

# Oxnam Parish Page



**JUNE 2017**

*Oxnam Parish Church of Scotland*  
*Registered Charity Number SCO10593*  
[www.oxnamkirk.co.uk](http://www.oxnamkirk.co.uk)

## *From the Minister ...*

Dear Friends,

As I write this letter, we are well into election fever and many words are spoken in heated tones! In the last couple of years, the one constant thing about the elections and referendums that have been foisted upon us is that they are divisive. We are regularly told that the people need to have a choice, but it is in the being allowed to have a choice that we become divided.

So different from all that we are taught in the Bible. Jesus notably said to his disciples, 'I have come that you might be one, as I and the Father are one' and 'Love one another.' When insults, often very personal, are hurled around by most political protagonists, where is the respect that is supposed to be prevalent? Let alone the love? Yes, these are fascinating times that we are living in, but it seems much more like watching a block-buster film about other people's bad behavior, than about seeing what is really happening to ourselves.

This, it seems to me, is one of the areas in which the Church really should lead the way. We have to live alongside each other, whatever way we choose to vote. Look at the first disciples - a motley bunch of workers, often quarrelling, wanting very different things. All Jesus asked of them was to be as one, united in serving him. My mantra has always been that if we in the Church cannot live alongside people who think differently, then what hope has the world? Sadly, however, the Church does not always end up being as united as it should be. Too often I hear tales of this or that person who no longer comes to church because they have had a fall out with someone else.

So it is good that we have, in a small way, started a Bible study group to look in detail at what Jesus says to us. We have not been able to meet as often as we would have liked, but the plan is to meet, usually on the Tuesday before an Oxnam service, and study in detail the readings for that Sunday. Usually announced in the Orders of Service, if anyone out there would be interested in joining in one of these fascinating discussions, then please let Morag McKeand know and we will make sure you are kept in the loop.

We held our Worship Group service at the end of January, a while ago now, but it was so good that we had hoped to take it 'on tour', to the other part of the linkage, the Kelso Country Churches. That has not yet happened, but we live in hope of arranging a suitable Sunday. The team worked very hard, and very creatively, as I have come to expect of them, and produced a stunning service, the best yet, on the theme of the Good Samaritan. Again, if anyone out there would be interested in taking part at any level, simply throwing ideas into the pot, or actually taking part, in reading, presentation, be it drama or a wee talk, or leading a prayer, even choosing some hymns, then let us know. You would be welcomed into the team, which has already grown since its inception.

The Presbytery have been running a 'Leading Worship' course in Kelso for elders and others over the last few Sunday afternoons. 21 people from across the east side of the Presbytery have met for a couple of hours each Sunday to look at subjects like the purpose of worship, the Bible in worship, all-age worship, preparing talks for children and adults, music in

worship (guess who is leading that one?), prayer in worship and putting it all together. There is to be a similar course at the Hawick end of Presbytery in the autumn. When I think of my father's years as a minister, the minister was the only person involved in worship. If for any reason, he was unwell, the Session Clerk would get a last minute call and have to go and rally the congregation to sing some hymns, do a Bible reading or two and a prayer - probably no sermon! Nowadays, the people in the pew are encouraged to get much more involved and I would suspect that in doing so, they get so much more out of worship than by simply being passive. It seems to me also that this has to be part of the way forward for the church, given the reducing numbers of available ministers.

I know you were all delighted to welcome Anna Rodwell back at the end of April to lead the Evening Service. With her came some of her new flock from Kelso North. I know Anna was delighted to be asked to come. A mutual joy!

We were delighted to welcome a large number of Dandie Dinmonts and their owners to Oxnam recently. They had a day in the Borders, which included a visit to Oxnam Kirk.. and particularly to the grave of James Davidson, the original Dandie Dinmont breeder, on whom Sir Walter Scott based his famous character of the same name in Guy Mannering. Amongst them were two direct descendants of James Davidson. We shall had a small service of thanksgiving and blessing of the dogs around the grave-stone, which has been renovated by a member of the family who is a stone-mason. It was George Shiell's grandfather who re-discovered the grave back in the 60s and had the stone restored at that time.

Do not let anyone convince you that Oxnam is a back-water!

Love and blessings to you all,

Marion

## **Easter Sunday at Oxnam Kirk**



*Beautiful daffodil cross*



*Jedforest Instrumental Band*



*What has Katie got in her pots and will she bring them back in September?*

## **From the Outgoing Session Clerk ....**

After thirty years at Mounthooly, Cynthia and I have moved to Bowden. As I have moved even further away from the Oxnam valley I have decided that I should handover the reins of Session Clerk and am delighted to say that Morag McKeand has agreed to take over. Morag has now been an active elder at Oxnam for a few years, lives in the valley and is a tremendous supporter of all things Oxnam. I know that Morag will be a first class Session Clerk.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> April at a specially convened Session meeting Morag was accepted as the new Session Clerk. On the same day after, after our morning service, we held our Annual Stated Meeting. Once again our Treasurer, Fiona Geddes, presented the Receipts & Payments Accounts which includes the Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees of Oxnam Kirk and also the Trustees' Annual Report. In 2016 the Accounts show a loss of £1,163 and indeed the reduction in income for 2016 compared with the previous year amounted to £2,440. Fiona highlighted that we do have just under £35,000 in the bank and the 2016 loss is not concerning, it must be stressed that such a loss can not continue every year and that there will, in the future, be additional costs with the KCC linkage. We must be aware of the need to increase our income. Our Interim Moderator, the Reverend Robin McHaffie, thanked for all her hard work as Treasurer and in particular for presenting such a well laid out set of Accounts which are available to all.

The Parish Page covers the period from December to April. I was away over Christmas but from all reports there was the usual well attended Christmas Eve service and on Christmas Day there were more attending this service than usual. There are always a number of visitors attending which is nice to see.

Our Linkage Committee continue to meet with the Kelso Country Churches (KCC – Roxburgh, Stitchill, Smailholm and Makerstoun) but, as yet, we are still no nearer to finding a minister. Do contact Ann Fraser to be kept completely up to date as Ann continues as the Nomination Committee Convenor. At present we are so lucky having Marion Dodd as our Locum Minister as her dedication to Oxnam has added continuity which is of enormous help to us all.

In January the Northumberland Theatre Group once again entertained an enthusiastic young and indeed not so young audience. It was wonderful to see the Kirk so full of people having such an enjoyable, fun afternoon. This year's pantomime was 'Little Red Riding Hood and other stories' Many thanks to Moira Land for all she did to make this now annual event such a success and also to all who helped Moira, including Francis Armstrong who fed the cast and others! Moira has already booked the Northumberland Theatre Group to return for the fourth year in January 2018.

In my last report in the Parish Page mention was made of a new sound system for the Kirk. This would not be a cheap undertaking and when Session met in early

February it was agreed that because of the expense this project would not proceed immediately, however, it has not been completely discarded. Obviously Session have to bare in mind that after this year's financial loss expenditure over income is not a good state of affairs.

This is rather a shorter report than usual and has not covered the Worship Group who, under Marion's guidance, took the Sunday Evening Service in January. Nor does it cover the Easter Day Service both of which are mentioned in other parts of this Parish Page. After last year's disappointment of not having a Daffodil Cross it was wonderful that the 'Early Birds' were able to have enough daffodils for this year's cross.

## **Thank You To All**

I was extremely touched that at our morning service on 2<sup>nd</sup> April I was presented with a very generous book token and two twin classic Glencairn whisky tasting glasses with the distinctive Gail Gael Dirlinn logo. I have, at the time of writing, not yet purchased a book but hope to in the near future at Main Street Trading in St Boswells. Now the whisky glasses, that's different!! Luckily Cynthia does not like whisky so I have had to use both glasses each night!!

Oxnam Kirk is a very special place and certainly close to my heart. I have enjoyed my time as an Elder and Session Clerk. Over and above that I have made friends with very special people who, year in year out, do so much for Oxnam Kirk. There have been for me many highlights over my time at Oxnam Kirk but two family occasions stand out. The first was when my elder daughter got married ten years ago and then when her first born was baptised! Vanessa insisted that the baptism should be in Oxnam Kirk and not in London where she and her family live. Like me, she thinks Oxnam Kirk has something special. Once Again very many thanks to you all.

**Col Colin Hogg**



Saying Goodbye to our Session Clerk Lt Col Colin Hogg after many years

## **Sunday School**

Any children between 3 and 12 years are welcome at our Sunday school on the third Sunday of each month. Marion has many original ways of including them in the early part of the service and, after a special children's hymn, we go out, sometimes with a parent too, for some fun activities in the vestry or outside if the weather is kind.

The Sunday school gardens have had a 'Spring clean'. Lots of the wild flowers sown last year are coming up again and the 'invaders' like docks and nettles have been dug out. In May we will sow the extra seeds sent this year by the 'Grow Wild' team in Kew Gardens and add a few sunflowers.

Some of the young parents came up with the brilliant idea of encouraging the children to grow sunflowers this summer. So, on Easter Sunday, after our usual exciting egg hunt in the old graveyard, several children planted sunflower seeds in little pots and took them home. Since then, we've had frost and snow so I hope they are being kept warm and watered! The children who go to 'Messy Church' in Jedburgh are also taking part in this project. We plan to hold a special 'Sunflower Sunday School' in September when the children can bring their sunflowers or a photograph of them to the church. Prizes will be given, so do encourage the children to take part.

**Val Hunter**

## **Film Nights**

We have continued to screen a variety of films to try and encourage people out of their armchairs to see films that they might not have automatically chosen, though with limited success. Recent screenings have included Warhorse and The Tourist followed by West Side Story in April. This classic musical had our largest audience of the year to date, but hopefully the forthcoming programme will motivate more to come along and support these nights. Oxnam Film nights are usually held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month in the Oxnam Village Hall, starting at 7.30 p.m. and give you the opportunity to see a variety of great films on a big screen in the company of friends and neighbours. All for only a £2 donation towards the cost of the hall. The current programme going forward is as follows:- June 16<sup>th</sup> Green Card, August 18<sup>th</sup> Stardust, September 15<sup>th</sup> Lion, October 20<sup>th</sup> Hidalgo, November 17<sup>th</sup> Aemilie. In July we will be having our normal summer break while everyone is off on holiday. Please get these dates in your diary and come along and support your local film night.

**Bob McKeand**

## **Sing Your Way Into Spring!**

Oxnam Valley Voices are totally in tune for the coming year. Now in their fifth year of singing together, they are becoming better and better at what they do best ... singing!!

Under the experienced eye of their choir master, Marion Dodd, the choir has a tremendous range of the type of songs they can sing; church music, tunes from the shows, classical music, modern popular music and they are expanding their repertoire all the time. This spring they have already sung at Ancrum Church on the evening of Good Friday and also for the Oxnam Water Ladies in Oxnam Village Hall in aid of The Borders Disability Sports Group.

OVV is a community choir in the Jedburgh area. They welcome everyone from anywhere to join them. They meet every Wednesday at Oxnam Village Hall and will always welcome new members. There is a great social side to the choir as well as their singing. In the past there have been visits to the Kelso Ice Rink to have a go at curling, visits to the cinema, a concert in Edinburgh, a walk in the Cheviots , with other activities planned for the next year.

If you like to sing, just come along to Oxnam Village Hall on a Wednesday evening at 7.00 p.m. or email [emma.howie@gmail.com](mailto:emma.howie@gmail.com)

**Ann Fraser**

## **Christmas Crafts for Kids**

In Oxnam Village Hall on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2016 Oxnam Kirk held a Christmas crafts morning for kids. Eighteen children came along with their mums and had a fun filled morning playing with playdough and making Christmassy items such as Santas, angels and snowmen to hang on the tree, wooden reindeer, glittery stars from lolly sticks and decorated trinket boxes.

**Morag McKeand**



## Presbytery

Presbytery meets on the first Wednesday of the month, about 9 times a year, to discuss business. Anyone is welcome to attend and I would be delighted if anyone wanted to come with me. The Jedburgh Presbytery is looking for five new ministers so this is a huge task. The big problem is there are not sufficient ministers to fill all the churches. To help with this Oxnam is linked with Kelso Country Churches and are trying hard to find someone to take on this three quarter post. We would like Presbytery to upgrade this to a full time post but this is proving difficult!

On a more positive note, Kelso Country Churches, Kelso North and Kelso Old and Oxnam are in the process of appointing a 'full time youth worker'.

Edinburgh have approved this appointment. We have got all the details, funding etc etc and hopefully I will be able to report back on this next time.

Anyone looking for information on the Church of Scotland, there is an excellent website and it does make interesting reading. On Facebook you can link into 'rural churches' to find out about any new initiatives.

**Moira Land**

## Pantomime

Every Sunday afternoon Oxnam Kirk sits quietly looking around the Oxnam valley landscape. On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> January Northumberland Theatre Company returned again bringing Little Red Riding Hood and the Big Bad Wolf. What fun everyone had, deep in the forest, scary, laughter and plenty of ice cream. Oxnam Kirk became like a newly emerged butterfly! A living, vibrant building and one could hear the walls smiling and the church whispering 'come back again next year'

p.s. Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2018

**Moira Land**





## Oxnam Village Hall

The village hall was lucky enough to secure a performance supported by Borders Live Touring of “T-hi/T-Hat” in the Easter holidays on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April. This dance workshop, aimed at children aged 2-5, was greatly enjoyed by the children attending (and also by the accompanying adults by all accounts!). As one of only three Borders venues benefitting from this we are extremely grateful for the support Borders Live Touring provide to getting the arts out to rural communities as we would not be able to fund this ourselves.

Your village hall committee has the following exciting range of events planned for 2017 with the aim of providing the community with some fun whilst raising money to help us upgrade the small hall/meeting room. We hope that you will all come along and support these events and, where possible, offer your help in organising and running them.

Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> June	Car Treasure Hunt and BBQ
Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup> August	Scarecrow Competition and Grand Village Fete (including Terrier Racing, Coconut Shy, Tug o' War, Kids Races, Adults Races, Cream Teas, Tombola etc etc)
Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2017	Race Night
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> October 2017	Pub Quiz Night
Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	Christmas Sing-a-long with Oxnam Valley Voices

With particular reference to the Scarecrow Competition and Grand Village Fete, we would like to involve all local groups and residents of the Oxnam area, including children, toddler groups, OWLs, young (and older) farmers and Oxnam Valley Voices so that this is a genuine community event for all.

Look for further details on the hall noticeboard and the hall website and of course the Oxnam Village Hall Facebook page for all of these events or email

[oxnamvillageevents@gmail.com](mailto:oxnamvillageevents@gmail.com)

**Bob McKeand**

## **Christmas Carol Service**

Every year Glendouglas Hall has Christmas Carols. 19<sup>th</sup> December 2016 was no exception and the Jedforest Instrumental Band turned out to play carols for us. Rev Marion Dodd took the service and afterwards we went inside to have delicious mince pies. Next year you are all welcome.

**Moira Land**

## **Christmas Bazaar**

This event, held in the village hall on the last Saturday of November was a great success. People seemed to realise Christmas was only a month away and there was an exciting buzz about the place as they began their Christmas shopping in earnest.

The craft stalls, gift stalls, bric-a-brac and our famous stall of cakes and preserves were piled high with tempting purchases. The bottle tombola, the children's lucky dip and competitions and the raffle were added attractions, along with the delicious scones and cakes served with tea or coffee. We were very pleased to have raised a total of £871 and our thanks go to everyone who gave up their time to help.

**Val Hunter**

Coming Soon To  
Oxnam Village Hall!  
Oxnam Kirk's



Fun for all the family!

Date and more information soon on the  
Oxnam Kirk website or Facebook page