



LOCHEND & NEW ABBEY CHURCH NEWSLETTER

October 2026

LETTER FROM YOUR MINISTER

As I write this article, I am in Rome. I would like to share with you a special experience I had today.

In fact, it was nothing extraordinary. Like so many tourists, I made my way from Santa Maria del Popolo up to the Pincio Terrace, which overlooks Piazza del Popolo and offers a magnificent view towards St Peter's Basilica. Normally, it is simply a place to stop for a memorable photograph before continuing with your day in Rome. But this time, I do not quite know how to describe it. It felt almost like a revelation.

In the heat of midday, it was pleasant simply to rest for a while and take in the view. But my thoughts began to wander. There was something bewildering about looking down on the busy city below: the traffic, the crowds, the people rushing from one place to another. It was almost like looking into a beehive, with all its bustle, movement and constant noise.

And I found myself asking: What is the purpose behind all our human busyness?

In all that we do each day, does it ultimately make sense? Or are we simply part of a relentless cycle that exists for its own sake? In Rome, you can watch history almost in time-lapse. I experienced this yesterday as I looked down from the Capitoline Hill over the Roman Forum. Once, this was the very heart of the Roman Empire. Here emperors celebrated their victories with triumphal processions. Here important decisions were made and history was written. Some of Rome's most magnificent buildings once stood here.

And yet, what remains of all that earthly glory?

During the Middle Ages, the Roman Forum became known as Campo Vaccino, the 'cattle field', because it had become a grassy pasture where livestock grazed. As I stood on the Pincio Terrace and marvelled at the splendour of present-day Rome, with the largest church in Christendom rising in the distance, I suddenly glimpsed something of the future. The time will come when all of this, too, will lie in ruins. And all the people rushing through the streets today will long since have disappeared.

Directly before me, in the centre of Piazza del Popolo, stood one of the city's oldest monuments, not from the Roman era, but from a time much older still: an obelisk brought from Egypt. Its very shape seemed to point upwards, away from our transient world and towards eternity.

As I gazed into the deep blue sky, a musician behind me began to play 'Knockin' on Heaven's Door'. Yes. That was exactly how it felt. And suddenly, in the midst of all the constant movement below me, there was something like a quiet centre – a stillness at the heart of the hectic life of the city. Like a fast-spinning wheel that appears to stand still, everything around me and within me was moving, while something deeper seemed strangely at rest.

At Christmas, we celebrate God coming into our world in his Son. But Jesus did not come simply to make himself at home in this world. On the contrary, he came to gather us and, through his death and resurrection, to lead us into his eternal Kingdom.

And when heaven knocks at the door of our hearts, even in the midst of the routines and demands of daily life, everything begins to make sense. And then, whatever the time of year, it is Christmas.

Yours,

Johannes

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KIRK SESSION NEWS

Joint service

On 13th September we shared worship with our congregational members from Maxwellton West. After the service, a time of fellowship with our church family was enjoyed. Many thanks go to those who helped with catering for lunch after the service.

Bible study group change of date

Please note the Bible study group will meet for the first session on **7th October**, not on 30th September as previously announced. This date is shown in the Events calendar on the last page of the newsletter.

Service in Beeswing

On **25th October** our service of worship will be held in Beeswing Memorial Hall at the usual time of 9.30am. There will be no service in New Abbey on that Sunday.

NEW ABBEY CURLING CLUB

It has been a great summer enjoying the sunshine, but it is almost time for New Abbey Curling Club to begin our new season of curling and we can't wait!

We're very excited to get our new curling season underway at the beginning of October. With four different club competitions being played up until December, it is set to be a busy but fun time. We also have some outside competitions taking place where we will compete against other curling clubs.

We are always looking for new members. Whether you have curled before, or never stepped on to the ice, it really doesn't matter. If you would like to find out more information or fancy coming along to give it a shot, please email us at

newabbeycurlingclub@outlook.com

and we will get back in touch with you. We look forward to hearing from you.

Nicole Weymouth
Club President - New Abbey Curling Club

Sacrament of Holy Communion

We celebrate Holy Communion in New Abbey on Sunday **1st November**.

Remembrance Sunday

We hope to have a wreath laying and act of remembrance at the War Memorial at 11am. on Remembrance Sunday, **8th November**. The final arrangements will be confirmed locally.

Christmas Eve service

There will be a service at New Abbey on Christmas Eve, **24th December**, at 6.15pm. and at Maxwellton West church at 7.30pm.

150th Anniversary

In 2027, it will be 150 years since our current church building was consecrated and came into use. We hope to celebrate this in some way. Plans and arrangements have still to be firmed up, so look out for further information in the future.

NEW ABBEY 65 CLUB

Our next meeting will be held on **Tuesday October 27th at 7pm in the Village Hall**. Our speaker is Alison Burgess.

We are looking forward to hearing about some of the history of New Abbey.

Please note this is a change of date from the one originally issued earlier in the year.

This is an open meeting and all will be welcome.

Christine Hutton

ST MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

There will be a Service of Christmas Readings and Carols on **Friday 18th December** at 7pm in St Mary's church, New Abbey, with refreshments afterwards in the church house. This will be a joint event between St Mary's Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Scotland. Everyone, from both churches, throughout and outwith the village, will be welcome.

FAVOURITE HYMNS

For the second in our new series of favourite hymns, we turn to the Guild Secretary, Glennys Ardin, and a contribution from her native Wales.



Glennys writes:

My first choice was going to be one of the many I have enjoyed singing in the Church of Scotland since retiring up here over 40 years ago but then I decided to go back to my roots in South Wales, only 50 miles from where this hymn was written. Originally written as a hymn it has become pretty well established as a rugby anthem, associated with the Welsh rugby union, and I am sure most people will have guessed what it is by now! It is of course 'Calon Lân' which, being translated, means 'A Pure Heart'.

Written in the 1890's by Daniel James, a working-class man in Swansea who worked in the local iron and tinplate works. Said to have been written on the back of a cigarette packet in the local inn, it was later set to music by John Hughes, a chapel-going accountant again from Swansea.

The hymn apparently took off during the spiritual Welsh revival of 1904 - 1905. Too long for me to remember but in my own mother's time though she would have been only six years old at that time and living in Cardiff. Since then, it has become almost another expression of Welsh identity, and is almost revered as Wales's second national anthem, sung by crowds and choirs before international rugby and football matches involving national Welsh teams. To bring it into a more modern context, it was sung by the Newport based group Only Boys Aloud on ITV's Britain's Got Talent in 2012 where they reached 3rd place.

As for my own singing of this hymn, it's the chorus that has stayed with me the longest; but speaking no Welsh myself, it's difficult to retain the rest! The tune, however, is very memorable and is used in several hymn books as well as in our own CH4. There is nothing to beat hearing a full-on rugby crowd in full voice!

Calon Lân

Nid wy'n gofyn bywyd moethus,
Aur y byd na'i berlau mân:
Gofyn wyf am galon hapus,
Calon onest, calon lân.

*Calon lân yn llawn daioni,
Tecach yw na'r lili dlos:
Dim ond calon lân all ganu
Canu'r dydd a chanu'r nos.*

Pe dymunwn olud bydol,
Hedyn buan ganddo sydd;
Golud calon lân, rinweddol,
Yn dwyn bythol elw fydd.

*Calon lân yn llawn daioni,
Tecach yw na'r lili dlos:
Dim ond calon lân all ganu
Canu'r dydd a chanu'r nos.*

Hwyr a bore fy nymuniad
Gwyd i'r nef ar edyn cân
Ar i Dduw, er mwyn fy Ngheidwad,
Roddi i mi galon lân.

*Calon lân yn llawn daioni,
Tecach yw na'r lili dlos:
Dim ond calon lân all ganu
Canu'r dydd a chanu'r nos.*

I don't ask for a luxurious life
the world's gold or its fine pearls,
I ask for a happy heart,
an honest heart, a pure heart.
*A pure heart full of goodness
Is fairer than the pretty lily,
None but a pure heart can sing,
Sing in the day and sing in the night.*

If I wished for worldly wealth,
It would swiftly go to seed;
The riches of a virtuous, pure heart
Will bear eternal profit.
*A pure heart full of goodness
Is fairer than the pretty lily,
None but a pure heart can sing,
Sing in the day and sing in the night.*

Evening and morning, my wish
Rising to heaven on the wing of song
For God, for the sake of my Saviour,
To give me a pure heart.
*A pure heart full of goodness
Is fairer than the pretty lily,
None but a pure heart can sing,
Sing in the day and sing in the night.*

NEW ABBEY GUILD

The return of The Guild marks what feels like the end of summer. Hopefully, we can all look back on a refreshing break.

As always, we meet on the last Tuesday of each month at 2pm, so on 29th September, we will have welcomed Revd David Bartholomew, who will speak to us about the Covenants. As this is a topic that has such broad appeal, we welcomed anyone who has an interest in the subject.

It is also a topic which dovetails beautifully with this year's theme of 'Beyond the Walls', the last in a series of three, which started with 'Sure Foundations' and was followed last year by 'Living Stones'. The four Guild Projects which we have been supporting since 2025 will be entering their final year in 2027. Two of the charities are in Scotland, one is in Egypt and the fourth in Bulgaria.

The new church building in Bulgaria - which Guild money helped to renovate - assists with training, establishing a foodbank, outreach to homeless people and Christian counselling.

In Egypt, 'Operation Hope', working with persecuted Christians, offers vital support to families in many key areas:

- basic living needs, such as constructing roads and installing bathrooms;
- distributing food packages;
- helping to expand income-generating projects through sewing workshops and pastoral care:

Here in Scotland, the Scottish Bible Society offers a free bible for every baby born in Scotland. Guild money assists with ensuring that every baby whose birth is registered gets the *Share a Story Bible* on their first birthday. Those in their second year will have already received two fun *Share a Story Bible* 'Buddies Books'.

Third birthday gifts are sets of pairs of cards using illustrations from the *Share a Story Bible*; and fourth birthday gifts are activity books connecting with the

Bible stories. Each package arrives gift wrapped, with a birthday card, all prepared by volunteers.

As one volunteer has said:

"This is a gift for the whole family, not just for babies. This might be the only Bible in the house. Adults reading to children is beneficial for brain development, emotional development, security and attachment. How wonderful to have spiritual development too."

Our final project, again in Scotland, is with *Crossreach*, the Church of Scotland's social arm. This focuses on supporting young children with additional needs, assisting parents in early parenthood and providing specialised counselling services across multiple locations. This is done by improving children's health and wellbeing through play and nurture. The Guild's support will ensure the children have the best possible start in life by developing a strong positive relationship between parents and children.

The money raised during the 18-month period between January 2025 and June 2026 has been:

1) Bear Necessities (church in Bulgaria)	£57,924.44
2) Operation Hope (Egypt)	£57,068.62
3) Bibles for Bairns (Scottish Bible Society)	£69,413.39
4) Crossreach (Church of Scotland)	£82,295.21

The total raised so far is therefore over £266,000 and there is still more time to go.

To conclude, it would be wonderful to meet up with any newcomers who would like to join our Guild, and we look forward to us all meeting in September and into our new year.

Glennys Ardin - Convenor

The two churches – Max West and New Abbey – have separate Guilds and there is a joint dedication of both Guilds for the new session to which Glennys refers on 6th October. In

addition, we extend congratulations to Max West's Guild on the occasion of their 95th anniversary on 18th October.

CHRISTIAN AID

Thank you to everyone who has contributed in any way at all to our branch's recent fundraising. The Coffee Morning in Dumfries earlier in September has raised a total of £1,103 so far, but donations are still coming in. In addition, £1,729 was raised to help with support after the floods in Nepal.



As you know, Christian Aid launches a Harvest Appeal at this time of year every year. To make the appeal seem more meaningful and relevant, they focus on a

human story, the situation of an individual. The focus of this year's appeal is Anok Angok Kon. She herself is a farmer, women's group leader, wife and a mother of 7 children. Her community, like many communities in South Sudan, is suffering from the effects of climate change, their government's debt crisis, and is struggling to survive as South Sudan faces multiple crises.

Anok's story



Anok lives in Aguat, where floodwaters sweep through the village year after year. One season, floods destroyed her cattle shed, killing all her animals at once. Like many farmers, she feared what the future would hold for her

children. The continuous flooding over recent years has led to the destruction of harvests leaving many farmers unable to provide for their families. The climate crisis threatens food on tables, while a debt crisis leaves the Government unable to meet its citizens' basic needs.

But Anok and her community are not alone. With support from Christian Aid and our partners, people in Aguat came together to protect their land. They built dykes to hold back the water, thus helping families protect their homes and animals, grow food again and strengthen the livelihoods they'd built.

Like many low-income countries, South Sudan has relied on loans from private banks to meet basic needs. In 2025 private lenders took South Sudan to the UK's High Court for not meeting payments. Hundreds of millions of dollars, equivalent to almost half the Government's revenue, was demanded. As debts rise, the Government struggles to support ordinary people like Anok who face the brunt of the climate crisis.

Most of the debts that burden low-income countries like South Sudan are owed to private banks. The terms and conditions of 90% of these debt agreements are governed by English law (even if the lender isn't based in the UK). This is why South Sudan could be sued in a London law court by private lenders.

However, it also means the UK Government has the power to pass laws that could prevent these lenders from forcing countries to make vast payments at the expense of their citizens. They could introduce legislation to make the biggest polluters pay for the impacts on the climate crisis, both in South Sudan and beyond.

Anok, her community and other communities in South Sudan need different kinds of nourishment and nurturing besides food. Besides other physical needs - shelter, water, and sanitation for instance - they have emotional and spiritual needs. In addition to donating money to support their physical needs, we can remember them in our thoughts and prayers.

A Harvest Meditation

The earth is fruitful; may we be generous.
The earth is fragile; may we be gentle.
The earth is fractured; may we be just.



MISSION PARTNER

In July's newsletter, we published an extract from the blog of our Mission Partner for the last 7 years, Gary Brough. You may recall that Church of Scotland mission partners are the church's overseas personnel, working in various roles with partner churches in several countries across the world. Returning to Scotland, Gary is now Director of Programmes at the Scottish Bible Society.

This is the second, and sadly the final, extract from the blog he authored during his time in Malawi. It dates from the period just before he and his family returned to Scotland and has a powerful reflective feel to it.

What Malawi Taught Me About Time, Trust and the Pace of Life

18th March 2026

She shuffled off down the hall leading to the consultation room. Not slow, but definitely not rushed. The nurse is the gatekeeper to all healthcare. You cannot proceed in the hospital without her knowing your temperature, blood pressure, height and weight. With my statistics in hand, she sets an unambitious pace. Just fast enough.

Few people visit Malawi without commenting on the pace of life. As a visitor, you are rarely a user of government services and so the slower rhythm is appreciated. If you need to go to the hospital, deal with road traffic services or visit immigration, then that unhurried pace is perhaps a little more frustrating.

But over time, I came to realise it's not a matter of fast and slow, or of time well-spent or wasted. Instead, it revealed how much I measure time by my own expectations. Without timetabled internal demands, is anything late or early?

When friends in Malawi asked us what we'll miss about life there, I'd say the pace of life. But I'd struggle to articulate what I meant. The nurse's shuffle gave me something of an allegory to explain what I meant. A question back in Scotland gave me an opportunity to find a further layer of meaning - in what ways has Malawi changed you?

On the surface, we might say we've learned to live life at a different pace. But really, it's about realising that we're not the ones who set the pace. I can slow

to the pace of the nurse's step – and, having pneumonia, I was happy to do so – or I can speed up to the hustle of Edinburgh's commuters. But that's not change.

Trusting that God not only orders our steps but sets their time is a harder lesson. And that does require change.

C.S. Lewis explored our illogical infatuation with time in *The Screwtape Letters*. There, Hell's administrators encourage humanity's preoccupation with controlling their time:

"You must therefore zealously guard in his mind the curious assumption 'My time is my own'. Let him have the feeling that he starts each day as the lawful possessor of twenty-four hours. Let him feel as a grievous tax that portion of this property which he has to make over to his employers, and as a generous donation that further portion which he allows to religious duties. But what he must never be permitted to doubt is that the total from which these deductions have been made was, in some mysterious sense, his own personal birthright."

When, however, we let go of this perceived "birthright", we might come to understand that many things are neither fast nor slow. And therefore to trust that for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven (Ecclesiastes 3:1).

LOCAL CONTACTS

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Lorraine Sweeney	New Abbey village hall	07770 910156	newabbeyhall@gmail.com



Beeswing Memorial Hall
& Lindesay Memorial Field
Newsletter editor

NEW ABBEY SCHOOL

Welcome from the Headteacher

It has been a very busy start to my new role at New Abbey, and I am embracing this exciting opportunity. I am thoroughly enjoying working alongside our staff, pupils and families and look forward to working more closely with the wider community.

Lindsey Kirkwood (Acting Headteacher)



What's happening

It has been a very busy term and there have already been many successes, some of which include:

- Our P3 & P4 pupils enjoyed taking part in swimming sessions at DGOne.
- We continue to share news from the school on our 'New Abbey Rockstar' Facebook page.
- Our football club for P4-7 is up and running and the pupils are really enjoying the expertise of Coach Shannon.
- Our House and Vice Captains were nominated and have taken on their new roles. Congratulations to our successful candidates and also a huge well done to all pupils who put themselves forward for the positions.
- Our first non-uniform day raised £34 which will be put towards further opportunities for our pupils.
- The Woodland Trust has visited the school to discuss the possibility of securing a grant to support the planting of hedges and trees along the perimeter fence between the school and the football pitch. Let's hope that our application will be successful.
- Our P7 parents/pupils had the opportunity to attend an information evening which was held at Dumfries Academy. While leaving seems a long way off, we want to ensure that our pupils are fully prepared for the next step on their journey.
- The Abbey Arms Hotel has given the school a very generous donation. I have tasked the children with the job of coming up with ideas on what to spend this on. Thank you very much to the hotel.



Our School Captains
and Vice Captains

School Improvement

Our School Improvement journey is in full swing and we are already putting together dates to invite the community into school, as well as our dress rehearsals for the Christmas show, which we would love everyone to be part of. Dates for this will be shared later in the year.

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Face
We
the



Making survival
bracelets during
Outdoor Learning

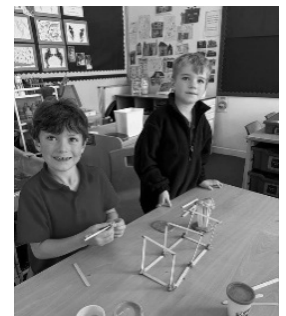
started work on a new display which will highlight their wider highly motivated by this, and we hope to share pictures on our article.

ing with the



P4-7 being put through
their paces in P.E.

community in



Developing our
technology &
engineering skills

THE VILLAGE HALLS

NEW ABBEY VILLAGE HALL

I just can't believe it's almost end of September as I write this. We are still having glorious weather after such a lovely hot summer. I was planning to do a games day in the hall in the holidays, but I never found a wet day to do it. But we can't complain. There will be lots more opportunities.

Thank yous

I would firstly like to say a huge thank you to Ian Baird for his phenomenal cycle event to raise money for four charities, one which was our hall. The committee and I are beyond grateful for his efforts to raise money. Ian, you are amazing.

I would also like to thank Karen Love for all the work behind the scenes, and for all the events she held to bring the money in. If she wasn't washing cars or organising curling in the halls, she was preparing food for Ian along the way.

So, thank you so much to you both. We really appreciate everything you have done, not just this year but for the last 9 years.

For the rest of the year.....

We have a few plans before the end of the year:

- We received funding for our superhero club to hold events. The first one I have organised is a kingdom of creatures, where our guest actually brings spiders with him. So I will definitely not be in the room when the creatures come out! This will be held on Saturday **3rd October**, from 10.00 - 11.30am. Our club is aimed at neurodivergent people. It's a space you can come and just be yourself for a couple of hours. Parents get a lot out of it too. So please don't be frightened to get in touch about it.
- a Halloween party on Friday **30th October**, between 4.00 -5.30pm.
- We will have our Christmas coffee morning on Friday **4th December** at 10am with the school children coming along to sing.
- I have ideas for a fun Christmas event, but I won't tell you what until it's all organised so watch this and other local spaces.

- Karen plans to open the hall on Christmas Day, **25th December**, again this year for families on their own or a low budget. Once she works out her plans for this, we will keep everyone posted. I'm sure we can all agree it's a very selfless and generous thing to do.

.....and the longer term

Finally, we are working on ways to make the hall more energy efficient and are trying to work on a large funding budget for this. We are keeping everything crossed we get this. Our electricity charges over the winter can be really high. So, again, watch this space.

Lorraine Sweeney

BEESWING MEMORIAL HALL & LINDESAY MEMORIAL FIELD

The latest meetings of the Hall and Field committees were held on 28th June, and further steps were taken to improve the Hall fabric; the last of the original windows will be replaced soon.

The committee continue to put significant effort into organising social events. The quiz night, which was held on 12th September filled the Hall to capacity, much to the delight of the Committee. There was a great atmosphere, and a good time was had by all!

The next event will take place on Saturday **31st October at 7pm – 'Spooky' Bingo**. There will be a bar from 7pm to 11pm.

The next committee meetings will take place at 7:30pm on Wednesday **14th October** in the Memorial Hall when further Hall events will be decided (see the village noticeboard or local Facebook for details).

The next Sunday Morning Church Service scheduled to take place in the Hall, rather than New Abbey, will take place on **25th October** at 9:30am.

Lucy continues her Yoga classes in the hall on Monday evenings at 6.00pm; contact Lucy on 07 950 702 165 for details.

The hall is available for private hire – contact Melanie Brown for bookings: 07 754 144 608 or Melbrown50@btinternet.com

Richard Lye

EVENTS

October

Saturday 03 October	10.00am	Superhero club	New Abbey village hall
Sunday 04 October	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church
Wednesday 07 October	07.00pm	Bible Study Group	Manse - 11 Laurieknowe
Sunday 11 October	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church
Wednesday 14 October	07.00pm	Bible Study Group	Manse - 11 Laurieknowe
Sunday 18 October	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church
Wednesday 21 October	07.00pm	Bible Study Group	Manse - 11 Laurieknowe
Sunday 25 October	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	Beeswing Memorial Hall
Tuesday 27 October	07.00pm	65 Club – Alison Burgess	New Abbey village hall
Wednesday 28 October	07.00pm	Bible Study Group	Manse - 11 Laurieknowe
Friday 30 October	04.00pm	Halloween party	New Abbey village hall
Saturday 31 October	07.00pm	‘Spooky Bingo’	Beeswing Memorial Hall

November

Sunday 01 November	09.30am	Holy Communion – Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church
Wednesday 04 November	07.00pm	Bible Study Group	Manse - 11 Laurieknowe
Sunday 08 November	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church
Sunday 08 November	11.00am	Act of Remembrance	New Abbey war memorial
Wednesday 11 November	07.00pm	Bible Study Group	Manse - 11 Laurieknowe
Sunday 15 November	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church
Wednesday 18 November	07.00pm	Kirk Session	Max West church
Sunday 22 November	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church
Wednesday 25 November	07.00pm	Bible Study Group	Manse - 11 Laurieknowe
Sunday 29 November	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church

December

Friday 04 December	10.00am	Christmas coffee morning	
Sunday 06 December	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church
Sunday 13 December	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church
Friday 18 December	07.00pm	Service of readings and carols	St Mary’s RC church
Sunday 20 December	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church
Thursday 24 December	06.15pm	Christmas Eve service	New Abbey church
Friday 25 December		Christmas Day lunch	New Abbey village hall
Sunday 27 December	09.30am	Morning worship - Rev Johannes Wildner	New Abbey church