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

Services at St. James' during May 2026

Sundays.
10.00 am Holy Communion

Tuesdays
10.00 am Said Holy Communion

1st Wednesday of the month
7.00 pm Still @ 7. An opportunity to explore contemplative prayer/meditation within the Christian Tradition

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DIARY NOTES May 2026

Day/Date	Event
3rd May 5th Sunday in Easter	10.00 am Holy Communion Rev Canon Mary Jepp
10th May 6th Sunday in Easter	10.00 am Holy Communion Rev Canon Mary Jepp
17th May 7th Sunday in Easter	10.00 am Holy Communion Rev Canon Mary Jepp
24th May Whitsunday	10.00 am Reserved Sacrament Mrs Anne O'Gorman
31st May Trinity Sunday	10.00 am Songs of Praise Clare and Irene

From Mary,

Sunday the 3rd of May is the fifth Sunday of Easter and the Gospel reading John 14. 1-14 is one that you have heard many times or at least the beginning of it, verses 1-7. At this point you may be saying "do?". Those verses are perhaps the verses that are chosen to be read at funerals more than any others and they begin…. "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me, in my Father's house there are many dwelling places" or perhaps you prefer the words "mansions". As far as funerals go they are words of great comfort as they carry the belief that eternity is vast and that there is room for all regardless of the makeup of the individual; I wonder if the phrase colour, race or creed might be used here.

And so the liturgical year continues with us celebrating Pentecost on the 24th May, the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples gathered in one place.

The name Pentecost comes from the Greek word for 'fiftieth', originally Pentecost referred to the Jewish festival of Shavuot which occurred 50 days after Passover. From the Book of Acts we read…*"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability".*

The feast of Pentecost signifies the reversal of the Genesis story of the Tower of Babel, a story which explains the origin of different languages. Humankind, united with one

language, attempted to build a city and a tower reaching to heaven to, as it says in the Bible, "make a name for themselves" and in reality challenged divine authority. In the story God confounded their speech and scattered the people.

What do you think about these words: "Pentecost with the coming of the Holy Spirit enables unity rather than confusion?" The past few months, and it is months now, I have been dismayed, like many others, with the tidal wave of disruption globally, of the politics and war. I am aware even in the places where we live that there can be disagreements and much intolerance. It does not seem to matter what the organisation is there is intolerance to the opinions, gifts and talents of others, I suppose in many ways it is simply a lack of respect, a recognition of the values and opinions of others; although it may not be recognized as such. Now at this point you may very well be thinking, here she goes again, or she should talk… but ….I know that Jesus calls us to love, but perhaps that command might well be to be tolerant, and where good prevails to be accepting of different ways of doing things, of recognizing what others have to offer. Of course there will always be different ways of doing things, but we can learn from difference, we can be enriched by difference. In the long run does it matter how a cup of coffee is made…or perhaps what matters is that we sit down and enjoy the differences of others.

Our world, our nation, is struggling at the moment, perhaps we in our own small ways can be open to the Spirits call of unity , after all there are many dwelling places in our Father's house, as long as we believe in the one whom he sent, the bearer of love our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Social Report

The Words and Music for Easter by Ian Lovegrove and friends was well attended. There was a super selection of music and the poetry was great too. Philipa Johnson (poet) got a favourite word from each member of the audience and by the end of the afternoon had included them all in a poem (see next article). An incredible skill! There were refreshments afterwards and we received the sum of £124 in donations which is a great start to the organ fund.

Needles and Natter held on Thursdays in the hall continues to be very well attended. It resumed on the 16th of April after an Easter break.

We have a busy few months ahead of us – keep your eyes peeled on the noticeboards and on the back of the pew sheet for what and when.

May

Richard Cowling concert
Christian Aid Fundraiser – Congregational Soup & Sandwich Lunch – please add names to the sheet at the back of the church if you are coming.
Granite City Brass Concert – proceeds to church funds
Stonehaven Chorus
Candlelit Concert
Mearns Singers

June

Feein' Market
Rock Choir

Further ahead events so far:

September – Open doors weekend – Coffee Morning – 19th & 20th

October – Harvest Sunday Congregational Bring & Share Lunch
October – Harvest Thursday Afternoon Tea & Service in the hall
November – Rock Choir
December – Christmas Coffee Morning – Saturday 5th
December – Brass Band – Sunday 6th

Next meeting is planned for **Monday 29th June in the afternoon – 2pm at Loreen's, 8 School Road.**

Barbara

A Stonehaven Sunrise

Here flow the colours of copper
leaching across the sky's ocean of sunrise
from the star-spattered delphinium of pre-dawn
as moonlight's coracle drifts into the harbour of dusk:
the sea-silk's mercurial cloth of rippling calm
lays before the sun's majesty a train of capricious glitter.
This first sunbeam, joyous in scatters of living brass,
acclaims the day, and above, crimson cloud-lace & kingfisher
blue seep in deltaic grandeur towards the heart of the morning,
the cheerful primrose of our wide world's warmth;
the passion & peace of light flood like the longing of love,
like verdant *suscipe*, into Artemis's wild green hills
as she plays the hedgerows' new green like a lyre
with her golden fingertips to call the whole family
of living beings, with their brother mountains & sister rivers,
father earth & mother's watery deeps,
the cousins of roe deer, hedgehogs & humans, soaring bird-souls
to weave their voices into the music of hope's vast canopy,
a polyphonic salute to this beating future.

by Philippa Johnson

Written at the Easter Day concert at St. James Episcopal Church, Stonehaven, with the kind contributions of the audience.

ABIDE WITH ME

The Victorian hymn '*Abide with me*' is a favourite hymn especially for evensong and funerals. It was written by Henry Francis Lyte (1st June 1793 – 20th November 1847). Henry Lyte was born in Ednam, near Kelso. He was the second son of Anna Maria Oliver and Thomas Lyte. Thomas Lyte, an army captain, does not appear to have been formally married to Anna, although it has been argued that, since they were accepted as husband and wife in Scotland, they were legally married according to Scots Law. Lyte's father abandoned the family shortly after arranging for his two oldest sons to attend Portora Royal School in Enniskillen in County Fermanagh. Anna moved to London where she and her youngest son died.

The headmaster of Portora School recognized Lyte's ability, paid his fees and welcomed him into his own family during the holidays. Henry Lyte studied at Trinity College, Dublin and took Anglican holy orders in 1815. He held a curacy near Wexford for a time and in 1817 became a curate in Marazion, Cornwall. Here he met and married Anne Maxwell, she was 31, 7 years older than Henry and a keen Methodist. They had two daughters and three sons. From 1820 – 1822 the Lytes lived in Sway in Hampshire where Lyte's baby daughter died at the age of one month. In 1822 the Lytes moved to Dittisham, Devon, then Charleton. In 1824 Lyte left Charleton for Lower Brixham, a Devon fishing village. Here he established the first Sunday school in the Torbay area and created a Sailors' Sunday School.

The primary object of both (other than religious education) was educating children and seamen for whom no other schooling was available.

Lyte was described as tall and handsome, slightly eccentric but of great personal charm, a man noted for his wit and human understanding. He was an expert flute player and spoke Latin, Greek and French. He supplied bibles to all the ships in the harbour and compiled songs and devotions for use at sea. He was a friend of Samuel Wilberforce and opposed slavery, organising a petition in 1833 requesting it be abolished in Great Britain. At Berry Head House, a former military hospital, Lyte built a library, largely of theology and old English poetry, described in his obituary as one of the most extensive and valuable in the West of England.

Henry Lyte was in poor health for most of his life, suffering from various respiratory illnesses and often visited continental Europe in order to get treatment. He also grew discouraged when numbers of his congregation, including in 1846 nearly his entire choir, left him for Dissenter congregations, especially the Plymouth Brethren, after Lyte expressed High Church sympathies.

By the 1840s Lyte was spending much time in France and Italy undergoing medical treatments such as blistering, bleeding, calomel, tartar emetic, and large doses of Prussic Acid. He spent the summer of 1847 at Berry Head and, after giving one final sermon to his congregation on the subject of Holy Communion he left for Italy and died on 20th November 1847 in Nice.

Henry Lyte is thought to have composed the verses of '*Abide with me*' in 1820 when he was 27. The inspiration seems to

have come from a visit to an old friend who was dying. The dying man kept repeating the phrase 'Abide with me' and this made such a deep impression on Lyte that he composed a set of verses round them. The hymn was not published until after Lyte's death. The scriptural inspiration comes from Luke 24. 29 where the disciples journeying on the road to Emmaus beseech Christ '*Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.*'

Lyte composed his own tune for the hymn however, when *Hymns Ancient and Modern* was being compiled, the editors felt that this was unsatisfactory and the musical editor, William Monk (organist of St Matthias, Stoke Newington) was asked to write a new melody. This tune '*Eventide*' has been connected with the hymn ever since. Monk is supposed to have written the tune in ten minutes following a committee meeting of the compilers of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* and while a piano lesson was going on in the same room.

'*Abide with me*' was much parodied in the First World War. The most common version was *'We've had no beer, we've had no beer today.'* In its original version it gave much comfort to Edith Cavell, the British nurse imprisoned and condemned to death by the Germans in 1915 for helping wounded soldiers to escape. One criticism of this hymn was that it was best kept for funerals since it was almost too intense and personal for ordinary congregational use. The practice of singing '*Abide with me*' at the FA Cup Final in Wembley Stadium began in 1927 with the strong approval of King George V who shared with his wife Queen Mary a particular affection for the hymn. This hymn was played at his funeral. It is still a favourite at various state occasions and was played by a Salvation Army band at Ground Zero in the aftermath of the terrorist attack on

the World Trade Centre on 11th September 2001.

Other Hymns by Henry Francis Lyte In Our Hym Book
God of Mercy, God of Grace No 227
Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven No 565
References
Book of Hymns – Ian Bradley *Wikipedia*
Abide with Me – Ian Bradley

Easter flowers

The church was decorated on Easter Saturday morning with vases of daffodils picked by Diana and Tony - thank you so much and thanks also to Mary and John Forbes for access to their daffodil fields.

AND thank you to Hilary and Barbara for your invaluable help on Easter Saturday and to Arma, Hilary and Loreen for roses and spray carnations - the church looked very pretty.

We are very fortunate at St. James to have such generosity and talent. Thank you very much

Val Cadd (Flower Convenor)

1st May - May Day and unbridled merriment

May is the month when the ancient pagans used to get up to 'all sorts'! The Romans held their festival to honour the mother-goddess Maia, goddess of nature and growth. (May is named after her.) The early Celts celebrated the feast of Beltane, in honour of the sun god, Beli.

For centuries in 'Olde England' the people went mad in May.

After the hardship of winter, and hunger of early Spring, May was a time of indulgence. One Philip Stubbes, writing in 1583, was scandalised: 'for what kissing and bussing, what smooching and slabbering one of another, is not practised?'

Henry VIII went 'maying' on many occasions. Then folk would stay out all night in the dark rain-warm thickets and return in the morning for dancing on the green around the May pole, archery, vaulting, wrestling, and evening bonfires.

The Protestant reformers took a strong stand against May Day, and in 1644 May Day was abolished altogether. Many May poles came down - only to go up again at the Restoration, when the first May Day of King Charles's reign was 'the happiest Mayday that hath been many a year in England', according to Pepys.

May Day to most people today brings vague folk memories of a young Queen of the May decorated with garlands and streamers and flowers, a May Pole to weave, Morris dancing, and the intricacies of well dressing at Tissington in Derbyshire.

May Day is a medley of natural themes such as sunrise, the advent of summer, growth in nature, and - since 1833 - Robert Owen's vision of a millennium in the future, beginning on May Day, when there would be no more poverty, injustice or cruelty, but harmony and friendship. This is why, in modern times, May Day has become Labour Day, which honours the dignity of workers. And until recently, in communist countries May Day processions were in honour of the achievement of Marxism.

There has never been a Christian content to May Day, but

nevertheless there is the well-known 6am service on the top of Magdalen Tower at Oxford where a choir sings in the dawn of May Day.

An old May carol includes the lines:

The life of man is but a span, it flourishes like a flower
We are here today and gone tomorrow - we are dead within an hour.

There is something of a sadness about it, both in words and tune, as there is about all purely sensuous joy. For May Day is not Easter, and the joys it represents have always been earth-bound and fleeting.

24th May - Pentecost

We used to call it Whitsun – 'White Sunday' because long ago children marched to church in white on that day. There are no processions nowadays, and we've even changed its name. It's now 'Pentecost', which is more accurate but needs explaining.

Pentecost marks a vital event in Christian history. It is celebrated 50 days after Easter. The year Jesus was crucified (which took place at the Passover), the remnant of His followers, just 120 of them, were together in an upper room in Jerusalem. They were afraid to show their faces in case the authorities arrested them. But on the day of Passover, they had an amazing collective experience.

They described it in terms of wind and fire, a great surge of spiritual energy and confidence. Afraid no longer, they burst out on to the streets where crowds were gathering for the festival, led by Peter they began to tell them about Jesus and His resurrection. As they did so, although many of the people in the crowd were foreigners who spoke other languages, every-

one heard them in their own tongue. Peter told them that what they were seeing was the fulfilment of an old prophecy when God would pour out His Spirit on the human race, men and women, young and old.

As a result of His words and the extraordinary spectacle, 3,000 people believed and were baptised in the name of Jesus. They were the nucleus of what in 100 years would be a Church that would turn history upside down. For Christians Pentecost is in effect the birthday of the Church.

Many people find the whole idea of the Holy Spirit mysterious and elusive. It wasn't helped by the earlier title 'Holy Ghost'. The spirit is not spiritually a 'ghost' but a precious gift.

Adverts

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

Date	Readings
3rd May 5th Sunday in Easter	Acts 7.55-60 Ps 31.1-5,15-16 1 P 2.2-10 Jn 14.1-14
10th May 6th Sunday in Easter	Acts 17.22-31 Ps 66.7-18 1 P 3.13-22 Jn 14.15-21
17th May 7th Sunday in Easter	Acts 1.6-14 Ps 68.1-10,33-36 1 P 4.12-14;5.6-11 Jn 17.1-11
24th May Whitsunday	Acts 2.1-21 or Nu 11.24-30 Ps 104.25-35,37 1 C 12.3b-13 or Acts 2.1-21 Jn 20.19-23 or Jn 7.37-39
31st May Trinity Sunday	Gen 1.1-2.4a Ps 8 2 C 13.11-13 Mt 28.16-20

Year A – Readings are from the NRSV of the Bible

Greeter	Lessons 1+2	Coffee
Hilary Cooper	Hilary Cooper	Peter Sharp
Natalie Easton	Natalie Easton	Diane Fleming
Peter Fogiel	Peter Fogiel	Natalie Easton
Diana Peters	Diana Peters	Hilary Cooper
Val Cadd	Val Cadd	Richard Clark

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)

GROUP CONVENORS	
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 24th May 2026.
Reminders will not be sent out.

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