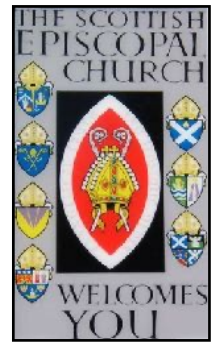


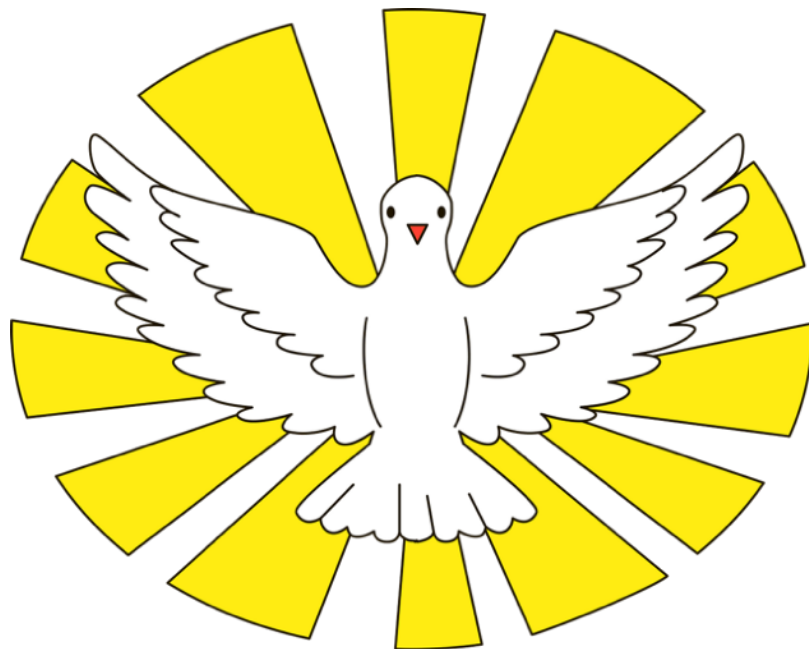
In Touch



*with St James the Less Church, Penicuik
& St Mungo's Church, West Linton*

**A quarterly magazine for all of us
Issue 24 - May 2026**

Ascension - Pentecost - Ordinary Time



Reflections from the Rectory

You will be receiving your copy of In Touch towards the end of May, when I hope the summer has arrived and we can all enjoy the long hours of daylight in warm and dry weather.

For me, the beginning of June has for many years been marked by three events: our Church's General Synod meeting, the celebration of St Columba's Day on 9th June, and, not coincidentally, the coming together of Iona Community members for a gathering in Glasgow to witness the hallowing of new members (after a two year discernment in the new members programme) and the Iona Community AGM.

I have referenced my membership of the Iona Community in a few recent sermons, and some people have asked me to say more about it. So here goes...

I felt called to be associated with the Iona Community because I needed a framework and the support of like-minded people who, like me, wished their faith to have a real impact in the world. I also knew that left to my own devices I could talk a good game, but would I really "walk the talk"? I liked the idea of a common rule for life and being held accountable for following it by others who shared the same values. I had already created a personal rule for life to help me focus on how I should live my life, which was a start, and although I committed it to God in prayer, it isn't the same as being part of a supportive group. I was also attracted to the underpinning beliefs and the working principles, and by the liturgies and songs produced by the Iona Community.

I became an Associate Member, and attended my local monthly gathering of members and associates (called a Family Group), to learn more about the Rule and how the Community supports its members and vice versa. It felt a natural spiritual home and somewhere where my lived experience as a Christian could be developed and enhanced, and where I felt I could channel my desire for my faith to be of use in the world. In 2010 I applied to join the new members programme, and after an interview with the leader, I was accepted onto it.

It was a really interesting two years, meeting and discussing matters with others on this same journey of discernment. On Saint Columba's Day 2013 (the 75th anniversary of the Iona Community) I was 'hallowed', that is, I became a member. By this time I was more than ready to follow the Rule of Life.

Since then I have been active in the various Family Groups I have been in, I have attended Community Weeks where members gather together for workshops, worship and fellowship. These have taken place on Iona, and also in Holland (Dopersduin Mennonite Centre in Schoorl) and in Germany (Erfurt, where Martin Luther started studying Paul's Letter to the Romans, which eventually led to the Reformation). And I have been a Trustee since 2020 of the Iona Community. I demit office as a Trustee at this year's AGM.

I have learnt a lot from so many wise, deeply faithful people, been humbled by the work and commitment of many, and been refreshed by the worship, preaching and music in Iona Abbey, and by using the materials the Iona Community produces.

Each year I have to renew my commitment to remain a member of the Iona Community – I value this approach. It isn't lifetime membership; there is a conscious decision to be made by me to continue, and an accounting for how I have lived by the rule by fellow members.

I am sure this style of living out faith isn't for everyone, and maybe the action-oriented commitment to justice, peace and integrity of creation, isn't what everyone is called to do. But, this year, once more, I have been happy to submit my 'with us' letter to the Iona Community and be held accountable for another year as to how I express my Christian faith.

If anyone wants to know more and explore associate membership then I am always willing to chat. And I feel like an 'Iona Community Wee Sing' should be held this autumn, for others to experience their songs.

How does your faith impact on who you are, what you stand for, and what action you are able to take to further God's kingdom on earth?

Nick Bowry

News from the Congregations

Welcome Nikkie and Alan Dickson's new grand-daughter!



Nikkie and Alan Dickson's daughter, Alice, gave birth on the 24th March 2026 to a wee daughter, Grace Mary Demynn, weighing in at 7lb 8oz (3.4 kg). Congratulations to the family and welcome to the world, Grace! See pages 32-33 for photographs of Nikkie's special gift to welcome Grace.

Left: delighted parents, Alice and Jack with their brand new daughter, Grace.



St James the Less Vestry Notes

Since the last Vestry report, three Vestry meetings have been held.

1. Vestry Meeting – Tuesday 3 February 2026

- Soup kettles have been purchased.
- Nick is investigating options for a new noticeboard.
- A recent burst water pipe occurred in the Rectory, with a risk that the problem may recur. It has been recommended that the hot water header tank be removed and replaced with a pressure vessel beside the boiler. In addition, removal of the attic cold water tank and conversion to a mains water supply has been advised.
- Problems with the live streaming of services have been caused by problems with the camera controller. A new controller will be purchased.
- Serious concerns were raised about the muddy condition of the car park. During winter months the surface becomes icy, creating a significant risk of falls. Vestry considered several possible solutions, all of which were costly and unlikely to fully resolve the problem. As an initial step, it was agreed to ask for support from members of the congregation to help improve the surface.

***Update:** On Saturday 21 March 2026, a group of volunteers met to work on the car park. While the condition has improved, this is not a solution. Vestry thanks everyone who contributed their time and effort.*

2. Vestry Meeting – Saturday 7 March 2026

This meeting focused on the **Mission Action Plan (MAP)**.

Vestry reviewed the current version to identify:

- What actions had been achieved,
- What had not been achieved,
- What was no longer appropriate.

Nick collated all suggestions and updated the Mission Action Plan, which was circulated to Vestry on 21 April 2026.

3. Vestry Meeting – Tuesday 21 April 2026

This was a particularly busy meeting, with discussion centred on the financial position and proposed large expenditure.

- **Financial position:**

Vestry considered the current financial position of St James which is forecasting an overspend at the end of this financial year. Concerns were raised regarding the funding required for the Quinquennial Review work, replacement of the church heating system, and work required to achieve Net Zero. It is planned to apply for grant funding for some of the work. However, the VAT Recovery Grant is no longer available, and it is unlikely that the Scottish Government will reinstate it. As a result, VAT will need to be paid on all works.

- **Quinquennial Review:**

The Quinquennial Review will need to be implemented over the next five years. Estimated costs are as follows:

○ Category U (immediate):	£14,976.00
○ Category N (within 12 months):	£125,776.80
○ Category R (within 5 years):	£10,476.00
○ Category D (desirable):	£129,974.40

Even, without including Category D work, this represents a substantial financial commitment.

- **Church heating system and Net Zero:**

Vestry discussed options for replacing the church heating system and progressing towards Net Zero. Vestry decided not to pursue funding that would mean the church had to be made available to community groups each day. Vestry approved the installation of solar panels on both the church and hall roofs to generate electricity to support an electric heating system within the church and to generate income by selling any excess electricity. The Church Heating Working Group will provide costings, with the aim of commencing work in the autumn. This project also represents a major financial undertaking.

- **Gift Day:**

Vestry agreed to hold a Gift Day on **6–7 June 2026** to help raise funds towards the costs of the Quinquennial Review, the new heating system, and the installation of solar panels.

Vestry has been busy over the last few months not just with the routine matters but with planning for the future fabric and finance of St James.

Charlotte Kemp
Vestry Secretary

***There's no news from St Mungo's Vestry for this issue.
Hopefully we'll hear from them again next time.***

Server in training...

Ania O'Rourke's first day of server training at St James the Less Church, pictured with Revd Nick (centre) and Val McGavin (left), our longest serving server.

An article on the role of the server will appear in the next issue.



Introduction to the Iona Community

As a member of the Iona Community, the Rule of Life and the commitment to Justice, Peace and integrity of creation is important to me. It has helped shape my life, for instance, in vastly reducing my flying, taking trains wherever possible, in supporting refugee charities, using an ethical bank, and engaging in a more sustainable way of living. I have also learnt so much from well-informed members about a range of justice, peace and environmental issues, and from experts in their fields who come to talk to members at our Community Weeks. Below I have copied the Rule or Life and the Commitment members make.

Members of the Iona Community commit themselves to a four-fold Rule of Life.

1. Daily prayer, worship with others and regular engagement with the Bible and other material which nourishes us.
2. Working for justice and peace, wholeness and reconciliation in our localities, society and the whole of creation.
3. Supporting one another in prayer and by meeting, communicating, and accounting with one another for the use of our gifts, money and time, our use of the earth's resources, and our keeping of all aspects of the Rule.
4. Sharing in the corporate life and organisation of the Community.

Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Commitment

Members of the Iona Community believe:

1. That the Gospel commands us to seek peace founded on justice and that costly reconciliation is at the heart of the Gospel.
2. That work for justice, peace and an equitable society is a matter of extreme urgency.
3. That God calls us into a responsible, responsive, and caring relationship with the whole of creation.
4. That, handled with integrity, creation can provide for the needs of all, but not for the greed which leads to injustice and inequality, and endangers life on earth.

5. That everyone should have the quality and dignity of a full life that requires adequate physical, social and political opportunity, without the oppression of poverty, injustice and fear.
6. That social and political action leading to justice for all people and encouraged by prayer and discussion is a vital work of the Church at all levels.
7. That the use or threatened use of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction is theologically and morally indefensible and that opposition to their existence is an imperative of the Christian faith.
8. Engage in forms of political witness and action, prayerfully and thoughtfully, to promote just and peaceful social, political and economic structures.
9. Work for a policy of renunciation by our own nations of all weapons of mass destruction and for the encouragement of other nations, individually or collectively, to do the same.
10. Celebrate human diversity and actively challenge discrimination on grounds of age, ethnicity, cultural background, disability, mental illness, sex, gender, sexual orientation or religion.
11. Work for the establishment of the United Nations Organisation as the principal organ of international reconciliation and security, in place of military alliances.
12. Support and promote research and education into nonviolent ways of achieving justice, peace and a sustainable global society.
13. Work for reconciliation within and among nations by international sharing and exchange of experience and people, with particular concern for politically and economically oppressed nations.
14. Act in solidarity with the victims of environmental injustice throughout the world, and support political and structural change in our own countries to reduce our over-consumption of resources.

Nick Bowry

Fellowship Lunch on the Festival of St James the Less

A good crowd stayed for Fellowship Lunch on Sunday 3rd May, after a rousing service celebrating our Patronal Festival of St James the Less.

Revd Nick's sermon that day was unusual in that it didn't really reflect on the Gospel (or any other of the readings), but instead, told us a little bit about the early days of our church building and congregation, and the vision they had. He reminded us how we still carry that vision, and how we must be good stewards of the building and our faith community to to keep practical, material and spiritual aspects of our church life in good shape, and to ensure the vision extends to future generations. Stewardship involves prayerful consideration of what we are prepared to give in terms of time and money to make this a reality now and for the future. Nick's *Reflection from the Rectory* on Page 2 goes into more detail.

Back to the Fellowship Lunch! As always, three delicious soups were on offer, with bread and cheese, followed by tea and biscuits. And as always, there was plenty of chat too, and a good time was had by all, while raising £355 for Broomhill Day Centre.

Sue Owen



Fellowship Lunch on 3rd May - our Patronal Festival

A Weekend in Rome, April 2026

I had a holiday in Rome over the weekend of the 23 to 28 April 2026. The prime reason was to meet up with my Canadian family who were at the beginning of an Italian tour, and due to arrive from Calgary on the afternoon of Sunday 26 April. This gave me time on my own for Saturday and Sunday morning. Saturday I spent wandering the streets with suitable stops for refreshment, and a visit to one of the many Art Galleries in the City Centre. (you don't want to do too many of these in a session, since the art and artists produce a kind of aesthetic indigestion, and you can't remember a thing about individual pictures). The key thing was that I thought I would go to All Saints Church on Sunday morning, the English Church near the Spanish Steps, where our former Rector, Rob Warren, is priest. Partly I was curious, but I also wanted to meet Revd Rob again. He is, I think, pretty well remembered by most of us, and whom I knew was doing a pulpit swop with Revd Nick at the end of July this year.

I thought I was attending a fairly normal Sunday morning Holy Communion, albeit a sung service with rather more ritual elements than was usual at either St James the Less or St Mungo's. I think I thought it would be more a Cathedral type of service. I arrived in good time (nearly twenty-five minutes before the scheduled start, not West Linton time "plus or minus five minutes), and was amazed to find the Church crowded already. My immediate thought was that Rob's preaching and the pastoral care must be off the charts if he could attract this size of congregation. It was only when I was handed the Service Sheet I realised I had landed in the middle of a very special Sunday for the Church, and for all Anglicans In Rome and Italy.

My visit coincided with that of the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Sarah Mullally who was presiding and leading the Mass. To make it even more special there was a triple baptism, and the Bishop for Europe, Dr Robert Innes, preached. It was a very important day for Revd Rob, also for the choir and for Caireen and the team behind the scenes.

It was all splendid, and if there were hitches I did not see them. The High Altar was used for the mass, and because of its configuration, was performed with back to the congregation. The lady sitting next to me commented that that was “very pre-Vatican 2”. I discovered in a later conversation that she was Catholic, and this was her first time in a Protestant service. It was very clear that a female Archbishop had provoked considerable curiosity to see what this strange phenomenon was all about. What they found, I think, was a lady of considerable ability, warmth and intelligence, committed to the Christian message, as something vital and practical to our daily lives. Bishop Robert’s sermon on the theme of the Good Shepherd and the sheep seemed unusually apposite, if at times I felt that his sheep were idealised when compared to the actual sheep which are all around us in the Borders.

My moment came during Communion when receiving the cup from Revd Rob. He looked at me with the “I know you but can’t quite place you” look. So I said “Hello Rob”, and he was still grinning when I got back to my place.

At the end of the service Archbishop Sarah stationed herself at the exit to greet members of the congregation leaving. I had a brief conversation with her. She clearly thinks we have made a great choice by electing Dagmar as our new Bishop. I also had the impression that she was sorry to be losing a friend and support.

I met up with both Rob and Caireen at this point and was invited to join the Congregational lunch in the Church Hall. I declined because it seemed to me that the point of the lunch was for the families of the Baptised children and the stalwart members of the congregation to meet the Archbishop and Bishop.

Altogether it was a major highlight of my weekend, and one I shall both treasure and remember.

Alan Cameron

ALL SAINTS'



ANGLICAN
CHURCH
ROME

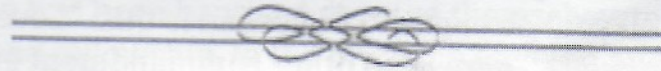
Sunday 26th April 2026
The Fourth Sunday of Easter
10:30 Sung Mass

With the Baptisms of

Caterina Anna Cardile

Isabella Monika Nanyonga Winker

Sophia Rita Jordan

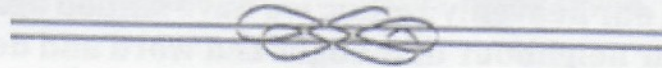


President:

**The Most Rev'd and Rt Hon. Dame Sarah Mullally,
Archbishop of Canterbury**

Preacher:

The Right Rev'd Dr. Robert Innes, Bishop in Europe



Chaplain: The Rev'd Canon Robert James Warren

Titular Organist: Gabriele Catalucci

All Saints' Choir with members of the New Chamber Singers

Conductor: Joey Draycott

Setting: Addington

Music: Ancient & Modern

A Wedding at St James the Less!



On Saturday 2 May 2026, Edward Clerk married Rose Gurney at St James the Less Church, Penicuik. It was a joyful ceremony, with lots of beautiful music: David McGavin played the organ and a very full choir gave its all to the singing. The church was packed and humming with excitement before the service started. Revd Nick Bowry officiated at the service and made everyone feel at ease while giving the service its due full reverence. The bride's uncle, Revd Canon Dr Andrew Mayes, led the congregation in prayers during the service.

Left: the happy couple

Below: Ed's family with the bridal couple (left to right, George, Faye, Ed, Rose, Robert and Julia)



A Sermon to re-visit

Revd Nick's sermon for the third Sunday of Easter on 19th April 2026

Based on the Gospel for that day: Luke 24:13-35

We Had Hoped...

I am always happy to preach on this fourth Sunday of the Easter season in Year A, to preach about the encounter between Cleopas and we assume his wife, and the Risen Lord.

Of course, I like the notion that the couple are walking together; walking from Jerusalem, about seven miles to their home in Emmaus. About half the distance I would do on an average day's walking on el camino. Cleopas and his wife are disconsolate. Remember, they are walking home having witnessed the death of their spiritual leader, Jesus, in whom they had very high hopes. In such a depressed and sorry state, each step would have been tiring, as if they were wearing lead boots. They were talking about the events that led up to the death of Jesus, and how all their hopes were dashed. They had hoped that Jesus was the one to redeem Israel. They could not understand the reports of that first Easter Day, by some of the women disciples, that the tomb was empty.

When we are upset, sad, or depressed, our world can become very small. We can struggle to understand what has happened, to put it into context, to lift our heads up and gain a different perspective. We can hear it in the words spoken by Cleopas and his wife, "But, we had hoped...". Any sentence starting with that is going to describe unmet wishes or dreams. It can also be a time of realisation that we had unconsciously built a picture, a vision even, of what the future would look like, and now... that future vision, that expectation of what the future would be like, comes crashing down. It is a time of grief for a future that won't now happen. I am sure, given that life throws these things at us all at some time in our lives, we have all experienced something of this type of event in our lives.

Cleopas and his wife were struggling to come to terms with all that had taken place. And in their sadness and form of myopia, they did not recognise Jesus, and I suspect it took them a while to realise Jesus was even walking with them; their thoughts were so introspective.

When Jesus spoke with them and opened up the scriptures and set out the whole arc of the story of the people of the tribe of Israel and the Messiah's role and fate, something stirred in both of Jesus' listeners. However, they were still processing their grief and they were very slow to comprehend and take in everything Jesus said. But, clearly, Jesus' words made sufficient impact that Cleopas and his wife insisted that their fellow traveller receive hospitality from them as it was now twilight and would soon be dark.

It was only when they were seated, and their walking companion took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them, that their eyes were opened and they recognised Jesus. This is one of those moments when all of a sudden, the picture becomes clear, when there is recognition, when there is understanding, and recent events all fell into place. Their sadness is transformed into joy. They no longer have feet of clay or lead. They got up, and in the dark they walked back the seven miles to Jerusalem – I am sure at a much faster pace than when they left Jerusalem earlier that afternoon, to share their experience of the risen Lord with the disciples still hiding away in the upper room.

It was a simple act at Cleopas' table that Jesus made himself known; in the breaking of bread, sharing a sip of wine, sitting at a common table, sharing a simple meal.

Maybe we expect God, Jesus and or the Holy Spirit to turn up with a whole host of angels sing 'Glory to God'; that the transformative power of God will be loud, with proclamations and something really significant. Really? This story shows us that we can be transformed through the simple everyday things; the divine can be revealed to us by the common place, by the small but personal actions and simple conversations. This story reminds us that God is in the day to day rhythms and the every day rituals, more than in the big showy stuff.

God showed up to Cleopas on a walk home. God was made known at a very simple meal at a very simple table, in a wee village a few hours walk from Jerusalem.

So, be ready to meet God everywhere, and to be God's agent in all the day to day things you can do. Smiling at someone looking sad at a bus stop, making a phone call or a visit you meant to make but were too busy, to a lonely friend or neighbour, distracting a fractious child on the bus so its weary mother can get a moment's peace. The sacred happens in these interactions and the small decisions we make each day to make what to us seem small differences to someone's day. But to them, it might be what they need to get through that hour or that day. The risen Christ is not confined by the humdrum of the everyday aspects of our lives. Just know that whenever and wherever you make room, you pause and decide to act in a way that reflects God's kingdom,

Jesus is there. Listen to your heart, it may not burn with an intensity that Cleopas' probably did, but attend to it, trust in the power of the risen Christ to guide you.

And recognise that you will also be visited – Jesus isn't trapped on the road to Emmaus. He is ready to walk with you, to talk with you, and to open your eyes and heart, to share a simple meal with you – to break bread, to share wine. And all you need to do, like Cleopas and his wife, is say to Jesus 'Stay with me' and invite him in to your life. Jesus yearns for you to make that invitation. Just like that Holman Hunt painting, Jesus waits at your door, but you are the only one who can open it and invite him in.

And this morning, just like every Sunday morning, Jesus meets us as we break and eat the consecrated bread. A simple act, with a profound impact. A Communion, a spiritual coming together, that we celebrate and partake in. May you receive the body of our risen lord, however you understand it, in awe and with joy and a with a thankful heart. Alleluia, Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!

Nick Bowry



The early evening sun casting a shadow of the cross tower onto the bell tower of St James the Less church. Photos from Nick Bowry.

Prayers to re-visit

Intercessions for the third Sunday of Easter on 19th April 2026, complementing Revd Nick's sermon

As we gather to hear the word of God and to break bread in the presence of Jesus, let us pray.

Lord, this morning we take heart from the story of the disciples who thought Jesus was gone from their lives, but then realised he was among them all along. We recognise in ourselves times when we fail to see you walking with us, when we forget that you are with us and feel that we are alone. Help us Lord to look and to find you in everyday life. Walk with us on our journey of faith; open us up to the truths you long for us to understand and inspire all who teach and encourage. Equip us all to pass on the good news of Easter.

Lord God: **Abide with us**

We feel the anguish of the thousands who realised too late that the crucified Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and then the joy when they turned to him and were baptised. Like the ultimate plot twist in a film, we realise that that was the plan all along, that Jesus' death reaches more people than his life alone could have. Lord, we give thanks for those who have found you recently and feel the joy and comfort of having you in their lives. We pray for those who have not yet had the joy of that revelation and think now of anyone we know who needs to know your love.

Walk with us all Lord, in our life journeys and help us to learn the lessons of loving in our homes, our work and our community.

Lord God: **Abide with us**

We pray for those who use your name in vain, who try to imply some greater wisdom and benevolence in association with your image. Help them to experience their own revelation and to see the light which is available to them. We pray for our world in turmoil as it is, and for an end to violence and domination of one over another. We pray for an end to the fear, chaos and uncertainty which surrounds us all at the moment.

We pray for those suffering in areas of war and violence, particularly in Iran, Lebanon and the Middle East, but also continuing to think of those in Ukraine, Sudan and many other places. We think not only of the civilian casualties but also of those servicemen and women who are also placed in danger in the course of doing their daily duty.

We pray for the souls of the estimated 250 Rohingya people, lost at sea this week, while attempting to reach safety and a new life in Malaysia. We pray for an end to the persecution of their people in Myanmar.

Lord God: **Abide with us**

Walk with our community of Penicuik, Lord, and help those who work to make it better. We pray for all those who volunteer in our community and for the success of their work. We give thanks for those who look for ways to support our community and pray that we can also see ways in which we can help. We pray for the work of Graham Macdonald and his efforts to secure funding for a new performing arts centre in Penicuik. Help him to succeed in his mission.

Walk with our children this week as they return to school after the fun of the Easter holidays. We pray for those in secondary school whose exams start this week, that they are able to focus on their work, keep nerves in check and achieve their potential.

We pray for the churches of Penicuik; help their message to reach those who need it most and for their work to continue and grow in Penicuik.

We pray for those who feel they must bear the bulk of responsibility for those around them, and who shoulder the burden of keeping the wheels turning. Help them to lay down some of their load and for others to see a need and take it up for them.

Walk with our church of St James, Lord, our congregation, our clergy and our vestry. We pray for the work of the Vestry in laying out the mission plan for the coming months and years; that we can all work towards a plan which grows our church and helps us positively impact the world around us.

Lord God: **Abide with us**

Walk with us Lord, through the times of suffering and pain, alerting us to one another's needs. Help us to trust you through the dark times; breathe new life into those who are close to despair. We think of those known to us who need your assurance and we offer their names to you now, either silently or aloud.

Walk with us Lord, through the valley of death; may our love and prayers support those who walk that journey today. Draw close to them and welcome them into the joy of heaven.

Lord, we thank you for walking with us wherever we go, everyday. We rejoice that you are indeed real and alive with us always.

Merciful Father, Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Rachel Crease

The new Bishop of Edinburgh

(From <https://edinburgh.anglican.org/2026/02/new-bishop-elected-for-the-diocese-of-edinburgh/>)

The Right Reverend Dr Dagmar Winter was elected on 14 February 2026, as the new Bishop of Edinburgh. She will take up her new post later in the year.

Bishop Dagmar becomes the Bishop-Elect of Edinburgh following the retirement in August 2025 of the Rt Rev Dr John Armes who served as Bishop of Edinburgh for 13 years.

The Bishop-Elect accepted the post following a meeting of the Electoral Synod in St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh, where she received over half of the votes in each house, with clergy and lay representatives from congregations across the diocese voting.

Bishop Dagmar currently serves as the Bishop of Huntingdon, a suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Ely. Since 2023 she is also Acting Bishop of Ely.

She is Vice-President of the Conference of European Churches which runs a number of projects, especially Pathways to Peace, a coordinated response of the European church fellowship to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

With a particular interest in New Testament scholarship, she has contributed to a number of English and German books and journals.

Bishop Dagmar, who is of British and Swiss-German descent, studied at the Universities of Erlangen, Aberdeen and Heidelberg. She was ordained in the Diocese of Rochester as deacon in 1996 and as priest in 1997. From 1995 to 1999 she served as curate at St Mark's, Bromley, Kent, and was Assistant Chaplain at Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust. From 1999 to 2006 she was Associate Vicar at Hexham Abbey and Deanery Training Officer in the Diocese of Newcastle. From 2006 to 2015 she was Priest-in-Charge of Kirkwhelpington with Kirkharle & Kirkheaton, and Cambo in Northumberland, and the Officer for Rural Affairs for the Diocese of Newcastle. In 2010 she became Area Dean of Morpeth and in 2011 Honorary Canon of Newcastle Cathedral. From 2012 to 2019 she was Bishop's Adviser for Women's Ministry, returning in 2015 to Hexham Abbey as Rector and Lecturer.

She was consecrated as a bishop in 2019.

Following the election, the Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Most Rev Mark Strange, said:

"I am delighted to welcome Bishop Dagmar as Bishop-Elect into this new season of ministry in the Scottish Episcopal Church, and I am looking forward to welcoming her to the College of Bishops. The gifts she brings will enhance the life and mission of the Church.

"I would also like to thank everyone who took part in the process – those who offered themselves and tested their discernment, as well as members of the Electoral Synod, Diocesan Officers, Preparatory Committee, diocesan staff and Bishop Andrew, Convener of the Electoral Process, for their prayerful work.

"Please keep Bishop Dagmar in your prayers as we plan her installation and new beginnings in Scotland."

The Bishop-Elect said:

"I am hugely honoured to have been elected as the next Bishop of Edinburgh and would like to thank most warmly all those involved in the thorough process, indeed, in electing me.

“I rejoice in the diversity and inclusivity of the Diocese of Edinburgh and can’t wait to get to know all the clergy and people in the charges from the Tweed to the Firth of Forth – your joys, your challenges, your opportunities. I firmly believe that the Scottish Episcopal Church has a unique voice to share in today’s world, and I am committed to supporting and encouraging all who contribute to its mission and ministry and to raising its profile further. I also look forward to joining the College of Bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

“As I pray for you, please pray for me as I prepare to leave Ely and join you in Edinburgh.

“Only last night I confirmed some young people, preaching on John 20:19–end, and told them ‘as Jesus was sent, so he sends us’. It will be exciting to discover with you where God will lead us. The one who calls us is faithful – this is our joy, our hope and our strength.”



Bishop Dagmar - Photo by Simon Filsell

Eulogy for Susan Mary Jullion Crosfield

16 April 1933 - 13 January 2026



Mum was born in Sussex on Easter Day in 1933. Sixty-two years would pass before her birthday fell on that day again.

She was the third girl and middle child in a family of five. By any standards their childhood was fairly unconventional, with the freedom to run wild and explore. From a young age she particularly enjoyed cold, snowy, frosty weather, as well as the rain - frequently commenting that it

didn't rain enough. Her mother wrote that Susan as a toddler doggedly refused to take off her mackintosh when the sun came out.

She was educated at Roedean school in Brighton. In 1944 the school was evacuated to Keswick in the Lake District. This was her first taste of 'the north' and she loved it. If the weather was suitable, they would abandon lessons and go walking in the hills behind their temporary school.

Back in Brighton after the war, she completed her education and left school in 1950. Her father thought a spell in France would be beneficial, so, intrepid as she was, and was expected to be, she set off for Grenoble, only to find she had been sent on the wrong day and no-one was there to greet her.

She had a happy year in France where she mastered the French language and made life-long friends.

Drawn to the north again, she found herself at St. Andrews University where she studied English and French. I remember her saying recently that her digs, a bedsit with half board, cost £15 a term. Young men were strictly not allowed over the threshold!

It was in St. Andrews that she met Dad who was appointed as the Anglican chaplain. She described being whisked off with him on the back of his motorbike under cover of darkness, because Dad was worried about gossip and didn't want to be recognised.

Having graduated in 1955, she spent a year teaching in Switzerland, enjoying the skiing and the wintery landscapes as well as the teaching.

Mum and Dad were married in 1956. Thereafter Mum moved to the border town of Hawick where Dad was the rector at St.Cuthbert's. I arrived the following year. I think becoming a clergy wife and a mother in quick succession was a challenge, and there are interesting stories of chaos in the kitchen whilst Dad kept the guests entertained in the dining room. Supported by kind people, she soon grew into both roles without much ado, as was her way.

In 1960 Dad was appointed chaplain at Gordonstoun School in Morayshire. It was there that both Maggie and Paul were born. Mum coached English and French at the school, but her main role was that of mother and support for dad which included entertaining both visiting staff and pupils, notably the future King Charles to whom she fed marmite sandwiches at a formica topped kitchen table with nappies drying on the pulley above.

The move to Edinburgh took place in 1968. There began a life where both Mum and Dad became deeply embedded in life at St. Mary's Cathedral and were to remain so for twenty-two years. What stands out from those days is just how much Mum packed into her day. As well as teaching full time-ish (she would say), my memory is that she was always cooking.

In addition to providing her young family with good hearty food, there was hardly a week went by when we did not have people sharing a meal, or tea and cake, or staying overnight - from visiting preachers, speakers, artists, poets, dancers, relatives, friends... the list goes on.

She also found time to volunteer in various roles including running the Saughtonhall prison play area. On top of that she made a lot of time for us, encouraging us in our school work, nurturing our interests, welcoming our friends into the house, teaching us to drive.

Mum and Dad moved to Silverburn in 1990 and when Mum retired in 1993, they were able to lead a less hectic life. They enjoyed walking, including several long distance, multi day walks, travelled more widely, often on holidays with an art, gardens or wildflower theme. They were able to catch up with old friends, enjoy their grandchildren and certainly carried on entertaining.

Mum bore Dad's death in 2013 with great courage, preferring to keep her grief and her mourning private. She launched herself into many activities, became a befriender to an elderly woman - considerably younger than herself. She joined the cathedral walking group, played bridge, was a member of the book group, volunteered at community run projects in Penicuik, attended the cinema club, continued to be heavily involved in the Mothers' Union and, of course, here at St. James the Less where she was a stalwart member.

It was during this time that she had the garden re designed, a move which would provide her with a restful, peaceful place of solace, a place where she would often sit in the spring and summer of 2020 after her son Paul's untimely death. She bore his death so bravely, but he was never far from her thoughts and for the rest of her life she would often talk about him at some length

Mum had a sharp mind, was a good communicator, a loyal letter writer, read widely and maintained a keen interest in current affairs. Living in Edinburgh provided her with many opportunities to enjoy the arts, she was a frequent visitor to the various theatres, concert halls and galleries which the city offered.

Until her seventies, she suffered from debilitating migraines, which often would emerge on the first day of our holiday.

She bore these with quiet stoicism, as she did any ailment. She hated doctors and hospitals and was secretly very proud of the fact that she had not visited a doctor for ten years.

Mum kept our family ship on a steady, even keel. Throughout her life she was a calm, reassuring influence on us all and, in her unflappable way, a huge support to Dad right through their long marriage.

In reminiscing about their childhood, her remaining sister tells us “She was indeed amazingly good, deep down, with no guile or sneakiness:”

For all this she had a firmness and feistiness to her. Rules could be bent, if she didn't see the point and views could be expressed even if they were not very “p.c”.

She loved driving, and perhaps her biggest fear around getting older was the possibility of having to give this up. Motorways were a good opportunity for the car to “stretch its wheels” and as for those new 20mph limits – they were “quite unnecessary”!

Her love of railway journeys were not only enjoyed through watching Michael Portillo's *Great Railway Journeys* whilst enjoying an early evening G&T, but she also embarked on a few herself. More recently, however, mini cruises on the west coast of Scotland were her preference. One of her university friends tells me that “she was the most adventurous of us all”.

A good sense of dress was important to Mum. She would put a lot of thought into her wardrobe, carefully selecting the most suitable outfit for the occasion. It was made abundantly clear to us that she disliked messy hair - ask her granddaughter Amy about that one - and it took her decades to accept that tidy hair and neat clothes were not really me.



Mum was determined in her intention to stay in her own house, but, as keeping up with life became trickier, she appreciated the loving warmth and support of so many - family, friends, neighbours.

And so it is that we remember a remarkable woman who has enriched our lives and will live on in our memories.



St James the Less Fundraising February 2026



Marion Mather has been extremely busy with family matters these last months, and so I'm writing this wee fund-raising update on her behalf.

It gives me a chance to thank Marion for all her enormous efforts with fund-raising for the church, especially recently while she's been so busy with other things.

Marion and her team of volunteer helpers put on a marvellous Daffodil Tea event on Saturday 11th April, and raised a whopping £913.95p for church funds. Huge thanks to Marion and everyone who donated items, helped set up the hall the previous day, or helped on the day.

Fellowship lunches are a great way to socialise on the first Sunday of the month after the morning service, and they also raise money for the church and for different charities.

So far this year:

January £217 for St James' funds

February £295 for St James' funds (especially kitchen equipment)

March £290 for St James' funds (especially altar frontals)

April £225 for the Bishop's Lent Appeal for the Aberlour Children's Trust

May £355 for Broomhill Day Centre

Again, many thanks to everyone who organises or helps in any way with these Fellowship lunches. They are hard work for those involved but they really are much appreciated.

Marion is unable to plan fund-raising events for the near future, but she's hoping to be in the saddle again before too long.

Sue Owen



Photos from the Daffodil Tea Fundraiser on 11 April - always a lovely social occasion for the community.

Fancy a Social sing-along?

Would you be interested in a singing social event at St James the Less? I'm thinking of facilitating a one-off event to gauge interest for a once-a-month sing together. This wouldn't be about singing solo or party pieces - it would be just for church family fun - songs from the past, traditional songs, favourite hymns, pop songs we've loved, etc. With tea and biscuits, of course! I have a few song-books and would learn how to put words on the screen in the hall. If you're interested, please contact me, Sue Owen, [susanowen.sabadell\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:susanowen.sabadell[at]gmail.com), before Sunday 7th June.

Stewardship

You will be aware that each church (each 'charge') is a separate charity, and the income received by each has to meet the costs of the Rector, the maintenance, repairs and heating of the buildings, and worship costs.

Each year the costs increase for each charge, as items like the Rector's stipend, utility bills, maintenance and repairs, buildings and contents insurance, rise to reflect inflation.

However, it may be that those who donate by a monthly recurring bank standing order, do not always review their giving if they receive an increase in their income each year or in fact their income decreases. It is always easier to adjust your giving as you get an increase in income, than it is to adjust it later – often after you have got used to a great amount of disposable income.

The challenge for all members of our congregations is to review their regular giving and building in a review process so that whenever their income goes up (or goes down) they adjust their giving to charities accordingly.

It may not surprise some of you to know that I keep a spreadsheet. On it I list all the regular and essential payments I make (some are monthly, such as gas bill, and some are annual, such as car insurance, house contents insurance etc) and allow for my approximate food bills and essential costs of driving. After that it is a matter of conscience to decide what other items of expenditure are 'essential'. For each person and family they will be different. As a single male with no financial dependents, I have few other essential items of expenditure. Subtracting my monthly essential expenditure from my income gives me my disposable income. I then commit a minimum of 10% of that disposable income to charitable donations.

I recommend undertaking such an exercise. The hardest part is deciding what to include in 'essential expenditure'. For instance, for some that includes a holiday abroad, for others it will not.

This process of assigning items as essential expenditure is for you to consider and pray about; ultimately it is between you and God (unless you become an Iona Community member and have to 'bare all' in the annual accounting process!).

For individuals who have not developed a habit of giving, this exercise can also be useful to do, although it is often hard or impossible to carve out 10% of disposable income in one go; it can take several years to adapt your lifestyle to achieve this. For some it does also involve negotiating with a life partner, as this can't be done in isolation when more than one person is affected by decisions about how to use money.

One of the Iona Community liturgies includes the words,
'We will not give to God something that costs us nothing'.

These are powerful words that can sit uneasily with us. As we decide what is essential expenditure, and calculate our disposable income, and what percentage we feel able to donate, those words can create a useful tension for us.

What are we willing to forgo in order to support our faith community, the provision of a priest and a beautiful building, and the mission work we wish to do in our community?

This is a matter between you and God. Please prayerfully consider your contributions to the life of our churches.

Stewardship does also include what time we 'donate' to the church; how our gifts and time can be put to use to support our worship, and our missions in the community. What skills and time can you offer?

Nick Bowry

A special gift

The happy news we shared on page 6 inspired Nikkie Dickson to create a very personal and beautiful gift to welcome her new grand-daughter Grace - her own gallery of artwork depicting some of the animals so beloved of her parents Alice and Jack. Here's our own personal viewing of the collection!





Poetry Corner

Distracted the mother said to her boy

Distracted the mother said to her boy

“Do you **try** to perplex and upset and annoy?”

Now give me four reasons - and don't play the fool -

Why you shouldn't get up and get ready for school?”

Her son replied slowly “Well, mother, you see,

I can't stand the teachers, and they detest me;

And there isn't a boy or a girl in the place

That I like, or in turn, that delights in my face.”

“And I'll give you two reasons”, she said, “why you ought

Get yourself off to school before you get caught;

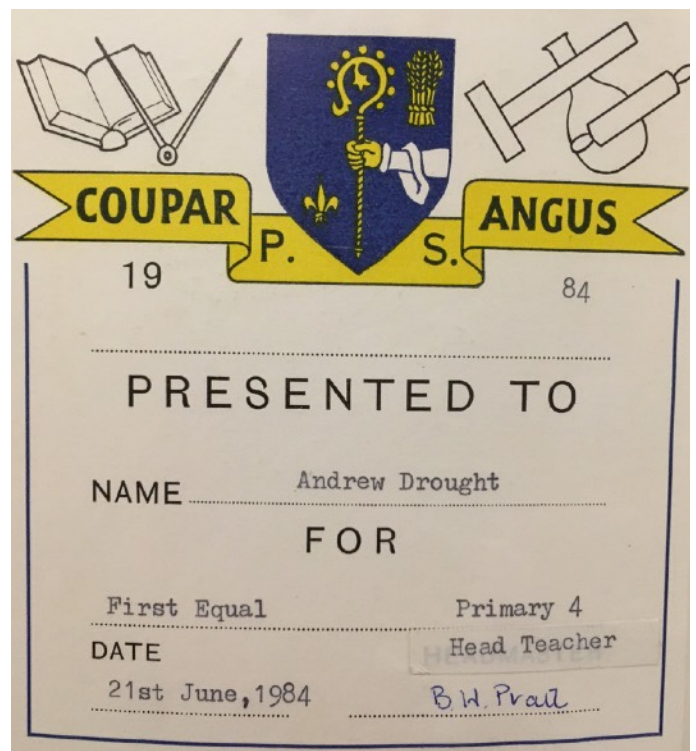
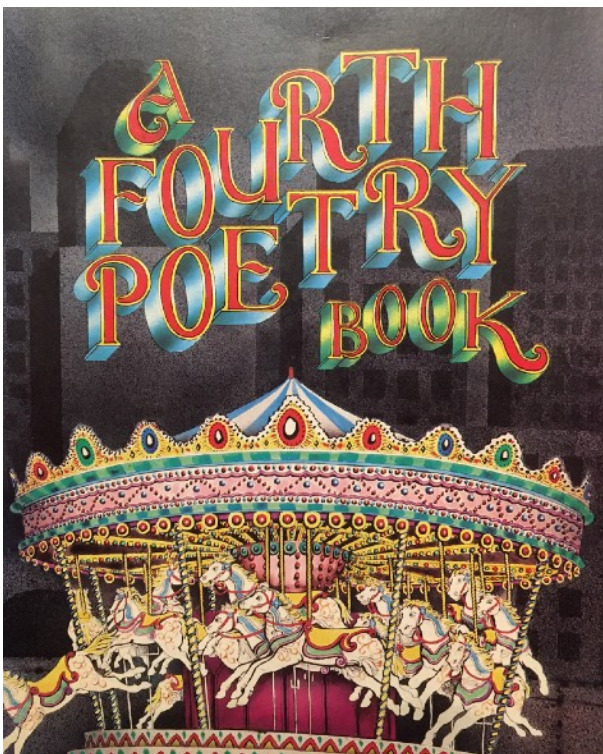
Because first, you are forty, and next, you young fool,

It's your job to be there,

You're the Head of the school”.

Gregory Harrison

From one of Jill Drought's poetry books - a prize awarded to one of her sons, Andrew, - long ago!



I'm no *havin children*

I'm no *havin children*, A'm gonnae hae weans;
an ye'll can ask whit A cry them, no *what are their names*;
an they'll be gettin a piece, no a wee *packed lunch*;
an they'll be haein a scan, no *having a munch*;
they'll fanny aboot, they willnae *waste time*,
an when they scribev their wee poyums, A'll mak sure they rhyme.

A'm no *havin children*, A'm gonnae hae weans,
who'll be gowpin an bealin when they've goat *aches an pains*;
an instead of *don't worry*, A'll say dinnae fash;
instead of *stand your ground*, dinnae take any snash;
ma weans'll be crabbit, no in a *bad mood*;
and they'll greet, no *cry*, when their day isnae good.

A'm no *havin children*, A'm gonnae hae weans,
wae a prood ancient language crammed in their wee brains;
an whenever life tells them their *English is bad*,
A'll tell them the hassles that their mammy had,
an A'll say ma maw's words till the day that A'm deid:
Ye'll be awright, hen, ye've a guid Scots tongue in yer heid.

Len Pennie

Contributed by Val McGavin

Intercessional Prayers

Each week, a member of the congregation leads us in intercessional prayers during the Sunday morning service. I've been asked at times to include some of these prayers in *In Touch*. It's not a competition and my choice is rather random - I appreciate everyone's prayers, and will try to include something from each of the intercessors over the next few issues. This issue contains prayers from Rachel Crease which so beautifully complemented Nick's sermon that day (page 19). I'm also including prayers from Andy Longmore (below), whose conversational style with praying to God I've always appreciated.

Prayers for Lent 3, 8 March 2026

Father, we thank you for this time together to worship you, to acknowledge all that you have given us, and to pray for the needs of the world.

We pray for world peace. There are so many areas to pray for: the Israel - Iran situation, including people being rescued from the Middle East and the huge destruction taking place in Tehran; protection for the people of Beirut after they have been warned to evacuate so that Hezbollah can be targeted; the Russia - Ukraine situation, with decisions to be made including in the UK about providing weapons support for Ukraine; protection for all people who are innocent victims of world leaders' inability to find ways to solve their disputes peacefully. Please inspire all those leaders, including our own Prime Minister, in what they do and say to help bring an end to these wars as quickly and safely as possible, with successful policies to get people back to the UK safely when their routes would involve flying near dangerous areas. Also on this type of topic, let us pray for all those who will experience financial or other difficulties as a result of the economic effects of the war, with an inflation wave predicted.

On a more positive news topic, let us pray for comfort, support and encouragement for Andrew Malkinson, now released from jail after seventeen years of wrongful detainment.

Locally, we pray for guidance for our councillors in the decisions they make about where to spend the tax that they receive from most of us. May they find a good balance between helping those most in need and supporting the community generally in education, health care, environmentally friendly policies. May our politicians and businesses be inspired to work together to provide development of the infrastructures that are supportive of this fast-growing Midlothian community, with the number of schools and teachers being available as one example problem.

Also, Father, please help them to address the current significant problem in assisting those with special care needs, and inspire us to recognise such needs in any around us and to respond constructively in supporting them.


Next, let us remember our reading this morning of the woman at the well, who went into her community to tell people to come and listen to Jesus after He had shown that He knew her interesting relationship history. None of us is perfect either, but Father, may that not stop us from sharing the Good News about your son Jesus. As just mentioned in our New Testament and Gospel readings, may the fields around us indeed be ripe for harvest - and may we fulfil our part in bringing in the harvest.

We pray for Nick our Rector, and all our ministry team (Peter, Joy, Chris, Dyane, Georgina, Sue, Val); our leading musicians David and Alan, and the choir. We give thanks for them; please continue to guide and inspire each and all of them as they help our services be times of joy, opportunities for praise and thanks to God, and opportunities for our spiritual growth.

O God of Peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep: may ALL recognise you as the God of Peace and Love. Make us perfect in all goodness to do your will and to be what you would have us be.

Through him to whom be glory for ever, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Andy Longmore




SU Scotland

A Tale of Two Kings

A Bible based holiday club

Scripture Union Holiday Club
Trinity Community Church Hall Penicuik
4th August - 7 August 10am- 1.30pm
Cost £3 per day. £10 for 4 day. Subsidised places available
Children P1 -P7 welcome.
To book scan the QR Code here



Thank you!

I'd like to thank the proofreaders Georgina Phillips and Ian Fuge for the excellent work they do for In Touch. They read through every issue, word for word, before it's printed and distributed. Every issue that I think is "ready" hides many errors of all types, which Ian and Georgina spot and mark up for me to correct. They save me considerable embarrassment! So thank you, both!

Sue Owen
Editor

Last Word

I recently attended the funeral of a member of the Iona Community who had been a member since he was a young man, and although not quite there at the beginning, was one of the early members. He was a very gentle man, from who great words of wisdom were humbly spoken. I am not sure he even realised his words held such value. He was deeply committed to the Iona Community, although every year when we did our financial accounting, he found it difficult to do. He had been brought up to think that your finances were a very personal matter, not to be shared. Although he fully appreciated and valued the accounting process, he still found it difficult to do. Those early formative years in the family home had really shaped him. The beautiful thing was, that he engaged in the accounting process, knowing its value, even though he found it so difficult at a personal level. His struggle with this aspect of the Rule of Life spoke to me of his faith and deep commitment; that despite his discomfort he did the accounting and the yearly 'ordeal' of accounting for his use of his money. He found accounting for how he used his time and his skills much less daunting.

I wonder what aspect of our faith you adhere to but may find difficult from time to time? How does your personal prayer life and time in corporate worship support you?

Nick Bowry

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For donations to any of the causes mentioned in this issue, please contact the treasurer for St James the Less, John McCulloch ([treasurer\[at\]stjamesthelesspenicuik.org](mailto:treasurer[at]stjamesthelesspenicuik.org))

Websites

St Mungo's: <https://stmungoswestlinton.org/>

St James the Less: <https://stjamesthelesspenicuik.org/>

Next Deadline

Please send copy to Sue Owen at the email address below by **Sunday 2 August 2026**

The next issue of *In Touch* will be distributed on **Sunday 23 August 2026**

Email: [intouch\[at\]stjamesthelesspenicuik.org](mailto:intouch[at]stjamesthelesspenicuik.org)