

# The Hird

Church News for Ashkirk and Selkirk  
September 2021



Minister:

Rev. Margaret Steele, Tel: 01750 23308  
Ashkirk SC 010768 Selkirk SC 014883

# Changing cycles

As summer sun gives way to autumn chill,  
bright glare turning to yellow light,  
shadows lengthening and leaves falling,  
we move and change with the cycles of the seasons.  
As timetables and programmes restart in unfamiliar ways  
and new activities begin to take shape,  
as colleges, schools and churches  
gear up for a new session,  
we move and change with the cycles of the year.  
As patterns in our lives shift and change  
with family losses and new relationships,  
altering our perception of ourselves and those around,  
we move and change with the cycles of our lives.

Jan Berry

From Autumn, Liturgical resources for August, September and October  
including Ordinary Time and Harvest by Ruth Burgess

## Children and Families



Over the summer, Sunday Gang families have had several meet-ups in the Pringle Park with the kids playing while the adults chatted or joined in. Everyone enjoyed the ice creams!

The way ahead for more regular events is not clear, with COVID regulations and a shortage of volunteers. Please continue to pray for the young people in our church family and for future plans.

1 Loanside  
Selkirk  
TD7 4DJ  
September 2021

Dear Friends,

**John 1:16 tells us that, out of the fullness of God's grace He has blessed us all, giving us one blessing after another.**

This is the time of year when we naturally turn our thoughts to thanksgiving and harvest – the time when the golden fields around us have seen combine harvesters doing their work, yielding so much more than the original seed planted.

What is true in the natural world is true too in our lives. God has given each of us gifts and talents to use for the benefit of others and for the benefit of His church. It is our choice as to what we do with those. Like the story Jesus told of the three servants given gold coins, we can choose to bury them or use them. **(See Matthew 25:14-30)**

What talent of yours are you being challenged to use to help another? Often, we never know the benefit to others of what we do but God sees, knows and blesses our efforts – usually by giving us something more to do!

We sometimes sing the hymn,

*"In the bulb there is a flower, in the seed an apple tree,  
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter, there's a spring that waits to be,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see."*

You can read the rest of the verses in CH4 717.

God calls us to put our trust in Him. He provides us with what we need to live for Him. He already has a plan so that our lives can be lived to the full. **For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10**

May we, this Harvest Season, thank God for all He has done for us and invite Him to help us use the gifts He has given for the benefit of His Kingdom here on earth.

You will read elsewhere about Heather Carroll, our new Pastoral Assistant for the linking. She is now using her God given gifts in visiting folk in the different parishes. It is great to have her on the team.

With every blessing,  
Margaret

## Open Door



Three months on from opening our doors again, we are enjoying welcoming our guests to Open Door, as people get accustomed to meeting one another again after such a difficult time of enforced isolation. Friendly faces, smiles and a "What's on the menu this week?" are a great tonic!

We are told it is still the only time some are socialising and we feel privileged that they choose to come to Open Door. It is good to have a mix of chatty folks and good listeners at the tables to make for a companionable time, so "all sorts" are warmly welcome.

We have increased our table settings in line with the relaxation in rules issued by the Scottish Government, so can now have 32 customers. It is still compulsory to wear a mask until seated and use hand sanitiser. We still recommend booking your place if you want to be sure of a seat and a delicious lunch but you can "turn up" and take a chance. So far, we have been able to seat almost everyone who has come. Did you know you can have 3 courses for a suggested £5 or on a "Pay What You Can" basis? And it's all home cooked and prepared on the premises.

We are very grateful to those who have volunteered for our meal delivery project "Open Door to Your Door". If this is something you might be interested in, please let us know via the church office or contact Myra Ward or John Moley. It involves taking a frozen meal to a family once a month. If you would enjoy being a cafe volunteer, setting tables, welcoming/serving customers, helping prepare food, cooking or dish washing, we'd love to hear from you too. We try to treat each volunteer individually, respecting the time they can give and the talents they have, so flexibility is the key!

Without each other, we are unable to achieve what we do: serving the community as Christ's hands and feet. It can be hard work but is life enriching for all, and as we offer our time and talents in these ways, we enjoy ourselves (mostly) and are blessed with new friendships and satisfaction. Why not come for a lovely lunch and /or volunteer and be part of this journey with us?

Myra (Volunteer Coordinator on behalf of Open Door)

*Dear God,  
Help us to speak with care  
and listen with abandon.  
Amen*

## Ashkirk News



Hope you have all enjoyed the summer and kept safe and well.

Ashkirk Parish Church has been open for worship since 2nd May, albeit with restrictions in accordance with Scottish Government guidelines. For the moment, the Kirk Session has decided to keep to one metre distancing inside the church while Covid numbers remain high. Masks, of course, must still be worn even while singing and hands must be sanitised on the way in and out. The one way system is still in operation as is the track and trace. There is, however, no longer a booking system as we can now accommodate more people.

Over the summer, improvements have been made to Kirk Brae. Access is now easier both by car and on foot.

In the middle of August, the church underwent a five yearly property inspection and we await the results.

The church took part in the National Gift Day on the 5th September. Many thanks to all who have so generously contributed.

The Kirk Session has been busy planning ahead for Remembrance Day and Christmas but everything depends on the virus and what might lie ahead. Please pray that the spread of the virus will be contained so that life will continue to get back to some kind of normality. Meanwhile, stay safe.

God Bless  
Marjory Dooley, Session Clerk

---

## A nice surprise for Fresh Start Borders

We recently received £200 from Asda's Green Token Giving programme. Huge thanks to whoever nominated us and everyone who voted for us!

We are now receiving good quality bedding and crockery again and also toiletries. Open on Wednesday mornings from 10am to 11am at Unit 9B, Tweed Mills, Dunsdale Rd, Selkirk TD7 5DZ. To find us, turn in at Lochcarron/Tweed Mills Business Park. We are on the 2nd row of units behind Lochcarron.



For further information, please contact Glynis Wilkie, 01750 22494.

## Selkirk Churches' Holiday Club

Shortly after I started in the role of Children & Families Worker, I was lucky enough to be recruited to present the 2019 Summer Holiday Club. For five days, Fan and I larked about in front of the children introducing various activities, scripture readings, prayers and games. Not only was the week immensely enjoyable for all involved, but it also served as an awesome demonstration of what our community is capable of when we work together.

I'm sure I wasn't the only one to feel tremendous disappointment in the summer of 2020, when any such event proved impossible. The year 2021, on the other hand, seemed to begin with reasons for optimism and, at a CTSV meeting on Zoom, I raised the idea of running the programme offered by Scripture Union for an outdoor event. I was eager to play my part; clowning around in front of the children, gently introducing them to the themes of each day and directing them to their various activities. It gradually became apparent, however, that since the departure of the Youth Worker from the Baptist Church, Daniel Sturgeon (or, perhaps I should say, his wife Joanna), we lacked a project manager who could bring together the necessary team of volunteers and keep us all on track. It started to seem that we would run out of time and another year would pass without a Summer Holiday Club.

That was when Andrew Rollinson got in touch. Like me, he was very keen to see the event take place, but didn't feel that he could fill the role of project manager either. Instead, he suggested that we gather together a steering group of volunteers, each willing to take responsibility for a significant aspect of the event (volunteer recruitment, health & safety, promoting the event, etc). At the last moment, the Holy Spirit delivered everything and everyone we could have hoped for. First of all, the Haining Committee agreed to give us the use of a large, beautiful clearing in the woods. We couldn't have asked for a more inspiring and exciting venue. A number of very kind people allowed us to borrow their garden gazebos, so each small group would have a dry space to gather and do their activities. In the few weeks that remained of the summer, an enormous team came together; more than fifty volunteers, each willing to work at least one of the days, leading a small group, preparing the snacks, running a crafts activity or lending a hand with the inevitable lifting and carrying that was needed every day. Finally, we were delighted to see that fifty-two children signed up to attend on at least one of the days.

*Continued on page 7.*



*Continued from page 6.*

Then, the Holiday Club was upon us! Each morning, the small groups met to do activities that prepared them to discuss the theme of the day. Then, the presenters (Grace and myself) spoke to the whole group and we all sang our Holiday Club song. The children then received water and a snack of fruit provided by Andrew Beatt at Down to Earth Foods. Once they'd eaten, the children were treated to a story from scripture, sometimes read, sometimes performed, by the fantastic youth leaders. Afterwards, we had crafts and games before returning to the small groups to discuss the ideas raised by the Bible story we'd heard. Each day was wrapped up with a bit more foolishness from Grace and myself and another rendition of our song. We were blessed all week with glorious weather and, on the Friday, we followed the event with a "bring-your-own" picnic for the families and volunteers, giving everyone the opportunity to socialise in a physically distanced, outdoor environment.

All in all, I believe the club was an unmitigated success and I thank you all for your support and prayers. I can't wait to see what we can build on the back of this fabulous event and the wonderful spirit of cooperation that undeniably makes our community so special.

John Moley

---

## **Changing patterns - how we worship**

Now that Ettrick and Yarrow have been able to open up their buildings, Margaret is only able to be present in our church building to lead worship on alternate Sundays. Our services still go ahead **every** Sunday at 10.15am. They may be led by different members of the congregation, sometimes using pre-recorded readings, prayers and sermons, and sometimes with different formats. For example, we might include some discussion time, or bring in some of the more informal styles of worship that we have been developing for many years through Taste and See. There has already been a more reflective service with hymns and prayers, Taize style. We still need to think about how our children can be part of our worshipping church family.

The Wednesday service has also restarted every week, in the hall, at 11 am. The Sunday morning service is recorded live from one of the church buildings each week and available online through Youtube, so there are now several opportunities to take part in worship every week.

David Bethune (Joint Session Clerk)



## Outdoor Hot Chocolate

In July and August, our Hot Choc group (high school age kids getting together) have met in Selkirk at Myra and Rod's, Fiona and Mark's and Elma and Keith's gardens, and also in Ashkirk at Barbara and Martin's small farm. We are very grateful to them for their hospitality.

Our sessions have included some food to share (pizza, hot dogs or a chip supper), some run-about games, some Bible discussion using a TV series of Jesus life called 'The Chosen', and some general chat together about how we are all doing.

There are generally between 5 and 8 youngsters at a session and this year we've had 4 newcomers to our gatherings. Please keep praying for the youngsters.

To find out more or offer your garden for a 'Hot Choc', speak to Louise Raffier or John Moley.

---

### **Pastoral Assistant: Heather Carroll**

It is a pleasure to be able to introduce myself to you. I started my role as pastoral assistant in June and feel privileged to have got to know many of you already. For those of you I have yet to meet, here is a little introduction:

I spent my pre-school years on the Philiphaugh estate at the bottom of Yarrow valley before moving to the top of Ettrick valley, where I attended Ettrick Primary School and then Selkirk High School. After 4 years studying at the University of St Andrews I returned to Ettrick, working for a while at Bowhill House before taking up full-time employment at RP Adam Ltd, along Selkirk's riverside. I worked for 16 years at RP Adam until its closure in 2019.

I was brought up in a Christian family, and have attended a number of churches over the years. Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, I served in Hope Church, Tweedbank, but feel privileged now to be able to serve in my home area of Ashkirk, Ettrick & Yarrow and Selkirk.

Many of you will have seen me attending the services and meeting people at Mondays' Open Door cafe. However, primarily I have been doing home visits. It has been lovely to meet people who perhaps are less able to get out and about and have missed the church connection. I like to think I'm the friendly face that will come and have a chat and brighten up their day, and thank you to everyone who has given such lovely feedback. I also go home satisfied, knowing that my day has also been brightened by many of the lovely people I have visited. In addition, I am available to support others when times are hard, and I am happy to telephone anybody who is not ready for face to face home visits but would appreciate a telephone call instead. My telephone number is on the back page of the magazine.

God Bless,  
Heather

**Our  
final  
event  
Towards COP26  
This sounds like  
fun!**



**Sunday 3rd October** at 3 pm outside Selkirk Parish Church. We will play our part in **YCCN's Rise to the Moment.**

YCCN, the **Young Christian Climate Network**, is an action-focused community of people aged 18-30 following Jesus in the pursuit of Climate Justice.

**Rise to the Moment** is an initiative by YCCN, supported by Christian Aid. They are walking a Relay from the G7 summit in Cornwall to COP26 in Glasgow. They set off in June.

**Their boat:** YCCN are carrying a **model boat** on the relay. It represents our hope that we will rise to the moment and use this year to set sail towards a more just future.

**Our boats:** On 3<sup>rd</sup> October we will write our prayers for Climate Justice on magazine pages and fold them into boats. We will make a display for Selkirk folk to see, send photos to our MP/MSPs and finally send our boats to join 1000s of others at COP26.

**Jane's boat**



For further  
info and boat folding  
instructions

[https://www.christianaid.org.uk/  
resources/get-involved/rise-moment-activity-  
pack](https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/get-involved/rise-moment-activity-pack)



**Join in!** We need you to join us. We are all in the same boat. Our world is sailing in stormy seas towards a hurricane. So join in on 3<sup>rd</sup> October. You could bring a prepared prayer, a magazine (they fold well), a friend or two. But most of all, come yourself.

## The pearl of great price Matthew 13 vv 46-7

Anniversaries - most of us have some meaningful ones in our lives, whether it was the excitement of birthdays and Christmas when young, or maybe a wedding, or the birth of a child, or grandchildren or, often, ones of sadness as the years advance.

40 years ago, 'Project Pearl' took place, on the 18th June 1981. A Chinese teenager called Xiao Chen\* watched as a giant ship under no flags approached a beach in China in the night; everyone on the beach seemed anxious; a small rubber boat came down from the ship carrying a full load of Bibles - hundreds and thousands of them. A few hours later, soldiers came down and chased off the Christians from the beach, but they had already retrieved many of the crates. A lot of Bibles were thrown into the sea, but courageous believers fished them out and went to distribute 700 more boxes of the precious books. A fellow believer, Sister Cindy\*, who experienced the effect of the 'Pearl Bibles' said, 'It catalysed the great revival in China - many churches rose up and thousands and thousands of people accepted Jesus and many leaders were born because they finally had their own Bibles.'

Here is an extract from a message of thanks to Open Doors supporters from Chinese Believers:- 'you poured out your heart, passion, strength and financial support to Project Pearl 40 years ago- this project has had a tremendous impact on Chinese churches - we want to express our deep gratitude to you! May God bless you to continue as a shining light for Him.'



**Open Doors**

Serving persecuted Christians worldwide

By the way, did you know that the unassuming Yorkshire town of Barnsley normally sees lots of Chinese visitors all the year round - and they often kiss the ground there in front of the house that once belonged to James Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission; one commentary on his life said 'not since the apostle Paul has one man had such an evangelistic vision!'

\* names are often changed for security reasons in the Open Doors Prayer diaries and magazines.

*Continued on page 11.*

*Continued from page 10.*

For prayer, this week, I will be concentrating on Myanmar and the indescribable suffering which Christians are enduring there among the minority Christian sects. In Chin state, for example, the brutal Burmese army launch artillery strikes not only on villages but actually on IDP camps; they also stop humanitarian aid from getting in; the UN has warned of mass deaths from 'starvation, disease and exposure'. God can move the hearts of rulers - ask that He will cause those in power in Myanmar to stop destroying their own people.

**But** in spite of dangers, churches in the Middle East, Syria, Iran and Iraq are seeing many new believers from Muslim backgrounds choosing to follow Jesus even if it costs them dearly, some of them relatives of sheikhs and other people of influence.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus exhorts us to pray for our enemies (5:44).

Do you find it difficult to pray for, say, Kim Yung-un or the Taliban? Join the club! - but at least we can pray for the Christians in China, living under suffocating surveillance 24-7 (voice and face recognition) at the hands of an aggressive atheist government.

David Taylor, Prayer Promoter

---

## Finance Update

With heartfelt thanks to all those who have continued to support the Church throughout the last 18 months, we have managed to keep a healthy balance overall. However, as we are gradually becoming more active again, expenses are increasing much faster than our income. At the end of August, our income for 2021 was £46,705, and our expenditure £46,697, giving a balance of just £8 for the year. Hopefully, this situation will improve as more of our members feel able to return to in-person services. If you have offerings that you wish to be collected, please contact me (tel. 21971).

Our 5p donations were very few and far between, inevitably, but they are picking up, and we have received £95.95 to date.

The offering of £140 in the open plate at the joint service on 29<sup>th</sup> August was donated to the Food Bank, as a Harvest offering.

Lynda McCraw, Treasurer





## Building the Future – next steps



The “Building the Future” group would like to thank all those of you who have spoken, met with us or written to us following the article in the June Hird. We have set up a web page at [selkirkparish.church/building-the-future/](http://selkirkparish.church/building-the-future/) to share progress and feedback. Feedback so far has been encouraging, with some really interesting ideas around what we could do and a vision of why it is important to adapt and embrace change to provide a building suitable, not just for us, but as a legacy for the generations to come.

Our aim should be to provide a building which enables our congregation’s vision: to be an open, growing, enthusiastic and supportive Christian community, which

- *nurtures members and welcomes newcomers*
- *offers a range of inspiring worship and teaching*
- *reaches out with the good news of Jesus Christ*
- *serves the community and world in practical ways*

That means developing the church buildings as a flexible community resource, which provides a place for worship, useful and adaptable spaces for congregational and community life, and a base for our outreach with the message of God’s love to our neighbours and friends in and around Selkirk.

From your responses so far, there seems to be a shared feeling that we should:

- *improve and extend the kitchen and food storage areas*
- *provide more flexible spaces for a wider range of activities*
- *make the church entrance more open and welcoming (especially for visitors)*
- *improve accessibility for disabled and wheelchair users*
- *improve storage*
- *develop the front garden area*

Within the worship area, we should:

- *improve the lighting and audio-visual equipment*
- *provide more comfortable and flexible seating*
- *adapt the space to make it more flexible for different uses, including both traditional and alternative forms of worship.*

We will also need to consider the best way to provide comfortable and efficient heating, and to ensure that the fabric of the building is maintained in good condition.

Continued on page 13

Continued from page 12

What happens now? We have some ideas about different ways to address these issues, but we need to engage some professionals – for example, an architect and energy adviser – to advise us and carry out an “options appraisal” to provide us with sketches and plans of a wide range of options that we can then display and discuss more fully, giving everyone a chance to share their views.

All this will take some time, but in the meantime, please continue to share your thoughts and ideas with the “Building the Future” group (David Bethune, Andrew Laing, Jack Peers and Elissa Jones). We look forward to hearing from you and are happy to meet with individuals or groups to hear your ideas.

And, importantly, please pray for God’s guidance for all of us as we explore ideas and start to move forward.

Building the Future Group

---



## St John’s Memory Café

Enhancing the well-being  
of people living with dementia  
in Selkirk & the Valleys



**1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month in St John’s church 2 pm - 3.30 pm**

Our café provides a safe supportive place  
where people with memory loss and their care givers  
can connect, learn and engage with others.

To find out more, please contact Mrs Chris Sharpe (20546)  
or Mrs Heather Sceats (77027)



This work is supported with funding from the Life Changes Trust.  
The Trust is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund.

## Sweet Sounds in Wild Places



The past 18 months has been a challenging time for many people, and even although some things are returning to normal, some of us are left with feelings of loneliness, isolation and anxiety that can make it difficult to re-connect with our usual activities, social circles or with the places where we live and work.

'Sweet Sounds in Wild Places' is a series of free creative workshops open to anyone 18+ and identifying as female. This new community project, led by artists from Scottish Opera, uses music, creative writing, film and photography to empower you; helping to build your creative skills as well as increasing self-confidence and self-expression.

If you're interested in learning more about any of the art forms involved – even if you haven't tried them before – and are keen to meet others who share similar interests, experiences and concerns in a supportive and friendly environment, please come and join us! You can attend workshops in either Hawick (2-4pm) or Galashiels (6-8pm) on Mondays from 27 September to 15 November.

For more information on the workshops and how to sign up (deadline of Friday, 17 September 2021), please go to the Liveborders website at ➔ <https://tinyurl.com/SweetPlaces>

### **Tomorrow**

*Do not worry about tomorrow,  
said the Lord.  
Love drives out fear, said the Lord.*

*I think I understand.  
So today I reach into his good earth  
and I sow  
A little kindness here,  
A little gentleness there  
and all and everywhere grace.  
And as the soil closes over them,  
I know that tomorrow will contain  
their sacred fruit,  
And I worry no more.*

*From Tearfund Prayer Diary*



Anyone can have an outing on the Selkirk trishaw by booking a ride on 07849 451676.

Church members who have enjoyed a ride said:

*“great to see parts of the Haining that are too far for me to walk”*

*“very grateful to the volunteers for making it such fun and being such good company”*

*“It was good. I just had a short ride up the High Street.”*

*“Remember to belt up!”*

## Notes from Kirk Session

### From June and August meetings:

- Moira Mitchell was welcomed as a new elder.
- 2 new church members will be welcomed on 3<sup>rd</sup> October.
- Heather Carroll was welcomed to the post of Pastoral Assistant.
- Wednesday services have restarted, every week at 11 am in the hall.
- Coffee after the Sunday service has restarted.
- Issues concerning openness, communication and inclusion within the Kirk Session were discussed.
- Minutes of Kirk Session meetings are now available on the website, [selkirkparish.church/publications/](http://selkirkparish.church/publications/)



## Notes from Congregational Board

Meetings continue to be by Zoom or telephone. Items of note from the August meeting are:

- **Flowers in church:** the way forward is still to be agreed. Thanks to Maisie for her long service in this role.
- **Garden:** volunteers to clear the banking in the back garden, please contact David Bethune.
- **Property:** the Quinquennial inspection is due. Volunteers to help paint window frames, please contact Andrew Laing.
- **COVID:** changes to social distancing in church premises were agreed, tea and coffee is now allowed after the service and the hall can be hired by external organisations - all to comply with updated Risk Assessment. Andrew Laing was thanked for his work in this.
- **Vacancies:** there are 2 vacancies on the Board for members of the congregation.

## Bereavements

### Selkirk

May 26	Mary Pringle 11 South Port	24	Jim Newlands 5 Mavis Bank
June 9	Bobby Watt Cornmill Court Galashiels	26	Jack Wood Cedar Lodge, Goslawdales
July 19	Hetty Sutton Thornfield House	Aug. 26	Betty Harkness 23 Heatherlie Park

The records on this page are as up-to-date as possible. We apologise for any omissions that may have occurred.

**Minister:**

Rev. Margaret Steele  
 1 Loanside, Selkirk, TD7 4DJ  
 Tel: 01750 23308  
 MSteele@churchofscotland.org.uk

**Pastoral Assistant:**

Heather Carroll  
 Tel: 01750 62240 or  
 07871 642843  
 hcis@gmx.co.uk

**Joint Session Clerk:**

David Bethune  
 Tel: 21703, david@dbethune.com  
 Fiona Corbett  
 Tel: 22687, fiona.m.corbett@live.co.uk

**Treasurer:**

Lynda McCraw Tel: 21971  
 mrs\_houseproud@yahoo.co.uk

**Children and Families Worker:**

John Moley  
 Tel: 07753 341605  
 cfw@selkirkparish.church

**Property Convener:**

Andrew Laing, Tel: 21210

**Cleaner:** Carole Neilson**Hird Editor:**

Anne Bethune, Tel: 21703  
 anne@dbethune.com

**Church Administrator:**

Wilma Groenewald Office Hours: Wed – Fri, 10–12 noon  
 Tel: 20078 office@selkirkparish.church

## Selkirk



## Ashkirk

**Session Clerk:**

Marjory Dooley,  
 Castanea, The Woll, Ashkirk  
 Tel: 01750 32710  
 marjory.dooley@yahoo.co.uk

**Treasurer:**

Harry Dooley,  
 Castanea, The Woll, Ashkirk  
 Tel: 01750 32710  
 hddooley@yahoo.co.uk

Items for the **December** issue of The Hird should be with the editor by **21st November**<sub>16</sub>