



Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105

Annual Report

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF NEWHAVEN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

2021

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A Word from the Minister

Dear Friends

I've spent some time thinking about the year that has passed and all the challenges we have faced, especially with regard to Covid. All of us I'm sure have been waiting for the day when things can return to normal. Upon reflection, I was reminded of something we witness in the pages of the New Testament, especially in some of the earlier writings of Paul, and that is the imminent return of Christ.

For example, in Romans 8: 18-19 we read: *I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God.*

Again, in 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-17 we read: *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of heaven's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever.*

It is clear from these writings, and others, that people believed it wouldn't take long for Christ to return, that those who

penned such letters and those who received them would still be alive when Christ returned.

However, after a time, when it became obvious that what they thought was going to happen imminently wasn't likely to happen in their lifetimes the theme faded from view somewhat.

Did they despair? Did they give up hope?

The answer to these questions is 'no'. Instead, someone like the apostle Paul encouraged people to live out their faith by imitating Christ (Phil. 2:1-11). He encouraged them to persevere, to care for

each other, to carry out the good works that God had called them to, and to build their relationships and make them strong. Put another way, he called them to live with hope in their hearts that one day Christ would return to take them to be with him but until such time encouraged them to live day by day doing the

things that Christ had called them to, living their lives in the love of Christ and serving one another with joy.

Perhaps they also realised something: namely, that if they were looking for the kingdom of God, they might have been looking in the wrong place; that instead of gazing heavenwards they should have been looking at the earth and instead of simply waiting for God to act, God wanted them to do the work, to get on with it, and not for God's sake but for the works' own sake.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian and anti-Nazi martyr who was arrested and executed for his role in a plot



against Adolf Hitler wrote letters to a friend, Eberhard Bethge, whilst in prison. In one of his letters he wrote these words: "God would have us know that we must live as men who manage our lives without Him... Before God and with God we live without God."

At first glance, his words may seem to make little sense but what Bonhoeffer was encouraging his friend to see, in a nutshell, was doing good for its own sake not because God demands it, that true faith was not about belief but action, something done not simply an idea held in the mind.

Personally, I believe this is what Christ encouraged in those who followed him, that the things of God's kingdom would not simply be an additional extra in peoples lives but become a genuine part, the foundation of their being and existence.

I write this because I'm pleased to say that despite the many challenges we have faced, the things of God's kingdom have not been absent in Newhaven Parish Church and we haven't simply waited despairingly for things to get better. I am immensely proud and encouraged by the way people have dealt with the issues we have faced and the spirit in which they've been dealt with. I am also immensely proud and encouraged by the generosity of those within our congregation, whether in terms of giving financially or giving of their time and talents. Considering the restrictions in terms of our activities we have done extremely well.



I would like to thank the congregation for their attitude and their willingness to get stuck in with the things that have needed to be done and the cheerfulness with which the tasks of our church were carried out.

I would also like to say thank you to our Session Clerk, John Hodge, and the Kirk Session for leading us not only with great wisdom but also with humility and humour and enthusiasm that is a joy to witness and be a part of. I am a great believer in people being able to exercise the gifts and talents God has given them and it's especially good to see when those gifts and talents are used for the benefit of the Body of Christ.

I would like to thank Jen Robertson and the praise band for leading us so wonderfully well in our worship services and in functions like our annual Ceilidh. Personally, having Jen lead us in worship is a source of great support for me as Jen is wonderfully gifted and her "can do" attitude is very helpful indeed.

As all of you know Cassie Abousamak left us after six years as our Youth Worker and Sandra Edwards has taken over that role. It's been good to be able to welcome Sandy, as she is known, as part of our body at Newhaven and we are looking forward to working with her as she carries out her ministry which she feels strongly called to.

Furthermore, in terms of thank yous, there are so many people who have given of their time, effort, energy, and enthusiasm to ensuring that the people of Newhaven are served well and in and through the love of God. There

are many activities that take place during the week and it is great to see what God has blessed us with being used and enjoyed by people from many different walks of life. To Sandra Lindsay, and her staff and volunteers at Newhaven Connections Café, thank you for all you do for so many people who come through the doors of the café. I have been told on numerous occasions, and have read a number of comments in books and on websites, how warm and friendly those who serve in the café are and how good and inexpensive the food is. There have been numerous challenges you have faced but your faith and trust in God's presence has never wavered.

As most of you will or, hopefully, should know by now the Presbytery Plan is being implemented across the Church of Scotland. This was a plan that came down from the General Assembly which is seeking to reduce the number of presbyteries as well as ministers, and seeking a new form of ministry and mission to be taken forward. We (Newhaven Parish Church) have been grouped with North Leith Parish Church and South Leith Parish Church with the plan being, in time, to be one body.



As I write this report, representatives from the three churches have met on a number of occasions to simply get to know one another better and to plan for joint services in the future. Our Session has also met to ensure we are all on the same page and we plan on keeping the congregation up to date and informed as to where we are at. All of us know that any form of change can be a difficult thing and can also be fraught with all sorts of assumptions and, indeed, challenges. Bearing this in mind, the Session of Newhaven Parish Church have committed to working through the Presbytery Plan, and with the other churches, with positivity and enthusiasm, all the while seeking to discover the "fingerprints of God" in the task that lies ahead. We believe it is imperative to build strong, good, and loving relationships with our brothers and sisters from these churches in order that we might serve God and one another in love and with honour. We also believe it is important to be open to the opportunities to serve one another and our communities that God might be presenting us with.

In terms of this, I think of a number of instances in scripture where the people of Israel were challenged with change, often of monumental proportions. For example, I think of the Israelites in Exodus leaving Egypt and journeying to the Promised Land. I think of the destruction of both the first and second Temples in Jerusalem and how for a time God's dwelling place was no more. I think especially of the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD where the Romans turned Jerusalem and the Temple into rubble and how the religion of the people had to adapt from being a faith tied to the Temple to a faith of the Word. I also think of the disciples and followers of Jesus after Jesus had left them and was no longer with them in any physical capacity. The challenges they faced must have been daunting, yet with the leading of God's Spirit in the hearts of a handful of men and women the good news of Jesus spread far and wide and

even through immensely punishing and difficult times blessed them with hope and a deep sense of joy. I think we need to bear this in mind as I believe God will lead us and mould us and shape us if we keep our eyes focused on Jesus and internalise the things of God's kingdom, so that they simply become a natural part of who we are, as individuals and as part of the Body of Christ.



Finally, I was standing at the doors between the sanctuary and the café area after one of our services and, although some people were ordering tea and coffee, many were still in the sanctuary chatting away. It was wonderful to witness but I jokingly made a remark to someone along the lines of "I could be here the whole

day" and the person remarked in reply, "it's a happy church."

I reflected upon what the person had said for a second and agreed. It is this happiness and warmth, along with many gifts and talents, that I believe we can bring to the gathering of a wider church.

May God bless the people of Newhaven Parish Church and lead us and guide us into God's future for us and may we listen attentively to and for God's voice. It has been, and is, a great joy to be your minister.

With much love

Peter

Rev. Peter Bluett



Report from the Kirk Session

This has been a bit of a roller coaster year with the relaxation and then tightening of the rules on what we could do. When we had to observe 2 metre social distancing it meant that the maximum number we could accommodate at church was only about 25 to 30. When it came to 1 metre distancing then we were able to have a much larger number and so far we have never had to turn anyone away. But it was not all negative. We had two wonderful services in the Park Road park for Cassie's farewell and also for Back to School with God. There were between 80 and 100 at both these services and we were also able to provide after church refreshments. A lot of work by a lot of people went into making these events happen and we are most grateful to all who made it possible. We are also grateful to the local residents and the committee of the park for giving us permission to use it which made such a difference in allowing such a large group to gather in safety.

One of the major items in the year was the beginning of discussions in connection with the new presbytery plan. Initially we were teamed up with Wardie and Inverleith St Serfs, and Peter, Heather Robertson and Colin MacNeill represented us in the discussions. They proved interesting and worthwhile but in the end it was felt that our real links were with the Leith Churches and this was made known to the Presbytery. Therefore it was no surprise when in the draft Presbytery plan we were linked to North Leith and South Leith (see Peter's report above).

For most of the year Session meetings were held on Zoom. If we had not had Zoom it is difficult to think how we would have coped over the last 2 years.



Cassie's time with us came to an end in July. At her farewell service we made a presentation to her and donations from the congregation enabled a cheque for £750 to be handed over as well as other tangible gifts. She achieved a lot especially during lockdown when she supported the young people at home and devised all sorts of ways to enable us to continue our children's and youth work during the pandemic. It is unusual to have a youth worker for 6 years and we are grateful to her for giving us that time. This has enabled a foundation to be laid for our work with young people. It was essential that the work continued and therefore we were very glad, with only a small gap, to be able to appoint Sandy Edwards as her successor on a thirty hour a week contract. Unfortunately Go for It funding is no longer available but due to the generosity of members we are able to fund the 30 hours from our own resources. Sandy has made a great start and we are keen to take the work with the young people forward. We wish Cassie well in resuming her teaching career.

The young folk suggested a pet blessing service. While some of us felt that this sounded like something from the Vicar of Dibley, it proved to be a really good time and was much appreciated by all who attended. It was also good to have different people participating.

One other high light was the dedication of the artwork by Milena Folta-Banaszkiewicz. This is designed in the style of a stained glass window and has been much appreciated. We are fortunate in having such talent available in the congregation.

A new contemplative prayer group was started up by Lesley-Anne Weir in the summer and was found to be very meaningful by those who attended.

After last year's on line Ceilidh we had an in person ceilidh in aid of Kampi. We raised £1,126. It was a ceilidh without dancing but all those attending did not seem disappointed and there were all the usual contributions by the talented folk we have in the congregation.

As we look ahead to the new year, we are going to have to work out what the new presbytery plan means for our congregation. However I am sure that God has a purpose for us at Newhaven and having come through the challenges of the pandemic with His leading and support, we can confidently face the new challenges knowing that He is our rock and strength and salvation.

John Hodge
Session Clerk



Milena Folta-Banaszkiewicz with her artwork depicting Christ's baptism and the descent of the Holy Spirit, dedicated at the all-age service on Sunday 5th December 2021.

Roll Keeper's Report

A Statistical Return is required to be sent to the Church of Scotland at the end of each calendar year. It is a sort of annual census and it helps to provide a national overview of the make-up of the Church of Scotland.

"Joining the Church" has become a more flexible term in recent years and many people no longer see the need to make such a public commitment. However, it is not so much a commitment to the Church as making a commitment to Christ - professing faith in Christ and being part of the life and work of His Church at Newhaven.

If you would like more information on what 'membership' means and involves, please speak to the Minister or the Session Clerk.

Statistical Return as at 31st December 2021

Opening Roll:	141
Added by Profession: 0	Removed by Death: 4
Added by Resolution: 0	Removed by Certificate: 2
Added by Certificate: 0	Removed by Resolution: 0
Closing Roll:	135

Elaine Greig

Finance and Stewardship

Once again we have managed, with God's help, to get through another challenging year. Restrictions due to the Covid pandemic affected all aspects of our activities at Newhaven Church, to a greater or lesser extent.

However, I am delighted to advise our congregation that over the course of the year we managed to generate a surplus of £19,209 and also increase our closing bank balance. We are indeed blessed to have the financial security which many of our fellow churches do not enjoy.

My sincere thanks go to all those in our congregation who give of their time, talent and of course money. Volunteering for tasks, both large and small, can be extremely rewarding and is an essential ingredient in the wellbeing of our Church. I am pleased to report that Offerings were maintained at £56,600 in line with the previous year. More people have made their contribution by regular standing order / direct debit, often allowing for Gift Aid which is greatly appreciated.

Alister masterminds our Gift Aid claims to H.M.R.C. which ensures prompt payment of the monies we are due. For 2021, a total of £17,268 in respect of Offerings and Youth Worker donations has been received. This is a significant element of our finances and we are indebted to Alister for his diligence in this key area.

The 2021 Trustees' Report and Annual Accounts will be issued in March and will, at some future date, be the subject of a congregational meeting. Highlights include :-

- Surplus for the year of £19,209
- Increase in Bank balances of £10,999, to close at £101,305
- Increase in the market value of our Investments of £8,604 to close at £100,625
- Youth Worker fund being in line with expectations at £27,674

Our largest Outreach activity, the Café, was again adversely affected by necessary closures. However, in the months when it was able to operate on a fairly normal basis the financial performance was encouraging.

As with many churches, our building requires expenditure to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. We have again been fortunate to be able to draw upon approved funds held on our behalf by the Church of Scotland to greatly minimise the impact of costs, such as lighting works, incurred in the year. Unfortunately, these funds are nearly exhausted.

I am indebted to Alister for all that he does so well in his proactive role as Treasurer, and also to Sandra who not only successfully manages the Cafe but handles all associated book keeping and banking. Their contribution is invaluable.

These last two years have been very difficult but we remain in a good place financially. We can look to the

future with hope, and thank God that we may be able to fully support all aspects of worship and activity within our Church.

If you have any queries about any elements of our finances, or would like to understand more about standing order / direct debit Offerings and Gift Aid, please feel free to speak to either Alister or myself, or

contact us directly by email -

Graeme Taylor, Finance Convenor
graemetaylor00@hotmail.com

Alister Greig, Treasurer
bowtow@btinternet.com

Graeme Taylor



Fabric Report

Wind and weather are uninterested in the conditions and restrictions imposed as a result of the public health emergency wrought by the spread of Covid-19. Notwithstanding the lower footfall within the church buildings over the last year, the maintenance requirements of the church estate remain undiminished. A glance at the list of fabric issues completed in 2021, and early 2022, demonstrates that it has been a busy year.

It was a relief finally to see the completion, in June, of the protracted process of replacing the old, and defective, emergency lights with a new LED installation. The new lights have blended in well with the remaining fittings throughout the building. Of course, we hope never to see them illuminated in their emergency settings, but it is a relief to know that they are there (and that they work).

On the subject of fire safety the Session Clerk and Fabric Convener recently undertook a fire risk assessment of the premises. While, to a substantial degree, the fire precautions are thought to be of an appropriate standard, the practicality of holding occasional fire drills now requires consideration.

In July the decking in the garden, whose condition had long given cause for concern, was removed. Plans to remove the large (and ailing) ash tree at the back have hitherto been met with firm resistance from the local authority.

Once again, routine inspections of the fire and intruder alarms, and the gas boiler, have been conducted through the year in accordance with existing contractual arrangements. The fire extinguishers have been tested to current fire safety standards. A blocked drain under the old caretaker's lodge was successfully cleared. The church also continues to be inspected quarterly for the purposes of pest control. There is little evidence that the local mice have been on manoeuvres this year, which will be a source of gratification to some.

Beyond routine and necessary maintenance (including attention to the Manse, gutters, downpipes, the roof over the caretaker's lodge, and the side wall to the right of the entrance path) future planning for improvements has to recognize the potential ramifications of the implementation of the Presbytery Plan. The Committee does, however, hope that resources can be found to landscape the space left behind by the decking, at least to a basic degree, in order to create a more attractive and usable space for the months of inevitable sunshine which lie ahead.

Robert Weir

Jeanette Meek

Brian Souness



Communications Group

It has been a quiet year for the Communications Group, although the members, Elaine Greig and Lesley-Anne Weir, have met regularly throughout the year. Many thanks go to Elaine for her dedicated service to Newhaven Church as Editor of the Harbour Lights Newsletter. This publication has been particularly valuable during the ongoing pandemic as a means of helping members stay abreast of what has been going on in our Church community.

Many thanks also go to the Session Clerk, John Hodge, for his weekly updates, sent out by email/hand-delivery, which have allowed people to access the Church's various services in the manner which suits them best.

The maintenance of the website has been a particular challenge for the Group. We are indebted to Jen Robertson for faithfully posting Peter's sermons every

week. The website, however, needs to be overhauled and updated to reflect the current state of affairs at Newhaven. It has proved difficult to find someone who is able to take on this task. Peter has made contact with a website developer who is willing to take on the updating and maintenance of the website on a trial basis. The work has not yet started, but the Group is hopeful that this may provide a long-term solution. Of course, if there is anyone reading this report who has the necessary skills and feels called to offer their services the Group would be delighted to hear from them!

Anyone wishing to help with the website, or other aspects of the communications at Newhaven, should contact the Convener, Lesley-Anne, who would be happy to discuss volunteering opportunities.

Lesley-Anne Weir



www.n-c.org.uk



Pastoral Care

We commenced 2021 once again under lockdown restrictions and continued our pastoral team meetings virtually on 'Zoom'. Thankfully we were able to hold our last meeting of the year in person.

We continued our contact with folk by phone and fortunately were able to have face to face visits once again. We were also kept informed by our Elders, youth worker and members, of anyone who needed support and assistance during the year, responding with sensitivity and confidentiality.

2021 saw our church family experience loss in the passing of loved ones and friends. We pray for all who are grieving at this time. We extended our love and support to those who suffered ill health, underwent surgery, were hospitalised, and all who continue to live with pain and discomfort. We remember those who are housebound, and in residential care. Thankfully, with the lifting of restrictions, visits to care homes were resumed.

We were all delighted to celebrate milestone birthdays and anniversaries - sending love and congratulations from our church family.

We send our thanks and appreciation to the Elders who distributed Christmas gifts to those in our congregation who were ill, housebound, those who faced difficulties throughout the year and others within our congregation. Christmas cards made by our young folk were given along with the gifts. Our thanks goes to them for these beautifully crafted cards.



Many thanks to our pastoral visitors for their continued care and support during the year.

It is a privilege for the team to provide pastoral care within our church family and community.

Should anyone wish to contact any member of the team our details are:

Peter Bluett - 467 5212
Heather Robertson - 552 2047
Linda Brunton-Bruce - 467 2199
Lesley-Anne Weir - 07486 440234
Liz Thomson - 554 9176

**Peter, Heather, Linda,
Lesley-Anne and Liz**

Mission and Outreach Group

To enable the people of God to be the people of God.

The Committee has not been so active in lockdown. It feels that it would benefit from new members and leadership. Anyone with an interest in outreach should speak to John Hodge.

At Easter time there was a combined meeting with the Worship group and various Easter activities were set up including a prayer walk round Newhaven. We are most grateful to Colin MacNeill for setting it up. In addition, Peter produced thoughts for Holy week and Richie Biggers interviewed folk on the topics. There was also a youth quiz and question time.

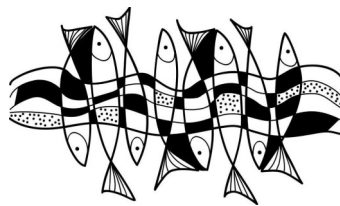
Cassie was always a stimulus for ideas of what we might do. Many of the new things were as a result of her suggestions. We are grateful to her for introducing new ideas and we look forward to working with Sandy in taking things forward.

We managed to revert to the usual programme of Christmas services but, perhaps not surprisingly in light of the huge rise in omicron cases, they were less well attended than usual. Alastair Sutherland helped organise the carol singing in Fishmarket Square which was well attended. Folk felt safer outside.

We are hoping to have another open air service in the Starbank Park for Easter.

The Committee comprise Alastair Sutherland, Brian Souness and John and Christine Hodge. We hope that Sandy Edwards will also join us.

John Hodge



Growth Groups

I am delighted to report that two groups have been able to restart after many months of waiting.

Covid restrictions had put a halt on the traditional 'in person' house group meetings. It was with a real sense of disappointment and loss that the small groups were put on hold. However, with restrictions lifting and people slowly getting back to some normality again, they are back!

They meet fortnightly at Jeanette Meek's home (Tuesday evenings) and Alastair and Irene Sutherland's (Thursday evenings). Both groups have limited spaces and will offer you a warm welcome. The book of Proverbs is being explored at Jeanette's and I John currently at the Sutherland's. If you are interested in finding out more, or would like to join, please speak to them directly or contact me on the number below.

In addition to house groups, the Wednesday evening Bible study continues weekly at 7.30pm, on Zoom. It was agreed that this meeting would stay on Zoom as it gives



folk an opportunity to have fellowship with others without having to get down to the church in an evening. There has been a steady group of around 8 or 10 people over the past year. They have been exploring a wide variety of Bible topics which have included the parables found in Matthew's Gospel, studies from Paul's letter to the Philippians, the book of Ezra and a Bible Society series on Advent. There is no limit to the number of spaces available and it's easy to join the group by simply clicking on the link included in the Session Clerk's weekly update. Please **do** consider joining a group if you would like to. Exploring different bits of the Bible, sharing fellowship and praying together (out loud or in silence) is a really rewarding way to spend an evening! It's a great way to encourage one another, ask questions and discover more about God's word and what he has in store.

John 6:33 -

*'For the bread of God is the bread
that comes down from heaven
and gives life to the world.'*

Lynn MacNeill
(0131 346 8293)

Youth and Children's Worker

It has been a privilege to work at the Newhaven Church. Since starting in October 2021 I have encountered a loving and caring community.

To begin with I spent time familiarising myself with the running of the church and organising the rooms where I work. Due to the Covid situation it was a challenging start that came with its own unique obstacles.

In November I attended an informative Mission Leadership weekend workshop. I had a nerve-racking experience being interviewed by pupils from Victoria Primary (Any adult who has been interviewed by a child knows what I mean!). We now wait for the covid rules to change so that we can go to the school and do various activities with the pupils.

In December I was delighted to be part of the Extravaganza, a wonderful community activity. Every Sunday in December I held a Christian Christmas activity i.e. relating the Christmas cracker to the Christmas story; Christmas carols; Nativity scene and Jesus's Birthday on Christmas Eve.

Keeping the board in the Lighthouse Room updated has been acknowledged through positive feedback from parents and children.

I continue to look forward to working, and being of assistance, in the Newhaven community in 2022.

Sandra Edwards

Sunday Groups

Little Lights

Due to Covid restrictions and the lack of children in this age group, there is nothing to report for 2021.

Jeanette Meek



Lighthouse

The second wave of Covid lockdown restrictions were challenging to all but perhaps it was most keenly felt by families with young children.

We continued to try all sorts of ways to have Lighthouse Group for children P1-P6. We had to think of new ways to stay in touch with families and share with them the Bible stories about God, the God who is with us in all circumstances, pandemics included.

We were blessed by new ways which connected us with families in our church, in our community and further afield. This was done via Zoom Sunday club, Lighthouse in the park and Lighthouse in the church garden.

We had a bumper start to the year with as many as 10 children (and their families sometimes appearing in the background) joining us for interactive bible stories, prayers, games, crafts and songs – all on Zoom!

As restrictions lifted and families could restart their local activities, weekly numbers roughly halved. Our first return to meetings was a hybrid, part indoors with masks and part outside. We were very thankful to God again for supplying us with all that we needed in terms of understanding risk assessments, creativity, and an



enthusiastic team of leaders who could bring along a smile and a warm welcome on cold/drizzly days.

The regular rota of leaders continued the club over the summer but we hope to be able to offer them a break in coming years and that there may be enough volunteers to allow this.

Our youth worker Cassie bid us a farewell in August 2021. We want to give thanks for her expertise, love and commitment to the work that she did in our midst and wish her well.

We are delighted that we have a new youth worker and welcome Sandy Edwards. We are excited that she has joined us in this part of God's ministry and the team look forward to working together with her.

Thank you for your support and continued prayers for this part of our church.

Lynn MacNeill

Youth Group

The Group experienced another year of changing circumstances in 2021. At the end of July, Cassie left us after 6 eventful and happy years as our Children's and Youth Worker. It was an emotional send off at her Farewell Service in the park on 1st August and Cassie left with thanks and fond memories from myself and all the teens that came through the Group during her time with us. However, in the summer Jamie Bruce agreed to help get involved with leading on a Sunday morning and in October we were delighted to welcome Sandy, the newly appointed Youth and Children's Worker as part of the Team! In the short time with us, Sandy has shown her caring side to quickly build relationships and brought her craft making skills to the fore (see below).

- ◆ Over the course of 2021, the Sunday Youth meetings went from being held remotely on Zoom, to outside in the garden at the rear of the Church to finally being able to meet again inside the church halls after the service from September. It was encouraging to see the teens adjust to the different restrictions and I am grateful to them for sticking with it!
- ◆ The Group has been small in number Sunday by Sunday but that hasn't stopped some meaningful discussions, laughter and just being able to share stories and build relationships with each other and God in a safe environment.
- ◆ During the Autumn, we were joined by four girls from Hong Kong, attending Trinity Academy, who had all left the challenges and uncertainties of home and moved to the UK with their families. It was good to be able to make the girls feel welcome and cared about but they now have challenges of a different kind adjusting to all the changes moving here brings. I think they found the discussions new and a bit difficult for them but we were able to offer the girls encouragement and prayer at the very least and hopefully show that whatever they face in life God cares for and loves them and they are important to Him and us.
- ◆ One of the year highlights for the Group was turning the idea of a Pet Blessing Service into reality and then planning and help lead the service on the day. Despite wondering how the different animals would get on together in close proximity in the Hall, God was with us and the service turned into a meaningful and blessed occasion!
- ◆ In the lead-up to Christmas, Sandy brought her craft-making to the fore and led a morning of Christmas card making that the teens enthusiastically took part in, the impressive finished results going out with the traditional gift to the elderly members of our Congregation.

Brian Souness



Toddlers

FROG - Fully Rely On God - is what we have done more than ever since the pandemic started with so many different restrictions and having to think out of the box!

We had hoped to start 2021 with 3 sessions on a Tuesday morning but like everything else Toddlers had to close yet again. It was a tough lockdown as it was winter and everyone felt far lonelier than the first lockdown when the weather was beautiful!

We tried to keep in touch with our families by email. It was lovely to receive some emails from our mums -

"It's been a hard time with continuing lockdown but we watch your songs and story every week and it really helps us keep some cheer!"

"We've read the book you gave my son for Christmas about a million times. And when we go out for a walk he often says 'this is like the greatest journey to see baby Jesus'. Clearly the book has had an impact." says one mum who doesn't go to church!

During March we discovered that we could meet together outside with 15 families. Thanks to the residents of Park Road Park and Victoria Primary, who let us have the park for 2 sessions every Tuesday morning till the end of June. Meeting outside was brilliant and everyone so appreciated it. We had only big toys, lots of footballs and bubbles which were great fun. We had so much space and it was lovely not to have to wear masks.

A big thank you to Dinah and Robert Dunlop who let us keep the chute and trampoline in their garage so we didn't have to transport them from the church each week.

Also a big thank you to the gentleman in Park Road who brought me a cup of tea between the two sessions we had.



September, and everything changed again, and it was great to be able to meet back in the hall. We tried a different way of serving snacks to keep everyone safe and this has worked well. Thanks to all our amazing helpers and families who have cleaned the toys and stayed socially distanced and obeyed all our rules! I don't think our toys have ever been so clean!

Thanks to God for His provision and for keeping us safe throughout.

Christine Hodge



Messy Church

During the pandemic we managed to continue Messy church - whether on zoom, or in the Park Road park or in the hall wearing masks.

Thanks to Cassie for keeping us up to date with the rules and regulations and for all the work she did providing a programme to follow no matter where we were.

We had obviously fewer families than before the pandemic but it was lovely to get to know people better when there were smaller numbers.

Christine Hodge



Farewell to Cassie from Messy Church!

Chatterboxes

Who would have thought that "Chatterboxes at home" would continue into 2021 but it did! The children received an envelope each fortnight with a comment and some crafts to make illustrating what we had been reading that week.

By the end of June we celebrated finishing Luke's diary with a party of sorts in the church garden with games, crafts and food. It was going to be the end of an era as some of the children were going to High school, one family was moving down south and there would only be one child left, so we talked on how we were all different but special to God, and how He was and would be with us in the next stage of life, wherever we were.

Both Lynn and I felt led by God to move Chatterboxes to the church in September as we still couldn't get into the schools. So a brand new Chatterboxes was started after school on a Monday, joining the two primary SU groups from Trinity and Victoria primaries, but with completely new children. Most of the children came because we met them and their parents at the Leith churches holiday club in the summer when we met in Park Road park.

September 2021 - We have now been joined by Evelyn Sinclair who has been a wonderful help and is now part of our team. One of us meets the children from each school and walks them to the hall. We have snack and chat together, play games and make crafts. We have serialised the Miracle Maker looking at "Who is this man Jesus?" and have just finished the DVD.



The children have really enjoyed it and have fully engaged in all that we have been doing. They have gradually got to know each other and the quieter ones are now really opening up and are full of chat too. It's wonderful to see God at work. Most of the children were at the Christmas Extravaganza and 5 out of the 8 will be coming to an SU weekend in February 2022. We have really felt God's presence with us in the new arrangements.

Christine Hodge

Leith Churches Holiday Club

We were very excited to be able to hold this in person after being online last year. **Jungle Adventure** (being outside) and finding out more about Jesus, was great fun!



Because of various Covid rules we decided, along with other SU holiday clubs in Scotland, to have it outside. Many thanks to the residents of Park Road park for allowing us the park for the week.

We had reduced numbers because of regulations but we had about 32 children from P1-6 and because we weren't allowed Teenage helpers we had a programme on four evenings for about 16 young people from P7 to Secondary Year 4.

We were blessed with wonderful weather - apart from the first morning when the weather surprised us with rain! We had a gazebo for each group and kept the children in groups so as to minimise mixing.

Thanks to the catering team from various churches who provide a packed lunch for leaders, children and their families each day. It was lovely to be able to chat to families in the sunshine at lunch time. It was truly a Leith Churches event with team members from different churches in Leith or who live in Leith.

We were delighted when 6 of the holiday club children came to our new Chatterboxes (Scripture Union) group in the church.

Christine Hodge

The Boys' Brigade

The 20th Leith Boys Brigade continued to be significantly disrupted by the coronavirus restrictions into 2021. Our Anchorboy (P1-P3) and Junior (P4-P6) sections were able to continue meeting on a combined basis in the first half of the year at Pollok Pavilion, the BB premises at Lethem Park. The younger boys were not subject to social distancing indoors so were able to meet there on Fridays up until the end of the term in May 2021.

The Company section (P7-S6) was subject to too many restrictions for meetings indoors to be viable, and the boys had not really enjoyed previous online sessions (feeding back that they were fed up doing things that way), so we did not repeat that as we suspected it would make boys more likely to leave than doing nothing at all. However, we were able to arrange a few games evenings at Park Road park in June. Unfortunately our S6 boys did not complete their Queen's Badges, in large part because of the Covid disruption.

We were able to recommence meetings in person in September 2021, in the church hall and with more or less normal activities. We lost a few boys but numbers across the Anchors and Juniors have increased from 7 to 12. Company section has 9 boys in total but weekly numbers have tended to be between 5 and 7, which is only just sustainable. However, we do have one boy on course to complete his Queen's Badge this year, and four others who have achieved their President's Badges and will work towards their Queen's Badges for next year.

Our staffing position remains extremely fragile. Andrew Gillies and Kieran Hudson lead the Anchorboys and Juniors with help from Jack Liddall. Cassie is no longer assisting after moving on from her role with the Church. Neil Bain continues to assist me in the Company section, but Keith Robertson has stepped back and is now only attending if required as cover. Any further reduction in staff capacity will put the company's continuation into serious doubt.

The younger sections retained the 6pm start time they had had at Pollok, so the Anchors now meet 6-7 and the Juniors 6-730. Company section still meets at 730 but now finishes at 930 rather than 10, largely because neither Neil nor I live near the church and the earlier finish time makes the evening less demanding. The boys seem content with the new timings.

Our financial position is relatively healthy all things considered, thanks in large part to generous donations from within the church after last year's annual report and to Heather Robertson's plant sales notwithstanding that we still couldn't have our usual coffee morning. We will hopefully be able to have a coffee morning again this year.

Charles Livingstone
Captain
20th Leith



Newhaven Connections Café

Once again this was a challenging year with COVID-19 lockdowns forcing us to close the café for several months. Also, there were frequent changes to the hospitality coronavirus rules, meaning we had to adapt our ways of working multiple times, including modifying spaces between tables, and limiting numbers of households meeting together. However, our volunteers and customers coped with all these changes brilliantly and we were happy to do whatever was needed to keep everyone safe and comfortable.

We were eventually able to open the café in late April and business started quietly, with customers gradually returning over the next few months. However, it was only really when regulations eased later in the year and groups such as Toddlers, The Haven and the Ageing-Well Dance Class were once again able to meet in the church hall that the café started to buzz again.

When restrictions on the number of households who could meet together were lifted we held an event for volunteers and staff to all get together for the first time since 2019. We enjoyed an Italian-themed evening at the café (socially distanced, of course) with excellent pizzas, Cornetto ice-cream cones (what else!!) and lots of fun. It was so good to celebrate being together as a whole team, to remember God's faithfulness and protection for all at the café, and to say thank you to our volunteers for their hard work and cheerful support.



Another highlight later in the year was being able to support the Service of Remembrance at Newhaven Harbour, for fishermen lost at sea. More than 20 people, including our local MP, came to the café directly after the service for hot drinks and bacon rolls to warm themselves up. We had to do some fast thinking and quickly set up extra tables in the church hall to accommodate the sudden influx of hungry customers, and it was great to welcome some new folk to the hidden gem that is Newhaven Connections.

In the autumn we were excited to take delivery of our colourful new café sign for the front gate (generously donated by some lovely friends – you know who you are!) and it quickly helped draw in more new customers for the first time. Then, just as things were looking up, the news of Omicron spreading across the country once again prompted a drop in customer numbers as more people made the understandable decision to stay at home. However, there were others for whom the café continued to be a regular place of sanctuary and support, and we were delighted to celebrate the season of Advent with them. As in previous years our Christmas pop-up stalls proved very popular, enabling customers to do a bit of Christmas shopping for handmade gifts made and sold locally.



So, in summary, a tricky year with many twists and turns in the road. One of the biggest challenges has been the increased fluidity of our volunteer team, with multiple changes taking place on a weekly basis, and an ongoing shortage of helpers. Through it all God has been faithful and has taught us much about relying on Him, and we continue to look to Him to provide the additional people we need as we head into 2022. Would you consider praying about whether God might be calling you to be part of the solution and join our happy volunteer team for a couple of hours every week, or every fortnight? Please do speak to Sandra or Andrea, in confidence, to find out more about what's on offer – we'd be delighted to hear from you!

Sandra Lindsay



The Haven

Like everything else, the Haven has been adversely affected by Covid-19. Being for the more senior members of our church and community, we have had to be particularly careful of how and when we re-opened.

With advice from John and Christine Hodge, we reopened a couple of months ago and whilst the numbers attending are down, due to covid, old age and the weather, we have been happy to welcome a few new members.

We are still providing art, dominoes and conversation for our members along with the monthly church service. We continue to work well with the café and many of our members continue afterwards for lunch in the café on a Wednesday. The Haven continues to provide a most valuable outlet for our members.

Elizabeth Munro

Running Club



The opportunities to run together in 2021 were limited, mainly due to injury, retirement, and commitments after church.

However, Robert and Jen both trained

during the week and ran in the Scottish half-marathon in September!

We would like to invite anybody keen to start running with the group to contact any of Jen, Robert, Brian or myself - though runs may be mid-week rather than a Sunday after church.

Shona Adam



Timothy

Timothy Masasi is doing well with his studies, in spite of an interruption due to the closure of his school during the pandemic.

He wrote on 14 January 2022 to acknowledge the card and money sent from Newhaven -

“Dear Jackie Souness and Friends,
How are you? I am fine here in Nyamira. I am back in school for third term. In May this year I will be promoted to Grade 6. I am enjoying the new education system called CBC. Corona is reducing and I pray every day that it goes away. Thank you for your Christmas wishes card. I wish you a blessed year 2022, and thank you very much for your help.”



A total of £560 was sent to Siloam Christian Ministries in December 2021. Books and clothes were given to Timothy as a Christmas gift from Newhaven Church (see photo) The bulk of the money goes towards Timothy's accommodation and education.

Thank you for saving your pennies and loose change, and for all other donations. These are much appreciated and help to make such a difference to this young man's opportunities in life.

Jackie Souness

Kampi

Newhaven Church gave its financial support to Kampi Ya Samaki Child Care Centre in Kenya for another year through 2021. There is positive progress to report, notably with the management team at Kajiado CCC taking a greater role in supporting and monitoring the Child Care Centre at Kampi. This is encouraging, but is sadly against the backdrop of continued high waters of Lake Baringo which have again flooded completely the original purpose-built site of the Child Care Centre on its shores.

For the time being, the Centre is in temporary accommodation (as it has been for nearly ten years...) in the grounds of the primary school in the village of Kampi. There is a possibility of a permanent new site for the Centre and we wait with hope for that to come to pass.

After a long break from March 2020 because of the COVID pandemic, the Centre opened to 16 primary school age children in January 2021. There are five staff in the school, led by Paul Kiptis, who himself benefitted from the love and care given to him at the Centre when he was a child.

2021 will also be remembered, however, for the year in which two key people in the history of Kampi and Kajiado passed away. Daniel Sapaiya contracted COVID in April 2021 and passed away after a short illness. Daniel had been involved in the Centre at Kajiado nearly all his

life and latterly was a regular visitor to Kampi, bringing equipment and encouragement from the larger organisation at Kajiado. Daniel was my guide when I visited Kampi and Kajiado in 2014. He was himself disabled and worked with Newhaven's own Georgie Orme at Kajiado, before taking over the running of Kajiado when Georgie left to set up the Centre at Kampi. Daniel visited Newhaven at least once, and members of the congregation may remember his visit to one of our Sunday morning services in Victoria Primary School in 2004/5, when our Church premises on Craighall Road were being redeveloped.

In December 2021, of course, Georgie herself passed away into the arms of God. Georgie had been working at Kajiado for many years when she was inspired to leave there and establish a centre at Kampi, many hours' drive north. We are blessed to have known her, to have been inspired by her faith and her love for the disabled children of rural Kenya, and we are privileged to be able to carry on supporting that work at Kampi Child Care Centre.

The staff of the Child Care Centre at Kampi are very grateful for the continuing love, prayers and financial support of the congregation of Newhaven Church.

Colin MacNeill



Georgie Orme with some of the children and staff of Kampi Child Care Centre, on the site which is currently submerged under the waters of Lake Baringo.

Presbytery Report

By the start of 2021, presbyters were well used to virtual meetings via Zoom webinars which, although not an ideal way to conduct business with around 200 participants, was really the safest option in a pandemic. The webinars continued throughout 2021, with the exception of our sixth and final meeting in December, which was felt to be of such significance, it was only fitting to hold it in person. The significance lay in the fact that this was to be the last meeting of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, prior to the imminent merger with the Presbytery of West Lothian on 1 January 2022.

I was able to be present at all six meetings last year, each one moderated by the minister of Morningside Parish Church, the Very Rev Dr Derek Browning, a previous Moderator of the General Assembly, who has significant experience in all protocols of Presbytery, and handled the meetings with admirable aplomb.

In last year's report I said that Presbytery meetings in 2020 were somewhat dominated by the preparations for the new ten-year Presbytery Plan. This was even truer of the meetings in 2021, as the deadline for the unveiling of the new plan grew ever closer. You will remember that cluster groups had been set up at the end of 2020, as a preparatory step towards getting congregations thinking through working together with their neighbours. The Newhaven representatives, of whom I was one, had three very cordial and informative meetings with representatives from Wardie and Inverleith St. Serf's. However it became clear to those of us from Newhaven that we did not belong in this grouping, and that our mission area lies conceptually northwards and eastwards, not westwards. I should add that those from Wardie and Inverleith St. Serf's saw the logic of this too. Accordingly our report to the Strategy Planning Group stated that we wished to be grouped with churches in Leith.

The Strategy Planning Group heeded our wish. When the draft plan was published in December 2021 we found we have been grouped with the congregations of North Leith and South Leith, and asked to work together towards forming a union, which would become a reality by the end of 2025. In the draft plan we have been allocated two Ministers of Word and Sacrament and an Ordained Local Minister (non-stipendiary minister). As far as church buildings are concerned, nothing is yet decided. It is up to our three congregations to figure out what will work best for the future. It is quite normal for human beings to resist change. This plan certainly spells change with a capital "C" but it also spells exciting opportunities. I believe God's hand can be seen at work in this radical re-shaping of the church in Edinburgh and beyond. And where God is at work we ought to be joining in!

A word about the Strategy Planning Group: a group of ministers and elders were asked to come up with a way of reducing the numbers of ministers in Edinburgh from 75 to 48 within tight time constraints – a huge ask. The work was demanding and stressful, particularly as twice a

spanner was thrown in the works, first by a decision of the General Assembly and then by a decision of the General Trustees, who have oversight of all church buildings in the city, and throughout Scotland. Both "spanners" caused a huge amount of extra work. Church committees normally get a break during the summer months, but not this group. Their meetings continued all summer in order to meet their deadline of having a draft plan by December. Their dedication to their enormous task was very impressive, as was the desire to honour God in all their deliberations.

Last year I mentioned Hugh McDiarmid and his significant responsibilities as Vice-Convener of the Deployment of Resources Committee (DRC). As the DRC has been working closely with the Strategy Planning Group, Hugh has had to attend a large number of meetings this past year. Not only that, he was asked to be one of a group of assessors of church buildings, to help compile an objective audit of the suitability of buildings for future mission. Hugh is now a member of the Deployment Group, the DRC replacement, for the Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian. Last year Peter was also asked by Presbytery to take on a new role in addition to his normal duties, that of Interim Moderator for Stockbridge Church, whose minister retired recently. Being an Interim Moderator always requires a good deal of time and commitment but even more so when the vacant church is facing a union, in this case with Inverleith St. Serf's. Please pray for Peter and Hugh as they shoulder their new responsibilities.

One item of Presbytery business in 2021, unrelated to the Presbytery Plan, which deserves a mention, was the vote at the November meeting. This was to do with the overture handed down to Presbyteries from the General Assembly, as to whether or not to allow ministers who wished to, to perform same sex marriages in church. As you can imagine this was highly contentious, and the debate was prolonged. In the end the vote was 97 to 42 in favour of permitting ministers, who so wished, to carry out these ceremonies.

I am aware that this is a longer report than usual, but for a good reason. We are living at a time of enormous upheaval for our national church. Every Presbytery in the country is facing major changes. It is important that we understand something of the background to inform our reaction to what is happening. God is doing a new thing. We are being asked to be open to where he is leading us, to forming new relationships with our neighbours and to exploring our mission field together.

Last year I closed my report by saying it was an interesting time to be your Presbytery Elder. How much more so this year!

As always I will be happy to try to answer any questions connected to Presbytery business.

Heather Robertson
Presbytery Elder

PRESBYTERY PLAN UPDATE

PRESBYTERY PLAN UPDATE January 2022

In the middle of December 2021 the Presbytery of Edinburgh issued to Kirk Sessions a 'Presbytery Plan, 2022 – 2025 Consultation' document.

A reminder of the context from the Presbytery Moderator

The Church is committed to operating more effectively and efficiently to ensure that it is properly equipped to deliver the Good News of Jesus Christ in a dynamic and sustainable way. At recent General Assemblies the whole church has been instructed to begin to draw up plans which will look at the future shape and number of ministries. All churches across the country are at the start of a four-year process to ensure that the best structures are in place to meet 21st century mission and ministry needs.

One of the objectives of the current Presbytery consultation is to ensure that congregations work more closely together in efficient and imaginative ways to serve local communities, and to find ways to make this happen. A planning strategy team has produced a consultation document for discussion, but no final decisions have been made and the details contained within the plan are subject to change.

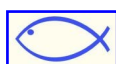
An agreed plan on the best way forward will evolve in due course and will be shaped by the feedback from churches within the Presbytery, as well as national church bodies that have responsibility for overall planning, and for buildings.

No final decisions about ministries or church buildings have been made, but this will play a part in future discussion this year.

In the meantime, the good work that Edinburgh churches are involved in to support the vulnerable and the marginalised and those with real pastoral need continues.

Across the country the whole Church of Scotland is facing similar challenges in planning, and the process is not an easy or straightforward one, but the ultimate goal, whatever Plan is finally agreed, is to ensure that the good work of the Church continues.

In this sensitive and unsettling time, please pray for your own congregation, your neighbouring congregations in the Presbytery, and the whole Church of Scotland. It will be together that we will, with God, find a way forward.



How the document's proposals affect us

The document emphasises the need for the Plan to be a Mission Plan founded on the challenge to the church to plan for growth and sustainability as we move to the future. We require to be creative and to be prepared to grasp opportunities to share the Good News in the

parishes we are called to serve. We also need to work together to share resources and skills.

You will recall that the 2021 General Assembly decreed that the numbers of ministry posts in the plan for Edinburgh had to reduce by the order of 40% from the previous plan. Recent work had divided the Presbytery into 18 Clusters of neighbouring parishes to discuss working together under the new plan.

The consultation document has reduced this number of clusters to 7 Mission Districts serving larger areas. In total 70 parishes will reduce to the order of 27. Our congregation is part of the North Mission District, which would consist of **4 new parishes** formed by unions of existing parishes:

1. Granton and Wardie
2. Inverleith St Serf's and Stockbridge
3. North Leith, South Leith and Newhaven
4. Leith St Andrew's, Pilrig St Paul's and St Margaret's Restalrig

The new parish would be served by a ministry team of 2 Full Time Ministers of Word and Sacrament plus an Ordained Local Minister. (Any locally funded posts would be in addition to that.)

It is important to note that, at this stage, no proposals have been made about buildings. This is because independent (from local office-bearers) audits of churches and halls are now taking place to enable decisions to be made based on both mission and soundness of fabric criteria.

Newhaven Kirk Session considered the plan after the joint Elders conference and are much encouraged by the positive attitude in all three churches to the proposals. Much has still to be worked out and the Kirk Session recognises that it will involve both opportunities and challenges. However we are encouraged to play our part in sustaining and enriching our mission to the folk in Newhaven and Leith.



What Next?

Presbytery held a (webinar) meeting to which 3 people from each church in the presbytery area were invited on Saturday 15 January. A number of presentations were made to give background on the process of producing the consultation document, to expand on some points, to answer questions, both pre-submitted and posed on the day, and to outline the timetable for the next steps (see below) to allow a near final version of the Plan to be presented to Presbytery in October 2022. The Plan has to be authorised by the national church Faith Nurture Forum and the General Trustees (with respect to buildings) with all this being finalised by the end of this year. Implementation then goes ahead

with completion by the end of 2025. Some unions, where there is an existing vacancy, can start to go ahead of final Plan agreement if the parties involved can agree plans relatively quickly.

The priority for now is to get to know our neighbours in the new proposed parish groupings. The Ministers / Moderators and Session Clerks of Newhaven, North Leith, and South Leith have already had a couple of informal meetings. These were very positive and constructive meetings with all concerned demonstrating a commitment to work together, and enthusiasm to make progress and not lose any existing momentum. These meetings will continue as we start to hold more structured discussions to consider the future. There are already plans for joint worship and an elders' conference.

We aim to update you regularly. In the meantime we ask you to be patient and to hold all these important matters in your prayers.

Peter Bluett (Newhaven), Iain May (South Leith), Karen McKay (North Leith) Moderators

Appended: Presbytery Plan Current Timetable

February & March:

Further written communication between Presbytery and Kirk Sessions to review and possibly improve proposals.

April to June:

Presbytery Deployment sub-groups engage with the new parish groupings.

July to September:

Presbytery engages with Mission Districts, the National Faith Nurture Forum and General Trustees to produce and agree the near final version of the Mission Plan

October:

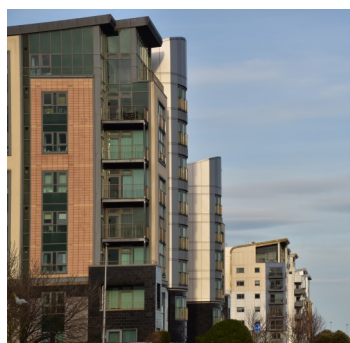
Mission Plan presented at a Presbytery meeting.

By end December 2022:

Final version of the Plan agreed and authorised.

January 2023 to December 2025:

Implementation of the Plan.



Aspects of
Newhaven
Parish



NOTICE OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**We hope you have enjoyed reading
the 2021 Annual Report**

**The Annual Congregational Meeting
will be held
on the evening of**

Monday 28th March at 7pm

Please come to hear about,
and celebrate,
the work of Newhaven Church over the last year.

The Accounts will be presented and
there will be a presentation on the Presbytery Plan
with an opportunity for questions and discussion.

Do join us!

*Serving Christ, each other,
and the community.*



www.n-c.org.uk