



# St John the Baptist Scottish Episcopal Church Perth

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April and May 2026

# Weekly Services

Sunday	8.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Sunday	10.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist
Thursday	11.00 a.m.	Communion, coffee and a chance to chat



**Good Friday Devotions 12 – 3 p.m.**  
**Easter Sunday Eucharist 10.30 a.m.**

# Swieconka – Easter Baskets

## A Guide to the Świąconka Tradition

One of the most beautiful and meaningful Easter traditions in Poland is the Świąconka, the traditional Polish Easter basket. On Holy Saturday, families across Poland bring carefully prepared baskets filled with symbolic foods to church to be blessed. This centuries-old custom expresses gratitude, faith, and the joy of Easter.

Świąconka (pronounced shvee-en-SOON-kah) is one of the most enduring and beloved traditions in Polish culture. The basket contains small portions of foods that will later be eaten during Easter Sunday breakfast. Each item has a special symbolic meaning connected to Christian faith and the celebration of the Resurrection.

Traditionally, the basket is lined with a white linen or lace cloth and decorated with sprigs of boxwood (bukszpan), a common Easter evergreen in Poland. Many families take great pride in preparing a beautiful basket, sometimes using embroidered cloths and colourful ribbons woven through the handle. During the blessing at church, people often admire the carefully arranged baskets of other parishioners, making the event both spiritual and communal.

In earlier times, especially in rural villages, a priest might visit homes to bless the Easter foods. Today, however, most Polish families bring their baskets to church on Holy Saturday. This is also true for many Polish communities living abroad, including Polish families in Scotland and other countries.

For Poles living outside Poland, preparing an Easter basket remains an important way to stay connected to their heritage and traditions.

The word Świąconka comes from the Polish word meaning “the blessing of the Easter baskets.” On Holy Saturday, families bring beautifully

decorated baskets filled with small portions of traditional foods to church. A priest blesses the baskets with holy water and prayers.

### **Prayer for the Blessing of the Eggs and Pisanki**

Chryste, nasze życie I zmartwychwstanie,  
pobłogosław + znak nowego życia, abyśmy  
dzieląc się nimi w gronie rodziny, bliskich i  
gości, mogli się także dzielić wzajemnie  
radością z tego, że jesteś z nami. Pozwól nam  
wszystkim dojść do Twojej wiecznej uczyty w  
domu Ojca, gdzie żyjesz I królujesz na wieki  
wieków. Przez Chrystusa Pana naszego, Amen.

### **English Summary:**

The blessing addresses Christ, our Life and Resurrection. It asks Him to bless the eggs, the sign of new life; asks Him to remember our family, those near as well as guests, especially those who wait in the hope of being with Him. We wait to accompany Him to His Father's house, where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

The priest then sprinkles the individual baskets with Holy Water.

Many thanks to the Revd Mariusz Wojciechowski

# Fellowship

The February meeting of the Fellowship turned out exactly as I had anticipated in my report in the February / March Quest. Marjorie Clark is an excellent speaker and gave a fascinating presentation on Heritage Plaques in Perth. It did just as predicted show up just how unobservant I have been over the past 55 years during which Perth has been my home and I have done a great deal of walking around all districts of Perth! There have always been some I was aware of. I spent 46 of those years living in Craigie so that I had always noticed the prominent plaque on the house in Wilson Street where William Soutar lived for many years, housebound due to illness, writing poetry. I have on occasion stopped and read plaques on buildings in Rose Terrace but there were a great number that I must have walked past many times with my eyes and thoughts elsewhere. I think others among us, but not all, were also a bit shaken by how much they had missed but there are also some amongst our membership who have considerably greater knowledge of the existence of and history behind these many plaques than I have.

A month later we had a visit from two community safety advocates, Keith and Asha, both based at Perth Fire Station. Keith had spent much of his career as an operational fireman and Asha's career has been in general community safety which includes fire safety and prevention. They chatted with us informally, welcoming our questions but pointing out that we do have to balance our decision-making on risk with what our actual circumstances are. It is up to us to make our own decisions on whether we decide to take their advice on the safest option, which is to turn off and unplug every appliance at the wall each night, or the advice from the utilities encouraging us to wash our clothes and dishes during the night when most of us are sleeping because it is cheaper. It suits the Power companies to have more or less uniform use of the electricity supply over any 24 hour period. This all led to interesting discussion and it transpired that there can be a number of very good reasons why various things need

to be switched on at very specific times; that it is not necessarily a good idea to advise the frailest 90 year old to get down on their knees and crawl into an inaccessibly poky corner to reach, turn off and unplug the TV and then do the same next morning to switch it on again, and repeat this every day.

Swarthick Salins from the Bethany Trust, who gave a very interesting talk two years ago on the hospital in India which his family are very involved in has offered to come back, not just because he would like to update us but also because he was so disappointed that he was unable to show us photos of it due to our projector not working. We want to do our best to make sure the projector doesn't play up again and with this in mind the plan is that he will come to either the April or the May meeting but at this stage I am not sure which.

Jean Hendry



Aconites

Flower photographs courtesy of Patricia Noel-Paton,  
Gardening Correspondent

# Coming to Church

Between that fearful occasion of coming to church, which St Augustine confesses and laments, that they came to make wanton bargain with their eyes, and met there because they could meet nowhere else; and that more fearful occasion of coming, when they came only to elude the law and proceeding in their treacherous and traitorous religion in their hearts\*, and yet communicating with us, draw God himself into their conspiracies and, to mock us, make a mock of God and his religion, too; between these two, this licentious coming and this treacherous coming there are many comings to church, comings for company, for observation, for music. And all these indispositions are ill at prayers. There they are unwholesome, but at the Sacrament, deadly. He that brings any collateral respect to prayers loses the benefit of the prayers of the congregation; and he that brings that to a sermon, loses the blessing of good ordinance in that sermon; he hears but the Logic, or the Rhetoric, or the Ethic, or the Poetry of the sermon. But the Sermon of the sermon he hears not. But he that brings this disposition to the Sacrament, ends not in the loss of a benefit but he acquires and procures his own damnation.

They don't make sermons like that anymore!

John Donne (1572-1631) is one of England's foremost poets. In his youth he was a soldier and gallant and wrote satires, love poems, elegies (some of them highly erotic) and sonnets. He began to have doubts about his \*recusant Catholic upbringing. He turned to religious themes in his writing and eventually in 1615 was ordained as a priest in the Church of England. At the same time he wrote Holy Sonnets and Meditations on religious themes. From 1621 until his death he was Dean of St Paul's Cathedral and preached before the King. Many of his sermons have survived. They are long and erudite and in the elaborate style of the times. Their message is uncompromising.

David Willington

# Candles

I read a little episode about the lighting of candles in a novel recently, which appealed to me. It concerns a girl of about eight or nine and two adults, one a friend called Pete, and the other her stepfather, Ulysses.

She has been with Pete when he has been lighting candles and now is in a church in Florence with Ulysses, inviting him to do the same. She tells him to think very hard about someone he likes, pick up the candle still thinking hard about the person, light it and then put it on the stand. He asks her if she thinks the person knows he is thinking about them, and she says “Pete says it's like a special telephone call. They get the message even when they aren't in.”

Ruth Harris



Daphne bholua - very fragrant

# Lectionary April and May 2026

## **April 5<sup>th</sup> Easter Day**

Jeremiah 31.1-6, Acts 10.34-43, John 20.1-18

## **April 12<sup>th</sup> Second Sunday of Easter**

Acts 2.14a, 22-32, 1 Peter 1.3-9, John 20.19-31

## **April 19<sup>th</sup> Third Sunday of Easter**

Acts 2.14a, 36-41, 1 Peter 1.17-23, Luke 24.13-35

## **April 26<sup>th</sup> Fourth Sunday of Easter**

Acts 2.42-47, 1 Peter 2.19-25, John 10.1-10

## **May 3<sup>rd</sup> Fifth Sunday of Easter**

Acts 7.55-60, 1 Peter 2.2-10, John 14.1-14

## **May 10<sup>th</sup> Sixth Sunday of Easter**

Acts 17.22-31, 1 Peter 3.13-22, John 14.15-21

## **May 14<sup>th</sup> Ascension Day**

Acts 1.1-11, Ephesians.15-23, Luke 24.44-53

## **May 17<sup>th</sup> Seventh Sunday of Easter**

Acts 1.6-14, 1 Peter 4.12-14;5.6-11, John 17.1-11

## **May 24<sup>th</sup> Day of Pentecost**

Numbers 11.24-30, Acts 2. 1-21, John 20.19-23

## **May 31<sup>st</sup> Trinity Sunday**

Genesis 1.1- 2.4a, 2 Corinthians 13.11-13, Matthew 28.16-20

# HOLY WEEK AND EASTER AT ST JOHN'S 2026



## ***Palm Sunday***

**8.30 a.m.** Holy Communion

**10.30 a.m.** Sung Eucharist with Procession of Palms

## ***Monday***

**8.30 a.m.** Morning Prayer followed by tea and coffee

## ***Tuesday***

**8.30 a.m.** Morning Prayer followed by tea and coffee



## ***Wednesday***

**7.00 p.m.** Stations of the Cross with incense

## ***Maundy Thursday***

**11.00 a.m.** Holy Communion

**7.00 p.m.** Sung Eucharist with Feet Washing and Vigil, ends with compline at 8.30 p.m.



## ***Good Friday***

**12 - 3.00 p.m.** Good Friday Devotions, led by Canon Elaine Garman and Liturgy of the Lord's Passion.

## ***Saturday***

**1.30 p.m.** **Swieconka 2026.** The blessing of Easter baskets.



## ***Easter Sunday***

**7.00 a.m.** PACT Dawn Service at Quarrymill

**8.30 a.m.** Holy Communion

**10.30 a.m.** Sung Eucharist

# Eco Group

## Questionnaire

The Eco Group are planning to carry out a survey of how people travel to St John's by means of a short questionnaire. This is to allow us to more accurately calculate the church's carbon footprint. It will also give details of car-sharing arrangements available at St John's.

We hope to carry out the survey in the next couple of months. We will have copies of the questionnaire available in the church pews, at coffee in the Threshold and an electronic version online. Please only fill it in once!

## Rosebank

We are also supporting the campaign to oppose the development of the Rosebank oil field (located north-west of the Shetland Islands). We have obtained a supply of postcards for people to send to their MP and/or MSP. These will be available at coffee in the Threshold if anyone wishes to join us and take a couple of the postcards to send off.

Cath Bodrell – Eco Group member



Laucojum

# Baptism

Jayden Thaveesh Seneviratne Mudiyansele  
Baptism 15th February 2026

In the same week that we said goodbye to Anne Addison, a wonderful member of St John's, who passed away on the 20th January, we celebrated Jayden's baptism and welcomed him, mum Achini, dad Tharindu and friends to St John's. His Sri Lankan extended family and friends ensured it was a warm and colourful occasion. Dean Graham and Jackie, one of our intercessors, had and have the privilege and honour to be two of his godparents, ensuring his Christian journey started and continues from St John's wherever his life takes him. The Threshold was decked out with banners and balloons and Sri Lankan nibbles were shared by all, along with the Baptismal cake and chocolate cake for the children. A delightful, spicy (but not too hot and spicy) change from our usual coffee after church. May God bless Jayden on his Christian journey.

Jackie Thomson



# More Angels

In her piece in the February/March issue of *Quest*, Ruth Harris asked if we believed in angels. The reason one does or does not believe in them may be found in another observation in the same magazine from David Willington's article: 'At eighteen one never thinks beyond the immediate future.' The passage goes on to describe 'the infirmities of old age, pessimism, physical weakness, in short, all the ills the flesh is heir to'.

I would suggest that in youth we receive kindness and goodness but do not consider that they have come from a guardian angel. However, as time wears on and we receive the same type of treatment, perhaps we appreciate them more, and regard them as angelic acts.

On a lighter note, many years ago when I was a choirboy in St Mary's Church, Portobello, especially at Christmas time as we sang softly and sweetly *Away in a manger*, mutterings were heard in the congregation from people whom we perceived to be very old, 'How angelic!' An honest boy would tell you that though we were dressed like angels and sang sweetly, angels we were not.

Perhaps I should not believe in angels.

Raymond King

Early Rhododendron



I'm always amazed when folk say they've never heard of Christian Aid – where have they been since WW2 ended? This international charity fights poverty and responds to humanitarian emergencies, no matter how tough.

This year, Christian Aid Week, May 10 – 16, is our shared moment to stand alongside mothers living in poverty, in Nairobi, Kenya, where they face devastating urban poverty and the daily struggle to feed their children.



Meet Belinda Kasudi, her husband, David, and three of their children. They live in a one-room home: income is uncertain.

Work is unreliable. When there is no work, there is no money. And no money means no food. Belinda said, 'We have to buy everything – even water.' Providing enough food for the children is very difficult.'

When part of a women's savings group Belinda heard about Imarisha Kilimo, a project supporting women to learn new skills and grow nutritious food in the city. Linda was delighted, 'I was very happy because there was so much to learn. I felt at home.' She received tools, seeds and a cone garden, whose space-efficient design lets many plants grow in a small area. Belinda said this was a blessing as 'it's very difficult to find a plot in Nairobi.'

Belinda's urban farm now produces spinach, beetroot, maize and local vegetables. She sells some, earning money for school costs and household essentials.

'When I sell vegetables, I can pay school costs. I don't have to beg for money.'

Her independence has changed how she sees herself. 'As a woman, you don't have to be dependent on the man for everything.' Now she

supports other urban farmers and hopes to become a leader in her community.

She and David are determined that their children will not be worried about food. So, with her new budgeting skills, she plans to save for their future education.

Her story shows what can happen when women are trusted with the tools and training to lead change themselves. Christian Aid see this as turning hope into action, and so building a fairer, more peaceful world.

Here in Perth, ideas for raising funds and helping build a fairer, more peaceful world are taking shape for 2026.

Firstly, Gerry at Kinnoull has again agreed to have a second-hand Book Sale at Kinnoull church on **Saturday May 9**. So, please start rummaging through your books to find some to give to Gerry for his stall. Last year, they raised about £1500.00. You can either bring books here to St John's or tell me if you wish them collected.

On Sunday May 17, we are going to have a fund-raising Lunch here at church. There will be a sheet at back of church for you to register what you may bring for the table. And don't be shy if your favourite food is not listed – just add it to what's there!



Please let me know if you're happy to help, in any way with this lunch – preparing the Threshold, setting tables, arranging flowers, and so on.

During Christian Aid Week, we will have the usual envelopes in church.

With my prayers and thanks in advance,

Elaine Cameron, Christian Aid rep



Please give as generously as you can in 2026 to my **LENT APPEAL** supporting **CHRISTIAN AID** in their work with communities in **BURKINA FASO** in north-west Africa, being devastated by drought caused by **CLIMATE CHANGE**.

With my thanks and blessing for a holy Lent and a joyful Easter.

*+ Ian Stewart*

### Climate Change and Burkina Faso

In an area where a changing climate has been expanding the Sahara Desert southwards, securing local agricultural resilience is important both in the lives of local communities, and globally for our shared environment.

Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world, with more than 40% of the population living in poverty. The country also remains one of the most vulnerable, impacted by climate change, armed conflict and political instability.



The Centre-North and Sahel regions are especially vulnerable, and a humanitarian crisis is fast unfolding. Local communities are witnessing increasingly erratic and damaging weather patterns and events, including droughts, flooding, epizootic disease and locust attacks. For a population reliant on agriculture, who depend on crop and livestock production for their income and food, this is devastating.



## in Burkina Faso

In this part of north-west Africa, where the changing climate has been expanding the Sahara Desert southwards, local agricultural resilience is needed for local communities, and for our shared environment. Christian Aid and its partners are working with local communities to enable them to adapt and change to meet the crisis being caused by climate change.

Working in the Centre-North and Sahel regions of Burkina Faso, this Christian Aid project, working with local churches and other partners, is aiming to reach about 10,000 people in 14 communities.

### The project will bring a range of long-lasting benefits:

- **Improved and strengthened livelihoods**, with more diverse and sustainable income and opportunities. This will help people to meet their basic needs and to reduce levels of poverty, as well as building their resilience.
- **Greater food security and improved nutrition** through improved shared action and education, as well as the creation of jobs and monthly cash payments to the most vulnerable.
- **Improved environmental management and sustainability**, through training to ensure the better use and management of natural resources, as well as adapting techniques and approaches to become resilient to climate change.
- **More peaceful, stable and secure communities** thanks to a range of activities aimed at strengthening social and living conditions, as well as boosting peace and cooperation amongst neighbours.



More information can be found at

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/our-work/where-we-work/burkina-faso>

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION TO THE LENT APPEAL 2026.**

Please send it to your Scottish Episcopal Church Treasurer  
or by Bank transfer to:

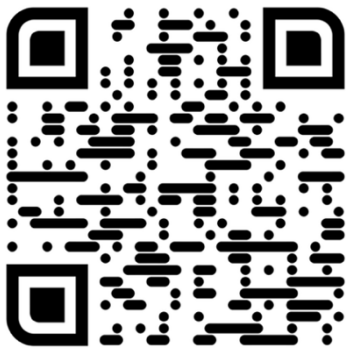
Diocese of St Andrews Lent Appeal (SC017654 )  
Sort Code: 82-68-31  
Account No: 00187750  
using Ref. 'Lent Appeal 2026'.

## From the Editor

Thanks very much for everyone's contributions to this issue. All entries to the editor, David Willington [dwillington@hotmail.com](mailto:dwillington@hotmail.com) for our June and July issue by **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May**.

**Just a reminder that there is a tin at the back of the Church  
if you wish to donate towards the costs of  
producing *Quest*.**

## Helpful QR Codes



St John's website



St John's Facebook page

# Contact Information \*indicates member of the Vestry

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<b>Church Activities</b>			
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Flowers	Christine Bracewell*	552817	
Magazine	David Willington*	813787	
Fellowship/PACT	Jean Hendry	623603	
Young Church	Jean Hendry	623603	
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