



Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk News

April/May 2025

Minister:

Rev. Dr David J Graham, BSc, BD

**Sunday Morning Worship
at**

**9.30 am (until 10.20)
Dirleton Kirk**

**10.30am (Until 11.30)
Abbey Church**

**Dirleton
Wednesdays 10am
Half Hour Prayer Service**

Come along. All welcome



Dear Friends,

As we approach Easter, we think about the story of Jesus' death and rising. In all the appearances of Jesus after he rose from the empty tomb, he said two things to his bewildered disciples: 'do not be afraid', and 'peace be with you'. Those are two messages which are very much needed today.

There's a lot of conflict in the world, both on an international scale and right down to communities, families and individual disputes. We need God's peace! Jesus promised us a peace which the world can't give, and the Bible also calls it a peace which is beyond our understanding. Only God, in the risen presence of Christ, can give us that.

There's also a lot of fear in the world. Some of it is caused by those conflicts, but also by many other things from our health to the cost of living and even climate change. When we look around, or ahead, what are the prospects? What do we see? Whatever we think the future may hold (and only He knows), Jesus tells us not to fear.

Another verse of scripture encourages us not to worry, but instead to take everything to prayer, and if we do so, we'll have God's peace.

Easter is a lovely time of year. Even the world around, as it bursts into Spring, gives us hope. I pray that is your experience this Easter time, and always.

Your minister,
David

Holy Week and Easter services

Holy Week services in April, all at 7.30pm

Monday 13th: St. Adrian's, Gullane

Tuesday 14th: Gullane Parish Church

Wednesday 15th: Our Lady Star of the Sea

Maundy Thursday 17th: Abbey Church, Communion

Good Friday 18th: St Andrew Blackadder

On Easter Sunday at 8.00am we meet for an open-air service on the green behind Abbey Church, followed by a simple breakfast at 8.30am in Abbey Hall. This will be followed by our regular services in Dirleton at 9.30 and Abbey at 10.30.



Abbey Kirk Session

Robert Burgon



In our last Newsletter, I reflected on our many activities during the season of Advent and Christmas. We are now in the season of Lent and looking forward to celebrating what many would describe as the highlight of the Christian calendar- the events leading up to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday.

At our first Kirk Session meeting of the year on 7 February 2025 we considered and approved the narrative section of our Annual Report for the year to 31 December 2024. This section, referred to by our Treasurer as the "wordy" part of the report, allows us to reflect on the life of our congregation in the year which has just ended- and, in our Vision Statement, to look forward to our plans for the future. If you take a little time to reflect on that section of the report, you will have no doubt that we have been busy. We pray that as a result of that "busyness," Abbey Church has been faithful to the calling of the gospel message and that we have touched the lives of many who have had contact with our worshipping community.

At a subsequent meeting of the Kirk Session in early March, we considered and approved the annual accounts for the year which will be presented to the congregation at the annual congregational meeting following morning worship on Sunday 30 March 2025. Abbey Church continues to be financially sound and one of the small number of Church of Scotland congregations which can pay their way by meeting in full all of our ministry and other costs. The accounts show a better than anticipated outcome for the year, due to two generous legacies received during the year and responsible stewardship of our assets.

The maintenance of our financial records and the considerable work involved in preparing our annual accounts rests with our Treasurer. Stuart Ainslie, who has carried out this role for an amazing 17 years, announced his intention to retire from the post some time ago. The role of Treasurer isn't just about maintaining the accounts and, in addition to computerising our records, Stuart has also spent considerable time in dealing with problems created by our bank and by our energy suppliers. My words cannot adequately express the debt of gratitude which we owe to Stuart for his diligent and hard work over the years and we wish him well in the future. We are delighted that Judy Lockhart-Hunter has volunteered to take on the role of Treasurer and she will continue to be supported by the other members of our Finance team- Phil Spencer and Janice Cobb.

Another important role in the smooth running of Abbey Church is that of Administrator (a role which is shared with Dirleton Kirk). After almost 8 years in the role, Paola Burrows has decided to "retire". During her years in that role, Paola became what we describe in our Annual Report as the "competent and friendly" face of our churches and she was regularly found in the church office long after her normal working hours as she ensured that everything was in place for the smooth running of our churches and premises. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Paola for her hard work and wish her every blessing in the next phase of her life. We are pleased to announce that Darren Barber has been appointed as Administrator and we look forward to working with him.

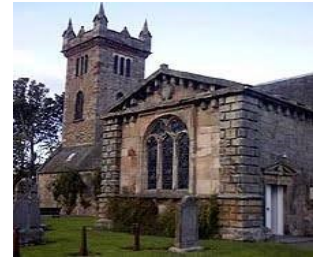
Although, for some, Lent has become a time of giving something up, this Lent, I would encourage our members to consider what additional role they might take up to support their church. Additional volunteers are required for various roles- see the separate section in this Newsletter.

The Abbey Kirk Session meets again on 7 April 2025 when one of our discussions will focus on our future pastoral care work.



Dirleton Kirk Session

Keith Stewart



We will shortly be embarking on work to repair the Church tower at Dirleton. Gordon Symon, our property convener, has engaged in prolonged discussions and negotiations with Presbytery, and architects, and surveyors, in order to arrange matters. There will be scaffolding round the tower, for use by those carrying out the works. I emphasise that there is no sense in which the condition of the tower is unsafe at present. For a short period, quite recently, access to the kirk via the main door was barred- this was a precautionary measure only, while the condition of the parapet above the door was inspected, and found to be sound.

The word 'tower' brings up the negative association of the Tower of Babel, but we can also think of Proverbs, chapter 18 verse 10: 'the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe'. There are voices in the church- both the Church of Scotland and the broader church in the world- who contend that it is wrong to expend funds on mere buildings, so that money should be spent on mission, and evangelism. Some of these voices are influential. I would argue that the maintenance of beautiful and historic buildings is a trust reposed in us by previous generations; and the most cursory inspection of the visitors' book at Dirleton demonstrates how much the kirk serves as a source of solace, comfort, and inspiration for casual

visitors, as it does for those of us lucky enough to worship there regularly.

The funeral of our dear, good friend and elder, Liz Keddie, took place on Tuesday 18th March. Liz has joined that cloud of witnesses, surrounding us, to which David referred on All Saints' Day and subsequently. We remember someone always ready to take on burdens and responsibilities, shouldering them without complaint, always with good humour; always ready with words of love and encouragement at times of ease and times of toil. We miss her but take comfort in the faith that teaches that we are not divided forever.

Jim Dickson will have returned to playing the organ for us by the time this newsletter is circulated, and we welcome him back, as we shall whenever he is able and ready to come to us. I take the opportunity to remind everyone of all the thought and hard work which he puts in to identifying, preparing and presenting music to form part of our worship on Sundays. I also take the opportunity to thank all of those who have stepped in to play in Jim's absence, and offered their services in future.



Finally, Paola is stepping down as Church Administrator, after eight years of hard work in the role. She has been a public face of Abbey and Dirleton: dealing with all sorts of enquiries and queries, about weddings,

Christenings, funerals, services, as well as the everyday stuff of office life, like printing, stationery, computers and telephones. Always calm and measured in a crisis, as on the occasion where a Summer Cooking School had taken the Church Hall in Dirleton to hold a class for children, and when setting up, as the children were starting to arrive, found that there was no running water! Paola's efficiency helped resolve the matter shortly. As the Session Clerk who has always had to be reminded, urged, and encouraged to carry out my duties on time- I offer Paola my personal thanks for all her tact, kindness, patience and hard work.

Message from Anne

I have been very touched by all the kindness and good wishes I have received recently after breaking my wrist. I am no longer "plastered" and am able to drive. It could have been so much worse, for which I give thanks. In future I will try to act my age. My grateful thanks and best wishes to you all.

Anne

Opening and Closing the Church

Once again this year, we plan to open our church doors from Monday- Saturday between Easter and October. An open church is so much appreciated by many visitors from the UK and overseas. A rota of helpers is required to open the doors in the morning (usually before 10 am) and to close in the afternoon (usually before 5 pm). If you would like to help on days which suit you, please add your name to the rota which is placed on the table inside the church doors.



Christian Aid Quiz Evening

Abbey Church will be hosting the annual Christian Aid Quiz Evening on Saturday 3rd of May.

Teams can comprise up to 6 people and the price per table is £30. We regret we are unable to take individual bookings. To keep our costs down in order to maximise the funds going to Christian Aid please bring your own drinks and snacks this year. To reserve your table please pay your £30 at Abbey Church Office.

This is always a great evening and we look forward to seeing you there. Book early to avoid disappointment.



Abbey Church (All Funds) Year to 31st December 2024

General

Payments exceeded receipts by £2,304. The budget being a deficit of £19,014

Income

Offering support was less than budget. This has a consequential effect on Gift-aid recoveries from HMRC. Premises income is well below budget, the budget appears to have been optimistic!

In September we received £2,000 legacy from the estate of David Murdoch Reid. In October we received £20,000 from the estate of Ann Tollan Morrison, being a total of £22,000.

During the year Dirleton reviewed the monthly amount they were paying for joint costs and increased this amount from £500 to £600 per month.

If you are a tax payer and wish the Abbey to recover the tax paid by yourself please would you ask for a gift-aid form by phoning the office or ask Phil for one. Alternatively, both the gift-aid and the standing order form are available from the Abbey Church website).

Expenditure

Church of Scotland payments are less than budget due to the budget being overstated.

The savings on premises costs reflect some maintenance works are outstanding at both the Church and

the Manse. Additionally we have had problems with our energy supplier. Hopefully these are beginning to be resolved.

Miscellaneous contains the cost of the new projector, and screen, being £9,444.

If you have any questions please ask.

Stuart Ainslie

Your Finance Team

1	Income - Gift-aid	Phil Spencer
	Income - Hall Rentals	Paola Burrows
2	Payment of bills	Janice Cobb
3	Accounting - OSCR, periodic accounts and Church of Scotland	Stuart Ainslie

Budget V's Actual 31 December 2024

All Funds

Income (All Funds)	Annual Budget	Actual to 31 Dec	Variance
Offerings	67,600	60,272	(7,328)
Tax reclaim	16,000	14,423	(1,577)
Miscellaneous	3,000	5,582	2,582
Premises income	20,000	17,988	(2,012)
Investment income	5,200	5,453	253
Legacies	-	22,000	22,000
Sale of Investments	-	-	-
Dirleton	6,000	6,700	700
Total Income	117,800	132,418	14,618

Expenditure (All Funds)	Annual Budget	Actual to 31 Dec	Variance
Church of Scotland pay-ments	50,698	43,692	7,006
Pastoral Expenses	12,800	11,897	903
Other Salaries	34,623	33,727	896
Premises costs	29,393	22,891	6,502
Church Office Expenses	4,300	4,863	(563)
Investments	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	5,000	17,382	(12,382)
Total Expenditure	136,814	134,452	2,362

Budget for 2024	(19,014)		
Expenditure in excess of income		(2,034)	
Postive Variance			16,980



It's been absolutely wonderful to see so many faces at Little Nippers this year. We've had a lovely mix of parents, grandparents and childminders every week. It's a really friendly group of people and the children have so much fun playing and singing songs.



We are going to be having a small Easter celebration in the church as part of our session on Thursday 3 April. We will hear a little bit about the Easter story, have some songs and all the children will receive a small Easter gift.

We will then break over the Easter holidays and return for the summer term on Thursday 24 April.

Little Nippers meets every Thursday during term time from 10.00-11.30am in the church hall. All children age 0-5 and their parents / carers are very welcome.

If you want any more info about Little Nippers, please contact Catherine at littlenippersNB@outlook.com

The Stone Was Rolled Away

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. Matthew 28:2 (NIV)



Complete the activity below.

Find the hidden words. The words have been placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. When you locate a word, draw a circle around it.

B H M W E E K A J E S U S E S
N T J O X D G N O L M L N A R
I S Z V K M T G O R H C L R I
B D O I T C A E R I S E N T S
X A M O L A L L R S R R T H E
A Y F O E A X P N L D T O Q N
O H N X B G Q X N I U N M U L
S E L O Y Z W S R O D S B A V
H A C N L S X L O D Z V F K A
O V H Z G I Y Q L J U U I E F
O E U E I W N U L D Q B R Y R
K N S V X Z B T E L J Q S O A
T M K J Z F M F D F Z I T N I
Y T I N M F A Q P H J F G Z D
J Z E D A W N P S T O N E N G

TOMB
SHOOK
EARTHQUAKE

ANGEL
WEEK
ROLLED

RISEN
FIRST
JESUS

RISEN
DAWN
AFRAID

STONE
HEAVEN
DAY

For our younger members to colour
The Empty Tomb



CAN YOU HELP?

Like most churches, Abbey Church relies on the time and talents of volunteers for many roles. There are usually opportunities for people to help in new ways and we would currently like to see more people helping in the following areas:

THE CHOIR

We have a small, but dedicated choir, leading praise at our services and would like to see this number increasing. Currently, there is only a short practice immediately before the service- and an ability to read music, while useful, is not essential. Do you enjoy singing and think that you could help by joining the choir? If we see a few more people in the choir, then we might even be able to return to singing occasional choral items to supplement our congregational worship. If you would like to help, please contact Robert Burgon.



LITTLE NIPPERS

Although we have seen an increase in the team supporting our Little Nippers Coordinator, Catherine, at the term-time Thursday morning sessions for pre-school children and their carers, we can always do with a few more who might have a spare Thursday morning once or twice during a school term. If you would like to help, please contact Catherine Mundell (email: littlenipper-snb@outlook.com)





By the time you read this we will only have one meeting left on our syllabus.

At the meeting on the 28th of January, we were given a demonstration of a family water filter which in a few minutes turns dirty water into clean drinking water.



Aquabox provides this life saving device and we collected £172 which will provide 5 family filters which will give clean water for 25 people over a long period of time.

Over the last year Aquabox has dispatched 2088 family filters, 1550 aqua boxes and 92 community filters. The aid was sent to Turkey, Syria, Libya, Ukraine, Nepal and Yemen.

In February, Richard McLauchlan, who spent his early years in North Berwick and Abbey Church, gave us an excellent insight into a charity which he set up with a friend called 'Light Up Learning'. Richard spoke from the heart without a note telling us about the one-to-one mentoring for high school students in Edinburgh and the Lothians in an effort to ignite a love of learning in young people who have generally become disengaged. If you haven't come across this before I suggest you google the charity to find out more. £100 was collected for 'Light Up Learning'.

Along with St. Andrew Blackadder Guild we were introduced to two projects over separate weeks. The Crossreach project 'Playful Beginnings' helps infants have the best possible start in life by developing strong, positive relationships between parents and children by working together and offering perinatal counselling to parents. This is offered at Daisy Chain in Glasgow and the Sunflower Garden in Edinburgh. A joint collection of £314 was raised for this project.



'Bibles for Bairns' by the Scottish Bible Society aims to offer an annual Bible themed book for children on their birthdays for the first five years of their

lives. Parents need to give their consent to this so if you know of a newborn you might like to suggest to the parents that they sign up for this free resource by going to the Scottish Bible Society website.

8th April - Our final meeting of this session will consist of a short AGM, an introduction to 3 amazing charities which you may never have heard of including one which is run by the 'Rituals' company then we will finish off with a Daffodil Tea of tea and cakes!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported TAG by coming along, helping with the teas and taking control of the accounts. It would not be possible without you!

Sheila Burgon

Abbey Church Flower Rota

DATE	DONORS	ARRANGERS
6th April	Jean Donald	Elma Danks Irene Brodie
13th April	Helen Mackenzie	Elma Danks Irene Brodie
20th April	Joan Griffith Mary Graham	Joan Griffith
27th April	Val Young Irene Brodie	Elma Danks Irene Brodie
4th May	Cath Hill Margaret McLean	Frances Fallmyr Olive Curran
11th May	Donald McCulloch	Dorothy Kirkpatrick
18th May	Zandra Main	Isabel Smith
25th May	Sheila Burgon	Isabel Smith



Abbey Church Sunday Tea Rota

DATE	
6th April	Katrina Hendry and Irene Nichol
13th April	Fiona Gibson and A. N. Other
20th April	Rose Leslie and Anne Bell
27th April	Irene Brodie and A. N. Other
4th May	Linda McLean and Anne Bell
11th May	Anne Bell and Florence Buchan
18th May	Joyce Strachan and Sadie Young
25th May	Sally Penman and Dorothy Kirkpatrick



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, TAG
REGAL, WALT, Alpha, Little Nippers,
to mention but a few.

We have many other groups using our church halls,
Pilates classes, Jo Jingles, Conexus Tuition, The Drama
Mill, The Brownies, Dunedin Dance, Freedom and Form,
Interoception Yoga, JKA Bass Rock Karate, Kundalini
Yoga, Dirleton Playgroup, Wild Tide Yoga, The Scone
Café.

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

Weddings

15.3.25 William Nisbet and Shiona Liddle

5.4.25 Stuart Kerr and Cristie Connor

Funerals

13.2.25 Doreen Adams

18.3.25 Elizabeth Keddie

Pastoral Visits

The Minister and Pastoral Assistant are happy to contact church members if requested. In the first instance, please contact the Minister (892410) or the Church Office (892800). For privacy reasons, any request for a pastoral visit should come from the individual or a family member.

It would also be helpful to have a mobile number, and the details of the person's next of kin.

Farewell All

I just want to say thank you for letting me be your administrator for the past 8 years, you have been so lovely to work for and I am in awe of all the members of Abbey and Dirleton who do so much to help others. It has been a wonderful time.

Paola x



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

Church Office: 01620 892800

abbeychurch@abbeychurch.co.uk

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

Working remotely Wednesday and Thursday

Newsletters

The next newsletter will cover June and July 2025.
The deadline for submitting articles is Tuesday 20th
May 2025. 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. SC0 04761—CCL51436