



Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk News

April/May 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

Dear Dirleton & Abbey Friends,

Since the beginning of the year, we've been able to return to our more regular church services and meetings. I've been heartened by the attendance at Sunday services. Our joint attendance has averaged 100 each Sunday. Our other groups are also well supported: Women Learning Together bible study, the Tuesday Afternoon Group (affiliated to the Church of Scotland Guild), Wednesday morning prayer service & coffee, and Regal. We also have our prayer half-hour on Sunday evenings (which became the Lent Group in March). None of these could continue without the time and preparation of the people who organise them, so a special thanks to them (you know who you are!).

Each of these meetings has three key elements: there is Bible-based learning, there is prayer, and there is fellowship (usually with coffee and something to eat with it!). These three things are vital for a healthy and growing church, which I believe is what we are- it's been great to see new people come in recent weeks, please welcome people and speak to anyone you don't know. I know it's not easy with a face mask, but it is possible!

If you've never been to any of these meetings, why not give one (or more) of them a try? They are vital to the prayer life and the growth of us as individuals and as a church.

Your Minister, David

Services for Holy Week (all at 7.30pm)

Monday 11th St Baldred's

Tuesday 12th St Andrew Blackadder

Wednesday 13th Our Lady Star of the Sea

Thursday 14th St Andrew Blackadder

Good Friday 15th Abbey

On Easter Sunday (17th April) at 8am, we have our early outdoor service on the green behind Abbey Church (near the big anchor). This will be followed at 8.30 by a simple breakfast in Abbey Hall (donations to Ukraine appeal).

REGAL

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 14th April at 12 noon. Our guest speaker, Kate Campbell, will be presenting '30 years before the mast', tales from a nautical life found in a journal in her mother's desk.

This will be followed by a light lunch of soup and sandwiches.

As always an appeal for help with setting up and clearing, just let Bob or the office know.

A Trip to Ukraine.

When I first went to Ukraine, I had \$10,000 tucked into my socks. I was not trying to cheat the immigration people but it was a sensible way to avoid the attentions of the mafia. Four other friends had the same amount in their socks. What was the money for? It would buy a building and a piece of land for a Scripture Union outdoor centre, similar to facilities in Scotland, where thousands of young people have had great holidays and have learnt something of God's love for them. Since that first visit more than 10,000 young people have enjoyed and benefited from the facilities at Vorzel, not far from Kyiv, now being bombarded by Russian guns at the time of writing.

On the Sunday following our arrival we went to church - a Baptist Church in the city centre. Baptist churches have a long history in Ukraine, having been planted by German missionaries in the 18th century. I can't remember what I was expecting but it certainly was not what I saw. For a start, we had great difficulty finding seats, because the place was packed. I would guess there were over four hundred people and the singing was overwhelming.

My friend Grigori was a Baptist Minister who supervised a group of other churches in the area, as his father had done before him. Grigori was born in one of Stalin's forced labour camps, because his parents were sentenced to ten years in one of them, just for being Baptists. In due course Stalin died, his parents were released and they went back to church as before. Grigori is still alive and preaching the Gospel as his father had done before him and as his son Timothy does

now. I have had no contact with them since the beginning of the Russian invasion. I just know that when the Russian invasion has passed, as it will, Grigori or his son or someone else will take his place and once again young people will go to Vorzel to have a lot of fun and learn to follow Jesus.



Grigori Stupak

I haven't been able to contact Grigori but when I do he will say, "Pray for us. Dictators come and go but God's word is forever. Young people need God - and so do Dictators."

Peter Kimber

P.S. How could Grigori be born in a labour camp for male prisoners? After the death of Stalin conditions were sometimes relaxed for good prisoners who were allowed to bring in their wives - and that's how it happened.

Footnote: Grigori Stupak came over several years ago, and preached in the Abbey Church, thanks to Peter's contact with him.

David Graham

ABBEY KIRK SESSION

Robert Burgon



Against the backdrop of the agonising images we are seeing from Ukraine, it seems appropriate that the theme of our services during Lent and the topic of our Sunday evening Lenten Studies has been that of justice. It is difficult to understand why the world has strayed so far from God's expectation that we should live justly. We all pray for a speedy conclusion to the war in that part of Europe (and indeed in some many other parts of the world where war is being waged). The Abbey Church will be open for private prayer for Ukraine on Sunday afternoons during Lent.

Annual Report and Accounts

The Abbey Kirk Session met on 7 February and 6 March 2022. The principal business at both of these meetings was consideration and approval of the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021. These accounts will be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting which will take place after the morning service on Sunday 27 March 2022. 2021 was another year in which our normal activities were affected by the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. Despite a period in the early part of the year when we were unable to meet in person for worship and other activities and our doors were closed to the large number of community groups which use our premises, the

year as a whole was a positive experience in the life and witness of our congregation.

Our accounts show a surplus of income over expenditure which is due to a number of factors including a generous legacy from the estate of the late Liz Harrison, a highly regarded and valued member of our Kirk Session.

Having adopted a Vision Statement for the decade of the 2020s, our Annual Report reports progress in a number of areas set out in that statement. Our vision is to see growth in a number of aspects of our life and work and encouraging progress is being made in many of these areas.

The Annual Report and Accounts (which will be lodged with the Scottish charity regulator, OSCR, and the Church of Scotland) are available on the church website and paper copies can be collected from the vestibule of the church. I would encourage all members to take some time to read these. We are so fortunate to have the expertise of our Treasurer, Stuart Ainslie, and the finance team which supports him- Janice Cobb, Phil Spencer and David Aston and we give thanks for the professional manner in which they have kept our financial records in good order over the past year. We also thank our Independent Examiner, Andrew Scott.

Presbytery Planning

As members are aware, the Church of Scotland is facing a severe shortage of ministers of word and

sacrament and Presbyteries across the country are preparing plans as to how best to deal with this shortage. Sadly, many churches will face closure in the coming years. The proposal in the Presbytery of Lothian is that towns, like North Berwick, with a population of over 5,000, should only have one church. The proposal from our Presbytery for Abbey and Dirleton was that either there should be a union with St Andrew Blackadder or that we could continue with an allocation of 0.25 of the time of an Ordained Local Minister or Lay Pastor. The latter arrangement would mean that we would come under the guardianship of Presbytery.

As vibrant, well-attended and active congregations, we have argued that neither of these options is in the best interests of our churches and the work which they seek to carry out in the large area covered by the Abbey and Dirleton parishes. This point has been made, and supported with evidence, in a number of communications with the Presbytery's Strategic Planning and Mission Committee. We considered a response from the Committee at our February meeting and regret to report that no progress seems to have been made. The draft Presbytery Plan will be considered at a meeting of Presbytery on 28 April 2022 and all congregations have been cited to attend that meeting. Any congregation wishing to object to the draft plan is to be given an opportunity to do so at that meeting. The Abbey Kirk Session meets again on 4 April 2022 and we will

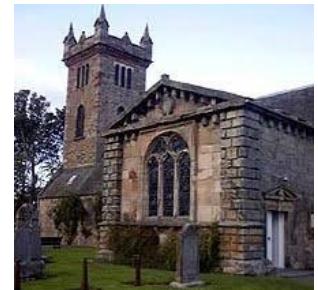
consider our next steps at that meeting. In the meantime, we would encourage prayer for an equitable solution to the challenges facing our national church and for the particular situation in this part of Scotland.

DIRLETON KIRK SESSION

Keith Stewart

Over the past few weeks our worship has had a more traditional, a more old-fashioned, character. Not a matter of three-hour sermons or metrical psalms, but rather of doing without the assistance of the projector and the screen to put up short films, illustrations, pictures and texts to aid reflection, and the words of the hymns. David had come into the kirk and found that the screen had fallen from its mountings. This appears to have happened as a result of normal wear and tear- the fixings had simply given way.

For a little while longer it will continue to be a matter of hymn books, and reliance on David's skill with words to conjure up images in our minds: but we have obtained a quote for a replacement and for servicing, and so we hope to have this resource back before too long.



There is to be a meeting of Presbytery at St. Mary's, Haddington, at 7pm on 28th April, to consider the Presbytery Plan. All parishes are called to attend and will be able to make submissions on what is proposed. I take this opportunity to thank, once again, all from Dirleton and Abbey who have contributed already to articulating your views on aspects of the Presbytery Plan, whether by writing, speaking, or prayer.

The high winds of a few weeks ago inflicted damage to buildings and woodlands up and down the country. Images of devastation at Tynninghame and elsewhere in East Lothian prompt reflection that in Dirleton we emerged (comparatively) unscathed. However there was a fair amount of damage caused to the garden of 'Harmony', immediately to the north of the churchyard, which did affect the churchyard as well. I have written on behalf of the congregation to Mr. Ford, the proprietor, to thank him for his efforts in tidying all this up.

Dirleton Kirk



You are warmly invited to join us for
Holy Communion
on Sunday 17th April
at 9.30am

WALT - Women Are Learning Together

4th April - The Genesis Girls - Eve

Looking at Genesis chapters 2 and 3 plus other verses from Scripture

2nd May - The Genesis Girls - Sarai/Sarah

Selected verses from Genesis chapters 17, 18 and 21

Walt meets in the small hall at 2:00. Hot drinks are available from 1:45. All women are welcome to come along and learn together and enjoy each other's company.

Sheila Burgon



Muddy Church is continuing to run on a Sunday afternoon once a month. We've been following the journeys of Bible characters as we engage with God in the outdoors. In February we followed the journey of Moses as we walked down the Glen with story telling and activities on the way and we finished with fire building at Lime Grove Community Garden.

All ages are welcome, though under 16s should be accompanied by an adult. Next date - Sunday 24th April, venue to be confirmed. Any questions, please contact Hazel - hazel.abbeychurch@hotmail.com



Abbey Church (All Funds)

Year to 31st December 2021

General

Receipts exceeded payments by £14,050. 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 saving on the prior year is £10,760.

The savings against budget on pastoral expenses reflect the effects of lock-down and the reduction of manse expenses.

The savings on premises costs reflect the reduction in

maintenance during lock-down periods. There is a backlog of maintenance which should be tackled in 2022.

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

14th March 2022

Your Finance Team

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

ABBEY CHURCH - NORTH BERWICK
BUDGET v ACTUAL AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

Income (all Funds)	Annual Budget	Actual to 31 Dec	Vari-ance
Offerings	68,000	66,643	(1,357)
Tax reclaim	15,000	16,035	1,035
Miscellaneous	7,000	8,030	1,030
Premises income	5,000	6,838	1,838
Investment income	4,000	3,852	(148)
Legacies	-	20,000	20,000
Sale of Investment	-	-	-
Dirleton	6,000	6,000	-
Total Income	105,000	127,398	22,398
 Expenditure (all funds)			
Church of Scotland payments	46,404	46,995	(591)
Pastoral Expenses	19,300	8,961	10,339
Other Salaries	35,101	34,707	394
Premises costs	20,013	12,497	7,516
Church Office Expenses	3,750	4,683	(933)
Investments	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	5,704	5,505	199
Total Expenditure	130,272	113,348	16,924
 Budget for 2021			
	(25,272)		
 Expenditure in excess of income		14,050	
 Positive Variance			39,322

Easter Plans

Our joint churches holiday club team are continuing to reach out to children and families over the Easter period.

- Easter Activity Bags will be delivered on Saturday 2nd April. If you know of children who would like to be added to our delivery routes, please email hazel.abbeychurch@hotmail.com This has been a great way of keeping in touch with families, with over 900 bags delivered since summer 2020. As activities return to in person, however, the Easter bags will be our last deliveries. We will invite children and families to join our face to face activities instead.
- Easter Decoded is an interactive workshop for P5s explaining why Christians celebrate Easter. Last year we delivered this by video but this year we have been invited to run it in person, which is exciting. The sessions are filled with story telling, games, quizzes and crafts.



(photos of previous Easter Decoded workshop!)

Hazel Gray
Young People's Worker

TAG - Tuesday Afternoon Group



By the time you read this TAG will have met for our last meeting of the session. Over the past year we have had a membership of 32 with an average of 24 folk at meetings. There has been a lovely feeling of sharing together and we have had a range of speakers on a variety of interesting subjects. Sadly, we had to cancel two of our meetings due to Covid.

We have supported two of the Church of Scotland Guild's projects and have sent donations to them both.

Donations have been collected at our meetings and we have allocated our funds as follows:

Home for Good (project) - £200

UNIDA (project) - £200

Abbey Church - £100

Ukraine Emergency Fund - £100

This will leave us with £56 pounds in our account.

We hope to restart again in late September/early October and both men and women will be most welcome. Thanks to all who have made our meetings so enjoyable.

TAG Support Group

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

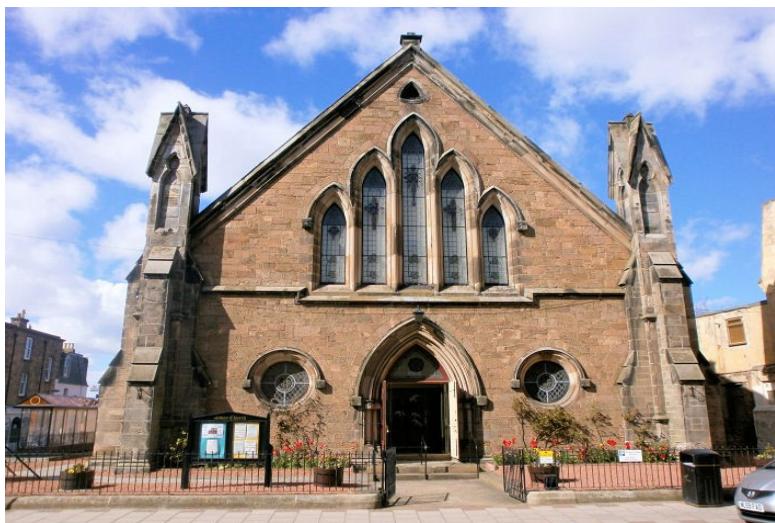
To get information of all the events organised by
Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk.

Sunday Services, prayer meetings, bible classes, TAG REGAL, WALT, Alpha, Little Nippers, The Voice Project, 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

30.1.22 Florence Crowe
13.2.22 Maya Swindells

Funerals

31.1.22 Virginia Gamble
4.2.22 Evelyn Henderson
4.2.22 Hugh Williams
8.2.22 Morag Morton
15.2.22 Alex Greenwood
22.2.22 Doreen Cox
1.3.22 Anne Blakey
4.3.22 Elspeth Johnston
18.3.22 Margaret Spratt
18.3.22 Arthur Martin
31.3.22 Lucille Bone

New Member

Kirsten Swindells

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 June and July 2022,
The deadline for submitting articles is Tuesday 17th
March 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. SC0 04761—CCL51436