

Diary: March

April

1		10.30 Makerstoun H. Communion
2		
3		
4	10.30 Makerstoun	
5		
6		
7	Presbytery, Denholm, 7pm	
8		10.30 Stichill
9		
10		
11	10.30 Stichill	
12		
13	Bridge 7pm	
14	Guild 2.30pm	
15		10.30 Smailholm
16		
17	Guild Coffee Morning 10am	
18	10.30 Roxburgh	
19		
20		
21		
22		10.30 Stichill
23		
24		
25	10.30 Stichill	
26		
27	Bridge 7pm	
28	Kirk Session Meeting 7.30	
29		10.30 Roxburgh
30	6.30pm Stichill, G. Friday	
31		

Kelso Country Churches



The Country Link

~~~~~March/April, 2018

Dear Friends

Jesus addressed the people: "I am the light of the world. No follower of mine shall wander in the dark; he shall have the light of life". John 8:1

As I write this, the snow is birling round outside the window and we have at least 6 inches lying here in Denholm. It's hard to believe that within a month the clocks will go forward and Spring will officially start.

Recently our worship group held a café church in Denholm. Café church is held in the village hall and is set out around tables so that when people arrive they can enjoy coffee or tea with biscuits and chat before we begin our worship. On 4<sup>th</sup> February we were thinking about Candlemas day which falls on 2<sup>nd</sup> February. Our worship leaders told us that in times past, on the Sunday nearest Candlemas, enough Church candles to last all year were blessed so we brought our own special candles from home and had them blessed. We also heard that the snowdrop stands for new beginnings, hope, purity and consolation. The snowdrop has the ability to melt the snow around it as it produces its own heat. The hope for new warmth comes due to its blossoming time as well as its heat.

We all took part in a craft activity and made lanterns and stained glass windows with coloured card and tissue paper. Old and young alike threw themselves into this and then showed off the results. There was a real buzz of conversation and laughter in the hall before we continued our worship and finished with the Grace. Café church is different from the traditional service but for those who attended on 4<sup>th</sup> February we were able to learn more about Church history, consider the beauty of God's creation and we left with a tangible reminder of our time together.

In February I also attended a stewardship conference in Stichill church hall. I enjoyed hearing different people express their views on various aspects of Church life in Kelso Country Churches and I'm sure these views will be considered in detail by the Kirk Session.

Take care in this wintry weather and I pray that we can rely on the saying, "If March comes in like a lion it will go out like a lamb".

*Helen Howden Interim Moderator*

## *Parish News and Updates*

A very successful Quiz was held in the Church Hall on 23<sup>rd</sup> February. It was Alister Pike's idea and he recruited the help of David Adamson who was quizmaster. Although quizzes are not everyone's idea of a fun night out, lots of people came along, making up tables of four, and there was a good buzz of interaction and laughter. The winning 'Quizzers' were Ian and Margaret Dutton, Alison Darling and Elizabeth Topp. A hearty supper was served and £213.40 was raised for church funds. Warm thanks to all who helped make this possible.

**The chickens have hatched!!** Kathy Wilkie has been busy again creating her Easter Chicks. They are £2 each and are selling well. They will be in the churches until Easter and all money raised will go to Blythswood to help with the transport of Christmas shoeboxes later in the year.

I have been appointed Deputy Session Clerk, and so in **Jim Smith's absence during March**, please get in touch with me, Sophia Duncan (01573 225532) if you have any urgent pastoral matters.

**The Guild** has had another interesting, lively programme this winter. The last meeting of the present session is on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> March. Lynda Stark will give a talk on the benefits of 'Mindfulness'. It is also the annual business meeting and any suggestions you may have for next year's syllabus, please bring them along.

**The Guild Coffee Morning** is on Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> March at 10am in the church hall (see page 11). I do hope that you can come and enjoy 'coffee and craic' and sample the delights of the sales tables.

This is also a reminder to our members of the **Jedburgh Guild Presbyterian Council Coffee Evening and ABM** at Ancrum Church at 7.30pm. Lifts will be arranged for those wishing to attend.

Please check the **Flower and cleaning rotas** in the churches and add your name where it suits you.

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

Scottish charity no. SC000958

KCC Guild

**COFFEE MORNING**

**Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> March at 10am**

**Stichill Church Hall**



**Sales Table and Raffle**

**Admission: £3 children free**

On a freezing night in January this year, the team went into the same takeaway to say hello (and to get warmed up!). The same member of staff was there and explained that he was going to China for the Chinese New Year in February to see his family and children, and would it be possible to have two Bibles for his children out there? As a result, God's Word has reached two children (and hopefully others) in China!

Blessing  
Duncan Cameron (Coordinator) Tel: 01896 758248

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Raphael Fund and children's clothing –

Kelso Country Churches maintained this fund for expenses incurred in supporting the Raphael Centre, Grahamstown, South Africa. Over several years we mainly used the funds raised to post donated children's clothes and these were welcomed and found good homes over there. However, there have been difficulties with the parcels getting through of late and the recommendation from the team of KCC ladies involved was that we simply donate the remaining funds of £555 to the Centre for them to use as they wish. This was agreed by the Kirk Session and also at a joint service of the congregation at Stichill on 28th January. The Raphael Centre also were happy with this and so a payment was made to them on 19th February amounting to roughly 9,000 rand.

The acting director of the centre, Anne Loffler, wrote as follows:
"Your clothes always caused great excitement when we took them to the day cares! They have been beautiful! And thank you so much for [the] donation of the remaining funds! We will use this for our children programme: 1) for organising an art celebration and art exhibition. The children we work with (our Siya Sonke project) were producing beautiful art work last year. Some of it we will hand over in form of individual portfolios and celebrate it. Other pieces are going to be exhibited. And, 2) we would use it for the Tuesdays and Thursdays activities with the children this term: we hope to be able send our older ones (11-18) to swimming lessons and the younger ones (7-10 years) will learn a little bit about self-confidence, being aware of their strengths and talents and further, knowing their social support system a little better (this is all adapted from our training for asset-based community-driven development for adults)."

Liz Orr

Preaching Plan for March/April, 2018

March

4th Makerstoun Rev Robin McHaffie

11th Stichill Rev Robin McHaffie

18th Roxburgh David Harvey

25th Stichill **Palm Sunday** Sophia Duncan

30th Stichill **Good Friday, 6.30pm** Sophia Duncan

April

1st Makerstoun **Communion** Rev Robin McHaffie

8th Stichill Rev Marion Dodd

15th Smailholm David Harvey

22nd Stichill Sophia Duncan

29th Roxburgh Charlie Orr

May

6th Makerstoun James Smith

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**Holy Week Services**



**On Good Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> March** there will be a service in Stichill church at 6.30pm.

**On Easter Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> April**, Holy Communion will be celebrated in Makerstoun Church at the usual time of 10.30am.

**EASTER DAY:** KCT Dawn Service in Kelso Abbey at 7am, followed by breakfast in the Abbey Row Centre.

*“Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted”*

**Bess Peddie**, late of Roundlewood, Stichill, died on 28<sup>th</sup> December aged 93 years. Bess spent her early years in Heriot and Edinburgh before coming to Stichill when she married Peter Peddie in 1960. Bess soon became well known in the Borders and she and Peter were loyal and generous supporters of the church and local community. They lived at Stichill Eastfield until Peter retired. Bess spent the last seven years in Victoria Lodge, Coldstream where she enjoyed visits from her many friends. Bess will be remembered fondly for her thoughtfulness, energy and caring friendship.

Her funeral service in Stichill Church was conducted by James Smith who had known her since she came to Stichill. She was laid to rest beside her husband in Stichill cemetery.

**Jean Palmer (nee Clazie)** was born in Coldstream and moved with her parents to Ednam where she joined the church. She married Sandy Palmer in 1969 and they lived much of their married life in Roxburgh and Jean worked in Floors Estate Office for forty years. Jean became an Elder of Roxburgh church and she and Sandy were always at the heart of village life. She was gentle and serene but with great inner strength. When Sandy retired, they moved to Kelso but retained their commitment to Roxburgh Church for many years before joining Ednam Church.

When Sandy died in 2017, she made the brave decision to move to Plenderleith Court but her health was failing. Jean died on 22<sup>nd</sup> January aged 83 and the funeral was conducted by Rev. Anna Rodwell at Borders Crematorium.

**Isobel Arnott (nee Laing)** died on 29<sup>th</sup> January aged 90 years. She was a Kelso lass and she married Billy Arnott of Haymount Farm, Makerstoun in Kelso North Church. They lived in Edinburgh Road, Kelso until Billy took over the running of the farm. They had three sons, John, Tom and Michael and were well known and respected in the farming community both in the Borders and beyond. Isobel was an active member of Makerstoun Church family for many years. Billy and Isobel moved to Muirdean farm nearby when they retired. Isobel enjoyed socializing with her friends and continued driving around the countryside until quite recently. A private funeral took place at Makerstoun followed by a celebration of her life in Kelso North Church conducted by Rev. Marion Dodd.

## Borders Street Pastors



## Listening Caring Helping

Registered Scottish Charity No.46473

Dear Friends

As we move into 2018, Street Pastors continues to operate in the Borders, taking Christ's love out onto the streets of our towns.

December proved to be a busy month. Three members of our team represented the Borders at a special member's debate and reception at the Scottish Parliament to celebrate 10 years of Street Pastors in Scotland. Weekly patrols continued in Galashiels throughout the month, with the Hogmanay patrol starting in Melrose, before moving to Galashiels, and thanks to the team's flexibility, there were two patrols in Hawick in December, and two also January.

'Listening' continues to be one of our main functions. There are so many folk who want to talk about their lives and problems they are having, and yes, faith issues come up on a regular basis, sometimes several times a night. The team doesn't have all the answers, but we trust that God is guiding us with what to say. One such conversation resulted in a young man attending Church in Hawick the next day and we pray that this will be the start of a journey of discovery for him.

Of course, flip flops and lollypops continue in their popularity! Over five thousand lollypops given out, and by the end of February over a thousand pairs of flip flops! Woolly hats are also very popular at this time of year, almost two hundred going to cold revellers since our launch in 2016.

Since our commissioning service and launch in Hawick in January 2017, a number of new folk have joined the team in the Borders, and we will be holding a commissioning service for them in April

There are so many stories of how God has brought us into contact with people and I think it's fitting to share one of these stories with you. Last summer, just before one of the teams went out in the Borders, they were given a cheque for Street Pastors' work. Later that night the team felt drawn to go into a takeaway to say hello to the staff. One of them asked if it would be possible to have a Bible in English and Mandarin. This was arranged next day at a cost of £19.99. On opening up the cheque next morning, the amount of the donation was £20.00!

## Book Review Lynda Stark

### A Spot of Bother by Mark Haddon



I bought this book because I had really enjoyed "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time". When I started to read it, I was, at first, a bit disappointed, as it seemed to me to be about not very much. As it is five hundred pages long, I thought I had a bit of a struggle ahead! In fact, I couldn't have been more wrong – it is an enormously enjoyable book, finding humour in the everyday, as well as being very touching.

The story concerns a family going through a bit of a crisis. The father, George, has a patch of eczema, which, despite his doctor giving him the diagnosis, he decides is a tumour. Things go from bad to worse as he tries to cope, on his own, with this seemingly bad news, and his mental health deteriorates rapidly. Meanwhile, his wife, Jean, is having an affair with one of George's ex-colleagues. The couple have two children, a son who is homosexual, and a daughter who is divorced, has a young child, and is in a tempestuous relationship.

The story circles around George's attempts to deal with Jean's affair, his "illness" and the, at times, madcap behaviour of his children.

Mark Haddon's writing style is extremely readable, and the book is quite difficult to put down, as we follow the fortunes of the family over a short period of time. Like "The Curious Incident...." the book is quite unique, both in the fact that the story is fairly left field, and that it is utterly down to earth, and realistic. It is also very cleverly constructed, and increased my admiration for Mark Haddon's talent as a writer.

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The elusive Jenny Wren

A Jenny Wren took up residence in Stichill Church before Christmas and, despite several attempts to encourage her to 'move out', she seems remarkably at home and perky. She flies around the roof space, camouflaged against the oak beams, but often stays hidden when the church is in use, no doubt enjoying the heat wafting upwards.

So how do we know she is still there? Jane and Martin Worrall, who take it upon themselves to clean the church, find they have to clean up fresh droppings each time.

There are several theories about how she is surviving;

Getting flies and spiders in the church.

A secret escape route, and comes and goes as she pleases.

Is 'uplifted' and perhaps joins in our singing.

If anyone can suggest an answer to the conundrum, do get in touch!

An update from Whitsbury....

To start with a huge thank you for all the lovely cards and letters we have received, I have replied to all those who enclosed an address but for those who didn't "Thank You". Your kind words and messages have helped no end in the days that have been that little bit tougher.

Well, it's been seven weeks since we left Scotland for life in Whitsbury; seven weeks of pretty much relentless rain which is never the best way to see somewhere new.

Theo has started school and is playing catch up. As I am sure you all know, starting school after your fourth birthday is the norm in England (as to Scotland after your fifth) so Theo is with children who have completed five terms at school as to his one. His maths is right up there but he is a wee bit behind in English....although his teacher is sure he will catch up by May...that's some learning curve for a little boy.

Jess has come home for her first half term and returns tomorrow for her next half term, having only spent six days here before she left in January. She assured me things had changed but she has only had one shower while home as we still have no hot water, having a shower is for the brave or the foolhardy only. The men arrived to start mending the roof on the 16th Feb and hopefully the damp in two of the bedrooms will start to dry out and things will be better there too. Old houses that have been empty for a long while need that bit more love and attention. We have a garden and those who visited us at Floors know I love my garden. Well, here is an untouched wilderness. Yesterday the professionals arrived with extreme kit and reduced our hedge from 18ft + to a mere 6ft. The light has been let in and with that hopefully the ground will dry up.

So I am holding on to just that, "Let there be light" 2 Corinthians 4:6, 'the God who made his light shine in our hearts to bring us the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.'

Juliette

Turning Stumbling Blocks into Stepping Stones



This was the apt title of a Stewardship Day Conference held recently in the Church Hall. Margot Robertson and Fiona Penny (Stewardship Advisors for C. of S.) came from Edinburgh at our request, to give us the opportunity to explore the issues that are relevant to our congregations and discuss fresh ways of finding a new way forward.

Margot pointed out that the only difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is the way in which we use them.

We identified what we felt were the good things that were taking place; An increased lay involvement through the Worship Team over the past 16 years has enabled us to have regular services in our churches and encouraged more people to participate more actively through reading scripture in church and providing refreshments after each service. This has been a considerable achievement as for 8 of these years, we have been without a minister.

The Kid's Club
Social and fund-raising events.
The Annexe built onto
Makerstoun Kirk providing
better facilities.



The possibility of appointing a youth worker who would work alongside churches and schools in the Kelso area.

Those present had a frank discussion about what we thought were the biggest challenges facing us.

e.g. An ageing congregation, lack of a Minister, low attendance, not attracting young people into the church, too many church buildings.

Margot assured us that the situation in our rural churches was one of many facing similar problems and challenges throughout the country and beyond.

A welcome lunch of soup and rolls was served and people had the opportunity to come and go to suit their own schedule.

After lunch, Margot and Penny offered a few suggestions based on our discussions in the morning, on ways in which we could connect with not just the membership, but the whole community to raise the profile of the church in the day to day life of the villages.

Here is a picture of some of people who came along and took part in the discussions



Although the conference was open to all, numbers attending were disappointing, but it was a very useful means of exchanging thoughts and ideas and inspiring us to ensure that the church does have a viable future in these scattered rural parishes.

The suggestions will be brought to the Kirk Session for discussion, and it is hoped that we can be a committed and forward-looking church, that can attract the right person to lead us.

Sophia



Good news about Jenny

The 13th of February saw a happy occasion at Bunessan Church on the Ross of Mull. The Reverend Jenny Earl was inducted as minister of Iona linked with Kilfinichen, Kilvickeon and Ross of Mull. You will know Bunessan as a popular hymn tune in CH4, 212 (Morning has broken) 213, 314 and 577. The Church is like ours but not so grand, no stained glass, but on this occasion, full and the Highland Presbytery there, formal in gowns and hoods. After the formalities the church relaxed into a terrific bun fight, presentations and speeches, though the Highland visitors soon had to leave to catch the ferry back to Oban, which fortunately was running to time.

The weather was kind, the sun shone and a happy congregation welcomed their new Minister, confident because they had got to know Jenny living on Iona before she preached as Interim Moderator. She has undertaken to be their Minister for three years.

Charlie Orr

