

**Episcopal Churches of  
St. James' Stonehaven.  
St. Philip's Catterline.  
February 2026**



**Services at St. James' during  
February 2026**

**Sundays.**

**10.00 am Holy Communion**

**Tuesdays**

**10.00 am Said Holy Communion**

**1st Wednesday of the month (not December)**

**7.00 pm Still @ 7. An opportunity to explore contemplative  
prayer/meditation within the Christian Tradition**



## DIARY NOTES February 2026

Day/Date	Event
1st February 4th Sunday in Epiphany	10.00 am Christingle service for Candlemass. Anne O’Gorman, Claire Starr, Matthew Geldart
8th February 5th Sunday in Epiphany	10.00 am Holy Communion Rev Canon Mary Jepp
15th February 6th Sunday in Epiphany	10.00 am Holy Communion Rev Canon Mary Jepp
22nd February 1st Sunday in Lent	10.00 am Holy Communion Rev Canon Mary Jepp

### **From Mary,**

Well...at the end of November it had crossed my mind that I would not be providing a contribution to St James magazine again...and here we are...I think the phrase " the best laid plans of mice and men" springs to mind.

Since my retirement date at the end of November, life has been far from straight forward for the Jepp family. Technically, one might say that we are homeless, I will not go into the details here, but let us just say it is in the hands of the courts and the lawyers. Therefore it was decided, through the generosity of Bishop Andrew, that I would continue as 'house for duty priest in charge'

for a while. What that means is that I will no longer be paid a stipend but shall continue to live rent free in the church house in return for reduced hours, serving the two charges.

And yet again the phrase “best laid plans of mice and men” springs to mind....through a string of events it has been decided that my ministry will solely be at St James’, and so you will be seeing both less of me and more of me at the same time.

In the months to come, whilst I am still here I hope that we will be able to develop the ministry team. Over the past few years Anne O’Gorman has, as you know, worked very hard in order to support our work and worship at St James’ and for this I am extremely grateful. More recently Clarie Starr, Matt Geldart, Ian Wilson and Edward Dickens have taken more active roles in worship. I would say that I feel it is very important that those who offer to help are not totally overwhelmed once offering and that individuals feel that they are capable/gifted in particular areas, or indeed wanting to have a go. It is about development which means growth, trying new things and always having the option to say 'you know this is just not for me'.

However....in order for St James’ to thrive, to really thrive, to become a vibrant presence in the community, more members of the congregation need to participate in worship! What do you fancy having a go at? Think about it and may I suggest have a conversation....having a conversation does not mean you are signed up.

As for me, the notion is that I will work 2 days a week and 3 Sundays out of 4. So for a while at least I will be around.

## **Reports from the AGM (part 2)**

For the benefit of those of you who didn't attend the recent Annual General Meeting, copies of some of the reports presented to the meeting were published in the last issue of the newsletter and the rest are given below.

### **Report on Church Buildings**

**Peter Fogiel**

It is now approaching the three year mark since Paula, Mike and I took ownership of the Church Convenor role in overseeing the regular maintenance of our church and hall, as well as the rectory. We have had no requests from the Catterline Community Church regarding the church of St Philips. Sadly from the end of November it will just be Paula and I as Mike is leaving this role, we are willing to carry on this role unless someone would like to take over now? But we stress that this will be our final year and will pass over the reins to someone new. If anyone would like to offer to help us with our role we would be grateful.

Health and Safety The tool kit provided by the Scottish Episcopal Church continues to be used for the completion of Risk Assessment forms for any task to be performed. An annual Fire Risk Assessment is also done. Monthly checks of all aspects of the church and hall are also carried out and documented and where required maintenance is carried out.

Painting of the South porch remains to be completed by the convenor team. Any painting of the Nave and Chancel would obviously require involvement of a professional firm and adequate funding.

Heating Although the Loxone system is generally working well in providing heating for the church in all areas, it has had a few problems and we are awaiting the engineer to come back and replace the box that hopefully will ensure the remote plugs and timer system will work correctly again.

Organ No issues that we are aware of, it is due to be serviced shortly.

Exhibition Alarm system No problems at present. The alarm system was triggered during the recent power outage on Friday 3rd October but was reset easily.

Meraki CCTV. No issues.

Emergency Sensor Lighting Working well both in the corridor between the nave and the office, and in the rear corridor. With safety in mind, and although this is not a legal requirement, we have discussed the installation of emergency lighting in the Nave, although we have not progressed with this as yet.

Roof and Gutters Stonehaven Roofing Services were advised that their services were no longer required. Another firm has been engaged and they have done a very professional job and will be re-employed this year.

Walkways Thankfully sand and grit is always available at the gateway to be used at the entrances to both the church and Hall. The grit bin adjacent to our entrance had been threatened with removal but protests from ourselves and members of the local community saved the day and it will stay in place.

Garden A real success story, obviously with Inspire, but also with the many volunteers who came to help us transform a virtual jungle into a thriving vegetable and fruit garden, with flowers too. However the most recent greenhouse also succumbed to bad weather and we have reverted to the use of cold frames, a much safer and longer lasting option. Help with this is always welcome.

Church Hall Replacement of the hall windows and fascia boards has taken place and with the loft insulation this has improved the warmth in the hall. However there has been an issue with the gas boiler where water pressure has been falling. A replacement part had to be fitted and it is now working perfectly.

Paula has had a quote for insulating the hall as the joiner says this would be the best way of reducing sound and increasing warmth, currently the walls are single layer with hardly any insulation, however this is costly approx. £10,000 she has applied and been turned down for 3 grants but will keep trying.

Stonehaven Resilience Plan. We are one of three community venues that are involved in this, an external Generator socket has been fitted outside the hall, and an additional electric box has now been placed inside the hall, by the original electric fuse box at the front door. Paula is the contact with the Community Council who put this into action when needed. The use of the hall would only be needed in emergencies, and would be the responsibility of those involved in the Resilience Plan. Thankfully we were not needed during the power outage on Friday 3rd October.

Hall Lets. The hall is beginning to reach full capacity in session usage and one-off lets.

Rectory. No issues that I am aware of.

Church. The toilet in the vestry lobby has been removed. This was due to a blockage, by tree roots, in the clay pipes. The cost to replace the pipes would be over £10,000. David Fleming asked if this was not covered by our church insurance.

Paula, Mike and I would like to thank you all for your continued support.

Net Zero

**Peter Sharp**

As mentioned in my last report, the SEC has committed itself to moving towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030. It has produced a plan in which it sets out targets to be aimed at by charges. This is being overseen by a team led by Paul Williams and our diocesan contact person on this team is Jack Nevin. We are fortunate that, here in Stonehaven, to have a church heating system which uses electricity and our lighting in the church and the hall is LED and so we are Net Zero compliant. Over the past year, thanks to the efforts of Paula and the rest of the buildings group the windows in the hall have been fitted with double glazing.

As the rectory is a relatively new build, it already meets the requirement to have an Energy Performance Certificate of at least C.

The only area which doesn't fit with the Net Zero agenda is the gas central heating in the hall. However that is still working well and we have no plans to replace it in the near future. Each year we are asked to complete what is known as an

Energy Footprint Tool. Given our energy usage during the past year this then tells us what our carbon emissions this correspond to. This enables us to monitor our emissions from year to year. In 2024 we emitted 12.4 tonnes of CO2 of which 74% was from our use of electricity and 26% from gas.

### **Social Committee/Fundraising**

**Jane Cook**

It has been another busy year of social and fund-raising events. Purely congregational events were a successful lunch held in # Number 44 in January, followed by bacon butties after a joint morning Service with St Ternan's in May, Mary's surprise 70th birthday lunch in September and our annual soup and sandwich Harvest lunch in October. Val did her usual sterling work in organising the Senior Harvest Service and tea.

The spring and Christmas coffee mornings were both well supported as was the scaled-down version for the Stonehaven Open Doors weekend in September. The hall was full for the Quiz Night in March, with fiendish questions posed by Hilary and we had great support for our stall at the Feein' Market in June.

St James is becoming well known in the town for its excellent concerts, with the Rock Choir and Granite City Brass Band performing in the spring and the late autumn and the Mearns Singers attracting a large audience in July.

Needles and Natter on Thursday afternoons, with its mixture of crafts, needlework and games, continues to be popular and the Inspire youngsters continue to join us for drinks and biscuits after working in the allotments. Weekly donations for refreshments at N & N have raised £400. This money has been donated to Suresh, who works for Indian Village Ministry

which supports a Sewing Training Project. After 6 months training, at graduation, the women are given a sewing machine and our £400 will purchase 4 machines for this worthwhile project.

Planning is well ahead for events from next weekend into next year with concerts by the Rock Choir, Ian Lovegrove and Granite City Brass Band, plus the next coffee morning, all before Christmas. We are also looking forward to a Valentine Quiz in February. Last but certainly not least, is Mary's Leaving Lunch on Sunday 30th November to which St Ternan's has been invited along with Bishop Andrew & Mary, and friends and family of those being confirmed.

I am resigning as Social Convenor; Barbara will take over secretarial duties from January and events will be run by the main committee of Anne, Paula, Barbara, Val & Jane.

I should like to thank all those who are so generous with donations for our various social and fund-raising activities – the raffles in particular raise a lot of money – which enables them to be so profitable. I should also like to show my appreciation of those who regularly give so generously of their time to help with the social and fund-raising efforts, the advertising of all in the pew sheets and on posters and with the weekly Needles & Natter. They would not be possible without that regular support and terrific teamwork.

**Flowers**

**Val Cadd**

A huge thank you to everyone who has helped this year with 'the flowers'.

Thank you to Laura and Anne for all the Christmas

preparations and everyone who placed the decorations just before Christmas as I was away.

Thank you to Anne, Hilary, Mary, Mike, Paula and Peter who were left with all the clearing up to do in January – thank you.

Thank you to Hilary who arranged fresh flowers at the altar in January in memory of her mother Anne Cooper. There were fresh flowers at Easter and Harvest.

My thanks go to our kind and thoughtful members Noah and Theo and their friends and of course their mum Natalie at Easter who decorated the Easter tree with eggs in the Baptistry.

At Harvest the windows and chancel/altar steps were beautifully decorated – everyone was not only generous with their food gifts but very creative – thank you to Anne, Arma, Barbara & Heather, David, Irene, Loreen, Jane, Natalie, Noah & Theo, Paula and Stella. Lovely to see the tower of tins getting taller, the colours of the baby food containers and the different foods for the alphabet window plus other ideas. Thank you Paula and Peter for delivering all the food gifts and a £30 cash donation to Barbara (who was very grateful) to the Stonehaven Food Bank based at the Far and Wide charity shop.

In May on the 80th anniversary of V. E. day the church was beautifully decorated by Barbara R. and ladies from the Thursday Knit and Natter with handmade poppies – a fitting reminder of the sacrifices made for us by two generations of service people – thank you ladies.

For the remainder of the year with the exception of Advent

and Lent there have been artificial flowers at the altar but if anyone would like fresh flowers placed there please speak to Anne, or me.

The Tree of Life was decorated for Advent 2024 and my thanks go to Heather G in preparation and Barbara R. and Heather M. for taking all the baubles from the tree before Twelfth Night - thank you.

Advent this year begins on Sunday 30th November and baubles will be available from then and I'm hopeful the tree will look as pretty (and comforting) as it always does. Baubles will be available at the back of church from Sunday 30th November, at the Christmas coffee morning on Saturday 6th December and until early January.

The Senior Harvest Festival and afternoon tea was held on the afternoon of Thursday 9th October 2025 in the church hall. To this afternoon we invite older residents from the town's care homes, sheltered housing complexes, members and friends of our congregation to join us for a short harvest thanksgiving service followed by a sweet afternoon tea. We were delighted to welcome residents from Havencourt, Mowat Court, Hanover Court and Turners Court and this year for the first time members of our Thursday Knit and Natter group. Before the service started we were entertained by the Thursday Fiddlers who finished their 'set' with a medley of Scottish tunes that everyone joined in - in the words of ABBA - thank you for the music. Rev Mary led a short harvest service invoking memories of harvests from years gone. Margaret Wells joined us again and played 4 hymns - everyone sang joyfully - again in the words of ABBA, thank you for the music.

From the 'putting up' of the first table to the last sweep of the floor the team work was fantastic - my grateful thanks go to Anne, Barbara, Claire, Clare, Hilary, Jane, Loreen, Rita, Paula and Peter. The afternoon tea was delicious and enjoyed by all. The smiles and words of thanks as folk left was received gratefully. £23 donations were given to Far and Wide Food Bank.

## Communications

**Peter Sharp**

Our means of communication within St James' and the wider SEC are largely unchanged from last year.

We have the weekly pewsheet which shows events for the coming weeks on its back page. Then each month we have the St James' and St Philip's Newsletter which includes a reflection written by Mary, a copy of the latest confirmed minutes from the vestry and other items of interest to the congregation. You can either have it emailed to you each month or it is available on the church website. Printed copies are also available from the table at the back of the church along with material from other organisations that may be of interest to church members. On-line we have the church website ([www.stjames-stonehaven.org.uk](http://www.stjames-stonehaven.org.uk)) which has various information about the church, copies of the newsletters and the notices of church events as well as an area dedicated to our church exhibition. Finally, we have a Facebook page.

The diocese also publishes the Brechin Bulletin weekly, which gives a roundup of diocesan news. It is available on the diocesan website but, if you would like to receive a copy by email then please let the vestry secretary, Anne O'Gorman, know.

The monthly Inspires Online gives news of events across the

Province. As its name suggests this is emailed to subscribers and you can sign up for it at <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/publications/inspires/>.

Further information about diocesan activities can be found on the diocesan website ([www.thedioceseofbrechin.org](http://www.thedioceseofbrechin.org)) and on the provincial website ([www.scotland.anglican.org](http://www.scotland.anglican.org)). So, it is easy to keep in touch with what is happening elsewhere in the church. If you still have concerns or questions about any diocesan matter, then feel free to raise them with me.

I would like to thank Diane Fleming, who not only proof-reads the Newsletter, but provides summaries of vestry minutes and Diana Peters who produces the weekly pew-sheets with her typical efficiency.

## **Minutes of Vestry Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

### **Matters arising**

Mary has spoken to, and emailed, Gill Walker's family explaining that, on advice from the Diocese, it is their policy that no memorials are put up in church.

There is now no toilet in the church (see Fabric Report). Hall users will need to be informed that the hall toilets will be in use if there is an event in the church.

### **Correspondence**

Val has received a card thanking us for the seniors' harvest and tea.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Main Account: £10,969.36

Fabric Fund Account:	£4,586.80
Buildings Account:	£2,841.11
St Philip's:	£11,477.93

Peter was asked if the new contract for gas and electric had been agreed. With this new contract we should have a smart meter fitted but, because we have a 3 phase electric supply, it is not possible to fit one. There is a gas one but it has never worked.

As Trustees we are now required to submit details of our names, addresses, telephone numbers, and date of birth to OSCR. Only names of trustees will be displayed on the OSCR website.

### **Worship/Priest's Report**

Mary retired on 30<sup>th</sup> November, her last service with the Bishop in attendance, was a joint service with St Ternan's. There were 4 confirmations.

Mary and Mike will be leasing the Rectory and staying in this area for the time being. Mike will continue acting as Property Convenor for St Ternan's. Mary said she would particularly miss the Tuesday morning service where there can be up to 17 people. It is a very ecumenical service. There are only 2 people who regularly attend Compline and it is unsure whether that service will continue. Mary is working on a way to continue Still@7.

Mary has received a reference from a minister with whom Claire Star worked previously. Claire has recently moved to the area and has been worshipping with us. Mary will speak to the Bishop.

The Remembrance Day service was at Dunottar Church, although St James had not been officially informed at the October vestry meeting.

George Sneddon is the new minister at Fetteresso Church. A

new priest, Ellie Charman, from Elgin may be the new interim minister for Laurencekirk and may also have a pastoral presence in St James and St Ternan's.

Mary said that she was sorry to be leaving but knows it is the right time. Vestry said they would miss her and appreciated what she had done for St James.

### **Net Zero**

There was a road show at the cathedral attended by Mike and Peter Sharp. It was regarded as a great success with nearly three quarters of the charges in the diocese attending. There was to be a webinar on 30<sup>th</sup> October on Sustainable Travel and one on 6<sup>th</sup> November about the Energy Footprint Tool. There were also remote roadshows on 20<sup>th</sup> November for those unable to attend the one in the cathedral.

### **Fabric**

**Church:** Heating - The Loxone system has been serviced and updated by Andrew McCully. He removed a green mini-router to assess and repair but, despite several call and emails, Peter Fogiel has been unable to ascertain when he might return to re-install it. In the meantime Paula has purchased a couple of timer plugs to assist the practical use of the heating in the office and sacristy.

Exhibition Alarm System - no problems and the alarm system did come into action during the recent power cut on 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

Meraki CCTV - We have had fruitful discussions with the youths involved in the pranks (as previously reported) asking them to respect the church and since then there have been no issues. We recently were able to help the police with footage from one of the hall cameras as there had been an incident with youths at the White Bridge.

Plumbing - the toilet at the rear of the church has now been

removed. Investigations showed that the drainage pipes out to the street had been infiltrated by tree roots and the replacement costs were prohibitive. Lanes Drains gave an excellent service, being very informative throughout the process allowing the vestry to make a swift decision to remove the toilet. This little room is now the cleaner's cupboard.

Roof and Gutters - Maintenance took place in August and has been completed with additional spraying of the whole roof with Wet and Forget which kills moss and seals the slates. Kris and his team were extremely professional and will undertake future regular maintenance.

**Garden:** Inspire continue to be actively involved and have been much more involved in its maintenance after our discussion with Kira.

**Church Hall:** Problems have arisen with the heating and the water pressure in the boiler has regularly been dropping. Dee Don plumbing have attended, a replacement was required and this is now working well.

Hall Lets - Paula continues to enlist numerous lets and there is little availability other than in the school holidays.

### **Fund Raising/Social**

At the Open Doors weekend in September we had crafts and coffee in the hall and this raised £400. On the Sunday Mearns Singers held a concert for UN International Day of Peace. They were very grateful for the use of the church.

Other events were:

22<sup>nd</sup> November - Rock Choir

23<sup>rd</sup> November - Charity Concert with Ian and Friends

6<sup>th</sup> December - - Coffee Morning

7<sup>th</sup> December - Granite City Brass

The church was also booked by Mearns Singers and Richard Cowling for concerts in December.

There was a bring and share lunch in the hall after Mary's last

service to which St Ternan's were invited.

### PVG

We are still waiting for Anne's PVG.

Irene has applied for a PVG for Claire Star and Peter Fogiel

### Next Meeting: 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026

### **Social Report December 2025**

The hall was packed with members of both St James & St Ternan's churches for Mary's Retiral Lunch on 30<sup>th</sup> November. There was a splendid array of savoury and sweet food and plenty of 'fizz' for everyone there. Peter made an excellent speech (see below) to which Mary replied after being presented with a cheque, a small engraved desk clock and vouchers for Baa and Aly Bali. Mike was presented with a bottle of gin. Bishop Andrew was also in attendance.

December has been a very busy month with the Coffee Morning on 6<sup>th</sup> December having a good turn-out and income despite the heavy rain. The church was full for the Granite City Brass Band Christmas Concert on 7<sup>th</sup> December. The church has also been packed with audiences for other concerts arranged by groups outwith the church.

Needles and Natter has continued to be well attended with residents of Havencourt being brought regularly. We celebrated a 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in November (with a surprise birthday cake) and ended the session on 11<sup>th</sup> December with carol singing and festive fare. The group resumes on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January.

On a personal note, I should like to thank everyone for the

support and friendship you have shown me in so many ways over the last two years.

Jane Cook.

## **Retirement Presentation**

*It was requested that the talk that Peter Sharp gave on Mary's retirement should also be printed in the newsletter.*

Frank Sinatra first announced his retirement in 1971 but it was not until a thousand concerts later, in 1995, that he finally stopped performing.

Today was originally scheduled to recognise Mary's final performance before retiring. She is retiring but, like Sinatra, has not stopped performing. I think we can be confident that she is unlikely to have another thousand performances, but we were very happy to hear that she is staying with us in Stonehaven and Muchalls for a few more months, albeit half-time. So today doesn't mark the end of Mary's time in Stonehaven and Muchalls, but perhaps the beginning of the end.

Mary is a great believer in the importance of making links with the local community. Not in the sense of holding revivalist meetings in the Town Square playing her fiddle, but by raising the profile of St James' in the town. The church building is always open during daylight hours – and I think we have only once locked someone in overnight – Mary is a well-known figure around the town and personally helps with organisation, such as the guides and brownies and the sea cadets. She played a leading role in helping Ukrainian refugees to adapt to their new environment by opening the church hall for Friday drop-in meetings for refugees and their host families as well as running a Thursday Afternoon Warm Space Drop In. Arising from conversations at the drop-in a piece of underused space in the church grounds was given over to members of Inspire, a local learning disabilities charity, to grow a vegetable and flower garden. The

project has had the support of other local groups including the Men's Shed and the Masons.

In 2023 this work was recognised in the National Church Awards when St James' won the Church and Community Volunteer Award for its community work in Stonehaven and the surrounding area.

The number of people here today is evidence of the fondness and respect with which Mary is held in our community. That respect is also reflected in the fact that Mary was made a Canon in the Diocese of Brechin.

Mary recently made the headlines in the press, not for the usual reasons that clergy unfortunately appear, but for her expertise in weightlifting. Apparently Mary can deadlift 50kg and can hold a plank for four and a half minutes – whatever that means. Combine that with Mary's more conventional activities for a woman of her maturity of knitting and playing the fiddle, we can see that she is indeed a woman of many talents.

Behind every great woman is a great man and so we must not forget the contribution that Mike has made. Not only does Mike make a wicked bacon butty, but he is the epitome of the handyman. In a building as old as St James' there is never a shortage of work needing done on the fabric and Mike has always been keen to help our buildings team when needed.

I know Mary would be the first to say that what has happened in the congregation of St James' since she arrived nearly 4 years ago, is not due to her alone but she has acted as an inspiration to us all and, when she eventually leaves – which we hope will not be too soon – she will be missed.

## History of the Scottish Episcopal Church (part 1)

*David Fleming attended a talk at the Aberdeen and NE Scotland Family History Society by Nicola Mills. He felt that the section on the history of the Scottish Episcopal Church would be of interest to members of the congregation. So, with Nicola's permission, we will publish it in the Newsletter in two parts.*

The Scottish Episcopal Church, or SEC for short, covers all of Scotland and is divided into seven dioceses, each with its own bishop, dean, and at least one cathedral with a provost in charge. The current dioceses – the results of a number of historical amalgamations and boundary changes – are Argyll & the Isles; Brechin; Edinburgh; Glasgow & Galloway; Moray, Ross & Caithness; St. Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane; and of course Aberdeen & Orkney, which includes Shetland.

The origins of the SEC lie in the Reformation, when both Episcopalians and Presbyterians broke away from the Roman Catholic church. Each was known at different times as the Church of Scotland, the name that now applies to the main Presbyterian church. The Reformation was, as you will know, a complicated, partly political, backwards and forwards thing in Scotland, with key figures including Mary, Queen of Scots and her mother, John Knox, Andrew Melville. In 1560 Presbyterianism was established as the Church of Scotland and the Pope's authority was abolished by the Scottish Parliament, but in reality there were more adherents to an Episcopal church – if not actually a Catholic one – across the country than to the Presbyterian church – many clan chiefs led the way, and certain parts of the country, for example Buchan, just preferred not to do what their government told them and persisted in something more like the old ways. Nothing was settled, and in 1610 under King James VI full episcopacy was restored. King Charles I stirred up trouble again by imposing a Prayer Book on Scotland without any consultation with either the young General Assembly or the Bishops, and attempted to dissolve the General Assembly, which then deposed all the bishops.

The restoration of Charles II to the throne after the Revolution led to a period of further confusion: the Scottish bishops regarded the monarchs William and Mary as a passing fad, and stayed loyal for the most part to the deposed James VII. Following this pattern, many also supported the Jacobites and those who did not were assumed to do so. After the uprisings failed, Episcopalians were subjected to the Penal Laws, which greatly restricted their ability to worship or gather in any numbers, or to build their own buildings. As a kind of consolation, Qualified Chapels sprang up: these, which included St. Paul's in

Aberdeen, were Episcopalian in name and used the English prayer book, but were loyal to King George – I have heard it said, however, that these Qualified Chapels were in fact disguises for the hottest of Jacobite hotbeds after 1745. Outside the Qualified Chapels, people tried to worship in private houses pretty much in secret. When restrictions on the number of people allowed to meet tightened, they tried ruses such as having the minister on an upper landing, with the maximum number allowed for a gathering in each of the rooms off the landing. Often the clergy were arrested and the buildings where they had led worship were burned down – you may know the painting by George Washington Brownlow of a priest carrying out baptisms from the window of the Stonehaven Tolbooth prison. But gradually as the perceived threat of the Jacobites died away, and the last Stuart king-in-exile, Henry IX, died childless in 1788, there was a chance of rapprochement with the government. Taking this opportunity was the then Primus, or leading Bishop, of the church, a man named John Skinner. Skinner was born in Longside, the son of another John Skinner, the clergyman there. When his father was jailed in Aberdeen under the Penal Laws, young John, then around eleven, chose to accompany him, perhaps to act as his link to the outside world. As an adult, John Skinner led worship in the upstairs room chapel of his house in Longacre, where Marischal College is now, and was appointed Co-adjutant Bishop of Aberdeen to assist Robert Kilgour, then Bishop and rector of Peterhead. Later he became Bishop in his own right, then Primus. Due mostly to his diplomatic labours, the Penal Laws were finally lifted in 1792 (though they remained for Roman Catholics until 1829), and in 1804 he also managed to unite the old Qualified Chapels with the non-jurors. The church by this time had only four bishops and forty priests ministering to five percent of the country's population, and only in the Diocese of Aberdeen had there been an almost continuous occupancy of the Bishop's position right the way through.

Nicola Mills

## **ADVERT**

Peter Fogiel announced at the AGM that he and Paula would be retiring from the Buildings' team at the next AGM. With Mike also (perhaps!) having left Stonehaven by then, it means that we have no-one to look after the church buildings. If you would be prepared to join a small team to undertake this important job would you speak with Peter, Paula or Mary who will be glad to explain what it involves.

## Readers and Greeters

<b>Date</b> Natalie Easton	<b>Readings</b>
1st February  4th Sunday in Epiphany	Mic 6.1-8 Ps 15 1 C 1.18-31 Mt 5.1-12
8th February  5th Sunday in Epiphany	Is 58.1-9a,(9b-12) Ps 112.1-9(10) 1 C 2.1-12(13-16) Mt 5.13-20
15th February  6th Sunday in Epiphany	Dt 30.15-20 or Sir 15.15-20 Ps 119.1-8 1 C 3.1-9 Mt 5.21-37
22nd February  1st Sunday in Lent	Gen 2.15-17;3.1-7 Ps 32 Ro 5.12-19 Mt 4.1-11

**Year A – Readings are from the NRSV of the Bible**

<b>Greeter</b>	<b>Lessons 1+2</b>	<b>Coffee</b>
Ian Wilson	Ian Wilson	Catherine Young
Hilary Cooper	Hilary Cooper	Val Cadd
Natalie Easton	Natalie Easton	Irene Paterson
Peter Fogiel	Peter Fogiel	Peter Sharp

## St James', Stonehaven and St Philip's, Catterline

Priest in Charge: Rev. Canon Mary Jepp  
 Vestry Secretary: Anne O'Gorman  
 Phone: 01569 762917 (for pastoral matters)  
 01569 764473 (for other enquiries)

<b>GROUP CONVENORS</b>	
Property	Paula Fogiel, Peter Fogiel and Mike Jepp
Communication	Peter Sharp
Social and Fund-Raising	Paula Fogiel, Anne O'Gorman & Jane Cook
Flowers	Val Cadd
Lay Reader emeritus	Arma Iles
Weekly Pew Sheet	Diana Peters
Hall Management	Paula Fogiel
Protection of Vulnerable Groups Officer	Irene Paterson
Vestry	Rev. Canon Mary Jepp

**The copy deadline for the next Newsletter is Sunday 22nd February 2026.  
Reminders will not be sent out.**

St James Episcopal Church, Stonehaven .Scottish Registered Charity No. SC000301  
 St Philip's Episcopal Church, Catterline Scottish Registered Charity No. SC023282