Kirk News

Now these three continue . . .

Of these, the greatest is . . . 1 Cor 13:13

St Andrew's Wallace Green & Lowick

February 2024

(Registered Scottish Charity No SC00867)

Minister	Rev Dr Adam Hood	01289 332787
Session Clerk	Miss Rita Inglis	01289 307421
Treasurer	Mr Brian Tait	01361 882897
Organist	Miss Rena Telfer	01289 302080
Choir	Miss Rena Telfer	01289 302080
Church Flowers	Miss Rita Inglis	01289 307421
Churches Together	Miss Rena Telfer	01289 302080
Gift Aid	Mr Alan Irving	01289 308741
Investments	Mrs Sarah Weatherburn	01289 298579
Kirk News	Mrs Joan Montgomery	01289 763151
Keep Fit	Mrs Susan Jordan	01289 306144
Life & Work	Mrs Anne McQueen	07526 223274
New Horizons	Rev Dr Adam Hood	01289 332787
Pastoral Care	Mrs Betty Mathieson	01289 308686
Presbytery	Miss Rita Inglis	01289 307421
Property	Mr Chris Budzynski	01289 305303
Safeguarding	Mr Dale Hall	01289 308944
Walking Group	Mrs Grace Tait	01361 882897
Website	Mrs Allison Longbone	01289 302249
Work Party	Ms Evelyn Mavin	01289 306086

Kirk Session Sub Committees

Finance
Lead: Mr Brian Tait

Fabric
Lead: Mr Chris Budzynski

Pastoral
Lead: Rev Dr Adam Hood

Mission and Nurture
Lead: Rev Dr Adam Hood

ELDERS

Alan Aitchison, Karen Aitchison, Linda Bankier; Dale Hall; Fiona Hall; Rita Inglis; Alan Irving; Bryon Longbone; Betty Mathieson; Joan Montgomery; Keith Montgomery; Joan Reed; Brian Tait; Grace Tait; Rena Telfer; Sarah Weatherburn

New Elders

It was an immense pleasure to have the ordination and admission of three new elders on Jan 28th: Joan and Keith Montgomery and Rena Telfer. All three are well-known to the congregation, and we pray that they may be blessed in their new role on the Session.

Holy Communion

We will be celebrating Holy Communion on Sunday March 10th at 11am. **Please note that we are no longer handing out communion cards to everyone on our roll quarterly.** The function of the card is to remind us that communion is happening and invite us to come along, and this task is now carried out by the Kirk News. We will, however, continue to return those cards handed in at previous communions, since many of us appreciate the tradition of handing in our communion cards as we come to the sacrament.

If you have not received a card with your magazine, but would like to hand in a card when you next come along to communion, please just look out one of the cards you have previously received and hand this in. If you cannot find a card at home, and would like to receive one, please let me know.

Congregational Register

Deaths

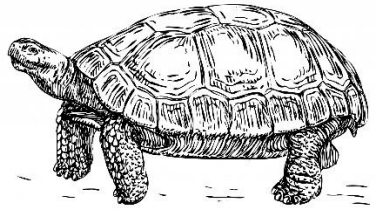
(*denotes communicant member)

Jane Mallard	28.7.23*
George Hastie	14.10.23
Elizabeth Renton	21.10.23
John Wight	12.11.23
John Johnston	25.11.23*
Gordon Fair	7.12.23
Raymond Inglis	26.1.24

New Communicants

Kevin Golding

Rena Telfer



Minister's Letter

Dear Friends,
It's a fact of life that sometimes precious things get lost. A newspaper once told the incredible story of Manuella, the pet tortoise of the Almeida family who live in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
In 1982 Manuella disappeared and despite a painstaking search was never seen again. The Almeida family assumed that she had escaped after builders had left the front door of their house open during renovations.
A few months ago, Leonel, the father of the family, died. Leonel was an avid collector of broken electrical items, which filled one of the upstairs rooms of his home that he always kept locked. It fell to his sons to clear out the room and they deposited the rubbish on the footpath outside, including a box containing an old broken record player.
Imagine their astonishment and joy when a neighbour looked in to ask if they really wanted to throw away their tortoise! It turned out that Manuella had been locked inside the box for thirty years and, even more surprising, she was still alive! One suggestion is that she had survived her dark prison by eating termites.

The Bible, itself, is full of lost and found stories. Jesus was particularly keen on telling tales of things or people that got lost, be they coins, sheep, or prodigal sons. The point of these stories is always that God seeks patiently for those who stray from him, never gives up hope and is

always extravagantly pleased at their return. In these tales, Jesus paints a lovely picture of what God is like.
Even if we are not alienated from God, it can be, that like the stray Brazilian tortoise, precious aspects of our lives have slipped from our grasp. Maybe we look back with envy and regret on past days when our lives had a sparkle that they now lack. Perhaps we used to find reading the Bible inspirational, but now, because of work, family responsibilities or just plain laziness, the habit has been allowed to wither. Or maybe, for no pressing reason, we have given up attendance at Sunday worship, justifying this with the thought that, after all, God can be as easily worshipped in the outdoors or at home, as amongst a congregation.
The story of the tortoise reminds us that what has been lost can be recovered.

Indeed, Eastertide, which will soon be upon us, is the season that teaches us that all things are possible with God, even the resurrection of valuable aspects of our lives that have been dead as a doornail for many years. By God's grace, we can recover treasures that we thought were lost forever.

Prayer
'Dear Lord, please forgive us for allowing precious relationships, habits and duties to fade, so that life has become paler and lacking in zest. By your Spirit, help us this day to make a fresh start. Amen'

Your minister and friend,
Adam

Membership

Adam always welcomes enquiries from anyone who would like to join the membership roll of the congregation. Membership formalises a commitment to the congregation and our mission and allows for involvement in congregational decisions and leadership of the church. Though, of course, all are welcome to participate in any and all of our activities regardless of whether they are formally members or not.

For your calendar

Sunday 10th March - 11am, Holy Communion

Tuesday 12th March - 2pm, New Horizons: The Very Revd Susan Brown

Thursday 14th March - 12-1.20pm, Lent Lunch, Baptist Church

Thursday 21st March - 12-1.20pm, Lent Lunch, Tweedmouth Church

Wednesday 27th March – Remembering the Victims of the Rwandan Genocide: 3pm, Legacies of Genocides, a panel discussion; 7.30pm, 'In Memorium', Seckou Keita – world famous Senegalese musician and poet.

Thursday 28th March - 7.15pm, Maundy Thursday worship

Friday 29th March - 10.40am, Good Friday March of Witness leaving from the church, followed by act of worship at old Advertiser building, 11am

Friday 29th March - Good Friday Worship, 7pm, SAWG

Sunday 31st March - Easter Worship on Spittal Beach, details TBC

Sunday 31st March - Easter morning worship, 11am

Sunday 7th April – 'Act of Commemoration', Holy Island, 7pm

Remembering the Victims of Genocide

As part of our Holy Week programme, we are pleased to be hosting Berwick Literary Festival Events on Wednesday 27th March. These are a panel discussion: 'Legacies of Genocides: Revisiting Rwanda's Catastrophe Thirty Years On' – 3pm; and a concert featuring the world famous Senegalese musician and poet Seckou Keita – at 7.30pm.

These events are ticketed and tickets can be got from the Maltings.
There is also a Christian 'Act of Commemoration' on Holy Island on Sunday 7th April at 7pm

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The organiser of these events, Andrew Deuchar, writes: On 6 April 1994, the plane carrying the Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi was shot down as it approached Kigali airport, killing all on board and triggering one of the worst mass murders in living memory in such a short period of just four months. The genocide carried out by Rwandans against Rwandans was made all the more horrific because it was carried out not by soldiers or other security forces, but by the general population, who over a period of months and years had been schooled to hate and mistrust their neighbours; and when the signal was given they turned on their friends, neighbours and family members in a horrific destruction of communities across the country.

Many of us will recall daily news bulletins filled with images of bodies piled up in rivers and gangs of youths wielding machetes marauding through towns and villages. Up to a million people died, and two and a half million were made refugees either internally or in neighbouring countries.

Sadly, as we know only too well, genocide has happened in many places over the past century and a half and one wonders why the human race seems unable to learn from history. Rwanda is not a tragedy of Africa. It is a warning to and a charge against the whole of humanity.

"No man is an island, entire of itself … any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved In mankind….And therefore do not send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee."

(John Donne 1572-1631)

New Horizons

Our January meeting was a ‘Scottish Afternoon’ and it was a great and memorable success, with recitations, readings, music and food. Amongst the highlights was the beautiful singing of Cameron Robertson.
The next meeting of New Horizons will be on Tuesday 12th March at 2pm, when the Very Revd Susan Brown will be leading us in thinking of Easter and its message. All welcome.

Cleaning

We now have a rota for the weekly cleaning of the church premises, and more helpers would be welcome. If you can help – it doesn’t normally take any more than an hour to do the basics – please sign up on the sheet in the Session Room. (AH)

Streaming

It is quite urgent now that we find some new folk to help with streaming our services. The services are streamed weekly and are viewed on average 30-40 times, and I know that they are appreciated by many who cannot get to church. However, if we are to continue streaming, we do need extra helpers. No special technical experience is needed, as full training will be provided. Please do get in touch asap if you can help. (AH)

Ordination and Admission of Elders

It was the ordination of Rena Telfer, Keith and Joan Montgomery on Sunday 28th January. The ordination and admission of new Elders is an important moment in a congregation's life and it was shared together in a serious but joyful ceremony.

The trio were welcomed to the Session by Adam and many of the Elders. The congregation were involved with a renewal of their commitment to love and serve Christ. The Elders also promised to carry out their duties faithfully and cheerfully with God being their helper.

As the saying goes – many hands may light work. So, if you feel you would like to help out in the Church or assist in any way, we would be grateful to hear from you.

Don't think we won't welcome you – we will with open arms and there are plenty of things that need doing, so please don't be shy.

No experience needed – Training will be provided!

Tea and coffee after the Sunday service
Coffee morning delivery service – Baking or if you can't bake maybe help with the delivering.
Events – Baking, providing food, or helping with the dishes,
Flowers in the Church – help especially needed for important events like Easter or Harvest.
Cleaning the church – we have a rota up in the session room. Why not chum up with somebody and do it together?

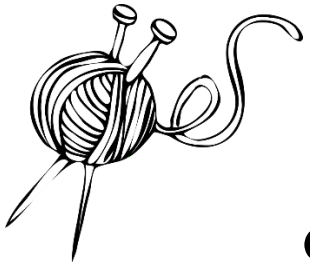
If you would like to help but aren't sure why not come and discuss it with me.

Coffee Mornings – Delivery Service

The coffee morning delivery service will have started up for the year again by the time you receive this Kirk News. If you haven't participated yet but would like to, then please look out for the email from Adam listing what's on offer.

If you haven't got email, it's no problem – just let me know and I can make sure that I get a copy to you. Remember it's all provided and delivered by volunteers and all proceeds go to church funds. So, this year why not put an order in and share in the delicious goodies we offer.

If you want a recommendation why not just ask someone in the next pew what Robert's scones are like?

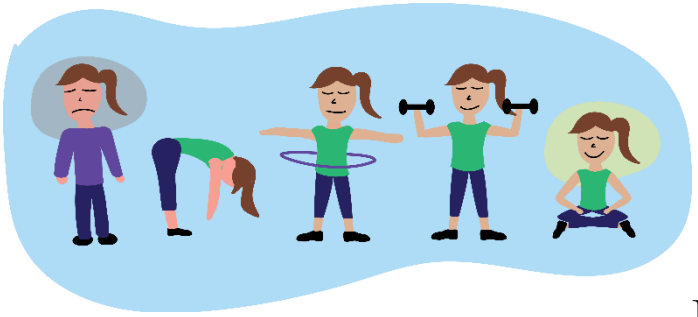


Craft, Cake and Chat

The CC&C group is continuing to meet on a fortnightly basis. Don't think it is only for folk who are gifted or who can do amazing things – it's for everyone! Some bring whatever knitting they are doing at the time; others sew or crochet and we even have a gentleman who draws and paints! So you see it's not only for the ladies!

Everyone brings whatever they are making at the time and enjoy in a lot of lively chatter and an interval of tea and cake. If you have nothing to do on the Fridays that we meet and you want some company and chat or feel like starting up an old hobby or new hobby or just feel like a piece of cake – then come along we would love to see you.

Rita



Keep Fit

The Keep Fit Class meet on Tuesday mornings 10.00-11.00 with nice gentle exercise followed by tea, coffee, biscuits and chat.

New members welcome to join the fun and fellowship.

Susan

The Christmas Presence

What is a home from home? A home from home is somewhere you feel welcome and people are happy to see you. Somewhere you can collapse into a soft chair and someone brings you coffee or tea, with a scone or a piece of cake. There is someone to talk to who is happy to listen to your tale of woe or look at your latest bargain. Maybe a pet comes to welcome you, as you enjoy the warmth after the cold of outdoors.

The Christmas Presence was all of that, and much more. Some of the best bargains in Berwick were found there, and everybody could afford to have them. You could meet your friends there, or chat with someone you hadn't met before. You could write your memories and tie them to the prayer tree, and know that each would be prayed for, or chat with the chaplain on duty. You could choose unique hand-crafted cards, and get all your presents wrapped without getting yourself all stuck up with Sellotape, or losing the end half a dozen times like someone does!

It was lovely being back in the centre of Marygate, and nice to all be able to be together in a single space. The only drawback was having to walk a lot further than most of us do to access the water we needed downstairs! Good for our step count though.

One of the loveliest things is the generosity of people and to be able to cover all the costs from donations. Thank you to all those from St Andrew's Wallace Green who donated presents, which this year were displayed on a dresser, or artistically arranged elsewhere. Some of them were snapped up very quickly.

The Christmas Presence was very much a home from home for those who came in regularly, and we do give thanks for the very special deal that made it affordable for us.

God is good.

Rena

Pastoral Care Team

The Pastoral Care Team visit people who need a bit of extra company, and have a chat over a cup of tea, in order to brighten their day and keep them up to date with what is happening in the church. Visits are generally monthly.

I visit Mrs A. The best thing about visiting Mrs A is hearing stories about how things used to be in Berwick; where certain shops where, which buildings have been knocked down or rebuilt, and funny stories about people she knew in her younger days. We talk about her knitting because she always has something on the needles. She says that knitting keeps her mind active. Mrs A is also keen to hear about events in church, even though she can't come along anymore.

I have only visited Mrs A a few times so far but she has quickly become a friend. I'll be taking my own knitting along to show her, soon, and we'll be able to discuss our different techniques. Maybe I can pick up a few tips!

If you are interested in joining the Team, and visiting someone like Mrs A, please speak to me, or email me at terribearhope@hotmail.com, or telephone 07521 585 828.

Please also contact me, if you know of anyone who is a member of the church or a regular attendee, past or present, who would welcome a visit.

Terri Bearhope

Greetings from the English Reformed Church, Amsterdam.

Hello to all at St. Andrew's, Berwick-upon-Tweed. Last Autum I visited your church. You gave me such a warm welcome and when I wrote to Adam to thank you all he invited me to write a short piece for your

magazine on our church in Amsterdam, just to give a glimpse of our life here.

Our church is in a calm, beautiful courtyard right in the centre of bustling Amsterdam. There has been a church on the site since 1419 and in 1607 it was given to English speaking worshippers by the city, many worshippers passing through Amsterdam on their way to the U.S.
The building itself is simple and homely but with a sense of majesty and a joy to enter. It is a wonderful place for uplifting worship. The downside is that it's not very practical. I was very envious of your meeting room and kitchen facilities. Our church being a listed building and being in a courtyard, it has no room to expand. We have to be very creative in organising gatherings using a matchbox size kitchen and no area to gather in other than the sanctuary itself. We're used to it though and manage to enjoy ourselves there. We hold concerts in the church, have pub quizes, meetings, harvest lunches, and much more.
We are a gathered congregation so we use zoom a lot for activities such as Bible study and other talking gatherings. This helps keep people in touch without having to travel much; and some do travel a couple of hours just to get to church on a Sunday morning. This also means that we find the Sunday service and in particular the sermon of huge importance.
There are other ways to keep in touch with the church - women's fellowship, 20's to 30's group (growingly popular), a coffee morning. Something we are very proud of is our choir and musical tradition. We are extremely fortunate to have Richard Zook as our musical director. He's fantastic - demanding but much fun at the same time. Our choir is another wonderful blessing we have and the music at the Christmas services is particularly inspiring and uplifting.

Just down the road from the church we rent a hall in which we accommodate meetings of 12-step programme groups. We also reach out to the homeless in the city cooking hot meals for them (not in our own kitchen I might add, that would be disastrous!)
We donate food to help foodbanks meet the ever-growing need. Most years we go on a sponsored walk to support refugees. By some accident of fate, we have found ourselves doing the 25 mile walk, starting at

midnight, every year. The idea is to get a very small glimpse of what it's like to flee your home in the dark. It's pretty tough, even though we know that we have food and warm shelter waiting for us! We generally raise thousands of euro's so it's worth the blisters.

For the last three years we have been without our "own" minister. Covid and changes in the Church of Scotland have extended the time taken to search for a new one. We have been very fortunate, however, to have met a stream of great locums, all of whom have fitted in with us seamlessly and helped us tremendously in keeping the life of our church going. We are very grateful to them all.

If you'd like to follow one of our services online or see more pictures of our church here is our website and YouTube channel.

https://www.erc.amsterdam/

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC51cUT507t8YdfBUCqFsZQg

And if you feel like joining an extra Bible study just get in touch. We have people "zooming" in from all over the world at times.

Above the entrance to the church you can read "Within these walls let no-one be a stranger" and we do our best to make folk feel welcome.

I hope this has given you an idea of our church and community. We feel very blessed with our church and community. If you are in Amsterdam please do get in touch and visit us. I hope we will welcome you as warmly as you welcomed myself.
Many, many blessings for you all.

Here are some photos of our congregation taken especially for you at the beginning of the service, it generally fills up a bit more as the latecomers arrive🙄. A few folks even stood to wave up for the occasion. Our choir were also keen to wave and say hello.

Gillian Walker

Home

The saying “home is where the heart is” captures the essence of what home means to many people. It’s not just about the physical location but where you feel most connected, comfortable and even emotionally invested. Home can be where you find love, joy and a sense of belonging, whether that’s with loved ones, in a particular place, or even with yourself.

As a family, we have been fairly nomadic. We have moved for work, always making the most of every opportunity and making a beautiful home wherever we have lived.
Our first move as a family was from Cambridge to Edinburgh. Our son, Cameron was 3 and a half – he was really sad when the two of us had a final look around the empty quarter. (Keith had moved to his new job already and I had to finish the school year). I then showed him all of the boxes in the removal van and explained that that was contents of our house and before he knew it, we would be in our new home in Scotland. (The lure of owning his first kilt certainly helped!)

We have had several moves before finally returning ‘home’ to Berwick. Now home embraces a sense of not just our house, but, community, security, friendship and belonging.

Home is where your heart is.

Home is where the heart is.

They say, “Home is where the heart is.” I think that is true. If you’re living with people you love and who love you, surely you feel at home?

I’ve had many homes – Edinburgh, Jedburgh, Kelso, Galashiels, Darnick, Crowborough, Aberdeen, Greenlaw, St. Abbs, Isle of Tiree and finally Berwick-upon-Tweed. Every home holds precious memories.

After I became a committed Christian in Crowborough, every subsequent move seemed right, believing I was to be where God wanted me to be.

But, if you ask me where my roots are – that’s different. My roots are in the Borders, where I grew up. The customs, traditions, dialects are part of me and what Scot doesn’t thrill to the sound of the bagpipes.

Although I now live alone. This is still my home as Bob and I created it together.

So yes, home is where the heart is.

Di Higham

Home …… a very special place

Not many of us could say that we built our home brick by brick. Every door, window, floorboard placed by the man who has lived there with his wife and family since 1975. This puts a whole new spin on, ‘a labour of love.’

Neil and Susan Jordan started to build the house of their dreams in 1974 and moved in the following year. They put their heart and soul into the build and it is clearly central to their lives with Neil knowing every

corner of his house. Inside and out. There has been some refurbishment over the years with two new bathrooms and three new kitchens – a must for the chief cook and bottle washer!

The pride and joy continue outside with their beautifully tended garden. Hundreds of flowering plants lovingly nurtured from tiny seedlings and plugs, adorning the garden in a colourful display every summer. Nature is a powerful force and central to the pleasure Neil and Susan feel about their home.

But, this house is more than just their home – it is a place of tranquillity, safety, security, love and where they feel their closest to God. It means such a lot to Neil, Susan and their family.

A very special place, indeed.

Neil and Susan

Make your home a sanctuary

Whether you live in a sizeable house or a tiny flat, make it your own. Your home can be an outward manifestation of your personality, reflecting your likes and preferences.
When you walk into your home, you will feel happy, peaceful and energised.

Any place can be made to feel welcoming with a little care and attention to detail. When your home reflects your best self. You will have created a sanctuary for yourself. Your care for your surroundings offers you a refuge.

Make your home your sanctuary.

Home

(or because of our Scottish links)

Hame

What is it?
Where is it?
What does it mean to me?

Well that's easy I thought …….. fool that I am!

The dictionary gives 'home' three noun defintions, three adjectival definitions, one adverb definition, two verb definitions and cited it as being something of an old English/Germanic origin.

So, is it a house, or something a missile does to target accurately something, or one of the other things. If I don't know what it is – how can I find out?

No matter, I thought, 'Home is where the heart is.' Easy peasy (and the spell checker does that) Sigh!

Anyway, if home is where the heart is then, wherever I am, must be home as my heart is there and if my heart is somewhere else, then medically speaking, I'm in real trouble! But when I'm away somewhere, how can I go home if I'm already at home because I always take my heart with me?

If I have a problem, then how did Tony Bennet cope – he left his heart in San Francisco, And, while I'm on about it, people talk about 'going home', not to the house they live in, but to some place they lived in as a child and have not visited for decades. What's that about?

People talk of 'home comforts', but now I'm uncomfortable with the idea of looking this up in case I find more confusion and no comfort at all.

And what about The Home Guard, a Homestead, a Home-from-Home, a Homecoming or……. STOP, STOP, STOP!
I can't take anymore – I'm going home.

(Music from the Hovis advert quietly plays in the background)

Yours,
#confusedofBerwick.com

A Reflection on the meaning of Home

"Home is where the heart is"

How many times have you heard that saying? Have we truly considered the true and broader meaning of home?

Very often it alludes to a physical place, somewhere where we feel safe and have built memories as well as plans for the future. What then, if we consider the spiritual side of home, that feeling when you have cooked a family recipe handed down over the years or indeed the memories that are evoked when you smell the first bunch of daffodils that slowly are making their way into our homes now.
If home is much more of a feeling, then it can be created anywhere, no matter where we find ourselves in the world. By returning to familiar smells and tastes we can then return home in joyful spirit.

This feeling of home means so much to so many and it is this feeling of home that I have come to enjoy when I joined St Andrew's Wallace Green and Lowick Church. The camaraderie and fellowship that greets me each week is heart- warming, it can be a simple wave or indeed a cheery smile but it lifts my spirits and sets me up for the week. I can truly say, I feel as though I have come home.

Fiona de Havilland

Reflections about Home

When I reflect on my spiritual ‘homes’ and sharing faith and worship with others I have had quite a range of experiences. My first being at Dollar Parish Church where I joined the Sunday school at around 6 years of age.

I remember the challenge of filling my attendance book with stamps of biblical scenes in the hope that I would get an attendance prize at the end of the school year. I vividly recall our wonderful Sunday School trips alternating each year between a farm trip (our session clerk was a farmer) and next year a bus trip to the beach and ‘the shows’ at Burntisland - each had its own excitement.

As I grew up, on some Sundays I would also attend a later Church service at Dollar West Church and sometimes an evening service at Muckhart Parish Church. Needless to say my father was convinced I was destined for the ministry.

Later, while living in Saudi Arabia, it was prohibited to worship any faith other than for Islam. Unsurprisingly, when told not to do something, one’s human nature is to find a way of doing it. We worshipped in private homes (parking our respective cars sufficiently far away from the host’s home so as not to attract attention). These times of worship were memorable as we adapted to different forms of service led by folks from a wide range of faiths and backgrounds.

In the cities (Riyadh and Jeddah) I worshiped in different embassies - what went on behind the embassy’s closed doors was not for the local authorities to be concerned with!

Worship was led by members of the congregation, it was a real ‘treat’ when visiting clergy led a service - quite how they described their occupation on the visa application leads much to the imagination!

On return to Scotland and East Kilbride, I was part of Calderwood and Mossneuk Parish Churches - these were vibrant congregations of largely young folks in a growing new town.

From there to Awali Parish Church in Bahrain, this was my Church home for many years. This was a small Church set at the heart of the national oil company's compound serving the local and surrounding communities.

Since my return to Scotland 11 years ago, I have enjoyed worshipping at Abdie and Dunbog Parish Church (Newburgh), a small Church set in the farming community of rural Fife. And currently here I am at St. Andrews, Wallace Green and Lowick Church in Berwick - my first coastal Church home.

Reflecting on my Church homes over the years, I have had the pleasure of meeting people from a range of ethnicities and beliefs. I have worshipped when prohibited to do so in Saudi Arabia and also just across the causeway in Bahrain, worshipped openly in another Muslim country. The latter reflecting the warmth and tolerance of most Bahraini people who wish to learn from the experiences of others. I learned a great deal from the Bahraini character - perhaps that's why it was my home for just over two decades! Now to my Church home in Berwick which has warmly welcomed me - thank you congregation!

My final thought of 'home' is to our ultimate resting place described here in Revelation 7 (15-17) - 'Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in the temple, and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger, never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes'.

Quite an inspiration and comfort!

Yours in Christ, Bill

What home means to me

Home is where I relax and make myself 'at home'. Home is where I like to entertain friends, neighbours and family. Even though I have a small flat, I love to welcome Elizabeth and her 3 cats to stay for periods of 1 week or even more. Of course, it is necessary to 'feline proof' my flat when they come to stay but they are both adorable and demonic in equal measure. All 3 cats love their 'Gran' and their 'holiday home' in Berwick.

I have put my own stamp on my home in King James Court even though it is rented. I have items of furniture I have had for some time and others which are relatively new. It has been like a tricky jigsaw puzzle fitting everything in! All is well and I feel it is very homely now. Photos of my daughters adorn the walls including new and old paintings and prints. I enjoy photography and 2 enlarged versions of my photos are also on the walls – Berwick scenes, by the way. Items discovered on my allotment make up an interesting collage, ranging from old nails with rectangular heads to a clay pipe.

Whilst my kitchen is small, I enjoy freezing allotment produce and producing meals. When I have a glut of courgettes, for example, it's challenging to produce something tasty and different as the season moves on.

I enjoy upcycling - finding used furniture and painting it to suit my decor. I painted the walls and ceilings myself. It was hard work moving all the furniture around but it has been worth all the hard work and hassle. I look out onto a tiered courtyard garden - a lovely view to have in the town centre.
I feel I am so lucky to be living in King James Court and have often found myself thanking the Lord for helping to make it possible.
I no longer worry about damage to the roof or building structure when the next storm is heading our way. My home is my haven.

Joan R.

Home

Home isn't a house for me – partly because we moved so often. With a father in the RAF, we were rarely in one place more than 5 years and the shortest was 2 weeks!

In fact, my house now is the longest time I have ever spent in one place. In all the moves we made, when we spoke of home it was of two different places and never meant where we were currently living at the time. It always meant either Berwick – the town where my father had grown up and where all his family were or Goch a town of similar size in Germany, where all my mother's family were. When we travelled back to Berwick or Goch on a visit, it was to go home. Home as they say is where the heart is and therefore home was where the family were.

Looking back now I can see how much closer we are to Aunts, Uncles, and Cousins, than many other families. I think that the reason for this is that we were often so far away from each other (on the other side of the world and once for 3 whole years) that whenever we did come home on a visit everyone made the effort to come together and see each other. There would be get- togethers, parties, convoys of cars into the hills to roll eggs, family gatherings on the beach at Spittal or Goswick. This is where the whole family would come together and there would be games of badminton, rounders, treasure hunts, loads of food and of course a large tent to shelter from the vagaries of Northumberland weather.

Travelling does give you a different outlook on life, there are new things to see and experience. There are new friends to make and exiting new things to explore. But, being away from those dearest to you, also makes you appreciate them more. As a result, you make more of an effort to remain close and to be a family. Travelling so much was great and with hindsight I can see that it also had the advantage of making us closer to our family in both Countries than is the norm for many.

So, for me home means family.

Rita

Spotlight on a local Charity

Barnardo's

Keeping a promise to protect children and young people for 150 years.

I am sure many of us remember having a Dr Barnardo's Money Box in the shape of a house as we were growing up. I can remember the Christmas Parties in the Tweed View Hotel. During the party our houses would be emptied and the pennies, thruppennies, sixpences, shillings would be counted and the grand total written on the base of the house. This was all for a very good cause and this still is a very good cause more than 150 years later.

Thomas John Barnardo was born in Dublin in 1845. As a young man he moved to London to train to be a doctor. He was shocked to find children living in terrible conditions, with no access to education. Poverty and disease were so widespread that one in five children died before their fifth birthday. When a cholera epidemic swept through the East End, leaving 3000 people dead and many orphaned children the young Barnardo felt an urgent need to help.

In 1870, Barnardo opened his first home for boys. As well as putting a roof over their heads, the home trained the boys in carpentry, metalwork and shoe making and found apprenticeships for them.
To begin with, there was a limit on the number of boys who could stay there. But, when an 11-year-old boy was found dead – of malnutrition and exposure – two days after being told the shelter was full, Barnardo vowed never to turn another child away.

Barnardo believed that every child deserved the best possible start in life, whatever their background. This philosophy still guides the charity today.

In 1873, Barnardo married Syrie Louise Elmslie, who played an important role in the development of the Charity. They received the lease of a 60-acre site in East London, where the couple opened a home for girls.
Syrie was keen to support girls who were being exploited – this continues to be an important area of work for Barnardo's today.

By the time Barnardo died in 1905, the charity had 96 homes caring for more than 8500 vulnerable children. This included children with physical and learning difficulties. Barnardo's experience of caring for his daughter Marjorie, who had Down's syndrome, strongly influenced his approach to the care of disabled children.

Barnardo's is certainly a dynamic charity ensuring that it provides the essential services which are needed. During the last 50 years there have been many social and economic changes in society. The need for Children's Homes has decreased and now the charity works in the community supporting families and young people.

Today, Barnardo's supports and protects children and young people facing a wide range of issues, from drug misuse, domestic violence to disability.

But one thing has never changed – the philosophy of Thomas Barnardo, who believed that with the right help, children can change their lives and achieve their potential.

Over 150 years ago, Barnardo promised to support those children in need of help – regardless of their circumstances, gender, race, disability or behaviour.

The Charity continues to honour that promise.

Barnardo's has more than 600 charity shops across the UK and we are lucky enough in Berwick to have one of the newest and most up-to-date shops on the High Street.

A morning spent with Maureen Kirkaldy and Clive Price

Jeremiah 29:11
"*I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you* ***hope*** and a ***future."***

Maureen and Clive are a charismatic couple with a zest for life. They share a positive, can-do attitude and a desire not to waste a single moment. Hence, their busy schedule of holidays and new adventures. Brought together through adversity, Covid, sadness and a 'bubble' – Maureen's mantra of 'Carpe Diem' is certainly most evident.

Maureen is a very well known and much-loved member of the Church having attended since 1973. She was Session Clerk and with her late husband, George, a very active member of the Kirk.
It is as well that we don't know what is ahead of us because Maureen has had much joy, but much sadness in her life. An amazing career in teaching cut short through a condition affecting her voice (quite important as a teacher).

She had eight years looking after her beloved husband of 50 years as his health deteriorated until his death in August 2020.

Meanwhile, Clive had endured his own loss as his wife of 55 years had died earlier that year in April. Clive had visited Jenny in hospital every day for 6 months. To compound this sadness, it was the early days of Covid – there was a huge sense of bereavement and isolation.

For some reason, Clive firmly believes Divine intervention, the two bumped into each other outside the bank in Hide Hill and the started a new and welcome chapter for both of them.
A walk along the pier followed, as all other meeting places were firmly closed due to the pandemic. This was the starting point of a lovely friendship and a deep connection. (Although, both couples had previously chatted to each other in church.)

They became unofficial bereavement counsellors for each other and due to Covid restrictions, they formed a 'bubble' together. There is no doubt a great connection between Clive and Maureen. They are certainly on the same wavelength and are incredibly comfortable in each other's company.

Although their personal journeys in Faith differ – Clive spent his working life as an Anglican Vicar and Ecumenical Officer; whilst Maureen, is a proud Scot and member of the Church of Scotland. There are shared beliefs and a common thread that binds their lives together.

This brings me back to the Bible quotation from Jeremiah, which is so important to Maureen and Clive.
" I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you ***hope*** *and a* ***future.****"*

Life is about choices and certainly this couple have made a very good choice in each other.

JGM

REMEMBERING GENOCIDE

The 30th Anniversary of Rwanda's Tragedy

Wednesday 27th March at 3pm

An open forum chaired by Rev canon Sarah Hills, Vicar of Lindisfarne and former Director of the Coventry Cathedral Centre for Reconciliation.

The team is made up of:
Professor Gilbert Achcar, Dr Mark Levene, Veronique Tadjo and Michela Wrong.

Tickets £10

Later that day at 7.30pm

"We will remember……."

A performance of African music by world-famous Senegalese cora player, Seckou Keita.
This is a unique opportunity to welcome this giant of the musical world to Berwick whilst also honouring all who have died in genocide. A portion of the income from the concert will be given to the Red Cross.

Tickets £20

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Notes from the Editor

Many thanks for all of the contributions to the Kirk News. Special thanks to those who shared their thoughts about 'What Home means to me.'

Special thanks to Maureen Kirkaldy and Clive Price for agreeing to speak to me. Also, Neil and Susan Jordan for our Garden Centre rendezvous.

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