
CONNECT



Early spring sunset

You are warmly invited to join us in the
SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Sunday 26th May 2024

All church services held weekly at:

Gullane Parish Church **9.45a.m.**

Aberlady Parish Church **11.15a.m.**

**Joint services held at 10.30a.m. on the first Sunday of each month -
Gullane-June 2nd, Aberlady-July 7th, Gullane-August 4th. Aberlady -September 1st**

All are welcome

MINISTER

Dear Friends,

It's that time of year, once again, when summer seems to be just around the corner. It's lovely to enjoy clearer days without the wind and rain but with the warmth of the sun on our faces. The promise of summer warmth and sunshine helps us think of holidays and relaxing and taking time to enjoy the company of loved ones and friends and the possibilities of making new friends too.

I feel that I have made a lot of new friends since coming here because you have all made me feel so welcome and I give you my grateful thanks for that. It's that sense of welcome, warmth and support that is so nourishing and lifts one's spirits.

Just the light and warmth of the sunshine is enough to blow away the gloominess of winter and the sharpness of spring. The world is coming alive with the warmth and glorious colours of summer blooms and bright coloured summer wear that dispel the gloominess of darker days. As the new buds open and the green stems unfurl from the soil, so we stretch out spiritually and we feel that lift that wants to be expressed in song and praise of our glorious creator. I think that it's these kind of feelings the Psalmist is talking about in Ps 98:4-6

⁴Sing for joy to the LORD, all the earth;
praise him with songs and shouts of joy!

⁵Sing praises to the LORD!
Play music on the harps!

⁶Blow trumpets and horns,
and shout for joy to the LORD, our king. (GNT)

We've been on a bit of a journey recently with our hymns and songs as I try to find out the ones that are familiar and not drown you with too many new ones. I thought you might like to help me and if I put some hymn request forms in each church building you might like to put some of your favourites down and we could have a Songs of Praise service one week and use the rest in the weeks beyond. So do look out for the form.

MINISTER

As the sun shines and the warmth grows, doors open and people get out and about more. We have the freedom that we didn't have during the recent lockdown years to go where we will and to meet friends and acquaintances that perhaps we haven't seen for a while or chat with new neighbours out in the garden.

As a church perhaps it's time as well to see what new doors of opportunity should be opened or knocked upon. What is our vision for our church for the future? How do we as a church engage with friends and neighbours and our community? How do we open our doors and invite people in? How do we go out and let people know about us and the joyful message of the love of Christ that we are told to share?

I often finish these letters to you with a prayer but this time I'd like to share a hymn.

God bless

Rev Lis

CH4 184

1. Sing to the Lord a joyful song,
lift up your hearts, your voices raise;
to us his gracious gifts belong,
to him our songs of love and praise.

2 For life and love, for rest and food,
for daily help and nightly care,
sing to the Lord, for he is good,
and praise his name, for it is fair.

3 For strength to those who on him wait
his truth to prove, his will to do,
sing to our God, for he is great,
trust in his name, for it is true.

4 For joys untold, that from above
cheer those who love his sweet employ,
sing to our God, for he is love;
exalt his name, for it is joy.

5 Sing to the Lord of heaven and earth,
whom angels serve and saints adore,
the Father, Son, and Spirit blest,
to whom be praise for evermore. Amen.

*John Samuel Bewley Monsell
(1811-1875)*

SESSION CLERK

Session Clerks Annual Report 2023

The Annual Report was presented to the Stated Annual Meeting held in Aberlady Church on 5th May and is reproduced here for those unable to attend on the day.

‘The Annual Report for 2022 summarised the challenges arising from the Presbytery Mission Plan, in particular, our allocation of a 0.5 minister and working towards Union of our churches after many years of successful linkage.

The 2023 Annual Report mainly covers our work as a Session when approval to advertise for a new minister was received from Presbytery in May. The fact that we advertised in June and had a new minister in post six months later, in December, was largely due to the preparatory work undertaken in the earlier months of the year. The Parish Profile was prepared and ready for issue to prospective applicants, we had elected a Nomination Committee which was ready to spring into action, a new manse purchased and monthly joint services introduced in March 2023. The Nomination Committee, chaired by Barry White, gave us a sole Nominee, the Revd Lis Stenhouse. Lis preached as sole nominee on 22nd October in Aberlady Church, and in a subsequent vote by the congregation, received an overwhelming majority vote in favour of her becoming our new minister. An Induction Service was held at the end of November in Aberlady Church, and Lis moved into the new manse and delivered her first service on 10 December. Our thanks go to the Nomination Committee and the remarkably good sense of the congregation in giving its fulsome support to her appointment. We now have an excellent minister in post and increasing numbers attending church.

Throughout 2023, our new post-union Committee structure has worked well. The Finance Committee has maintained oversight on finance, the Property Committee has worked on plans for a programme of works which will be presented to you in a consultation exercise later this year. The Communications Team is developing ways in which we can reach out to our growing local community with events planned for the summer months, and the Children’s Church continues to develop and prosper.

SESSION CLERK

Aberlady and Gullane Church continues to play a key role in the local community and, during straightened times, this has proved essential. Strong and supportive links have been developed with the East Lothian Food Bank, and through coffee mornings held each week in the Church Centre. We also made significant contributions to Christian Aid during the year.

Summarising, our Kirk Session was successful in meeting the key challenges which faced us during 2023. We have also improved our website which now contains resources such as our staff team, the Parish Profile, the church magazine, a photographic gallery, annual accounts and policy documents relating to safeguarding, whistleblowing, data retention and protection, and how we use the information you give to us. In this way, we continue to meet the not inconsiderable policy demands placed upon us by 121 George Street, particularly those applicable to Safeguarding and Data Protection.

Throughout 2023 we were fortunate to receive ongoing advice, support and encouragement from our Interim Moderator, the Revd Dr Jock Stein, who chaired five Kirk Session and four Steering Group meetings. Having arrived at 'steady state' we disbanded the Steering Group at the end of 2023.

Most importantly, I thank my colleague Session Clerks, Convenors of Committees, and members of Session and the congregation for their contributions during 2023. All devote considerable time and effort towards ensuring the ongoing success and long-term sustainability of our church.

Jim Donaldson

Session Clerk

TREASURER'S REPORT continued**Church Finances-Treasurer's update May 2024**

The last three months have been busy for me with the completion of the Annual Accounts, now audited and approved by the trustees i.e. the Kirk Session and submitted to Presbytery and 121 George Street. The Annual Stated meeting will have taken place at our joint May service to provide you with information about our Finances by the time you receive this magazine. I am happy to say that our Financial position is very healthy, both in our General account and in our Investments. I continue to be grateful for your support in your giving through your offerings. Please continue to maintain this. You can do so by cash, cheque, or by Standing Order via the bank. For further information, please speak to Morag Black at Gullane or to me at church or by phone. Morag will be in touch by letter to Gift Aid donors about their 2023-24 donations in the near future.

I am pleased that donations in the plate at the rear of both churches, either Free Will or Open Plate, are helping with our regular income. The heating costs have remained very high during the winter months but hopefully reduced charges from our supplier and a warm summer will redress the balance.

Can I please remind everyone that all cheques should be made payable to :

Aberlady and Gullane Parish Church General Account

and not to either individual church. The bank may refuse to accept these cheques and this results in extra work for Morag or for me. We only have one joint account since the union almost two years ago.

The Annual Plant Sale on 18 May is a joint fundraising activity which takes place on the last day of Christian Aid week. The committee hope you will support this event to boost our income and to make a generous donation to Christian Aid. This event is **Cash Only**. It is likely that there will be some events later in the year as we may need to start some fundraising to pay for work to improve all our buildings.

Kaye Macaskill (Treasurer)

TREASURER'S REPORT

There is some availability for the Kirk Stables and Gullane Church centre for regular or occasional lets. I am pleased to say that there have been more lets at both sites in the last few months. These lets help defray the cost of running these buildings.

Please contact our Secretary, Tracey Thomson for information or availability. (either by email: agpcsecretary@outlook.com or by leaving a message on the office answering machine:01875 870777)

Kaye Macaskill (Treasurer)

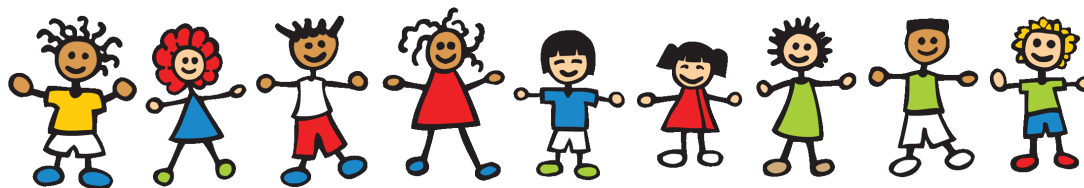


Congregational Roll

Gullane and Aberlady

Deaths

- January. 17.1.24. Irene Scott. Muirfield Care Home, previously Muirfield House, Gullane.
- February. 14.2.24. John Durie, Muirfield Care Home, previously Mayfield, Drem.
- March. 5.3.24. David Coull, 11 Rig Place, Aberlady.
- April . 4.4.24. Arnott Craigs, 10 Broadgait Court, Gullane.



Children's Church in Aberlady and Gullane Parish Church

Hello from JAM Club. As I write it's so nice to see real signs of spring. The cherry blossom is waving outside the window. How appropriate that the children were planting their sunflower seeds last week. I'm sure they will grow into strong plants for our gardens. Fran also has plans for a bug hotel for the church garden. I'm sure the children will love getting their hands dirty again. All these activities link nicely into the Great Big Green Week which is happening in June. Watch this space.

We had lots of fun at Easter. Thanks to Ruth for her help creating the amazing Easter garden display with the children, which looked lovely in the foyer during holy week. The Easter Craft Afternoon was another success, welcoming lots of families into our church. Then on Easter Sunday we skipped over to Elspeth's garden for the scavenger hunt, and hunting for chocolate of course.

We are looking forward to our summer term when we hope to get out and about to enjoy our lovely surroundings as well as rainy Sunday mornings, when bible stories and gluing will be the order of the day.

For more information on Aberlady and Gullane's Children's activities please email Rachel at agpcchildren@gmail.com

Please keep in touch by checking our website for updates:

www.aberlady-gullaneparishchurches.org,

as well as:

Facebook @Aberladyandgullaneparishchurch.

EASTER CRAFT DAY PHOTOS



MINISTER



Letter received from Elaine Morrison - Foodbank Manager - 27th February 2024

Dear Reverend Stenhouse

On behalf of the entire foodbank team, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to Aberlady and Gullane Parish Church for your continued generous support of the foodbank. In 2023 you donated 122kg of food and other essentials - which was the equivalent of 290 meals for those in need in our community.

We very much appreciate you thinking of us at a time when we know everyone is still being impacted by the cost of living and we are seeing demand reach levels not seen before. Last year saw a demand rise by 22% on the previous year with 5801 households supported with emergency food including 4527 children. We provided approximately 125k meals last year which is more than the entire population of East Lothian! The generosity of you and others in the community is what enables us to carry on the work we do.

Whilst we're proud of the work that we're doing to meet the needs of our community, we don't want to 'exist'. We believe everyone should have enough money to be able to afford to buy food and other essentials, and to thrive. This belief is what drove us to set up our Financial Advice service in partnership with Musselburgh Citizens Advice Bureau. Launched in October 2023 with a dedicated advice worker for foodbank users, it has now secured nearly £180,000 of financial gains to date, for those we are working with.

Looking to the year ahead, we are committed to building closer partnerships with our local church community and are in the early stages of introducing Church Ambassadors to help us action real change to tackle poverty within our community, ultimately to mean we're no longer needed.

We would like to invite you along to the foodbank at your convenience so that we can tell you more about our work and the positive contribution that your support makes. It would also be good to have your ideas on how we can work more closely with the congregation. If you would like to arrange a visit, please contact us at info@eastlothian.foodbank.org.uk

Thank you for your continued support!

Kind regards,

Elaine Morrison/Foodbank Manager



East Lothian Foodbank – a day in the life of a foodbank volunteer

The Foodbank warehouse in Tranent opens at 10am, and that's when we start too. Sometimes there are people waiting for the door to open, hopeful that there may be some free handouts, or just free information on where to get 'a foodbank'.

There are usually half a dozen volunteers on each shift, with some staying until noon and others staying on until 2pm. What we start the day doing often depends on how busy the day before has been. If they have been rushed off their feet the day before, there will be lots to do. There are always food parcels to be made up, at least 30 a day, so we grab a trolley and a picking list and fill usually three bags per parcel, with various basics from the shelves, then stack them up ready to be personalised at the labelling table.

There may also be a backlog of donations to be sorted, both from the public and deliveries from the supermarkets. Crates are laid out the length of three tables allowing beans to go into one, soup into the next and so on, then the dates need checked and the crates moved on to the picking shelves. Anything that is out of date by less than a year gets put in the 'help yourself' tray at the door. It's amazing what people donate, unusual items that may have been gifts at Christmas, but no one likes out of date tins from the back of the cupboard, which are regulars, but other people put a lot of thought into their donations and try to meet the needs of a healthy diet.

Just when we think we are getting organised, the referrals start coming through to the labelling area. The office staff have received client's names from various agencies, then we phone the client to check the details of the referral. It then comes through for us to be made up ready for delivery. We add fresh fruit and vegetables, bread, some chocolate if we have it, tea or coffee, toiletries and pet food if requested. A family parcel for three days can end up being 8-10 carrier bags full, especially if things like nappies are added. A single parcel won't be that big. We also do no cook parcels, vegetarian and gluten free parcels. Each parcel is labelled up with the client's name ready for the delivery guys coming in from noon.



We have been having sour dough donated recently, which is a nice addition to the parcels from a local bakery. We also have fresh mushrooms and eggs donated from local suppliers. We are still giving out Easter eggs left over from last month.

There are always people coming to the door, and the Foodbank staff deal with visitors looking for advice or a food parcel, visitors from other agencies, school groups coming in, Duke of Edinburgh volunteers, work experience guys, and new volunteers as well as delivery drivers.

Time for a quick coffee and bite to eat before the volunteer drivers come in. They may be given a number of deliveries to do depending on the size of their car. They are mostly off to places like Musselburgh, Prestonpans and Tranent but they come out to Gullane and North Berwick too and sometimes on to Dunbar. Apparently, it's easy to get lost in Blindwells! The drivers have each clients' address and take the delivery to the door. I don't do deliveries very often, but the drivers say that the clients are always so grateful, often wanting to chat, but they have also come across some sad circumstances.

The chat at the foodbank this week has been that the staff and volunteers enjoyed coming out to Gullane Food Festival. They enjoyed coming in to the primary school to talk to the children and, their stall at the fun day was well attended. The next Tesco collection isn't for a while but there are plans for the next volunteers to meet soon and there will be a social. We have heard from the office that there is funding available for new polo shirts too which will be nice. They are also looking for volunteers to contribute to roles in the office as well as drivers and warehouse helpers.

Time to go home is about 2pm, which coincides with the time when the office have a positivity moment, a time to share positive thoughts after what may have been a bit of a depressing morning. The Foodbank has become so busy, that this is a good way for we volunteers to end our day.

For more information see the website www.eastlothianfoodbank.org.uk

We had an absolute hoot at the **Christian Aid Beetle Drive**. It was a packed hall, with lots of fun and laughter. Pizza and goodies were shared, and it was a lovely family evening. I'm not too sure that some folks grasped the number of legs a beetle required, but it really didn't matter. The fellowship and raising money for Christian Aid was the focus. Thanks to Ruth, Iain, Effie, Elaine and all those who organised and made this such a success.

Muriel Calder





Aberlady Scone Cafe

Another lovely gathering was held at The Old Aberlady Inn on Thursday 28th March 2024. Twelve guests and volunteers all caught up with each other and chatted over tea, coffee and Easter hot cross buns. 🐣

Once again our lovely refreshments were very generously provided by The Old Aberlady Inn who have supported the Scone Cafe single-handedly since last Autumn, since DUCK'S hotel closed. Thanks again to the Inn's wonderful team.

Discussing the initiative with our guests, Nancy said, "The Aberlady Scone Cafe is very nice and friendly. The Inn provides tea, coffee and different things to eat - from scones & cakes to seasonal treats such as today. I am delighted to be back."

The ladies also agreed that it would be lovely to have gentlemen from the village to join them at the Scone Cafe. The dates are the second Tuesday and the fourth Thursday of each month, both starting at 11.30am at Aberlady Inn.

Further chats revealed a real desire for our guests to meet up at weekends, which they find the most lonely - watch this space!

Anne Keir Mitchelmore

ABERLADY CHURCH FLOWERS

We are grateful to the small band of volunteers who has offered to contribute a floral display for our Church again this year, but we still have a few months when we will only be able to display silk flowers, as our team has not yet reached twelve so that we can divide out the months fairly.

Kind members of our congregation have requested special displays this year in memory of loved ones. These members either provide monetary contributions for the allocated flower volunteer to provide a display, or they choose to create a display by themselves. These special displays this year will be in May, August and October.

For the second time recently events in the Church have left behind some magnificent floral displays. These have been dismantled after the event and made into bunches which have been distributed round the village to some of our elderly residents.

Thank you to Margaret and David Chalmers for the abundance of daffodils we have enjoyed over the Spring this year. Not only have we liked seeing them in Church but many of us were delighted to be able to take home a beautiful bunch after the Church service!

Liz Forsyth
Flower Coordinator (Aberlady)
elizabethmforsyth@btinternet.com



ABERLADY BIG HYMN SING - ALONG

Come and enjoy the wellbeing of singing popular hymns from across the centuries, in a beautiful, historic church. The event will include poetry which is being selected and recited by Rev Dr Jock Stein. We will be celebrating music making and there will be light refreshments. See below for details.

OPEN TO ALL

A Celebration of Church Music



It will be *Music Sunday* on Sunday 9th June 2024.

This is an event organised annually by RSCM (The Royal School of Church Music).

You could use this link to go online and vote for your favourite hymn:

<https://www.rscm.org.uk/whats-on/music-sunday/>

and you could join us on 9th June at 2.30pm at **Aberlady Church**

for 'A Celebration of Church Music' -

an afternoon of favourite church hymns and music.

There will be refreshments afterwards at the Kirk Stables

All donations will go to RSCM and Christian Aid.



Summer Concert

Knox Academy

June 1st 2024

7.30 - 10.00p.m.



Hadley Court's Summer Concert will be on the 15th June 2024. The plans are for a concert in Haddington to celebrate **Bruckner's Bi-centenary** with a program to include his Requiem and motets plus motets by **Mendelssohn, Brahms and Rheinberger**.

For your information:

www.aberlady-gullaneparishchurches.org.uk

Click on "CONNECT" to read the magazine online.

www.facebook.com/AberladyGullaneParishChurches

www.facebook.com/AberladyAndGullaneChurchForChildren

GLADSMUIR PARISH CHURCH
Main Street, (A199), Gladsmuir EH33 1ED
SING at 6.30p.m.

Be part of a lively season of Come and Sing worship events, organised by one of East Lothian's most beautiful and active historic churches.

Each month we, along with neighbouring church partners, will be offering an evening service with a strong emphasis on praise and music, featuring Gladsmuir Parish Church's amazing instruments: our pipe organ and our theatre organ.

For our 2024 season of **6.30p.m. gatherings**, we will be offering a wide range of joyful and exciting acts of worship. All are most welcome.

Sunday 9th June: "THE WONDER OF WATTS"

Have you heard of Dr Isaac Watts? If so, you will know that he made a huge mark on music and faith on both sides of the Atlantic. If not, you are in for a big musical treat.

Sunday 14th July: "ORGAN EXTRAVANZA"

Our keyboards have some hidden depths. Tonight we show them off at the height of their powers, with wonderful organists to guide us through their range of sounds.

Sunday 18th August: "THE LAND OF SONG"

There are few countries that are so passionate about singing than Wales, and over the centuries Welsh hymn singing has become world famous. Come along and find out why.

Sunday 8th September: "THE HEART & SOUL SWING BAND"

Scotland's top gospel big band rounds off our season with hymns and solos which will see us "swing a new song to the Lord".

An amazing evening of musical fun awaits!

Admission free, come along and sing together!

From April to August donations will be received for Christian Aid. In September the offering will support the Church of Scotland HIV Programme.



Gladsmuir Parish Church (Church of Scotland) SC005996

What's happening in Aberlady and the Bay?

In Aberlady, we are about to replace our original defibrillator unit (of the three we have) which used to be outside Duck's but is currently located within Margiottas until the new hotel can re-position the cabinet outside the premises. This is something they have committed to doing for us. The new unit is needed as the old unit parts progressively become redundant and has been funded by donations from the community awareness sessions we ran last year as well as some local funding. We have a super group of volunteers within Aberlady who regularly check and maintain our units and cabinets on a rota basis and who have been sharing their practices with other local villages/towns.

Aberlady Community Association is currently liaising with East Lothian Council and Scottish Water to gain permission for the Aberlady Bay nature reserve car park toilets to be spruced up a little in time for Summer by the Community Payback team, with which we have established a good relationship. They have successfully undertaken maintenance work around the village before. That team is also liaising with Aberlady Community Association and East Lothian Council regarding the possibility of doing some further maintenance at Coffin Lane.

Sue Jardine

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Come and learn more about.....

BUTTERFLIES - BIRDS - BEES

On Sunday 19th May @ 2.30pm

GULLANE VILLAGE HALL

**Entry by cash donation at the door,
or by ticket available after Church Services at Gullane and Aberlady.**



FOR ALL THE FAMILY

FREE, TEA, JUICE AND BISCUITS will be available.

MARTHA AND PETE

Who knew when first we met how it would end?
 A wee playmate, pal and then a friend;
 We grew up happily friends throughout the years,
 You were with me through my happy days and tears.
 I always knew you were a faithful friend
 And on you I always could depend.
 You showed in oh so many ways how much you care
 I'd just hold out my hand and you were there.
 Our friendship changed to love as time passed by
 For me you were My Special Kind of Guy.
 The Army called you - you had to do your part
 But when you left, you also took my heart.
 Our love kept growing, till the best day of my life
 When I walked down the Aisle to become your loving wife.
 Our happy wedded bliss, filled with love and laughter
 Was completed by the birth of our Son and Daughter.
 You always have been the best Husband, Soul-Mate, Dad
 You are, no doubt, the best that we could have had.
 We're getting old and one day we will go
 But before that time there's something you should know -
 If you go first "Old Man", on me you'd better wait
 Wait patiently outside Saint Peter's Gate,
 And when I arrive we'll enter Hand-in-Hand
 Together into the Promised Land.

Pete and I met when we were 11 & 12 years old and doing a paper round. We became friends and the rest is in the poem!
 I wrote this poem for his 85th Birthday and we celebrated 63 years of marriage on 29th April (same day as Prince William and Katherine - they "pinched" our day).

Martha Lithgow

Editor: Many thanks to all the companies who support our joint magazine, 'CONNECT', helping to pay towards the printing costs. Val Barrie - Editor

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Registered Charity SC005237

www.aberlady-gullaneparishchurch.org.uk

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Safeguarding Coordinators	Val Morrison Win Wright	
Sunday Club.	Rachel Wallace	

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY	
May 18th - 24th	General Assembly Week
May 18th	Plant Sale at Aberlady Community Hall 10am - 12.15pm
May 19th	Pentecost Sunday
May 26th	Celebration of Holy Communion
June 2nd	10.30am Joint Service at Gullane led by Worship Team
June 8th - 16th	Great Big Green Week (climate change)
June 9th	Kirkin' Sunday at Aberlady Church 11.15am 2.30pm at Aberlady Church 'A Celebration of Church Music'
June 23rd	JAM end of session gift presentation and family service
July - August -	No JAM or EJAM
July 7th	10.30am Joint Service at Aberlady led by Worship Team
August 3rd	Gullane Games Day BBQ
August 4th	10.30am Joint Service at Gullane led by Worship Team EJAM 5.30pm Gullane (tbc)
August 25th	Celebration of Holy Communion
September 1st and 8th	10.30am Joint Service at Aberlady led by Worship Team JAM 1st Sept and EJAM 8th Sept (both tbc)
September 9th - 22nd	Fairtrade Fortnight
September 15th	Lammermuir Festival Concert at Aberlady Church 3pm
September 29th	Harvest Thanksgiving
October 6th	10.30am Joint Service at Gullane led by Worship Team
November 3rd	10.30am Joint Service at Aberlady led by Worship Team
November 10th	Remembrance Sunday
November 24th	Celebration of Holy Communion Joint service at Gullane Church 10.30am
December 1st	10.30am Joint Service at Aberlady led by Worship Team