



## Chalmers Memorial Church Newsletter Autumn 2023



**For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.  
Romans 12: 4-5**

**The Manse, August 2023**

Dear Friends,

If you've been at worship recently, you'll know that we've been spending time in the company of the Old Testament figure of Abraham. You'll find his story in the book of Genesis from chapter 12. Abraham was, of course, a man on a journey. Ever had it been so for Abraham and his family. They were nomads. They'd never lived in the bright lights. Instead, they've spent their days in the countryside nurturing their flocks and living in tents that could be moved as needed when new pastures were required.

However, not even Abraham knows what lies ahead when God calls him to travel to a land which he will show him. His final destination is still hidden at that point. What sustains him, however, is a promise... a promise that God will keep his promise! In theological terms, we call that a Covenant – an agreement which God reaches with his people in which he assures them of faithfulness as they walk in his steps.

Mostly Abraham does that just fine, except (as the old saying goes) when he doesn't!!! Like most of us he's prone to taking matters into his own hands when the voice of God seems silent. When the plans don't emerge quickly enough, Abraham has a tendency to "fill in the gaps" in what he perceives as God's inactivity. Even when God has promised him an heir, Abraham still has a child with Hagar (his wife Sarah's servant), a son called Ishmael. Perhaps Ishmael is the Son, Abraham wonders, that God gives him... until God reminds him that another Son will be born, this time to Sarah – a son they are to name as Isaac.

Walking with God can often bring us to that borderline where, in frustration, we start to try and do God's work for him. Equally, we might expect that God would somehow, like a genie producing three wishes, fulfil his promises in an instant...

Neither approach is right. Instead, God promises to be with us. But we are part of what he does. In a special and unique way, we are called to partner God in his work in the world. And, sometimes, that means allowing new things to happen and being patient to allow it to be so.

I believe that God is working amongst us at the moment. Yes, there are changes afoot, huge and sometimes unsettling changes. In due course we will be asked to make decisions to begin creating something new as a church and our faith will be tested. We might even feel a little unnerved - which is wholly understandable.

However, God promises us that he keeps his promises!

We sang the hymn recently at Church and its words bear repeating again: *"Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father, there is no shadow of turning with thee; thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not, as thou hast been thou forever wilt be!"*

Your friend and Minister  
Robin Allison (Rev)

### Our Minister

Rev Robin N Allison

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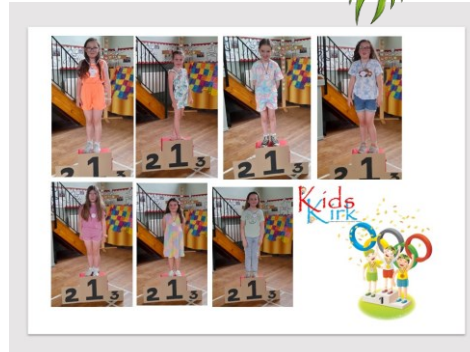




## Children and Youth News

The **Bible Olympic Games** closing ceremony at **Kids Kirk** in June was a great time for families and friends to see what happened over the year. Each child received a medal, standing on the podium, filled with pride.

The team have had a rest over the summer and are refreshed and ready for our new session. We return on **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September**. This year we are running **Streetwise**, a trip down Luke Street, where we will explore stories from Luke's Gospel.



**Kids Kirk** meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month (as advertised) 10am – 12noon in Chalmers Church Hall.

Please contact Sheila to book a space or request further information.

<https://www.facebook.com/chalmersmemorial> or text - 07980 059 974.

God Bless. *Sheila & Amanda*

### Session Section

The Joint Churches Steering Group, tasked with preparing for the union of Chalmers Memorial and the Old Parish churches, have been in discussion since last November and reported progress to the Kirk Session and the congregation as we have moved forward. We are taking our time due to the care being taken over disposal of the Old Parish church buildings – currently at a consultation stage.

We are considering how the structure of the new congregation might look if we combine the resources and experiences of the committees and working groups of both parishes, as well as the regular activities we run. A presentation of a possible structure, with opportunity for discussion and questions and suggestions, will be held in our neighbouring Parish Church in Longniddry on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November. We hope this will answer any queries members will undoubtedly have and give an opportunity for them to identify where their personal knowledge, experiences, skills and interests might be offered and used for the benefit of the new congregation. More of that to come...

Meantime, by the time this Newsletter comes to you, all member households of both Chalmers and the Old Parish will have received an **Invitation** to a special **Coffee Morning** – on **Saturday 9th September 10am-12pm in Chalmers Church Hall** - which is being arranged for members and friends. The committee have been busy exploring possibilities of how some modifications might be made to our buildings so that it reflects the new start of our 'New Parish Church', retaining the worship atmosphere of the current building at Chalmers, but giving more flexibility and space to developing options for more contemporary use.

Members of the Steering Group have visited four nearby churches who have already made alterations to their buildings, and photos of these will be on display boards at the Coffee Morning - and on a screened slide show - showing how they have created more modern and flexible spaces related to *their* individual needs. **THIS WILL BE YOUR CHANCE TO SEE POSSIBILITIES AVAILABLE and COMMENT** on what **YOU** think may be desirable and helpful in our own worship space – and indeed in the rest of our premises.

Please note that no professional advice has been sought so far other than on feasibility issues to confirm some options may indeed be open to us. All the Steering Group have been doing currently is **FACT FINDING**. They are presenting information to the two Kirk Sessions of both churches – **and to you all** – so that, after discussion and consultation, proposals can be brought for approval by the new congregation.

We hope you will join us as we give you the opportunity to find out some facts for yourselves to help make those decisions when that time comes.

Mary Gordon, Session Clerk

### Baptisms

Sunday Eloise Gibbins, infant daughter of Sam Gibbins and Brooke Skinner, Wallyford on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2023

### Funerals since last newsletter

Peter Horne, Haddington (formerly Cockenzie), funeral 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Isabel Weaver, Port Seton, funeral 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Brian Currie, Port Seton, funeral 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023

David Ramsay, North Queensferry (formerly Prestonpans/Cockenzie) funeral 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Brett Hobbs, Port Seton, funeral 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023

### Stewardship Committee

By the time you read this we will have held our Annual Sale on the 26<sup>th</sup> August. In anticipation of a successful afternoon, we would like to thank all those who donated their time to help to make for a fun afternoon, those who provided the items for sale and, of course, all those of you who came along and spent your money. **To date the amount raised is £740.**

The Committee have designated **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October** as our “**Day of Giving**”, another annual event. Members will receive a letter of explanation. This year the repair of the weathervane/steeple is the item for which we need to raise funds. As in the past 10% of whatever we raise will be donated to a charity; this year we propose the John Bellany Day Centre.

Those behind the organisation of “CAMEO” (Come Along And Meet Others) are looking to start the Thursday afternoon sessions soon. Much thought has been given to improving the publicity. The afternoon will be open to anyone who wants to come along for tea or coffee and a chat, but we are keen to attract people from the wider community, for example parents collecting their children from school.

Another date for your diary:  
**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November** at  
**7.00pm Quiz Night** with Tom Gordon asking the questions.



### Thanks

*Maggie Ross* would like to thank everyone for the lovely cards flowers and gifts she received on her 99th birthday. They were all much appreciated, she had a lovely day.

*David Weaver* would like to thank church members for their grateful support, prayers and thoughts during Isabel's illness and funeral.

*Alison McNeish* would like to thank everyone for their kind thoughts during her recent illness.

Thank you to everyone who knitted teddies and blankets for SIMBA's memory boxes. If you still have any teddies or blankets to hand in can please pass to Anne Sutherland.

## *Stepping Stones* – Chalmers' Bereavement Support programmes

Following the first post-Covid *Stepping Stones* bereavement programme in the early part of this year, we have decided to have a second one this Autumn.

This will begin on **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7pm in the Port Seton Community Centre** and will run for six weeks. There are leaflets in the church if you need more information.

Our support programmes are offered to anyone in the church and community who needs to explore aspects of grief and loss following a bereavement. We do so as a group, guided by a trained and experienced team, as we share with and learn from each other. We'll explore our feelings, look at how bereavement affects our physical, mental and spiritual health, how we deal with the practical aspects of loss, and what the future might hold for us. For some of the sessions, we'll be joined by an experienced resource-person in the specific area we'll be looking at.

The programmes are best suited to people who are a few months into their bereavement, but they're not confined to a particular stage of loss. There's no formal registration, but it's useful for us to know who might be intending to come, So, if you could let us know at [steppingstones.mail@gmail.com](mailto:steppingstones.mail@gmail.com), that would be great.

Tom Gordon, *Stepping Stones* coordinator.



**Sunday**

10:00am - All-age Worship (in Hall, led by the worship team)  
 11.00am - Morning Worship

**Monday**

2.30pm - Guild (1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the Month) (Oct-March)  
 6-8.30pm - Beavers and Cubs

**Tuesday**

10.00am - Chalmers Walking Group  
 2.00-3.30pm - Chest, Heart and Stroke Group  
 (every second week)  
 6.00-7.30pm - Brownies  
 7.00pm - Prayer Meeting (on zoom)  
 8.00-10pm - AA Group

**Wednesday**

10.30am - Chalmers Crafters (1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of month)  
 10am - 12 - Coffee and Chat (Last of month)  
 1.30-3.00pm - Indoor Kurling (1<sup>st</sup> and Last of month)  
 1.30-3.00pm - Get Together (2<sup>nd</sup> of month)  
 5.00-6.15pm - Rainbows

**Thursday**

1.30-4.00pm - Come and Meet Each Other (CAMEO)  
 (during school term)  
 6.00-8.00pm - Brownies

**Friday**

9.30-10.15am - Stretch and Strength Exercise Class  
 10.30am-2pm - AA Group  
 10.45-11.45 am - Keep fit class.

**Saturday**

10.00am-12 noon - Kids Kirk (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of month)

**OUR WORSHIP**

**Rev Robin Allison will conduct worship unless otherwise stated.**

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September**

10.00am All-Age Worship – Ian Bulloch  
 11.00am Morning Worship

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September**

10.00am All-Age Worship – Amanda Johnston  
 11.00am Morning Worship

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September**

10.30am Joint Service with local churches  
 (Marathon Sunday)

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October**

10.00am All-Age Worship – George Smith  
 11.00am Morning Worship – Harvest Service

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October – Day of Giving**

10.00am All-Age Worship – Rev Robin Allison  
 11.00am Morning Worship

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October**

10.00am All-Age Worship – Tom Gordon  
 11.00am Morning Worship

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> October**

10.00am All-Age Worship – Mary Gordon  
 11.15am Morning Worship – Ian Bulloch

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October**

10.00am All-Age Worship – Colin Sutherland  
 11.00am Morning Worship

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November**

10.00am All-Age Worship – Ian Bulloch  
 11.00am Morning Worship

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November**

10.50am Service at War Memorial  
 11.30am Remembrance Service

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November**

10.00am All-Age Worship – Amanda Johnston  
 11.00am Morning Worship

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> November**

10.00am All-Age Worship – Tom Gordon  
 11.00am Morning Worship

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**

10.00am All-Age Worship – George Smith  
 11.00am Morning Worship

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December**

10.00am All-Age Worship – Rev Robin Allison  
 11.00am Morning Worship

**MINISTER**

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**SESSION CLERK**

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**ORGANIST**

Mr Bob Glover  
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VACANCY  
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**SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR**

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Please recycle this newsletter and care for the earth as God intended.