



Serving Christ,
each other and
the community

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST

- ◆ Friendship
- ◆ Kirk Session report
- ◆ All Age Worship
- ◆ Kampi update
- ◆ Steering Group update
- ◆ Café Update
- ◆ Community News



PRAYER
FOCUS

*A true friend is
closer than a
brother.*

Proverbs 18:24

Harbour Lights

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEWHAVEN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

SUMMER 2026

Dear Friends,

A message popped up on my WhatsApp the other day. It was just a number so I had to think about who it might be for a second. I realised it was my childhood best friend, Michael. We have known each other and been good friends for fifty-seven years.

Our friendship began when I was three or four years old and had been invited to his birthday party. I can't remember much about the party but I do remember toddling home to go to the loo because I was painfully shy and didn't want to inconvenience anyone by asking if I could use the toilet. Michael and I, and our Afrikaans friend, Jacques, became firm friends and we went on many adventures together. If we weren't on our skateboards or riding our bikes around the neighbourhood, or playing with our cars and train sets, we were hunting for snakes in what we called the bush, which was actually a forest of blue-gum trees.

I remember on one occasion we were hunting for snakes which had an Afrikaans name I won't even try to spell. They were harmless and not very long and were all over the place if one really looked.

As the snake began tunnelling into the grass, we went after it, using our hands until we came to a fairly flat rock. Being adventurous we decided to turn the rock over and lying underneath it, much to our horror, was a Cape Cobra, coiled up like a blackish brown rope. Needless to say we dropped the rock and ran as fast as our legs could carry us. Needless to say, we gave snake hunting a rest for a while.

Michael or Mike, as I call him, got in touch with me because I had been on his mind, and after I had assured him I was well, he sent me photos of his new steam locomotives, and we reminisced.



After we had finished messaging each other, I thought to myself, "Aren't good friends, just the most amazing gift God could have given us?" People we have been blessed to share our lives with. People who know us well, probably inside out if we're honest. People whom we can love and support and who can love and support us too. Thinking about my life, I realise I have had, and still have, some wonderful friends.

About two years ago, another WhatsApp message popped up on my phone. It was someone I had been at school with and hadn't seen nor heard of for forty years. Our 40th anniversary of having left school was coming up and she was launching an idea to get us all together again. Soon, there were messages coming in from all over the world from people, as I said, I hadn't seen nor heard from in forty years. It didn't take long, however, to re-establish connections, and when those of us who could meet together in Cape Town, South Africa, met, it was like we had never been apart. Seeing all my friends and schoolmates was an absolute joy and we are all still in contact on WhatsApp,

continued over

sharing news and birthday wishes etc. Again, friends and friendship are wonderful gifts from God.

All of this made me think about Jesus and his disciples. One of the many wonderful things about Jesus, I believe, was the fact that he never saw himself as a one man band. He never saw himself as an island, someone who didn't need other people. He might have. After all, he was the Son of God. But he didn't.

I often imagine what it must have been like, firstly, being called by Jesus himself to follow him, and, secondly, to be one of Jesus's closest companions, one of his disciples. We only get a tiny glimpse of what life was like for them in the stories we find in the gospels, but it must have been incredibly special. I can only imagine what the conversations must have been like around the campfire.

The point being, Jesus, the Son of God, the Messiah, the Word, needed companionship, he needed friends. He needed people that he could confide in and trust, and although they might have got it wrong at times, and sometimes drastically wrong, ie Peter's denial, they were an integral part of his life and wellbeing.

Think of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of his arrest. He had his three closest disciples with him and he asked them for their support, to keep a watch over him. Why? Because he was agitated and distressed, knowing what was to transpire in the hours that lay ahead (Mark.14: 32-42).

Furthermore, in John 15:12-15, after teaching his disciples about who he was and the nature of God's kingdom, and after telling them how much he loved them, Jesus said: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I have learned from my Father I have made known to you."

One can only imagine what the disciples must have thought when Jesus called them friends.

Incredibly, in the same way, just as Jesus called his disciples friends, so he calls those who love him even today his friends too. What an honour and privilege.

Take time, friends, to think about your friends and those who have meant a great deal to you in life, and give thanks for them. Give thanks to God for the gift of great friendship.

Much love,

Peter



The Annual Congregational Meeting

will be held on

Sunday 21st June

after the service

when we will be able to meet to celebrate
the work of Newhaven Church over the last year.

The Accounts will be presented and
there will be an opportunity
for questions and discussion.

Do join us then!

Kirk Session Report

The Kirk Session has met three times so far in 2026, in January, March and April. The January and April meetings were full business meetings, and March was a hybrid of business and also reflection and prayer. We have all felt that the time spent reflecting on the life of the congregation in the community, and committing this to God in prayer, is immensely valuable for us as a group and as individuals, as we seek to serve Christ, each other and the community.

Having said that, the business of the Kirk Session in the early months of each calendar year is often heavily skewed towards necessary annual administration that must take place for us to fulfil our obligations to Presbytery. Matters

such as the review and approval of the Annual Accounts, or the approval of the Members' Roll, Safeguarding Register or Property Register are not the most exciting; and yet the work put in by those involved in such areas is often extensive and significant.

As a Kirk Session we are most grateful to them for such valuable effort.



Colin MacNeill
Session Clerk

A Word about All Age Services

The Worship Group at Newhaven Church plans particular services through the year, such as Easter and Christmas services, as well as our All Age Services. The Group has been blessed by a couple of additional people this year – Shara Morris and Milena Folta-Banaszkiewicz, who join Peter Bluett, Christine Hodge, Jen Robertson and Colin MacNeill in making up the Worship Group.

In our Church family, we are very blessed to have people of all ages, from the very young to the not quite so young, and every age in between. And that is why once a month we take a break from our usual worship service, where the children and young folk go out for their own groups part way through the service, and instead we have an All Age Service where we worship God all together as one family, recognising and celebrating that God has blessed us with each other.

This year, we've been trying a different format for our All Age Services. We've moved the communion table down into the middle of the hall and we've sat in groups at tables arranged round the hall. In addition to singing songs, a Bible reading and short message from Peter, this has allowed us to spend some time at our tables exploring the Bible reading together in different ways and, if we've felt prompted to do so, to make some form of collective response – writing out a short prayer and bringing it into the central communion table, or at our March service we looked at what the Bible says about worries and anxieties and we had the opportunity to drop a pebble into a bucket of water, as a symbolic act of handing over our worries and anxieties to God. This has helped some of us engage in a much deeper way with what God is saying through his word. For others it might not have been quite like that.

But this brings us to the reason we're doing worship in this way:



First, it encourages us to actively engage with each other as we worship, beyond our usual friendships, families and generations.

But also, it allows us to engage in a different - perhaps deeper and more meaningful - way with God's word through the discussions round the table, or the collective response

In our All Age Service at the beginning of May we looked at Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount about loving our enemies. It's a short passage at the end of Matthew Chapter 5, but it's really difficult to get our head round the hows and whys of what Jesus is teaching and our prayer and hope was that by approaching it in our All Age Service we experienced something of God's boundless love that lies at the core of this teaching.

The Worship Group

Kampi Ya Samaki Child Care Centre

Rosemary Gilmore from Northern Ireland has recently visited the Child Care Centre at Kampi ya Samaki and reports back that the Centre is going well, with Panga in charge, who himself spent time at the Centre as a little boy. Unfortunately, the waters of Lake Baringo continue to rise. Rosemary previously worked at the Centre, with Georgie Orme, and is also a trustee of Kampi Disabled Children’s Trust, which raises funds for the Centre.

Rosemary writes: *“It’s 20 years since I left the Child Care Centre and what a joy to meet the new generation of children with disabilities. Seeing the children reminds me of when Panga [who is now the manager of the centre] was a little boy and I*

praise and thank God that despite his own physical challenges, he is passionate at caring and showing Christ’s love to the children. He is responsible for leading the small staff team.

It’s heartbreaking to see Lake Baringo continuing to rise – many people have lost their homes and small shops.”

All the team at Kampi Child Care Centre, and the Trustees of Kampi Disabled Children’s Trust, are so grateful to Newhaven Church who have supported the Child Care Centre for so many years.

Colin MacNeill



A new generation of disabled children at Kampi Child Care Centre



Church affected by Lake Baringo waters rising



Football is universal everywhere in the world – even with an artificial limb!

Steering Group Update



**JOURNEYING
TOGETHER**

Granton and Newhaven Churches

The Steering Group has had its third meeting and the Worship, Mission, Communications, and Team Ministry subgroups have all met.

A dedicated website will be launched on Thursday 11 June, so check this out via the current Granton and Newhaven websites. This includes the Structure Document, Process Chart, Organisation Chart, and

Frequently Asked Questions.

If you have any questions, post these via the website and a member of the Steering Group will answer. Paper versions of these will be available on request.

A key decision regarding the future of the buildings at Granton will be taken by Presbytery on 16 June. The Church of Scotland Deployment Committee has recommended that the status of Granton's buildings be redesignated to category 'A', ie essential to retain, and Presbytery is being asked to approve this.

An update will be sent out to both parishes in their Weekly updates on 18 June.

Meanwhile -

Save the following Dates!

- **Praise Night at Newhaven Church on Sunday 28 June at 7.30pm**
- **All Age Joint Service at Granton Church on Sunday 2 August at 10.30am**



A Big Thank You!!

Many thanks
to all who supported the
Holiday Club Afternoon Tea.

We made the fantastic amount of

£1000

which will be used for our family lunches.



Re-belonging...personally speaking

The small group course, 'Re-belonging: The Story of the Christian Faith', ran every second week from September 2025 until March 2026, with a Tuesday evening session and, for a different group of attendees, a Wednesday afternoon edition. At Colin's prompting, I decided to sign up, and opted for the Tuesday slot.

Colin led some sessions and Peter ran others. Each session began with a responsive prayer and each participant would take it in turns to read aloud one of our assigned Bible passages. Discussion would then begin on the themes planned for each session, covering the nature of Creation, of God and of humanity; the relationship between God and humanity; the story of Israel; the nature and message of Jesus; and the question of where God is now.

This course answered a question I had had for a long time, namely: What do the rising and falling fortunes of tiny groupuscules of bickering, denouncing persons have to do with me, or any of us alive today? This question, which exercised me perhaps more than it should have, was at last answered in the penultimate week. Jesus, addressing a local audience, commissioned us all:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations..." (Matthew 28:19).

The regular attendees included members of the congregation at Granton. They were welcomed and contributed like everyone else, with none of the friction we read of in the Old Testament. If Re-belonging is any guide, we have nothing to fear, and much to gain, from merging with Granton.

The award for the best joke of Re-belonging goes to Colin. Jen had previously remarked that the local disputation – centuries and centuries of it, all agonisingly recorded for us – reminded her of *EastEnders*. Colin said it might be more accurate to call this ancient soap opera *West Bankers*.

I would recommend the course to anyone. Colin and Peter bring a depth of knowledge and wisdom that add significant insight and perspective. Being together in the same group over several months, and discussing matters of theological and personal weight, creates a kind of solidarity that might be harder to achieve from attending Sunday services alone. And it's fun and healthy to get out the house and meet new people. If you've still not had your fill of squabbling, *EastEnders* is available on BBC iPlayer.

Iain Borrowman



The Story Behind Well-Known Hymns

There is a Happy Land

For those of a certain age, and for film buffs, the song 'There is a Happy Land' will bring back fond memories. But how many of us know that the song originated in Edinburgh?

It was written by Andrew Young, who was born in Edinburgh in 1807 and who, after studying arts and theology at the University, became headmaster of Niddrie Street School in 1840. He taught there for 12 years before becoming English master at Madras College, St Andrews. He married twice and had a son and a daughter. On his retirement in 1853 he returned to Edinburgh where he attended Greenside Church and was superintendent of the Sabbath school there. Andrew Young died in 1889 and was buried in Rosebank Cemetery.

He contributed many hymns and poems to various publications. In 1838 he wrote the words of 'There is a Happy Land' setting them to an Indian tune he had heard - https://hymnary.org/text/there_is_a_happy_land_far_far_away

There is a happy land,
Far, far away,
Where saints in glory stand,
Bright, bright as day.
O how they sweetly sing:
Worthy is our Saviour-King!
Loud let his praises ring,
Praise, praise for aye.

The song was sung in the film *The King and I* (1956), and features in the book *Little House on the Prairie* (1932). It was parodied by the novelists Mark Twain (1892) and Keith Waterhouse (1955) and in the film *Arsenic and Old Lace* (1944). The melody was used by the rock group Slade (1983) and in the film *The Prince of Egypt* (1998). More recently, the song appeared in the film *The Proposition* (2005).

Various online sources

Newhaven Connections Café News

Newhaven Connections Café ... Connecting with the Community

Starting 2026 strong

It's been a great start to the year as the café has fallen into a good routine with its weekly rhythms. Apart from the regular groups, we enjoy seeing more new faces on a regular basis.

The real peak was election day, when the church hall served as a polling station. We opened the café at 7am that day, so early voters would have a chance to get takeaway coffees on their way out. It ended up being a busy day from start to finish and we were very grateful for our (extra) volunteer support. As some people entered the building we overheard comments saying



they didn't realize this was here. It was certainly a great boost for the church and café's visibility, especially since it would have all been locals who would come to this location to vote. We hope it was a very positive experience for those who came for the first time and that we will see more momentum following all this foot traffic.

Continuing partnership

In the last *Harbour Lights* edition I mentioned a new partnership with the Granton Baptist Church. They have been hosting weekly coffee mornings in their community for outreach. It has been going well and they have been buying traybakes from the café which they serve there every week.

Summer

The café will be closed at the start of July, while the Holiday Club takes place in the church. We will reopen July 14th. As we head into the summer, this can sometimes be the slowest time for the café. Regular activities are off as people go away on their holidays and it can fall quiet here. Please consider supporting the café during these quieter weeks. It can be a great space to bring children as the hall can be a great space for them to run and play, especially on a rainy day!

We also continue to offer afternoon tea bookings, which can be perfect for treating a friend (whether or not you



celebrate an occasion). And of course, find us here for lunch, a hot (or cold!) drink or baking any time!

Volunteering opportunities

Several of our younger volunteers will be moving on in September as they pursue further education. We are so appreciative of their help in this season, and wish them the very best as they go on from here. That means we have some opportunities for new volunteers to (re)join the team. Please let us know if you may be interested in supporting the café to keep it running.

A Big Birthday...

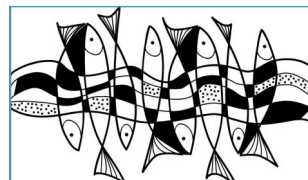


In 2027 we are coming up to 20 years of the café. Can you believe that? I feel privileged to be carrying on the baton of managing the café and being a part of its mission. It's special how many people have worked together over the years to make this possible. I imagine many of you have memories from over

the years. I would love to gather stories of the impact of the café. Would you please share how the café has been meaningful to you?

We continue to serve and love the community here week after week. Thank you for being a part of it and see you here soon!

Liesanne Craib
Café Manager



Local Events this Summer

As we head into Summer, various events are being planned in our parish.

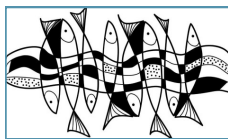
Heart of Newhaven are hosting - in addition to regular activities - a Children's Gala Day on 13 June (12-3pm); James Hutton Geology Day on 20 June (10.30am-3pm); Summer Fun - Den Building on 8 August (2-4pm) - for more information, see www.heartofnewhaven.co.uk. In addition to these free events, there will be an Afternoon Tea Party on Saturday 27 June from 2pm to 4pm - a lovely afternoon filled with delightful conversations, music, tea, fizz, and a delicious selection of sweet & savoury treats! Tickets £15 each from Eventbrite.



Members of **Newhaven Heritage** can be found every Saturday at the old Police Box by the Harbour. Why not check out their popular walking tour - www.newhavenstravaigs.scot - to learn more about the fascinating history of Newhaven.



Meetings of the **Trinity and Newhaven Community Council** are held on the second Monday of each month (except July and August) at 7pm in Inverleith St Serf's Hall, Clark Road. If you have any questions or concerns relating to our area, speak to Alister Greig, or email tcc-comms@outlook.com



Used stamps

Please remember to collect your used stamps in aid of the work of the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB). Ask your friends and neighbours to give you theirs too!

The RNIB have a nominated stamp dealer in Glasgow who processes the stamps, raising money for the work of the charity. This benefits the many people in Scotland who are blind or partially sighted.

R N I B

See differently

Please cut round your stamp(s) leaving, if possible, about ½inch/1cm of paper. Put in the pocket pinned to the notice board at the entrance to the church, and we will do the rest!

Many thanks for your continuing support.



**Committed to Serving Christ,
each other,
and the Community**

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Newhaven Church Roll

The Church Roll is more than just a list of members - it is a means of identifying those who have professed their faith in Christ and who are part of his Church at Newhaven.

It is also a vital means of communication.

For this reason, it is important that the Church Roll is kept as accurate as possible.

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

Please notify the Roll-Keeper, of any changes/updates

Copy Deadline

Please send any items for inclusion in the next issue of *Harbour Lights* to the Editor, Elaine Greig, by 16 August:-

editor@n-c.org.uk

TGBTG

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www.n-c.org.uk