

NORTH LEITH PARISH CHURCH MAGAZINE

October 2022

Dear Friends,

I cannot believe that we are in mid-October already, they do say how time flies when you are enjoying yourself. Over the past few months there has been a huge amount of activity going on in the background with the Steering Group progressing all the different things that require to be carried out to keep us moving forward towards our new parish and the union. Here is an update of where things are with the Presbytery Mission Plan Working Document.

Members of our three congregations – Newhaven, North Leith, and South Leith – will be aware of the Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian is preparing a Mission Plan that recognises the realities of falling rolls, increasing costs and reduction of ministry resources, and has proposed unions that are designed to strengthen our mission for years to come. Our three congregations have been forming closer relationships through joint services, and the Steering Group formed from the ministers, session clerks, elders and church members from these congregations has been meeting regularly and harmoniously to ensure the process goes smoothly.

The future of our church buildings has been a matter of concern to many members, and we know that a Presbytery team has assessed all the church buildings and has designated them A or B. Buildings with an A designation are identified as those to be retained; buildings with a B designation are those that are to be released.

This is an example of what was reported back from Presbytery on North Leith buildings - *All 3 buildings are wind and watertight, and meet most health and safety requirements, though the church and*

session house don't have fire alarms, nor does the church have emergency lighting. All buildings are accessible to disabled people, though the church has some internal obstacles. Only the hall has a disabled toilet, and it does not fully meet the standards in terms of dimensions and equipment. Otherwise, facilities are satisfactory.

The church is prominent in its neighbourhood, and the buildings collectively offer flexibility for a range of uses. They are in a centre of population and close to other facilities. Parking, including disabled parking, can be a problem and can impact on local residents. Sunday attendance at the time of the AMBA visit was over 50. How often all the buildings were used during any one given week, and what for, was taken into account.

Overall AMBA scores were church 74%, halls 84%, session house 74%.

The AMBA was very complimentary about the building maintenance schedule.

The Edinburgh and West Lothian Presbytery met on Tuesday 4th October to discuss solely the Presbytery Plan working document which included the designations of buildings.

North Leith's three buildings have been given "B" designation with release date by 31 December 2024.

They understand that the congregation might be disappointed by the proposed designation but it has been recognised for some time that Leith has too many churches for the worshipping population and the pressure on ministry numbers, and that difficult decisions must be made so that the estate is sustainable for the new united parish going forward. The extra resources that can be realised, both financially and in terms of manpower, can lighten the burden on others and give space for more energy for outreach and mission.

On a positive note, the Steering Group has been praised for making good progress and working well together and how we are functioning as a group. Our steering group has been used by the deployment group as an example of good practice.

While some will be disappointed, although not many too surprised, we fully acknowledge that everyone will be sad and feel the loss badly, but we have a wonderful past to celebrate and an extremely hopeful future to look to.

Presbytery will meet next on 15 November. Congregations will be cited to attend for their interests. Given the enormity of the task, congregations have been respectfully asked to limit their numbers to the Minister/Interim Moderator, Presbytery elder, plus one other. All those who represent their congregation can participate in the discussion, but only members of Presbytery shall be entitled to vote. Presbytery's approval in principle will then be sought by proceeding to vote district by district and then on the Presbytery Mission Plan as a whole.

We await further information about what happens following the meeting on the 15 November.

To finish here are a few lines that I always find comforting.

Always A Hope

There's always a hope though it may be quite small. There's always a star, though the darkness may fall. There's always a glimmer of gold in the grey and always a flower growing wild on the way. There's always a song floating out on the air. There's always a dawn to the night of despair.

There's always a path for the faithful to tread and always a bend in the roadway ahead. There's always a chance but you've got to believe. You've got to be ready to see and receive, the hints and the signs

although faint they appear to wait and to trust till the meaning grows clear. And when through the gloom of the shadows you grope. You've got to remember there's always a hope

Your friend in Christ

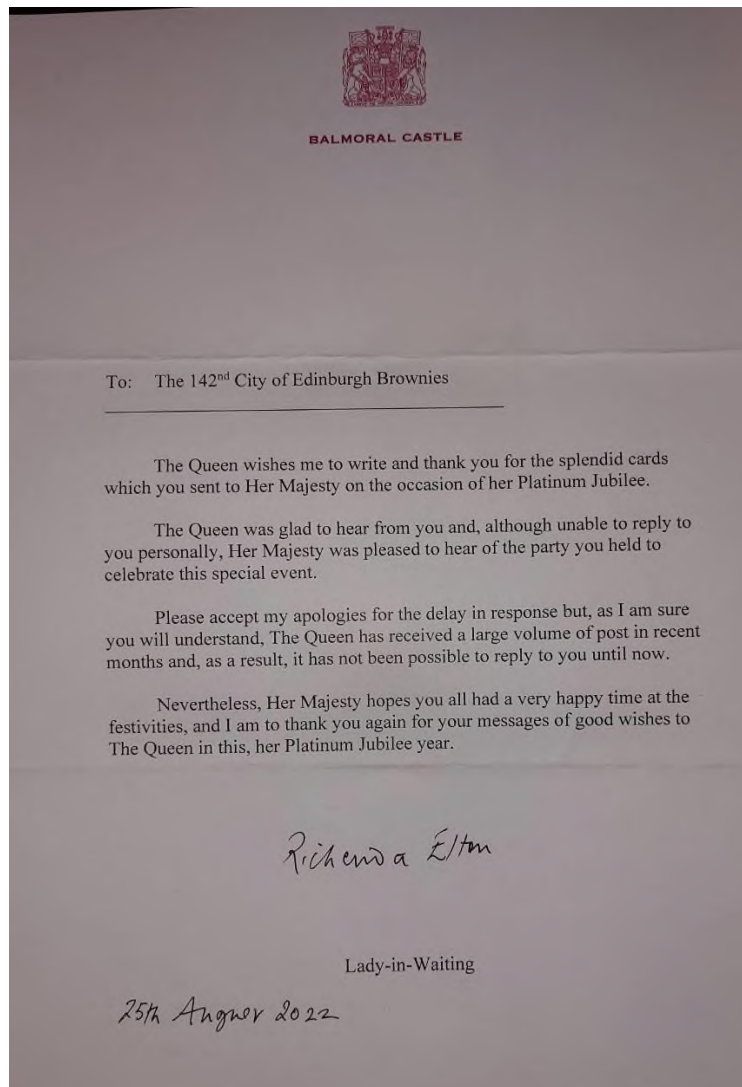
Karen, Interim Moderator

Our Guiding Units

To celebrate our late Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee the girls made cards which they sent to the Queen.

The Brownies have received a card and letter of thanks.

Well done to all the girls!





Jimmy's South West Coast Path walk

Congratulations to Jimmy Hudson who has finally completed his walk of the South West Coast Path in the south west of England.

Jimmy started the walk in May 2018 at Minehead in Somerset on the south bank of the Bristol Channel and this first stage ended in Bideford on the estuary of the river Torridge in North Devon. The second part of the walk in September that year took him from there to Perranporth on the north coast of Cornwall.

In early April 2019 Jimmy had his third visit travelling on to Falmouth on the south coast of Cornwall and covering Land's End. The walk continued in September and took him to Dartmouth in Devon on Day 27.

But, mainly because of Covid, Day 28 of the walk had to wait till September 2022. In this last walk from Kingswear, across the estuary from Dartmouth, to Poole in the south east of Dorset, looking across to France, he covered 162.1 miles.

The official length of the whole SWCP is 630 miles – with wrong turnings and toing and froing he reckons he probably did another 20 or so miles. What an achievement!

Jimmy has a written online blog which describes his day to day adventures and has a host of great photos. If you have not already seen this, please speak to him and he will give you the link.





Beer beach in Devon

Seafarers' Christmas Bags

The hope again this year is to create 50 "Ship Christmas Bags" which will accompany an individual pre-wrapped gift, supplied by the Sailors' Society, for each seafarer.

It is wonderful we are able to share gifts and it means so much more to a seafarer 1000s of miles away from family and friends at Christmas.

Although in the UK we have relaxed the restrictions that affect us day to day due to Covid, some of the crews continue to be restricted. For Ukrainian crew, families are displaced and all over the world, and will share a Christmas like no other.

To make it easier for folks to donate we're asking for donations of monies and or donations of sweets/ chocolate. Monies donations will enable bulk buying and make it simpler for folks to contribute towards a bag.

The cost of the bag contents has been estimated to be around £10 pounds. This will include: wrapped chocolates, shortbread, fudge/tablet, mixed sweets, and mixed nuts. It will be accompanied by a Christmas card.

Pauline Robertson, Port Chaplain

Please bring donations to the church during November and no later than Sunday 27th.

Fresh Start Update

Starter packs and white good referrals have noticeably increased, cost of living is definitely a factor but possibly more agencies are aware of the excellent services we provide.

For several months we were at the forefront of providing emergency food for Ukrainian refugees as they were homed by Edinburgh City Council and the Scottish Government. This has now been handed over to Edinburgh community food as they were able to provide healthier and more culturally appropriate meals and recipes.

Donations have been steady and of very good quality, the most pressing need is for Kettles, Toasters, Frying pans, Pots, male and female Toiletries.

Church family

Death: Miss Florence Dick, formerly of Ashville Terrace and latterly resident at Queensbay Lodge care home, died on 29 August at the age of 94.

Please remember to update us with any changes of contact details and any changes that affect giving by Gift Aid.

The things that we pray for, good Lord, give us the grace to work for.

Sir Thomas More