

Diary: March

April

1		
2		
3	10.30 Makerstoun (H.C.)	Meeting in Smailholm 2pm
4		
5		
6	Meeting in Smailholm 2pm	
7		10.30 Makerstoun
8		
9		
10	10.30 Stichill	
11		
12	Bridge Club 7pm	
13	Guild 2.30pm	
14		10.30 Stichill (Palm Sunday)
15		Holy Week (see page 3)
16	Guild Coffee Morning 10am	
17	10.30 Makerstoun	Meeting in Roxburgh 2pm
18		
19		6.30 Stichill (Good Friday)
20	Meeting in Roxburgh 2pm	
21		10.30 Makerstoun Easter Day
22		
23		
24	10.30 Stichill	Guilds' Together' A.G.M. 7.30pm
25		
26	Bridge Club 7pm	
27		
28		10.30 Stichill
29		
30		
31	10.30 Stichill (S.of Praise)	

Kelso Country Churches



The Country Link

~~~~~ March/April, 2019



Dear friends

By the time you read this I will be on the other side of the world, hopefully enjoying some sunshine. You may think I spend all my time travelling around but actually I do spend most of my time in the Borders.

This coming trip has taken a lot of planning and preparation and I can only pray now that all the planes, trains and buses turn up on time and the people at the accommodation I've booked know that I'm coming.

The Church of Scotland Guild has as its theme this year "one journey, many roads" and often a journey is a metaphor for our path through life. This can be applied to individuals like ourselves or to organisations such as the Church of Scotland, the Guild and indeed Kelso Country Churches.

Our congregation is at an exciting point in its journey. We have appointed seven willing volunteers to be our Nominating Committee and they are hard at work preparing to advertise for a Minister. I would ask every one of you to pray for the Nominating Committee and also to pray that as part of God's plan for us He is calling a suitable person to come and be the Minister in our Parish.

I hope that all your plans come to fruition this year.

Helen Howden  
Interim Moderator

## *Parish News and Updates*

The Nominating Committee of our congregation has met to start the process of advertising our ministerial vacancy. We have to start all over again following the severance of the linkage with Oxnam Church. The committee is working on a Parish Profile for Kelso Country Churches and once this is completed it will be sent to Presbytery for approval. Once approved it will be printed in booklet form, ready to send to any interested minister and placed on the KCC website.

*Robert Monie*

The Guild has had another interesting and lively programme this session. In October, we learned about one of the projects on how the Guild, in partnership with Church of Scotland's CrossReach, is tackling the ever-present problems of loneliness and social isolation in Scotland. The following month, we learned about the valuable work being done by the charity Cheviot Youth to challenge children and young people and teach life skills, and Ian Landles entertained at the Christmas social with an interesting and humorous Robert Burn's tour of the Borders. This year we learned about the project partnership with World Mission Council in Zambia to mentor and support teenage mothers in health and parenting skills; and working with refugees in Calais, and our last meeting of the session will be a talk on the Alpha Course.

This meeting is also the ABM and any suggestions you may have for next year's syllabus, please bring them along.

The Guild Coffee Morning is on Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> March at 10am in the church hall, (see page 11). I hope you can come and enjoy coffee, home baking and good conversation.

Kathy Wilkie gives an update on milk bottle tops which our congregations save. To date, 52 stones, or 6.5 cwts. have been gathered so keep on drinking milk and saving the bottle tops. It's going to take a lot more to reach a ton!

Isabel Amos is making some progress in her road back to fitness again. She has not been out of the house yet, mainly because she can't do stairs. George is looking after her very well and she appreciates all the friends who have visited her and sent good wishes. We are thinking of you Isabel and cheering you on to better days.

The same message goes out to those of our church family and members of our scattered communities who are ill at home or in hospital, those who are anxious for a loved one and those who are lonely or bereaved.

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

Scottish charity no. SC000958

## KCC Guild COFFEE MORNING Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> March at 10am in Stichill Church Hall



Sales Table and Raffle  
Admission: £4 children free

## Thought for the Day

A legend recounts the return of Jesus to heaven after his time on earth. He returned bearing marks of his earthly pilgrimage with its cruel cross and shameful death.

The Angel Gabriel approached him and said, "Master, you must have suffered terribly for people down there."

"I did", said Jesus.

"Do they now know all about how you loved them and what you did for them?" Gabriel asked.

"Oh no," said Jesus. "Not yet. Right now, only a handful of people in Israel know."

Gabriel was perplexed. "Then what have you done," he asked, "to let people know about your love for them?"

"Well, I have asked Peter, James, John and a few others to tell the people about me. Those who are told will in turn tell others and the gospel will spread to the furthest reaches of the world. Ultimately all of humankind will hear about me and what I have done on their behalf."

Gabriel frowned and looked doubtful. He knew people were not dependable. "Yes," he said, "but what if Peter, James and John grow weary? What if the people who come after them forget? And what if, way down in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, people get too busy to bother telling others about you; haven't you made any other plans?"

"No, I have made no other plans, Gabriel," Jesus answered. "I am counting on them."

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A few more Places to visit:

I would like to go to "conclusions", but you have to jump, and I'm not too good at physical activity anymore.

I have been "in flexible", but only when it's very important to stand firm.

One of my favourite places to be is "in suspense"! It really gets the adrenaline flowing, and I need all the stimuli I can get!

I have been "in continent", but I don't remember what country I was in. I'm told it is very damp there.!

Preaching Plan for March/April, 2019

March

3rd Makerstoun (Communion) Rev. Robin McHaffie

10th Stichill Charles Orr

17th Makerstoun Jim Smith

24th Stichill Sophia Duncan

31st Stichill (Songs of Praise) Worship Team

April

7th Makerstoun Jim Smith

14th Stichill Rev Marion Dodd

19th Stichill (Good Friday at 6.30pm) Charles Orr

21st Makerstoun (Easter Day) Sophia Duncan

28th Stichill Rev. Robert Bruestedt

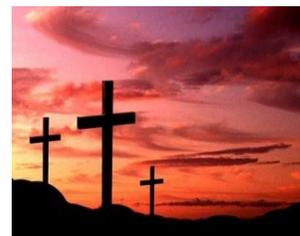
May

5th Makerstoun David Harvey

All services start at 10.30am unless stated otherwise.

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### *Kelso Churches Together services for Holy week.*



Lunch time reflections will be held in Kelso North Church from Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> – Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> April at 12.45pm. Soup and rolls will be served following the short service. All Welcome.

## *The Storms of Life*

Did you know that an eagle knows when a storm is approaching long before it breaks?

The eagle will fly to some high spot and wait for the winds to come. When the storm hits, it sets its wings so that the wind will pick it up and lift it above the storm. While the storm rages below, the eagle is soaring above it. The eagle does not escape the storm. It simply uses the storm to lift it higher. It rises on the winds that bring the storm.

When the storms of life come upon us – and all of us experience them – we can rise above them by setting our minds and our belief toward God. The storms do not have to overcome us. We can allow God’s power to lift us above them.

God enables us to ride the winds of the storm that brings sickness, tragedy, failure and disappointment in our lives. We can soar above the storm.

Remember, it is not the burdens of life that weigh us down, it is how we handle them.

The Bible says, “Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles” Isaiah 40:31.

## *Humility*

At times it is important to remember just how small we are.

Franklin Roosevelt used to have a little ritual with the famous naturalist, William Beebe. After an evening’s chat the two men would go outside and look at the night sky. Gazing at the stars, they would find the lower left-hand corner of the big square of Pegasus. One of them would recite these words as part of their ritual: “That is a spiral galaxy of Andromeda. It is as large as our Milky Way. It is one of a hundred million galaxies. It is 750,000 light years away. It consists of one hundred billion suns, each larger than our sun.” Then they would pause, and Roosevelt would finally say, “Now I think we feel small enough. Let us go to bed.”

*Taken from ‘A bucket of Surprises’. J. John & Mark Stibbe*

God created the world out of nothing, and as long as we are nothing, He can make something out of us.

*Martin Luther*

## *A Prayer for Holy Week*

*Loving Father*

*We give thanks that your wisdom is greater than ours.  
Your Son turned the world upside down  
and challenged the ways of human beings with divine grace.*

*He rode on a donkey, although he came as a King.  
He went to the poor, although he was the Lord.  
He healed the sick, although accused of breaking the law.  
He died on a cross, although he had never sinned.  
He rose again, overcoming death with eternal life.*

*We give thanks that your love is greater than ours.  
Your Son was greeted as the Messiah,  
yet soon after was rejected and reviled by the very same people.*

*In love he guided the disciples, to prepare them for the future.  
In love he entered the city and the Temple.  
In love he shared his knowledge of you, his Father.  
In love he took the way of the cross.  
In love he did not condemn even those who crucified him.*

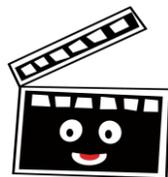
*All these things fill us with wonder.  
They seem in such contrast to the ways of the world, to our ways.  
We can only give thanks that they were your ways.  
Thanks be to God who continues to surprise us. Amen*

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This is a prayer that was found beside the body of a dead child in Ravensbruck. The words speak to us today as much as they would in 1945. Quoted in ‘The Wisdom of Jesus’ by Cynthia Bourgeault.

*O Lord, remember not only the men and women
of good will, but also those of ill will.
But do not remember all the suffering they inflicted on us;
Remember the fruits we have bought, thanks to
this suffering – our comradeship,
our loyalty, our humility, our courage,
our generosity of heart
which has grown out of all this, and when
they come to judgement, let all the fruits
which we have borne, be their forgiveness.*

Film review: A Tom Hanks double bill



1. **The Post** – Directed by Steven Spielberg

‘The Post’ stars Tom Hanks as Ben Bradlee - the executive editor of The Washington Post during the 1970s, and Meryl Streep as Katharine Graham - the only woman on the board of The Washington Post who is fighting not only for a free press but also to keep control of her late husband’s newspaper company.

At the heart of story is a legal and political battle over whether The Washington Post (and other newspapers) could publish leaked documents, known as the Pentagon Papers, which showed that the American people had been lied to *by their own government* for many years over America’s involvement in the Vietnam War. On June 30, 1971, the Supreme Court handed down its judgement confirming that “the founding fathers gave the free press the protection it must have to fulfil its essential role... to serve the governed, not the governors”.

This film is something of a prequel to ‘All the President’s Men’ (released 40 years ago) and it proves the old adage... ‘There is nothing new under the sun’. Donald Trump is a mere novice in trying to control the media when compared to one of his predecessors in the Oval Office: Richard Milhous Nixon.

2. **Sully: Miracle On the Hudson** – Directed by Clint Eastwood

Another Tom Hanks film based on a real life character but this time the story is not about political intrigue and skulduggery; it’s all about ‘Sully’, aka Chelsey Sullenberger, the airline pilot who brought down a malfunctioning passenger jet on the Hudson River in New York, with no loss of life, on a cold January afternoon in 2009.

You might think this would be an automatic passport to hero status but not so fast – enter into the picture the men in suits who work for the National Transportation Safety Board. These guys decided, from the safety of their office chairs, that Sully did the ‘wrong’ thing and risked the lives of 155 people by landing on the Hudson River when he should have turned the plane round and flown it to a nearby airfield. I hope it’s not too much of a give away to say that the men in suits had to eat very large slices of humble pie by the end of the film.

Andrew Nicholson

DVDs available to borrow

Gatherings at Smailholm and Roxburgh Churches

During this time when we are not having regular worship services at Smailholm and Roxburgh Churches, we have decided to hold short informal monthly gatherings at each of the two churches. The first was held on 6th of February at Smailholm Church over a cup of tea. We spent some time talking about what might be the future content of the meetings then went on to a short reflection and a time of prayer.

The reflection was based on our deep worth and value to God, and his trustworthy love and care for us. It’s all too easy to lose sight of that at times so it was good to remind ourselves of it! One of the verses we thought about was from Isaiah 41:13-14: “For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you. Do not be afraid, ... do not fear, for I myself will help you,” declares the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” We spent a bit of time chatting about that, then had a short time of prayer when those who wished to could pray out loud, and everyone else could pray along silently.

Future meetings for the next few months will be as follows and everyone is welcome to come along, whether you can only make it occasionally or are able to attend each time. The Smailholm meetings will be on the first Wednesday of the month at 2pm, and the Roxburgh ones on the third Wednesday of each month at 2pm.

Wed, 6th March - Smailholm Church

Wed, 20th March - Roxburgh Church

Wed, 3rd April - Smailholm Church

Wed, 17th April - Roxburgh Church

Wed, 1st May - Smailholm Church

Wed, 15th May - Roxburgh Church

Liz Orr

Our Church Family

It is with sadness that we heard that Pat Ellin, Stichill, has died after a short illness. Pat was a faithful member of the church and the Guild and was KCC co-ordinator for the Kelso Food Bank. Our thoughts are with her husband George, and daughter Claire at this time.

Roxburgh Church

The last Sunday service was held on 17th February before the church is mothballed for six months initially, and it is likely that the church will be closed after that. The reasons were explained in detail in last month's edition of the Country Link.

A warm welcome was extended to a bigger-than-usual gathering, helped greatly by former members of the congregation who had fond memories of their connections with the church in years past, and have now moved on to live in Kelso or elsewhere in the Borders, and everyone wished to be present and be part of a significant and historic event in the life of Roxburgh Church and village.

At the close of the service, John Elliot presented Oliver Stark with a certificate marking forty years as an elder in the Church of Scotland. He was ordained into the eldership of Roxburgh Church in 1977 and was also Session Clerk for twenty five years. Prior to that, Mrs Beatrice Kyle had taken over session duties in 1990 and Jimmy Johnston was Session Clerk from 1991-95 when Oliver took over.

In accepting his long service certificate, Oliver recalled that his father, James Stark had been an elder for forty four years and was also Session Clerk and Treasurer for twenty five years till his death in 1990. He reflected that it was a sad day for him as the church had been part of his life, and that of his family for many years.

It was also the end of an era for Ian Abernethy who has been organist for twenty five years, playing with skill and dedication and great pride in the unique organ.

Jim Smith and John Logan addressed the congregation and reiterated that the people of Roxburgh were still members of Kelso Country Churches and are assured of a warm welcome in Stichill and Makerstoun churches and hopefully, would continue to be involved in the life and witness of the country churches.

The ladies of the congregation had prepared a feast of scones and cakes and these were enjoyed at teatime amid much chatter and memories shared.

Pictures were taken to record the day; a selection of them is shown here.

