

**Abbey Church
and
Dirleton Kirk News
October/November 2021**

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,

I love the Autumn, the 'season of mists and mellow fruitfulness'. It's a time when nature ripens and comes into maturity. It's also a time when we can thank God for His goodness, and share that with others.

It will soon be our Harvest Thanksgiving service. After having to postpone it last year, we're supporting 'Bees Abroad', which is an interesting and worthwhile cause.

This year, congregations are to participate in the National Giving Day on October 24th. Abbey will also be open on the morning of Saturday 23rd for anyone wishing to make a donation then, or just pop in to chat with me. At Dirleton, this can be done by the special envelopes on communion Sunday 17th October. As we reflect on God's presence with us through these challenging times and offer gifts to express our love and thanks, we also look forward with hope to all that God has in store for us and for our church. There's more information later in the newsletter.

God created everything good, and gave us the responsibility of looking after it. During October we'll be marking 'Creation Time', which this year very appropriately takes us to 'Climate Sunday' on 31st, the opening day of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 26) in Glasgow.

Remembrance Sunday is 14th November this year, with our services devoted to that solemn theme.

Finally (for now!), we're supporting the Blythswood shoebox appeal. There will be information (and shoeboxes!) available soon.

Thank you for your support and generosity for all these special things. May this Autumn be a time of fruitfulness and blessing for you.

Your Minister,
David

ABBAY CHURCH

KIRK SESSION

ROBERT BURGON

At the meeting of the Abbey Kirk Session held on 9 August 2021, tribute was paid to the late David McAdam who had been a dedicated elder over many years, even during the time since he suffered a major stroke about 2 years ago. Our prayers were extended to David's widow, Valerie, and his two daughters. We also prayed for the Torrance family, following the sudden passing of our elder Rev David Torrance's grandson, Daniel.

Further discussion took place about the disappointing and concerning proposals which had been presented by the Presbytery of Lothian concerning our future. The Kirk Session confirmed that it did not find the proposals either equitable or acceptable. A small group was established to develop our formal response to the proposals in conjunction with the Kirk Session of Dirleton Kirk. Our response was submitted to the Convenor of the Presbytery's Strategic Planning Mission Committee on 10 September 2021. In that response we have raised a number of questions about the proposals and the process which was adopted. We have been assured that we will receive responses to these questions, and we have been offered a meeting with representatives of Presbytery which will probably take place in October. We will update the congregation with news of progress.

As anticipated in the last Newsletter, the 2-metre distancing requirement in churches was reduced to

1-metre which allowed us to reconfigure the seating in church and increase our maximum capacity. Although the 1-metre rule has subsequently been removed, we have decided to maintain it meantime as a way of providing additional safety to those worshipping with us while levels of Covid 19 infection continue to be high. We are still required, by law, to wear face coverings during services. We have not yet reached our maximum capacity under the 1-metre arrangements and look forward to welcoming even more of our congregation at services in the coming weeks.

Congregational life now is much more like it was pre-pandemic with many of our groups either having resumed or about to do so. Little Nippers on a Thursday morning continues to be popular with pre-school children and their parents/ carers. Super Sunday Club is now meeting on a twice-monthly basis. Our new Tuesday Afternoon Group (TAG), which was formerly known as The Guild, will hold its first meeting on Tuesday 28 September and the women's study group, WALT, will recommence on a monthly basis on Monday 4 October. All these gatherings will continue to observe best practice in relation to Coronavirus in order to keep participants safe.

Our Harvest Thanksgiving Appeal this year is to support a project in Western Uganda where the charity, Bees Abroad is working with a small community providing training and equipment to enable them to keep bees. The sales of honey from this project enables the villagers to improve their income and their lifestyles. We will report the results of this appeal in our next Newsletter. We will again support the Blythswood Trust's Shoebox appeal this year enabling them to send

gifts to people in several Eastern European countries, bringing joy at Christmas. Abbey Church will participate in the Church of Scotland's National Giving Day over the weekend of 16/17 October and further details are contained elsewhere in this Newsletter.

The next meeting of the Abbey Kirk Session will take place on 4 October 2021.

BLYTHSWOOD SHOEBOX APPEAL.



The Blythswood Shoebox Appeal is going ahead as usual this year. We will have a selection of covered boxes and draw-string bags available in Church from the end of September. The last collection date is Sunday 24th October, a little earlier than previous years to allow more time for distribution abroad. The usual Eastern European countries will be receiving them. The Covid Pandemic has added greatly to the need for gifts to bring some much needed joy.

Anyone who feels unable to fill a box or bag may like to give a donation towards transport costs.

Jungle Adventure Holiday Club



The North Berwick Churches Holiday Club team had a busy summer!

We delivered 60 activity bags to families every week for 5 weeks - filled with crafts, activity sheets, challenges and a wee treat. We also put together a video for each week with story telling and applications. The response from families was very positive and it was great for the team to chat with families at their doors.

During the week of 26th July, we ran a holiday club in person for primary aged children based in the Lodge Gardens, and youth nights based at St Andrew Blackadder Church but out and about round the town too. We had a great week - 26 children came to our morning holiday club and 14 teenagers came to our youth nights over the week. We are so thankful for your prayers. We had a relatively dry week, with lots of fun and sharing about Jesus.

Please give thanks for:

- The children and their response to the teaching
- The youth and the relationships built
- The chance to chat with parents and their appreciation of the week's activities
- The team and their gifts they shared
- Safety and protection.
- God's faithfulness.

Please pray for wisdom and guidance as we continue to find ways to continue to reach out to families.



Coming soon.....

Our first Muddy Church will take place on the afternoon of Sunday 10th October, 3-4.30pm - venue to be confirmed.

What is Muddy Church? Muddy Church is a place for people to gather together, outside and to connect with the space and God. We will explore a Bible passage together through outdoor activities, and enjoy the outdoors - in all weathers! More details will be available in the church bulletin soon, but keep the date free if you'd like to join us. All ages are welcome - children must be accompanied by adults.



The Draft Presbytery Plan

In the August/September newsletter we were given an outline of the recent Presbytery Plan by our Minister and both he and the Session Clerks of Abbey and Dirleton strongly expressed their concerns about much of the proposal. I believe that an appropriate response has been sent by them to the Presbytery.

I first heard of the 'Plan' when I read the letter to the St Andrew Blackadder congregation which stated that there would be massive cuts to Abbey, Dirleton, Gullane and Aberlady churches.

I decided not to follow my initial negative reaction but to write in the first instance to the Presbytery suggesting that they find a more equitable solution, pointing out that the 75% cut in ordained minister for the four churches was not the approximate 25% cut agreed at the General Assembly. Facts from the 2020-21 year book showed membership numbers and payment details to Church of Scotland Head office from each church. Eg Abbey/Dirleton gave £95,909. The combined four churches totalled £162,037. St Andrew Blackadder gave £101,288. In addition Abbey/Dirleton employ a Pastoral Assistant, a Young People's Worker who leads Youth Work on an ecumenical basis, thus benefiting other Christian churches in North Berwick, and a little Nipper Coordinator.

In response to 'proposed' property disposal I said that in the rapidly expanding town of North Berwick many new residents are retired and some will be changing church and able to devote more time to worship and enjoying the fellowship of like minded people and as

the only way into the St. Andrew Blackadder sanctuary is up numerous stairs it is not suitable for many. One small individual lift is insufficient. Abbey has easy access down the side of the church for those who can't manage the couple of steps at the front door. If Abbey goes many elderly and/or physically challenged people who wish to worship in North Berwick will also go. Dirleton Church Hall being sold is ludicrous as it is used every day of the week by Church and community groups. There would be no place for fellowship and coffee after church, nowhere for Sunday School children to go after the children's address and extra expense would be incurred heating the church for midweek prayers etc.

I suggested a fairer allocation of ministers which would not be so drastic could be the linking of Abbey/Dirleton/Gullane with Aberlady either joining St AB or Longniddry. 2 Ordained ministers and possibly 0.5 OLM/Lay would be approximately 25% cut. Only when an equitable conclusion has been agreed should the disposal of one or more manses be considered, taking into account which are most fit for purpose.

In conversation with members of other churches I became aware that we could help each other by sharing examples of 'best practice'. I gave some examples.

I explained that I was writing to the Presbytery to give the viewpoint of a 'getting on a bit North Berwick incomer' who joined Abbey about 9 years ago. I gradually became aware that I was part of the 'church family'. I gave some examples of kindnesses shown to me by the church and explained that this in turn encouraged me to become involved in church life and outlined some

examples of things I've found myself doing eg everything from editing the newsletter for a spell to operating puppets at Law Primary.

I said I'd enjoyed regular Bible study provided by Abbey, including WALT and that I was looking forward to resumption (post Covid) of such activities as Regal, outdoor Easter worship. During lockdown Abbey made every effort to continue to preach and teach the Christian message by online services, Bible study and zoom prayer meetings. I wondered how many churches had online New Testament Greek lessons. (Abbey did).

I pointed out that the pre Covid average church attendance was far above the C of S average and said that if there are two vibrant churches in North Berwick we should be thankful and bring about change by including the other churches mentioned, perhaps in one of the ways I had suggested.

I know that some others have made their views known to the Presbytery and I would encourage any of you who are hesitant to do so. The more constructive comments that they receive the better.

Kate Campbell



Little Nippers started back on Thursday 19th August. It's been a lovely group and we have a mix of regular and new faces each week. We no longer have covid restrictions on numbers so parents/carers do not need to book. Due to busyness and safety, we decided to allow a maximum of 20 families which works well, and as term has settled we are at around 18 families each week.

Toddlers enjoy playing with other children and singing at the end, as well as snack. It's lovely for so many of them as many were babies during covid. Kathryn is getting to know all the parents and carers well, many of whom faced tough circumstances through the pandemic. For many, some company, a few friendly faces and a hot drink can make all the difference at the end of a fairly sleep-deprived week with a wee one!



We have a lovely team of helpers and it's a rewarding, fun role. If you'd like to help with teas/coffees and welcoming parents/carers on a rota basis please speak to Robert or Sheila Burgon.



Income (All Funds)	Annual Budget 2021	Budget to 30 Jun 2021	Actual- to 30 Jun 2021	Variance
Offerings	68,000	31,849	33,323	1,474
Tax reclaim	15,000	7,500	7,713	213
Miscellaneous	7,000	1,201	1,732	531
Premises income	5,000	2,050	1,886	(164)
Investment income	4,000	2,750	2,473	(277)
Legacies	-	-	-	-
Sale of Investment	-	-	-	-
Dirleton	6,000	3,000	3,000	-
Total Income	105,000	48,350	50,127	1,777
Expenditure (All Funds)	Annual Budget 2021	Budget to 30 Jun 2021	Actual- to 30 Jun 2021	Variance
Church of Scotland payments	46,404	23,202	23,202	-
Pastoral Expenses	19,300	9,650	3,826	5,824
Other Salaries	35,101	17,549	16,020	1,529
Premises costs	20,013	6,947	5,682	1,265
Church Office Expenses	3,750	1,875	2,117	(242)
Investments	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	5,704	2,220	1,027	1,193
Total Expenditure	130,272	61,443	51,874	9,569
Budget for 2021	(25,272)			
Budget for 2nd quarter 2021		(13,093)		
Expenditure in excess of income			(1,747)	
Positive Variance				11,346

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

General

Payments exceeded receipts by £1,747. 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).

The Halls are coming back into use by our regular users following the easing of the Covid 19 restrictions.

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 Abbey continued to claim furlough income on some staff. The staff, however, are being paid their full salary.

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

If you have any questions please ask.

Stuart Ainslie

4th September 2021

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 of Scotland	Stuart Ainslie



Tuesday Afternoon Group

October

12th at 2:00pm - Look Forward in Faith - Our minister, Rev. Dr. D. Graham will guide our thoughts on this challenging topic.

19th at 2:30pm in St Andrew/Blackadder - UNIDA - Brazil

This is one of our projects which aims to empower young women through theological education.

26th at 2:00pm - Plants of the Bible - Dr Libby Morris

November

9th at 2:00pm - Favourite Books for Inspiration and Pleasure

Come along and hear members talk about their favourite genres, books and authors. You might find ideas for Christmas presents! Secondhand book stall in aid of projects. Volunteers required to talk about their favourite books.

Come along and join us as we enjoy exploring the above topics together.



Abbey Church National Giving Day 2021

The Church of Scotland has initiated a National Giving Day this year, as a response to the pandemic and the financial losses that congregations have had to bear during the last 18 months.

The Abbey congregation has responded so generously during this time, with increases in the number of people giving by Standing Order and the amounts they have given. We are very grateful for these offerings towards the work of the church here and nationally. However, we have had a major reduction in the income from hall hire while groups were not allowed to meet together and a loss in offerings from visitors. We are grateful that the situation now allows groups to come back to using our halls, but in the meantime we have had to again draw on our reserves to meet ongoing costs, resulting in an overall deficit for the last few years. We continue to use our reserves, particularly to fund our outreach work, in the form of our Young People's Worker and Little Nippers Coordinator.

The offerings received for National Giving Day will go specifically to Abbey Church. They will not form part of the income which is used to calculate our Ministries and Mission contribution for the following year.

We plan to mark National Giving Day in Abbey Church over the weekend of 16/17 October and further details will be given in our weekly intimations

If you would like to make an extra gift towards Abbey Church on National Giving Day, we invite you to give through bank transfer, cheque or cash, as outlined on the form. If you are a taxpayer, please confirm by completing and signing the form. An envelope is provided for your convenience.

Volunteers Needed

Projectionists urgently needed to join a rota on a Sunday at Abbey Church. Full training will be given and any help would be greatly appreciated.

Please contact Andrew Cobb or the Church office for more information.

Thank you in anticipation



Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk Prayers

October & November 2021

Dear readers of the prayer section- welcome back to the new start and also welcome to our new readers. What a way to begin!

First, I expect you will know that my dear husband, Jim Hawthorn, passed away on 29th March this year. It was a great shock to us all. Also, I've had to move into the Abbey Home as I had no carers at home to help me. Jim was my husband, best friend, carer- and Dad to our family. He was also Church Officer in Abbey, which he enjoyed doing. He will indeed be greatly missed.

We thought (hoped and prayed) that Coronavirus would be well over by now. Sadly, this is not to be. We ask Father God to hear our prayers and kindly remove this really scary virus. We pray for all churches which are having to change their church services and pray that many more churches will be able to reopen their doors so that many worshippers will be free to attend their church (or indeed any church) to enable them to praise you Lord. Thank you.

We ask God to strengthen all ministers, pastors, and preachers everywhere during these difficult circumstances. Also renew the strength and faith of all Christians who have faltered during these terrible times.

Bless all who are ill and all who care for them- at home or in hospitals. Thank you God.

Bless all children and teachers who have recently returned to their places of education.

Draw close to those who mourn, who are sad or lonely and lift them up Lord. Thank you.

We ask these things in Jesus' precious name.

Amen

*Betty Hawthorn
Prayer Secretary*



WALT

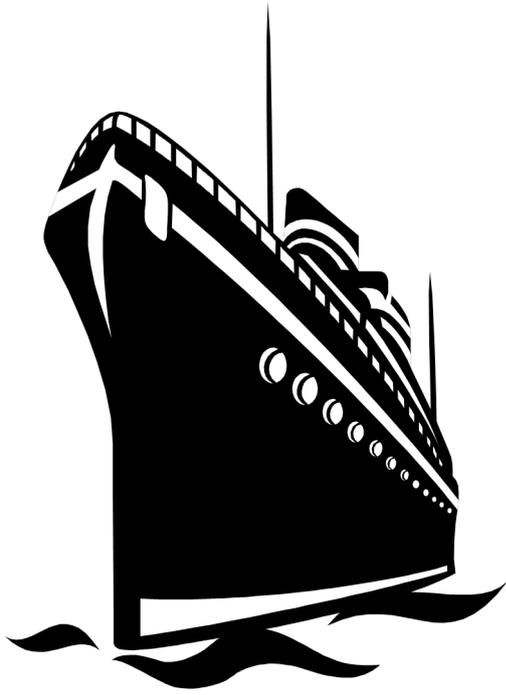
Women Are Learning Together Bible study meets on the 4th October, 1st November and 6th December in Abbey small hall at 2:00pm. We will be looking at the lives of Ruth, Martha and Mary and the relevance they have in our lives today.

A cup of tea/coffee will be available from 1:45.

Come and join us for an hour of informal learning and sharing together.



SET SAIL WITH REGAL



Every month
In Abbey Hall
At 12 midday

SOUP AND SANDWICH LUNCH

ALL WELCOME

Re-launches October 14th
DON'T MISS THE BOAT!

Super Sunday Club

Super Sunday Club has relaunched after the summer, running twice a month. We will join the church for the first part of the service then head through to the hall for a mix of games, stories, discussion and crafts. The aim is to run on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the months, though that may change slightly due to holidays but we will advertise any changes. On other Sundays, there will be children's activity packs which can be picked up at the door, and children can enjoy them while sitting with their family during the service.

We are thankful we have a church family which welcomes all ages. If you would like your child to join us, please just come along on a Sunday morning, it would be lovely to see you. The activities are aimed at primary school age, but if your child is younger or older, please let us know.

If anyone would like to help on the Sunday Club team, that would be greatly appreciated, please speak to Hazel Gray or Sheila Burgon.

Below are some photos from our Sunday Club picnic before the summer.

Hazel Gray
Young People's Worker
Abbey Church
North Berwick



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

22.8.21 Isabelle Emily Flockhart

5.9.21 Cameron Mitchell

12.9.21 Milo Salvesen

26.9.21 Oscar Lamb

Weddings

19.8.21 Eric Herd and Kay Tonkinson

30.9.21 Sean Sarafilovic and Amber Harrison

Wedding Blessing

18.9.21 Tom Hunter and Judy Lockhart

Funerals

5.8.21 David McAdam

10.8.21 Anne Allan

25.8.21 Vanda Bailey

19.8.21 Cecilia Rollo

21.9.21 Alastair Miller

Pastoral Visits

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

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

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

Church Office: 01620 892800

abbeychurch@abbeychurch.co.uk

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

Newsletters

The next newsletter will cover December 2021 and January 2022, The deadline for submitting articles is Tuesday 16th November 2021. Please send to Abbey Church Office.

Abbeychurch.org.uk

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



Abbey Church, North Berwick (Church of Scotland)

Scottish Charity No. SCO 04761—CCL51436