



Abbey Church and Dirleton Kirk News

June/July 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,

On Thursday 28th April, the Presbytery of Lothian met to agree its Presbytery Plan. The proposals in the draft plan, which you know about, were passed despite a spirited speech by Robert Burgon trying to change their mind. This is a very disappointing outcome for us as congregations, and will mean that the following will be implemented when I leave:

Abbey & Dirleton will have a 0.25 allocation ie a 25% ministry. This will be a Locum appointment, and not necessarily an ordained Minister. An Interim Moderator will be appointed, and the congregations will move into 'Guardianship' of the Presbytery.

Although other buildings will be retained meantime, the manse will be sold. This ministry arrangement will be reviewed annually, and is subject to change by the Presbytery at those reviews, by which time we will be in the Presbytery of South East Scotland, which will cover everywhere from Berwick to Musselburgh.

This decision is very disappointing, the process is flawed, pastorally insensitive and short-sighted. A one-quarter appointment cannot hope to cover the 'urgent', never mind the necessary or desirable. We're not concerned so much about buildings as people. We want to grow and move forward, not be caught up in decline and closure.

You can read more in Robert Burgon's article inside. Meanwhile, please pray for the right response by us as a congregation.

Your Minister,
David

Church Services over the summer period

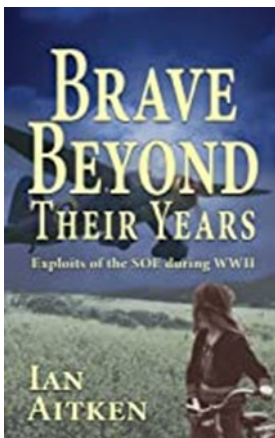
Abbey communion is on 12th June.

Over the summer we're looking at passages from Mark's gospel. We can't read all of it in church, so maybe you'd like to read it at home? If you'd like some material to help study it, I can recommend: For introductory study, the booklet by **Tracy Coterrell** (6 studies, published by IVP for £5), or by **Dane Ortlund** (12 studies, Crossway, £7) - the material in Ortlund's book is also online at thegospelcoalition.org/course/knowning-bible-mark With more detail, an excellent book is David Hewitt's **Discovering Mark's Gospel**. Now out of print, it's available second-hand quite cheaply. For more in-depth reading, try Donald English's **The Message of Mark** (IVP; it's £20 for the paperback, but worth every penny).

'I wanna be a paperback writer' (*The Beatles*)

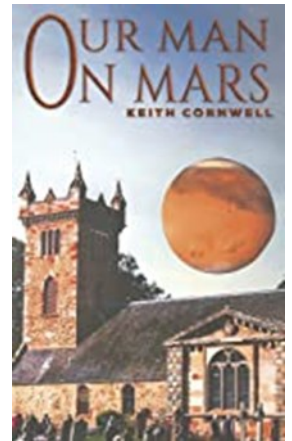
Did you know there are some very gifted authors in our congregation?

Earlier this year, **Ian Aitken** published his second book **'Brave Beyond Their Years'**. It follows the exploits of some of the Special Forces in France during the Second World War. They were the courageous young men and women who had volunteered to work behind the enemy lines in Belgium, Holland but mainly France. Working behind the lines meant the volunteers obviously could not wear uniform; if caught they were considered to be spies and treated more harshly than if they had been prisoners of war.

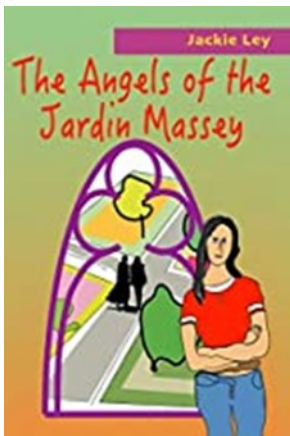


The other tremendous disadvantage was that they tended to work in very small groups and frequently on their own. The book was inspired by the service of Ian's uncle, who was a pilot flying Halifax and latterly Stirling bombers. His task was to fly the volunteers to their rendezvous in France. Sadly, he died on active service before the war ended. It's a gripping read, and a reminder of what people endured to rid Europe of fascism.

Published last year, **'Our Man on Mars'** by Prof **Keith Cornwell** is the story of the first Chaplain (from North Berwick, see the cover!) in a space colony on the 'red planet'. As a life-long lover of science fiction, I was warmed by the scientific mind behind the book, and the gentle humour so typical of its author. Science fiction? With so many vacancies in Scotland, who knows? Where's the application form . . . ?



Jackie Ley is a prize-winning author, who started her writing career after completing a Masters Degree in Creative Writing at the University of St Andrews. Her books include **'The Angels of the Jardin Massey'** a



time-slip story inspired by real public gardens with a beautiful reconstructed 16th century cloister, in Pau, Southern France. The novel's action moves between an American woman and her female British student lodger who live in a flat overlooking the gardens, and a young 16th century Medieval monk. Their lives interweave with poignant

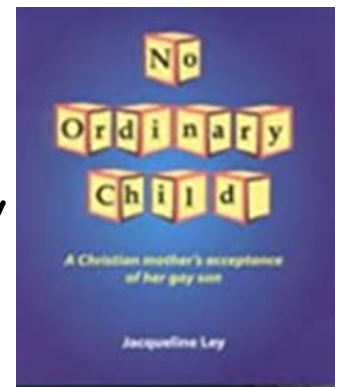
and often humorous effect.

'Gift of Sparrows' was inspired by the first house she owned in France, an ancient 3 storey Belle Époque house, and their eccentric British next door neighbours who became very unconventional friends. It combines suspense with humour, and has a spiritual undercurrent which is her writing trademark.



'Rescuing Rapunzel' is set in the Stockbridge colonies in Edinburgh, it's a 'domestic noir' novel, and features a little girl who goes missing, and her grandmother's quest to find her: layers of nail-biting suspense with a happy ending.

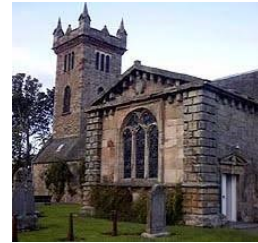
Published under the name Jacqueline Ley, her first book was **'No Ordinary Child'**, a reflective and scriptural celebration by a Christian mother of her gay son. Personal and poignant. Published by Wild Goose (Iona Community publishing).



Apart from the last one, all the books are available on Amazon, which also gives 'our' authors very near 5-star reviews. And for about a tenner or less, they're all excellent value. Please keep writing, we want more! Apologies if there are other writers I don't know about: please make yourself known. PS I'm not on commission!

Dirleton Kirk Session

Keith Stewart



The Presbytery meeting which took place on 28th April resulted in an unwelcome, if predictable, decision. At such time as David retires, our linked charge of Abbey and Dirleton will move into what is known as 'guardianship', with a locum minister in post only two days a week.

The avowed intention of the Presbytery plan is the creation of 'one vibrant missional church' in towns of over 5,000 inhabitants. That the approach will be to prioritize one such church in North Berwick over another (ourselves), to the detriment of the one not prioritized, has been considered by Presbytery and passed over.

The Presbytery was told of the scale of the pastoral work carried out by our Minister and pastoral assistant, and how difficult it would be to foresee that this vital work could be continued as effectively under the arrangements now contemplated.

Presbytery's decision acknowledges our meeting the criteria selected for this process of determining which churches should be granted the 'most favoured status' of continuing with a full-time Minister. We are not to be thought of as having failed to demonstrate our success in the restricted categories of church activity which were selected as the measures against which the distribution of the resources of Presbytery

is to be allocated. Whether those criteria are sufficient to value the work of churches- whether it is right to elevate them above other considerations, such as witness, and service, will remain a matter of active discussion.

The Kirk Session will consider the outcome of these discussions at its next meeting. For the present, I acknowledge the huge effort made by Robert Burgon, Session Clerk at Abbey, in preparing and leading our response to the Presbytery's proposals.

We have recently lost a number of beloved members of our community. I hope I will be forgiven for writing about just one, Joan Fraser, in this newsletter.

Ian Fraser was the first Minister at Dirleton whom I knew. While the appearance of the village has not changed significantly since we moved here, in many ways it was a very different place. When I was at the Primary School, many of the children came from families employed directly in farming. The parents of practically all the children worked within the immediate area.

Mrs. Fraser was an active, kindly, always approachable woman, who placed herself at the heart of the life of the village and the wider parish. As I grew older I appreciated all the more her intelligence, her insight, and her gently ironical sense of humour. I realised more the extent to which she had cared for Ian, as the progressively crippling rheumatoid arthritis from which he suffered. In the face of that condition, his Ministry to us was heroic, and her part in that Ministry was heroic too.

Abbey Kirk Session

Robert Burgon



It was so good to welcome a group of around 40 (of all ages) on Anchor Green at 8.00am for our outdoor Easter Day celebration, followed by breakfast in the Church Hall. We had been unable to meet in this way since Easter 2019 and the weather was as good as I can recall at any of these gatherings in the several decades in which they have taken place. What an encouraging start to our celebration to mark Christ's resurrection!

On a much less positive note, just 4 days later, 12 representatives of Dirleton and Abbey churches sat through the debate at the Presbytery of Lothian's meeting to decide how to allocate the (reduced) number of ministers available in our area in the future. The starting point of this exercise was a policy that each town in the area with a population of over 5,000 should have at least one Minister of Word and Sacrament. In some places, like Haddington, that will mean that at least one church will close. The Presbytery's Strategic Planning and Mission Committee accepted, at an early stage in this process, that there were two towns (Dunbar and North Berwick) in which there were two churches "actively involved in mission, financially viable, with a good number attending worship and an active eldership". It therefore proposed that in those towns (which includes Dirleton), two churches could remain

open, but one of them would have a reduced ministry allocation.

For two years, our two Kirk Sessions have tried, and failed, to convince the Committee that Dirleton and Abbey needed more than one quarter of someone's time to lead our ministry while other congregations in the area, including one in the Dunbar area, were being allocated more. The justification for this difference was that the population of Dunbar is higher than that of North Berwick. We find this hard to accept, given the size and effectiveness of our two congregations. We do not accept that population numbers should determine future ministry.

We believe that we have a strong case for the continuation of an active ministry in our area and had made a written submission prior to the meeting. Each congregation was each given 4 minutes to state their case, and I tried to do so on behalf of our congregations. A counter-motion was made that the Committee reconsidered its proposals for us. The matter went to a vote. The Committee Convenor opposed our counter-motion saying that if we were allocated more, another congregation would have their allocation reduced. It wasn't too surprising to find, given that statement, that our counter-motion was rejected by other congregations.

It is hard to find words to express the disappointment faced by those of us who went to Haddington that night. Your Kirk Session will meet again on 6 June 2022 and we will consider our next steps at that

meeting. However, in the meantime, it has to be stressed that we continue to have two thriving (and growing) fellowships) under the leadership of our Minister, David. What was agreed by Presbytery will not be implemented until David is no longer our Minister and at that time, Dirleton and Abbey will remain open. This process has not been easy for David and his wife, Mary, and I urge all members to continue to pray for them and their ministry amongst us.

In closing, on a more positive, note, it has been good to see all of our church-led activities being so well supported in the past year, in spite of the ongoing challenges of the pandemic. As TAG, WALT, Regal and Little Nippers and their leaders prepare for a well-deserved break over the summer months, we give thanks for their enthusiasm and for the excellent work which they continue to carry out in Christ's name in our community.



Cherished Clothing Exhibition

Abbey and Dirlerton Churches are organising a 'Cherished Clothing' exhibition as part of our Eco-church commitment and to coincide with Fringe by the Sea from 4th -7th August. We need your help!

Do you have an item of clothing that tells a story,
that is dearly loved and that you would be willing to
have displayed at our exhibition? We are looking for an
eclectic mix of colour, style, age and condition. Nothing
is too old or too worn so long as it tells a story!

There will be a small Sale of Work at this event.

Do you have something you have made that you can contribute? We are highlighting use of natural materials and fabrics but also up cycled materials. Each item will be matched to a line from a hymn that celebrates gifts.



Would you be willing to help at this event? There will be two exhibition spaces which will need to be manned over the four days. Word has it that the organising committee are very good at keeping volunteers supplied with tea and coffee and maybe even a wee treat!

Please contact Yolanda on Yolstrachan@gmail.com if you are able to help with any of the above. Volunteers needed please.





We're looking forward to another joint churches holiday club this summer. The plan is to have three options for different age groups during the week of 25th July.

- 10am-12 noon Monday to Friday outdoors for P1-P5 at the Losge Grounds - using Epic Explorers holiday club, an exiting 5 part explanation of the gospel, the material is by Christianity Explored Ministries
- 2pm - 4pm Tuesday and Thursday for P5-P7 at St Andrew Blackadder Church Hall
- 7-9pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings for secondary age

Please let families know who may be interested. Bookings will be opening by beginning of June.

To make all this happen, we need your help please ☐

Do you have a heart to share Jesus with children and young people? Do you enjoy getting alongside children and young people to make sure they have fun and are safe? If so, please be part of the team. You may be only free a couple of days - that's fine. You may have a

particular age group you'd like to work with - don't worry, we wouldn't expect you to be involved with all three age groups, one is great!

The event is registered with SU Scotland so they will cover things such as insurance, child protection, training and equipment. To do that, we need to ask volunteers to register on the SU Scotland volunteers website and apply for a PVG update (unless they are already SU volunteers). The regulations have changed this year (not SU's decision). To meet regulations, we must have the application process complete by the end of June. So, we need to make sure we have a team in place by mid June. Don't let the paperwork put you off, I will happily fill it out with you if that helps. We are having a

team meeting on Thursday 9th June 7.30-8.30pm at Abbey Church small hall.

If you'd like to find out more, please come along, or get in touch with me.

We'd love to have your help. If you know of others who might be interested, please invite them too.

Blessings,

Hazel

Abbey Church (All Funds)

Quarter to 31st March 2022

General

Payments exceeded receipts by £5,375. This is much better than budget. The budget was set to allow for the employment of a youth worker and many other expenses.

Income

The congregation has been very generous and income from Standing Orders, these remain 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 savings on premises costs reflect the reduction in maintenance during lock-down periods. There is a backlog of maintenance which should be tackled later in 2022.

If you have any questions please ask.

Stuart Ainslie

2nd May 2022

Abbey Church—North Berwick
BUDGET V ACTUAL at 31st March 2022

All Funds

Income (All Funds)	Annual Budget	Budget to 31 Mar	Actual to 31 Mar	Variance
Offerings	62,700	15,674	15,223	(451)
Tax reclaim	16,000	4,000	3,479	(521)
Miscellaneous	8,000	2,001	601	(1,400)
Premises income	10,000	2,499	2,402	(97)
Investment income	3,750	400	293	(107)
Legacies	-	-	-	-
Sale of Investment	-	-	-	-
Dirleton	6,000	1,500	1,500	-
Total Income	106,450	26,074	23,498	(2,576)

Expenditure (All Funds)	Annual Budget	Budget to 31 Mar	Actual to 31 Mar	Variance
Church of Scotland payments	52,506	12,976	12,976	-
Pastoral Expenses	15,200	3,674	2,076	1,598
Other Salaries	39,145	9,567	9,707	(140)
Premises costs	18,420	4,959	2,905	2,054
Church Office Expenses	4,200	1,050	916	134
Investments	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	7,560	575	293	282
Total Expenditure	137,031	32,801	28,873	3,928

Budget for 2022	<u>(30,581)</u>
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Budget for 1st quarter 2022	<u>(6,727)</u>
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Expenditure in excess of income	<u>(5,375)</u>
Positive Variance	<u>1,352</u>

Breakfast Club - Volunteers Needed

When the schools return in August, we hope to start up a Breakfast Club on Thursday mornings at Law Primary. It will be for no more than 8 pupils, all of whom will be invited by the school as benefitting from some small group time. The plan would be to offer breakfast from 8.15am to 9am - toast and cereal - then to have some board games to play together, and a time to chat if they would like. Would you like to help?

We need a small group of volunteers who would be available to come into school from 8am to just after 9am to spend time with the children. It would be good to have consistency in leaders to get to know the children, but we could arrange a rota to suit availability. An East Lothian Council PVG would need to be completed before starting. If you'd like to know more, please contact Hazel - hazel.abbeychurch@hotmail.com



Hazel Gray
Young People's Worker
Abbey Church
North Berwick

Summer Colouring Activity for our young/
young at heart members.



"Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get
some rest." Mark 6:31

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

22.5.22 Willa Woodhead

Weddings

21.4.22 Morten Aker and Hannah Welsh

14.5.22 Alan Scott and Donna Bush

14.5.22 Edward Philip and Rosanna McGuinness

21.5.22. Marzio Superina and Emma Jaberu

2.6.22 Jamie Fleming and Ailsa Bridges

Funerals

14.4.22 Thomas Hanson

10.5.22 Mary Chase

19.5.22 Sheena Smith

27.5.22 Grace Martin

New Members

Kirsten Swindells

Pat Burnett

Libby Burnett

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 August and September 2022, The deadline for submitting articles is Tuesday 19th July 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. SCO 04761—CCL51436