

Greenbank Connections



February 2017

Issue 658

Scottish Charity SC011325



Messy Church, based on the message of the Good Shepherd: harbingers of Spring? See page 6.

Greenbank Parish Church, Edinburgh

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

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Minister's Letter

Dear Friends



As this is the first issue of *Connections* for 2017 let me begin by wishing you every blessing for this year. I would also like to thank everyone for the support which they gave to the various appeals which we ran over Advent and Christmas. The generosity with which you supported, not only our annual Christian Aid Advent Appeal, but also the appeal for gifts of food for those living on the streets of our city and the annual Gift Service, is much appreciated by all the recipients. Thanks also to those who attended to the practicalities surrounding these appeals.

At our service on New Year's Day we were reflecting on the things that we need to let go at the beginning of a New Year, as well as those we need to take up. As you will read elsewhere in this newsletter, the Kirk Session are currently giving consideration to the provisions we make for the Sacrament of Communion.

Sometimes circumstances require Session

to take immediate decisions but these are always given serious consideration first. Sometimes we have the luxury of taking our time with decision-making. We are currently seeking your views over possible changes in the number and timing of our quarterly Communion services. Please avail yourself of this opportunity and speak to your district elder at their next visit or contact our Session Clerk. We want to hear what you think.

In the Church of Scotland, the Kirk Session is the body of elders which carries the responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the congregation. Recently Greenbank Session has been seeking to appoint new elders. We are excited that a number have accepted the call to serve God in this way. The service of ordination will be held on 12th February and I hope you will be able to join in the celebration of worship on that day. Please also remember these new elders in your prayers, and continue to give thanks and pray for all who have offered many years of dedicated and faithful service on Session and still continue to do so.

As I write this letter I am preparing to leave for Pittsburgh for the final taught school of the Doctorate of Ministry. This will be followed by an organised elective in the Netherlands at the end of February/beginning of March where we will meet with congregations and reflect on the ways in which the church there is responding to the challenges presented by the increasingly secular nature of society. There is still a project to be carried out before the Doctorate is completed but I am very grateful for having had the opportunity to study in this way. In particular I'm grateful to our Associate, Rev Peter Graham, for providing pastoral cover and

leading worship during my study leave.

Last but not least, a warm welcome to our new youth associate, Steve Chaffee, who started work with us part-time in December. Once his visa comes through, which we hope will be soon, Steve's post will become full-time. I'm sure that you will all make him very welcome and we pray for him and look forward to his contribution to the life and work of Greenbank.

Every blessing,

Alison I Swindells
Parish Minister

Pulpit Diary

Feb 5

- 9.30am First Sunday Service led by the Help the Homeless Group
10.30am Uniformed Organisations

Feb 12

- 10.30am Morning Worship with ordination of new elders (no meetings of Young Church; there will be alternative arrangements for children)

Feb 19

- 10.30am Morning Worship

Feb 26

- 10.30am Morning Worship followed by monthly informal Communion Service

Mar 5 First Sunday in Lent

- 9.00am Communion
10.30am Communion (Young Church meet as usual)
3.00pm Communion (Braid Room)

Greenbank's "Reverse Advent Calendar"

This Christmas saw the first **Greenbank Reverse Advent Calendar**, an initiative by the Mission and Service Committee, following a great suggestion by David Allan.

The idea was that instead of taking chocolates from an advent calendar, it would be good during Advent to give something to those less fortunate than ourselves.

We asked people during Advent to bring non-perishable food items to church which we could take to the three homeless organisations which we already support throughout the year – Streetwork in the Cowgate, St Catherine's Convent and Foursquare (supported accommodation for young people). We also helped Richmond Craigmillar's Fareshare project.

We hoped that we would be able to give reasonable donations to each one. We need not



have worried! Richard and I emptied the two hampers of donated food from the church vestibule several times each week to take to

the four organisations. After 50 sackloads, we stopped counting! We estimate that over 1,000 items of food worth well over £1,000 were donated. The appeal was supported not only by the congregation, but also by many of our friends who use the halls throughout each week, not forgetting our pre-school who made a great contribution.

This was a MASSIVE success, and the four organisations pass on their gratitude to all who helped. Thank you all, and don't forget that the food box is at the door of the church every Sunday to receive your contributions of food for the homeless.

Julia and Richard Dunbar

World Day of Prayer – Friday 3rd March 2017

Prepared by the Women of the Philippines

Every year on the first Friday in March Christians around the world of all ages gather in small groups and large congregations for a service of prayer. The service is written by women of a different country each year on a theme chosen by the World Day of Prayer International Committee. This year the service is on **Friday 3rd March 2017** and will be held in Greenbank Parish Church Braid Room at 11.00am, with coffee served beforehand from 10.30am in the Hermitage Room.

The 2017 service has been prepared by the women of the Philippines and has the title *Am I being unfair to you?*

In the weeks before the service there will be two Bible studies. The first is on **Friday 10th February** and the second on **Friday 17th February**. These meetings will be held in 121 George Street at 10.30am.

Everyone is welcome to come to any or all of these meetings, and especially to the service on Friday 3rd March.

Margaret Barrowman

Our New Youth Assistant – Steve Chaffee

Steve was born and brought up “on a sandbank” off the coast of New Jersey. He has an older brother. His father is a realtor (estate agent). During the winter the island is really quiet, but over the summer season it is crowded with people “going to the beach” – either renting lush properties, or having second homes there. He was brought up in the Lutheran Church.



After local High School he attended Eastern University in Pennsylvania (private, Baptist), graduating with a degree in Theology. He won a scholarship to nearby Villanova University, a Catholic institution built round an Augustinian monastery. During his studies he became interested in systematic theology and in particular in the work of Thomas F. Torrance. Professor Torrance is best known for his pioneering work in the study of science and theology, but is equally respected for his work in sys-

tematic theology. He taught at New College, Edinburgh for many years, and this was one reason why Steve enrolled in the MSc in Science and Religion course there. He is a copy-editor with the *T F Torrance Theological Fellowship*.

Edinburgh holds other attractions for Steve. He is keen on Okinawan Martial

Arts, and there is an active group here. In addition he has always been interested in the theory and practice of games – a wide variety of board games as well as online games such as Minecraft and Dungeons and Dragons. There is an active and growing interest in game-playing in Edinburgh, which Steve will enjoy. He sees games as a way for people of a wide age range to get together; perhaps there will be more game-playing at Greenbank!

Steve’s girlfriend is a recently qualified vet, who is currently working in Dover.

Editors

Fairtrade Fortnight 2017

I’m sure you have all heard of Fairtrade, which works to obtain good prices for producers throughout the world, helping them to support their families and communities.

Our World Mission group will be holding a **One World Stall** here at Greenbank on **Sunday 26th February** after the 10.30 a.m. service. This marks the beginning of Fairtrade Fortnight, **27th February to 12th March**.

Many supermarkets now stock various Fairtrade items such as coffee and banan-

as, so look out for the logo when you go shopping. If you run out of essentials like coffee, tea or that very tempting Divine chocolate, pop in to the Oxfam shop on Morning-side Road which has an excellent selection. Happy Shopping, Fairer World!



Messy Church

On 19th November lots of children had lots of fun. The theme was the Good Shepherd and Psalm 23, so shepherds, sheep, wolves and catapults appeared. (See also the cover photograph.)



Christmas Event for Children

Our Christmas event for primary school-age children on 10th December was a great success. Over 75 children played games, heard stories, sang songs, ate ice-cream, made sock snowmen and iced snowmen biscuits – all in three hours!



Eco-Column – Registered for Going Green in 2017

Readers may have noticed that we now appear on the Eco-Congregation Scotland website as a registered congregation! Our ambition this year is to make significant progress on our developing agenda in this area, and this includes action and involvement from everyone – even in small ways. Registration means that the convenor of the Green Group, John Ferguson, will be our lead contact, becoming at the same time a trustee of the national body. We will get help in the form of resources and advice, and benefit from the support of a mentor as well.

Being part of the eco-congregation movement means that we all have an obligation to make a contribution to saving the world's resources, and assisting in 'caring for creation'. Top tips for domestic action include the old chestnut of turning down the room thermostat on the central heating, but also changing light bulbs to LED versions where possible, just as we have in church. Other good moves are to make sure washing machines

are running wash programmes at low heat settings (30°C) and looking carefully at hot water consumption generally.

The Green Group is meeting now to prioritise actions in the coming months and so comments and ideas from anyone interested, as well as offers of help to implement practical tasks in the church premises, will be welcome.

If you want to get into campaigning on the key issues, a good starting point is Christian Aid's 'Big Shift' initiative, designed to lobby the big banks to retreat from investment in fossil fuel industries. More information can be had at www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/climate-change/the-big-shift

Come on now – how about a New Year resolution to be positive about this?



YACHT Project: Photographic Competition 2017

The YACHT Committee has decided that we should again hold a photographic competition this year, leading to an exhibition of entries and in due course to a Greenbank Calendar for 2018. More details and deadlines will follow shortly, but the photographic format and accompanying biblical or hymn text required in previous years will again be a feature of the competition.

This year, however, we have decided to focus on *images of Edinburgh and its environs*,

so please look out any suitable photographs that you may have taken of our fair city. Of course, we will require images of Edinburgh in every season of the year, so please get busy with your camera now, while the winter months are still with us.

We hope to organise walking tours in and around Edinburgh, considering different aspects of Edinburgh life, and at least one of these will focus on photography. Watch this space!

John Murison

Kirk Session News

Some Changes to Communion Arrangements

Communion is a really important part of our worship at Greenbank, as it is for Christians everywhere, and we have recently been thinking about whether our Communion services should be changed in any way, to reflect today's circumstances.

One change has already been made. Since last October, there has been an informal celebration of Communion after the 10.30am service on the last Sunday of every month. These more frequent services are proving popular and will continue throughout this year. The common cup and individual glasses are available. Please think of staying back after the end of the service to take part.

On the other hand, at its meeting on 10th January, the Kirk Session decided to discontinue the pre-communion services held on the Friday as a preparation for the quarterly Communions. These had been linked to the Kirk Session meetings, when elders used to get their duties for the Sunday. The duties are now circulated by email and the meetings are no longer held. The numbers attending the services have declined to single figures so it has been decided to stop holding them from now on. The Kirk Session has also had a preliminary discussion about the number and

timings of the main Communion services, including whether to combine the two morning services into a single service at 10.30am, or to hold the 9am service in the Braid Room, or to make no changes. The 3pm Communion service, held in the Braid Room, would continue unchanged. The Session would like to hear what members think. So, if you have views, please speak to your elder at the time of the March Communion or email the Session Clerk at

Valerie.macniven@gmail.com

Finally, I wish to record the Kirk Session's thanks to Muriel McLardy and her team of helpers who have laundered and maintained our Communion pew cloths over the years. Muriel is giving up now and the Session has decided that the use of the cloths should come to an end. We will continue to have cloths on the Communion Table and on the table in the chancel on which the elements are placed. We have been fortunate to have had so many people willing to help. But their numbers are shrinking and there are many other calls on people's time. We are very grateful for the efforts of the team over many years.

Valerie Macniven



Carol Party: Sunday 18th December



On the Sunday before Christmas we had a Carol Party. Colin MacRae and Malcolm Reid led us in a thoroughly enjoyable event. Although we have a new heating control system, it appears that the children were able to build a snowman in the chancel!

David Allan

The Guild

We finished the year in good style with a fascinating talk by Kathleen Patrick on her trip to *St Helena*; her vivid photos gave us an illuminating insight into life on such an isolated island. Our Christmas party went well with games, good food (especially the chocolate cake) and time to socialise with friends.

2017 began cheerfully with a well-attended coffee morning, then on the 17th we enjoyed a joint meeting with Fairmilehead Guild when John Coutts gave us a lively

mix of story and poems which were touching and thought-provoking yet were delivered with humour.

We are looking forward to *Itch to Stitch* on 7th February with Margaret Boe, and to *Women Pilots of WW2* on the 21st with Roy Johnstone. Looking forward to March, the Guild will be leading the World Day of Prayer on 3rd March in the Braid Room at 11am. It will be preceded by coffee and tea served in the Hermitage Room.

Kathleen Patrick & Edith Armit

Life and Work: February 2017

'A Movement, not a Programme'

The work of the Path of Renewal project, which is nurturing a culture of discipleship in Church of Scotland congregations.

A Spiritual Journey

Thomas Baldwin meets author and activist Alastair McIntosh.

Releasing Gifts

Jackie Macadam examines how congregations in long-term vacancy maintain their Christian witness and presence.

Keeping Watch Over Loch Awe

The Very Rev Dr Ian Bradley reflects on a beloved architectural treasure in Argyll.

A Miraculous Escape

The Very Rev Dr Andrew McLellan considers the messages drawn from the Bible accounts of Peter's times in prison.

MSPs and the Church

Irene MacKinnon reports on the work of a pioneering project bringing together local people through their churches with Members of the Scottish Parliament.

A Critical Lifeline

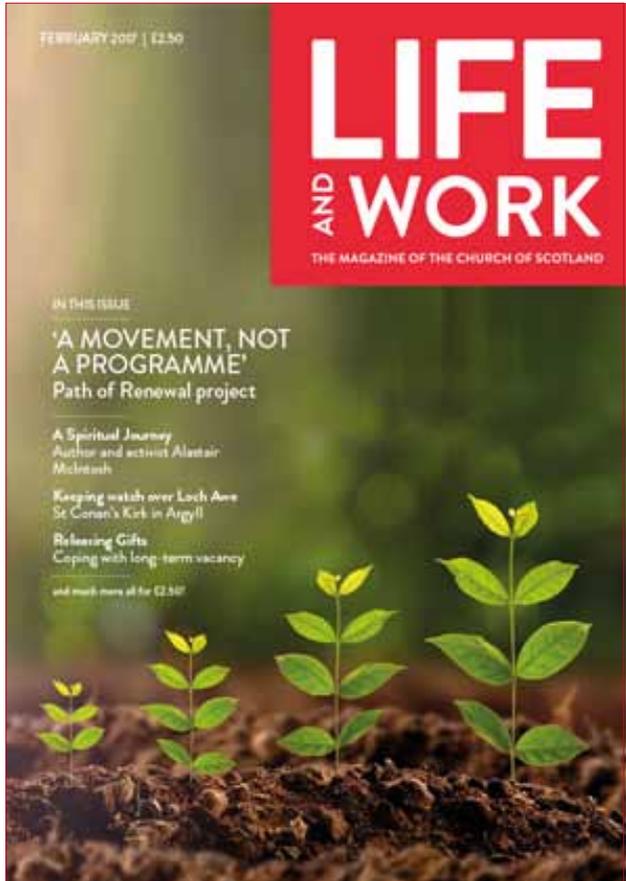
The Head of Oxfam Scotland, Jamie Livingstone, offers a first hand account of the food crisis in Malawi.

The 'New Guild'

In the second part of our focus on the Church of Scotland Guild, the changing face of the group at Arbroath: St Andrew's comes under the spotlight.

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.



Website Calendar

There is a Greenbank Church calendar on the website. Please see:

www.greenbankchurch.org/calendar/

The information contained in this calendar needs to be kept up-to-date, and of course the more complete it is, the more useful it is. If you or your organisation would like to put entries into the calendar please contact me directly (alison.murison@gmail.com).

Alison Murison

Bookstall

Four times a year we bring a selection of books on a range of religious topics from The Cornerstone shop beside St John's Church at the foot of Lothian Road.

The next Bookstall will be on **Sunday 12th February**. If there are any titles you would like to see on the Bookstall, please contact us. If you wish to see a wide range of religious books, cards, CDs and gifts, please visit The

Cornerstone where the staff will be pleased to help you.

John and Joan Ritchie

Friendship Club

Wednesday 11th January 2017, and despite the gusty winds a good number of us were entertained by Kathleen Patrick's talk and photos of her trip to *Ascension Island*. As it was the birthday of one of our members we celebrated by singing "Happy Birthday" and eating delicious cake.

But now, we move on to **8th February** when Walter Crosby will be taking us on his trip last year to *Assisi*. On the **15th** Kathleen will, at her musical afternoon, give us some *Vocal Gems* and on the **22nd** Andy Johnson will be showing us more gems with some *Jewels of the Forth*. Please do join us if the subject interests you. You will be assured of a warm welcome. The cost to non-members is £2 per meeting.

Val Smart



Happy New Year from the Connections Editors: Louise, Edith and Alison

Work Party

At the very enjoyable Work Party Christmas party on 17th December the most recent knitting was on display. Several sackfuls of clothes for all ages were taken to the Edinburgh Clothing Store and to Simpson's Maternity Centre, ERI.





Scouts @ Greenbank

Be prepared for "probably the best..."

JUMBLE

sale

...in Edinburgh"

SATURDAY 8TH APRIL 2017 : 9.30am – 12 noon
GREENBANK CHURCH, BRAIDBURN TERRACE, EH10 6ES

- ★ clothes - adults & children
- ★ small furniture
- ★ toys
- ★ books - adults & children
- ★ electricals
- ★ jewellery
- ★ bric a brac
- ★ dvds, cds & lps
- ★ sports gear
- ★ garden furniture
- ★ lighting
- ★ home baking, teas & coffees

4th Morningside Scout Group is registered as a Charity, number CR43781.

Adults £2

Your Free New Year Gift

Happy New Year, everyone!

If you made New Year's resolutions, how are you getting on with keeping them? Are the pounds coming off? Are you getting fitter? Are you walking further? Are you finishing fitting that new kitchen? Or...?

I wish you well!

While the year is still new, here are some resolutions that we, as Greenbank members, should be making. These New Year's resolutions are the vows of Church membership, and what better time to renew our resolve to keep them?

Here they are, in New Year's resolutions form:

in 2017, I resolve to believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;

in 2017, I resolve to confess Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord;

in 2017, I resolve to join regularly with my fellow Christians in worship on the Lord's day;

in 2017, I resolve to be faithful in reading the Bible, and in prayer;

in 2017, I resolve to give a fitting proportion of my time, talents, and money for the Church's work in the world;

in 2017, I resolve, depending on the grace of God, to profess publicly my loyalty to Jesus Christ, to serve him in my daily work, and to walk in his ways all the days of my life.

So how are we doing so far?

In 2017, are there already more times when we love this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit unreservedly, more times when we trust him implicitly, more times when we commit ourselves to him totally? Remember, for us Christians 'believing in God' is

not just mental assent to the fact that God exists – it's about our relationship with God and playing our part in deepening it.

In 2017, are there already signs of Jesus' saving power in our lives as he makes us the people God wants us to be? In 2017, are there already signs of Jesus' lordship over our lives as he directs our thoughts, words and actions into God's ways? In 2017, are there already more times when we pledge our loyalty and pay homage to Jesus as Saviour and Lord?

In 2017, are we already joining more regularly with our fellow-Christians in Greenbank and across the world to worship God on Sundays?

In 2017, are we already spending more time in reading the Bible and in prayer? This is our daily appointment with God.

In 2017, are we already positively and prayerfully reviewing how much of our money, time and talents we give for the work of the Church in the world?

In 2017, are we already looking for opportunities to share Jesus with others?

In 2017, are we already doing our daily work in such a way as to honour God?

In 2017, are we already living our lives more in tune with Jesus' way?

One final thought: wouldn't it be awful if we got to the end of 2017 and found that we had missed the target because we never

got around to it! So please find attached your free New Year's gift to help you keep on track.

John Fraser



**A
Round
Tuit**

Congregational Register

*Omitted from the
on-line version of
Greenbank Connections*

Coffee Rota

February

- 5 SLA
- 12 Choir
- 19 Louise Coghill & John Mowat (D68)
- 26 Gillian Sweetman (D22)



Flower Rota

Provided by  *Delivered by*

February

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 5 Innes Family | Janet Edwards |
| 12 Ishbel Emery | Katy Maguire |
| 19 Chrissie Munro | Caroline Kehoe |
| 26 Ray Dely | Helen Aitken |

March

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 5 Jean Denison | Rosemarie
Crawford |
|----------------|-----------------------|

Crèche Rota



February

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 5 Lorna Htet-Khin | Shona Murray |
| 12 Ailsa Cameron | Vivien
Hutchison |
| 19 Gillian Sweetman | Hazel
McLachlan |
| 26 Carrie Reid | Ailsa Cameron |

March

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| 5 Anne Kinnear | Jenny Wright |
|----------------|--------------|

Welcome Teams

February

- 5 Caroline Kehoe, David Allan, Richard Denison, Ian Mc William, Caroline Kehoe, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones, Lyndsay Kennedy
- 12 Donald King, Brian Barron, Walter Crosby, Donald MacLeod, Roderick Morrison, Mairi Stevenson, Jim Young, Kathryn Sangster
- 19 Stuart Sanders, Moira Davidson, John Murison, Rachel Cadell, Jenny Wright, Sandy Cameron, Carrie Reid, Moira Land, Julia Dunbar
- 26 Rosemary McCulloch, Rona Ferguson, Fiona Grant, Christina Morrow, Alison Murison, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Toby Tucker

March

- 5 Ian Thom, Keith Clark, Ray Dely, Catherine Hardie, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Anne Oxbrow, Isobel Thom, Kay Ellis, Charles Black, Catriana Black

Greenbank Calendar: February 2017

February

5 Sun	09.30	First Sunday Service led by the Help the Homeless Group
5 Sun	10.30	Uniformed Organisations
7 Tues	19.30	Guild
8 Wed	12.30	Mid-Week Prayer Group
8 Wed	14.30	Friendship Club
8 Wed	19.30	Country Dance Club
9 Thurs	14.30	Work Party
12 Sun	10.30	Morning Worship
15 Wed	12.30	Mid-Week Prayer Group*
15 Wed	14.30	Friendship Club (Music)
15 Wed	19.30	Country Dance Club
19 Sun	10.30	Morning Worship
21 Tues	19.30	Guild
22 Wed	12.30	Mid-Week Prayer Group*
22 Wed	14.30	Friendship Club
15 Wed	19.30	Country Dance Club
23 Thurs	14.30	Work Party
26 Sun	10.30	Morning Worship
March		
1 Wed	12.30	Mid-Week Prayer Group*
1 Wed	19.30	Country Dance Club

*Check previous Sunday's Order of Service to confirm that the event is running



March (continued)

3 Fri	11.00	World Day of Prayer
5 Sun	9.00	Communion
5 Sun	10.30	Communion
5 Sun	15.00	Communion

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

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

**Postal address: Greenbank Parish Church
Braidburn Terrace, Edinburgh EH10 6ES**

Material for the March issue of Greenbank Connections should be delivered to the Church Office or to the Editors' pigeon-hole in the Main Hall by Sunday 12th February, or emailed by 9am on Tuesday 14th February to greenbankconnections@gmail.com