

Abbey Church, North Berwick
and Dirleton Kirk

*Warmly
invite you
to join us
this*

CHRISTMAS

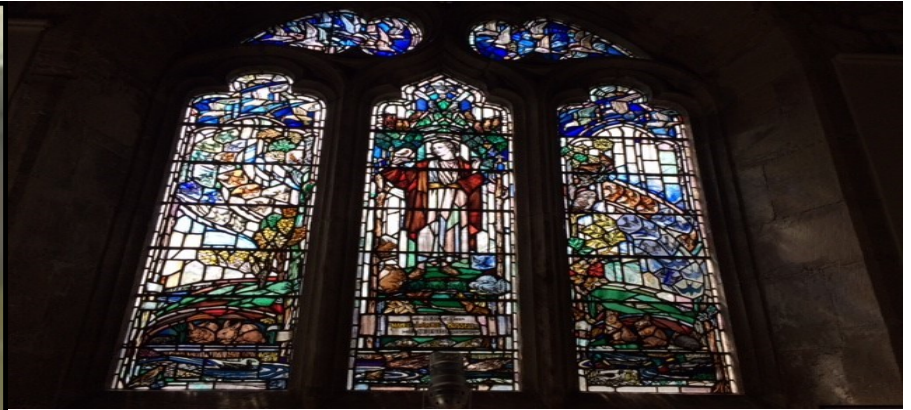
Peace on Earth

Dear Dirleton & Abbey Friends,

There are usually some Christmases which stand out in our memory. It may have been one when we had special friends or family members with us, or when we celebrated it in a special place. It could be the first one in a new home, or the last one with a loved one. Christmas two years ago was quite normal in many ways. In the news there was something about a new virus which had emerged in China, but we probably didn't pay too much attention to that. Little did we know . . .

How life has changed since then! Places closed, social distancing, masks, and of course the human cost. This Christmas, two years on, we're not yet back to normal. Life is still different, people are still falling ill. Since the day the virus came, it seemed that everything had changed. And yet, not everything. In one of Graham Kendrick's Christmas songs, he reminds us that *'the only certain thing was the child'*. The song is called *'Thorns in the straw'*, and it points us from Bethlehem to Golgotha, from the manger to the cross. Christmas is a lovely time, and I hope that yours is happy this year. But don't let the sentimentality obscure the message. Christmas, and life in general, may not be back to 'normality' yet, (whatever that really means). But the 'only certain thing' is the Christ-child, born of Mary, who lived and died for us.

Your Minister,
David



**Abbey Church
and
Dirleton Kirk News
December/January 2022**

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**

Come along. All welcome.

Wednesdays 10am

**Half Hour Prayer Service
Dirleton**

Thorns In the Straw

Since the day the angel came it seemed that everything
had changed

The only certain thing was the child that moved within
On the road that would not end winding down to Bethle-
hem

So far away from home

Just a blanket on the floor of a vacant cattle-stall
But there the child was born, she held him in her arms
And as she laid him down to sleep she wondered will it al-
ways be

So bitter and so sweet?

Then the words of ancient seers tumbled down the cen-
turies

A virgin shall conceive...God with us... Prince of Peace
Man of Sorrows strangest name, oh Joseph there it
comes again

So bitter yet so sweet.

And as she watched him through the years

Her joy was mingled with her tears

And she'd feel it all again, the glory, and the shame

And when the miracles began, she wondered, who is this
man

And where will this all end?

'Til against a darkening sky the son she loved was lifted
high

And with his dying breath she heard him say 'Father for-
give'

And to the criminal beside "Today-with me in Paradise",
So bitter yet so sweet.

And did she see there in the straw by his head a thorn?
And did she smell myrrh in the air on that starry night?
And did she hear angels sing not so far away,
Till at last the sun rose blood-red in the morning sky.

Graham Kendrick

Future Church Services

Advent is already upon us! And that means that Christmas is not far away. Our December Sunday services have the themes of some of the important events in the nativity story:

Sunday 5th - '*Preparation*'

We are holding an evening service at 6pm in Abbey on Sunday 5th with bereaved people specially in mind:

'*Remembering Loved Ones*'

Sunday 12th - '*Announcement*'

Sunday 19th - '*Song*'

Christmas Eve, Friday 24th at 4.30pm, Abbey service for all ages: '*Birth*'.

Christmas Eve, Friday 24th at 11.30pm, Dirleton Watchnight service: '*Glory*' (coffee in the Kirk Hall from 11pm).

Christmas Day, Saturday 25th Abbey service at 10.30am: '*Lamb*'.

Sunday 26th 10.30am in Dirleton Kirk: '*Visitors*'. Because of the day on which Christmas falls this year, there will be no Abbey service on Boxing Day, Dirleton will hold a Sunday service, but at a slightly later time than normal.

You are welcome to any or all of these services.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES OFFERINGS AND GIANT CARD DONATIONS

As in previous years we have chosen a charity to receive the offerings from our Christmas services at both Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk and donations given by using the Giant Christmas Card. The card will be on display at each service at Abbey Church from Sunday 5 December to Saturday 25 December. A description of the charity follows.

Sophie Hayes Foundation /Freedom Quilt

2021 is the 10th anniversary of the Sophie Hayes foundation, a charity dedicated to helping survivors of modern day slavery and human trafficking.

It is estimated that 130 000 women and children in the UK are enslaved at any one time. 1 in four of these are children and it costs on average \$100 to buy a human being. The Sophie Hayes Foundation runs employability programmes and currently offers help, support and a survivor network for 475 women from 48 different nationalities.

To celebrate their 10th anniversary, Liberty of London have commissioned a fabric range which is going to be made into a Freedom Quilt sewn by the survivors and which will narrate their stories of hope and survivorship. It is hoped that the Freedom Quilt will raise awareness of the barriers to sustainable freedom for thousands of survivors of modern slavery in the UK, and will also raise vital funds for Sophie Hayes Foundation to continue its mission of creating a better future for every woman survivor. Each square of the quilt will

be available for sponsorship to raise these much needed funds.

The finished Freedom Quilt will go on permanent display at the Liverpool Museum of Modern Slavery next Autumn.



You can learn more about the work of the Sophie Hayes Foundation on their website.

www.sophiehayesfoundation.org

Abbey Church mugs will be available for sale before Christmas, £6 each or two for £11. Please see Isabel Smith for more details



ABBEY AND DIRLETON CONTRIBUTE OVER £2000 TO SUPPORT BEEKEEPING IN UGANDA

This year's Harvest Appeal saw the magnificent sum of over £2000 being donated to the charity Bees Abroad to support their work with poor communities in Uganda.

The Abbey Church Flower Team had created stunning floral arrangements on the beekeeping theme, including a swarm of knitted bees (which were later sold to raise funds for the charity). Betty Hawthorn had coloured in a large number of pictures featuring bees and these were also displayed in the church.



The following message has been received from Bees Abroad to thank our congregations:

"On behalf of Bees Abroad I would like to say thank you for your donation of £2017.54 plus Gift Aid. Your financial support will help us continue our work in Uganda, improving the quality of life for low-income communities through beekeeping. We are an organisation of volunteers, we have low costs and are careful in the use of all donations ensuring they find their way directly to beneficiaries.

We will use your money to pay for essential materials and equipment as well as providing training, support and business guidance. Beekeeping really works as a means of poverty relief. It's environmentally friendly, sustainable culturally well accepted and there is a ready market for honey and other hive products.

During the pandemic, we continue to support our projects from the UK and are pleased to report our in-country partners are using technology to report the progress of their work. WhatsApp groups and photos are received regularly so we can discuss issues and continue with our training.

Thank you once again for your generous support and please do pass on our grateful thanks to all those who made this very significant donation possible.

Best regards

Veronica Brown

Administrator"



ABBHEY KIRK SESSION

Robert Burgon

There have been two meetings of the Kirk Session since my last report- our regular meeting on 4 October 2021 and an additional joint meeting with the Dirleton Kirk Session and representatives of the Presbytery of Lothian's Strategic Planning and Mission Committee on 18 October 2021.

At the first of these meetings, in addition to discussing a response which had been received to our submission on the future of churches in this area (more of which below), we reviewed the arrangements for worship under the ongoing Covid 19 restrictions and agreed to apply to Presbytery to increase the capacity for services to 100. It was also agreed that teas and coffees could recommence after services and it was noted that the church choir planned to resume shortly. With these changes all now in place, our weekly services are much closer to "normal" than has been the case since March 2020. It continues to be encouraging to welcome visitors to our services and to see some of our own congregation returning after the lockdown.

Abbey Church has a number of Committees, covering Resources, World Church, Nurture, Outreach and Worship. These Committee report to the Kirk Session and at our meeting we noted that the World Church Committee proposed to arrange a "Slow Clothes"

display to coincide with the COP 26 event in Glasgow. The Nurture Committee reported on plans to review our approach to pastoral care and the Worship Committee reported on the outcome of this year's Harvest Appeal, when over £2000 was collected to support the charity Bees Abroad.

The meeting on 18 October 2021 was our first in-person meeting for 20 months and technology enabled a number of representatives of both Kirk Sessions to participate in the meeting by Zoom.

The Convenor of the Presbytery's Strategic Planning and Mission Committee outlined the background to the challenges facing the entire Church of Scotland with the predicted significant reduction in the number of ordained Ministers of word and sacrament. He focussed in particular on the proposals for this area, stressing that there would be no change for as long as our Minister remained in post. Members of both Kirk Sessions expressed their views on the proposals and questioned the rationale for the proposed reduction in ministry for congregations which are clearly vibrant and missional. Questions were also raised about the proposals for the future of church properties. It was made clear to the Presbytery representatives that the way in which these **proposals** (which are not due to be considered by Presbytery until some time in 2022) had been communicated as if they were a *fait accompli* had caused considerable hurt and distress to members of our two congregations.

The current situation, as we understand it, is that our case for not going into union with St Andrew Blackadder has been accepted and this is no longer part of the proposals. We are being advised that Abbey and Dirleton congregations (and churches) will be permitted to continue. There were also some encouraging signs about the future of our church properties. The main issue which remains to be resolved is the allocation of ministry which is being proposed for Abbey and Dirleton- 0.25 the time of an Ordained Local Minister or Lay Pastor. Strong objections were made to this proposal given the pastoral and missional needs of our two congregations. Although we were advised that under this arrangement our contributions to central church funds would reduce considerably, providing us with funds to employ other staff, this is an issue on which further serious consideration is being given.

As part of our submissions to Presbytery we highlighted our plans for the decade of the 2020s- and a review of the progress which has already been to meet the goals set out in those plans will be part of the agenda for our next meeting on 6 December 2021.





Blythswood Shoebox Appeal 2021

A huge thankyou to everyone who contributed to the Shoebox Appeal. This year we sent off 112 filled shoe boxes and draw string bags, together with £200 in extra cash donated in lieu of a box, from Abbey and Dirleton Churches. Some came from friends and neighbours and Fidra Care Home residents and staff filled 6 boxes .The residents love doing it and watch the video that Blythswood provides.

This year our donations are being distributed in Moldova, a country lying between Romania and Ukraine.. How welcome they will be to families who have so little.



Muddy Church

Muddy Church launched in October, and it's been lovely to have adults and children come together to explore God in the outdoors. Our first meeting was on the beach for a windy but dry day as we thought about where we see God in his amazing creation.



In November we headed to the woods to notice nature slowing down and resting for the winter, and likening that to advent when we take time to prepare our hearts for Jesus coming.

We've made sandcastles, built dens, created leaf art, identified trees by their leaves, played games, and toasted over the fire pit.



Our December event will join with the holiday club team on Sunday 12th December for a special nativity trail. For more information, contact Hazel - hazel.abbeychurch@hotmail.com



Dirleton Kirk Session

Keith Stewart

There was a joint meeting of the Kirk Sessions of Dirleton and Abbey on 18th October in relation to the Presbytery Plan. My apologies for my absence, but more importantly my thanks to those who attended, representing the wider congregation and community, and especially to those of you who spoke, eloquently and forcefully, to our guests from Presbytery, setting out our concerns regarding the Presbytery Plan and its implications.

It is important to acknowledge that the Presbytery plan is written in the context of difficult times for the church. We are reminded of the projections concerning the projected shortfall in the numbers of full time Ministers, and the possible consequences for the presence of the Church of Scotland throughout the country.

We are aware that we are a national church, that we are called to serve a whole nation. But we are bound to call into question the reasoning in the Presbytery plan that elevates hypothetical outcomes, and hypothetical new patterns of worship and service, above the actual, successful service which we, as congregations, are fulfilling now: in terms of numbers of people worshipping, in terms of our contributions to the wider church in terms of Ministry and Mission, in terms of the facilities which we provide to the wider community- the church hall in Dirleton and the equivalent spaces at Abbey Church. All of these were busy with activities and voluntary groups before Covid lockdown and are steadily becoming busier again as lockdown restrictions continue to ease.

We are bound also to question, as was done at the meeting of the joint sessions, the soundness of the figures relied upon in the drafting of the Presbytery Plan, which seems to have thrown up certain anomalies: when the treatment of churches in North Berwick and its vicinity are compared, for example, with those in Dunbar and its vicinity.

It feels uncomfortable for us to describe ourselves as 'successful', when we are conscious of many ways in which we would like to do more for the whole of our community and all the people in it, and more for the world and the world-wide church. As Christians, we are bound to acknowledge that our efforts alone, in any context whatsoever, are bound to be insufficient of themselves to accomplish any task. Every merely human endeavour is the same: we cannot succeed fully in anything save by Grace. But we ought to proclaim that, according to the very metrics which the Church of Scotland applies, we and Abbey bear to be considered successful.

We fund, directly, youth work in our area. We are active in pastoral work of the sort which may be of the greatest importance to people at times of greatest need- of bereavement and loss. We have refurbished the hall to a high standard, making it available for wider use, in a village which has no alternative space. Taken together, Dirleton and Abbey are the second highest financial contributors, in Presbytery, to the work of the church.

The proposals in the Presbytery Plan bear to provide for a Ministerial allocation of 0.25 to Abbey and Dirleton. It should be emphasised that this will not happen while David is in post. David is a full time Minister

devoting himself to the two parishes.

But, and with his permission, it is worth reflecting on the burden of work which he bears, and whether it is realistic to expect that this can be borne by someone, whom we might describe as a quarter of a Minister, who is therefore spread even more thinly on the responsibilities of the parishes. At the beginning of September David could look forward to conducting two services weekly on Sundays; and one on Wednesday, to include two services of Holy Communion, five baptisms (all of which falling on different Sundays), Harvest service, a National Giving Day, Climate Sunday; two weddings, two meetings of two Kirk Sessions, chairing the meeting of the local Association of Churches, attending two 'zoominars' on Pastoral Care, addressing the opening meeting of the new iteration of the Guild, attending a meeting of Presbytery, and a number of committees; organising Bible study, and conducting funerals, which on average occur once a week. This is a huge burden, even with the assistance provided by our pastoral assistant Rev. Bob Kane.

The Presbytery is to issue a report on its proposals in 2022.

In the course of the meeting, in answer to pointed questions by Dirleton members, it was conceded that it is 'unlikely' that Presbytery will try to take any steps towards effecting a sale of the Church Hall. This was a matter which caused a great deal of disquiet and anger among Given the justifiable upset and concern at the content of the Presbytery Plan, and the manner in which it was introduced- not least the apparent failure to engage with the representations which were made to Presbytery in June 2020 as to the basis (discussed

above) for our asserting that we meet the Presbytery's own tests as to our success as linked charges within our communities- this provides some reassurance, and shows not only Presbytery framing the plan on a flawed basis, but scope for winning arguments against these proposals.

oOo

There was a fascinating display of 'slow clothing' at the front of the Kirk on Sunday 7th November. The exhibition arose out of observations as to the environmental impact of the fashion industry, and statistics about how infrequently some items of clothing are worn before they are discarded. On display were items of clothing which have been worn and reworn, to counter-balance the throwaway trend in contemporary life. Our thanks to Liz Keddie, and to Yolanda Strachan and others from Abbey, for putting this on. They hope to reprise the exhibition on a larger scale in the future, when more time and space may be available. I may submit for inclusion my tweed jacket, purchased second hand in the mid-90s and worn regularly since, if it hasn't disintegrated altogether.

oOo

On Wednesday 3rd November, the Kirk Session met (by electronic means, again). Among items considered was the Christmas services. On Christmas Eve, the Watchnight Service will take place as usual at Dirleton. On Boxing Day, Sunday 26th December, there will be a service at Dirleton, AT THE LATER TIME OF 10.30. This will be a joint service with Abbey.

TAG (Tuesday Afternoon Group)



It has been such an encouragement to see so many women and men attending TAG. We have 32 subscribed members and some folk who pop in and out which is absolutely fine as all are welcome. There is a lovely, friendly atmosphere as people chat round tables over a hot drink after the speaker has finished.

So far, our minister has challenged us to think about the strategy "Look forward in Faith" and Libby Morris educated us about plants of the Bible. She drew our attention to the many plants in the Bible Border outside the door of our church and if you look closely, you can still see bunches of grapes and figs.

Our programme for December to the beginning of February is as follows:

December 7th - "Getting into the Christmas Spirit" with lunch at the Glen Golf Club at 12:30pm.

January 11th - "Polar Stroke" - David Aston

25th - "The Scottish Influence on Worship" - Robert Burgon

February 8th - "Relationship Building - experiences of youth work" - Hazel Gray

Unless stated all our meetings are at 2:00pm in the large hall. Feel free to tag along to any meeting as we would be delighted to see you.

TAG Support Group

Slow Clothes



Abbey and Dirleton Church Committee had the pleasure of hosting two small exhibits of 'slow clothes' for our congregations. The exhibits were intended to coincide with COP26 and to support of our commitment as eco congregations. 'Slow clothes' for the uninitiated are clothes which have been treasured, or much worn, perhaps hand crafted or locally made from natural fibres and textiles and which haven't, thankfully, found their way to landfill.

Each item on display was accompanied by a short story of the life of the garment and we had a wonderful eclectic selection including christening gowns, beautifully cared for woollens, very stylish unageing fashion, hats and a jacket carrying memories of fresh air, freedom and wild landscapes. We even had a little handwritten note book dating from the 1930s and filled with samples of how to invisibly darn a range of fabrics. Beautiful and remarkable!



Slow clothes are the antithesis of fast fashion. According to research the average garment is worn

only ten times before disposal and more than half of the fast fashion produced is disposed of in under a year. Once you start looking into this subject it becomes addictive and you start to look at your wardrobe very differently!



Because we are still very mindful of covid prevention measures our exhibits this time were kept intentionally small but what fun was had and one day we would love to repeat the initiative and gather more of your wonderful stories.

Grateful thanks to all who helped with this.

Yolanda Strachan



ALL FUNDS

Income (All Funds)	Annual Budget	Budget to 30 Sep	Actual to 30 Sep	Variance
Offerings	68,000	49,799	51,082	1,283
Tax reclaim	15,000	11,250	11,704	454
Miscellaneous	7,000	1,801	232	(1,569)
Premises income	5,000	3,500	3,340	(160)
Investment income	4,000	3,000	2,767	(233)
Legacies	-	-	-	-
Sale of Investment	-	-	-	-
Dirleton	6,000	4,500	4,500	-
Total Income	105,000	73,850	73,625	(225)

Expenditure (All Funds)	Annual Budget	Budget to 30 Sep	Actual to 30 Sep	Variance
Church of Scotland payments	46,404	34,803	34,803	-
Pastoral Expenses	19,300	14,525	5,991	8,534
Other Salaries	35,101	26,325	24,910	1,415
Premises costs	20,013	10,781	8,660	2,121
Church Office Expenses	3,750	2,812	3,049	(237)
Investments	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	5,704	3,507	1,885	1,622
Total Expenditure	130,272	92,753	79,298	13,455

Budget for 2021 (25,272)

Budget for 3rd quarter 2021 (18,903)

Expenditure in excess of income (5,673)

Positive Variance 13,230

Abbey Church (All Funds) - Quarter to 30th September 2021

General

Payments exceeded receipts by £5,673. This is much better than budget, the budget was set to allow for the employment of a youth worker.

Income

The congregation has been very generous and income from Standing Orders remains much higher than in previous years.

(Note - 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

The Church of Scotland has substantially reduced the amount payable to them for 2021, these amounts cover the costs of running the Church of Scotland including Ministers' salaries, this payment is called Ministry and Mission.

The savings on salaries reflect furlough income.

Much of the expenditure is less than budget due to the very much reduced use of the Church facilities.

If you have any questions please ask.

Stuart Ainslie

WALT (Women Are Learning Together)

Over October and November, we looked at the Old Testament book of Ruth and found that men and women are both equally important to God and he uses ordinary, unlikely folk to do his will. God also uses a series of events to accomplish great plans - God intended Ruth to be part of the lineage of Jesus. So, events such as the famine in Bethlehem, Naomi's relocation to Moab, the death of Naomi's husband, Ruth's marriage to one of Naomi's sons, Ruth becoming a widow, Naomi and Ruth's return to Bethlehem, Ruth's meeting of Boaz etc. were all part of the plan. We reflected that God does the same thing in our lives today although we don't always see it at the time.

We plan to meet on the following dates:

Monday 6th December, Monday 10th January, and Monday 7th February.

Our studies will include sisters Martha and Mary, who do you readily identify yourself as being like? Plus, the haemorrhaging woman who has much to tell us about her faith.

All women are warmly invited, and we meet at 2:00 in Abbey small hall for about an hour. Tea or coffee is available from 1:45. The studies are informal, and no previous knowledge is required.

Sheila Burgon



Wednesday 3rd November

6.45pm-9pm

Abbey Church Hall, Church Road, North Berwick

Food, chat, games and exploring the bible for
anyone aged 15-18.

On the first Wednesday of the month, starting October 2021

Please book, so we can organise food, at
<https://form.jotform.com/212691902247355>



More information from Hazel.abbeychurch@hotmail.com

Registered in Scotland as a charity (no.SC011222) and as a company limited by guarantee (no.SC54297).
Registered office: 70 Milton Street, Glasgow G4 0HR

Feast youth group has resumed in person, which is very exciting. We had 9 teenagers join us for our first meeting in November and had good chat and games over pizza. Feast will run on the first Wednesday of the month, from 6.45-9pm, at Abbey Church hall and is for anyone aged 15-18 who wants to meet with other Christians for food, fun and faith exploration. We are now running in partnership with SU Scotland and seeing young people from other parts of East Lothian join us too. For more information, contact Hazel - hazel.abbeychurch@hotmail.com

A gentle and hopeful request for help?

Of late the Nurture committee of Abbey and the session of Dirleton have been looking again at how we provide pastoral care?

Since it's very early days the Church of Scotland, like the good Presbyterians we are, have relied on the idea of the visiting Kirk Elder.

In reality though things have changed since the 1590s and what has worked for so long, may, just may not be the best way of doing things now. We are not going to do away with Elders; it is an ordained office and elders serve in so many different ways. Fear Not.

Rather, in our discussions a number of wise souls asked why we don't simply ask our people - it's been a while.

What do they think? What would suit them best? And how do we do this? We have always sought to emphasise pastoral work in our kirks and we need your help to keep this relevant. So much is and was different during "lock down" in our Church life as well as everywhere else. We got there mind - it would be good now to reflect.

So to the point: along with your next Kirk Magazine you will get a letter seeking in a questionnaire your ideas of how to meet the need. It will not, I suspect, be a one style suits all kind of answer but it will help us immensely to get it more right than wrong, if you let us know what you think, and we listen and start there.

God bless

Thanks in advance

Bob Kane

Nurture Convener

Abbey and Dirleton Kirk Prayers
December and January 2022

Dear friends in Christ,

Let us give thanks to God for all his goodness to us. Thank him for new beginnings- help us to make the most of them.

Thank you, Lord for bringing us through difficult times.

Thank you for always listening to our prayers and answering them, not always as we would want, but always for our good.

Bless us all, young and young at heart.

Strengthen our Minister, our Pastoral Assistant, our Organists and all who make our praises to you worthwhile.

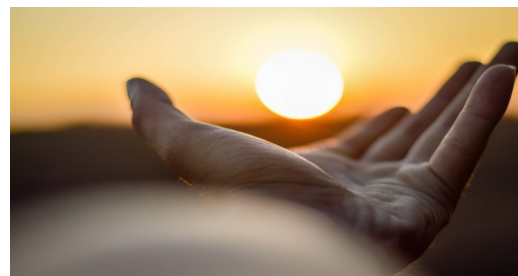
Let your people join together praising your Holy name during these difficult times.

Heavenly Father, save us from this dreadful virus, strengthen all who are working to help us fight against this. We pray it will end soon.

We ask these things in Jesus' precious name.

AMEN

Betty Hawthorn,
Prayer Secretary



Little Nippers

Little Nippers continues to be lively and busy. The helpers are wonderful at providing tea and biscuits to around twenty families each week. In amongst the playing and noise, there are some good conversations with mums, dad's and carers.

Some people have moved to North Berwick in lockdown and feel lonely, while others are going through tricky situations and talking to others, and me, does help. There is a need for compassion and checking in with them. It feels like the worst of covid is behind us but lockdown has taken its toll on families in different ways. It's good for them to talk to me and, and to find common ground with other parents and carers and form friendships with each other.

There are a lot of people who come regularly, and each week there are some new families too.

Kathryn Robertson



Holiday Club at Christmas



The North Berwick churches holiday club team are working on a number of events over Christmas to reach families in the community with the good news of Jesus.

- We are continuing the delivery of Nativity Activity bags after the success of the last 18 months. We now have over 60 children on our delivery list. The bags contain crafts, activities, and some chocolate treats, all with a focus on the nativity. If you know of anyone who would like to receive a bag, please let us know by 7th December as they will be delivered the following week.
- Last year's nativity murals will be back up around the churches, with a special nativity trail planned for Sunday 12th December - more details to follow.
- We are not able to run 'Bubblegum and Fluff' Christmas workshops with P5 pupils due to Covid restrictions, but will be sending them a video and craft

materials so that they can still engage with the original Christmas message of love and hope.

Please pray for the families in our community, that they will hear this Christmas message, and for the team as they work out the practicalities involved.



Hazel Gray
Young People's Worker
Abbey Church
North Berwick

Community Connections and the Return of Scone Café!

Loneliness is still with us, and Covid's made it even harder. But there's so much we can do to tackle that.

Abbey Church has a special connection with one of this area's newest charities, North Berwick Coastal Community Connections. Here's a mini-history!

We started in 2019 with one part-time worker (me), recruited an incredible team of volunteers and started weekly Scone Café gatherings in Abbey's small hall - all thanks to Dorothy's idea and her legendary scones. Over time, we engaged with partnership activities such as helping with NB Movie Matinees, Intergenerational Meals with the Youth Project, chumming members to the Beacon community lunches and Board Games at the Library.

During lockdown, we put all gatherings on hold, converted to Zoom meetings, started a monthly newsletter, retrained our dedicated volunteers to offer a telephone befriending service and later one to one Buddy Walks. We recruited a new board, then achieved charitable status, thanks to Robert's diligent work. A massive Christmas Treats and Cards Campaign was delivered, thanks to an incredible partnership between the new Bass Rock group and Community Connections.

This spring, we began inviting members for Coffee Connections in the Seabird Centre, a lifeline for many who'd not been out since spring 2020. Thanks to new grants, we recruited a magnificent Befriending Coordinator, Lisa Brownlie. More volunteers came on board. Following outreach meetings to support our connections in other coastal villages, volunteers in Gullane and Aberlady were inspired to launch new Scone Cafés of

their own.

This summer, we worked night and day on a major application to the National Lottery Community Fund. Happily, it was all worth it when we finally heard in late September that we'd succeeded in gaining three years' funding of £195,000 - just in time for our second AGM, electing a new Board of Trustees (still with some familiar faces like Robert).

This wonderful news means we can sustain our one-to-one services (coordinated by Lisa), relaunch our gatherings (coordinated by Carol) - starting with Scone Café, now back on a Wednesday 1-3pm - and recruit two more part-time staff. One important development is our new Compassionate Neighbours Project (with our partners, North Berwick Compassionate Communities), through which befriending volunteers are trained to offer emotional and practical support to people facing a terminal diagnosis.

Intergenerational connections: Betty and Fin share a love of colouring in.



Referrals have grown significantly this year and many of our members have benefited enough to move beyond 1:1 volunteer support. We're busier than ever. It's a time of great excitement and new beginnings, to be shared by the launch of our own website and Facebook page later this month.

How can you help? New volunteers could help in a multitude of ways - ask for an application pack! You can make referrals for our services such as Scone Café and Coffee Connections. Sadly, our one-to-one waiting list is temporarily closed, until we have more volunteers!

Donations to help Community Connections meet the needs of our members are very welcome - please contact our Treasurer, Bill Brown on treasurer@nbc-communityconnections.org

We continue to seek additional funding, and also need central North Berwick premises where our team can be based and meet our members in privacy - please let us know if you have thoughts on that. Catch me for any other ideas and questions you might have, especially if you would like to get involved. Everyone is welcome. Help us make isolation a thing of the past in this community.

Loneliness and social isolation can affect a range of ages. If you or someone you know in the North Berwick area could benefit from this project, or you'd like to subscribe to our newsletter, please contact Carol Stobie, Project Officer on 07940 203380 or nbc-communityconnections@outlook.com

Carol Stobie, Project Manager, North Berwick Coastal Community Connections

November 2021

A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC050505)



*Christmas is coming, the Church is glad to sing,
and let the advent candles brightly burn in a ring.*

The first is for God's promise
to put the wrong things right,
and bring to earth's darkness
the hope of love and light.

Christmas is coming . . .

The second for the prophets,
who said that Christ would come
with good news for many
and angry words for some.

Christmas is coming . . .

The third is for the Baptist,
who cried, 'Prepare the way.
Be ready for Jesus,
today and every day.'

Christmas is coming . . .

The fourth is for the Virgin,
who mothered God's own son
and sang how God's justice
was meant for everyone.

Christmas is coming . . .

At last we light the candle
kept new for Christmas day.
This shines bright for Jesus,
new-born, and here to stay.

*Christ is among us.
The candles in the ring
remind us that our Saviour
will light up everything.*



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, The Voice Pro-
ject, to mention but a few.

We have many other groups using our church halls,
Physiotherapy Plus, pilates classes, Jo Jingles, fitness
classes, The Drama Mill, The Brownies, Dunedin Dance,
Freedom and Form.

**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

Baptisms

31.10.21 Felix Pugh

Funerals

28.9.21 Amelia (Amy) Cassie

5.10.21 Ronald (Mac) McDonald

8.10.21 Jessica Fergusson

19.10.21 Joy MacDonald

29.10.21 Margaret Punton

3.11.21 Alan McLeish

5.11.21 John McCubbing

5.11.21 Albert Thomas

9.11.21 Margaret Marwick

15.11.21 Sheila Grey

26.11.21 John Evans

10.12.21 Mary Brown

Pastoral Visits

The Minister and Pastoral Assistant are happy to make contact with church members by request. This information should be given to the Minister (890800) or via the Church Office (892800). Please note that for privacy reasons, any request must come from the person, or from a family member. It would also be helpful to have a mobile number, and the number of the person's next of kin.

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 February and March 2022, The deadline for submitting articles is Tuesday 18th January 2022. 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

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SEASON

AT ABBEY CHURCH AND DIRLETON KIRK

DECEMBER 2021

SATURDAY 11th

10.00am—12Noon

**Abbey church will be open for coffee, informal chat
and Christmas music**



FRIDAY 24th CHRISTMAS EVE

4.30pm Family Christmas Eve service at Abbey

11.30pm Watchnight Service at Dirleton Kirk



SATURDAY 25th CHRISTMAS DAY

10.30am Christmas Day service at Abbey

SUNDAY 26th

10.30am Morning Service at Dirleton

No morning service at Abbey

SUNDAY 2nd January 2022

9.30am Morning Service at Dirleton

10.30am Morning Service at Abbey



*The Minister, Kirk Sessions and Congregations
will be pleased to welcome you
to these services and events*



Peace on Earth

