

# MAXWEST CONTACT

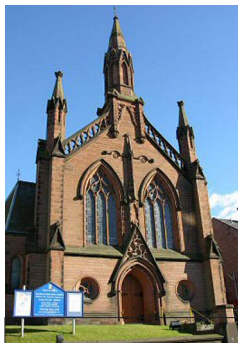
December 2021



Maxwelltown West Church - Dumfries  
[www.maxwelltownwest.org.uk](http://www.maxwelltownwest.org.uk)



The Church of Scotland



## MAXWELLTOWN WEST CHURCH

### Our Mission

Maxwelltown West Church seeks to be a place of welcome to all in our parish; a centre of Christian worship and fellowship.  
We seek to provide a framework for family life and a place where young people may be nurtured in Christian values.

**SUNDAY SERVICES – 11 am**

Communion Service: Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December - 11am

### CONTACTS

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#### Session Clerks:

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**Church Officer:** Tommy Jardine, 50 Hardthorn Crescent, DG2 9HJ  
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**Fabric Convenor:** (Volunteer required - please call the Session Clerk if you can help!)

**The Guild:** Anne Dunbar, Parkdale, Cargenbridge  
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**Church Website:** www.maxwelltownwest.org.uk

#MaxWestChurch Tel: 01387 255900

Scottish Charity Reference: SC 015925; CCLI: 1194718

### Flower Ministry Appeal

Every Sunday, and on special occasions, beautiful flowers adorn the front of the Church. These are arranged by Anne Dunbar and her team of volunteers. These flowers are then delivered to members of our congregation to comfort, congratulate or to say, 'thank you'.

The messengers who deliver these flowers are a wonderful bunch of people (please excuse the pun!). Thank you for giving your time to this ministry. I will be compiling a new rota from January, so please let me know if you are happy to continue. New volunteers are always welcome!

**Kathleen McMillan**

**Front cover:** Violet Service, Interim Moderator at MaxWest greets Rev Johannes Wildner on his Induction to Maxwelltown West Church - Photo by Patricia Jardine

Rev  
Johannes



**“Here I am, Lord.**

**Is it I, Lord?**

**I have heard you calling in the night.**

**I will go, Lord,  
if you lead me.”**

The Induction Service on 21st October was an overwhelming experience for me. I am so thankful to everybody who was involved in it. I was especially touched by the hymn **“I, the Lord of sea and sky”**, from which I have quoted the refrain above. It is this peculiar mixture of certainty and doubt in the first two lines that echoes my own feelings.

**“Here I am Lord.”** I have left Germany and the Lutheran tradition in which I grew up. For, as I believe, there was a call to Scotland and the Church of Scotland and also a longing to follow this call. And it definitely feels that MaxWest is the right place where He has led me to.

Nevertheless, there are these uncertainties: “Is it I, Lord?” Do you really mean me? Am I the right one? I get weak at the knees when I think of the solemn vows that I have made, especially “to live a godly and circumspect life; and faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully to discharge the duties” of my ministry.

It reminded me of the wedding vows. And it is true, that also applies to the relationship between a minister and the congregation: “for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish”. Yet, there is one big difference: whereas a couple normally know each other very well before they make the wedding vows, the minister and the congregation do not really know each other. It starts with the vows. And that is thrilling. Like a marriage it is not so much a safe haven but the start of a fascinating journey.

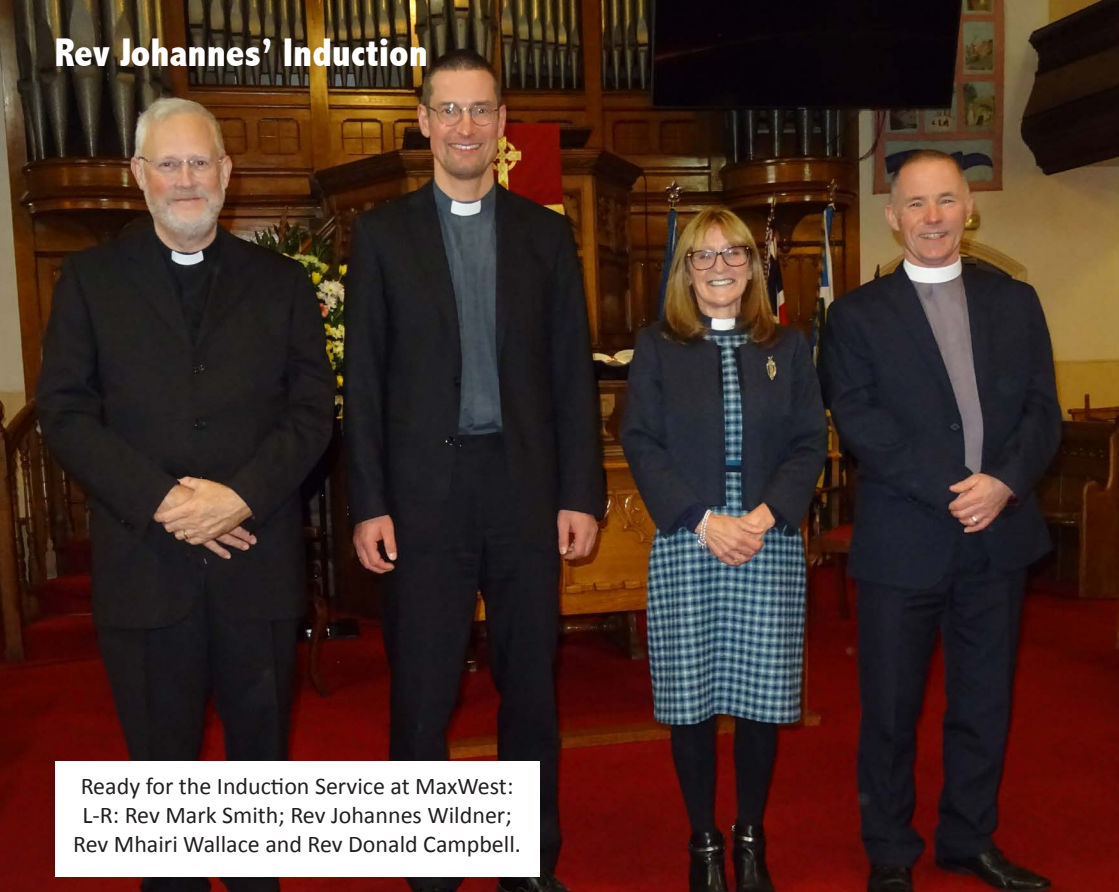
I am looking forward to meeting you and to get to know you and to learn from you. Many things are new for me. For the last year, that was designed that I should familiarise with the Church of Scotland, was a very strange year, nothing was normal. And although I have worked as a minister in Germany for more than twelve years, it is like a new start for me. That is exciting.

**“Here I am Lord.”** And with the final line of the refrain I am looking forward to the future: “I will hold your people in my heart.”

Johannes Wildner



## Rev Johannes' Induction



Ready for the Induction Service at MaxWest:  
L-R: Rev Mark Smith; Rev Johannes Wildner;  
Rev Mhairi Wallace and Rev Donald Campbell.

The Induction Service for our new minister, Rev Johannes Wildner, took place on the evening of Thursday 21st October. Approximately 80 people attended including members of Presbytery; members of our own congregation; guests from Johannes' previous church at Tullibody, and Johannes' wife and daughters.

It's tradition that the worship part of an Induction Service is led by the last minister to have been inducted. In this case it was Rev Mark Smith, minister at Dunscore and Glencairn. His induction had taken place during lockdown and was conducted via Skype. Happily for us, the induction for Johannes was able to take place in church.



There is a formal part of the Service: The Narrative, Preamble and Questions; the Signing of the Formula; the Induction; Declaration and Welcome, and Questions to the Congregation. This was conducted by Rev Mhairi Wallace, Presbytery Moderator, assisted by Rev Donald Campbell, Presbytery Clerk.

At the end of the service, after the Benediction, the Praise Group led the congregation in singing Hymn 807, "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow".

The congregation was divided into four sections and sang it as a round – a successful and enjoyable performance! ►

## Maxwelltown West Church Strategy Group March 2020 – September 2021

March 2020 marked a significant change in the day-to-day organisation of church life here at Maxwelltown West, as the country went into the first "lockdown". To ensure that we were able to carry out all the tasks required of us, we established a "Strategy Group", made up of our Interim Moderator, our Locum, six Elders and four Deacons.

In November 2020, we received the devastating news of our Interim Moderator Rev. Sally's death. We needed to establish a Protocol for making decisions affecting the running of our church whilst the Kirk Session and the Deacons' Court were unable to meet. We adapted the Protocol suggested by Presbytery; our Strategy Group would only make recommendations on decisions required to ensure the efficient running of MaxWest. This may have been stating the obvious, but we needed the agreement of the Kirk Session to adopt this Protocol. This was agreed at the Strategy Group meeting on February 25th 2021, and the Protocol ceased operation after the final meeting held on 30th September 2021, when our soon-to-be new Minister Rev. Johannes was able to join us online. In all sixteen Strategy Group meetings were held. These meetings were held on 'Zoom', and our grateful thanks must go to our "Host" Mike Marshall, and to our comprehensive Minute-taker Jean Marshall. The Minutes of all sixteen meetings will be available in the normal Kirk Session Minute



Book. My thanks to all who took on the challenge that we faced to comply with the Covid-19 regulations from the Church of Scotland, when we were unable to meet face-to-face. Particular thanks must go to dear Rev. Sally and to Violet Service, who convened our meetings with such wise counsel. David Johnson

► Afterwards, refreshments were served in the Main Hall. It was wonderful to be able to hold a social event here again, after such a long period of being restricted from doing so. A special end to a very special evening!

Jane Marchbank





## Well Done Nancy!



Many congratulations from MaxWest to Nancy Cameron, who recently celebrated her 100th birthday. Anita Stott called in with Rev Johannes on one of his first visits around the Parish to add their best wishes.

## WELCOME BACK TO OUR FILM NIGHTS!

At long last we've been able to get back towards a more normal social activity with our Film Nights. We were delighted to welcome 36 members of our first audience since 2019 to the Centenary Hall for a screening of 'Edie', a breathtaking drama set in the north-west Highlands of Scotland. Judging by the reactions of all who came, they are already looking forward to our next screening, when the classic Italian film 'Cinema Paradiso', with its captivating cast and memorable music by Ennio Morricone will be shown on Friday, November 26th at 7pm. Next year's film programme is still being worked on, and the short list of titles are sure to be hugely popular - from classics to recent releases, with many of these that won't always have been on the big circuits.

Keep a lookout for announcements in MaxWest later in December! **Mike Marshall**

## Looking Forward in Faith



"Look Forward in Faith" is the Guild strategy for the next three years, I'm sure we have all done this since the arrival of Covid-19.

At our opening meeting there was great joy from everyone who met again, on 20th October, the very date on which the first Guild meeting at Maxwelltown West Church began 90 years ago. All were enjoying a good chat and were delighted when Rev. Johannes made a surprise visit to say "Hello" on the day before his induction at Church.

Our main 90th Anniversary Celebration on 10th November was a Dedication Service in church with certificates presented to members for long service to the Guild. A tree was planted at the front of the church in memory of the great Guild people who came before us. Lunch followed at the Edenbank Hotel.

We have chosen as our next project "Home for Good". Finding homes for vulnerable children which will raise awareness and promote foster care to churches encouraging Christians to become involved.

I do hope when we fundraise with "A Musical Evening" in the spring it will be well supported. As we move forward in the Guild and the Church we must shine as this year's Guild Theme encourages in "Lights and Bushels" enjoying fellowship and a Christian spirit no matter what challenges or tragedies we may encounter. We can move along knowing we have God on our side and faith will carry us through.

We are open to everyone men and women and invite you to come along to any afternoon meeting. There is no membership fee for the first year and you can be assured of a very warm welcome.

**Anne Dunbar - Convener**

## ✠ REST IN PEACE ✠

In our September newsletter there were inaccuracies in some names, and we have corrected these in this issue, along with any omissions. We apologise for any upset this may have caused.

02.09.2021 Mrs Nancie McCubbin

11.09.2021 Mr William Lessels

25.05.2017 Mr James Kerr This has only just been notified by his widow to Alison Macdonald during her visit.

25.08.2020 Miss Millicent Gemmill

08.01.2021 Mrs Marion Wheelans

31.03.2021 Andrew Cook (change of date)

03.05.2021 Miss Elspeth Henderson

Mrs Susan Kennedy had just removed interest in the church Community.



## Brownies Report



**W**e were all delighted to be able to return to meeting indoors after the summer holidays. It has been a busy term up to the October school holidays. Although adjustments are still being made because of Covid restrictions, it has felt “almost normal”.

The Girlguiding counties of Dumfriesshire, Stewartry and Wigtownshire merged into ‘Girlguiding Dumfries and Galloway County’ on 1st September 2021. To celebrate this, a challenge called ‘D&G-opoly’ was launched by the new County Commissioner. It ran from 5th September to 3rd October and, as in Monopoly, income was earned for each location. We had to either visit 34 locations throughout Dumfries & Galloway or invent a creative alternative.

We visited 17 locations in person and had crafts and activities to achieve the other 17. We had a Saturday Brownies session to be able to fit everything in. Photos had to be taken to show how the locations were achieved so we have our evidence for all 34! We also have a Brownie who, with her Mum, visited all 34 locations! That is amazing commitment.

Six new girls have joined Brownies and we held their Promise Celebrations on 5th October. ►

## Maintaining our Church

**Patricia Jardine describes how we are keeping our buildings safe and sound**

**D**uring the first lockdown all maintenance and repairs to our church buildings and the manse ceased. However, as life moved on and restrictions lifted, the Strategy Group agreed to repairs to keep our buildings safe, windproof and watertight. Currently work is progressing on the church roof which requires scaffolding, and replacing the lightning conductor which became detached in September 2018. Our manse has been leased for the past two years. At the time of writing it is unoccupied, having been recently inspected by Presbytery who have advised on several actions required, prior to it becoming home to Rev Wildner and his family.

Annual inspections and maintenance programmes are back in force, and we are most grateful to the volunteers who have freely given their time and energy to undertake tasks around our buildings. Thank you.



► That was our first Promise Celebration in 18 months. We also resumed our ‘Badge Nights’ and five ‘Interest Badges’ were achieved by four Brownies: ‘Collecting’, ‘Inventing’, ‘Painting’, ‘Performing’ and ‘Zero Waste’, showing the variety of subjects which girls can choose to learn about.

In Spring 2021 a competition was launched for all members of the three Girlguiding counties to invent a new County badge for the merged County. On 1st September it was announced that, because it had been so difficult for the Merger Project Team to choose one from the three winning designs, these would be merged - just like the Counties! Our Brownies were excited to learn that the thistles are from the design of someone at Maxwelltown West! Our Brownie membership is building up slowly: one girl is due to start at the end of October and three others in January. Please get in touch if you know of any other potential Brownies or register their interest at the Girlguiding website.

**Jill McEwan - Brownie Leader / Thistles Designer**



# Looking Back, Looking Forward...

As many readers will know, David Matheson, our Locum for the past four and a half years, had to undergo emergency surgery during mid-October. As this issue of 'MaxWest' Contact goes to press, we are so grateful to learn that he has now returned home and is making a steady recovery. Our prayers for David will continue over the coming weeks - please add yours at every opportunity.

David's last Sunday service was just a few days before the Induction of Rev Johannes Wildner, and we thought it appropriate to include here an abridged version of the Reflection that he delivered at MaxWest on 17th October.

Over four years ago we embarked upon a journey. A journey that started with uncertainty and doubts and worry. Yes, there was some unease and no one, including the late Rev Sally Russell or myself, knew where our journey would lead us. Today we can look back upon that journey, and we can very clearly see God's hands lifting us up onto His Road of Holiness which is illuminated by Jesus himself. Sure, we met some bumps along the way. Sadly, through death, we lost some excellent Servants who are now reaping the harvest of Love, Joy, Peace, and Rest, safe in the arms of Jesus.

On our journey we met weekly with Jesus, and listened to what Saints Paul, Peter, and James wrote, as well as going on pilgrimage walks with St Magnus, St Cuthbert, St Ninian and St Columba.

Our Road of Holiness had bends in it, and sometimes it was steep and narrow. But week by week we didn't just struggle to survive, rather our steps became lighter and easier. When the decision was taken by Dumfries & Kirkcudbright Presbytery to remove the need for Interim Ministry, we began to walk with a more confident spring in our step. Our Nomination Committee was formed, and it worked tirelessly to produce our Parish Profile.

And then came the body blow of Covid-19. Lockdown! *What do we do as Church?* was the question and prayers on our lips. What a massive learning curve that was. Yet I felt, from the first faltering service, along with Mike Marshall, our audio-visual 'techie', and Stephen Crosbie our organist, the caring loving hands of Jesus holding onto me and re-assuring me. I can honestly tell you the power of the Holy Spirit came upon me as I wrote and deleted, and re-wrote our Reflections and prayers. Both Mike and Stephen I'm sure also felt they were not alone, as they worked their magic and came up with pictures and videos, all to fitting music to clearly illustrate the meaning behind God's word.

A true saying is **Look back only to help you look forward.**

St Paul knew that personally. He looked back to the times when he persecuted Christ's Church, but then blinded by Christ's light, he saw the right path ahead and he never flinched from suffering for His Lord.

In Chapter 10 of his letter to the Romans, Paul asks: 'How can they call to him for help if they have not believed? And how can they believe if they have not heard the message? And how can they hear if the message is not proclaimed? And how can the message be proclaimed if the messengers are not sent out?'



My friends - that is where your journey will continue on the Road of Holiness with Rev Johannes. Bringing Good News by sharing your faith both in words and in your actions.

Yes ladies and gentlemen, it will soon be time to get baking again! For I have no doubts that Hospitality will be a key Mission Tool. Rev Johannes will lead you to greater depths of understanding of scripture and mission work than I ever could. He will also undoubtedly look to you all for assistance in Mission work in our Parish, in schools, in Dumfries and beyond, all the way to Mathia and the ends of the earth.

Please do not say: *Oh, no me... or I don't think I could do that.*

Rather, let your answer be *I will try my best.*

Mission work means making the gospel more accessible and understandable and relevant to the people today. I have said many times over the past four years I truly believe many people are looking for some Spiritual help. And we all know that help comes from our Lord Jesus Christ.

In my Reflection in July 2017, I pondered this question with you: **'Do we as church offer a place where we are encouraged to sacrifice our money and time to share the Gospel of Christ Jesus with the community and wider world? Is our church a place where no one is judged for their past actions or their lack of commitment?'**

Over the past four years you answered those questions clearly. For God has heard and seen our actions; we have reached out and helped many people - from our friends in Bondo and Mathia in Kenya, to those in Dumfries through baptisms, weddings, and funerals here in our church, touching the lives of hundreds of people. Through our gifts of food and wealth for food banks and other local Charities, you have been eager to share your faith and possessions with others.

But remember also that our on-line services opened up a new Ministry. At the beginning of Lockdown these services were being viewed by around 40-50 people. Today, that figure is closer to 200, especially when we have held special services such as Sea Sunday, the NHS service, Harvest, and Remembrance. MaxWest now has the tools to share God's Message to a much wider congregation.

**Your walk with God will never be a lonely walk.** For it will be a family journey, together as God's children. And if some of you fall behind, there will be those who will turn and offer words of encouragement, holding out their hand and offer assistance over life's obstacles, sharing refreshment, and helping them rise up from their knees when they stumble.

**Your walk with God will never be a lonely walk.** It will be a joyful experience, and as I pray along the path others will join you, attracted by your company as God's children, singing the same songs of praise that God's angels sing, following a path which will be worn down by tears, and joy, and sacrifice.

**Your walk with God will never be a lonely walk.** For God will walk with you, on the road of holiness that leads you all to a glorious destination.

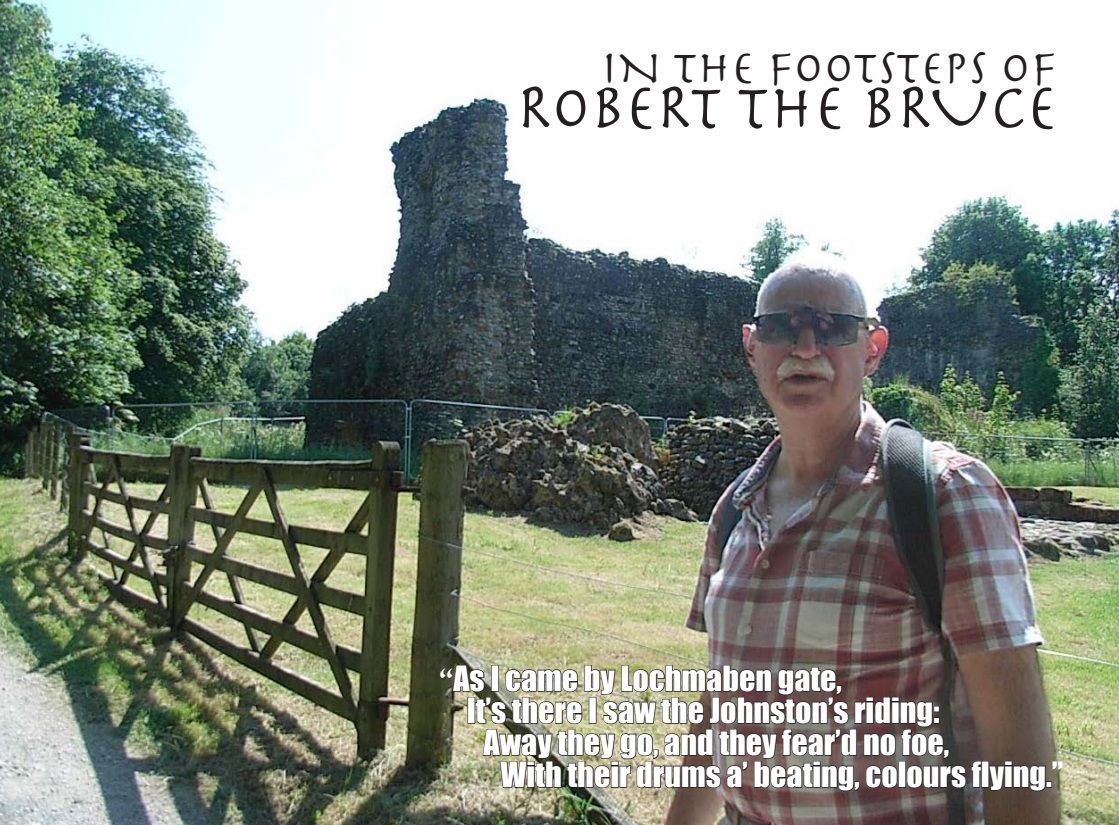
My friends, our prayers have not gone unheard. God has blessed you with Rev Johannes Wildner, so as I leave you with the promise of my continued prayers, may I also encourage you to look forward in faith.

**Be Bold, be strong, for the Lord God is with you.**

*David Matheson*



# IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ROBERT THE BRUCE



**"As I came by Lochmaben gate,  
It's there I saw the Johnston's riding:  
Away they go, and they fear'd no foe,  
With their drums a' beating, colours flying."**

On a scorchingly hot day in July, there were no "drums a'beating", no "colours flying" and certainly no "Johnston's riding" along Lochmaben's High Street. Ever since Roman times, Lochmaben has been a frontier town, with forts built in and around the town because of its strategic position close to the border with England. Our walk on that unusually hot day passed by the impressive ruins of Lochmaben Castle, built at the southern end of Castle Loch by Edward I of England in the 1300s, its massively thick walls suggesting that this castle was built for brutal and bloody war.

We walkers numbered thirteen, with no canine companions this time – it was just too, too hot! Originally, we had intended to follow the Core paths to the Royal Four Towns, following



in the footsteps of Robert the Bruce and the King's Kindly Tenants, but the alternative, a shady amble around Castle Loch was just too tempting. Besides, there was the promise of ice cream at journey's end! Temperatures outwith the welcome shade hovered around the 30°C mark. The path wends its way through mixed woodland, but when you do leave the shade, you are under big skies and that intense heat. As you walk along the track, you catch occasional glimpses of the loch and the rich diversity of bird life on it.

Castle Loch Nature Reserve contains nationally and internationally important fauna and flora. The waters of the loch boast some of the U.K.'s best bream, carp, tench and pike fishing. No fishing for us that day, but that promise of "probably the best ice cream in the world" from Crolla's spurred us on.

Crolla's is next to Lochmaben Town Hall, where there are two impressive stained-glass windows of Robert the Bruce and William Wallace. They are well worth seeing. A none too scientific poll was taken on which of Mr Crolla's excellent ice cream was the most refreshing on such a hot day, with the winner declared, after several recounts, as Lemon and Lime. I'm a vanilla man myself.

My thanks to all who made this historic stravaig so enjoyable: sunshine and shade, beautiful diverse surroundings, feeling at one with nature, great fellowship and ice cream too! What's not to like? **David Johnston**



## BADMINTON REPORT

The Badminton Club started a new season on Monday, 20th September. This was the first time that members had played since the 2019/20 season had to end prematurely due to the start of lockdown in March 2020.

The members are delighted to be playing once again but there have been several changes. We now play only on a Monday evening, instead of Tuesday and Thursday. This is because, due to Covid restrictions, two organisations cannot use the Main Hall one after the other. The Brownies have first claim on a Tuesday and another organisation requested the use of the hall on a Thursday, so we agreed to move to a Monday.

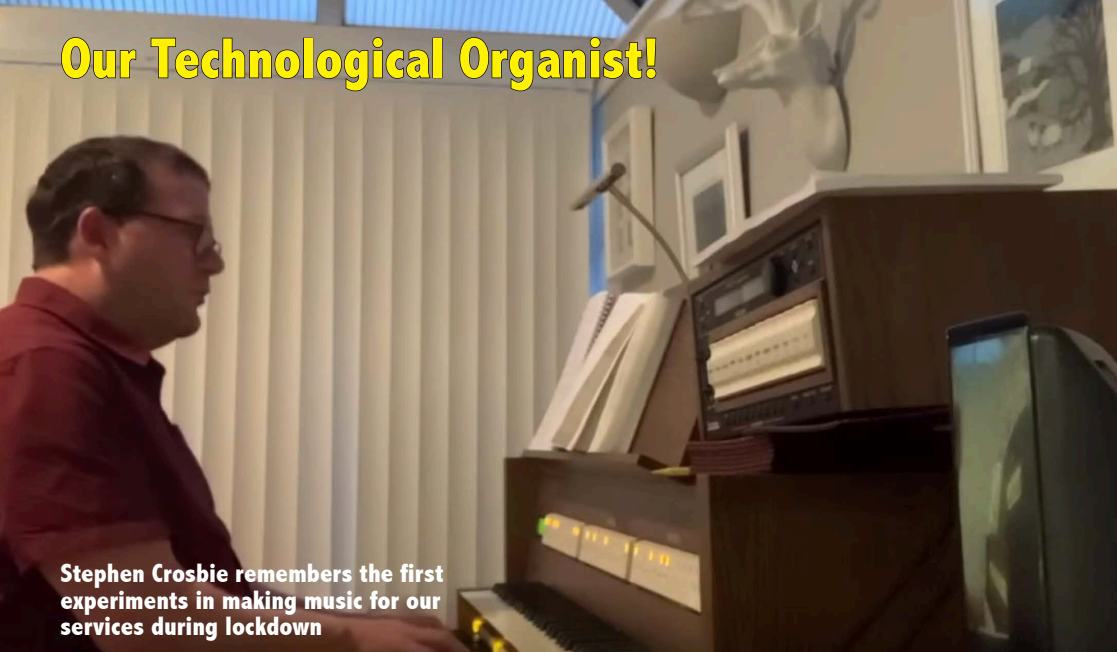
Luckily this suits our members. Masks are worn only when not playing on the court, there is frequent sanitising of hands and shuttlecocks, and social distancing is observed. Another change is that we're not having a break for tea and biscuits round the kitchen table. This has been missed because we all enjoy having a blether as well as playing badminton. Despite all these changes, they do not detract from our enjoyment of the game; there is still plenty of fun and laughter!

**Jane Marchbank**





## Our Technological Organist!

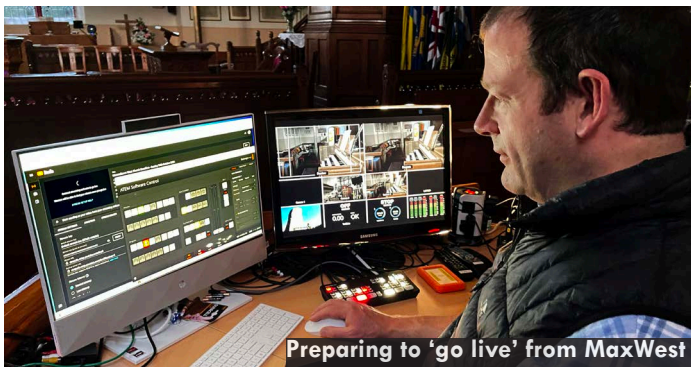


**Stephen Crosbie remembers the first experiments in making music for our services during lockdown**

When lockdown came and the church was closed, I spent some time working out with Mike Marshall how we might record the hymns for our online virtual services. Fortunately, I have an organ at home, taking up quite a bit of space in our conservatory! We started simply, with me playing the hymns and recording them on my iPad. The digital files would then be emailed to Mike. Sometimes the sound levels were not always ideal so several takes were needed. It could be challenging at times - I had to contend with bird song outside or the rain on the conservatory roof and a creaky stool! A little later I managed to get a small recording device connected to the organ and that made a great difference. When the first lockdown restrictions were lifted I was able to get back into the church, which had its own special device on which I could record the hymns.

But we could all see that the way ahead lay with live streaming of our Sunday services. We got the go-ahead to buy and install ourselves some cameras and all the equipment needed to transmit services on our new MaxWest channel on YouTube. While Mike has been looking after this aspect, there are times when he can't manage a Sunday, and this means I have to be both organist and video controller! It's a most enjoyable (and at times exciting) experience having to do this, playing in the hymn tunes as well as working the three cameras and the visuals on the computers. A lot's been learned in the last 18 months and I'm really looking forward to doing more of this in the future.

**Stephen Crosbie**



**Preparing to 'go live' from MaxWest**

## A Message from Twynholm



**Violet Service has helped guide our MaxWest Strategy Group through the many difficult months of lockdown. With her valuable task now completed, we asked her to tell us about her own church at Twynholm.**

It has been a great pleasure to join you in worship in your beautiful church at Max West, which is larger and brighter than the church where I usually worship, and where I have been a member for more than fifty years, twenty as Session Clerk. Tarff and Twynholm Church building stands at a junction at the top of a hill on the edge of the village of Twynholm. It sits amid gravestones, including those of Covenanters shot by Grierson of Lag in 1685. A church has stood in "Twinham" since the twelfth century and the present building was built in 1818. Two stained glass memorial windows, one by Stephen Adam, are of special significance and beauty. Our manse was sold after we linked with Gatehouse in 2015, and our small Church Hall with a refurbished kitchen (all work kindly donated by a member) has just reopened. These are the buildings but the buildings are not the Church. The Church is the people!

We are a Congregation of 125, with our minister, Rev Val Ott and attached Reader Gwen Corson. When our building was closed because of Covid, members were emailed "Reflections" with YouTube links, and those without email received them by post. Thankfully we are now back in our building but Reflections are still sent out, as our weekly congregation in these times is rarely above 20. The Kirk Session has 11 members and the Congregational Board has 15. We have two communion services in the year, with an offering for Mercy Ships. Two of our former members volunteered on Mercy Ships.

Hospitality has always been important for us. Before the pandemic, a soup lunch was served monthly after the service. On Advent Sundays there was a brunch, and the Christmas Family service, with a children's nativity presentation, followed by refreshments and mince pies was always special. It may be that we will resume hospitality in a simpler form as we move towards Christmas. You showed how it could be done after the Induction of Rev Johannes. Although our Sunday Club membership has dwindled there are children in the community who join us for our special services.

Elders distribute our church magazine throughout the community four times a year. Four volunteer organists working on a rota provide the music for our praise; and our small enthusiastic choir gives our voices a lift, even behind masks!

The Guild, restarted in October, is likely to have a healthy membership of over twenty again, with members taking it in turn to organise and run the meetings. This system works well sharing the load, building confidence and increasing faith.

In these days of change, despite diminishing numbers and uncertainty of which buildings will remain open for worship, Christian life will continue because our Lord does not change -

He is the same "yesterday, today and forever."

**Violet Service**





## Our Church Officer revealed!

**Meet Tommy Jardine - you need to be in the church early in the day to catch a glimpse of him! He's more than just someone with a box of tools and a repair kit by his side...**

**W**hen asked to do a "short piece" for MaxWest Contact magazine I wasn't quite sure what to write, but I thought it could be interesting to give an insight into my background, before revealing the inner secrets of the job of Church Officer! I am an Auctioneer to trade, having run my own local

business and before becoming involved with West Sound Radio for over 20 years. As well as presenting the Breakfast Show, (with a 4.15 am rise), I was also the Charity Manager for "Cash for Kids", raising money for under-privileged children across the region, and helping them raise £1million in the twenty years I was involved. Oh... and I was also a qualified Estate Agent and President of the Institute of Advanced Motorists & Motor Cyclists in Dumfries & Galloway!

I live within a mile of the Church with my wife, Margaret and our two wee Westies, Hamish and Bonnie. I'm a keen supporter of Guid Nychburris and I was honoured to be a Lynor to Cornet Maxwell in 1996 and Pursuivant in the Royal Burgh of Kirkcudbright in 2006. This did involve me buying a horse - a beautiful 16/2 Chestnut mare named Roxy!

### **And so, to the job!**

On my first day it was an absolute delight to listen to the vast experience and knowledge of my mentor Bob Wilson - I very quickly realised that there is nothing that Bob doesn't know about this wonderful Church.

I did notice though that nothing was written down - Bob kept a mental note of everything, including all the requirements of Groups attending the Church Halls! I therefore set about compiling a comprehensive document detailing all the requirements, with everything from position of tables and chairs down to cups required for "Good Companions".

The next job was to note all the "Operational" details from boilers down in the cellar to position of electric switch boxes etc. This has now been incorporated into a "Church Officer's Manual" and backed up digitally of course thus, should anything happen to me, the information can be easily referred to.

There is so much going on behind the scenes in the Church, involving a very dedicated group of people! I am very passionate about the small part that I play in the day-to-day running of the place. This can be everything from my daily internal and external checks to make sure everything is safe and secure, to setting up for the growing number of Groups we now have. As Covid tightened its grip over 18 months ago, I remember sadly, having to post the cancellations on the white board in the Main Hall. But now, it is a delight to see a full board listing Badminton (Mon), Brownies (Tues), Guides & Rangers (Wed) and National Youth Choir of Scotland (Thu). With additional Film Nights, Guild Meetings and the Loreburn Retirement Group, things are getting busier!

As previously mentioned, I'm a bit of an early riser, having been accustomed to that 4:15am rise, so you'll find me in Church (Mon-Fri) usually from 7:30 - 9:30am. If you're passing, pop in and say, a socially distanced, "Hello!"