

***This week's, and previous weeks' news, can be found on the front page of the Presbytery website***

<https://lothianandborderspresbytery.org.uk/home/news-events/>



Dear Friends

A story from Madagascar.

Nirina is a runner. His home, surrounded by paddy fields, is about 10km from the centre of Antsirabe in Madagascar where he operates a rickshaw. A common occupation of the poor. Every day, morning and evening, he runs the route to work where he works. At work he rides about 60km on his cycle rickshaw.

In 1997 Tsiry Rakotomalala organised Antsirabe's first rickshaw race where he organised prizes of rice, chickens and other food items. Then things moved on when in 2017 Yann Mayette, former international coach, became president of the local running club. Convinced that Madagascar's athletes had the potential to compete internationally, Mayette encouraged the runners by offering a microcredit plan through the club, enabling them to buy their rickshaw cycles whereas before they had hired them. Despite wearing second hand shoes and with little equipment these men have become competitive athletes.

Last year Nirina and a colleague ran in the Mascareignes, one of the races in the celebrated Grand Raid, an ultra-trail event on the Indian Ocean island of Reunion. Out of 1400 participants the two rickshaw runners finished second and third! Despite his athletes' impressive results, Mayette remains disillusioned by the lack of interest shown by the Madagascar authorities.

This wonderful wee story reminds us that it takes a number of people playing their particular part to bring projects to their fulfilment. It is also testimony to Rakotomalala & Mayette's ability to see the potential in others. There will always be others who don't see what we see or will remain negative to new things. I have rejoiced recently when I have learnt of a church in our presbytery nurturing the talent of a young man in music or of enabling older people to work alongside their local primary school. I pray that we may play our part and be people who help bring out the best in others.

### **New Presbytery Positions**

We are delighted to confirm the appointment of Rev. Dr. Dan Carmichael as the next Presbytery Clerk for Lothian & Borders. Dan will take up his post on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Likewise we are thrilled that the Rev. Dr. Jock Stein has agreed to take over from Helen Howden and be the Moderator for the year 2026-27 after the June Presbytery meeting.

### **Latest Videos**

The Leading Your Church into Growth (LYCiG) video link which was viewed at Presbytery is

[https://youtu.be/42MYOaMulUI?si=zylZRyzY\\_nLf8frp](https://youtu.be/42MYOaMulUI?si=zylZRyzY_nLf8frp)

The corrected video & link of Rev. Christopher Watt, Minister of Newbattle: St. Nicholas Buccleuch, chatting about his first few weeks in post

[https://youtu.be/hJKO0AqMsAs?si=6kRg9qL\\_zelmTdmz](https://youtu.be/hJKO0AqMsAs?si=6kRg9qL_zelmTdmz)

### **From the Interim Presbytery Clerk...**

*Good news from the Duns and District and Coldstream and District Parishes l/w Eccles and Leitholm. The nominating committees in these charges have now chosen sole nominees. Duns have appointed Moira Taylor-Wintersgill to preach on Sunday the 12th of April, and Coldstream have appointed her husband Kerr Wintersgill to preach on the Sunday following. They have been ministering on the West Mainland in the Orkneys since 2022.*

### **Christian Aid meeting with Purity in Musselburgh**

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March at 7:00 p.m.**

This year's Christian Aid Week (17th - 24<sup>th</sup> May) will focus on their work with partners in Kenya.

**St Andrew's High in Musselburgh** is hosting a meeting with Purity Osumba, the Programme and Partnerships Coordinator for Christian Aid in Kenya on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March at 7:00 p.m. Purity is part of the Impact division, a global team of development experts who support staff and partners across the organisation to deliver long term humanitarian work.

Join us as we hear from Purity, about the work enabled by churches in Scotland. Purity specialises in gender justice work, and our partners in Kenya have a particular focus on enabling women to develop their skills and to give financial stability to their families. Everyone is welcome to come and hear more about how lives are changed through the support that we give to Christian Aid.

### **St.Cuthbert's Day is March 20<sup>th</sup>**

A guided walk by Mr Alasdair Johnston around Old Melrose starting at 2pm.

For more see the poster attached

### **Tara Curlewis visiting from Rome**

Tara, our Presbytery Mission Partner is the minister of St. Andrews, Presbyterian Church of Scotland in Rome and represents the World Council of Reformed Churches in that city. She will be back in Scotland in early summer. Tara had a good time the first time she was in our Presbytery.

If you want to see if you can have get her to your church do get in touch with the Mission Officer.

### **Presbytery Pilgrimage Sun March 22nd to Sun March 29th**

We are walking the Forth to Farne Way his year -North Berwick to Lindisfarne.

Please get in touch to receive further details of the itinerary or if you are hoping to stay over in one of the stops.

### **Updated Presbytery Messy Church Gathering date of May 19<sup>th</sup>**

Note the change of date. Tyne Valley have kindly offered to host in North Middleton Village Hall (just off the A7) 630pm for food. With a guest speaker.

## **Penicuik Prayer Breakfast**

**Sat 28<sup>th</sup> March 9-1030 at Penicuik Trinity Community Church Hall**

With a focus on children & Youth.

## **Edinburgh Passion Play**

*As you may know, we produce the annual Easter play in the heart of Edinburgh every Easter Saturday. It is Edinburgh's largest free, public presentation of the Gospel story and we feel really important to be able to present the story whilst we have the freedom to do so.*

<https://easterplay.org/>

*We change the script every year to keep it relevant and this year the play is "Unbroken" which explores how Jesus connected with disabled people. We have 7 disabled cast members this year which is really exciting and a truly diverse cast.*

*The play takes place on April 4th at 2pm and we have attached a slide for your Church notices*

*It's a great way to introduce folk to the Easter story.*

*Finally, we would love to connect more with the churches in Edinburgh and work more closely together. Each year it is a big struggle for us to produce the play and we could do with some support and help, so if you are interested, let me know. I'm happy to come and chat.*

*Many thanks Suzanne Artistic Director, Cutting Edge Theatre*

## **Poster attached**

## **Disability Awareness Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2026**

### **‘One Body, Many Parts’: Independence or Interdependence?**

is the theme of this year's [Disability Awareness Sunday](#)



Get a copy the free resources (in English or Welsh) at:

[throughtheroof.org/forchurches/disability-awareness-sunday](http://throughtheroof.org/forchurches/disability-awareness-sunday)



Be part of the movement.

Finally, I hope that you manage time to retreat to a deserted place at some point during Lent to reflect and pray. I can strongly recommend Kilmalieu. We were talking about 'courageous listening' this past weekend with fellow Mission Enablers.

<https://www.abernethy.org.uk/kilmalieu/>

Love & best wishes

Peter

**Rev. Peter J. Wood**

**Mission Officer for Lothian & Borders Presbytery**

Website: [www.lothianandborderspresbytery.org.uk/](http://www.lothianandborderspresbytery.org.uk/)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61552394798223>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/@LothianandBordersPresbytery/videos>

Instagram: [Presbytery of Lothian & Borders \(@pres\\_lothian\\_borders\)](#)