
CONNECT



Walk along the path to the left of Aberlady Church to see the splendid view to the north and also to see and read the five plaques which tell the History of Aberlady

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

Sunday 23rd February 2025

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

Aberlady - March 2nd, Gullane April 6th,

Aberlady - May 4th, Gullane June 1st

All are welcome

Dear Friends,

As I write this letter it is almost the end of January which always seems such a milestone in our diaries. January is such a long and sometimes depressing month and the weather, although not snowy or icy, has been a little dangerous with the storms. I do hope you all managed to stay safe without too much damage to property.

It is inevitable at this time of year that we look backwards at the year that has just departed and look forwards to the year to come. The month of January gets its name from the Roman God Janus, Januarius the gatekeeper, the God of beginnings and endings, of war and peace, who had two faces so that he could look both ways at the same time. January stands at the gate of a new year full of possibilities and potential. 2024 was a busy year but 2025 has the potential to be even busier as we progress our plans for renovating/ upgrading our buildings. Our new PaMPP (Property and Mission Priority Planning Group) is meeting with architects to begin discussions this week.

A very busy Christmas season has spilled over into January as well, but what a wonderful way to start the year with seven people standing to profess their faith and join our church on 12th January, followed by the baptisms of three children on 26th January and, two more baptisms planned for 9th Feb and 4th May. A further two new members were added to our church roll through transferring their lines and through the resolution of the Kirk Session.

We also enjoyed a lovely joint service with the other members of the NBDAC (North Berwick District Association of Churches) on 26th Jan for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. It is such a witness of our Christian love for one another when we open our doors in invitation and join together to worship our God and Saviour.

I'm planning to run a new group which will meet in the Kirk Stables on Wednesday evenings at 7pm from 26th Feb to 26th March called 'Conversations about Spirituality'. All are welcome. The new 'Coffee, Cake and Christianity' group has also started and is intending to meet on the last Monday in the month at 10.30am. For further details please contact the Minister or Val Morrison.

By the time you receive this newsletter we will already be approaching the start of Lent on 5th March and looking forwards to another busy period as we make plans for the Easter services.

In amongst all this busyness, all this coming and going, I pray that you will always find time for worship, prayer and reading God's word. As you do so, always remember the words of Psalm 121:

The Lord will keep you from all harm - he will watch over your life;

the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. (Ps 121:7-8)

God is with us as we look back with appreciation for all the good things that are happening and as we look forwards with hope for what is to come.

With all God's blessings, Rev Lis

Conversations About Spirituality

"We are all spiritual beings trying to be human"
(nes.scot.nhs.uk)

The Kirk Stables, High St Aberlady EH32 0RB
7pm Wednesday 26th Feb & 5th & 12th & 19th & 26th March

This is an invitation to come to the Kirk Stables in Aberlady for a series of five evenings, each session lasting just one hour, to talk together about what being 'spiritual' means.

It is difficult to say what exactly we will talk about over these weeks as these sessions will be interactive and we will decide the programme of meetings together.

These sessions are not intended to be about religion but that may be a topic that arises.

Although I cannot say what exactly the content of these sessions will be I can say quite clearly that we will not be talking about 'Spiritualism' which is another subject entirely.

Scottish Charity Number: SC005237

PRESBYTERY LETTER

I have been back in Scotland for a week and the temperature difference between here and Tenerife was marked. Going from 22 to -2 has been a bit of a shock! I hope as well, you all came through Eonwe ok. Our near neighbours lost some roof ridge tiles and slates but otherwise are ok.

Whilst away in the village of San Blas, I went for a wander and came across the local Roman Catholic chapel. Trying to understand the various notices in Spanish, I saw the one below in English. The local Anglican church doesn't have a meeting place of its own, rather it uses the Roman Catholic chapel. The Roman Catholic chapel is generous enough to share their space with their brothers and sisters who do not have space of their own. I've often met people who think all the different branches of Christianity are different faiths and enjoy telling them we are actually different branches of the same faith. God is so big, no human being can grasp the entirety of God which has led to different denominations highlighting different aspects of God that they connect with. Another analogy I've seen used is that of a football team. We all play different positions within the same team. Paul used the analogy of a body made up of different parts. "Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ." 1 Corinthians 12:12.

It is good to remember we are one body, we are billions and we are all over this world.

I hope and pray this week that you encounter some of your brothers and sisters and get to share your common faith together

Norman Smith, Presbytery Clerk, Lothian and Borders

Easter Youth Video Competition: First prize £500

Youth groups from across the Presbytery are invited to make a short video (3-5mins) MP4 which explores the meaning of Easter. It is intended that this video could be played at a café church or another similar mission occasion where there are people who know nothing about Easter. The winning videos will be uploaded to the Presbytery's Youtube channel.

Those creating, producing & editing the video need to be under the age of 30.

The prize money is given on the condition that it be used for strengthening & promoting the Youth Group. *The first prize is £500, second prize is £300 and third prize £200.* Three prizes because we want as many entries as possible!

Entries need to be received by Sunday March 23rd. Please send entries to pwood@churchofscotland.org.uk

World Day of Prayer 2025.

This year's Service, which has been prepared by the women of the Cook Islands, will be held in Longniddry Church on Friday 7th March at 3.00pm. There will be hospitality afterwards. This is a joint Service with Aberlady, Gladsmuir, Gullane, Longniddry and St Adrian's.

Session Clerk Report for Connect Magazine
28th February 2025.

It is about two months since Christmas and about two months until Easter. Time is whizzing past.

We had four services at Christmas and a Carols and Readings Service the first Sunday after that. All were well attended and thank you to everyone who helped to make them such a success.

Not long ago we received the Presbytery Report, which was pretty much a description of what they see as the key factors of ensuring a Church's success and viability. I'm not sure if tough love is the correct description of the report, but it certainly confirmed that all we are trying to do here with Mission and Property is the right thing to be doing. We are lucky to have so much talent and enthusiasm within our Church. There is a lot of work to be done.

We had an unusual day on the 12th January. Two Kirk Session meetings were held on the same day. However, it was in fact a very joyous day as we welcomed into our Church, seven new Communicants. Elaine, Lauren, Douglas, Mhairi, Steven, Kathryn and Ed. It is wonderful to have you in our congregation.

Finally, just a reminder that our meetings are open to all and you will be most welcome. (You don't need to stay for the whole meeting!).

Michael Black,
Session Clerk.

Some members of the congregation received their copy of Connect magazine by email in November. If you would like to receive future editions of Connect **by email** please let your elder know and this will be arranged for you. Hard copies will still be available for those members who wish to continue to have the magazine delivered by their elder.



Congregational Roll

Aberlady and Gullane Parish Church

Funerals and deaths

Alexander (Sandy) Kirkwood - died 16.11.24
Carol Macleod - died 2.12.24
Neil Simpson

Baptisms

On January 26th 2025

Mabel Simpson
Nora Solvedt
Jacob Solvedt

February 9th 2025

Zara Cook

New Members

Steven Walker
Mhairi Templeton
Kathryn Cook
Ed Cook
Elaine Adams
Douglas McMillan
Lauren Solvedt
Hazel Burns
Miriam Simpson

by resolution of the Kirk Session
by transfer of lines

TREASURER'S REPORT**Church Finances-Treasurer's update**

The Church financial year runs from January to December. I am working on the 2024 accounts and when completed they will be approved by the Kirk Session and the auditor. An Annual Stated meeting will hopefully be held later in the spring at which you will have the opportunity to have the accounts explained. This is an information meeting as members of the Kirk Session are responsible for their approval. 2024 has been a busy year with maintenance at both Aberlady and Gullane and some emergency repairs. Heating and lighting was also major expenditure during 2024. I am pleased to report that we have a small surplus at the end of the year.

As the plans for the proposed improvements at both churches proceed we shall be fundraising and setting up a restricted fund for this purpose

I am grateful for your continued support in your giving through your offerings. Please continue to do so. You can do so by cheque or by Standing Order via the bank or cash in the plate. For further information, please speak to Morag Black at Gullane or to me at church or by phone.

Kaye Macaskill (Treasurer)

ANNUAL PLANT SALE

The **Annual Plant Sale** will take place on **Saturday 17 May** in **Aberlady Community Hall** - see advert elsewhere in this magazine. This is now a successful joint venture. As this happens near Christian Aid Week in May, Kirk Session has agreed to donate 10% of the profit to Christian Aid.

Please get your plants ready! Put the date in your diary! Come along and buy some new plants at very good prices!

Kirk Stables and Gullane Church Centre

At both the Stables and Gullane Church Centre there is some availability during the week for groups to meet there, both during the day and in the evening, and it is also possible to hire them for family events e.g children's parties. The charges are reasonable. Please spread the word. Further information is available on the website:

www.aberladygullaneparishchurch.co.uk

or from Morag Black, our Church Secretary, who deals with bookings either by email: agpcsecretary@outlook.com or by phone on: 01875 870777. (Thursday or Friday am or if unavailable, leave a message on the answering machine) Kaye Macaskill (Treasurer)

Message from Finance Committee

We are very grateful for all the financial contributions which members make to the running of the church, whether by standing order or through cash donations. Costs continue to rise across the board, as we are all too aware: inflation in the UK has risen about 23% in the last 5 years. With this in mind, we would ask members to review the level of their giving and, if affordable, consider increasing standing orders to reflect our higher costs.

Standing orders are the most efficient way to support the church financially as we can claim gift aid quite easily on these. If you would like church bank account details and gift aid forms, please contact Morag Black or Kaye Macaskill.

Data Protection

In accordance with the Church of Scotland requirements and, as required by law under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Aberlady and Gullane Church is required to maintain stringent privacy and security of all personal data it holds on individuals - church members as well as those who have some connection with our church which require us to hold personal data.

For example, if you are on our Church “Roll of Members”, the data we hold is typically your name, address, email address, telephone number and perhaps, if you have transferred your church membership from another church, the details of that transfer - the date and from which church you transferred. Since the GDPR regulation was introduced, all members, whether admitted by Profession of Faith or by Certificate of Transfer, are required to give written consent to their personal data being held by us.

You should be aware that the information we do hold, we hold only for the purpose of being able to contact you. This means that if you receive “Connect” magazine, either a physical copy or an electronic copy, (and presumably, you do receive “Connect” if you are reading this!) then we hold personal information about you - at least your name, address and possibly your email address.

You are entitled to view the personal data we hold about you at any time.

It is important that the data we hold is accurate and up to date, and you are encouraged to notify us of any changes.

Barry White
Data Protection Officer

Welcoming Christmas with Love, Fellowship, and Lighthearted Fun

The members of the worship team were able to help Lis our Minister out over Christmas with leading the 6.30pm Christmas Eve Family Service, and the Watchnight Services, both at Aberlady. This was new territory for us.

I had the idea of an Adult Nativity for the 6.30pm Service and I discussed it with The Worship Team then took my idea to Lis who said, 'Go for It'..... A plan was hatching.

I spoke with both congregations and asked for volunteers. There were lots of bowed heads!!!

But God had a plan

We had a wonderful cast, some even making their own costumes.

There were no rehearsals as Christmas is such a busy time, and we all know The Christmas Story well.

Musical instruments were given out at the door and encouraged to be played with gusto throughout the service.

We had sparkly Angels..... Joan, Susan, Moira, and Roan (Angel Gabriel)

Shepherd/shepherdessesAlan, Kaye, Kate, Kirsty

Kings.....Val, Liz, Jules (two queens and a King)

Mary/Joseph.....Lara, Nick

Donkey...Arlo (Black Labrador)

Katie...who read the prayer beautifully

Thank you all so much for taking part. I truly appreciated your help and I'm very grateful for your support. You were all amazing.

Thank you to Anne our Organist, to Roger for taking control of the AV, and to Jackie and Kathleen, for their help as Elders.

Thank you also to the Congregation for such positive feedback, to the singing, playing the musical instruments and the lovely Christmas attire.

I think everybody left Church with a spring in their step and The True meaning of Christmas... hope, joy, gratitude and Love.

Let's hope 2025 brings a little peace too.

Best wishes from Allison Frostwick on behalf of the Worship team.

Editor: and Allison did the most wonderful job of bringing the whole service together, creating the most happy and joyful service. Well done Allison.

Allison Frostwick



THE CAST

Angels

**Joan, Susan, Moira,
and Roan (Angel Gabriel)**

Shepherds

Alan, Kaye, Kate, Kirsty

Kings

**King Jules,
and Queens Val and Liz**

Mary and Joseph

Lara and Nick

Donkey

Arlo (Black Lab)







Children's Church in Aberlady and Gullane Parish Church

Jam Club continue to enjoy meeting each Sunday morning at Gullane, or in Aberlady when the joint service is there. They are such an enthusiastic bunch of happy children, a joy to know. The end of the year was an exciting one for us, preparing for Christmas and the nativity. We were few in numbers for the nativity but no lack of enthusiasm for taking part. We used a script based on the well-known story, 'We're Going on a Bear hunt'. The children followed the journeys of Mary and Joseph, the Shepherds, and the Wise Men and our 'real' baby Jesus joined us in the stable. We loved that the script required some congregational participation. Thank you for joining in.

Our Christmas Craft afternoon was well attended with 36 children from 18 families coming on the day. The usual Christmas crafts, activities, stories and refreshments were on offer, and everyone had a lovely time with the glitter and glue. More than half of the families are not regular attendees at church which makes it all the more rewarding seeing new faces in the church centre. As always, I owe a big thank you to all the helpers.

We have seen Jacob, Nora and Mabel baptised since Christmas, and we will have Flora and Mairi's to come soon. We very much welcome them to our church family, even though we already know them rather well.

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.aberladygullaneparishchurch.co.uk or

Facebook @Aberladyandgullaneparishchurch.

Rachel Wallace



Christmas Craft Afternoon



East Lothian Foodbank are delighted to announce that they smashed their 10 to 10 target to raise £10,000 and collect 10,000kg of donations in the run up to Christmas. Together we raised £33,700 and donated 14,600 kg of essential items.

Thanks to you, our incredible ELFS (East Lothian Foodbank Supporters), the Foodbank was there when people needed them, and your donations meant that over 1,300 people didn't have to face hunger alone during the festive season. Your support means they were better prepared to plan and provide consistent support in the coming months.

We are so lucky to be part of a community who cares. Thank you.



DO YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW NEED OUR HELP?

It's easy to access our support



Prefer to chat?
Call us on 07516 510 617



Prefer text or whatsapp?
No problem, it's the same number
07516 510 617



Prefer to write? Email us on
info@eastlothian.foodbank.org.uk

Here are some suggestions for donations –

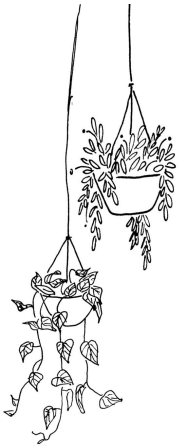
Long life milk and fruit juice, tins of baked beans, meat, fish, soup, tomatoes, spaghetti, fruit and vegetables. Rice, pasta, tea, coffee, cereal, biscuits, snacks and sweets. We also take toiletries and cleaning products as well as pet food.

Volunteers uplift donations for the Foodbank from Gullane and Aberlady Churches, Aberlady Community Hall, Gullane Library and Gullane COOP during opening hours. There is also a collection point at North Berwick Tesco. All donations are taken to the warehouse in Tranent where they are sorted and made into 3-day emergency food parcels. Parcels are delivered throughout East Lothian.

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

Thank you.

Rachel Wallace



ABERLADY PLANT SALE

Saturday 17th May 2025 10.00am - 12.15p.m.

ABERLADY COMMUNITY HALL

£1 ENTRY £3 for cream tea ticket

STALLS < PLANTS < CAKE AND CANDY



RAFFLE

ALL WELCOME

Look out for:
Aberlady Open Studios Event

May 10th - 11th

10.00am - 4.00pm

Map to be published in "Aberlady News & Views"

Reflections on the Camino Portuges

Readers will probably know The Camino de Santiago, the Way of St James, is a network of pilgrims' routes to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in NW Spain. Tradition has it that the remains of St James the Apostle are buried there. How they reached this spot is another story. You can watch the film 'The Way'. You can read the late John Brierley's wonderful guide book. He suggests inner preparation as well as outer preparation. He urges you to find a spiritual purpose for taking it. He made it his business to research so many of the routes over an extended period. He estimates over 100,000 people make this journey every year.

You can choose to walk a section. We chose a self-guided option to walk a section of the Portuguese Way, starting from North of Porto, at Porrino, heading over 100km to Santiago. You need to walk over 100km to receive confirmation you have completed a section of the Camino.

We walked along roads, up and down hills and around pretty coastlines; the route is marked by discrete scallop shells at every point where you might ponder over the next turn. Fellow walkers, perhaps they saw themselves as pilgrims, were in front of you, behind you and at your lodgings and hostels. Perhaps they pre-booked, perhaps they did not. Most had a scallop shell hanging from their backpack. All would have their Credential Del Peregrine stamped at the beginning and end of every day to evidence their route and earn their certificate in Santiago. (Churches, restaurants and your hostel could all provide the stamp on the way.)

Some walkers were local; some had travelled from miles to start (e.g. Australia, Asia and the USA). Some had read about the Camino; some wanted the challenge. Walking over 500km from Lisbon to Santiago seemed like a challenge for two people we met. Some just wanted time to think, perhaps on their own, many taking John Bierley's advice. Whatever the reason it was astonishing how many arrived in Santiago every day.

The arrival on the last day seemed for most people to be one of the most emotional moments of their journey; the walk may have been too long; things may have gone wrong; suddenly you are facing this magnificent Cathedral with stunning buildings all around. Whatever your own emotions it is impossible not to be affected by the emotions displaced by the stream of arrivals emerging from all corners of the square, from all directions of the multitude of Caminos whether from North, East or South.

Whatever dimensions of the church you belong to and however committed or sceptical a Christian you might be, if you have arrived in time for the evening service for pilgrims in this Catholic edifice it is indeed a service to remember. It is a walk to remember.

AD 17.1.2025

Editor: As always, 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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For your information:

www.aberladygullaneparishchurch.co.uk

Click on “CONNECT” to read the magazine online.

www.facebook.com/AberladyAndGullaneChurchForChildren

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY	
February 23rd	9.45am Celebration of Holy Communion - Gullane 11.15am Celebration of Holy Communion - Aberlady
March 2nd	10.30am Joint Service at Aberlady Church led by Worship Team
March 7th	3.00pm Joint Service @At Longniddry Church - World Day of Prayer - with Aberlady, Gladsmuir, Gullane and St Adrian's churches, followed by hospitality.
March 23rd	Deadline for Easter Youth Video Competition
April 6th	10.30am Joint Service at Gullane Church 3-5pm Easter Craft Afternoon in Aberlady Stables
April 13th	Palm Sunday
April 14th	7.30pm St Adrian's Church
April 16th	7.30pm Our Lady Star of the Sea, North Berwick
April 18th	7.30pm Good Friday Tenebrae Service - Gullane Church
April 20th	Easter Sunday: 8.00am Easter Service at top of Gullane Hill - followed by hospitality in Gullane Church Centre: 9.45am Service in Gullane Church 11.15am Service in Aberlady Church
April 27th	Deadline for articles for May issue of 'CONNECT'.
May 4th	10.30am Joint Service at Aberlady Church
May 11th -17th	Christian Aid Week
May14th	10.30am Coffee Morning in aid of Christian Aid at Gullane Church Centre - Home baking and all will be very welcome 🍵🍰☕
May 17th	10.00am - 12.15pm Plant Sale - Aberlady Village Hall
May 17th-22nd	General Assembly Week
May 25th	Celebration of Holy Communion