



Abbey Church

and

Dirleton Kirk News

February/March 2021

Minister:

Rev. Dr David J Graham, BSc, BD

Sunday Morning Worship

**Wednesday Prayer Service
Dirleton**

**All church services are currently
suspended due to COVID-19**

Our services are available by email, on our website, Facebook page, and YouTube channel (see back page for details).

Printed copies of the words are also available, please let the Church Office know if you would like to receive these.



Dear Dirleton & Abbey Friends,

Someone once said that if we don't learn from history, we're doomed to repeat its mistakes. I wonder what we can learn from the present global pandemic?

I'm sure we've been aware of how important it is to be good neighbours, especially for people who are isolated, vulnerable or housebound. Of course, that's not just something which is relevant for a time like this, but should be a ongoing concern.

There's also a global dimension to this: I read in the news that while many countries have millions of vaccines available, one poor country only has 5 doses of it for its whole population. On a world-wide scale, how seriously do we take the Bible's command to care for the poor?

Perhaps another lesson is about the environment, and materialism. Can we live with less, and do less damage to the world which God gave us as a good gift? Could we travel less, and do our bit for climate change?

I hope we're all learning another lesson, about the importance of worship and fellowship. *'Don't stop meeting together'* says the writer of Hebrews (10:25). For part of the year we haven't been able to meet physically in a building, yet there have been many opportunities to meet in other ways. While some people have taken this opportunity, it puzzles me that many in our congregations haven't, whether at Sunday morning 'zoom church', our fellowship time afterwards, the Sunday evening half-hour of prayer, or the Bible studies and fellowship groups. Does this mean that 'meeting together' isn't important for them? What if church as we knew it never returns to 'normal', how will we adapt and cope with that?

Many years ago, a church plant in a new housing development created a 'digital community' for the residents. Some people scoffed and thought it was an unnecessary bit of 'science fiction'. But who got the last laugh? We're living in changed times, and the church has put a lot of time and creative energy into new ways of worship which have been innovative and creative. Perhaps the main lesson God wants to teach us is to move on, and speak to a changed world in the new ways it's already using. The apostles in the early church had to do that, and the result was a new and vibrant global mission.

The writer to the Hebrews was concerned about people drifting away from the faith, and in those days of crisis he said it was even more vital to meet together. What about us?

Your Minister,
David

'We moved forward ten years in ten weeks' read the Moderator on how Covid has changed the church (other Sunday newspapers are also available!):

<https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/we-moved-forward-ten-years-in-ten-weeks-moderator-on-why-the-crisis-of-covid-might-leave-behind-a-stronger-more-modern-kirk/?>

fbclid=IwAR34E2hbOIyIpTia4_ABlgmnT6PJgpFICdZOpjYqbXBpwfg5mNEYdKWwNnI

Thank you from the Minister and family

We're very grateful for the many cards and messages on the recent death of David's Mother.

Thank you for all your support and prayers.

Lent Group

During Lent, our Sunday evening half-hour will be a devotional time in preparation for Easter. I'd like to recommend a very good book by Rev Gordon Giles 'At Home in Lent. The Story in 47 Objects'. I used his Advent book before Christmas, and really enjoyed it. He takes one familiar household object each day, and reflects on its meaning and how it relates to our life journey. If you'd like a copy to use, the Nurture Committee can provide them, the £8.99 cover price will probably be discounted. This will start on Sunday 21st February (the first Sunday of Lent), and end on Sunday 28th March (Palm Sunday).

Sunday Services and Bible Study

From Sunday 24th January and for the following few weeks, our Sunday services will be looking at the life and ministry of the prophet Jeremiah. I was inspired to do this after reading Eugene Peterson's book 'Run With the Horses, the Quest for Life at its Best'. You don't need to have read the book, but by all means get a copy if you want to go deeper.

Each Sunday will have a follow-up Bible Study on Tuesday evenings from 7-8pm. A 'zoom' link for this will be send out later (please contact the Office if you don't get the weekly emails which will include this).

These are the dates and themes. I hope you can join us on Sunday mornings and Tuesday evenings.

Sunday 24th & Tuesday 26th January	What's in a Name? Jeremiah 1:1-5
Sunday 31st January & Tuesday 2nd February	Pleading Inadequacy Jeremiah 1:6-19
Sunday 7th & Tuesday 9th February	Fake News! Jeremiah 7:1-15
Sunday 14th & Tuesday 16th February	God's Shaping Hand Jeremiah 8:1-18
Sunday 21st & Tuesday 23rd February	Honesty, the Best Policy Jeremiah 15:10-21
Sunday 28th February & Tuesday 2nd March	Obedience Jeremiah 35
Sunday 7th & Tuesday 9th March	Make the best of it Jeremiah 29:1-14

DIRLTON KIRK SESSION

Keith Stewart, Session Clerk, Dirleton Kirk

Christmas arrived on the back of the dismal news that coronavirus was dictating the resumption of more stringent lockdown measures, and the Kirk Session agreed that public worship should again be suspended, from 22nd December. Our Watchnight service was conducted by electronic means, and the service in Abbey on Christmas morning was the last occasion on which (along with our linked congregation) we could meet together in person.

As the process of vaccination gathers pace, we will continue to follow the approach suggested by the Church of Scotland (while noting where the application of restrictions elsewhere in the country may seem to leave others more free to worship than we are...).

I enjoyed the Watchnight service enormously, participating with four others in our family 'bubble', and reflecting that but for covid we would not have been able to join in, being away in Angus. Joining in remotely, with reading and singing, and seeing on the screen the view which others would have had of us, reminded me of the line in the children's hymn *Jesus bids us Shine*: 'you in your small corner, and I in mine'. The only technical difficulty which was apparent where I was did not come from the technology by which the service was hosted, but rather from the teenage children singing from different versions of the hymns, which they had found on their phones...hopefully there

was no discord in the sound! There was nothing discordant in Lucy Graham's beautifully sung solo.

The renovation work on the organ has- at long last- been completed. How ironic that the organ should be restored to a level at which it sounds better than most of us can remember hearing it, at a time when it is not possible for it to be played in public worship! But, once again, let us be thankful for the care and skill of Jamie Lightoller, who carried out the works; for Jim Dickson, who provided guidance; for David Kirkpatrick, who stewarded the operation over a prolonged period; and for the generosity of the anonymous donor who provided the funding. One of the happier developments over the past few months has been the way in which the company in church on Sundays remains in their pews to hear Jim's playing, to the very close of the service- hearing the full range of the organ played in future is another thing to look forward to in the year ahead.

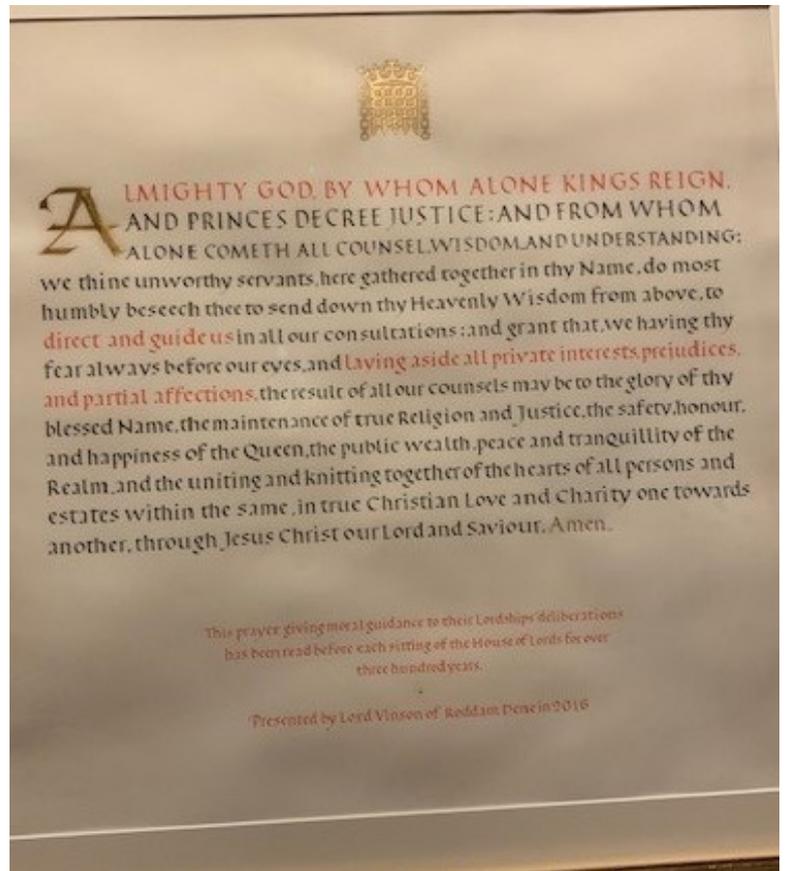
As well as public worship, the use of the Church Hall has been suspended by the resumption of tighter restrictions. We had arranged to have the playgroup as sole user, so that there would be less need for repeated thorough cleaning of the hall. Hopefully they will be able to resume activities soon- to the delight of the toddlers and, no doubt, the profound relief of their parents.

Finally, thanks very much to Hazel Gray for providing the filmed Nativity play which we enjoyed at our last service in Advent, and for her always thoughtful and innovative ways of keeping the church in touch with

young people during these unprecedented times. She organised the preparation of Advent and Christmas activity bags for children, and the take-up of these has been very encouraging.

I wish everyone the best for the New Year and, as we journey through this season of Epiphany to Lent and Easter, that we may be brought together in person as we are kept together in spirit.

From the Corridor
outside
The House Of Lords



I've been asked if I will run a class for learning to read the New Testament in Greek. This will be a fortnightly group on 'zoom' (day & time tbc). There's a book, and also some audio files and web resources to help. The only cost would be for the book. If this is something you'd like to do, please contact the minister or church office. The old saying that 'if the Authorised Version was good enough for Saint Paul' . . . really isn't true. Even the translators of the AV had to know their Greek.

The first test is to translate this word: $\Delta\alpha\upsilon\delta$

Rev David Graham

ABBEY CHURCH KIRK SESSION

Robert Burgon, Session Clerk, Abbey Church

It was good to be able to worship in church during Advent up to and including our service on Christmas Day. The numbers attending those services continued to be encouraging and there was only one occasion (the Sunday before Christmas) when we were unable to welcome all those who wished to attend. The initial reduction in the maximum numbers who could attend live services to 20, followed quickly by a second requirement from the Scottish Government that places of worship should close, saw our regular worship services returning to online (and printed and posted for those who are unable to access the online services). While disappointing after four months of live worship, we accept and understand the reasons behind these decisions and look forward (again) to the day when we can meet together in person. In the meantime, we give thanks for the programme of vaccination which is offering protection from serious illness to large sections of the community and we continue to pray for our brothers and sisters affected by the virus and the ongoing restrictions.

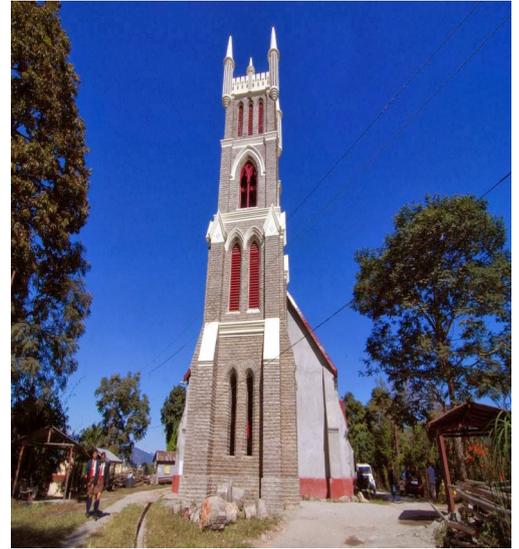
It was good to be able to celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion in church on Sunday 13 December. As we're not permitted to distribute the elements of bread and wine in the normal way, we made use of some pre-packaged individual containers which worked well

and were appreciated by those in attendance.

The Kirk Session met by Zoom on 7 December 2020. Most years we would have meetings every second month but in 2020, we actually met 9 times, most of them taking place online (and all having better attendance than would have been likely at physical meetings). The following items summarise some of the issues discussed at the December meeting.

Our Young People's Worker, Hazel Gray, continues to be busy in her work in the community including at Law Primary School where she continues to contribute recorded messages for Assemblies and other special events. Hazel developed an exciting range of activities for Advent and, with support from Abbey members and representatives of other churches in the town, there was a competition which encouraged children to spot items associated with the Christmas story in local shop windows. In addition, four large painted boards were erected in church grounds depicting aspects of Christmas. The board in the Abbey Church garden was painted by our own Milne Brodie (who was also the artist behind the giant Christmas card displayed in church during December and which saw a healthy donation being made to the East Lothian Foodbank). As the usual holiday club was unable to meet, Hazel developed video materials which were supported by Christmas craft activity bags and which were hand-delivered to some 60 children.

Our World Church Committee has set a goal of increasing the frequency of communication with our twinned congregation at MacFarlane Memorial Church in Kalimpong (as well as increasing the number of people involved in that communication). A WhatsApp group has been set up and has already seen a welcome improvement in the two-way communication between Scotland and North India.



The Kirk Session was delighted to note that the Brownie pack which usually meets in the Abbey Church halls was to celebrate its centenary in December 2020. Over its first hundred years, this pack has only had a relatively small number of leaders and it was noted that many of them were members of the Abbey congregation.

Our next Kirk Session meeting will take place, again by Zoom, on Monday 1 February 2020. One of the items to be considered at that meeting will be to review a draft of the Annual Report which, with the annual accounts, will be circulated to members in due course.

Nurture Jan 2021

May I be perhaps the very last to wish you a happy and safe New Year

The Abbey nurture committee is due to meet in the next few weeks and there are a couple of things I would like to tell you about.

The first is a dirty great unashamed plug! Those of you who read the intimations avidly will be ahead of me, but all good news can do with a second telling.

After the very popular and successful Advent studies led by our minister David, we will be having a series of Lent studies "At home in Lent, The story in 47 objects" The book that accompanies these is by the same author David used for the Advent series, Rev Gordon Giles.

Our committee will be offering discounted books for only £5 if you would like one let me know... details below.

The second thing is actually a request for help, don't panic, I won't ask you to do or run anything (not this time) but rather to think! We are looking for ideas or suggestions that the committee could take forward.

We have, as part of our remit, the role of supporting both the Guild and Regal; in some of the last few editions I have boldly set out plans for the months to come covid permitting! It has finally sunk in to even my brain that things keep changing and to be honest it may be the summer or early autumn before we can

start up in anything like the way we are used to. So clinging to the old military mantra of "improvise, adapt, overcome "

I am asking you if you have any ideas either for meeting by zoom or when we can meet in person, what would you like to hear about, where would you like to go, and what could we do together? In a blend of fun, food, fellowship and faith!

Please let us know

Write C/o Abbey church office

On 07971075185 txt or Phone

Or e-mail the church office,

abbeychurch@abbeychurch.co.uk, put 'Nurture' as the subject and they can be passed on to me, thanks.

And those contacts will work for the books too

Or if you see me just ask .

God Bless

And take care

Bob



Back in the heady days pre Covid when we could sit and eat a meal together we enjoyed an Alpha evening of some of the finest cuisine. I thought I would share a recipe from the Alpha recipe book, it may need to be adapted for our own home bubble.

MELANZANE PARMIGIANA (Mary Graham's recipe)

Vegetarian and gluten free

Cooking time 1 hour (some preparation required)

Ingredients:

Aubergine 8-10 for 20 people;

10 packs of mozzarella;

parmesan cheese grated 2 packs (Aldis is cheaper for aubergines and cheese)

8-10 tins of tomatoes (not chopped)

Need 2 large wide base oven dishes or use Costco foil trays-serve 8-10 per tray

Preheat oven to 180C

Grease dish with oil.

Method: Arrange slices of aubergine in single layer on baking sheets or fry in frying pan and keep warm in oven, drizzle with olive oil and bake for 20-25 minutes turning half way. Set aside.

Make tomato sauce, use olive oil, fry chopped garlic for 1 minute careful not to burn then turn up heat and fry whole tinned tomatoes (without juice initially until fried) and cook for around 10 minutes, gradually breaking down in pan as they soften. Add small jar of pesto

sauce (green or red variety) add juice from tomatoes and reduce sauce for approx. 10 minutes until 1/3 reduction.

Layer in lightly oiled tray, spoon tomato sauce followed by a sprinkle of parmesan, a layer of aubergine, then dot slices of mozzarella between and repeat until 3 layers formed. Top with crumb of parmesan mixed with gluten free bread crumbs or simply parmesan. Bake for around 40 minutes uncovered at 180 C.

Serve with garlic bread (slices are better) and salad and or new potatoes.

Sit down and enjoy.



Why don't you send any photos of the finished result to abbeychurch@abbeychurch.co.uk for the next newsletter and perhaps a suggestion for a recipe of your own.



The Welcome Centre has supported **481** different guests this winter so far, an average of **44** people each day. This has resulted in **4,272** daily accesses to the service over the 98 days that the service had been open. We don't always know where a guest moves on to, but for the stays that we do know the outcome for, 83% went to accommodation and 9% went to stay with friends or family. The Welcome Centre sees great partnership working between Bethany Christian Trust, City of Edinburgh Council and many other medical and support services who help facilitate these great outcomes for guests.

Here are a couple of quotes from some who have joined us this winter:

"Thank you for being kind and patient."

"The kindness I have been shown gives me such hope".

The Centre itself runs through to May 3rd and will re-open again the autumn.

We hope this gives encouragement that all your £21 donations have made such a difference to individuals this winter and we once again give our sincerest thanks.

We could not do this without you!



The Church of Scotland
MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Dear friends,

Perhaps as never before in recent times, folks have 'tried praying'! The global pandemic has raised so many questions, not least about our vulnerability and mortality, that many people have found themselves wondering about deeper matters and not least that which is usually referred to as 'spiritual'.

There are some within the Christian fold who adopt a somewhat sneering, cynical attitude in response. Much as they criticise those who worship at Christmas by asking: "Where are they on the other fifty-one weeks of the year?", they contemptuously dismiss those who have turned to prayer in recent times, suggesting that looking for God in an emergency is shallow and infantile and hardly worthy of a response.

I take a different view. An entirely different view.

Should those who are genuinely seeking be dismissed and put off, or encouraged? If there is even a mustard-seed worth of faith, shouldn't it be fed and nourished?

The *trypraying* initiative has grown significantly through the years and now has a significant degree of 'brand recognition'. Its simple seven-day format offers a challenge, but one that seems attainable to those

who may be doing no more than enquiring. And just as importantly, **trypraying** has now built up a considerable case history; that is, people who have tried praying and have met with significant responses.

I can't imagine that there's a better year for congregations to have a go with **trypraying**. I'm delighted to commend it to you and offer my encouragement to those who make it happen, that it may be a blessing to the whole Church at this time:

www.trypraying.co.uk

www.thereishope.co.uk

Every blessing,

Rt Revd Dr W Martin Fair
Moderator

General Assembly of the Church of Scotland



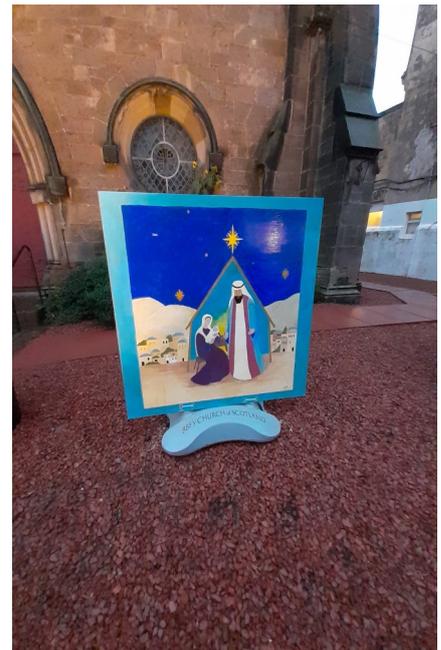
Christmas Holiday Club

We were unable to meet in person for this year's Christmas holiday club, but that didn't stop the holiday club team from sharing the good news of Jesus' birth.

You may have seen some posters in local shops as part of the Advent Trail Challenge. Any age could join in the trail, but we also invited primary school pupils to take part in a competition to find the clues and make a phrase. The winning phrase was 'Jesus is born' and three entrant's names were picked out of the hat to win a High Street shopping voucher.



Four local artists from the holiday club team, their friends and families, also painted murals which were placed outside Abbey Church, St Andrew Blackadder Church, Our Lady Star of the Sea and St Baldred's. They told the story of the annunciation, wise men, shepherds and nativity scenes. You may have seen our very own Milne Brodie's painting of the nativity scene outside the front door of Abbey Church. It was great to have a reminder of the first Christmas around the town.





We also created Nativity Activity bags and hand delivered them to 60 children. They had a mixture of crafts, activity sheets and some sweets. A storytelling video was also emailed out. I had some lovely feedback from parents who appreciated the activities over the holidays. It was a great way to keep in touch with the families.

We hope to keep the contact up over Easter too, and further information about plans will be available on the church website, Facebook page and notices. Please keep praying that we can reach out to families at this challenging time.

Hazel Gray
Young People's Worker
Abbey Church
North Berwick

Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk Prayers
February & March 21

Dear friends in Christ

As I write, this place is covered in snow and it looks beautiful. Mind you when it melts and becomes slushy and slippery I don't really relish it. It's like life - it changes quickly but not always for the better. Let us thank God for all the good days he provides us with.

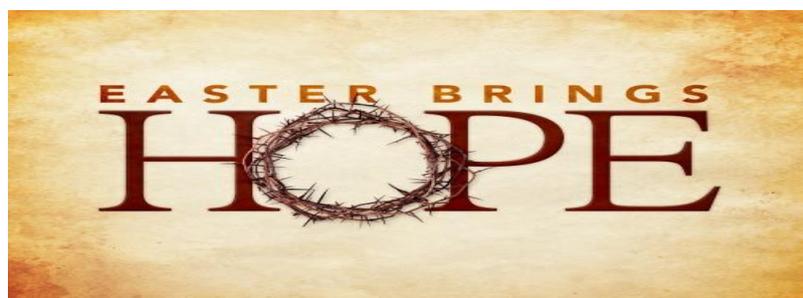
Let us pray

Heavenly Father, thank you for all your goodness to us. Thank you for keeping us safe in these very difficult times. Bless the national health service and all those others working flat out to make life easier for so many, give them the strength to carry on so we all have hope for the future. Uplift those who are grieving over the loss of loved ones, strengthen them that they may be aware of your presence during these times. Thank you lord for staying near to each one of us in Jesus' precious name.

Amen

Betty Hawthorn, Prayer Secretary.

Hope is a wonderful thing to cling to as we look forward to Easter!



Please have a look at our website
<https://www.abbeychurch.org.uk/>

To get information of all the events organised by
Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk.

Sunday Services, prayer meetings, bible classes, The
Guild, REGAL, WALT, Alpha, Little Nippers, The Voice
Project, to mention but a few.

We have many other groups using our church halls,
The Gospel Choir, the Scone café, Christian fellowship
men's breakfast, physiotherapy plus, yoga classes,
pilates classes, Jo jingles, fitness classes, The drama
Mill, the Artisan Fair, the brownies, North Berwick
Photographic group, dance classes.

**Hall Hire is limited in line with current government
Covid-19 restrictions**

If you are interested in hiring our halls on a regular
basis or for a 'one off' event please get in touch with
Abbey Church office on 01620 892800 or
abbeychurch@abbeychurch.co.uk



Church Register

Funerals

7.12.20 Graham Speirs

15.12.20 James Dodds

5.1.21 Morag Kinnison

8.1.21 Andrew Young

25.1.21 Beatrice Flockhart

Pastoral Visits

The Minister and Pastoral Assistant are happy to make contact with church members who are ill, either at home or in hospital. This information should be given to the Minister (890800) or via the Church Office (892800). Thank you.

For pastoral visiting, it would also be helpful to have a **mobile number**, the number of a next of kin, and your 'Sunday' name- hospitals use your official name, as it can be confusing when making contact if you're known by something different! And the ward number too, please.

Abbey Church,
116 High Street, (at Church Road)
North Berwick

Church Office: 01620 892800

abbeychurch@abbeychurch.co.uk

*Office open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
10am until 1pm*

Newsletters

The next newsletter will cover April/May 2021. The deadline for submitting articles is Tuesday 16th March 2021. Please send to Abbey Church Office.

Abbeychurch.org.uk

Like us on Facebook: Abbey Church, North Berwick & Dirleton Kirk



Abbey Church, North Berwick (Church of Scotland)

Scottish Charity No. SCO 04761—CCL51436