



**Abbey Church and
Dirleton Kirk News
August/September 2025**

Minister:

Rev. Dr David J Graham, BSc, BD

**Sunday Morning Worship
at**

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

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

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



Dear Friends,

I have been reading some Shakespeare recently, something which I haven't done since I was at school. His plays are full of famous sayings, many of which are in everyday use even when we don't realise their origin. One well known one (from Romeo and Juliet) is 'Parting is such sweet sorrow'. There's always a 'bittersweet' quality about leaving anyone or anything behind, it's an experience of mixed emotions.

After being here as your Minister for over a quarter of a century (yes, time flies), it will soon be time to depart. I will be retiring at the end of November, with my final service at the end of October before taking some holiday leave (no doubt some of which will involve packing boxes).

When we accepted the call to come to Dirleton and Abbey, it wasn't because North Berwick is a nice place to live (which it is), or because it has a good school (it has), or any of the other advantageous things about living here. It was in a clear answer to a call. For some time, I had felt it was time to move on from my previous ministry, and when we saw the advert which this church posted, we felt that our gifts were a good match for the ministry here. I hope that has proved to be right. Of course we will be sad to leave, but it's

time for us, and the churches, to move on to new things.

In our services recently we have been reading about Paul. His farewell speech is in Acts chapter 20. One of the things he says there is

'I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God'

I hope that can also be said of our ministry here.
Wishing you every blessing.

Your minister,
David

Future Sunday Services

For most of the rest of the summer, our Sunday services will be following the Bible readings from the lectionary. The Gospel readings are from the central section of Luke's Gospel.

September 28th is our harvest service, and this year our chosen charity is Water Aid. More information on that will follow soon!

ABBEY KIRK SESSION MATTERS AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2025



As I write this, it seems that we have been blessed with the type of summer weather which I seem to remember we experienced every summer when I was growing up in North Berwick. While I accept that my memories might be selective (remembering the good days more than those on which it poured), it has been really good to enjoy the beauty of the place in which we are so fortunate to live in long and warm sunny days.

Although the summer months are generally quieter months in terms of church activity, with most of our groups enjoying a well-deserved rest, this summer has seen an explosion of administrative activity as Abbey Church seeks to ensure that it complies with changes in the law. Firstly, as a registered charity, we have to comply with the requirements of the Scottish charity regulator, OSCR. Although the Charity Commission for England and Wales has registered the names of individual trustees for many years, this is only now becoming a requirement for Scottish charities. Each of the elders on the Abbey Kirk Session has legal responsibility as trustees of the charity and the new require-

ments has meant that I have had to input the names, addresses and dates of birth of each of our 28 active elders onto the OSCR website. While not a difficult task, this was quite time consuming and when the last entry was made, I had a feeling of relief that we were now compliant with the change in the law. In due course, OSCR will publish simply the first and last names of each Scottish charity trustee.

Another legislative change which has impacted on our activities has been the recategorization of our activities in local care homes, including the monthly services of worship which we organise in Fidra House and Astley House. Visitors from churches who support these services are now seen under safeguarding legislation as carrying out a "regulated role" which means that all those who assist must be registered as members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme. Our ministry in care homes has been an important part of our service to the community for many years and we are very fortunate to have a dedicated team of people who lead these services, who provide music for the hymn-singing and who support the services simply by being there, helping to look up hymn numbers and chatting to the residents. The process of applying for PVG membership involves making application online, both to the Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service and then to Disclosure Scotland. This pro-

cess has involved considerable extra effort on behalf of our Safeguarding Coordinators (particularly Mary Graham) and our volunteers over the last few weeks and we owe our appreciation to everyone who has engaged in this process. A small number of our dedicated volunteers have decided that the administration required to become PVG members is simply too much for them at this time and the Kirk Session will thank them in an appropriate manner.

Looking ahead, our Harvest Thanksgiving Service this year will take place on Sunday 28 September 2025 (with our now traditional Harvest Supper being held the previous evening). This year our harvest offerings will support the excellent work of WaterAid which focusses on the importance to public health of clean water supplies (something which large numbers of people in many parts of the world simply do not have).

The Abbey Kirk Session meets again on 8 September 2025.

Postscript

While not entirely unexpected, I am sure that many will have a real sense of sadness in reading the announcement of our minister's retirement. We will have an opportunity, in due course, to thank David and Mary for their faithful ministry among us. In the meantime,

I pray that their remaining time with us will be happy and that they will be very aware of God's strength and blessing as they prepare for the future. Let us all look forward in faith and with a positive attitude to the next stage of God's plan for our congregations.

Robert Burgon
Abbey Church



Opening and Closing Abbey Church

Once again this year, we will have our church doors open from Monday- Saturday between Easter and October. An open church is so much appreciated by many visitors from the UK and overseas.

A rota of helpers is required to open the doors in the morning (usually before 10 am) and to close in the afternoon (usually

before 5 pm). If you would like to help on days which suit you, please add your name to the rota which is placed on the table inside the church doors.



TAG - Tuesday Afternoon Group

As you read this, we hope you are managing to enjoy the sunshine and warmer weather. The TAG syllabus is not ready yet, but we thought you might like the following dates to put in your diary:-



September 13th - Guild Annual Gathering live streaming at St Andrew Blackadder

October 7th and 21st

November 4th and 18th

December 2nd and Christmas Lunch on the 9th at the Glen

January 13th and 27th

February 10th and 24th

March 10th, 17th and 24th

Take care and we look forward to giving you a detailed syllabus in September.

Sheila and Sally

CAN YOU HELP?

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

THE CHOIR

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



LITTLE NIPPERS

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



SUMMER HOLIDAY CLUB FUN

The annual Scripture Union Holiday Club took place during the week commencing 21 July 2025. With a large team of volunteers from several churches in the area, the morning sessions took place in the Abbey Halls for children who had just completed P1-P5 at school. The afternoon sessions for older Primary age children were in St Andrew Blackadder Halls as were the evening sessions for teenagers.



The numbers attending this year were higher than we have seen for some time, with as many as 32 children participating in the morning sessions, 17 in the afternoon and 9 in the evenings.





The theme of the morning club was "A Tale of Two Kings" which initially focussed on the anointing of King David and his faithfulness, obedience, repentance when he went astray and his being forgiven by God. This led to the importance of King Jesus. The sessions included songs, games, crafts, training exercises, bible teaching and memory verses. Each morning included an episode of a drama which told the story of brave Sir Perceval and his fight against a dragon with aid of the King (who provided the shield of faith, the belt of truth, the sword of the Spirit, shoes of readiness, the breastplate of righteousness and the helmet of the salvation).

The pictures show some of the beautiful crafts produced during the week and a scene from the drama. There are unsubstantiated rumours that the Abbey Church Session Clerk might have made an appearance in the drama as Bill the Donkey!

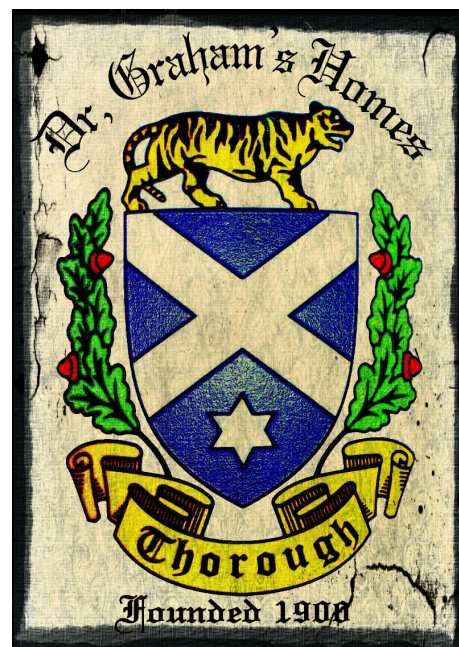
A MESSAGE FROM DR GRAHAM'S HOMES KALIMPONG (UK)

It will be 125 years since the doors of Dr Graham's Homes were opened. Six Anglo-Indian boys were the first to be loved, cared for and educated due to the concern and efforts of John Anderson Graham and his wife.

The lack of acceptance of Anglo-Indian children by both Europeans and Indians, would almost certainly have condemned these children to dire poverty in the area around Kalimpong.

Along with fee-paying pupils, children, many of whom are Anglo-Indian and are from slums, broken or impoverished homes, are still being loved, cared for and educated through sponsorship — as have countless others over the years.

There is still a great need for sponsors for waiting children. We have around 50 children for whom there is no sponsor. The buildings are now 125 yrs old and are in great need of upgrading. All this requires funding — so basically this is an appeal for help! If any are in a position to sponsor, share sponsorship, give any amount regularly or indeed visit, please do contact us at sponsorship@drgrahamshomes.co.uk or at <https://drgrahamshomes.co.uk/get-involved/sponsor-a-child>.



We would love to help you help us to help them! Sponsorship is £2,400 per year or £200 per month (with Gift Aid, £1920 or £160). However, any amount is welcome.

Kind regards.

Pat Lomax
Secretary Dr Graham's Homes UK



Abbey Pastoral Visitor

Hello, I am Ian Lennock your new Pastoral Visitor. I was a member of a Congregational church when young and, although I drifted a little away from the church in my teenage years, my faith strengthened as I matured and I was ordained as an elder.



I am a regular worshipper at Dirleton Kirk where I currently serve as treasurer. I'm married with three daughters aged from 14 to 21.

- Ian Lennock

Administrator

Hello, My name is Darren, your administrator for Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk.

Since 2010 I have been the at-home parent to both of my children, now 16 and 12 and have worked on several IT and fundraising projects with churches and universities.



I am an avid fan of ancient history and miniature models. I am married to an archaeologist and live in North Berwick.

- Darren Barber

MOUNTAINS IN THE BIBLE

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

Abarim	Ephron	Hermon	Nebo	Sina
Baalah	Gerizim	Hor	Olivet	Sinai
Bethel	Gilboa	Horeb	Paran	Sion
Carmel	Gilead	Jearim	Perazim	Tabor
Ebal	Halak	Lebanon	Seir	Zalmon
Ephraim	Heres	Moriah	Shapher	Zion

Blythswood Shoebox appeal 2025

Since the first Shoe Box Appeal in 1993 Blythswood has sent more than 2.7 million boxes - each one different, each one personal, each one an expression of care and kindness towards a stranger in need.



Filled with small, practical items such as toiletries, stationery, and clothing, the individually-wrapped boxes have been distributed in schools, hospitals, orphanages and care homes, and to households in very low income communities. Many have gone to people affected by the war in Ukraine.

We will once again participate in the Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal this year and would be grateful if you might **save any shoe boxes** so that we have a good supply come autumn, alternatively please drop them in the church office, if the office is closed the boxes can be left in the vestibule at the front of the Abbey church.



HARVEST THANKSGIVING

SUNDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2025

Both of our congregations will celebrate Harvest Thanksgiving on Sunday 28 September 2025.

This year, our harvest offerings will support the excellent work carried out by the charity WaterAid in supporting communities to ensure that they have good supplies of potable drinking water. As we all know, water is an essential part of the harvest process and in Scotland we are generally blessed with enough rainwater to meet our farming and household needs. Sadly, there are many other countries where there is simply not enough water of an appropriate quality and organisations like WaterAid do so much in these places to change that situation.

On the day prior to our Harvest Services, we will once again hold our Harvest Supper in the Abbey Church Hall. Tickets will be available in early September but **put the date in your diaries now: Saturday 27 September 2025 at 6.30pm**





Little Nippers has taken a wee break over the summer holidays but we will be back for lots of playing, singing and fun from Thursday 28th August. We are really looking forward to seeing all the little ones (and their grown-ups!) and hearing all about what they've been up to over the summer.

It would be lovely to see some new faces this coming year too - it's great having so many happy toddlers attending each week but babies are very welcome too. We do have a dedicated baby area with lots of toys for tiny hands, comfy cushions and bumbo seats - plus high-chairs if needed for snack time.

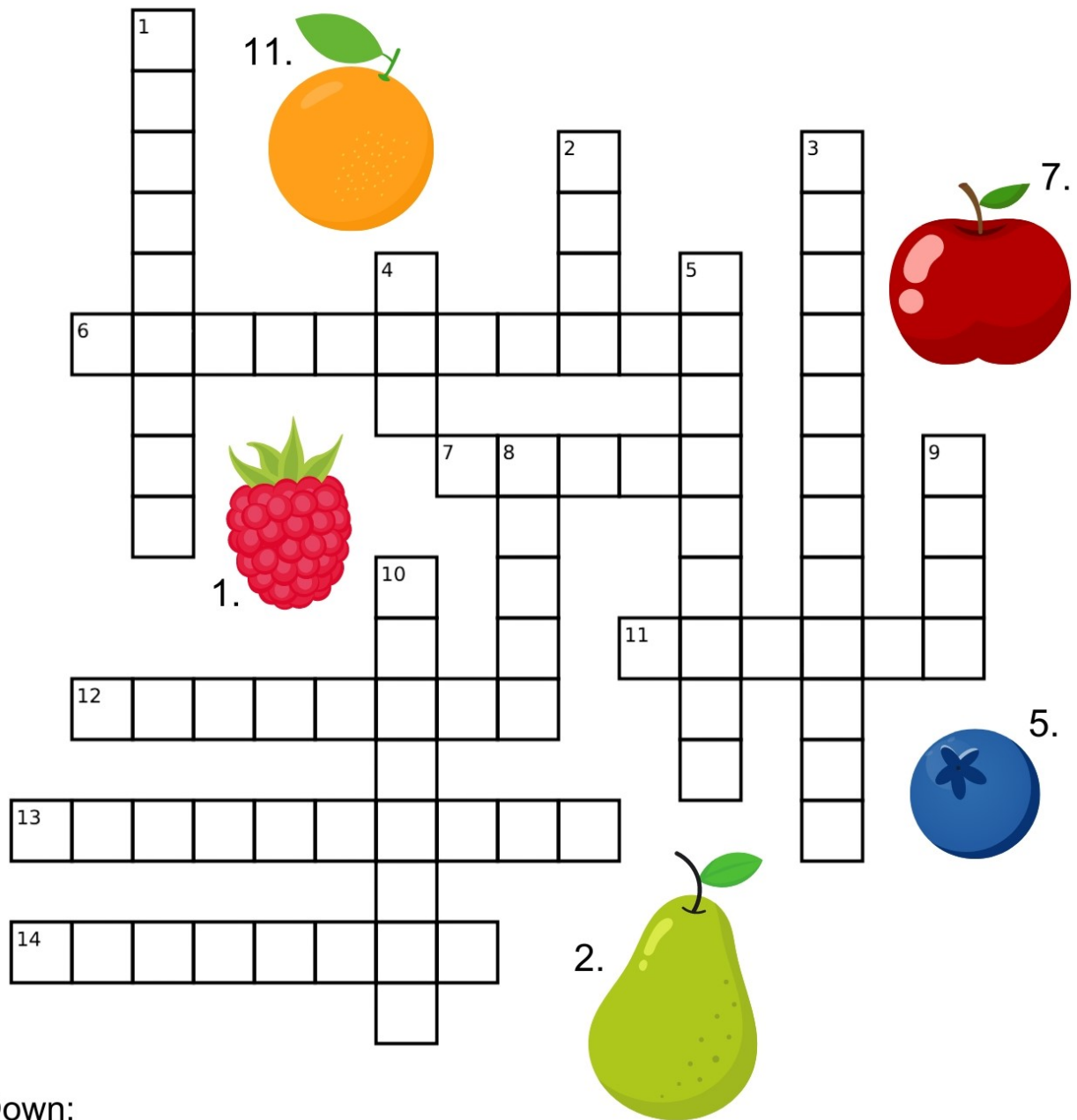
We have teas, coffee and biscuits for the adults and offer a welcoming, friendly space to chat about anything and everything - there's no judgement here.



Little Nippers meets every Thursday during term time (from 28 August) from 10.00-11.30am in the church hall. All children age 0-5 and their parents / carers are very welcome so please do spread the word.

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

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT CROSSWORD



Down:

3. Found in Lam. 3:23 (NIV)
4. Found in Psalm 66:1 (NIV)
8. Found in John 14:27 (NIV)
9. Found in 1 Cor. 16:14 (NIV)
10. Found in Joshua 2:12 (NIV)

Across:

6. Found in Prov. 25:28 (NIV)
12. Found in Eccl. 7:8 (NIV)
13. Found in Phil. 4:5 (NIV)
14. Found in Psalm 23:6 (NIV)

Abbey Church Flower Rota

DATE	DONORS	ARRANGERS
3rd August	Susan Ainslie	Susan Ainslie
10th August	Kate Campbell	Kate Campbell
17th August	Dorothy Danks	Susan Ainslie Kate Campbell
24th August	Linda Scott	Susan Ainslie Kate Campbell
31st August	Anne Bell	Anne Bell
7th Sept	Sheila McCubbing	Sheila McCubbing
14th Sept	Maureen Griffiths Chris Manning	Sheila McCubbing
21st Sept	Morna McClure	Morna McClure
28th Sept	Yolanda Strachan	Anne Bell



Abbey Church Sunday Tea Rota

DATE	
3rd August	Sally Penman and Dorothy Kirkpatrick
10th August	Isabel Smith and Florence Buchan
17th August	Katrina Hendry and Irene Nichol
24th August	Irene Brodie and A. N. Other
31st August	Anne Bell and Bel Hardie
7th Sept	Joyce Strachan and Sadie Young
14th Sept	Fiona Gibson and Linda McLean
21st Sept	Rose Leslie and Anne Bell
28th Sept	Sally Penman and Dorothy Kirkpatrick



Please have a look at our website

<https://www.abbeychurch.org.uk/>

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

Sunday Services, prayer meetings, bible classes, TAG
REGAL, WALT, Alpha, Little Nippers, to mention but a
few.

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

If you are interested in hiring our halls on a regular
basis or for a 'one off' event please get in touch with
Abbey Church office on 01620 892800 or
abbeychurch@abbeychurch.co.uk



Church Register

Weddings

21.6.25 Jack McClean and Melissa Laurie

19.7.25 Will Lord and Joanna Casson

Funerals

17.6.25 Margaret Law

26.6.25 Mary Whiteford

26.6.25 Elizabeth Munro

Pastoral Visits

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

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

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

Church Office: 01620 892800

abbeychurch@abbeychurch.co.uk

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

Dirleton Kirk,
Dirleton Kirk, Manse Road,
Dirleton. EH39 5EJ

Newsletters

The next newsletter will cover October and November 2025. The deadline for submitting articles is Tuesday 16th September 2025. Please send to Abbey Church Office on the email address above.

Abbeychurch.org.uk

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Abbey Church, North Berwick (Church of Scotland)
Scottish Charity No. SCO 04761—CCL51436