



Abbey Church & Dirleton Kirk

Church and Community Magazine

August / September 2026

"Come Along, All Welcome"

worship – fellowship – service – community

From the Office

A New Look

You will no doubt notice that this edition of our magazine looks rather different. The new design is intended not simply to make the pages more attractive, but to help the life and witness of our congregations speak more clearly.

The colours have been chosen with our setting in mind. **Blue** reflects the sea and sky around North Berwick and Dirleton. **Green** draws on the fields, gardens and landscape of East Lothian, and **Yellow and gold** bring warmth and light from the sands and fields of wheat to the pages, echoing the Christian hope that shines through worship, fellowship and service.

The clearer headings, more spacious pages and highlighted quotations are intended to make the magazine easier to read and navigate. Yet the purpose of the publication remains unchanged. It is here to share news, encourage prayer, and invite participation.

In the tradition of the Church of Scotland, outward presentation must always serve the Word rather than distract from it. Our hope is therefore that this refreshed design will help the familiar voices, stories and ministries of Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk to be heard more clearly, while preserving the warmth, openness and sense of belonging that have always characterised our congregation.

Looking ahead, with the advent of August, the office is once again a flurry of paperwork as our regular lets return to the halls. It is strangely reassuring to see so much of life revolve around school terms. Familiar groups reappear, diaries fill and quiet rooms regain their bustle. Beneath the forms, rotas and practical arrangements lies something more hopeful as the church's buildings once again become places of welcome.

- Darren

WELCOME

Worship, fellowship, service, and community

Two congregations, one linked charge, serving North Berwick and Dirleton.

Sunday worship

Dirleton Kirk

9.30 am – 10.20 am

Abbey Church

10.30 am – 11.30 am

Wednesday prayer

Dirleton Kirk Hall

Wednesdays at 10.00 am

Half-hour prayer service

Ministry team

Interim Moderator

Rev Dr Jock Stein

Locum Minister

Rev Geoff Berry

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FROM THE MINISTRY TEAM

Revd Geoff Berry - Our Locum Minister

One of the great joys of ministry, military or civilian, is that you get to be involved in milestone events in the lives of people and the local community. The community milestones get the press coverage but it is the personal and family milestones which have left the most lasting memories for me.

We end up conducting many funerals (I used to average 3/week) and memorial services. Thankfully, in a parish context, most of these are celebrations of long life; but please keep chaplains in your prayers. Whether it is hospital, workplace, military or the many other areas where chaplaincy is expanding; too many times, the chaplain is conducting the heartbreaking funeral for a child or young person.

The service in the picture was typical for me; (other than being

the final service in Main Operating Base PRICE) a memorial for 23-year-old Sapper Adam Moralee (32 Engineers). Sadly, Adam was killed just a few days before he was due to fly home after a 7-month Tour.

However, the emotional flip-side of this participation is that a minister also gets to take part in the joy-filled occasions. Being allowed to baptise a child as the wider family rejoices in a new life or the absolute privilege of baptising an adult as they publicly deepen their commitment to the Lord is a privilege. Also having the authority from the State and the Church to declare over a couple's joined hands, "I now declare you husband and wife" is something which never grows old.

Please continue to pray for, and listen to, those members of our community who are going through these life milestone events, both happy and sad.



Hebrews 13:2

"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it."

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Abbey Kirk Session Matters



As I write this, the annual Scripture Union Summer Holiday Club is in full swing. There are three groups- one for children who have completed P1-P5 which takes place every morning of the week in the Abbey Church Halls. There is an afternoon session for those who have just finished P5-P7 and an evening session for teenagers. Both of these groups meet in the St Andrew Blackadder Halls.

One of the key features of our Summer Holiday Club is that it is a collaborative effort involving volunteers from different churches, both in North Berwick and from further afield. For example, one of the volunteers this year is from Missouri, USA and she participated in both the morning and afternoon sessions.

There is lots of fun and games at the sessions, but also a message from the Bible and what it means to the leaders.

Sheila and I have been involved in the Holiday Club morning sessions for some years, and we take great encouragement from the fact that many of the children who participate come year after year, although that many have no regular church connection at other times of the year.

"Visitors from many nations speak of the peace and beauty of the church and give thanks that our doors are open."

Our open-door policy has once again seen a large number of visitors to the town popping into the sanctuary for a time of reflection and sometimes prayer. Our visitors' book has many appreciative comments from people of many nationalities who mention the peace and the beauty of the church and give thanks that our doors are open. Grateful thanks are due to the small team of volunteers along with Darren, our Administrator, and Cathy and

Juan Luis, our caretakers, who open and close the doors.

We were sorry to hear about the death of **George Kirkpatrick** in Fidra House Nursing Home in the early hours of Sunday 12 July 2026. Although not on the Kirk Session, George played a significant role as Treasurer and then Property Convenor over many years and oversaw the refurbishment of the sanctuary and the development of what many still call the “new hall” with its magnificent view over the West Bay. Our thoughts and prayers are with Dorothy, Gillian, David, Jenny and their families at this time and there will be an opportunity to join the family in celebrating George’s life and work in a service of thanksgiving in Abbey Church on Thursday 6 August 2026 at 2pm.

During this time of vacancy, the opportunity has been taken to carry out some maintenance work on the manse, in preparation for the arrival of a new minister. Willie Leslie, our Property Convenor, has arranged and

supervised a number of contractors who have installed a new gas central heating boiler, painted the interior and exterior of the property, arranged for a longstanding leak on the conservatory roof to be repaired and some upgrading of the electrical systems.

The property is looking good, but there is one area which needs some attention- the garden. Although not huge, there is grass to be cut, some paving areas to be weeded and some borders to be tended. If you enjoy gardening and have some free time, please contact either me as Session Clerk or Willie Leslie as Property Convenor and one of us can allocate some work to you. All offers of help, no matter how little time you have available, will be welcomed.

- Robert Burgon

Thanksgiving Service

The Thanksgiving service for Mr. George Kirkpatrick will be held Abbey Church on **Thursday 6th of August 2026 at 2pm.**

An Open Door to Grace

By welcoming children, families and visitors, we offer a practical sign of God’s grace and fulfil the Church’s calling to share the Gospel through worship, witness and service.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Dirleton Kirk Session Matters



The condition of knowing oneself to be under surveillance is something that most of us find unsettling. There is the obvious overtone of totalitarianism- the sense that an oppressive state has every aspect of the citizen's life under examination, in order to detect not crime, but dissent. George Orwell's name is applied to such practices, from his imaginative and prescient depiction of a society in which such monitoring was possible, in his novel 1984- we come across proposals, and practices, which are described as "Orwellian". The term is not applied to other aspects of Orwell's life and work. To have gone to Eton, to have fought in a foreign civil war for reasons of idealism, or to have shot an elephant: these things are not given the label "Orwellian".

Whatever the view we take of surveillance, it is a fact of contemporary life. Many of our

streets and roads are under camera supervision, cameras are mounted on trains and on buses, 'dashcam footage' helps identify the causes of road traffic accidents. Doorbell cameras record visits to our homes and the use of cashpoints. Such things are made into the stuff of entertainment: the television programme *Hunted* depends (I am told by Mrs. Session Clerk) on the use of cctv to track and trace people trying to conceal themselves and make journeys in secret.

And now this surveillance society has extended into Dirleton Parish Church. Not of course to assemble statistics on attendance or to determine who sings most enthusiastically- but in response to a recent act of minor damage and theft, in which the donations box at the main church door was forced open (and contents, presumably removed) and hymn books scattered around. There have been other occasions on which acts of mischief (all, thankfully, minor) have taken place at the church- giving rise to increasing concern that,

deliberately or otherwise, far greater damage might be caused to the fabric of the building or its contents.

As a result of this, the Kirk Session has approved the installation of cctv cameras at the church and hall. The reasoning is that the mere presence of such is likely to amount to a powerful deterrent against petty acts of malice. The Kirk Session has balanced the cost (not great) against the possible consequences of damage (potentially irrecoverable) and the undesirability of alternative courses of action to protect the 'church estate'. Greater security yet could be achieved by no longer keeping the church open for visitors. But the content of the comments in the visitors' book, as well as the heartfelt testimony heard from those who come into the church other than during service, to pray and to reflect, show what a grave loss that would be.

Matthew 10: 29

"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care.."

The Christian does not think of himself or herself as being "under surveillance" by God, but knows that to Him, all actions and all thoughts are known, and understood. He knows our movements and our hopes and fears, not as a sinister state authority, but as a loving and indulgent Father. Jesus explained that not a single sparrow falls to the ground without the father knowing (Matthew 10: 29) and has numbered the very hairs on our heads (Luke 12:7). I hope this thought and these reflections generally address concerns which people may have about the presence of cctv cameras in the church and hall. And- the recordings are wiped regularly!

Readers may remember Ernst "Ernie" Richter, who has died recently. Ernie was not a churchgoer, but he was a friendly and 'well-kent' face about Dirleton and North Berwick, who worked offshore in the North Sea for most of his working life. You may remember fondly his mother Margaret, who was a regular worshipper, and a kindly and friendly presence in the Hall on Sundays. Funeral arrangements are not, at the time of writing, settled, but let us send our prayers

and our compassion to the Richter family in the meantime.

Can I ask for your prayers also for Jock, our interim Moderator, Geoff our locum Minister, and all engaged in the Nominations Committee from both Dirleton and Abbey. The work may have taken longer than anticipated (as Geoff remarked last Sunday) but we all look to be guided and supported in the duties which we have taken on, and the burdens (some heavier than others!) which have been shouldered, for the good of all.

- K.D.S.

CARE HOME SERVICES

Abbey and Dirleton have for many years held Christian Services at care homes in North Berwick. In recent times as care homes were recategorised as 'regulated places' all helpers were obliged to do PVG training.

We hold services on the first Sunday afternoon of each month at Fidra House and Astley House care homes. As time goes by the number of helpers is decreasing and, if any are on holiday or have other commitments, we are sometimes a bit limited in the fellowship and assistance we can

give to the residents. A few extra voices can also encourage the singing.

If you could spare a couple of hours sometimes on the first Sunday of the month this would be much appreciated. Yolanda Strachan provides information on how to apply for a suitable PVG. If in the meantime you would like to learn more about the services please ask me or Robert Burgon.

- Kate Campbell

Bethany Donations

Thank you everyone for your continued donations of warm socks, underwear, clothing and toiletries to the Bethany Care Shelter. It is very much appreciated and needed. Abbey is now making 70 rounds of sandwiches once a month for Bethany and these are taken up to Edinburgh by North Berwick Christian Fellowship who man the Care Van.

— Dorothy Kirkpatrick

FROM THE MINISTRY TEAM

Revd Dr Jock Stein - Our Interim Moderator

The first two psalms set the scene for the whole book, which will be concerned with both individuals and leaders, personal issues and politics. Psalm 1 contrasts righteous and wicked characters, Psalm 2 contrasts God's chosen leader with the leaders of nations, along with an appeal to the rulers of the earth to serve the Lord.

As a considerable number of 'leaders of nations' have been and are in the news this year, here is a little poem I wrote on Psalm 2, called 'Iron Redeemed', since the psalm both references iron and is ironic. The poem below is a prayer addressed to God:

Psalm 1: 6

"For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction."

Do read those first two psalms: they are both about 'being wise', and you will notice the encouraging phrase, "The Lord watches over the way of the righteous"; and of course, 'righteous' always has the double meaning of 'made right, so living right'. Always encouragement, and challenge!

- Jock Stein

*You make them look ridiculous,
these tin pot gods, this pompous lot
of presidents. So plant your questions,
smelt, refine your iron work,
but craft it in a human frame,
with hands and feet we recognise,
and Zion somewhere in our hearts.*

GET INVOLVED

Can You Help?

Abbey Church relies on the time and talents of volunteers for many roles.

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.

Interested?

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.

Interested?

Please contact Catherine Mundell.
littlenippersnb@outlook.com



PROJECTION TEAM

The Abbey projection team are looking for new volunteers to join their team and would love to welcome a few more helping hands. Full training is provided, so no experience is needed. If you're interested in getting involved, we'd be delighted to hear from you.

Interested?

Please contact
Andrew Cobb or
Darren, via the Abbey
Church office

FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Little Nippers

Little Nippers has been taking a break over the summer holidays but we are looking forward to seeing lots of faces - old and new - when we return in August. Our first session back will be Thursday 20 August. The toys will be sparkling clean, new craft supplies will be ready to go and our snack cupboards will be stocked up for lots of hungry little tummies.

We welcome all children from 0-5 years old and we have a mix of parents/grandparents/minders who join them for the fun. It's a really welcoming atmosphere of playing, crafting and singing. So please do spread the word!

It would be amazing to enlist a couple more volunteers to join our

volunteer team, who welcome our families and help with refreshments etc. The rota is flexible and we work around your own availability. If you feel this is something you would be able to help with, please get in touch.

- Catherine Mundell

When and where

Every Thursday during term time

10.00-11.30 am

Abbey Church hall

More information

Please contact Catherine.

littlenippersNB@outlook.com



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

East Lothian Street Preachers



The development of East Lothian Street Pastors is progressing well, bringing an established church-based initiative to our towns and communities over the coming months and years.

Street Pastors is a voluntary Christian organisation which has been working alongside the police in UK cities and towns since 2003. Three-person teams patrol busy streets to help those who may be

"There is an enormous need to support vulnerable people and to care for our communities in ways that Police officers and other statutory services cannot."

in various kinds of need or difficulty.

There are over 13,000 Street Pastors in the UK, of which 450 are in Scotland. New teams are now being formed in East Lothian following an invitation from East Lothian Police Chief Inspector, Ben Leathes, a committed Christian and someone who has seen the beneficial impact of Street Pastors over many years.

"I have a vision to see our streets, beaches and gala days patrolled by Street Pastors from local churches connected to the community and seeking to support and help people in need," he said. "I know there is an enormous need to support vulnerable people and to care for our communities in ways that Police officers and other statutory services cannot." Local church members, including several from North Berwick, are involved in helping to set up East Lothian Street Pastors. The initial target is to establish two-member team in Musselburgh and to expand from there into a larger body of teams across East Lothian. For North

Berwick, the most obvious requirement would be to have a team or teams operating during Fringe by the Sea although there may be other identified needs in the future. While volunteer Street Pastors are obviously needed to join future East Lothian patrols, there are many other ways Abbey Church members can give support to this important initiative. This might include becoming a home-based Prayer Pastor to support teams when they are on patrol. There is also a need for people to staff church-based patrol centres where team members can be refreshed and encouraged during a daytime or evening patrol.

To find out more visit the Ascension Trust Scotland website (below), this is the central body for Scotland's network of Street Pastors. Please also feel free to talk

to me if you are interested in more information.

- Colin Ley

Faith Expressed Through Service

The Street Pastors initiative reflects the Church's calling to proclaim the Gospel not only in words, but through practical love of neighbour. Following the example of Jesus Christ, we are called to recognise the dignity of every person, draw near to those in need and offer help without judgement or expectation of reward.

Interested?

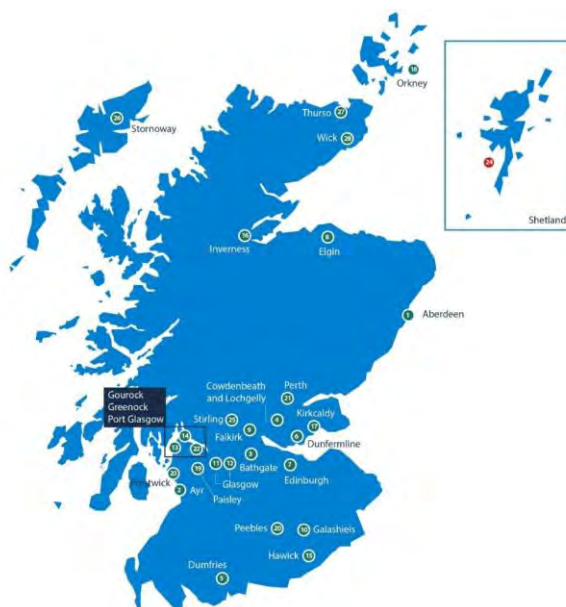
Please visit the Ascension Trust Scotland website

scotland.ascensiontrust.org.uk



Street Pastor Locations in Scotland

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Aberdeen | 17. Kirkcaldy |
| 2. Ayr | 18. Orkney |
| 3. Bathgate | 19. Paisley |
| 4. Cowdenbeath and Lochgelly | 20. Peebles |
| 5. Dumfries | 21. Perth |
| 6. Dunfermline | 22. Port Glasgow |
| 7. Edinburgh | 23. Prestwick |
| 8. Elgin | NEW 24. Shetland |
| 9. Falkirk | 25. Stirling |
| 10. Galashiels | 26. Stornoway |
| 11. Glasgow | 27. Thurso |
| 12. Glasgow West End | 28. Wick |
| 13. Gourrock | |
| 14. Greenock | |
| 15. Hawick | |
| 16. Inverness | |



FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Tuesday Afternoon Group

It is hard to believe that we are thinking about autumn already. Where do the months go? TAG will be ready to start its monthly meetings in September and unless stated we will meet at 2:00 pm in Abbey small hall. All our meetings are open to anyone, both women and men who would like to come along. If you would just like to hear a particular speaker, then feel free to do so. There is no subscription to pay but we will have an occasional offering. All our meetings start with a reading and prayer then we end with a cup of tea or coffee and chat

We look forward to seeing well 'kent' and new faces at our meetings.

- Sally and Sheila

Matthew 18:20

"And when two or three of you are together because of me, you can be sure that I'll be there"

- The Message Bible.

Tuesday 1st September Harvest Lunch at 1:00pm

Come along and enjoy baked potatoes, a selection of fillings plus salad then fruit based puddings! This is a good opportunity to catch up with each other's news and of course there might be a table quiz!

Tuesday 6th October Rev. Moira McDonald King's Chaplain

Moira was meant to inform of us about her interesting role as King's Chaplain last year, but it was cancelled due to inclement weather so hopefully the October weather won't let us down

Tuesday 3rd November Vicky Oleksy My Life in Archaeology

At Bob's get together at the Glen, we found out that Vicky, (the wife of Darren, our office administrator) was an archaeologist so we jumped at the chance of this opportunity to learn more about her fascinating work.

SERVING TOGETHER

Abbey Church Flower Rota

DATE	DONOR	ARRANGER
Aug. 2nd	Susan Ainslie	Susan Ainslie
Aug. 9th	Kate Campbell	Kate Campbell
Aug. 16th	Dorothy Danks	Susan Ainslie Kate Campbell
Aug. 23rd	Linda Scott	Susan Ainslie Kate Campbell
Aug. 30th	Anne Bell	Anne Bell
Sept. 6th	Sheila McCubbing	Sheila McCubbing
Sept. 13th	Maureen Griffiths Chris Manning	Sheila McCubbing
Sept. 20th	Morna McClure	Morna McClure
Sept. 27th	Yolanda Strachan	Anne Bell



Flowers after worship

During the vacancy, names of anyone who would appreciate a gift of Church flowers can be added to the book in the flower room. Please speak to Robert, Elma or Dorothy.

SERVING TOGETHER

Abbey Church Sunday Tea Rota

<i>DATE</i>	<i>ON DUTY</i>
<i>August 2nd</i>	<i>Isabel Smith Florence Buchan</i>
<i>August 9th</i>	<i>Katrina Hendry Irene Nichol</i>
<i>August 16th</i>	<i>Irene Brodie Morna McClure</i>
<i>August 23rd</i>	<i>Anne Bell Liz Wright</i>
<i>August 30th</i>	<i>Joyce Strachan Sadie Young</i>
<i>Sept. 6th</i>	<i>Fiona Gibson Linda McLean</i>
<i>Sept. 13th</i>	<i>Rose Leslie Anne Bell</i>
<i>Sept. 20th</i>	<i>Sally Penman Dorothy Fitzpatrick</i>
<i>Sept. 27th</i>	<i>Morna McClure Belle Hardy</i>

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who welcomes people and provides refreshments after Sunday worship.



CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

Find Out More and Hire Our Halls

VISIT OUR WEBSITES

For information about events organised by Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk, including Sunday services, prayer meetings, Bible classes, TAG, and Little Nippers, visit:

www.abbeychurch.org.uk

www.dirletokirk.org.uk

GROUPS USING OUR 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, Yoga with Helen, Wild Tide Yoga, The Scone Café, Scots Tots & Scots Fling, Erin Taylor Yoga.

Hall hire

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.

01620 892800

abbeychurch@abbeychurch.co.uk

Abbey Church



Dirleton Kirk



PASTORAL LIFE

Church Register and Pastoral Visits

Weddings

08.06.26 Madeleine Ryan &
Benjamin White

Funerals

10.06.26 Jim Dickson
25.06.26 Des Bathgate
13.07.26 Isabel McKay
16.07.26 Audrey Le Tissier

Baptisms

07.06.26 Heidi Simpson
12.07.26 Wayne Fletcher

PASTORAL VISITS

The Pastoral Team are happy to contact church members if requested. In the first instance, please contact 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.

A simple request

Please ensure that requests for a pastoral visit come from the individual concerned or from a family member.



Abbey Church & Dirleton Kirk welcome members and visitors throughout the week.

STAY CONNECTED

Contacts and the Next Issue

Abbey Church

116 High Street

North Berwick

EH39 4ED

Scottish Charity No. SCO 04761—
CCL51436

Dirleton Kirk

Manse Road

Dirleton, North Berwick

EH39 5EJ

Scottish Charity No. SC004533

Next newsletter

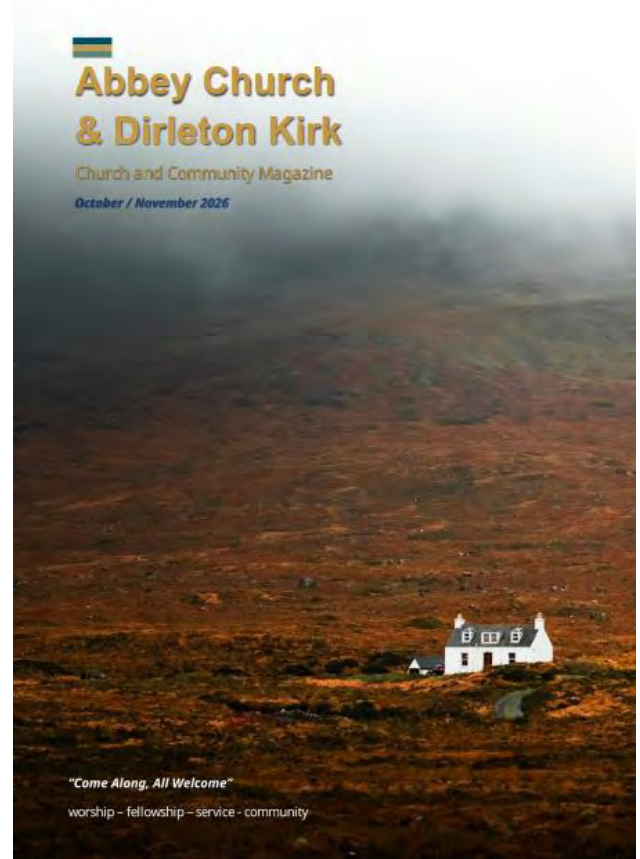
The next newsletter will cover October and November 2026. The deadline for submitting articles is Tuesday 15th September 2026. Please send to Abbey Church Office

Church Office

Our church office is open from Tuesday to Friday, from 10.00 am–1.00 pm

Tel: 01620 892800

Email: abbeychurch@abbeychurch.co.uk



Thank you for reading