

Diary: September

October

1		10.30 Makerstoun, <b>H.Thanks.</b>
2		
3	10.30 Roxburgh	
4		
5		
6	Presbytery 6.30pm ,Stichill	
7		
8		10.30 Stichill
9		
10	10.30 Stichill, <b>Spons. Walk</b>	2pm Scrabble, 7pm Bridge
11		Guild 2.30pm, Church Hall
12		
13		
14		
15		10.30 Smailholm
16		
17	10.30 Makerstoun	
18		
19	Scrabble 2pm	
20		
21		
22		10.30 Stichill
23		
24	10.30 Stichill	2pm Scrabble, 7pm Bridge
25		
26		
27		Quiz Night, Smailholm 7.30
28		
29		10.30 Roxburgh
30		
31		

# Kelso Country Churches



## The Country Link

~~~~~ September/October 2017



Harvest today and over the Centuries.

Hello,

One of the continuing controversial discussions in a rural church area is when to time Harvest. A couple of generations ago the cry Harvest Home would be a definitive point when the last sheaf was cut, the straw piled and the fields ready to rest till ploughing. Is it when the wheat and barley is in, or the peas and beans are cut or shall we wait for the potatoes.

But what about the brassicas and the blueberries? And as for rest, it seems as soon as the combine has finished, the plough is in, the riddling done, the muck spread, and the seeds in for spring. Harvest Festival is when it is now, and we are so aware we can't please anyone with the timing.

I was standing in a stone circle at Duddo Farm on Sunday past with a friend and we were both in awe of the 4200 plus harvest seasons these stones can witness. They sit in a massive field, empty and riddled and they look over Berwickshire, Roxburghshire and much of North Northumberland. God's country, God's land and his miracle that gives us Harvest.

Sometimes we need that kind of jolt to remind us to be thankful to the Creator.

**Join us for Harvest this year.**

*Robin McHaffie Interim Moderator*

## *Parish News and Updates*

**The evening Songs of Praise** held in Stichill Church on 27<sup>th</sup> August was an uplifting service which brought together regular worshippers, visitors, friends and families in an hour of inspiring singing of favourite hymns, with the theme of Love. The scripture reading was 1 Corinthians 13; that beautiful passage of Paul to the church in Corinth, so often read at weddings.

The ladies choir sang two hymns, ably led by Molly Pringle, and some of the children from Kid's Club read a poem and dedicated the Offering.

It was a very happy evening and it was so heartening to hear the enthusiasm and harmony in our singing

Thanks to the ladies who provided the delicious finger buffet that followed.

**Christmas Shoebox Appeal:** It will soon be time to fill shoeboxes with useful gifts for the Blythswood Care Christmas Appeal. Kathy Wilkie has again been covering shoeboxes with festive paper (over 300) in readiness. Her fame is spreading as she now provides boxes for Kelso North Church too. There will be boxes with checklists enclosed in all our churches in September/October so please take one (or more) home to fill ahead of the deadline at the end of October. Please note that all gifts must be new.

**Bridge Club:** Stichill Bridge Club will resume for the winter season on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month, starting on 10<sup>th</sup> October. It is held in the Church Hall and new members are welcome. Contact person is Alison Darling -Tel. 470 248.

**Scrabble Club:** Scrabble will re-start on Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> September at 2pm in the Church hall. New members are welcome. Contact person is Marshall Steel – Tel. 470 319.

**Meditation Group:** This group meets most Tuesdays at 3.30pm in the Roxburghe Hall (opposite Kelso Old Church.) All are welcome to come along anytime. Contact person is Lynda Stark - Tel. 225567.

**Our Church Family:** We welcome a new member, Charlie Orr, Courthill, to our congregational roll by resolution of the Kirk Session.

Website: [kelsolinkedchurchescofs.org](http://kelsolinkedchurchescofs.org)

Scottish charity no. SC000958

### **Kelso Country Churches dates for your diary**

**Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> September;** A Sponsored Walk around a 3.5mile circuit of old Stichill is being organised and sponsor forms are available now. The walk will start at approximately 11.45 following the service in Stichill Church. Children and dogs on leads most welcome. Refreshments will await the walkers in the church hall on their return.

Please take part in the walk if possible as participants are just as important to the success of the event as the sponsors.

All money raised will go to “Cheviot Youth”, a local charity for children and young people.

**Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> October;** A Quiz Night in Smailholm Village Hall. Details will be announced in church notices nearer the time.

Contact person; Alister Pike – Tel. 470 650

**Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> November;** A Concert will be held in Makerstoun Church. The well-known ladies choir, Mozaic, and St. Mary's School Choir will perform. Contact person; Kirsty Baird – Tel. 460 237

*Come as you are*                      *by Deidre Brown*

*Come as you are, that's how I want you.  
Come as you are, feel quite at home,  
Close to my heart, loved and forgiven,  
Come as you are; why stand alone?*

*No need to fear, love sets no limits.  
No need to fear, love never ends.  
Don't run away, shamed and disheartened,  
rest in my love, trust me again.*

*I came to call sinners, not just the virtuous.  
I came to bring peace, not to condemn.  
Each time you fail to live by my promise,  
Why do you think I'd love you the less?*

*Come as you are, that's how I love you.  
Come as you are, trust me again.  
Nothing can change the love that I bear you,  
all will be well, just come as you are.*

These are the lyrics of a hymn but the words speak to everyone in life's rich tapestry.

Thanks to Liz Orr.

*Words of Wisdom*

We have all been placed on this earth to discover our own path, and we will never be happy if we live someone else's idea of life.

James Van Praagh

*Preaching Plan for September/October 2017*

|                                 |                               |                       |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>September 3<sup>rd</sup></b> | Roxburgh                      | David Harvey          |
| “ 10 <sup>th</sup>              | Stichill                      | Rev. Robin McHaffie   |
| “ 17 <sup>th</sup>              | Makerstoun                    | George Amos           |
| “ 24 <sup>th</sup>              | Stichill                      | Rev. Robin McHaffie   |
| <b>October 1<sup>st</sup></b>   | Makerstoun ( <b>Harvest</b> ) | Robin McHaffie        |
| “ 8 <sup>th</sup>               | Stichill                      | Rev. Robin McHaffie   |
| “ 15 <sup>th</sup>              | Smailholm                     | Sophia Duncan         |
| “ 22 <sup>nd</sup>              | Stichill                      | Rev. Robert Breustedt |
| “ 29 <sup>th</sup>              | Roxburgh                      | Jim Smith             |
| <b>Nov. 5<sup>th</sup></b>      | Makerstoun                    | David Harvey          |

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**Presbytery** meets on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> September in Stichill Church at 6.30pm. At this meeting, James Smith comes to the end of his year as Moderator of Jedburgh Presbytery and Rev. Charles Finnie will take his place. The meeting starts with Communion followed by the business of Presbytery. Do come and give your support to James.

The KCC summer joint services have been memorable for their interest and diversity, mainly due to the team of ordained and lay people who lead our services and who put a great deal of time and thought and work into our worship each week.

The primary reason for having a united service each week is to give all our churches an opportunity to share worship as one church family.

Congregation numbers have been disappointing on the whole and it is important in our rural communities that we support **all** our churches with our presence and support if we are to attract a potential minister to lead us forward.

## Guild News

The 2017/18 session of The Guild is almost upon us and the new theme: **“Be bold, be strong and Go in Love”** will be launched at the Annual Gathering of the Guild from all over the country and beyond in the Caird Hall, Dundee on 2<sup>nd</sup> September.

We are fortunate here in the Borders that the events of the day will be live streamed to Yetholm Church as they happen, and some of our members will be there, sharing the experience, hearing the latest Guild news and singing lustily.

Jedburgh East and West Presbyterial Councils of the Guild have decided to amalgamate into one Council, and there will be a service to launch the new Council in Denholm Church on Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> September at 2pm.

This is a bold step forward for the Guild in our area so please, Guild ladies, put the date in your diary and come along. (A joint choir is already rehearsing for the event.)

Once again, KCC Guild Secretary, Lynda Stark has arranged an interesting programme of meetings for the winter syllabus and here is a short summary;

October 11<sup>th</sup>: “Send a Cow” – a charity to help sustainable Farming in Africa for hard-working families.

November 8<sup>th</sup>: Project – Mission International.

December 13<sup>th</sup>: ‘The Border Tarts’ entertain.

January 10<sup>th</sup>: Mercy Ships – Mary Smith

February 14<sup>th</sup>: Project -“All Friends Together”

March 14<sup>th</sup>: Talk on Mindfulness – Lynda Stark

Meetings are held in the Church Hall at 2,30pm. Ladies, a warm welcome is assured.

## Some Light Relief

### Finding Jesus

A baptismal service was being held by a river in a rural southern State of America. The keen young minister noticed a very drunken local man was blearily watching proceedings. He called out, “What about you? Are you ready for Jesus?”

The man looked startled, but responded, “Yes sir, I am,”

And so the young minister decided to baptise him, there and then. He led the man into the river, and dunked him under the water, and pulled him to his feet. “Well, have you found Jesus?”

“No, I didn’t,” said the drunk.

The minister then dunked him again. “Now brother, have you found Jesus?”

“No, I did not!” protested the drunk.

Disappointed, the minister held the man under for about twenty seconds and demanded again, “For goodness sake, why haven’t you found Jesus yet?”

The old drunk wiped his eyes and gasped, “Well, are you sure this is where he fell in?”

### The cost of preaching

One beautiful Sunday morning, a minister announced to his congregation: “My good people, I have here in my hands three sermons... a £100 sermon that lasts five minutes, a £50 sermon that lasts fifteen minutes, and a £10 sermon that lasts a full hour.

Now, we will take the collection and see which one I’ll deliver.”



## Harvest Retiring Offerings 2017 – Self Help Africa

*In recent years we have given our harvest retiring offerings to Self Help Africa. Here is some information from the charity about their work:*



Self Help Africa works in **nine core African countries**, tackling poverty and improving the lives of local communities. We are dedicated to ending hunger and poverty in rural Africa. 250 million people in Africa, farmers and their families, suffer hunger and malnutrition, struggling in extreme rural poverty without enough food, left behind by rising economic growth. In Sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture is **eleven times** more effective at reducing poverty than other approaches.

Self Help Africa is a leading international development charity with an expertise in small-scale farming and growing family-farm businesses. We are motivated by injustice, by our expertise in small-scale agriculture and family-farm business, and the opportunity we have to help small farmers change the lives of their families.

Self Help Africa works with **local African staff and partners**, supporting communities to grow more food, diversify their farm production, develop new off-farm enterprise, and sell their surpluses. We support rural micro-finance programmes, assist producers to **organise into farmers' associations and co-operatives**, enable farm families to access markets and add value to their produce. With climate change posing further challenges, we promote low cost sustainable **solutions to the management of land and water resources**.

**A majority of the farmers we work with are women** as gender inequality remains an obstacle to improving agricultural output across sub Saharan Africa.

(Charity no – 298830)

8.

## PART 3 - Martin Luther 500: 1483 – 1546

### THE CAT IS OUT OF THE BAG

Luther's ideas were taken up and applied in ways he neither anticipated or approved. The Peasants' War which broke out in 1524 saw serfs all over Germany take up what arms they could and fight for the idea of freedom and scripture as the only authority; they were applying Luther's ideas to their own situation.

In his Ninety Five Theses he had written, 'To see excitement and dissention arise because of the word of God is to me, clearly the most joyful aspect of all these matters. For this is the way, the opportunity, and the result of the Word of God, just as Christ said, "I have not come to bring peace, but a sword."'

Some said this raised the spirit of revolt and caused the war, but Luther did not support the peasants. He understood that if you attacked the principle of property, you attacked the foundations of society; serfs were, by definition, their landlord's property. His argument was with the church and how it was governed and raised money, not the secular state, but the cat was well and truly out of the bag and it won't go back. Authority can and should be challenged.

All the arguments, ideas and differing points of view which grew and spread so strongly after one shy monk nailed his famous Ninety Five Theses to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg on the 31<sup>st</sup> October, 1517, are with us yet, here in Scotland. His arguments against the sale of pardons we take for granted, but the place of religion and its teaching in our schools is debated almost weekly in our newspapers.

If Luther came and visited the Country Churches, would he approve of what he found? He would approve of what he would find written on John Knox's house: LVFE- GOD – ABOVE – AL – AND -YI – NYCHTBOVR – AS – YI- SELF; but what about us? Let's finish with his Morning Prayer....

*I thank you, my Heavenly Father through Jesus Christ, your dear Son,  
that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger;  
And I pray that you would keep me this day also from sin and evil,  
That all my doings and life may please You.*

*For into your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things.  
Let your Holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.*

5.

Charlie Orr



## *'All for Rachel's Wedding'*

*Susan Pike*



Rachel Pike, our eldest daughter and Christopher MacLeod were married on Friday 21st July, by Rev David Donaldson at St Clements Church, Rodel, Harris. It is a beautiful church, built in the early part of the 15th Century for the chiefs of the Macleod clan and dedicated to Pope Clement the First. It has fallen into

disrepair several times throughout the centuries, finally being restored in 1873 and in 1913 by Catherine, Countess of Dunmore, and is now under the care of Historic Scotland.

We boarded the ferry for Harris from Uig, Skye on the Monday, the weather was glorious, the scenery was spectacular and the mood was one of great excitement and happiness. The crossing was very smooth, much to Alister's relief and we landed safe and sound in Tarbert, and made our way to the tiny village of Geocrab, where we were staying.

The weather continued to be absolutely wonderful and we were spoilt for choice of beautiful beaches to visit, but our favourite was the amazing Luskentyre beach. It is truly wonderful, with pure white sands and clear, turquoise sea.

The day of the wedding arrived and we were blessed with another wonderful day which continued into a show-stopping sunset at night.

The wedding service was lovely. We sang All Things Bright and Beautiful and Morning has Broken, being led by a Presenter, as it is the custom of the Harris congregation not to have musical accompaniment. We did have some music though.....there was a very talented young harpist from Harris who we had met earlier in the year at Stichill Village Hall when the Plockton School of Music gave a recital.....small world! And of course, a piper who piped the newlyweds out to "All for Mhairi's Wedding".

The reception was held in Tala Na Mara (The centre by the sea) which is a new community centre owned by West Harris Trust and looks across the sea at Niseaboist beach. The venue looked amazing in various shades of Harris Tweed and reflected the shades of the island. Alister delivered a lovely speech and was a very proud father.

It was a wonderful day and we enjoyed every minute of it.

## *Makerstoun's Wedding of the Year*

Our eldest daughter Lilian Moira married James Fearon at Makerstoun Church on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2017 – and what a day it was!

The sun shone from dawn till dusk and the church looked wonderful. It was packed to overflowing, with Anna Rodwell taking the service, Isabel Amos at the keyboard, and John Mabon on the trumpet and harmonium.



The service was lovely and very moving and the singing was triumphant! The bride had four bridesmaids including her sister, Lucy and cousin Alex. The groom had three best men and two ushers including Lily's brother, Tom, all of whom did a great job.

The couple left to cheering applause in a wee Morgan and we all hastened to St. Mary's School, Melrose where the reception was held. The sun continued to shine as we toasted the happy couple and then we were entertained by the Secret Opera Singers and a fabulous jazz/rock band.

Delicious food supplied by Rosie Cully and tasty wine and beers meant that the party continued in high spirits to the early hours.

Everyone commented on the church and its surroundings, and I would like to thank all the kind members of the congregation who helped to make it look so lovely for Lily and James' special day.

*Kirsty and Gareth Baird*

