The Outlook

magazine of Inverleith St Serf's Church

May 2026

Where **hardship** means **hunger** ...**urban farmers can grow hope.**

Christian Aid week 10-16 May

Christian Aid Coffee House 8 May see page 9.

Collection arrangements on page 7.

Inverleith St Serf's Contacts

Minister
The Rev Shahrukh Gill rev.s.gill@gmail.com

Joint Session Clerks
Helen Hannan

Sandy Pratt

Finance Convener
Charles Sharp

Roll Keeper
Peter Hannan

Organist
Angus Tully

Hall Letting HallBookings.InverleithStSerfs@gmail.com
Gordon Hughes 07847 254 216

Pastoral care
Helen Hannan

Safeguarding
Susan Brown

'The Outlook' editor
Lorna Pratt

Church Centre InverleithStSerfs@gmail.com
0131 467 7185

Next Issue

Copy for the June 2026 issue of *The Outlook* should be with the editor no later than Monday 25 May. The distribution date will be Sunday 31 May.

Scottish charity No: SC015442

Wearing white for Eastertide

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now

Is hung with bloom along the bough,

And stands about the woodland ride

Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,

Twenty will not come again,

And take from seventy springs a score,

It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom

Fifty springs are little room,

About the woodlands I will go

To see the cherry hung with snow.

By A. E. Housman (A Shropshire Lad)

Housman did the ruthless math of human days, finding scarcely time to see the beauty before the petals scatter. Serving in a five-year renewable charge, I often feel the weight of that same swift math. In my rush, I often miss the scent and beauty of the blossoms. Yet, to measure our calling merely by passing seasons is to miss the deeper story hinted in Psalm 103: 15-17

'As for mortals, their days are like grass;

they flourish like a flower of the field;

for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,

and its place knows it no more.

But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting

on those who fear him,

and his righteousness to children's children,"

We can plant for our children's children, a legacy of God's everlasting love, as vivid as the cherry trees along our streets. They always make Essi pause, capturing a photo whenever she passes beneath their clouds of bloom.

An investment in renewal

A blossom, however, is only half the story. Along Sakura Brae in the Botanic Gardens, young cherry trees take hold in the spring chill. Given as a gift of friendship from Japan to Scotland, they were planted not to mourn life's brevity, but as a deliberate investment in renewal. The Sakura Cherry Tree Project understood that while petals scatter, roots dig deeper year after year.

This botanical partnership mirrors the friendships taking root right here in our own communities and churches. As we intertwine our lives, this shared ministry becomes a deliberate investment in renewal. Housman observed 'the cherry hung with snow' and studied 'the white petals' fall, yet entirely missed the enduring and renewing roots beneath the soil. The resurrection is God's triumphant re-creation of our humanity from within the ashy dust of earth. We can look up and see the branches not as a tragic countdown but as a new creation: a joyful celebration of eternal life, '*wearing white for Eastertide*.'

Your Minister, Shahrukh

Minister's day of rest

Our minister, the Rev Shahrukh Gill, has decided that he will take Fridays as his day off. Please only phone or email him on a Friday in an emergency.

Worship in May

Unless stated otherwise, the Rev Shahrukh Gill will conduct worship at the 10.30am service.

27 April	10.30am Pram Service in the small hall. Enter through Church Centre.
3 May	10.30am worship in the sanctuary. Dr Andrew Carter will take the service. Fresh Start collection of household goods.
4 May	No Pram Service. Next Pram service 1 June.
10 May	10.30am worship in the sanctuary.
17 May	9.30am Early Birds meet in the small hall. 10.30am worship in the sanctuary.
20 May	Wednesday Worship with Holy Communion in the sanctuary, followed by refreshments. Enter from Clark Road.
24 May	10.30am worship in the sanctuary.
31 May	10.30am worship in the sanctuary.
1 June	10.30am Pram Service in the small hall. Enter through Church Centre.

Mission and Discipleship Team News

Sunday Evening Talk on 17 May at 6.30pm

We are looking forward to our talk on Sunday evening in the small hall (enter via the Church Centre on Clark Road).

The topic is:

'Finding the Feminine Face of God and the voice of women in the Church'

Our speaker, the Rev Dr Urzula Glienecke, is Associate Chaplain of the University of Edinburgh.

Afterwards there is time for questions and thoughts and a cup of tea or coffee.

We look forward to seeing you then.

Frances Bicket

'La Luna' a sculpture by Dr Glienecke

Church Family

Death

'There is nothing in death or life, in the world as it is, or the world as it shall be, nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord'

Mrs Margaret Duncan

Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends.

Pastoral arrangements

Please contact Kate Walker or Helen Hannan regarding pastoral issues such as illness. The local undertakers are aware of arrangements if a member dies.

Christian Aid – local arrangements

Christian Aid Week is our shared moment to come together – across churches, communities and households – to stand alongside people living in poverty.

For one focused week, thousands of people across Britain and Ireland give, fundraise, pray and act together. This year, what will you do?

While you can donate at the *special Christian Aid Coffee morning* (see p8), *an envelope* will go out with paper copies of *The Outlook*. Those who get a digital copy of *The Outlook* may use the *envelopes available on Sunday 10 May* at church (or can opt to donate directly on line).

All envelopes should be returned to the church by Sunday 17 May before worship.

This year's focus on urban farming

This Christian Aid Week, your support could help mothers in Nairobi, Kenya, facing the devastating reality of urban poverty and the daily struggle to feed their children.

Fridah takes Quillan to school before setting off for the market

Most parents wake every single day knowing that they must go and earn money, otherwise their children won't eat that evening. Fridah knows this reality well. But she's determined to protect her grandchildren from hunger.

Through our partner, Beacon of Hope, she's received tools, seeds and training to grow fresh vegetables in a small city space – food she can cook for her family or sell to earn income.

'Now I can plan. I can buy this; I can buy that. I can help my family.'

Wanted: Hall Door Duty Managers

The church policy is that there should be someone on the premises from the church when there are external bookings in the church and church centre, in case of questions or any other emergencies.

Many people do not realise that the halls are manned for external groups by volunteers.

Currently this work is covered by Gordon Hughes, Alison McCallum, John Colquhoun, Sue Geggie, Helen Hannan and Allan Shaw. (Many thanks to all of these people, and the other helpers for external concerts).

If you are able to dedicate an hour or two - either on a regular basis, or an ad hoc basis (for non-regular bookings), please speak to Gordon Hughes about your availability.

Gordon Hughes

Christian Aid special

8 May

Christian Aid Coffee House

Friday 8 May
in the Church Centre
Anytime from 10.00-11.45am

All welcome to come for a cup of coffee or tea, a treat and a chat with friends or arrange to meet friends for a social morning. The proceeds will go to Christian Aid

Coffee House is taking a break and will be closed June, July and August.

Pram Service

Monday 27 April

then Monday 1 June

10.30am

Enter from Clark Road

Nostalgia Cafe

Nostalgia Café

30 April then 28 May

2pm

Easter Egg Hunt

On Easter Sunday the Early Bird and Pram Service families joined the wider congregation in the sanctuary at 10.30am for the first part of the joyous Easter morning service. Afterwards we had an Easter Egg hunt in the church glass corridor, as there were four seasons of weather (including snow!) outside. There was then an opportunity to complete Easter crafts and enjoy seasonal home baking. A member of the congregation made an anonymous donation of large chocolate Easter eggs to the event. The children were delighted to take one of these eggs home with them.

Although it was school holiday time, we were delighted that so many families were able to come. There were thirty-six of us in

total. This number included many of our regular Early Bird families and also visitors joining us for the event. It was lovely to see how kind and welcoming our regular Early Bird children were to visiting children.

The next Early Birds service will be on Sunday 17 May at the usual time of 9.30am in the small hall.

The Early Bird Team

Adults and children enjoying the Easter crafts

Granton Baptist food bank collection

We continue to collect food items for the food bank. Collection points are at the Church Centre and in the church vestibule. Money donations are welcome and should be put into the separate box alongside the baskets. Please ensure that the 'use by' date is well in advance.

News from your ECO Group

By the time you read this, it is hoped that the application for an Eco-congregation Silver Award will have been submitted.

As part of our application for the Silver award the Group is paying a visit to *Earth Matters*, an exhibition being staged at Inverleith House (in the Botanic Gardens).

***Earth Matters* exhibition**

This year is the 300th anniversary of the birth of James Hutton, the Edinburgh born geologist, farmer and thinker, who transformed our understanding of the earth beneath our feet. To celebrate his legacy, Inverleith House is hosting the exhibition which features contemporary artworks by 30 artists, designers and makers. These are shown alongside historical material and treasures from the Garden's collection.

An exhibit from the *Earth Matters* exhibition, Botanic Gardens, until 1 November

At the heart of James Hutton's thinking lies SOIL, dynamic, complex, vital and it is this that forms the exhibition's central theme. The artists were invited to submit work reflecting on our relationship with the land, the past and sustainability. What is displayed is a brilliantly diverse collection of responses. Do come and see.

Fiona Davies has been volunteering as an Exhibition Guide for the past eight years. Her usual shift is on Thursday from 10.30am until 1.30pm. She would be happy to show you around during this time or just pop in anytime you are in the garden.

ECO matters in the spotlight

The Group has worked hard at keeping Eco matters in the spotlight, and this article gives some suggestions of things you might do to help reduce your carbon footprint.

Plastic scouring pads

Like many of us, we used scouring pads for washing dishes until I read an article which said that by using the commonly used pads, microplastics were being released into the water supply every time we washed our dishes. I tried to find an alternative, and was unsuccessful in the main supermarkets. However, I did find, in the One World Shop at St John's Episcopal church, an "Eco living" washing up sponge which is both 100% biodegradable AND compostable. It is manufactured in the UK and made of plant cellulose and is totally plastic free. What is more, for every one sold, a tree is planted.

Washing-up liquid

Most of the larger supermarkets have Eco Friendly washing up liquid, very often as a "Special Offer". Ecover is a sensitive washing up liquid containing camomile and clementine and comes in a 100% recycled plastic bottle and contains biodegradable ingredients. It is made in a Zero Waste certified factory. It makes a great job when washing the dishes and is tough on grease too!!

Ethical investment

I know one or two people in the congregation are members of "Shared Interest". This will not be for everyone, but it is worth knowing about it.

SHAREDINTEREST
INVESTING IN A FAIRER WORLD

Shared Interest is an ethical investment organisation set up in 1990. It brings together a community of over 12,000 people with a shared

interest in investing in a fairer world. The investment people make is used to provide fair finance to farmers and craftspeople across the world. As examples, loans typically fund seeds, plants, materials, crops and equipment.

You can become a member for a minimum investment of £100. If you want to find out more, have a word with Matthew and he can point you in the right direction for more information.

Recycling for Good Causes—rejected items

Finally, a plea! When the last sack for Recycling for Good Causes was sent off, we had an email a few weeks later, saying that while most of what we sent was suitable (and for which they were very grateful), some items were not. We are not entirely sure how these got through our screening system when sorting, but **please** only deposit things which are on the list beside the box in the Church Centre. If your item is **NOT** on the list, please recycle via the Council bins. The items rejected were Bluetooth speakers, digital radios, calculators and an MP3 Charger.

Garden twinning seeds

To end on a positive note, the Early Birds on Easter Day planted the seeds we were given when we twinned the Church Garden and we look forward to seeing them growing over the coming months.

Matthew (on behalf of Anne, Fiona and Gordon)

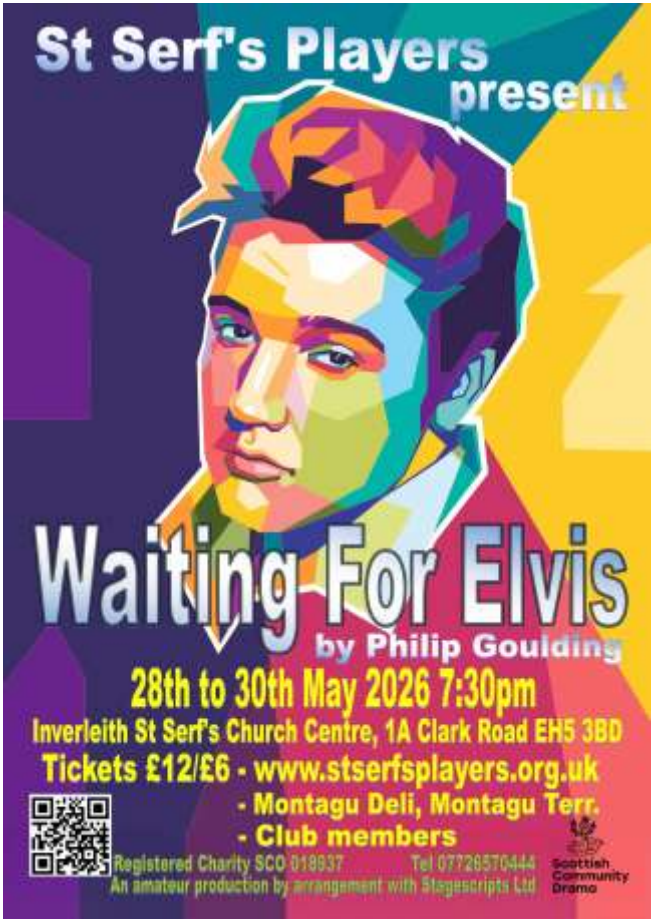
Let us pray …

God our maker, our shepherd, our redeemer
We come before You today from different journeys
With different names, with different voices
Yet we come before You *together*.
Together as a congregation,

Together as a community,
Together as a church.
We come before You together within these walls,
and together beyond these walls
From every land, and in every corner of creation.
How many different names? How many different voices?
Beyond our knowing, beyond our counting
Yet each known and loved by You

Loving God, in this month
As we gather today, help us to respond to Your word,
to hear Your voice, to care for Your creation
and in one another see not stranger or other
but fellow souls, known and loved by the same Shepherd.
Let us in our lives, in our actions, and in our care,
reflect a glimpse of Your love, that all might see
And all might know You better

May Jesus, who is the way, guide us.
May Jesus, who is the truth, speak through us.
May Jesus, who is the life, fill us with purpose.
And may God's blessing go with us today and always.
Amen.
From Christian Aid Week 2026 resources


St Serf's Players
present
Waiting For Elvis
by Philip Goulding
28th to 30th May 2026 7:30pm
Inverleith St Serf's Church Centre, 1A Clark Road EH5 3BD
Tickets £12/£6 - www.stserfsplayers.org.uk
- Montagu Deli, Montagu Terr.
- Club members
Registered Charity SCO 018937
Tel 07726570444
An amateur production by arrangement with Stagescripts Ltd
Scottish Community Drama

PERFORMING FOR
PEACE
Charity Concert
Music • Dance • Culture
Inverleith St Serf's Church, Ferry Road
15 May 2026 | 7:30 PM | Tickets £15
SCAN FOR TICKETS
SPONSORS AND PARTNERS:
COWAN & PARTNERS
Edinburgh Direct Aid
Organised by
Rotary Club of Leith