

Leaflet



Greenbank Parish Church
Braidburn Terrace, EH10 6ES
No 639 December 2014 / January 2015

Pulpit Diary

- Dec 5 Friday**
7.30pm Pre-Communion Service
- Dec 7 Second Sunday in Advent**
9.00am Communion
10.30am Communion
(Spectrum and Springboard meet as usual)
3.00pm Communion (Braid Room)
- Dec 14 Third Sunday in Advent**
10.30am All Age Gift Service
(Spectrum and Springboard – end of first term)
3.00pm Blue Christmas Service
(for those coping with loss)
- Dec 21 Fourth Sunday in Advent**
10.30am Lessons and Carols
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve**
7.00pm All Age Service
11.30pm Watchnight Service
(Carol singing from 11.10pm)
- Dec 25 Christmas Day (Thursday)**
10.30am All Age Service
- Dec 28**
10.30am Morning Worship
- 2015**
- Jan 4**
10.30am Morning Worship
(Spectrum and Springboard – start of second term)
- Jan 11**
10.30am Morning Worship
- Jan 18**
10.30am Morning Worship
- Jan 25**
10.30am Morning Worship
- Feb 1**
9.30am First Sunday Service
led by Kirk Session
10.30am Morning Worship

Minister's Letter

Dear Friends

It is the middle of November and I have just come back home from a training conference. The conference was held in a large hotel, part of a chain of hotels. As we sat at lunch, one of my colleagues remarked on the very stylish decorations that adorned the restaurant. Yes – you've guessed! Christmas had arrived in



that hotel! The Christmas tree stood in a corner. Garlands hung around the walls. And that hotel is not alone in welcoming Christmas six weeks early. For a week now the Christmas adverts of the big stores have been playing on our TV screens. The Christmas markets have been setting out their stalls in the cities. Musicians have been getting ready to release their latest songs, planning their dates carefully to give them a chance of a Christmas Number One. Some places have even celebrated the switch-on of their Christmas lights with a nativity play.

And if you think the middle of November is early some research has shown that we are beginning to think about Christmas earlier each year. Apparently many people are now beginning to plan their Christmas festivities in August! While we might wonder at all of this, there is nothing new in anticipating or preparing for Christmas.

In the bible, the Old Testament anticipates the coming of Christ not in terms of weeks or months or even years, but in terms of centuries. A people are prepared to welcome a new king whose reign of justice and love will know no end.

In the New Testament messengers from heaven announce the coming birth of Jesus to Mary and Joseph. A family is prepared to receive, nurture and protect God's Son.

On the world stage a strong Roman Empire has established peace in a region that will become the cradle of Christianity and has

created a network of communication that will allow the good news of Jesus Christ to go out to all the world.

And when all is ready and the time is right God in Christ enters the world.

And over the next 2000 years the Church will place a greater or lesser significance on the season of Ad-

vent – the four weeks before Christmas – as a time of preparation. During this season we are encouraged to examine our lives, to recognise our own failures and shortcomings and to prepare our hearts and minds to welcome once again the love and forgiveness God offers us in Christ.

It is this kind of preparation that is the theme of so many of the great hymns we sing at this time of year. One hymnwriter captures the anticipation and the excitement of Advent in these words:

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look East, and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

By the time you read this we will have entered Advent. Love, the Lord, is on the way! Here in Greenbank different events and services are planned to mark this season. I hope that in the midst of all the other preparations that this time of year involves you will make time to join us for some or all of these. You will be very welcome as, together, we prepare to celebrate the mystery and the miracle of God's incarnation, with all the possibilities it offers to the world of light and life and healing and wholeness.

With warmest wishes,

Alison I Swindells
Minister

Gift Service – Sunday 14th December

The children of Spectrum are invited to each bring a gift to the Gift Service at Christmas. These are given to children in needy circumstances in our own city and we know the gifts are appreciated.

Members of the congregation are also invited to bring a gift, if they would like to do so. Your parcels would be welcome!

Please bring your gift to the Service. It is helpful if it is wrapped and has a tag indicating whether suitable for a boy or girl and what age it is suitable for. Gifts are needed for a wide age range, from baby up to 15. **Thank you.**

Janet Ferguson, on behalf of the YES Group

Advent Collection for Christian Aid

Greenbank invites you to contribute to our annual appeal for Christian Aid in Advent. Please give generously. Donations made to the appeal this year will be doubled thanks to a scheme whereby the Government will match our donations.

From providing maternal healthcare in Kenya to ensuring poor communities receive the vital services we take for granted, your gift will help fund Christian Aid's work to eradicate poverty.

Thank you.

The Guild

It was appropriate that after an interesting evening on 21st October hearing the General Secretary of the Guild, Iain White, talking about our theme for the year "A world to serve", the Guild expanded upon that theme in leading the First Service on Sunday 2nd November. By contrast our meeting on 4th November was an illuminating illustrated talk by Maureen Kelly on the world of domestic service in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Our joint meeting with neighbouring Guilds, when we shall be entertained at Fairmilehead church with a programme of songs and scenes of the Highlands and Islands, will have passed by the time this *Leaflet* is in your hands and we shall be looking forward to our December meetings. On **2nd December**, at 2.30pm, we shall hear about *Spiritual Care in the NHS*, and then on **9th December** at 7pm (note earlier starting time) we shall have our Christmas party – a buffet meal interspersed with entertainment provided by two of our members.

On **6th January** we shall have a coffee morning in the Main Hall at 10.30am and then on **20th January**, at 2.30pm, we shall learn more about our project – *Mary's Meals*, one of the National Guild projects for the session. This is a precursor to our own fund-raising event for that charity which will be held in the church on **Tuesday 17th February** at 7.30pm with a jazz

concert given by Firrhill School pupils followed by refreshments. **Please put that date of 17th February in your diary** and come and support this event. Tickets will be on sale from 6th January at £8 for adults and £4 for children; the price includes the post-concert refreshments.

With the exception of the Christmas party all our meetings are open to members of the congregation and friends as well as to Guild members.

Kathleen Patrick

Coffee Group News

Thank you to all the coffee and tea drinkers after the 10.30am service for your generous donations. After expenses, I have been able to write cheques of £500 to give to SLA and £500 to the Greenbank YACHT appeal.

My thanks also go to the teams of volunteers who serve the coffee and tea – then clear up. Without you all the congregation would miss refreshments and fellowship after the morning service.

Finally my thanks go to Pauline Walker and Fiona Grant for their continued support on Sunday mornings.

Isobel Thom

Christmas Card Sale

Thanks to everyone who bought cards at the sale. The sales from the CrossReach cards and calendars were just over £200.

CrossReach and Dementia

A recent comment from Allan Logan, Head of Service for Older People, CrossReach:

"Through CrossReach, we support people across Scotland who are dealing with dementia. Since opening Scotland's first specialist care home for people with dementia in 1983 we have seen huge changes in the way society relates to the condition. We now understand that, while it is a devastating illness, a diagnosis must not signal the end to anyone's participation in their community, or their opportunities to live a fulfilling life.

Key to this is overcoming the prejudices and misconceptions that still exist about dementia, and helping people who have not witnessed the condition to understand the impact it has on people. Achieving this does not have to be complicated, and does not have to be led by public policy initiatives. CrossReach's Cameron House in Inverness has recently struck up a partnership with their local Gaelic primary school. Pupils meet regularly with Gaelic speaking residents to improve their

language skills and hear about the lives of those from a different generation. They learn that dementia does not stop people from enjoying life and sharing their skills and experience with others.

Dealing with dementia is not just a job for professionals in social care. We must be willing to allow our preconceptions of the illness to be challenged so people experiencing the effects of dementia remain active members of our communities, with a voice and a contribution to make. Our job is to ensure that people who live with dementia have, along with the rest of society, the opportunity to live positive and fulfilling lives."

For information about church organisations, please contact the Church Office (Mon–Fri, 9.00am–12.00 noon, 1.30pm–3.30pm):

Mrs Virginia Johnston

tel and fax: 0131 447 9969

e-mail: greenbankchurch@btconnect.com

The pastoral team can be contacted through the Church Office:

Rev Alison Swindells

tel and fax: 0131 447 4032

email: alisonswindells@blueyonder.co.uk

Rev W. Peter Graham

tel: 0131 445 5763

Youth Minister: Rev Bill Stone

tel: 07883 815 598

email: billstoneiii@gmail.com

World Mission Committee

Perspectives on Justice, Poverty and Migration

Last month we featured the need for a European dialogue on mission and unity. The World Mission Council's Strategy emphasises the need for our "comfort zones to be challenged as we labour to interpret the scriptures and traditions afresh for a new day".

In respect of poverty and social justice, we are asked to look again at the models of economic growth which are still clung to, in spite of the recent global financial crisis and the continuing failure of European economies. The need for a social and sustainable market economy relies on firm moral foundations. In our small local ways we act to challenge the established market economy through fair trade, the one world stall and other initiatives like the rice challenge. "The challenge for the churches in Europe is to encourage, enable and support the movement for justice ..." We need to push for wider change, and support agencies like Christian Aid which has been pressing for an end to secrecy in company ownership, irregular international tax devices, and money laundering. Each of us can individually lobby for such change.

Another hot topic as we run towards a General Election next year is that of migration. We need to remember that major movements of people have occurred across Europe since the 1500s. Europe's current population age profile is such that it has been established that EU states will need 35 million immigrants by 2025 if the level of the active work force is to be maintained. Rather than resisting the notion of increased migration, the challenge is to share the wealth of our economy with others, and live successfully together with people from different faiths and cultures. Practical ways of doing this include raising personal awareness about the issues and difficulties faced by migrants, challenging views which oppose EU migration, and again at local level, welcoming visitors and new residents from other parts of Europe and beyond into our congregation.

One World Stall

Our last stall this year is on the day this *Leaflet* comes out, i.e. 30th November, and will include a fair trade Christmas stall. The next regular stall will be on 11th January 2015!

Pam Jack



Thanks to those who have contributed to the Starter Packs which help people who have been homeless get established in their new home. Items in good condition are used to make up the packs. The next starter pack collection from Greenbank is on 1st February, after the morning service. **There is a particular need for glass tumblers, Jay cloths, white dish cloths and tea towels.**

See list below for suitable items to donate – in good condition, please.

Fresh Start List

Below is a full list of household goods wanted. *Please refer to it, to avoid giving unwanted items.*

Dishes and Crockery

Dinner plates, side plates, bowls, cutlery, mugs, glass tumblers, tea-towels.

Pots and Pans etc.

Pots with lids, milk pans, frying pans, plastic boxes, cooking utensils, can openers, potato peelers, wooden spoons.

Cleaning Things

Washing-up basins, washing-up liquid, toilet cleaner, toilet rolls, hand soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, dust pans and brushes, pedal bin liners, rubbish bags, all purpose cleaner, laundry tablets.

Bed Linen and Towels

Single flat sheets, double flat sheets, single duvet covers, double duvet covers, pillow cases, blankets, duvets, bed covers, towels, face cloths, bath mats, curtains, rugs.

Also wanted are small household electrical items – not TVs

To find out more about Fresh Start, pick up a leaflet on a Fresh Start Sunday, see www.freshstartweb.org.uk or telephone 476 7741.

Alison Ambler

Have you looked at the website?

www.greenbankchurch.org

Christmas Poems

These two books caught my attention in the Cornerstone Bookshop, both particularly useful at this time of year. *Christmas Poems* (£5.99) has a lovely selection for younger readers. *The Oxford Book of Christmas Poems* (£9.99) is an anthology of more than 120 poems, some of which you will recognise, including John Betjeman's 'Christmas' – one of my seasonal favourites, especially the verse:

And is it true? And is it true,
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Become a Child on Earth for me?

Joan Ritchie



YACHT Ceilidh

Saturday 20th September 2014



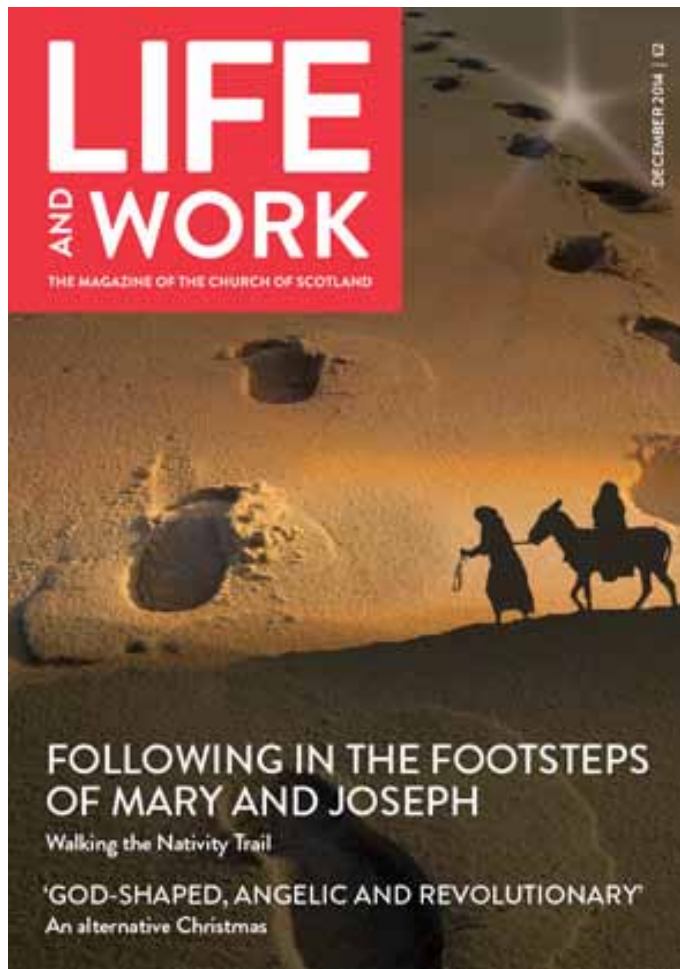
Thank You All

Thanks to one and all for their contribution by donation, participation and attendance at the Ceilidh and Open Day in September and for supporting the YACHT Campaign. There was a great atmosphere at both these “all age” events. The youngsters sat entranced at the musical performances at the Ceilidh; despite failing to “beat the goalie” the Rev John Stevenson is still hoping for that call from St Mirren; Alan Armit and Hugh Cowan made a mid afternoon request for earplugs to deaden the noise of excited games players in the Centenary Hall; and a couple leaving after an “Open Doors” visit said they were on their way to the Assembly Hall but “the coffee and scones at Greenbank could not be beaten – delicious”.



YACHT Fundraising Open Day Saturday 27th September 2014





christian
aid

Coffee  Morning

POVERTY

Morningside Parish Church Hall
(Foot of Braid Road)

Saturday 6th December 2014
10am-12noon

Stalls: Home Baking and preserves
Fairtrade Christmas Gifts & Crafts

Admission £3 (children £1) includes:
Refreshments: Coffee, Tea, Juice,
Christmas Pie, Scone

Donations for the Baking Stall will be
gratefully received.

Book Review

Why I am not an Atheist: Facing the Inadequacies of Unbelief

Edited by David Randall.

Christian Focus Publications Ltd, 2013.

ISBN 978-1-78191-270-6 £9.99

When pondering which book to review, I was intrigued by this book's title. As I have an interest in the 'how and why' of people's search for faith, the by-line of "eleven different people travelling on eleven diverse paths to faith in Jesus Christ and this book is where they meet" was compelling. Good, I thought, this should be straightforward. But, of course, it wasn't quite like that.

Each of the eleven authors contributes a chapter. Six of them work directly with Christianity in various roles and the others are a biologist, a CEO, a psychiatrist, a debater and a journalist. All attempt to examine what brought them to faith and keeps them there.

There is, in the main, an attempt to present the arguments in a balanced scholarly way, driven by the editor's premise that "every theory has its difficulties" but that authors should "consider if any other theory has less difficulties than the one criticised".

Do they succeed and are they convincing? The answer is, as you might expect, mixed and so the book, in my opinion, is a "curate's egg", only convincing in parts. I was disappointed to realise that all the authors are "members or friends of SOLAS, the Dundee based Centre for Public Christianity" which gives the work a strong evangelical flavour. I think that a more diverse author base might have made the book more objective and perhaps even more informative; a sorely missed opportunity.

There is, however, no doubting the sincerity and openness of the intelligently expressed personal views and many thoughtful snippets catch the eye. One was on the discussion of "people of all faiths and none" and the musing that "it is not whether people have faith but in what they have faith".

Worth the read? Try it and you can tell me afterwards...

Angus McLachlan

A Christmas Prayer

Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the
wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over
the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with
every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing that Christ brings,
and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy
children,

and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with
grateful thoughts,

forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

Robert Louis Stevenson

Congregational Register

Omitted from the Online

version of the Leaflet

Welcome Teams

December

- 7 **Ian Thom**, Keith Clark, Ray Dely, Catherine Hardie, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Anne Oxbrow, Isobel Thom, Kay Ellis, Charles Black, Greig Scott
- 14 **John Rutherford**, David Allan, Richard Denison, Caroline Kehoe, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones
- 21 **Donald King**, Brian Barron, Walter Crosby, Donald MacLeod, Roderick Morrison, Mairi Stevenson, Jim Young, Kathryn Sangster
- 28 **Rosemary McCulloch**, Rona Ferguson, Fiona Grant, Christina Morrow, Alison Murison, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Toby Tucker, Alastair Ross

2015

January

- 4 **John Ritchie**, Eric Brown, Stewart Coghill, Ralph Davidson, Susan Inch, Gill Sweetman, Ian Thomson, David Easton, Susan Jackman
- 11 **Alan Armit**, Edith Armit, Louise Coghill, Iain Davidson, Hugh Cowan, Susan Black, Malcolm Watters, Nora Kellock, Elizabeth Mackay
- 18 **Stuart Sanders**, Moira Davidson, John Murison, Rachel Cadell, Jenny Wright, Sandy Cameron, Carrie Reid, Moira Land, Julia Dunbar
- 25 **Keith Winton**, Eileen Campbell, Richard Dunbar, Clifford Hastings, Chris Horne, Doris Laing, Enid Mowat, Robin Nimmo

February

- 1 **John George**, Rhian Ferguson, Alastair Hunter, Hazel Macaulay, Kathleen Patrick, Dorothy Whitehead, Tony Foster

Coffee Rota

December

- 7 Communion – *no coffee*
- 14 Library
- 21 The Flower Group
- 28 The Teachers' Group

2015

January

- 4 Help the Homeless
- 11 Anne Oxbrow (D33) & Janet Walker
- 18 World Mission
- 25 Springboard

February

- 1 Edith Armit (D12A)



Crèche Rota

December

- 7 Lorna Htet-Khin
- 14 Hazel McLachlan
- 21 Shona Murray
- 28 Isobel Thom

2015

January

- 4 Janet Ferguson
- 11 Eileen McKinnon
- 18 Sharon Hamilton
- 25 Victoria Heathwood



Flower Rota

Provided by

December

- 7 Paddy Bowman

2015

January

- 4 Flower Group
- 11 Ishbel Clark
- 18 Sinclair Family
- 25 Mackay Family

February

- 1 Innes Family

Delivered by

Enid Mowat

Diana Hastings

Win Kerr

Marjory Goodban

Janet Edwards



Material for the February *Leaflet* should be delivered to the Church Office or to the Editors' pigeon-hole in the Main Hall by **Sunday 11th January** or sent by e-mail by **9am on Tuesday 13th January** to greenbankleaflet@googlemail.com

To make contact with any of the organisations referenced in this Leaflet, please use the telephone number given, if there is one. Otherwise please contact the Church Office. Website: www.greenbankchurch.org



WHY WORRY?

“Pack Up Your Troubles” was the song chosen to accompany the launch of the BBC’s World War One Centenary. It was written in the early days of the war for performance in the music hall by two Welsh brothers, George and Felix Powell. Its words and tune are still familiar to us a century later, yet back then even its writers did not expect it to catch on. However, in 1915 New York publishers Francis Day and Hunter held a competition with a prize of 100 guineas for a marching song for the troops. It was only when the Powell brothers adapted their song as an entry and won the prize that they realised the song’s true potential and quickly added it into their show’s repertoire.

The success of this song can be readily explained. It starts with something familiar to every soldier in the country: *your old kit bag...* and then mentions a product that came into its own in World War One, the *fat* [cigarette] with the *Lucifer* [match] to light it. From her considerable experience the broadcaster Kate Adie has commented that even today, when the ill-effects are well known, soldiers smoke in war zones. “Many who never smoked at home suddenly find themselves lighting up. It’s communal, comforting, calming.” And then comes what Gareth Malone has described as the “moment where it’s almost like a sermon from the pulpit, comforting...” *What’s the use of worrying? It never was worthwhile.*

These words may remind us of some questions Jesus posed. *Can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? Can you extend your life by a single moment by worrying?* asks Jesus. The obvious answer is, No. Not one of us can add a moment to the years of our lives by worrying.

Jesus proceeds to give us clear advice. “Stop your worrying. It’s pointless. It does not help at all. In fact, worrying only aggravates your life. Rather, concentrate on the most important things in life: God, God’s reign, love for one another, mercy and compassion. Seek first God and God’s reign of justice and mercy and everything will be provided for you.”

Jesus’ questions and alternatives are clear and to the point. And yet we prefer to cling to our lives as if we are in control. We try to control every aspect of our lives and the lives of those around us. Ultimately our preoccupation with control disguises our futile attempts to avoid suffering and death. When we suffer and die, we lose control of our lives. Just as we have no control over our birth, so too we have no control over our death.

All the major religions suggest that the key to a peaceful life is letting go of control and worry. If we can live in the freedom of the present moment and focus on the peace of God, we shall find life turned upside down and inside out. We will no longer worry about the past or the future but will be fully alive to the present. And by being fully present to ourselves, to others and to God, we will live our lives to the fullest.

Jean-Pierre de Causade, a 17th century French Jesuit priest, emphasised the importance of what he called “the sacrament of the present moment”. He believed very firmly that God is

loving us each and every moment of our lives, for God can no more stop loving us than the sun can stop radiating heat. It follows, he says, that God’s love is somehow coming to us through each single moment, through what is happening just now. “Why should not every moment of our lives be a sort of communion with the divine love?” he asks. And he draws the conclusion: Try not to let apprehension about the future or regret about the past flood over into your present living and make you miserable.

Is this not what Jesus said? He made a simple and challenging appeal. He invited his hearers, long ago and now, to look around and see how God feeds the birds and clothes the lilies. The invitation is to see God as life-giving, generous, lavish. Not even the greatest of Israel’s kings was so gorgeously adorned as the flowers of the field. Jesus saw reality as characterised by a cosmic generosity.

Jesus had a strong, lively sense of the goodness of God, the creator of the world. We can assume that his teaching grew out of his own experience and that when he taught his followers not to worry about tomorrow, he led by example. Jesus lived for the present, giving his total attention to the task in hand, to the person in front of him, and celebrating the goodness of God here and now.

The alternative to seeing reality this way is worrying, being anxious. Jesus gently rebukes those who are anxious by describing them as being “of little faith”. Worry and faith are opposites, for faith is trust in the generosity of God. One famous preacher once went so far as to say that “Worry is atheism”. This does not mean that the things we so often worry about do not matter. It is not that we are to renounce all these things – as if we could do without the food and drink and clothing mentioned by Jesus – but we are not to make them our priorities, an end in themselves.

The life of faith is not without its issues, concerns and challenges. There are setbacks, delays, detours, failures, frustrations, as well as joys, triumphs, victories, and accomplishments. Few of us are exempt from persistent worry and anxiety. Jesus understands this: his call to worry-free living is not based on unrealistic views of the world. He is inviting people to focus on God and God’s vision for all creation. We can face life, with all its uncertainties and contingencies, with the assurance that we are not alone – that God hears, sees and cares about us and our situation.

So why worry? Let go of your worries. Trust in God. Live each moment in peace. Let God be the dominating power in our lives. Seek God’s reign and all will be well.

For further reading:

The teaching of Jesus about the futility of worry is to be found in St Matthew 6, 25-34, which is very similar to St Luke 12, 22-31.

Gareth Malone tells how “Pack up your troubles” became so popular on BBC iWonder. This can be found at

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z3ypr82>