

Leaflet



Greenbank Parish Church
Braidburn Terrace, EH10 6ES
No 622 December 2012 / January 2013

Pulpit Diary

- Nov 30**
7.30pm Pre-Communion Service
- Dec 2 First Sunday in Advent**
9.00am Communion
10.30am Communion
(Spectrum and Springboard meet as usual)
3.00pm Communion (Braid Room)
- Dec 9 Second Sunday in Advent**
10.30am Morning Worship
- Dec 16 Third Sunday in Advent**
10.30am All Age Gift Service
(Spectrum and Springboard – end of first term)
5.30pm Big Christmas Sing-along
in aid of Scottish Love in Action
- Dec 23 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**
10.30am All Age Service
- Dec 30**
10.30am Morning Worship
- 2013**
- Jan 6**
10.30am Morning Worship
(Spectrum and Springboard – start of second term)
- Jan 13**
10.30am Morning Worship
- Jan 20**
10.30am Morning Worship
- Jan 27**
10.30am Morning Worship
- Feb 3**
9.30am First Sunday Service led by Springboard
10.30am Morning Worship

To make contact with any of the organisations described in this *Leaflet*, please use the telephone number given, if there is one. Otherwise contact the Church Office.

Website: www.greenbankchurch.org

Minister's Letter

Dear Friends

This morning I googled “Christmas” on the internet and was interested to find that top of the list of suggestions that appeared on my computer screen was “Christmas Countdown”.

I hit the button, and up on the screen, against a background of stars and snowflakes, appeared the

following message, “There are only 44 days 12 hours 53 minutes and 24 seconds until Christmas.” As I read the number of seconds steadily decreased.

At the top of the screen there is an invitation to set this clock as your own home page. Then every time you turn on your computer you can see how long you have to wait until 25th December! You can use the clock to plan your days and hours and fit in things like making the Christmas cake or decorating the tree or searching for that perfect gift. Alternatively at the touch of a button you can share the news or tweet it or put it on facebook!

Of course in the Church we have our own countdown to Christmas. We refer to it as Advent. This year at Greenbank we are planning to use an old tradition to help people reflect on the significance of the season. The Jesse tree appears frequently as a symbol in medieval art. It has its origins in the Bible, in the Old Testament book of the prophet Isaiah. There we find these words “A shoot will come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots” (Isaiah 11:1).

Jesse was the Father of David, and from the earliest days of Christianity, the “shoot” and “branch” of Jesse mentioned by the prophet were interpreted as referring to Jesus Christ. The Jesse tree shows in picture form characters from the Old Testament and their stories, which form the background to the birth of Jesus. We might think about it as



Jesus’ human family tree – a kind of ancient genealogy.

The Jesse tree is of course not alone in offering a genealogy for Jesus. Matthew and Luke in their Gospels each offer a different version of that family tree. The differences between the two reveal a great deal about the background and purpose of

the Gospel writers, but what these ancient genealogies have in common is that they stress the continuity between the old and the new and remind us that in Jesus we see the fulfilment of the ancient promises of God.

In recent years the Jesse tree has experienced a revival in popularity. This year we are going to be encouraging the children to find out a little about Jesus’ family tree by suggesting a story for each day, and giving them a symbol to colour in and hang on their own tree at home. Adults might like to join in by following the stories – you will be able to find the references on our new website or in the Church intimations.

Then together as we celebrate Christmas we will not only remember the new thing which God did in Jesus Christ. In love for the world God gives us the gift of his Son. In Jesus we see the love and grace of God revealed in a new and unique way – God offering himself, becoming present to us in the vulnerability of a child. But perhaps we will also have a deeper understanding and appreciation of why that gift was necessary and how that gift is inextricably linked to, and cannot be divorced from, the faithful love of God for his creation down through the centuries.

In closing let me extend a very warm welcome to you to all our Christmas activities and services. And when that internet clock finishes its count-down I wish you all a peaceful and joyful Christmas!

With warmest wishes

Alison I Swindells
Minister



Image: www.havingfunathome.com

World Mission Committee

The World Mission Committee would like to raise awareness of green and ethical investment. This is about choosing financial services and products which pay attention to ethical, societal or environmental issues and avoid activities that are of doubtful moral standing. It is the financial equivalent of Fair Trade. Some ethical investment specifically sets out to provide finance to organisations or companies which have a commitment to reducing disadvantage but cannot access

credit through normal commercial banking routes.

One example is the organisation *Shared Interest* based in Newcastle. It is the world's only 100% fair trade lender. It operates like a bank, taking in deposits from savers and making loans to businesses. It charges interest to borrowers at rates that reflect the risk they carry. In principle it pays interest to investors but, since this is usually at 4% below base rate, nothing is paid at present.

Shared Interest operates like a bank. Deposits start at £100 and are limited to a total of £20,000. Payments and withdrawals are done by post. The money goes into the *Shared Interest* "pot" from

which loans are made to fair trade businesses, for example to help them buy equipment or to use as working capital until cash comes in from orders. When loans are repaid that also goes into the "pot" for recycling to other projects.

Shared Interest works in about 70 countries, including the UK, and has helped about 500 fair trade producer groups in its 20 year life. There are offices in Kenya, Peru and Ghana. Their biggest product is coffee (38% of producers). One recent example of their involvement is in Mexico where over 2,000 farmers benefit from an export credit facility that means they get paid in advance of their harvest and so can meet the needs of their own families.

There is slightly greater risk in this form

of investment than in some other options but *Shared Interest* keeps a healthy reserve to guard against loan defaults and has never, in its 20 year history, failed to pay out to an investor.

Shared Interest is based in Newcastle. It has about 9,000 members, some in Scotland where occasional meetings are held. Its share capital is about £30m. For more information look on their website www.shared-interest.com or contact them at 2 Cathedral Square, Newcastle, NE1 1EH.

One World Stall

The next stall, with a selection of fairly traded goods, will be on 3rd February 2013.

Valerie Macniven

Lent/Easter Appeal 2013

Members of the Congregation are invited to nominate local charities to be recipients of monies raised in next year's Lent/Easter Appeal. Nominations can be sent to me via the Church Office, left for me in the appropriate pigeonhole in the Main Hall or emailed to alandfio@yahoo.co.uk in advance of Friday 4th January. Selection of a nominated charity (or charities) will be made at the January meeting of the Congregational Board.

Alan Ramage, Clerk to the Congregational Board

Resignation of an Elder

Michael Pearson has intimated his desire to resign from the Kirk Session. This was approved with regret at the November meeting.

Michael was ordained to the eldership in 2000 and has served the Session in a number of ways – as a member of the Nominations Committee, as representative elder for Springboard and a member of a Welcome Team. He has also taken care of the members of District 38 for the past ten years. We are sorry to lose the support of another faithful elder but are very grateful for his contributions to the work of the Session.

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

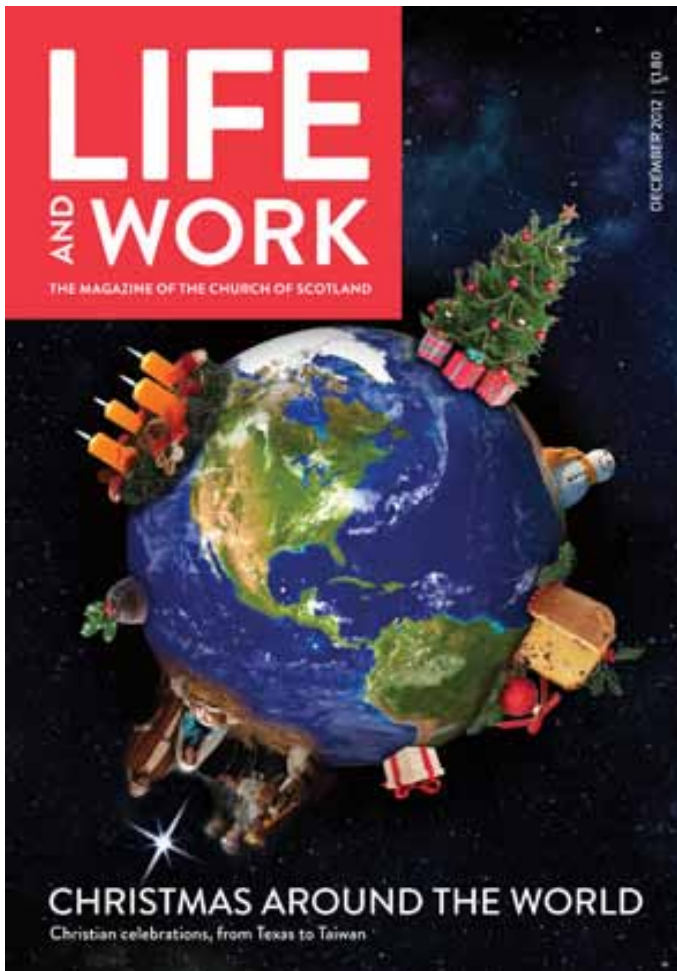
tel: 07883 815 598

email: billstoneiii@gmail.com

Were You there on 4th October?

More pictures from the Girls' Night Out for World Vision





December Issue

Christmas Around the World

From Texas to Taiwan, Christians tell us how they celebrate Christmas. Christmas reflections from the Moderator and Ron Ferguson.

The Guild

First of all we would like to thank everyone who helped us raise £288 for SLA at our baking stall at the Christmas card sale, a very pleasing total.

We have only one meeting left this year which is the Christmas Party on 4th December at 7.30pm.

January starts with a Coffee morning on the 8th at 10.30am to which all are welcome for coffee and a chat, and on January 15th we are having an afternoon meeting at 2.30pm at which Sally Hyder is talking about "Canine Partners". We would like to wish all our friends a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Ann Pirie



Have you looked at the new website?
www.greenbankchurch.org

'Applied Hingin' About'

An introduction to Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland.

An Unsung Hero

The Scottish churchman who signed the American Declaration of Independence.

A Labour of Love

Jackie Macadam meets a Fort William minister with a gift for intricate model making.

Solidarity with Syrians

A Church of Scotland gathering to pray for peace in Syria.

A 'Favourite Watering Place'

John R Hume considers the merits of the High Kirk in Dunoon.

Friends of Paul

In the final part of his series examining those mentioned only once by Paul, the Rev Billy McMillan considers Persis.

'Come to Me'

Concluding his series on Jesus' welcome, Robin Hill turns to the Gospel of John and thirst for life in Christ.

The Muffled Presence of the Holy

The Very Rev Dr James Simpson ponders the significance of our latent yearnings.

Plus all the regular columnists, letters, reviews and crosswords – all for just £1.80.

Life and Work needs you

View from the Pew is your chance to have your say on anything relevant to the Church of Scotland – and we pay £100 to your church if we use it. Send 550 words to *Life and Work*, 121 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YN or email magazine@lifeandwork.org.

Christmas Bookstall

Date to note – 9th December in the Main Hall

Come and see a new selection of books from the Cornerstone Bookshop including books to give as Christmas gifts suitable for all ages. We will also have copies of the recent *Book of the Month*. If you have any special requests please contact us before 8th December.

John and Joan Ritchie



Tour to Israel and Palestine

7th May – 20th May 2013



The Sea of Galilee

This tour is led by Joan and Clarence Musgrave, in association with the Middle East Committee, Church of Scotland World Mission Council. Its purpose is threefold:

- to visit places associated with the life and ministry of Jesus
- to meet with partner churches and organisations of the Church of Scotland
- to learn about the current situation in Israel and Palestine by travelling in Israel and in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and by meeting local people.

Cost

Cost per person sharing accommodation, based on a group of 20 people:

Hotel accommodation with Dinner and Breakfast, hire of coach

Entries to most special sites and boat trip on Sea of Galilee

Air Fare: Edinburgh to Tel Aviv via Amsterdam

Estimated cost £1,300

Single Supplement (if required) £390

To which add “Common purse” for lunches, gratuities, etc. £200

Estimated cost per person £1,500

Costs for hotels in Israel and Palestine are quoted in US\$ and final costs will depend on the rate of exchange at the time of

payment. The costs of air travel will depend on costs for the group when we actually make and pay for reservations.

Outline itinerary details are available from the Greenbank Church Office. If you have any questions, or wish to reserve a place on the tour, please contact Clarence and Joan Musgrave (Tel 0131 332 6337, email clarencejoan@talktalk.net).

Book Review

When The Rains Come

By Tom Pow, illustrated by Malika Favre

ISBN 978-1-84697-206-5. Price £6.99

This delightful children’s book, which is set in a village in Malawi, tells the story of twins Oscar and Jennifer, and baby Grace, who are brought by their mother Beatrice to stay with Grandmother Rose to be looked after for a little while by her. A traditional African folk tale, Tortoise and the Drought, is woven through the story which Rose starts to tell them only to have them fall asleep as they are so tired. Will they ever find out if tortoise knows how to make the rain come?

The twins and baby Grace grow and thrive and have great fun in the village with Rose and hear the end of the folk tale.

The book is beautifully illustrated throughout by Malika Favre.



When the Rains Come shows how love and hard work can help children grow and learn. It also shows that although life can be difficult in Africa there is much joy as well as hardship.

It has been written to support the work of MUMs (Malawi’s Underprivileged Mothers) and is one of the resources available to primary schools from the Scottish Book Trust.

If ordered through MUMs the charity will receive 50% of the revenue from the books.

Vivien Hutchison



Greenbank Coffee Group

Thank you to all members of the congregation who have donated money for coffee and tea following the 10.30am services. After covering costs, I was delighted to be able to write a cheque for £500 to give to SLA for their work in India and £500 to give to the Open Door for their work in the local community.

A big Thank You to all the groups who have made and served coffee and tea throughout the year and also to Pauline Walker and Fiona Grant who support on Sunday mornings.

Isobel Thom

Socks and Things!

Bethany have asked me to let the congregation know how much they appreciate all we donate for homeless people.

Very many thanks for the many beautifully hand knitted socks, gloves and hats.

I have already handed in a big, big bag of items and there is another one ready for when Greenbank provides the meal at the shelter on 9th December. That is the first of four night shelters we will be at over the winter.

Pauline Walker

Church Flowers 2013

Members wishing to donate flowers for the decoration of the Church during 2013 are asked to add their names and telephone numbers to the Flower List on the Notice Board outside the Church Office.

We are keen to have more helpers in the Flower Group who are willing to help as arrangers.

Katy Maguire
Flower Organiser



Flowers in the Sanctuary on Remembrance Sunday, 11th November 2012



Cookers for Christmas Appeal

This appeal is being supported by Michelin starred chef, Tom Kitchin. The top Scottish chef is supporting this year's appeal, which allows Fresh Start to buy cookers to pass on to Edinburgh families and individuals who have been homeless but recently housed. To donate to the appeal, visit the Fresh Start website at www.freshstartweb.org.uk or telephone 476 7741 to find out more.

Next Fresh Start Collection

This is on **13th January** in the hall after the morning service. See the list for suitable items to donate – in good condition, please.

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

Small household electrical items (not TVs).

Alison Ambler

From the Mission and Service Committee

The Church and Society Council of the Church of Scotland draws various events to our attention.

November saw the annual Prisoners' Week where the theme this year was *Making it at Last*. Through a series of events, it aimed to provide support to those affected by crime and imprisonment.

We are also reminded of Poverty & Homeless Action Week which runs from 26th January to 3rd February 2013. The week aims to raise awareness of the issues of poverty and homelessness in the UK and to raise funds for projects and campaigns to tackle them. Details of these events and more are available at the Church and Society page on the Church of Scotland website.

Congregational Register

Omitted

Welcome Teams

- Dec 2** **Stuart Sanders**, Moira Davidson, Stuart Macmillan, John Murison, Rachel Cadell, Jenny Wright, Sandy Cameron, Carrie Reid
- 9** **Alan Armit**, Edith Armit, Susan Black, Louise Coghill, Iain Davidson, Hugh Cowan, Malcolm Watters, Nora Kellock, Elizabeth Mackay
- 16** **John Ritchie**, Eric Brown, Stewart Coghill, Ralph Davidson, Susan Inch, Gill Sweetman, Ian Thomson, David Easton, Susan Jackman
- 23** **John Rutherford**, David Allan, Richard Denison, Kenneth Htet-Khin, Caroline Kehoe, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones, Colin Winchester
- 30** **Roger Bland**, Eileen Campbell, Richard Dunbar, Clifford Hastings, Chris Horne, Doris Laing, Enid Mowat, Robin Nimmo, Keith Winton
- 2013**
- Jan 6** **John George**, Kenneth Aitken, Alastair Hunter, Hazel Macaulay, Kathleen Patrick, Jill Powlett-Brown, Dorothy Whitehead, Tony Foster
- 13** **Ian Thom**, Keith Clark, Ray Dely, Catherine Hardie, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Anne Oxbrow, Isobel Thom, Kay Ellis, Charles Black, Greig Scott
- 20** **Donald King**, Brian Barron, Walter Crosby, Donald MacLeod, Roderick Morrison, Mairi Stevenson, Jim Young, Kathryn Sangster
- Jan 27** **Rosemary McCulloch**, Rona Ferguson, Fiona Grant, Frank Hutson, Christina Morrow, Alison Murison, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Toby Tucker
- Feb 3** **John Ritchie**, Eric Brown, Stewart Coghill, Ralph Davidson, Susan Inch, Gill Sweetman, Ian Thomson, David Easton, Susan Jackman

Coffee Rota

December

- 2 Communion – no coffee
- 9 Prayer Group
- 16 Library
- 23 YES Group
- 30 Edith Armit D12A

2013

January

- 6 Help the Homeless
- 13 Gill Sweetman D22
- 20 Alison Berrill D27
- 27 Maurice Berrill D33

February

- 3 Moira Davidson D31B



Crèche Rota

December

- 2 Carrie Reid
- 9 Jenny Wright
- 16 Valerie Macniven
- 23 Sharon Hamilton



Flower Rota

	<i>Provided by</i>	<i>Delivered by</i>
December		
2	Paddy Bowman	Aileen Thomson
9	Dunbar Family	Enid Mowat
16	Christmas	
23	Christmas	
30	Christmas	
2013		
January		
6	Flower Group	Diana Hastings
13	Ishbel Clark	Valerie Macniven
20	Sinclair Family	Win Kerr
27	Mackay Family	Margery Goodban
February		
3	Anne Innes	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 13 January or sent by e-mail by 9am on Tuesday 15 January to greenbankleaflet@googlemail.com



Some difficult sayings of Jesus

The Kingdom of God is within you (St Luke 17, 21)

Every time we repeat the Lord's Prayer we seek the coming of God's Kingdom. *Thy Kingdom come* we say. To pray for something to come suggests that it has not arrived, that it is not yet here, that it is still in the future. This seems to have been Jesus' own understanding when he began his public ministry. According to Mark's Gospel his first words were about the Kingdom of God: *The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near...* Near but not here; close at hand, but not actually present.

That the Kingdom is not yet fully present is obviously true. The prayer for the coming of the Kingdom is a hope, a vision, a dream. The Kingdom of God is what life on earth would be like if God were King. It is not a territorial area, like the United Kingdom or the kingdom of Bhutan. It is wherever God's right to reign is acknowledged, wherever the One who is always on the throne is made known, wherever the kingly rule of God holds sway. The Kingdom is about God's dominion rather than about God's domain. By no stretch of faith or imagination can even the most starry-eyed optimist claim that the current state of affairs is anything like what God would have it be. The Kingdom of God is still in the future. Or is it?

What are we to make of the many times Jesus seemed to be saying that the Kingdom is already present? There is an incident recorded in Luke's Gospel when some Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God was coming. He answered, *In fact, the kingdom of God is within you.* A similar affirmation is found in the Gospel of Thomas, a collection of the sayings of Jesus found in the sands of Egypt nearly 70 years ago. There Jesus seems to be correcting two misunderstandings. "Where is the Kingdom? In the sky? In the sea? No. Rather the Kingdom is within you and it is outside you." "And when will the Kingdom be? At some time in the future? No: the Kingdom of the Father is already spread out on the earth, and people aren't aware of it." The Kingdom is not somewhere else or sometime in the future: it is within you, inside you, among you, here, on earth — people just do not see it.

What did Jesus mean when he said, *The Kingdom of God is within you*? There are several ways of understanding what Jesus said. Some of the Jews of Jesus' time wanted to see God's rule established by a war of revolt against the Roman forces of occupation or simply by direct, divine intervention; others looked for something completely new, replacing this world and its ways. If Jesus said that the kingdom was "within" his hearers, then the coming of the kingdom would not be an outward and observable event but an inner experience. This suggests that the kingdom of God works in human minds and hearts. Its purpose is not to produce new things but new people. Its coming does not lead to a social or political revolution of the kind expected by many of Jesus' contemporaries, but to an inner revolution in human hearts and minds and spirits.

There is another way of understanding our Lord's words. There is an ambiguity in the Greek original of Luke's Gospel. As well as meaning that the Kingdom of God is *within you*, the same Greek words could mean, The Kingdom of God is *among you*. When speaking about the Kingdom of God, Jesus always had a community in mind, not individuals. If Jesus said that the kingdom is "among" or "in the midst of" his hearers, then there would be no point in keeping watch for the coming of the kingdom, since the kingdom was already present, waiting to be accepted and entered by those who had eyes to see it. This fits in with the repeated assertion of Luke's Gospel that the Kingdom is a present reality. Jesus speaks about the Kingdom as a fact of history and not merely as a spiritual condition. For instance, when Jesus sent his disciples out on a preaching tour, they were instructed to tell people that whether they believed it or not, whether they liked it or not, the Kingdom had come upon them.

Perhaps Jesus was referring to himself. He was in the midst of his disciples. The Kingdom was among them in the person of Jesus. He was the embodiment of the Kingdom. In him the reign of God was already there. From beginning to end Jesus's ministry can be understood not only as a proclamation that God's reign had come, that God's new age had begun, but also as a demonstration of what the reign of God meant in practical terms. In his preaching Jesus summoned his hearers to accept God's rule over their lives, teaching them in his wise sayings and in his vivid stories about the new way of life God expected of citizens in the Kingdom. His healings and feedings were signs of the Kingdom in action, restoring the broken in mind and body to health and sanity, providing food for the hungry and justice for the oppressed. His care and concern for the outcasts of society were signs of the wideness of God's mercy; his forgiveness of sinners was absolution from the compassionate and generous King himself.

When we pray for the coming of the Kingdom, we align ourselves with God's cause in the world. Long ago Jesus enlisted people to do exactly what he himself was doing, to demonstrate the Kingdom in practice. It is all too easy to think that the Kingdom for which we pray is entirely ahead of us, instead of realising that God wants us to play our part in its coming NOW. God's Kingdom did not, could not and will not begin, continue or conclude without human collaboration any more than it can be solely the result of divine intervention on its own. That said, the Kingdom is always God's, not the result of human achievement. And so we look up and look forward, up to the God who reigns and forward to the day when that reign will be fully revealed and totally acknowledged. That is why not only do we pray *Thy Kingdom come* but also affirm *For thine is the Kingdom...*