Kirk News

St Andrew's Wallace Green & Lowick
Spring 2025

(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
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 Terri Bearhope	07521 585828
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	Dr Nathan Hood	01289 302787
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.

Holy Communion

We will be celebrating Holy Communion on Sunday 9th March at 11am. There will be a retiral offering that morning in aid of Hospice Care North Northumberland, which provides emotional and practical support across North Northumberland to adults and their families living with a life-limiting illness requiring palliative input.

Congregational Register

Deaths(*denotes communicant member)

Adrienne Mullins	21.11.24
Arthur Bolton	3.12.24
Margaret Jones	30.1.25*

Minister's Letter

Dear Friends,
2025 marks an important milestone in the history of the Church, for 1700 years ago, in 325AD, an ecumenical council representing the worldwide church adopted the Nicene Creed – so called because the council met in Nicaea in modern day Turkey, then part of the Roman Empire. The creed was a response to a history of debate on how Christians were to understand the relationship between Jesus and God the Father. The result of the council's deliberations was the conclusion that Jesus really was one with the Father in substance, God of God, light of light, and not simply a good man, or a unique, though created special man.

All of this might seem a little abstruse, interesting to historians or musty theologians, but a million miles away from our concerns in 21st Berwick. However, this could not be further from the case. For what the Nicene Creed does, in admittedly forbidding language, is to establish that when we read the stories of Jesus or consider his teachings, we are truly touching the heart of God, discovering what God is like and what

God wants of us. The Creed, in this way, is an important reminder that we are not left in the dark about the biggest questions of life and death. For since God came amongst us uniquely in Jesus, and because Jesus went about doing good, taught us to forgive and died for our sins, so we have a firm hold on God's will for our lives and a sure hope, in whatever lies before us, that all will be well.

Yours, 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. Those who have been members of, or confirmed into other churches can join by a simple process of transference. Those who have not been members of another church, are invited to take some simple vows of membership, which would be explored through informal gatherings. 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

Sun 9th March	11am, Holy Communion
Thu 13th March	Lent Lunch in SAWG, 12-1.20pm
Sat 5th April	Church Spring Clean, 10-12 am
Sun 13th April	Palm Sunday Worship led by a Congregational Group
Thu 17th April	Maundy Thursday Worship at 7.15pm
Fi 18th April	Walk of Witness at 10.40am leaving from SAWG
Fri 18th April	Good Friday Worship at 7pm
Sun 20th April	Early Service on Spittal Beach at 8am & Easter Worship in SAWG at 11am.

New Horizons

The last four meetings have been fun and interesting, but in different ways. In November, Rita explained the work of Coastal Grains – we were all fascinated by the range of products that Northumberland farmers contribute to. In December, we enjoyed the Christmas film, 'Nativity'.
January saw our annual Scottish afternoon, when we were entertained with songs, poems, readings and were even greeted at the door by Keith on the pipes – there were quizzical looks from passers bye as to why a piper was playing in the parade on a dull January afternoon!
Our Feb meeting saw Linda give a fascinating pictorial talk on Berwick from the 1930s-70s (during Lowrie's visits). The programme continues right through to May and in June we are planning an outing to Paxton House. Our meetings are on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 2pm, and we always conclude our meetings with a time of chat over some delicious cake or biscuits.
All welcome.

Lent Lunches

As usual, there will be lunches organised by the Churches Together Group throughout Lent, beginning with a lunch on 6th March in the Salvation Army. The format of the lunches is that lunch is served from 12-1pm, followed by a brief talk (which might include prayers and songs) from 1-1.20pm. A donation is invited for the lunch, which goes to Christian Aid.
SAWG is hosting a Lent Lunch on 13th March, the list of venues:

6th March: Salvation Army
13th March: SAWG
20th March: Baptist Church
27th March: St Cuthberts Parish Centre
3rd April: Baptist (but hosted by Methodists)
10th April: Berwick Parish Church

VE Day

The town council are organising the 80th commemoration of both VE & VJ Days. VE Day, which is on Thursday 8th May, will include a service in Berwick Parish Church at 2pm, which will have an ecumenical flavour. There will be other events on the day – including the lighting of a beacon in the evening. VJ Day events are still at the planning stage.

Bridge over troubled waters

Is your life being shaken by endless upsets?
Are your nerves taught with worry or even regrets?
Perhaps those that you love are causing pain,
And you long for quietness and peace again.
When the storms of life are raging around,
And you need to stand on level ground,
Remember the Lord, for His love never alters.
Let Him be your bridge over troubled waters.

(Hollie H Spiers)

Helping out 2025

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. Please don't be shy. No experience needed and all training will be provided!

A few events coming up in the next few weeks:

13TH March	Lent Lunch help with catering required
5th April	Annual Church Spring Clean ensuring we are spick and span for Easter.
Easter Saturday	Decorating the Church with flowers for this important occasion.

Weekly we could do with more bodies on the cleaning rota and we do need help making teas after church on a Sunday.
So, if you would like to help just let me know.
Rita

Kitchen Refurbishment Fund – February

We passed our £1500 target for last year and by the end of December we had banked £1800, this is a brilliant total. Since then, we have continued with bits and pieces – magazines, and cards. So, we have nearly reached the £2000 mark and our little shopping list gets bigger all the time.

Super-duper dish washer - £1200
Boiling water tap £300

Cordless vacuum cleaner £300 – and if you are one of those on the cleaning rota you will realise what a godsend this is – no more hunting for the nearest plug!!!
Double cupboard unit £200
If you have fun ideas for fund raising in 2025 do let me know and likewise any ideas for kitchen equipment.

Rita

News from your Treasurer

Hello everyone, 2024 has come and gone and we are in a new year. For me, the days, weeks and months fly by and find it difficult to believe we are in 2025.

The finances in 2024 were once again a mixture of good and not so good. Fortunately for us the good was far greater than the not so good. Giving from members increased from the previous year, which is fantastic news, because we are working with a smaller membership base There was no gift day in 2024, it is hoped that members could increase their giving over a longer period of time rather than a one-off occasion.

Other positive figures where income increased was fund raising, congregational organisations and the use of premises. A big heartfelt thanks and appreciation is given to all who do the organising and support of these events.
Our expenditure during the year was controlled and the biggest costs incurred locally was insurance, energy and rates. We were able to get nearly through the year without any major repairs on the Church and Manse, but in the last month necessary electrical work was undertaken. The result is that last year at this time the deficit for 2023 was £8,265 and the deficit for 2024 is estimated to be £600.

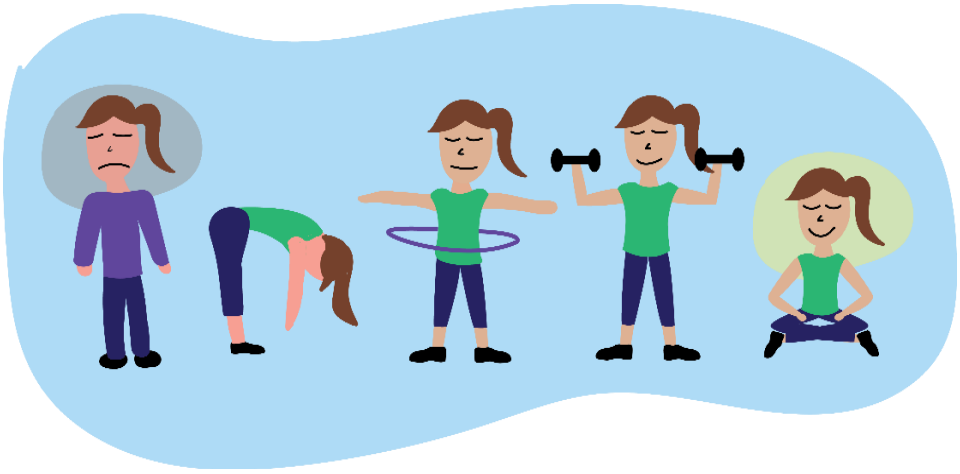
Looking ahead 2025 will bring its own challenges, we have already spent £3,000 on the damp on the North side wall. Plans are afoot for the

doors to be painted and further electrical work, all very costly due to the style and nature of the building.

Your support in 2025 will be needed more than ever and I am sure together we can overcome the problems that come our way, we are made of strong stuff.
With the above in mind, I would appreciate during 2025 you regularly consider your giving to the Church. It is important we keep increasing our income. Many of you now donate through the bank and it is easy to forget to review this amount in our busy lives.
Bank giving is a very easy way to donate. This ensures a regular donation from you to the Church and can work alongside the offering envelopes or replace the envelopes completely.
Modern online banking allows you to be in full control of the transaction, amounts can change month to month and are dictated by your own circumstances and can be stopped and restarted by you whenever you wish.
If anyone would like to go ahead with this please contact Rita or me for further details and we will be glad to help.

Thank you all for your continued support.

Brian Tait
February 2025



Keep Fit

The Tuesday keep fit class continues to go from strength to strength, meeting on Tuesday mornings at 10.00 for gentle exercise, friendship, fellowship, tea, coffee and biscuits.
In fact, the class is now full and operating a waiting list. Please contact me if you would like to join the queue!

Susan Jordan

Walking Group 2024 and 2025

SAWG walking group went from strength to strength during 2024. The group meet once a week on a Thursday, taking a short break over the Christmas and New Year holidays. During the months of April and September inclusive the time of the walk is 6.00pm. In the other months, the start time of the walk is 2.00pm.

At present the group has 14 members and Charlie – all welcome. The walks are usually around the Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal area. Although when there is maximum daylight and a good weather forecast, drives out to Cocklawburn, Hirsel, Paxton, Etal and Norham are part of the plan. If the weather is a bit dodgy, the group usually still meet at the Church for a cuppa and chat.

We are very friendly group, and the pace of the walk is not too strong. Those at the front are always aware they need to look behind and see that all are intact. The group is full of talented bakers and do not waste any opportunity to make a cake or traybake to have with the customary cuppa after the walk.

There is a small donation asked for of £1 per week. There is no charge for the refreshments.
In 2024, there were surplus funds at the end of the year and £250 was donated to the Church and £350 to the RNLI.
The group will be meeting on a Thursday afternoon until 27 March and thereafter on a Thursday evening throughout the summer.

The group is not restricted to SAWG members, guests are very welcome.
If any further information is required, please contact;

Grace or Brian Tait.

Berwick Churches Together

It was lovely for Churches Together to be a part of the Living Barracks Project on Sunday after our service. We were blessed with a dry day, which made all the difference. A large number from all the churches in Berwick came along to take part in this event, showing that the Church of Christ is alive and active in our town. There was also a wide age range: from 15 months to 90 years young, showing that you're neither too young, nor too old to be welcomed into the family of our God who loves us all.

Being such an orderly and well-behaved group we only had to do one practice run, before completing our filming in two takes. A different and very special occasion.

We are going to be having another special event between Sunday 6th April, and Wednesday the 9th. This is the visit of the UBUNTO Choir. They visited us a number of years ago with a group of school pupils, but this time it is a group of older Gap Year students. There will be a concert on the Monday evening in St Andrew's Wallace Green, and we look forward to that event. During the daytime the Choir will be leading workshops for Middle School pupils. Do come along and give support, and encourage your friends to come along too. This is being spearheaded by Waypoint Church.

It is also the season of Lent, when we will be having our usual Lent Lunches, hosted by a number of the churches. It's good to spend time remembering the events which led to the betrayal and death of Jesus. There will be a different speaker at each one. The first Lunch will be on Thursday 6th March, and there will be different churches hosting these.

On Good Friday, we will have our Walk of Witness. We will meet outside St Andrew's Wallace Green and walk round to the Old Advertiser Office. There will be stops for reflection and a short time of worship and reflection. This is a special time of witness pointing to the centrality of the death of Jesus as the way to LIFE.
All are welcome to join us at the Church, or at any point during the short event.

There is also a service at 8.00am on the beach at Spittal on Easter Sunday, followed by breakfast. A lovely way to begin Easter Sunday, especially remembering how often the sea features in the lives of Jesus and His disciples.

'Hallelujah, He is risen indeed'. Rena

Berwick Parade

On Sunday 9th February, the congregation of St Andrew's Wallace Green participated in a magnificent event. Over 100 Christians from the churches in Berwick were gathered at the Berwick Barracks. There were Presbyterians, Anglicans, Methodists, Roman Catholics, Evangelicals, and the Salvation Army. They were there to take part in 'Berwick Parade', a large-scale art installation that is has been developed by Berwick Shines, the Cultural Development Team for the Living Barracks project.

With funding from the Government and other sources, the Barracks is being regenerated. While retaining the striking architecture designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, the interiors will be refitted. There is going to be a new museum, exhibition rooms, and workshop spaces for artists. A café will be built, and there are plans for accommodation too. The aim is to provide a cultural hub that will vitalise the arts in the town and support the economic development of the centre. This is especially important given that the Maltings Theatre on Eastern Lane will be closing for refurbishment in May 2025, and so a new venue for artistic activity is most welcome while we wait on a brand-new arts centre.
To augment the refurbishment of the Barracks, the Maltings has received grants to set up a new team, Berwick Shines, that will oversee a programme of cultural events over the next two years. These will be a precursor to the kinds of activity that should take place in the Barracks once the building work is completed.

This team, which I have been working for since late-September, began in 2024 and made its first waves with a project working with local schools. The children made fish wicker lanterns inspired by the salmon of the River Tweed. You may have seen some of them hanging on the Church balconies over the last few months!

Following success of the salmon lantern project, Berwick Shines commissioned Matthew Rosier, a renowned artist of national status, to produce Berwick Parade. Matthew wanted to deliver an event that will represent and celebrate the many kinds of people and groups we have in the town. He intended on doing so by producing a light show that will be displayed in the Berwick Barracks.

First he had to film groups from Berwick over several days. Using the footage, he would then project the parading Berwickers onto the Barrack walls at 10 times their size. What will emerge is an amazing and awe-inspiring of giants processing around the Barrack walls featuring many of the people who live in this town.
My job was to help Matthew connect with the communities, businesses, individuals and traditions in Berwick. Working with my colleagues, we reached out to many groups, telling them about the project and inviting them to be filmed as part of the parade. We were grateful that Adam was so willing to support the project and that he shared it with the Churches Together forum. Matthew had hoped that, in total, we might get 100 people from across the town. This would be a good number for most community engagement projects. What we achieved far surpassed this! Between 21st – 22nd January and the 6th – 9th February we filmed all those taking part in Berwick Parade. Over the six days we had 850 people participating – around 6.5% of the town's population!

By far the biggest group was the Churches Together. We had expected around 40-50 people to show up at 12.30 to be filmed, but we had approximately 100 Christians show up. The group was so big that when we were assembled in the Maltings Cinema at the Berwick Barracks for our briefing, we filled the entire room. Berwick and its churches really bought into this event.
I was delighted that so many followers of Christ made the effort to take part. It was a great witness to the presence of God in our town and the important role our churches play in the community. Moreover, it was a show of Christian witness. Though we belong to different denominations we were a united group in this event. We were one under Christ. A foundation to build upon.

Following our briefing, we were led out to be filmed. The set was 12 metres long and each person had to walk, run, dance or parade across it three times. For most groups this was a relatively straight forward and quick to do, but given our numbers it was a big task, especially as everyone had to stay in the same order each time they were filmed. There were stewards keeping us in line and preparing us for filming. It was a giant logistical challenge, but we did it.

When it was time to shoot, I had the honour of leading the march. I carried the large cross we use in our Good Friday processions around Berwick and it felt fitting that it should be the symbol heading up the united Christians of Berwick. It was also a good workout for my muscles, as it was a heavy object to lift! Others from our church had objects like: the bagpipes; a saltire; the church hymnary; and the bible that is placed on the pulpit. Adam even wore his robes!

Overall, the Churches Together parade was a great success. Matthew was over the moon with the commitment of the churches to this project and their willingness to get involved. I would like to thank all of you who took part. It was a cold, windy day but you chose to support a big event in the town and to show your witness to Christ. I am grateful to you.
However, this is not the end of the project. On 28th February – 2nd March, Berwick Parade will be shown at the Berwick Barracks. It promises to be a great evening, with food and drink on offer while Matthew's brilliant art installation will be a sight to behold. Tickets are free but they are going very fast, so if you want to see it you need to book as soon as possible, especially as you will only be admitted if you have booked a ticket in advance. You can get tickets on the Maltings website or in person at the Maltings Box Office.

With Many Thanks, Nathan

Then and Now

At the end of one Prayer Group on a cold Saturday morning in January the conversation got round to discussing how things have changed over the years. How we managed with that very cold weather. How did we cope before central heating and what did we do with our stone hot-water bottles?

We have enjoyed an opportunity to reminisce – here are some of our thoughts and memories.

When the Second World War started my dad became a coal miner, mum having told him that he had served in the First World War he wasn't serving in this one.
One of the perks was that coal miners received six tons of coal a year and in the winter, mum would take her muma bucket of coal when she needed it.

Dad worked constant night shift and during the day he studied at Herriot Watt College in Edinburgh. In 1942 he was promoted Fireman at Woolmet Colliery near Dalkeith, which meant we had to move to Newton Village, some seven miles from Roslin.

Mum visited my granny every Monday, cleaned her house and took away her dirty clothes. The following Monday, she would place coal in the bottom of her case, put layers of newspaper over it and then place the clean clothes on top.
Every Sunday I would fill my saddlebag with coal and cycle to Roslin and give the coal to my granny and then play with my chum.

Ian Hannah

A Reversal of Central Heating Fortunes

I was talking to Adam recently about the time when my dad left the Army, having served just under nine years, with a medical pension and no job to go to.
This was in 1980, and the council-owned home we moved to was on The Oval in Prior Park, just across the road from my Nana and Grandad Gillie. The chat with Adam reminded me of the trials we had in our new home in Berwick, with heating.

The move was a shock to the system, albeit a delayed one. We moved in summer so the consequences didn't hit us until autumn arrived. Since we'd left Berwick in 1972, we'd lived in a succession of modern flats and houses; a high-rise block in Berlin, a dormer-windowed semi in Inverness, a modern terraced house in Bonnyrigg, among others. All of these homes had modern central heating systems that us kids didn't need to think about. Holidays with grandparents didn't prepare us for what was to come.

Autumn came along with the introduction of yet another new school. At home, we realised that Mam had set a fire and organised a regular coal delivery. This seemed new and exciting but for Mam and Dad it was probably a return to the bad old days that just had to be endured. We lit the fire with anticipation, probably too early in the year but we were keen to have the experience. It soon wore thin.
For the rest of the winter, we had to endure the overwhelming heat of the living room, often with the internal doors flung open in an attempt to share the heat with the rest of the house. Well, the heat usually stopped dead at the foot of the stairs. The bedrooms and the bathroom were incredibly cold. Ice on the inside of the windows was common, followed, of course, by the inevitable condensation.

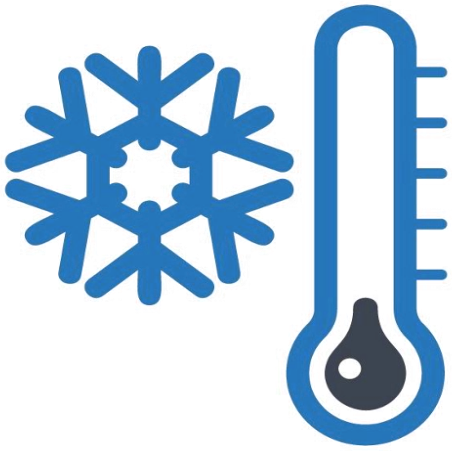
In hindsight, I feel sorry for my parents who were probably tired of the complaints from us young ones, and who had no choice but to get on with things. Even our cat, who had never known anything but modern heating convenience, refused to leave the living room on colder days, and if she came upstairs at night, insisted on sleeping under the bed

covers with whoever would accommodate her. The dirt caused by the fire, with falls of soot, burnt carpets, and even burst pipes caused by the lack of heat upstairs, must have been additional frustrations for the adults in the house.

A partial relief came when Berwick Borough Council installed night storage heaters. If you remember these, they were large, heavy, things that heated up at night and gave out their heat during the day. They were inefficient and we still needed to use the fire in the evenings.
Even worse, there was still no heating upstairs but they took the edge off the cold and we appreciated them; Tiger the cat lay on top of them in the afternoons, enjoying the last of the warmth.

Now, also living in a council-built home but north of the Tweed, my family enjoys the cosiness of gas central heating. However, who knows what will happen in the next few years, now that the overuse of fossil fuels is rightly seen as the cause of much destruction in this beautiful world that God entrusted to us.

Terri Bearhope



Cold weather

It was impossible to avoid chilblains on hands and feet before days of central heating! Fortunately, my grandmother knitted nothing but socks so she kept me supplied with lovely, long woollen socks.

An aunt, however, prescribed boiling hot wax as treatment for hands, which was horrible but mercifully short lived!
I will never forget my baby sister, in 1946, being parked outside in her pram in deep snow. Brother and I were pretty worried about her, to no avail. You had to be tough to survive in those days!

Sheila Ritchie

Is it only as you age that you think summers were once hotter and winters colder? As a child in 1947 I was unaware that stockpiles of coal at the pits and deposits froze and couldn't be moved and food rations still in use from WWII were cut to levels lower than in the war years. Thousands of chickens in poultry farms died of the cold. Winter root vegetables couldn't be harvested as they were frozen into the ground. Sheep farmers lost one quarter of their flocks.

We certainly didn't have central heating and I remember one coal fire in the living room and being told to shut the door to keep the heat in. Elderly relatives seemed to have knee rugs as part of their wardrobe. No posh leather boots either – just wellies with thick hand-knitted knee socks.
We wore cardigans over jumpers and underneath it all a cotton vest. I was told that, "A head without a hat is like a house without a roof." So we wore wooly hats……. sometimes, even in bed! Frost on the inside of the window meant you had to melt it with your breath to see what the weather was like.
We ate food that was warming and filling. Porridge for breakfast, stew with dumplings and suet puddings.
Life has come full circle as the nightly routine of filling a hot water bottle before bedtime has since returned, now that I am in my eighties.

Diana Higham

The Department of Elf and Safe Tea

It has come to our attention that you are asking your readership for reminisces of past practices in combating *"temperature deficiencies"* in the home during periods of insufficient temperature. The Department would like to remind your readers that such practices may fall outwith the regulated practices set out in Section 18 sub paragraph 3 note 5 and appendix 32.5 of the legislation set out on 1-4-1999 and amended by the CE standards – section 13, D / 6.
In case any of your readers are unable to put their hands on these documents we detail below some of the main points relating to former "*temperature deficiencies"* practices and why these are no longer suitable.

Cold Bed
PAST PRACTICE: Hot Water Bottle
DANGER Leakage making you think you have wet the bed combined with 3rd degree burns when placing feet on this. This practice is exacerbated with the use of old stone bottles which are even better at leaking and burning.

Window Frost
PAST PRACTICE: Waking up to discover frost on the inside of the windows.
DANGER Sticking tongue onto window (may result in tongue sticking to window); trying to scrape / rub frost off (breaking glass and also leaving ice on linoleum floor which is a slip hazard). Remember frost inside is just an accurate weather forecast that it is cold. Close the curtains if it bothers you.

Getting Dressed in Bed
Past Practice: Trying to change from Nightwear to Daywear without emerging from beneath the bed clothes
Dangers include getting your knickers in a twist (literally); appearing at work or school or elsewhere with an item of undiscarded wear showing; being unable to find your nightwear the next evening; shaming your

family if you are in an accident and are taken to hospital incorrectly attired.

BREAKFAST
Past Practice: eating your breakfast while wearing a coat to keep warm.
Dangers: getting porridge on your coat sleeves (licking it off does not work); suffering for it later when as you were warned, “Take your coat off or you won’t feel the benefit when you go out.”

Keeping warm by getting close to a heat source
Past Practice: Approaching / staying close to a heat source.
Dangers: Those with whom you are will find said practice to be selfish and you may get some form of chastisement, vocal and voluminous at least and possibly physical as a sibling or parent make take action “for the common good” to move you by whatever means are required. You have been warned many times that said practice will result in CHILLBLANES (whatever they are).

No fuel for “The Fire”
Past Practice: It was your task to ensure sufficient fuel for said heat source was in the house and near to the heat source.
Danger – You “forgot” or “could not be bothered” to get it from the storage area (“outside” last night. Hypothermia may result from your “memory lapse.” You may get lost in the Arctic wastes of the backyard as you go to the coal bunker / log store. A parent may give you “THE LOOK.” An elder sibling make give you a thump. In many ways, Hypothermia is possible the best outcome.

The Paper Round
Past practice: A teenage child would undertake to deliver to a certain amount of households’ newspapers in the period of time before school for a remittance of staggering generosity.
Dangers: You naïvely forgot that the balmy summer mornings and the prosperous Christmas period would be replaced by January darkness and February “freshness.” Being squashed by a snowplough; breaking

limbs from traversing glaciers which were previously footpaths; running from packs of wolves emerging from the darkness of number 36; meeting Mrs###### after you delivered the Sun to her and not the Peoples Friend." Present day survivors wonder why the world does not encourage this "remunerative form of employment "today.

School
Past Practice – you attended. No closures for heating breakdowns; bad weather forecasted; or anything else for that matter.
Danger – The fact that you attended class when the heating did not work and you had to wear your coat in class did mean you didn't "*feel the benefit* " when you had to go outside for playtime, lunchtime, P.E., etc. But the upside was the 1/3rd of a pint of milk you were given had not curdled. The risk of hypothermia is still outweighed by the requirement to attend. Pnuemonia is an excepted excuse.

The Department of Elf and Safe Tea wish all your readers a happy and Elf and Safe Tea time.

Assistant to the chief Elf

Inspirational People

Inspirational People are those who motivate and encourage us through their actions, words or achievements.

They often overcome challenges, display strong values and make a positive impact on people around them.

Often, we are inspired by men and women from the past who have done something remarkable. I have always taken strength from the power of the underdog. Those who have triumphed against adversity. Those who have the odds stacked against them, but continue without complaint to make a huge success of their life and have an impact on others.

Everyone likes a good underdog story as they seem to strike a chord deep within ourselves. It makes us feel like something has gone right in the world. We are assured that the odds aren't always stacked against us, that beginners really do have a chance. It is about grit, heart and unexpected moments of greatness.

God chose the youngest, smallest and most unlikely member of Jesse's family to show His greatness. From standing firm against a giant with pebbles to leading a nation as king. God turned underdog David into one of the greatest heroes of the Bible. Truly an inspirational character.

It can be difficult to choose who has inspired us as we possibly need different sorts of inspiration as we navigate life.

As a teacher I always shared my favourite role-model and inspiration with the wee people I taught. I think we could all learn a lot from Goldilocks …… not too hot, not too cold; not too hard, not too soft – just pick that middle path and all will be fine.

Inspired……. if that means being motivated and encouraged, then I have been inspired by many people to do many things. Not to strive for the unattainable, but to embrace the many activities and pleasures that life offers.

Who did I get my love of language from?

It has to be my maternal grandmother (a child of the British Raj) who taught me as a toddler, to count, recite nursery rhymes and street sellers' cries in Urdu.
I now have good French and Auld Scots, iffy German and Gaelic.

Who encouraged me to sing?

It has to be Mr Pope, my Music Teacher. He entered me into the Border music festival where I gained many certificates.

I loved the story of Mary Slessor the Dundee shoemaker's daughter who went as a Missionary to Africa and endured many dangers. She inspired my spirit of adventure and when I met Bob, my future husband, I found he had it too.

The family were aghast when we told them we were going to spend our Ruby Wedding driving across the Outback from Darwin to Sydney on our own!
“But you’re our parents. That is downright irresponsible,” said Ruth.
“But people have died doing that,” said Vivienne.
“That’s Mum and Dad, what do you expect,” said Shirley.

But, the greatest adventure required faith too. In 1980, we left our affluent life in the south of England and took our girls plus dog and cat to Aberdeen where Bob would study Theology at Christ’s College and achieve his BD.
We lived in a flat on the proverbial shoestring. I made the girls’ dressing gowns out of old blankets. I went to the fish-market early in the morning to get free dabs. I worked part time in the University Branch of the Clydesdale Bank. There are so many stories I can tell of how the Lord provided.

So, the greatest inspirer of all has to be Jesus.

Diana Higham

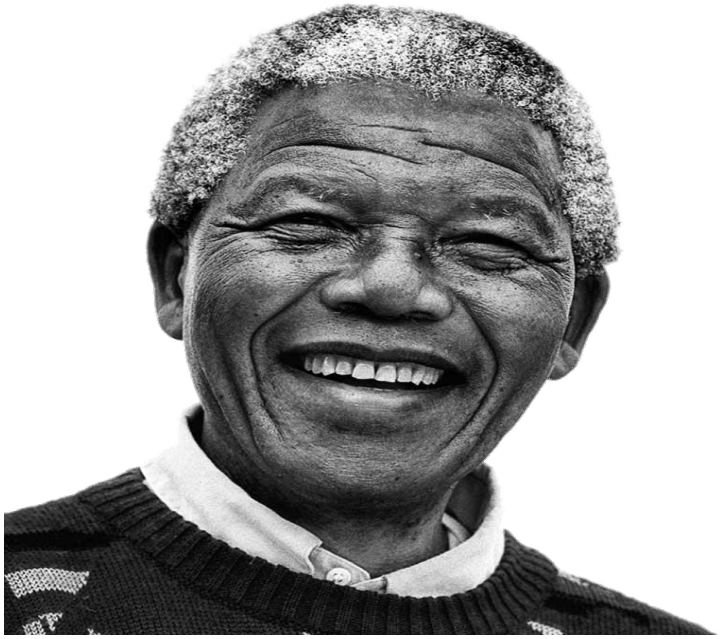
I am a volunteer for Age UKs Friendship Line. I have weekly telephone conversations with two gentlemen. One is an ex-shepherd, who suffers from cancer of the blood and the other a retired fish trawlerman who has Prostrate Cancer.

Brian, the ex-shepherd, phoned me one evening, told me that the cancer had spread to his bones and that he was now on Palliative Care. He said that the cancer would eventually take his life but it would never take away his sense of humour. A week past Friday it was his 58th birthday so I phoned him and sang Happy Birthday to him. He told me that in four weeks’ time he was going to select a plot of ground and hoped that sheep would graze on it.

Tom, the retired fisherman, whom I have only been chatting with for a few weeks told me the last time I phoned him that the Prostrate Cancer had spread and that he was now on Palliative Care. But he is still very cheerful and taking an interest in things about him at the age of 84

People like them give me great inspiration and make me feel so lucky in having good health at my age.

Ian Hannah



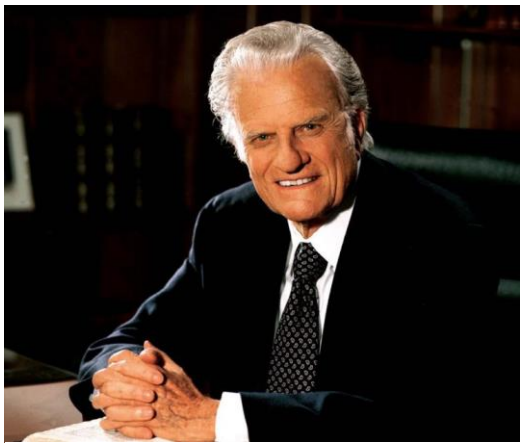
My hero is Nelson Mandela. Many years ago, I read his autobiography, 'Long Walk to Freedom'. From the day that I finished it, I became a great admirer. Having long been an active member of the African National Congress, he was eventually convicted of being a terrorist and sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labour, to be served on the penal colony on Robben Island, off Cape Town. He would serve 27 years.

I think of him as freedom fighter, who led his people out of the evil of the apartheid regime. In 1997, I was able to visit Robben Island to see where he was incarcerated. By day, he had to break rocks in a quarry

under the sun and with soaring temperatures. The reflection of the sun on the white stone affected his vision, leaving him with poor eyesight in later years. By night, he slept in a small cell with only a blanket to cover him.

For me, the most impressive aspect of his character was his ability to forgive his oppressors from the masters of the ruling class to the warders of Robben Island. I would have struggled to do this. I will always admire his fight to get justice and equality for his people and the peaceful way he went about making change.

Jackie Anderson



The American Evangelist, Billy Graham, had a great impact on my life. He called for commitment to the Lord and the Christian Faith. At one of his crusades, in London, about 60 years ago, I responded although I had just become a communicant member of our Church! Being a Christian is my top priority.

There are surely many people whom we admire from a distance. There are famous people who have changed the lives of countless folk, for good. Three to mention would be Mother Teressa, Martin Luther King and Terry Waite.

Many Christians have inspired me over the years: clergy, members of our churches and not least my husband and family.
To conclude, I am so grateful for Adam's ministry. He never fails to send us off with the Lord's blessing and hope to inspire us.
Praise the Lord.

Sheila Ritchie.

Inspiration Against the Odds

Doddie Weir was an inspirational Scottish rugby player and advocate who made a lasting impact both on and off the field. Born in 1970, he was a towering figure in rugby, playing as a lock for Scotland with 61 caps between 1990 and 2000 and the British and Irish Lions in 1997 tour to South Africa. Known for his infectious personality, humour, and leadership, he was very popular and well known.

Weir was diagnosed with motor neurone disease (MND) In 2016, MND is a degenerative condition affecting the nervous system. Rather than hiding away, he became a very successful campaigner for MND research and support, founding the **My Name'5 Doddie Foundation** in 2017. Through his foundation, he raised millions of pounds for research and awareness, offering hope to others affected by the disease.

His courage, positivity, and determination in the face of a terminal disease made him an inspiration not only to the rugby world but to all people. Doddie Weir passed away in November 2022, but his legacy continues through his foundation and the lives he touched and especially by the efforts of Rob Wainwright.

Sir Chris Hoy is one of the most inspirational British athletes. He is known for his incredible achievements in track cycling. Born in Scotland in 1976, he won six Olympic gold medals and was world champion eleven times. His dedication, perseverance, humility and facing up to his terminal illness make him a role model for athletes and non-athletes alike.

He is inspirational because:

1. **Hard Work & Dedication** – Hoy trained relentlessly to become one of the greatest cyclists in history, showing that success comes from consistent effort.
2. **Overcoming Setbacks** – He faced challenges and tough competition throughout his career but never let failure stop him from pushing forward. Since retiring from competitions, his 'biggest challenge' is facing up to a terminal illness.
3. **Olympic Success** – At the 2008 Beijing Olympics, he became the first British athlete in 100 years to win three gold medals at a single Games.
4. **Motivational Speaker & Advocate** – Since retiring, he has inspired others through speeches, books, and work with young athletes.
5. **Versatility** – After retiring from cycling, he pursued motorsport, proving that passion and hard work can lead to success in multiple fields.

Chris Hoy's story is a testament to resilience, discipline, and the power of chasing your dreams. He continues in public life, inspiring others by the way he is facing up to his terminal illness.

Keith Montgomery

In memory of my truly inspirational mother

Williamina Anderson Miller Ogilvie-Chalmers or more simply, 'Mina'.

In the days of the twin tub washing machine, a most basic four ringed Belling cooker, a coal fired boiler to get hot water, a kitchen pulley to dry clothes, single glazed windows and doors, no fridge, freezer, microwave or landline phone …… I had the most amazing mother. Mina was the mother of five children, six if you include my Dad and seven if you include my Gran Ogilvie who lived with us in her frail years - Mina was an exemplar of the finest set of life skills, for which I am eternally grateful.

The capacity for hard work - Mum had several part time jobs ranging from cleaning, retail work and caring for school boarders - she did not drive and walked many miles each day to and from work in all weathers. She was consistently reliable - I don't ever recall her having any time off work - and woe betide if I or any of my siblings tried to feign a 'sicky' to have a day off school. "Oh, I had that yesterday," she'd say, "and by lunchtime I was fine - so off you go to school"!

Management is achieving through others - as Mum was often at work at tea time, we learned at a fairly young age how to cook, or at least finish off partly prepared meals, how to make a gravy, how to make smooth custard (my favourite) all to a pretty good standard. We learned how to operate the twin tub, how to hang out clothes and how to iron without scorching the clothes or ourselves.

Mum introduced us to the value of money and indeed how to earn it through part time jobs. At the young age of 8, I earned my first ten shillings a week delivering fish for the local fishmonger (Fish Tam) two afternoons each week after school and on a Saturday morning. My first bike (a small wheeled RSW) was realised after many months of saving from part-time work, eagerly encouraged by Mum - note that over the years I progressed from delivering fish to butcher meat, to milk, to working in the local garden centre, cleaning holiday let caravans and

finally to serving petrol at the local garage, from which I bought my first car - it was a brilliant journey of discovery!

Mum was a great advocate of learning and self-development and encouraged us all to participate in clubs that nurtured our respective interests and talents. Whilst not a church go-er herself, she registered us all for Sunday School, and associated clubs such as the boys brigade and the girls guidery from which we learned great life skills too. We also learned to ‘scrub up well’ for the various annual processions for flag blessings and Remembrance Sunday.

Mum always kept her own counsel - she had many acquaintances through her multiple part time jobs, but only a few close friends whom she valued greatly. She was an avid family networker and once we had all left home, she would keep us all posted on one another’s activities, often through weekly letters. She was incredibly proud of all of her children and we were loved unconditionally.

Mina did not have an easy life - she lost her first husband in a tragic road accident, left with a family of three young children. She knew grief and hard times but she did not wear her emotions on her sleeve. She had enormous tenacity in tough times and never said ‘why me’.

Mum passed away in her 73rd year after a short illness. She did not believe in frequenting the doctors - I recall a doctor sharing with me that Mum’s medical record was wafer thin.

I had an incredibly tough time in dealing with Mum’s rapid decline and death. I felt cheated from being able to look after her in her twilight years, especially after all that she had done in my life and the legacy that continues.

My fervent wish is that the legacy of Mum’s teaching, goes beyond the positive impact on my life, to that of my own four children (now adults), and to that of their children too. I can certainly already see traits firmly emerging.

Til we meet again my inspirational Mum rest well x

p.s. My Mum's close friend was Ina - they shared some similar character traits and they were often referred to as the incredible twins, Mina and Ina! Quite a duo.

Yours in Christ.

Bill.

The importance of mindfulness to me

The principles of Mindfulness are based on the Buddhist religion. The nearest Monastery is at Sami Ling in the Scottish Borders run by Chowden who has written books on the subject. He taught Brian Turnbull my current Mindfulness tutor.
(Mindfulness can also be followed by people of all faiths and none.)

About a year before Covid started I decided to take up the Beginner's Course in Mindfulness at the Babyrama premises in Castlegate Berwick run by Isobelle a mindfulness teacher from Newcastle University (unfortunately this class doesn't run anymore.)
It proved to be invaluable to me in helping me deal with my stress and anxiety and to better deal with everyday life. In fact, I was so relaxed I had to be woken up several times during meditations because I was snoring like crazy!

During Covid I joined a Zoom session run by Brian Turnbull. This was on the next level dealing more with Compassion which delved more deeply into mindfulness dealing with three main principles : -

1. How to help other people.
2. How other people can help you.
3. And the most difficult one how to help oneself.

I have decided to repeat this course and am finding it even more enlightening the second time around.

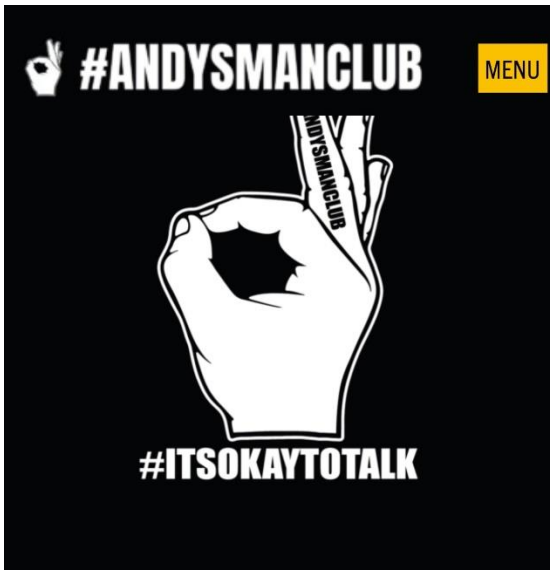
Also, there are zoom drop-in sessions from time to time which are really fun as you meet some of the same people and exchange experiences during the previous week.

There are also face to face courses held in Duns, Galashiels and Selkirk which are free. The only courses where you are asked to donate are the level two zoom courses.

I have found Mindfulness invaluable to help me run my everyday life and I am sure you will if you decide to take part.

To find out more contact www.peer2peer-mindfulness.co.uk
Re: Mindfulness.

Spotlight on a local support group



Andy's Man Club

#ANDYSMANCLUB wants to eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health and create a judgement-free, confident space where men can be open about the storms in their lives.
They aim to achieve this through weekly, free-to-attend peer-to-peer support groups for men over 18.

Andy's Man Club takes its name from Andrew Roberts, a young man who sadly took his own life aged 23 in early 2016.
Andy's family had no inkling that he was suffering or struggling to the extent that he would do this. They decided to look deeper into male suicide and men's mental health.

They discovered that male suicide is the biggest killer of men under 50, with male mental health surrounded by well-ingrained cultural stigma in the UK.

Elaine Roberts and Luke Ambler are Andy's Mum and brother-in-law and they came up with the idea of #ANDYSMANCLUB – a group where men aged 18+ can speak openly about their mental health in a judgement-free, non-clinical setting.

The first group met in Halifax in mid-2016, with nine men in a small room. Their aim was to talk through their issues and help each other deal with their mental health issues.

Over a cup of coffee at The Corner House, I met John Ritchie. We chatted for so long that Monty had to phone to find out where I was! John is one of the facilitators of the Berwick branch of #ANDYSMANCLUB. Like all of the groups they meet every Monday (excluding Bank Holidays) in the Old Ambulance Station on Wallace Green.
There are regularly 20 men attending the group and the pattern is the same every week. There are around ten in each group and there is a trained facilitator 'keeping order.' Their motto is 'It's OK to talk' and every meeting starts with the same 3 questions:

How has your week been?

Name a positive in your week.

Is there anything you would like to get off your chest?

A ball is central to good order and uninterrupted talking. If you are holding the ball everyone listens and no-one else talks.

John told me that one attendee was in the group for two years before he uttered a word. Another young man sat outside in his car for six sessions before he felt able to walk inside – no one judges anyone.
Halfway through the evening is time for tea/coffee, biscuits and informal chat. This is when experiences, problems, thoughts are shared and exchanged….. you are never alone.

In the second half of the evening the questions are a little less heavy, for example 'what is your favourite sandwich?' but, even that is confidential!

It is the aim of #ANDYS MANCLUB to reach out to all of those men who possibly didn't even acknowledge that they needed help.
Locally, John and David (two of the local facilitators) have spoken to audiences at Simpson's Malt, Torness, farm Salmon and Hearts Football Club.
As they proudly tell people, 'We're a bunch of blokes having a chat over a brew and a biscuit.'

But, with statistics telling us that one man takes his own life every 6 hours it is a life changer and a life saver.

It's ok to talk

Huge thanks to John Ritchie for sharing his difficult story and for opening my eyes and heart to #ANDYSMANCLUB

***** Pastoral Care Group ******

In March the Pastoral Care Group will be welcoming John Ritchie of Andy's Man Club to their regular meeting.
John's visit will be on **Thursday 27 March at 7.15 in SAWG.**
All are welcome and please bring a friend!

If you would like to find out more

About the work of the Pastoral Cars Group, call me on 07521 585 828 or email terribearhope@hotmail.com

Thanks
Terri Bearhope

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Notes from the Editor

Very many thanks to all who have contributed to this edition of the Kirk News. As always it is humbling to read your stories and recollections.

It was certainly a privilege for us all to be part of The Berwick Parade.

Our next edition is a Commemoration of 80 years Since VE and VJ Days.

As always, I am open to all suggestions and thoughts about future editions.

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