company. Details of future dates will be in the Order of Service and the web site. Please do come along.

Katherine

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## Carol Singing

Plans are being made for carol singing in some of the local Locals and Supermarkets. Look out for details in the notices, website or on Facebook and come along to join in or to support the singers.

(Ed. I will take this opportunity to invite you to join with my choir in our Christmas Carol Concert in Dunbar on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December. Details at [dunbarchoral.org.uk](http://dunbarchoral.org.uk))





# Your Contacts

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Treasurer        Pamela McGowan

Unitary Team Convenors

Worship & Education Team	Rev Katherine Taylor
Fabric and Finance Team	David Menzies
Outreach and Wider World Team	Douglas Roberts
Pastoral Team	

Roll Keeper      Dr Linda Ingham

Freewill Offering and Gift Aid Convener Dr Linda Ingham

Church officer team - contact John Greig

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



**Tranent Parish Church**  
**Church of Scotland**  
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