

Greenbank Connections



October 2016

Issue 655

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Guild Annual Gathering: "A passionate speech from Sally Magnusson took us from laughter to tears" (page 6)

Greenbank Parish Church, Edinburgh

Online version: www.greenbankchurch.org/about/the-newsletter/

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Minister's Letter

Dear Friends



One of my abiding memories of my first visit to Pittsburgh last January was a communion service, which I attended in the theological seminary. There, on weekdays, the staff and students came together, just before lunch, for worship in the seminary chapel. Every service was different. Whether it resembled the style of Taizé or Iona or a more traditional worship service depended upon the leader for the day. Every Thursday however communion was celebrated – and I use that word “celebrated” deliberately. The layout in the chapel can easily be changed. Normally for communion the table is placed in the centre with the seats in blocks all around it. At the particular communion service which made such an impression on me we were invited to come forward to the table to receive communion. Two people were serving – one held a plate of home-made gluten-free bread that gave

off the most wonderful aroma. Another held a large cup of wine. When you went forward you were offered bread which you dipped in the wine before eating and returning to your seats. That was a very different practice from our own and thought provoking in its own way.

But what made such an impression on me was the sense of joy that was present as people actively and spiritually participated in what was a real celebration of the Lord's Supper. I was not the only one to remark afterwards on that sense of joy we had experienced.

Communion is one of the two sacraments recognised in the Reformed tradition. The other is baptism. Each is generally understood to be a visible sign of an invisible grace. Of course, being part of a Reformed Church, there are different interpretations (even within the Church of Scotland!) of what exactly this means. Perhaps there are three key points to remember when it comes to communion.

Firstly, this sacrament was instituted by Christ himself as he shared a last meal with his followers and so when we celebrate communion we do so in obedience to a divine command to remember him. We celebrate this sacrament as a way of remembering Jesus Christ and his giving of his life on the cross for the life of the world.

Secondly, this sacrament was instituted not for Christ's benefit but for ours. Through it, provision is made for our human weakness. It is we who are reminded of the grace and forgiveness and new life that Christ offers us.

Thirdly, when we celebrate this sacrament we do so in faith and in response to God's

faithfulness. As in gratitude we offer back to God all that we have and all that we are, we are drawn together as one body, united in Christ to witness through the power of his Spirit to his love in the world.

The first Reformers recognised how important this sacrament was to the life of the Church and the individual believer. John Calvin thought we should be celebrating the Lord's Supper every week while others thought that monthly would be more appropriate. Unfortunately the initial shortage of ministers after the Reformation made this impossible and communion was celebrated far less frequently than it might otherwise have been.

This is the tradition which we have inherited, although gradually things have been changing towards a more frequent celebration of the sacrament. Recently the Kirk Session agreed that we would have a short informal communion, for any who wished to participate, after the morning service on the last Sunday of the month, commencing in October.

I hope that these will be meaningful and joyful occasions when together we can celebrate God's love for the world.

Wishing you every blessing,

Alison I Swindells
Parish Minister

The pastoral team can be contacted through the Church Office or directly:

Rev Alison Swindells

tel and fax: 0131 447 4032

email: alisonswindells@blueyonder.co.uk

Rev W. Peter Graham

tel: 0131 445 5763

Messy Church

The most recent Messy Church at Greenbank Church was held on Saturday 10th September (see photographs) – a good time was had by all. The next Messy Church will be held on **Saturday 19th November** at 4pm.



The house built on a rock and the house built on sand



Annual subscription for *Life & Work* and donations for *Greenbank Connections*

It is the time of year when you are invited to subscribe for 12 editions of the Church of Scotland's *Life & Work* magazine for the 2017 calendar year. The annual subscription is £28, payable by **15th November 2016** to enable us to submit the Church's bulk order in time. We will order *Life & Work* only for those who have made the payment by that date.

Greenbank Connections (formerly *The Leaflet*), with its up-to-date news about Greenbank Church, is provided to all members free of charge for nine editions during 2017. In order to defray the printing and production costs, a suggested donation of **£10 or more** per household, also payable

preferably by 15th November 2016, would be welcome.

A single payment of £38 can be made to cover both *Greenbank Connections* and *Life & Work*.

Payments, stating whether you are subscribing to *Life & Work* and/or contributing to *Greenbank Connections* and, importantly, giving details of your name and address, should be put in an envelope addressed to The Treasurer and delivered to the Church Office (by post or hand) or through the Sunday offering bags. Cheques should be made payable to "Greenbank Church".

John Ritchie
Congregational Treasurer

YACHT: Photographic Competition 2016

Many thanks to all those who submitted entries for this year's photographic competition – 73 photographs in total were received – and to all those who voted for their favourites.

94 completed voting slips were received by the end of August deadline. I am pleased to report that there was a clear favourite for the cover photograph and three clear winners in each of the four seasonal categories, so we now have 13 photographs from which to create the **Greenbank Calendar for 2017**.

The Calendar, priced at **£6 each or £10 for two**, will be on sale in the Main Hall on the afternoon of the YACHT Treasure Trail, **Saturday 1st October**. Copies will also be

available after the 10.30am service each Sunday and from the Church office during the week.

John Murison
YACHT committee

For information about church organisations, please contact the Church Office:

*(Mon–Fri, 8.30am–12.00 noon,
1.30pm–3.00pm)*

Mrs Virginia Johnston

tel and fax: 0131 447 9969

email: greenbankchurch@btconnect.com

To make contact with any organisation featured in Greenbank Connections, please use the telephone number given, if there is one. Otherwise please contact the Church Office.

Website: www.greenbankchurch.org

The Guild

Our summer coffee mornings were well attended by members and friends. Some members also assisted with the provision of refreshments for the Holiday Club in August. Our winter season opens on **Tuesday 4th October at 7.30pm** in the Braid Room when we look forward to a talk about the *History of Thomas Tunnock* to be given by Alan Burnett. This may be of particular interest to anyone with a sweet tooth! The Rev Alison Swindells will talk to us on **18th October** using as her theme this year's National Guild theme *Go in Joy*, and our first **November meeting, on the 1st**, will be a talk by Ruth Borham entitled *100 years of the Usher Hall*. Our meetings are open to all who are interested in the topics and we are also delighted if people who are interested in the work of the Guild will join as members.

Kathleen Patrick

Annual Gathering

On 4th September over 2,000 Guild members and friends gathered in the Caird Hall, Dundee, and what a gathering it was! The Moderator's address was a wonderful mix of warmth, inspiration and humour. A passionate speech from Sally Magnusson took us from laughter to tears as she told of caring for her Mother in dementia and how it has led her to set up *Playlist for Life*, a charity using music to improve the lives of dementia sufferers. Her video clip of an elderly man moved by music to communicate again was very emotional and showed the value of the *Playlist for Life* project. The Heart and Soul Band (*see photo opposite*) led us in enthusiastic singing – 2,000 voices raised in wholehearted praise... and even some dancing in the aisles. It was a wonderful day.

Edith Armit



Eco-Column

This month's eco focus is on the work we have initiated and developed to make our premises both energy efficient and more attractive to users. Now that the darker nights and colder temperatures are arriving, we are interested in feedback on the changes in lighting levels and heating control arrangements which are being introduced. The main actions are described below.

The summer has seen two major changes, each moving us significantly along the path of reducing our carbon emissions and caring better for God's creation. The first is based on the generosity of the members who contributed to Light a Light. We have replaced all of the down lighters in the Centenary Hall, the Hermitage and Braid Rooms, the corridors and the staircases. We saved a great deal of money by doing it as we replaced our emergency lighting system. A number of other bulbs have been replaced in the Link corridor and the

kitchen corridor. There is still some money left and it will be spent where it will make the biggest difference. More information to come on this!

The second major innovation demonstrates that comfort need not be incompatible with saving energy. Our new intelligent heating system has been installed and is now in the process of being set up. It covers the Church, the Main Hall, the Lower Hall, the Upper Hall, the Centenary Hall, the Hermitage Room and the Braid Room. We set the temperature that we want each area to have and the times we want it and the system judges when to switch the heating on, depending on the difference between the outside temperature and the desired temperature. After a little time, all the evidence suggests that we will be more comfortable and reduce the energy we use. A double win!

David Jack, David Allan



Everest in a Day

On the 15th of August, my friend Angus and I, with the support of my Dad, undertook the challenge of climbing ten Munros in one day. The Munros that we climbed have a combined height greater



than Mount Everest, which is a fitting reason to do this event to fund-raise for my year volunteering in Nepal.

We woke up bright and early at 4 o'clock so that we could get to our start location. After a twisting journey with a beautiful sunrise, we had a bite of breakfast and set off up our first Munro, Creag Leacach. Despite being in the cloud, we made good time and reached the top at 7.45am. On our journey to our second peak, we rose up above the clouds, giving us a remarkable view over to Cairn Toul and Ben Macdui, the second highest mountain in Scotland. After that, we had to navigate through the cloud to our next three peaks, which unfortunately did not give us any views. My Dad decided that that was a suitable time to tell us that it was in this exact location that he had once got lost and spent three hours finding his bearings! However, we navigated well and made our way up to our sixth peak, Cairn Bannoch, where we had lunch in sunshine with views all around to Aberdeenshire and the Cairngorms.

The final stretch of our day was spent in brilliant conditions, with not a cloud in the sky. However, it was the stage of the day where feet began to tire and blisters were setting in. On our way

from Broad Cairn, our seventh peak, to Cairn Taggart, our eighth, we had to stop to deal with blisters, which was very important with our two highest peaks to come. We climbed our ninth peak, Carn a'Coire Boidheach, which marked us reaching the height of Everest. To mark the occasion, we took a picture with some Nepalese prayer flags that we brought along. We then moved on to Lochnagar, our highest mountain of the day, where we met up with the rest of my family and cousins to complete the descent together. It was a very tiring day for our feet, but a thoroughly rewarding one.

Back in April of this year, I went out to the Island of Coll to participate in Project Trust's selection course to volunteer with them in 2017/18. I was selected to be a volunteer teacher in Nepal, where I will be teaching English, Maths and Science in a rural village. It is a remarkable opportunity, and one that I am thoroughly looking forward to doing next year. I have been busy fund-raising so far by selling local free

range eggs and babysitting and gardening, as well as this event, and I have steadily been breaking down my target of £6,000. I have got a Cabaret evening planned where there will be live music and comedy, as well as a continuation of my egg selling and odd jobs. If you want to find out more about my year abroad, please do get in contact at:

alasdair.bisset@gmail.com
[uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/
 everest-in-a-day](http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/everest-in-a-day)

Thank you for taking the time to read my article about my year volunteering.

Alasdair Bissett

Alasdair has been coming to church for some time now with his parents and grandfather, Charles Grant. Brother Tom was one of the student helpers at Holiday Club. (Editors)

World Mission

Nepal Update

Back in April we reported on the *Let us build a House* campaign which was being encouraged by the World Mission Council to raise money to help the earthquake victims in Nepal. Greenbank generously contributed £600.

The Church of Scotland has recently announced that more than £215,000 has been raised to help rebuild communities in Nepal after the earthquake which left more than 700,000 people homeless. All the money donated will go to building homes which cost around £500 each to build and will transform the lives of people who have lost everything.

More than 8,000 people across Nepal were killed in the devastating quake and a further 22,000 were injured. The United Mission to Nepal has helped repair roads, schools, hospitals, and water and electricity plants and is also training masons to build homes that can withstand earthquakes. Unfortunately, some remote villages have lost most of their young men to migration, leaving women, children, people with disabilities and the elderly living among the destruction.

However, progress on building homes has been delayed as charities wait for permission from the Nepali Government, which has taken over a year to decide how to allocate millions in international aid funds across the country. The government's register of quake victims has left off many people who should be eligible, including remote village dwellers who don't have land ownership documents, or people who can't read and write.

There are still large numbers of people across rural Nepal who are living in inadequate shelters – in caves, tents or under bits of tin. Over a hundred thousand homeless households have complained that they were left off the register.

The United Mission to Nepal will continue to lobby the Government until they can get permission to start working on the homes with the funding from the Church of Scotland. In the meantime they are glad to be able to help ensure people have clean water, access to electricity and are able to walk safely to their villages. It is disappointing that these people who have suffered so much are still without proper homes.

World Mission Team

Nile Grove Playgroup



Nile Grove Community Playgroup is held in Greenbank Church, Monday–Friday from 9.15am to 11.45am. It is run by a parent committee and trained staff, offering safe, happy and stimulating play sessions for children from 2 years 3 months to school age. Parents can choose which days their child attends to fit into other life commitments.

There is a daily charge and we fund-raise throughout the year to help cover our costs which include rent for the hall, staff wages and training, resources and insurance. We are inspected yearly by the Care Inspectorate. By coming to playgroup the children take their first steps to independence, develop social skills and learn through a variety of play experiences set up in the hall or outside in the garden or by taking part in

special events such as our Christmas Party or the sponsored obstacle course.

Food/snack is a very important part of our ethos – the children sit together, learning table manners and eating a variety of tasty and healthy foods, e.g. fruit, raw vegetables, cheese, hummus and oatcakes with a choice of water or milk to drink. For birthdays we bake delicious home bakes like apple muffins or apricot scones.

Playgroup is a place where parents can meet and socialise, get a little break and some childcare, as well as become involved in the running of the playgroup by taking up a position on the committee or by helping out at the sessions. Child-rearing is exhausting and the parents and staff are all there to support and help one another in this hard but wonderful task.

The Nile Grove Playgroup Team

Elder retiring from the Kirk Session

One of our elders has retired recently from the Kirk Session. Eileen Campbell was ordained to the eldership and admitted to the Kirk Session at Greenbank in 2009. She was the elder for District 16 and took a keen interest in the members there. She has been a helpful, practical member of the Communion Elements Committee and has served on the Board. Her retiral was accepted with regret at the September meeting of the Kirk Session when she was thanked for all she had contributed to the life and work of the Session and congregation.

Valerie Macniven

Friendship Club

Another new Session, when we hope to welcome our present members and anyone who would like join us for what promises to be full of interesting afternoons.

It begins on **Wednesday 5th October** at 2.30pm with the very welcome return of Fred Daniels – “explorer extraordinaire” – this time with Part 1 of his journey across *Golden America*.

Following on, on **Wednesday 12th**, Kathleen Patrick dips into her seemingly endless store of musical goodies to give us *Serendipity Again*, and we finish the month (on **Wednesday 19th**) with *Operation Osprey*: Charlotte Fleming of the Scottish Wildlife Trust will be telling us how this year’s activities at Loch of the Lowes have progressed.

Looking forward to November and our first meeting on the **2nd**, David Gavin will throw light on the *Aurora Borealis*.

Correction to September’s information: The subscription is now £15. For further information contact **Val Smart** (Tel 447 6001).

Bookstall

The next Bookstall is on **20th November** when Advent books will be on sale.

John and Joan Ritchie



Ministries and Mission Contributions

Each month Greenbank Church makes a Ministries and Mission Contribution to the Church of Scotland. Over the year it amounts to around **£140,000**. I quote from a letter from the central office of the Church. The contribution is divided in the following way: “85% of this goes towards the cost of providing over 1,000 ministers and other parish workers in communities throughout Scotland. The contribution also assists with the costs of recruitment and training”. In local terms here in Greenbank this part of the contribution pays for our minister’s stipend, national insurance and pension. Greenbank meets the full cost of our ministry and is supporting other congregations.

“15% of our Ministries and Mission Contribution is used to support the Church’s work in:

- resourcing congregations for Christian education and outreach;
- providing social care services in Christ’s name to further the caring work to people in need;
- accompanying partners around the world on our shared Christian journey;
- contributing the Church’s opinion in public debate and on issues affecting Scotland and the World;
- providing central day-to-day service work in administration, financial and legal matters;
- and in planning the General Assembly and ensuring the Moderator represents the Church.”

John Ritchie

“Connections” – Some Thoughts

Have you ever wondered: What on earth is the church for?

It's so easy to think that the church is about getting more people into it – despite the danger of the church becoming an exclusive social club for those who are interested in 'religious' stuff.

Dare I suggest that the church is about getting all the people who are in it into the world?! Standing alongside people in their struggles, in their pain, in their joys, in their sorrows, in the messiness of life – without having the secret aim of getting them into the church. Put another way, the church is about getting really connected to the community in which the church is set – local church connected to local community.

It's about all the members of the local church being concerned for, sensitive to, committing to and identifying with all their neighbours in the local community – with no hidden agendas. Not just sympathy but empathy. In this way we demonstrate the compassion of God without looking for anything in return or expecting any pay backs.

But if the first connection I want us to think about is our connection to the local community, the second is our connection to each other – in New Testament language, our love for each other.

Our love and care for each other must be unconditional and inclusive, embracing all and giving no one the cold shoulder. There is no room for losing patience, no room for envy or pride, selfishness or irritability. We must spare no effort to demonstrate kindness, to forgive, to rejoice in the truth, to protect, and to build up trust, hope and

love. Gossip, bickering, falling-out, power struggles and grudges are deadly diseases which attack love and readily infect any church – it can be shown in a thousand-and-one ways. If we fail at this point, we cannot expect to make any impact on those who don't know Jesus.

This love is no human emotion or superhuman feeling but that divine love with which the Holy Spirit floods our hearts. And it's a quality of love that is never merely words – it proves itself in action.

The third connection I want us to think about is our connection to God.

Our connection to God is thanks to Jesus and thanks to Jesus it is indestructible, even by death. As the modern praise song puts it: “No power of hell, no scheme of man, can ever pluck me from his hand.”

But having been connected to God and realising how wonderful this is, we'll want to make this connection stronger, to make this relationship closer, to make this love deeper. The challenge is to make sure we make the time and space for daily contact with God. So we find the time and space where we can leave the noisy, hectic hustle and bustle, empty our minds of all those unwanted thoughts, pray, read the Bible, pray again and be still to focus on what God is saying to us.

John Fraser

Material for the November issue of Greenbank Connections should be delivered to the Church Office or to the Editors' pigeon-hole in the Main Hall by Sunday 16th October, or emailed by 9am on Tuesday 18th October to greenbankconnections@gmail.com

Congregational Register

Omitted from the online version
of *Greenbank Connections*

Greenbank Calendar: October 2016

October

1 Sat	14.00	YACHT Family Treasure Trail
	15.00	Recipe Book & Calendar Sale, Baking Stall
2 Sun	9.30	First Sunday Service led by Trailblazers (S1–S3)
	10.30	Morning Worship with Sacrament of Baptism
	10.30	Fresh Start Collection
4 Tues	19.30	Guild meeting
5 Wed	12.30	Prayer Group
5 Wed	14.30	Friendship Club
5 Wed	19.30	Country Dance Club
9 Sun	10.30	Morning Worship
11 Tues	19.30	Congregational Board
12 Wed	12.30	Prayer Group
12 Wed	14.30	Friendship Club (Musical)
12 Wed	19.30	Country Dance Club

16 Sun	10.30	Morning Worship (Special activity for children)
18 Tues	19.30	Guild meeting
19 Wed	12.30	Prayer Group
19 Wed	14.30	Friendship Club
19 Wed	19.30	Country Dance Club
21 Fri	19.30	Christian Aid Film Night: <i>The African Queen</i>
23 Sun	10.30	Morning Worship
26 Wed	12.30	Prayer Group
26 Wed	19.30	Country Dance Club
30 Sun	10.30	Morning Worship, followed by informal communion

November

1 Tues	19.30	Guild meeting
2 Wed	12.30	Prayer Group
2 Wed	14.30	Friendship Club
2 Wed	19.30	Country Dance Club

Crèche Rota



October

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|--------------------|
| 2 | Isobel Thom | Jenny Wright |
| 9 | Ailsa Cameron | Janet Ferguson |
| 16 | Lorna Perriss | Eileen
McKinnon |
| 23 | Lorna Htet-Khin | Ailsa Cameron |
| 30 | Hazel McLachlan | Pauline Walker |

November

- | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------|
| 6 | Ailsa Cameron | Jenny Wright |
|---|---------------|--------------|

Coffee Rota

October

- 2 Country Dance Club
- 9 Dorothy Whitehead (D89)
- 16 Donald MacLeod (D46)
- 23 Neighbourhood Group
- 30 Isobel & Ian Thom
(D53, D54 & D56)



November

- 6 Monday Badminton Club

Flower Rota

Provided by

Delivered by



October

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|---------------|
| 2 | Rhian Ferguson | Rachel Cadell |
| 9 | Grace Maweu | Alison Ambler |
| 16 | James/Ferguson
Wedding | Moira Little |
| 23 | Catherine Hardie | Ishbel Emery |
| 30 | Joan Ritchie | Enid Mowat |

November

- | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| 6 | Helen Aitken | Janet Inglis |
|---|--------------|--------------|

Neighbourhood Group

Volunteer drivers in the Neighbourhood Group offer lifts to medical appointments and meetings of the Friendship Club at Greenbank Church.

For further information please contact

Susan Jackman

Welcome Teams

October

- 2 **John George**, Rhian Ferguson, Alastair Hunter, Kathleen Patrick, Dorothy Whitehead, Tony Foster, Diana Teasdale, Mark Ferguson
- 9 **John Rutherford**, David Allan, Richard Denison, Caroline Kehoe, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones, Ian McWilliam
- 16 **Ian Thom**, Keith Clark, Ray Dely, Catherine Hardie, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Anne Oxbrow, Isobel Thom, Kay Ellis, Charles Black, Greig Scott
- 23 **Donald King**, Brian Barron, Walter Crosby, Donald MacLeod, Roderick Morrison, Mairi Stevenson, Jim Young, Kathryn Sangster
- 30 **Rosemary McCulloch**, Rona Ferguson, Fiona Grant, Christina Morrow, Alison Murison, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Toby Tucker, Alastair Ross

November

- 6 **John Ritchie**, Eric Brown, Ralph Davidson, Susan Inch, Gill Sweetman, Ian Thomson, Clare Campbell, Susan Jackman

Life and Work: October 2016

Caring in Christ's Name

As CrossReach Week approaches, Jackie Macadam profiles the work of the Social Care Council of the Church of Scotland

'Follow My Nose'

Interview with designer turned author Ethyl Smith

From Gender Justice to Fresh Expressions

The Moderator of the National Youth Assembly, Andrew McPherson, reports on the work carried out by this year's delegates

An Online Life

Rob Flett, the Church's Head of Communications, explains the benefits of social media to congregations and presbyteries

Hope in Death

Robin Taylor considers the role of faith in end of life attitudes

Swapping Stark Pews for Smart Phones

The Very Rev Dr Albert Bogle emphasises the need for change in communicating the core messages of Christianity

A Lonely Job

In the months of harvest, the Rt Rev Dr Russell Barr reflects on the challenges facing Scotland's farming community

Divine Liberation

Ron Ferguson reflects on the limitless love of God

Plus news, reviews, letters, registers and crosswords – all for just £2.20

Online, visit us at www.lifeandwork.org for regular news and exclusive features, or find us on Facebook and Twitter.



Pulpit Diary

Oct 2

- 9.30am** First Sunday Service led by Trailblazers
10.30am Morning Worship with Guild Dedication

Oct 9

- 10.30am** Morning Worship

Oct 16

- 10.30am** Morning Worship (Special activity for children)

Oct 23

- 10.30am** Morning Worship

Oct 30

- 10.30am** Morning Worship, followed by informal communion

Nov 6

- 9.30am** First Sunday Service led by Guild

- 10.30am** Morning Worship

Nov 13

- 10.45am** Remembrance Sunday Service

Greenbank Recipes 2016



The new Greenbank Recipe Book: front and back covers

The Greenbank Recipe Book will be launched on **Saturday 1st October at 3pm**. This coincides with the YACHT Treasure Trail event taking place that afternoon. Besides the books, there will be samples of the

recipes to buy to enjoy with the tea and coffee, or to take home.

The books will cost **£12 each or two for £20**. They will also be available for sale after church or from the church office.

Alison Murison