



Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk News

February/March 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,

I wonder if you made any New Year resolutions?

They're usually about ourselves, what we would like to be this year, how to improve our lifestyle in some way. If you did, I wish you well in keeping them.

If you were to make a resolution for our church, I wonder what it would be? The church recently adopted a sort of resolution which describes what it should be like, or what as God's people we should be striving to be. It's a resolution with five points (more than an average sermon!), but it captures what it means for the church to be 'missional'. For the start of this year, we'll be looking at each of these. I've copied them below with a one-word summary of each, which I hope is easy to remember (also a bit like a sermon!).

There will also be some material for reading and study alongside our Sunday services. I hope you can join us in this discovery of what God wants us to be.

Your Minister,
David

January 23rd 'Tell': Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

January 30th 'Teach': Teach, baptise and nurture new believers

February 6th 'Tend': Respond to human need by loving service

February 13th 'Transform': Transform unjust structures of society

February 20th 'Treasure': Safeguard the integrity of creation

Winter Emergency Appeal

Edinburgh Direct Aid is launching an emergency appeal to save the lives of vulnerable refugees living in and around the town of Aarsal in Lebanon. The town is situated at 5000ft above sea level and winter temperatures can drop as low as minus 15 degrees. There are approximately 70,000 refugees living in flimsy tented structures and makeshift shelters. The price of fuel for their small oil stoves has risen by 350% in real terms and can only be bought with dollars. None of the refugees has the \$345 they would need to buy enough to last the winter. We fear that the very young and the very old will die unless money can be found to provide them with fuel.

We are working to alert larger agencies than ours to the impending crisis, but we hope to raise at least \$33,000 to get help to the 1500 Syrian families and 400 Lebanese families living in the highest areas. Please would you consider donating something, however small, to this appeal? Please make cheques payable to Edinburgh Direct Aid and post them to 29 Starbank Road, Edinburgh EH5 3BY, or go to the website www.edinburghdirectaid.org/donations, or by phone to 01315521545.

Thank you so much for your help.

Edinburgh Direct Aid is registered in Scotland as a charity, number SC021007, tax ref E1098/92

DIRLETON KIRK SESSION

Keith Stewart

It doesn't seem very long since the works on the roof of the Archerfield Aisle were being carried out. At the end of a prolonged period in which the door was locked and that part of the church sheathed in scaffolding, the unusual stone roof was restored. There was the disappointment of the first removal of the scaffolding, when the thought the roof was restored, and then on the very next Sunday we found water coursing down the walls. Swift remedial action followed and the Archerfield Aisle room has been made good, for another four hundred years, we hope.

Now significant repairs will be required on the church tower. We will be meeting with architects in the near future to consider aspects of the works which will be required. Gordon Symon our Fabric Convenor has been corresponding with Historic Scotland, and this has cleared the way for us to make an application to that body for funding in order to carry out the works. All of us will wish to thank Gordon, and all who serve on the Fabric Committee, for their time and energy spent looking after our ground and buildings.

We leave Christmas behind and move into Epiphany, and as we do so I record how beautiful the church looked over the Christmas season. So thanks to all who participated in decorating the church, with flowers and lights, and in particular, thanks to Tracy and Neil Walkingshaw for bringing in and decorating the Christmas tree (and for doing the less happy business of taking it down again).

NURTURE COMMITTEE

Happy new year to you all and every blessing to you and yours.

As you may recall in the last newsletter I asked in advance for your help with our planning for our pastoral care. I hopefully explained it all then and will not bore you with repeating it all.

As you may have noticed the questionnaire has indeed come with this edition of the newsletter.

Please do fill it in and please remember to return it to the Church office, it will really help us so much.

Thank you

Bob Kane

Convener

ABBEY KIRK SESSION

Robert Burgon

After a year in which we experienced a "stop-start" approach to many aspects of our congregational life, it was so good to be able to meet together for worship during Advent. Our services during December (including those on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day) were well attended and I am sure that the feeling of joy which the Christmas message brings was experienced by many of those who attended. The "scratch" Nativity Play on 19 December, which saw adults and children dressing up and participating wholeheartedly was described as "one of the best ever". Those attending Little Nippers participated in a Christmas Pram Service in mid-December and it was lovely to see the way in which children and adults interacted in this short focus on the message of Christ's birth in a stable. Old Macdonald and his farm even put in an appearance! The children were presented with gifts of books telling the Christmas story.

In the last weeks of the year, it was good to see the return of activities which make such a difference to those who participate- meetings of TAG, our women's study group, WALT, our Little Nippers group for pre-school children and their parents, grandparents and carers, the participation of the choir in leading our worship and even simple things like being able to enjoy fellowship over tea and coffee after our morning services. In pre-Covid times, we might have tended to take things like this for granted but now appreciate just how important they are. Although Omicron saw the temporary closure of several of these activities

after Christmas, as I write this at the end of January, there are encouraging signs that it may not be too long before we can recommence the activities that have been paused.

For many years, our offerings at the special Christmas services in both Abbey and Dirleton have been donated to one or more charities. This year's charity, suggested by the World Mission Committee, was the Sophie Hayes Foundation, an organisation that many of us would not have heard of previously. Focussing on the impact of modern slavery on women survivors of this practice, the charity provides coaching and skills development. Above all, it helps to build awareness of this problem which is, sadly, all too prevalent, even in civilised societies. Those attending our Christmas services were clearly touched by the information provided and (including the contributions made for the giant Christmas card in Abbey) donated the magnificent sum of over £1100 to support the work of the Foundation.

THE
SOPHIE
HAYES

FOUNDATION

The Abbey Kirk Session met on 6 December 2021 and reviewed our Vision Statement for the 2020s. Many of the issues which had been set as targets in our original plan had made progress over the year including the development of our work with young people (including the start of the Feast group for teenagers and Muddy Church) and a significant improvement in the flow of information between our church and our partners in Kalimpong. Our Committees are currently reviewing the Vision Statement in the context of the work which the Committees do, and a further discussion will take place at our next meeting. It is also hoped that we will be able to consider the latest information from the Presbytery's Mission and Planning Committee after our meeting with them in October about the future of churches in this area.

Abbey and Dirleton have always been seen as caring congregations and pastoral support has a high priority on our agenda. As with all things, although we believe that we are "good" in this area of work, there is always room for improvement and the models which have been followed for many years may no longer meet today's needs. Our Nurture Committee is currently leading a review of how we might provide effective pastoral support going forward and I would encourage every member of the congregation to respond when asked about how they would like to see pastoral care being provided by their church.

The next meeting of the Abbey Kirk Session will take place on 7 February 2022.

WALT - Woman Are Learning Together

February 7th - "Faith That Transforms Suffering"

The Woman who was healed by a touch
Mark 5:25-34



March 7th - "Faith That Perseveres"

The Canaanite Woman
Matthew 15:21-28



At this study group we continue to explore the lives of women who demonstrated great faith. As well as looking at the Bible passages we also reflect on what we can apply from their experiences to our lives today. Tea/coffee is served from 1:45 and the studies finish by 3:00. All women are welcome to come and learn together.

Sheila Burgon

TAG - Tuesday Afternoon Group



February

8th - "Trusted Relationships - Experiences of Youth Work" - Hazel Gray

22nd - "The Kindness Cooperative" - Katie Nevans

March

4th - "World Day of Prayer" at 3:00p.m. at St Andrew Blackadder

8th - "Home for Good - A Home for Every Child"
Joint Project Meeting in Abbey

15th - "Jane Haining - A Life of Love and Courage" -
Mary Miller

Joint Meeting at St Andrew Blackadder at
2:30p.m.

Note change of date for this meeting

22nd - "Looking forward to Easter Treats"

It has been very encouraging to see so many men and women at our meetings.

It was very unfortunate that we had to cancel our meetings in January due to Covid regulations and we hope to reschedule our planned speakers in the future. The TAG year is going in very quickly so we now look forward to the final two months' meetings. Unless stated otherwise we meet at 2:00 in Abbey large hall. Feel free to come along and enjoy friendship and fellowship with each other.

TAG Support Group

Dirleton Kirk Flower Arrangers

We are changing the system of flowers at Dirleton. We are hoping to find church members who would provide flowers for two weeks in a month.

I have so far got names of participants up to the end of May. This will involve filling a vase of flowers to cover a period of two weeks. These may be garden flowers or a bunch from the supermarket. If anyone feels unable to arrange their flowers themselves this can be done for them.

I will leave a list of names on the table in the vestibule every Sunday morning. Please add your name to the list. Your help would be very much appreciated

Norma Bruce



Little Nippers

Little Nippers continues to go well. A highlight of December was our Pram Service. We served Christmas cake and snacks then at 11am we all went through to the church. Many of our helpers came too which was lovely. Hazel, Rev David and I did a re-telling of the Christmas story with active participation from the children. Robert accompanied us on the piano to sing Christmas carols and we also sang Sleeping Bunnies to help us think about Baby Jesus sleeping! It was really cheering to see everyone taking part in the church and we hope to do a similar event at Easter.

It's been great to be back at Little Nippers in January! The cold, damp weather has meant we've been busy and lively every week. Mum's, dad's, grandparents and carers are all getting to know each other more and the children are making friends too. Lovely to see after such a disruptive time with covid.

We had a lovely surprise last week when one of the mums bought a bag of toys she'd made to help us in our singing. It's been super and children love picking them out of the bag each week. Can you guess the songs from the picture?



Kathryn Robertson

Muddy Church



Muddy Church has continued to run once a month on a Sunday afternoon, as we wander and wonder about God. We are blessed to have so many beautiful spots to meet outdoors around North Berwick. It's been lovely to meet new people and have returning Muddy Churchers coming along, and there's a real sense of getting to know each other, which is lovely. We've had a real mix of ages joining in the fun. Attached are some photos of our activities - our Nativity Trail in December and journey round the Law in January.



We will meet on 20th February and 20th March from 2.30-4pm - venue to be confirmed - please email hazel.abbeychurch@hotmail.com to check venue before arriving.

Hazel Gray
Young People's Worker

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

Funerals

5.1.22 Mary Keddie

10.1.22 Ellen White

24.1.22 Alexander ('Sandy') Steel

26.1.22 Marilyn Hare

4.2.22 Evelyn Henderson

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 April and May 2022,
The deadline for submitting articles is Tuesday 15th
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)

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