

# Greenbank Connections



February 2021

Issue 695

Scottish Charity SCO11325



*Greenbank in Winter (Photograph by Julia Dunbar)*

## Greenbank Parish Church, Edinburgh

Online version: [www.greenbankchurch.org/about/the-newsletter/](http://www.greenbankchurch.org/about/the-newsletter/)

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## From the Manse



**Dear Friends,**

I'm writing with some news that most of you will already know, but if this is the first of you hearing about it, then it may come as an unwelcome surprise.

I have been called to be the pastor of a small PCUSA congregation at Tenafly, a pretty suburban commuter town in northern New Jersey (Bergen County) just across the Hudson River from Manhattan. I was elected by the congregation at Tenafly after I led worship on Zoom on the afternoon of Sunday 10th January. The decision to respond to the call was very hard because our congregation here is such a fantastic bunch of people, and you've all been so kind and encouraging to me. However, it was a case of a complete match with my interests in ministry with and through the arts, as well as an existing relationship with the congregation since I spent a summer there with them on a faith and the arts internship in 2014. In addition, there had always been a pos-

sibility that Sarah would want to return to the USA to be nearer to her family, and the desire has been increased since Rowan arrived. However, we thought it more likely that it would be her career that would lead us back at some point rather than my job, and certainly not in this time frame.

After wrestling with the implications of this call, we decided to go for it, although Sarah will continue on at New College meantime until a post of some kind turns up in the USA. Not the best time to be keeping your eye out for academic jobs. I don't yet know the timescale for my departure, as there are various administrative hurdles to clear before I can set a date. In the medium term, the Presbytery of Edinburgh will look to appoint an Interim Moderator and a Locum Minister to lead worship, pastoral care, and to encourage you in all that you are doing.

Although I'm not away just yet, this seems like the time to say that I am deeply grateful for what we have shared together, and hope that my short time here will have been helpful in Greenbank's bigger journey. Meantime, I hope for your understanding amidst the upheaval, but I know that this very gifted and resourceful congregation will continue to prayerfully pull together as it lives out our vision for the faith community here.



Martin Ritchie

## Youth Work in Greenbank

Youth work in Greenbank (and in any church, I'm learning) is always a bit of a moving target. There are many ages to work with, parents to reach out to, and schools work to do besides! The ongoing nature of the pandemic has made this target move especially fast, as now 'screen fatigue' is a real concern. Nevertheless, we persevere!

The AM and PM Sunday Clubs have resumed, and we have added one more leader to the rota for the AM Sunday Club, and have intergenerational ideas in the works for the PM Sunday Club. Further, now that we're into the New Year, I will be able to make more appearances at AM Sunday Club – and I can't wait to do so!

QII continues to meet online 8pm–9pm on Sundays, though now it's taken on a flavour akin to the Coffee Afternoons of prior years. Through texting and socially distanced walks we have been able to remain connected.

Further, Scouts have been meeting online, and I have been very thankful for the chance to engage with them on Friday evenings. We even began counting down the days until (we hope!) Summer Camp.

Finally, the increased load put on parents to work and homeschool has meant that I've been taking (distanced) walks with parents too. Through all of this, and moving forward, I have become ever more convinced: to get through this, we will do so together. May we keep ready to both receive a helping hand when we need it, and to lend one when we can.

Steve Chaffee

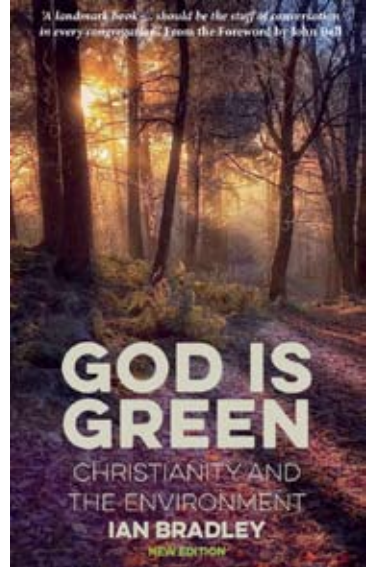
# Lent Study

*from week beginning 21st February*

Our Lent Study this year has an environmental theme to tie in with our developing eco-congregation identity. There are two resources for the group to look at in advance. The first is a book by **Professor Ian Bradley**, formerly Dean of the School of Divinity at St Andrews. It's called ***God is Green: Christianity and the Environment*** (Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd, 2nd edition, 2020). The five chapters are entitled:

- ▷ God's concern for all creation
- ▷ The dance of creation
- ▷ The fall of nature
- ▷ The cosmic Christ
- ▷ The role of human beings

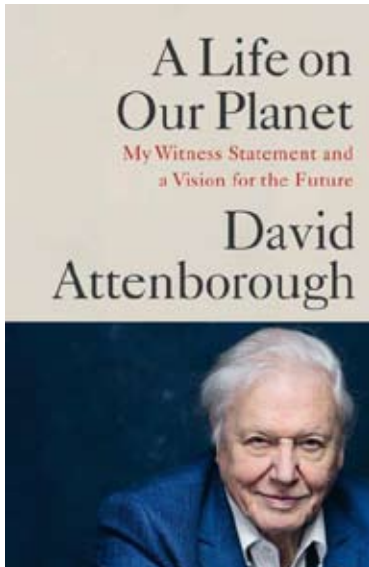
The book is quite accessible, but it's worth leaving yourself a decent amount of time to read and reflect on it.



The second resource can be a book or a film, or both! David Attenborough's ***A Life on Our Planet: My Witness Statement and a Vision for the Future*** (Witness Books, 2020)

is a wonderful testimony from his career exploring the world. The film version tracks the book very closely, so if you can't access it (on Netflix), then reading the book is just as good.

*For a local supplier, try sourcing the books through the Edinburgh Bookshop in Morningside, or for an online supplier try Blackwells.*



**If you'd like to take part**, the plan is to have groups meet on Zoom on Monday–Wednesday evenings and on Thursday afternoon. To register your interest, contact Chris Horne by email:

[christopherhorne2@talk21.com](mailto:christopherhorne2@talk21.com)

or phone him on 0131 662 0615.

Tell Chris all the times that you could take part, as this will give him maximum flexibility in compiling the schedule.

**Martin**

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# Implementing Our Strategic Plan

*Here is welcome news about moving forward with  
Greenbank's Strategic Plan*

*The Strategic Plan can be read on the church website*

*[www.greenbankchurch.org/about/our-strategy/](http://www.greenbankchurch.org/about/our-strategy/)*

The Strategic Plan was the product of much consultation with the congregation and office-bearers over a number of years. It sets out our mission, and tells of how we will deliver it through the key themes of **Discipleship**, **Outreach**, and **Care** (later split into **Care for People** and **Concern for Society and Creation**).

The Plan said that we would be reforming the system of Committees and aiming to involve more people beyond the office bearers. This was a big task, complicated and delayed by the arrival of COVID-19, but we are now all set to get new groups up and running. Each of the themes will be led by two people whom we are calling 'Strategic Leads'. They will work together to set up the groups or committees in their theme which will help to deliver the plan. Now is our chance to take forward the mission of Greenbank in faith and with the strong commitment of many people.

Greenbank has a tremendous resource in its people – we are the church, and every one of us has a part to play as members of the body of Christ! It's now time to translate the vision that we all helped to shape into a reality that will not only fire up our congregation, but shine as the light of Christ in our parish and beyond.

Here are the names of the Strategic Leads:

- ▷ **Discipleship** – David Allan and Stephen Hadden
- ▷ **Outreach** – Richard Dunbar and David Jack
- ▷ **Care** – John Adair and Moira Little
- ▷ **Society and Creation** – Chris Horne and Joan Ritchie

Please pray for them in their new roles, and look out for further updates on how you can become involved.

**Valerie Macniven**

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## Finance Team Update

In the December/January edition of **Connections** I reported that we were assembling a new team to look after our finances. I am now pleased to report that the team is up and running. **Tony Foster** is coordinating the team and will have the formal title of Treasurer, while the work is being shared out amongst **Charlotte Tucker**, **Stephen Hadden**, **Michael Struthers**, **Ian Thomson** and **Kathryn Sangster**. They have a new email address – [treasurer@greenbankchurch.org](mailto:treasurer@greenbankchurch.org), which is now the main way of contacting them.

**Valerie Macniven**

## Property Team Update

After over six busy years **David Allan** is standing down as Property Convener as he moves to be one of the Strategic Leads for Discipleship (*see p5*).

**Roddy Morrison** will now combine the role of Preses of the Congregational Board with coordination of the Property Team. Other team members are **Donald Milne**, **Gillian Sweetman**, **Angus McLachlan**, **Moira Land** and **David Ferguson**. We are hugely grateful to all these people for agreeing to take on, or continue, important roles in the leadership of Greenbank.

I realise there is a lot of information here. If you have questions please get in touch with me. I have a new email address – [sessionclerk@greenbankchurch.org](mailto:sessionclerk@greenbankchurch.org)

Valerie Macniven

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## Lent and Easter Appeal 2021

### *Aid for struggling congregations in Urban Priority Areas*

Recently we appealed for funds in support of Garthamlock and Craigen East Church in Glasgow, whose bank balance was close to zero, and who had no prospect of paying forthcoming bills. Thanks to the generosity of Greenbank members and friends they have been saved from insolvency, hopefully until the end of lockdown and the return of vital income from letting of halls.

Professor David Fergusson was approached even more recently by the Rev Sarah Brown of Castlemilk Church in Glasgow, who also have a crisis on their hands. The story is repeated in urban priority areas across Scotland. Our most disadvantaged sisters and brothers in Christ are in financial trouble as a result of the sudden drying up of income flows such as hall letting.

Of course, we already play our part in supporting stipends for ministers in these areas through the Ministries and Mission scheme. However, in this time of crisis, it seems appropriate that we offer our congregation

the chance to give further direct support.

*Our 2021 Lent Appeal is dedicated to creating a short term fund in support of congregations in deprived areas who are struggling with 'lockdown bills'. This is a small gesture of support and encouragement as we all emerge from the dark tunnel of Covid-19. The fund will be disbursed to struggling churches on the basis of need, with the advice of our colleagues in the national offices of the Church of Scotland.*

Donations to the Lent and Easter appeal can be sent to Greenbank via a cheque or via a bank transfer, in both cases identified as **Lent Appeal**.

### **Bank details**

**Bank of Scotland,**  
**Morningside Road, Edinburgh**  
**Account:** Greenbank Church  
**Sort Code:** 80-02-77  
**Account No:** 00371917

Martin

## Friendship Club

Well, 2021 is here and it begins sadly for us as we tell you of the death of one of our long term members, Isobel Aitchison, whom we remember fondly as the bringer of cheeriness and a lifter of spirits. We send our love and sympathy to her daughters, Ruth and Carole.

Now that the vaccine is here – and what a miracle of science that is – we trust that this year will be a happier and healthier one for us all. Over the 2019–2020 Session, I have contacted our speakers asking them to postpone their talks “for a year”. They were all prepared and happy to agree, the new dates now in their diaries.

Perhaps you have already attended the first Sunday Zoom Coffee Morning, quite a feat of technical management. Maybe, thinking positively, fingers and toes crossed, we could be able to meet up again over the summer with a coffee morning or two, or is that tempting fate?

Take care, keep safe and well.

Val Smart



*Isobel Aitchison*

## The Guild



We were all saddened to hear of the death of Isobel Aitchison, a much loved member. She was a long-standing and valued member of the Guild and really missed the interest and friendship of the meetings when she was no longer able to attend. We will all be thinking of her family as they mourn.

We are still keeping in touch with each other by phone, email, letters and doorstep chats. This month's puzzle ranges from very easy to “Ouch, I thought I knew this!”

We are beginning to plan how we will restart whenever the restrictions allow – there will be a LOT of chat, coffee, catching up on news and probably a lot of cake and pancakes, as well as hearing from some of the speakers whose talks were cancelled.

We will continue to be:

Great  
Uplifting  
Inspiring  
Loving  
Dedicated

**Edith Armit**

## Memories of Advent and the Advent Carols

*This is the first opportunity to pr*



*Chancel, ready for the Advent Carols*



*Christmas tree - inside*



*Christmas tree - outside*



# Worship Service – Sunday 29th November, 2020

Print these pictures in *Connections*



Christmas Card distribution, lockdown-style



Advent Candles



Advent Carol Service Virtual Choir (singing 'Lo he comes with clouds descending')

## Book Review

### “Rewilding” by P. Jepson and C. Blythe†

I’m not sure that I like the term “rewilding”. I liked it even less when I got to this book’s definition:

*Spaces of innovation in conservation philosophy, science and management, characterised by a desire to restore ecosystem processes at various scales, often through the introduction of functional species and restoration of natural disturbance and dispersal.*

Fortunately, that was almost at the end of the book and other lapses into opaque jargon were rare. And it was worth staying with it, because there were some interesting insights. The book’s main point is that rewilding goes beyond conservation (the preservation of threatened wildlife) and restoration (the re-creation of a lost ecosystem), by allowing nature to go its own way – potentially creating novel ecosystems rather

than restored ones. The authors see a new opportunity, because agricultural change and rural depopulation are making more land available, while global concern about climate change creates favourable public attitudes and unlocks money for projects which would capture carbon.

The authors are particularly interested in the role of large herbivores such as bison, and wild horses and cattle – because they challenge the assumption that woodland is the “natural” landscape in much of the world. They see forests as the consequence

of man’s extermination of large herbivores – in recent centuries, the bison and auroch and, in the distant past, giant armadillos in South America, giant kangaroos in Australia and mastodons in North America. So the book is pleasantly light on bringing back predators such as wolves and bears (beloved of journalists). Rather, it advocates breeding “wild” versions of

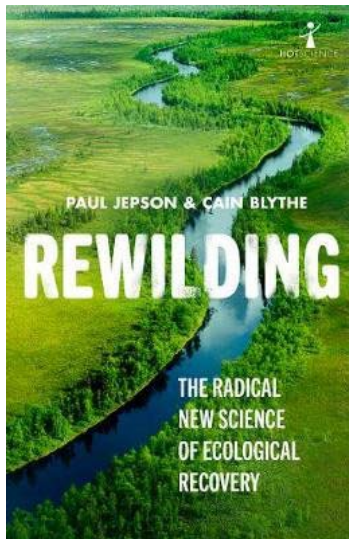
horses and cattle, and letting them loose to convert unused land into prairie. That’s been tried on a large scale (22 square miles) on an abandoned polder not far from Amsterdam – with some positive results but also criticism (notably because, left to themselves, many herbivores died in harsh winters).

The Dutch (and other) experience points up the need to act in concert with local communities. That’s one of the book’s positive messages. Another is the

prospect that rewilding can give a new purpose, confidence and ambition to 21st century environmentalism – not saving wild places (in a ’70s conservation fashion) so much as reinvigorating them for the benefit of society as well as the environment.

**Duncan Macniven**

†*Rewilding: The Radical New Science of Ecological Recovery*, by Paul Jepson and Cain Blythe (Icon Books Ltd, Paperback 176pp, £6.99)





## How can I reduce my Carbon Footprint?

I'd like to reduce my carbon footprint – but where to start? Here are a few ideas from the Energy Saving Trust Scotland website [energysavingtrust.org.uk/](http://energysavingtrust.org.uk/) It's full of information.

### Quick wins:

- Draught proof windows, doors, floorboards and skirting.
- maintain boiler efficiency.
- Fit LED bulbs.
- Switch off standby on electrical goods.
- Fully load the washing machine and dishwasher.
- Use the microwave instead of the oven.

### Medium term but still fairly economical actions:

- Fit controls to every radiator.
- Insulate attic and floors above garage or car ports, tanks, pipes and radiators.
- If replacing elderly appliances, look for A+++ energy ratings.

### Longer term and bigger investments:

- Insulate walls.
- If your boiler is elderly, consider replacing with a more efficient model.
- Generate renewable energy. Currently, the most viable options are:
  - ▷ Solar – well developed. Good to supplement heating and water systems.

- ▷ Ground or Air source pumps – developing technology. Currently needs garden and space inside the home.
- ▷ Wind turbine -technology already well developed but needs space

When we are allowed to travel:

- Walk or cycle if possible.
- Public Transport – bus, train or boat are all better than flying, or consider reducing the number of foreign holidays/ maybe find some parts of Scotland or UK to explore.
- If you are considering replacing your car, think about the possibility of hybrid or all electric.

**Jane Harkin**  
Eco Group

## Did you know?

Recycling bins for textiles at supermarkets are intended for reusable items only. To dispose of worn-out clothes and other textiles, place them in a bag in the blue kerbside 'bottle bin'. Small domestic electrical devices such as old toasters can also be placed in the blue bin.

If textiles are pure wool or cotton, they will compost quite well in the garden compost heap. Just remove the buttons or any acrylic bindings.

**Alison Murison**  
Eco Group

## Lockdown Life — Part 2

With the imposition of the new lockdown, we decided to restart our weekly web-based photographic competition. For details, please see

[www.greenbankchurch.org/about/lockdown-life/weekly-photo.php](http://www.greenbankchurch.org/about/lockdown-life/weekly-photo.php)

Here are some photographs taken from the three weeks of the new series.

(See also the cover photograph.)



*Serenading Robin (Kathleen Patrick)*



*Reflections on Ice, Inverleith*



*Marmalade Time Again! (Sharie Perks)*



*Sunrise : Flotterstone (Alan Ramage)*



*Park (Susan Black)*



*After Sunset in the Pentlands (Katie Bogie)*

## World Mission Stamp Appeal



I trust you have been saving your stamps over the Christmas period as requested in Martin's weekly Newsletters in December.

The Church of Scotland Stamp Appeal for 2021 will continue to support *The Women's Development Centre* (WDC) in Kandy, Sri Lanka which runs a project to support women and girls who have been victims of rape and sexual violence. The WDC gives these women somewhere to stay, and supports them in caring for their children, helps them return to education if they wish, and trains them in skills they can use to make a living when they leave. The WDC has a social enterprise and café where the women can work and sell their handmade products.

You can be part of supporting the work of this project that is changing lives simply by collecting your used stamps and posting them to:

*World Mission Stamp Project,  
PO Box 9191, Wishaw,  
Lanarkshire, ML2 0YB*

*Christina Morrow  
World Mission Team*

## Services at Greenbank

*Because of COVID restrictions, Greenbank Parish Church is not open for in-person worship at present.*

*Our main worship continues to be the livestream on Sundays at 10.30am.*

The Welcome Teams (*below*) will **only** be required if the Church is re-opened for worship before the end of February.

If this happens, worshippers will be required to **book, as before**, in order to attend Sunday services (not Wednesdays).

## Welcome Teams

### February 2021

#### *Sundays (6pm)*

- 7 **Donald King**, Jane Harkin, Elaine McRae, Katie Bogie
- 14 **Phil Barnes**, Stephen Hadden, Mary Hadden, Hazel Macaulay
- 21 **Rona Ferguson**, John Adair, John Murison, Alison Murison
- 28 **Caroline Kehoe**, Jill Powlett Brown, Keith Clark, Louise Coghill

#### *Wednesdays (1pm to 2pm)*

- 3 **Alison Kerr**, Louise Coghill
- 10 **Ray Dely**, Isobel Thom
- 17 **John Murison**, Alison Murison
- 24 **Susan Black**, Susan Inch

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## Coffee Rota

There is no requirement for a coffee rota until Sunday morning worship resumes at Greenbank. However, see next page...

# Congregational Register

**Omitted from the online  
version of Connections**

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## Flower Rota

### February

- 7 Eleanor Winton
- 14 Grace Maweu
- 21 Ishbel Emery
- 28 Louise Coghill

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## Zoom Coffee

We are trying out a Zoom “coffee hour” for chat on Sunday mornings following our livestreamed 10.30am service. It will be an informal gathering in small break-out rooms for about 20 minutes. It will begin around five minutes after the end of the livestream, giving the chance to go and make yourself a cuppa before joining the call. Please note that the Zoom is separate from the livestream.

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://tinyurl.com/yxvpwpzy>

Meeting ID: 681 532 4082

Passcode: chitchat

**The Ministry Team can be  
contacted directly**

**Rev Dr Martin Ritchie (Minister)**

**phone: 07984 466 855**

**email: MRitchie@churchofscotland.org.uk**

**Mr Steven Chaffee (Youth Associate)**

**phone: 07729 000 788**

**email: stevechaffee@greenbankchurch.org**

**Due to COVID-19 precautions the Office is closed to personal callers. Contact the Administrator by phone or email in the first instance until further notice.**

**Administrator: Mrs Virginia Johnston**

**phone and fax: 0131 447 9969**

**email: greenbankchurch@btconnect.com**

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

**Website: [www.greenbankchurch.org](http://www.greenbankchurch.org)**

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

**Material for the March 2021 issue of Greenbank Connections should be delivered to the Church Office by  
Sunday 14th February 2021, or  
sent by e-mail by 9am on  
Friday 19th February 2021 to  
[greenbankconnections@gmail.com](mailto:greenbankconnections@gmail.com)**



# World Day of Prayer

*Friday 5th March, 2021*

The World Day of Prayer (WDP) theme for 2021 is “**Build on a strong foundation**”. The service has been written by women of Vanuatu. Here is a link to the World Day of Prayer website, including a video on the peoples of Vanuatu:

<http://www.wwdp.org.uk/2021/01/13/introducing-vanuatu/>

However, this year’s World Day of Prayer will be very different from those of past years, as Covid-19 restrictions mean we must find other ways of joining in. There will be three opportunities to take part, as described below:

## **Bible Study**

In Edinburgh an online Bible Study will be held via Zoom on **Friday 12th February, from 10 to 12 noon**. It will be led by the Rev David Coleman, Eco Chaplain.

## **Ten Days of Prayer**

From **Tuesday 23rd February** the Scottish WDP Committee has planned for **Ten Days of Prayer**, which will be posted on the WDP Scotland website:

[www.wdpscotland.org.uk](http://www.wdpscotland.org.uk)

and on their Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/wdpscotland](http://www.facebook.com/wdpscotland)

Leaders of ten denominations have been invited to share a **Thought for the Day**, focusing on Vanuatu.

## **WDP Service: Friday 5th March**

In place of our usual form of worship the Scottish Committee invites those who have access to join them in a live WDP



service at 2pm on **Friday 5th March**, hosted on Zoom by Augustine United Church:

**Meeting ID:** 895 9398 3883

**Passcode:** 901656

Details of joining the live service will also be available on the WDP Scotland website and Facebook page.

The service will also be recorded, for later access from the WDP Scotland website and Facebook page .

Please contact me if you require further assistance.

**Edith Armit**

[e22armit@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:e22armit@yahoo.co.uk)