

Leaflet



Greenbank Parish Church
Braidburn Terrace, EH10 6ES
No 627 June–August 2013

Pulpit Diary

May 31 Friday

7.30pm pre-Communion Service

Jun 2

9.00am Communion
10.30am Communion (Springboard and Spectrum meet as normal)
3.00pm Communion (Braid Room)

Jun 9

10.30am All Age Celebration and "Moving on Service"
Followed by congregational picnic

Jun 17 – Aug 4 inclusive

9.30am Family Worship led by Rev Bill Stone assisted by Spectrum families and friends
10.30am Morning Worship (Creche and special activity for children)

Aug 11

10.30am All Age Worship with children from Space Academy Holiday Club

Aug 18

10.30am Morning Worship (Springboard and Spectrum start of first term)

Aug 25

10.30am Morning Worship

Aug 30 Friday

7.30pm pre-Communion Service

Sept 1

9.00am Communion
10.30am Communion (Springboard and Spectrum meet as normal)
3.00pm Communion (Braid Room)

For information about church organisations, please contact the Church Office (Mon–Fri, 9.00am–12.00noon, 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

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.

Minister's Letter

Dear Friends

Why is a human being like a tardis? That was the question asked by the speaker at a recent training day on children's spirituality. In case you haven't guessed the answer then let me tell you – it is because human beings are bigger on the inside than they are on the outside!

It may seem obvious yet it is something that we often overlook. We are so busy focussing on what we can see, hear, touch, smell and taste, - the material things of this life - that we can miss the deeper reality that is God's life at work in us and in the world, forming us and shaping us into people whose words and actions reflect the love of Christ.

Between the time of my writing this letter and the time of your reading it, the Church of Scotland will have met in General Assembly. Given the various issues of a potentially divisive nature which are due to be debated this year, it seems odd to be writing this letter before we know the outcome of the Assembly's deliberations and the likely impact upon the Kirk. At present all we can do is pray for business to be conducted in a manner that is loving and respectful, and for the unity of the Church in Jesus Christ. But as the Kirk prepares to sail into what could be extremely turbulent waters, we might ask ourselves another question "Why is the Church like a tardis?" The answer to that question is again "Because it is bigger on the inside than it is on the outside". Whatever lies ahead we need to remember that the Church is so much more than the buildings in which we worship, or the people who gather to worship week by week in those buildings all around the world, (or even the Church of Scotland for that matter!). At the centre of the Church, visible and invisible, is the life of the God whom the universe could not contain. At Pentecost we celebrate the breathing of that life into the disciples, and the birth of the Church.

So even if the Kirk we know and love makes mistakes and gets it wrong, even if, through human weakness and failure, our witness to God's love is poor and faltering, even if



the church as an institution looks more like the broken body of Christ than God's new creation, it is not the end of the world, nor indeed of the Church. There may be stormy weather ahead, there may need to be radical change within the Kirk. But let us remember with the hymnwriter:

"So be it Lord! your throne shall never
Like earth's proud empires pass away.
Your kingdom stands and grows forever,
Till all your creatures own your sway."

In the meantime, this summer here in Greenbank, Neil Ross completes his five year tenure of office as Session Clerk. Over this period Neil has quietly and faithfully ensured the smooth running of Session. He has given generously of his time and talents as we have sought to lead the development of the life of this congregation in accordance with the roadmap, undertaken a refurbishment of the sanctuary, a stewardship campaign and reviews of staffing and pastoral care. We give thanks for the service he has given in this role. Session has appointed Valerie Macniven as Neil's successor, and we remember her in our prayers as she takes on this new responsibility.

Finally, can I take this opportunity of wishing you all a refreshing summer break, hopefully with some sunshine! Last year we enjoyed following your journeys all around the world and we look forward to receiving more postcards this year. This year too we have printed our own card with greetings from Greenbank for you to take to any churches that you might visit over the summer – a tangible reminder of the worldwide nature of the Church family and the love of Christ that gives us life.

With warmest wishes

Alison I Swindells
Minister

Book Review

Speaking Christian, Marcus J Borg

SPCK 2011, 256 pages, £9.99 ISBN 978-0-281-06508-0

Speaking Christian is a bold attempt to meet the needs both of those for whom the traditional language of Christianity has lost its meaning and of those who have never understood it in the first place. Marcus Borg identifies two major obstacles which make it difficult for many people to understand the language of Christianity. One is what he defines as the “heaven-and-hell” understanding of Christianity, which emphasises the next world and what we must do to get there. The other is the reduction of rich, poetic and transformative language to its literal and factual meaning.

Not all will agree with Borg’s analysis of the problem facing modern Christianity. Is he right to generalise from his own North American Lutheran upbringing and its effect on his own religious development to say something more widely relevant? Are people as naïve and unthinking as he sometimes implies? Are we as burdened by the baggage of the past as he suggests?

While not accepting all of Borg’s negative criticisms of a traditional understanding of Christian language, his helpful insights into the meaning of words and phrases commonly – and often thoughtlessly – used are to be welcomed. With him we may learn to move beyond a restricted understanding to something wider and richer.

Borg illustrates his argument by the frequent use of Biblical quotations and reminds his readers of the wealth of meaning underlying particular words and ideas, a wealth that narrow understandings of Christianity have lost. For instance, the phrase “born again”, so often associated with a specific type of Christianity, has been reinstated as a meaningful and central concept for all Christians; salvation (another loaded word) is shown to embrace a wide range of meanings including liberation from bondage, return from exile and rescue from peril, as well as recovery of sight, the healing of wounds and making whole; and sin is recognised as being one of several biblical ways of describing the human condition rather than the only one.

Borg notes that some have tried to change the Church’s language, but he rightly prefers to recover the lost meaning of words and phrases from the Bible as well as in the ancient creeds. For this we must be grateful. Marcus Borg has succeeded in restoring to familiar words and ideas a freshness, a vitality and a power that could change and revitalise our faith. In his concluding words, we can rediscover that Christianity is simply about loving God (as known in Jesus) and changing the world.

Lent and Easter Appeal 2013

The total raised for the two chosen charities was £3,400 including Gift Aid.

Thanks to everyone who contributed.

New Session Clerk

The Kirk Session has chosen Valerie Macniven to be the next Session Clerk. Valerie has been a member of Greenbank since 1982 when she joined with her husband, Duncan. She was ordained to the eldership in 1980 at Mayfield Church and admitted to the Kirk Session at Greenbank in 1983. She soon became the elder for District 39.



In the Kirk Session Valerie has served as Convener of the Communications Committee and as a member of the World Mission Committee. For a number of years she was the main link in our partnership with Richmond Craigmillar Church. Since 2010 Valerie has represented Greenbank on the Presbytery of Edinburgh.

Valerie has two adult daughters, Rona and Morag, who were both active in the Sunday youth organisations and in Guiding at Greenbank before leaving home.

Valerie retired from her work with the Scottish Government in 2012 and now pursues many interests, including tennis, walking, skiing, golf, voluntary work in criminal justice and trying to improve her spoken French to help communicate during holidays there.

Christian Aid Collection 2013

As this article goes to press, Christian Aid Week is in full swing, with all streets in our parish covered once again.

It was a great boost to get new volunteers to help maintain our team of 46 collectors in this important outreach in our community. This has allowed some ‘older’ and ‘long-serving’ collectors to retire, and it is appropriate to salute their faithful contribution to this annual event over many years.

The week also had an inspiring start in the shape of the area Christian Aid Service, which this year was held on Sunday evening at 7pm at Fairmilehead Parish Church. Those who attended were able to hear more about Christian Aid’s programmes in several countries from Mary Mulligan, Christian Aid Development Officer in Scotland. The overall theme this year is to “bite back at hunger”, and Christian Aid’s work is at every level in this respect. This means supporting local projects and also campaigning to ensure fair treatment for minorities, and security of food and water resources for poor communities around the world. The reminder was given that collectors are part of more than 100,000 people nationally who go out collecting every year – an important witness for Christ’s work in the world – and a reinforcing fact to help local collectors face the occasional challenge on the doorstep!

The service also had both progressive and thought provoking elements – ‘prayer stations’ helped to focus on the work in different countries, and a communion service at the end gave a great sense of community together before heading out into collection week.

Our totals for the parish will be reported in due course, but thanks are due to all who have helped in organising, collecting and counting in this major task.

Pam Jack

Church and Society

From the Council's Newsletter

There are a variety of issues in this month's newsletter that will be of interest and relevance to our congregation, some of which will be familiar to us and are itemised below.

Christian Aid Week: Bite back at Hunger, 12th to 18th May

In addition to the collection of the familiar red envelopes, this year's challenge from Christian Aid is to put yourself in the shoes of the 1.4 billion people who survive on less than £1 a day. Can you live off £1 for food and drink for five days? The money you save can be donated to help some of the world's poorest communities.

Heart and Soul – A Celebration of Celtic Christianity, Sunday 19th May 1-5pm Princes Street Gardens

This popular event returns. Bring your family along to the tent in the gardens where you can demonstrate your creativity and talk about the work of the council.

General Assembly Fringe Event: Credit Union. Monday 20th May 12.30-2.00pm

Representatives from the Church of Scotland, Church of England experts in the field will be discussing Credit Unions, their role in our current society and how congregations can support them.

Church and Society Reports to the General Assembly. Thursday 23rd May

The Church and Society Council are presenting a number of reports to this year's General Assembly:

- Human Rights: what does love informed justice require of us?
- Country Report: Bolivia
- The inheritance of Abraham? A report on the 'promised land'
- The lies we tell ourselves: ending comfortable myths about poverty
- The implications for the Church of Scotland of independence for Scotland
- Update of project and programme works

Sanctuary and Asylum

David Bradwell, Associate secretary, Church and Society Council, looks at current issues around sanctuary and asks whether we need to change our thinking about asylum seekers and how we might influence government policy.

For more information on any of the above issues and more please go to candsenews@cofscotland.org.uk

Vivien Hutchison

Space Academy

5th to 9th August 2013

If you are at primary school now or are starting in August come along and join the fun at Space Academy, this year's Greenbank Holiday Club.

Monday to Friday 10.00am to 12 noon 5th to 9th August.

Bring a friend, bring lots of friends or come by yourself and meet lots of new friends!

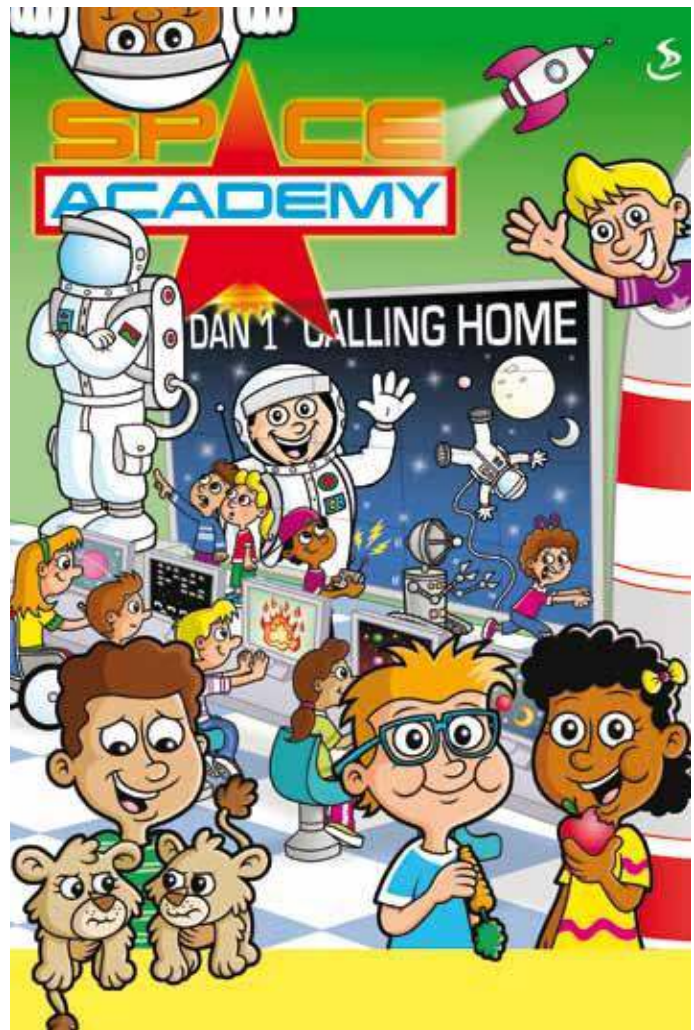
You may learn some weird and wonderful facts about space and you certainly will have lots of fun making things and playing games. Everyone is welcome but get your name in soon to be sure of a place.

For more information, or to book a place, contact the Church Office (447 9969) or better still go on to the Church website. You will find a booking form waiting for you to fill in at www.greenbankchurch.org

We are looking forward to seeing you.

A venture like this needs lots of helpers. We would welcome help from anyone in the congregation who feels they can give some time for the whole week or any part of it. I can promise you will have lots of fun too!

Alison Reid



The Friendship Club at “The Wheel”

Weatherwise our outing to the Falkirk Wheel was not good, but in all other respects, despite the drizzle, it was voted a GREAT DAY! Some of us, obviously in our second childhood, enjoyed playing in the ‘Water Play Area’ creating waterfalls and fountains, in the rain- and we have the photos to prove it.

Following our amazing ‘Soup and Sandwich’ lunch the trip on the wheel was an exciting and often hilarious (pity the other travellers) experience. Our driver Derek and all the Staff at the Wheel were delightful and helpful, all adding to make this a day to remember.

Where to next year?

Val Smart



Thank You

The Editors would like to thank all who have contributed to the Leaflet over the past session, especially those who have been able to send articles in before the cut-off dates. Please keep your articles coming in and if you have any relevant photos send them too (jpg format), they are very welcome.

We would like to remind you that the deadline for the next issue, September, is August 11th and 13th.

World Mission

The 90kg Rice Challenge final result

The World Mission Committee wants to thank the Congregation for their **huge** support for the Rice Challenge. In just three Sundays in April we sold two 90 kg consignments of Malawi rice – 180kg in all. This means



that, through Just Trading Scotland, we have funded two young Malawian people to go to secondary school for a year. We also raised a further £70 from donations and have sent this to Just Trading to help with their bursary scheme for the education of orphans. They aim to provide for equal numbers of girls and boys. Just Trading were delighted at our efforts and have included our story and photo on their website.

Just Trading’s work in selling Malawi Kilombero rice has been rewarded by a £276 000 grant from the Scottish Government. The grant funds a three year programme which will focus on producing high quality Kilombero seed to enable farmers to increase quality and volume. It will also give assistance to farmers in drying rice and transporting it to market.

Knitting

Another way in which Greenbank Church is helping children in Malawi is through the Work Party’s knitting of garments. They made 175 items last year and many of those go to Malawi via EMMS International (formerly The Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society).

Southern India

From Southern India a small-scale farmer expresses his gratitude in these words: “The ginger crop has blessed me, my family and fellow farmers. The benefits of fair trade we get through association with TRADCRAFT has finally resulted in the improvement of our living standards. Thanks for buying our products.”

A Prestigious Award

Catherine Nicol, a Scot, has received a prestigious award from the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. *The Medal of the Great Leader* is a civil award conferred on those who have attained academic distinction in the fields of science, art and literature, distinction in the fields of sports and nursing; and for rendering dedicated service with selfless devotion in human rights and public service.

Catherine’s various roles included the education and nurture of Christian girls and young women.

Need a lift to church?

If you are finding it difficult to get to church and need a lift, we may be able to assist.

Please contact the church office and we will try and arrange transport for you.

Mission & Service Committee

The Guild

The Guild have had another good year, with interesting, challenging and fun meetings. The session ended with our outing to Purves Puppets in Biggar. We had pleasant drive to Biggar and an excellent lunch, followed by a wonderful presentation of The Firebird. The music, sets and special effects made it a magical afternoon.

The Guild Summer Coffee Mornings will be on June 4th, July 2nd, August 13th and September 3rd.

Edith Armit

GREENBANK PARISH CHURCH

Provisional Programme for Session 2013/2014

2013

4 Aug (Sun)	9.30	Last of Summer Family Services
5 Aug (Mon) – 9 Aug (Fri)	10.00–12 noon	Holiday Club
11 Aug (Sun)	10.30	All Age Worship with Holiday Club
16 Aug (Fri)		Pre-school start of 1st term
18 Aug (Sun)	10.00	Springboard start of 1st term
	10.30	Spectrum start of 1st term
30 Aug (Fri)	19.30	Pre-Communion Service
	20.00	Pre-Communion Kirk Session Meeting
1 Sept (Sun)		Communion Services at 9.00, 10.30 and 15.00 Springboard meets at 10.00, Spectrum at 10.30
3 Sept (Tues)	19.30	Kirk Session Meeting
6 Sept (Fri)	9.15–9.45	Pram Praise
10 Sept (Tues)	19.30	Congregational Board Meeting
16 Sept (Mon)		Pre-school closed
24 Sept (Tues)	19.30	District Elders meeting 1
29 Sept (Sun)	10.30	All Age Celebration for Harvest
4 Oct (Fri)	9.15–9.45	Pram Praise
5 Oct (Sat)	16.00–18.00	Messy Church
6 Oct (Sun)	9.30	First Sunday Service led by Springboard
13 Oct (Sun)		No meeting of Spectrum or Springboard (Special activity for children)
14 Oct (Mon) – 21 Oct (Mon)		Pre-school closed
25 Oct (Fri)		Christian Aid Event: Forth Valley Chorus
1 Nov (Fri)	9.15 – 9.45	Pram Praise
2 Nov (Sat)		Charity Christmas Card Sale
3 Nov (Sun)	9.30	First Sunday Service led by The Guild
10 Nov (Sun)	10.50	Remembrance Service Springboard meets as usual, Spectrum 2 and 3 begin in church at 10.50, Spectrum 1 meets in Upper Hall at 10.45
12 Nov (Tues)	19.30	Kirk Session Meeting
17 Nov (Sun) – 24 Nov (Sun)		Guild Week
21 Nov (Thurs)	19.30	District Elders meeting 2
29 Nov (Fri)	19.30	Pre-Communion Service
	20.00	Pre-Communion Kirk Session Meeting
1 Dec (Sun)		First Sunday in Advent Start of Christmas Offering for Christian Aid Communion Services at 9.00, 10.30 and 15.00 Springboard meets at 10.00, Spectrum at 10.30
3 Dec (Tues)	19.30	Congregational Board Meeting
6 Dec (Fri)	9.15–9.45	Pram Praise
7 Dec (Sat)		Christmas Event for Children
8 Dec (Sun)		Second Sunday in Advent
	17.30	SLA Christmas sing-along
15 Dec (Sun)		Third Sunday in Advent
	10.30	All Age Gift Service Springboard and Spectrum end of 1st term
	15.00	Blue Christmas Service Pre-school end of 1st term
19 Dec (Thurs)		
22 Dec (Sun)		Fourth Sunday in Advent
	10.30	Lessons and Carols
24 Dec (Tues)		Christmas Eve
	19.00	Christmas Eve Family Service
	23.30	Christmas Eve Watchnight Service, (Carol Singing from 23.10)
25 Dec (Wed)		Christmas Day
	10.30	Family Service for Christmas Day

2014

5 Jan (Sun)	10.00	Springboard start of 2nd term
	10.30	Spectrum start of 2nd term
7 Jan (Tues)		Pre-school start of 2nd term
14 Jan (Tues)	19.30	Kirk Session Meeting
21 Jan (Tues)	19.30	Congregational Board Meeting
2 Feb (Sun)	9.30	First Sunday Service led by the Kirk Session

7 Feb (Fri)	9.15–9.45	Pram Praise
9 Feb (Sun)	10.30	Uniformed Organisations Service
16 Feb (Sun)		No meeting of Springboard or Spectrum – (special activity for children)
17 Feb (Mon) – 24 Feb (Mon)		Pre-school closed
18 Feb (Tues)		Guild Fund-raising event
28 Feb (Fri)	19.30	Pre-Communion Service
	20.00	Pre-Communion Kirk Session Meeting
2 Mar (Sun)		Communion Services at 9.00, 10.30 and 15.00 Springboard meets at 10.00, Spectrum at 10.30
7 Mar (Fri)	9.15–9.45	Pram Praise
		World Day of Prayer
9 Mar (Sun)		First Sunday in Lent
11 Mar (Tues)	19.00	Trustees Meeting
	19.30	Kirk Session Meeting
16 Mar (Sun)		Second Sunday in Lent Annual Business Meeting of Congregation during 10.30 Service Springboard meets at 10.00, Spectrum at 10.30
19 Mar (Wed)	19.30	Congregational Board Meeting
23 Mar (Sun)		Third Sunday in Lent Start of Lent/Easter offering
30 Mar (Sun)		Fourth Sunday in Lent Springboard and Spectrum end of 2nd term Pre-school end of 2nd term
3 Apr (Thurs)		
4 Apr (Fri)	9.15–9.45	Pram Praise
5 Apr (Sat)		Scout Jumble Sale
6 Apr (Sun)		Fifth Sunday in Lent
	9.30	First Sunday Service led by World Mission Special Activity for Children
13 Apr (Sun)		Palm Sunday Special activity for children
	10.00	Springboard start of 3rd term
	10.30	Spectrum start of 3rd term
14 Apr (Mon) – 18 Apr (Fri)		Holy Week Services (at Greenbank Church)
20 Apr (Sun)		Easter Day
	9.30	Communion
	10.30	All Age Celebration (followed by egg rolling in Braidburn Valley Park)
23 Apr (Wed)		Pre-school start of 3rd term
27 Apr (Sun)		Stewardship Sunday
28 Apr (Mon)	19.30	Kirk Session Meeting
2 May (Fri)	9.15–9.45	Pram Praise
4 May (Sun)	9.30	First Sunday Service led by Help the Homeless
5 May (Mon)		Pre-school closed
6 May (Tues)	19.30	District Elders meeting 3
12–18 May (Mon–Sun)		Christian Aid Week
19–20 May (Mon–Tues)		Pre-school closed
30 May (Fri)	19.30	Pre-Communion Service
	20.00	Pre-Communion Session Meeting
1 Jun (Sun)		Communion Services at 9.00, 10.30 and 15.00 Springboard meets at 10.00, Spectrum at 10.30
3 Jun (Tues)	19.30	Congregational Board Meeting
6 Jun (Fri)	09.15–09.45	Pram Praise
8 Jun (Sun)		Pentecost
	9.30	Pentecost Communion Service
	10.30	All Age Pentecost Celebration and Moving on Service Springboard and Spectrum end of 3rd term Congregational Picnic
10 Jun (Tues)	19.30	Kirk Session Meeting
15 Jun (Sun)	09.30	First of Summer Family Services
26 Jun (Thurs)		Pre-school end of year

Crèche and Children's Activity during 10.30 Service every Sunday



Life and Work: June Issue

Do You See What I See?

Jackie Macadam explores the links between Christianity and photography – and the thoughts of those behind the lens.

General Assembly 2013

Four pages of reports to the Assembly.

A New Voice

Jackie Macadam meets a minister who has overcome the trauma of losing his voice in a battle with cancer.

Changing Church

The Rev Dr Alister Bull highlights the work taking place at a church plant in a Glasgow suburb.

'A Fascinating Place'

John R Hume reflects on the history of a church with strong links to early Christianity in Fife.

Studio Tours to Success

The Rev Bryan Kerr highlights the success of a themed holiday club in Lanark.

Sacred Relics

Ann Winning reflects on the mystery behind a communion gift.

The Third Sacrament?

Dr Ian Bradley asks whether we should regard foot washing as another sacrament.

'The Robe of Grace'

The Rev Scott McKenna offers fresh insights into the Parable of the Prodigal Son

Month in a Life

Bill Stevenson, the Boys' Brigade's Director for Scotland.

Plus all the regular columnists, letters, reviews and crosswords – all for just £2.

Online: Visit us: www.lifeandwork.org, follow us: @cofslifeandwork, like us: [facebook.com/lifeandwork](https://www.facebook.com/lifeandwork).

Congregational Register

Omitted from the online version of the Leaflet

Welcome Teams

June

2 Rosemary McCulloch, Rona Ferguson, Fiona Grant, Frank Hutson, Christina Morrow, Alison Murison, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Toby Tucker

9 John Rutherford, David Allan, Richard Denison, Kenneth Htet-Khin, Caroline Kehoe, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones

16 John Ritchie, Eric Brown, Stewart Coghill, Ralph Davidson, Susan Inch, Gill Sweetman, Ian Thomson, David Easton, Susan Jackman

23 Stuart Sanders, Moira Davidson, Stuart Macmillan, John Murison, Rachel Cadell, Jenny Wright, Sandy Cameron, Carrie Reid, Moira Land

30 Roger Bland, Eileen Campbell, Richard Dunbar, Clifford Hastings, Chris Horne, Doris Laing, Enid Mowat, Robin Nimmo, Keith Winton

July

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

14 John Rutherford, David Allan, Richard Denison, Kenneth Htet-Khin, Caroline Kehoe, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones

- 21 **Rosemary McCulloch**, Rona Ferguson, Fiona Grant, Frank Hutson, Christina Morrow, Alison Murison, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Toby Tucker
- 28 **Alan Armit**, Edith Armit, Louise Coghill, Iain Davidson, Hugh Cowan, Susan Black, Malcolm Watters, Nora Kellock, Elizabeth Mackay

August

- 4 **Roger Bland**, Eileen Campbell, Richard Dunbar, Clifford Hastings, Chris Horne, Doris Laing, Enid Mowat, Robin Nimmo, Keith Winton
- 11 **John Ritchie**, Eric Brown, Stewart Coghill, Ralph Davidson, Susan Inch, Gill Sweetman, Ian Thomson, David Easton, Susan Jackman
- 18 **Donald King**, Brian Barron, Walter Crosby, Donald MacLeod, Roderick Morrison, Mairi Stevenson, Jim Young, Kathryn Sangster
- 25 **Stuart Sanders**, Moira Davidson, Stuart Macmillan, John Murison, Rachel Cadell, Jenny Wright, Sandy Cameron, Carrie Reid, Moira Land

Sept

- 1 **John Rutherford**, David Allan, Richard Denison, Kenneth Htet-Khin, Caroline Kehoe, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones



Pentecost Flames

Coffee Rota

June

- 2 Communion
- 9 Ian & Moira Davidson
- 16 Louise Coghill & John Mowat
- 23 Dorothy Whitehead & Caroline Kehoe
- 30 Liz Sheil

July

- 7 Joan & John Ritchie
- 14 Clare Jenkinson
- 21 Janet & David Allan
- 28 Rosemary McCulloch

Aug

- 4 Catherine Hardie
- 11 Vivien Hutchison, Margot Fergusson, Rona Somerville & Roddy Morrison
- 18 Edith Armit
- 25 Jill Powlett-Brown

Creche Rota

June

- 2 Lucy Teall
- 9 Isobel Thom
- 16 Rosemary Collier
- 23 Liz Foster
- 30 Carrie Reid

July

- 7 Vivien Hutchison

Flower Rota

provided by

delivered by

June

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-------------------|
| 2 | Ina Weir | Charlotte Tucker |
| 9 | Catherine Hardie | Irene Horne |
| 16 | Margo Fraser | Doris Laing |
| 23 | Moira Davidson | Dorothy Whitehead |
| 30 | Dunbar Family | Anne Morham |

July

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|------------------|
| 7 | Jennie Johnston | Alison Murison |
| 14 | Kathleen Patrick | Margo Fraser |
| 21 | Dorothy Whitehead | Moira Davidson |
| 28 | Rutherford Family | Cathie Maclennan |

August

- | | | |
|----|------------------|--------------|
| 4 | Gina Millar | Kay Ellis |
| 11 | Hazel Macaulay | Ishbel Clark |
| 18 | Hutson Family | Anne Mason |
| 25 | Margot Fergusson | Janet Walker |
| 31 | Hutchison Family | |

September

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1 | Alison Ambler |
|---|---------------|

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

AFTERTHOUGHTS

SOME DIFFICULT SAYINGS OF JESUS:

IF YOU HAVE FAITH THE SIZE OF A MUSTARD SEED, YOU WILL SAY TO THIS MOUNTAIN, ‘MOVE FROM HERE TO THERE,’ AND IT WILL MOVE; AND NOTHING WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU.

There is a story about two elderly sisters who had spent all their lives in a Welsh mining village. One Sunday at their chapel they had heard a powerful sermon on the faith that can move mountains. At the back of their cottage was an enormous slag heap, which blocked their view and was a constant irritation. The younger sister said, “If faith can move mountains, surely if we pray hard enough we can get rid of this horrible slag heap.” So they pulled down the blinds and prayed very hard that the offending blot on the landscape would disappear. When they pulled up the blinds again the monstrosity was still there. “You see” said the older sister, “I knew all the time that it wouldn’t move.”

Millions of years before human beings existed, the mountain ranges of Scotland were on the move. At one time they may have been as high as the Himalayas, although subsequent erosion by wind, water and ice altered their appearance. And these mountains, along with the rest of what is now Scotland, were somewhere south of the Equator! From there they have been moved across the surface of the planet to their present position. Despite their seemingly immovable and permanent appearance, mountains can move!

However, it is unlikely that Jesus expected his followers literally to move mountains from their place. A man had brought his epileptic son to some of his disciples to be healed. They had been unable to help. When Jesus himself healed the boy, his disciples then asked why they had failed where he had succeeded. He explained that it had to do with faith: if they believed, they could do anything. If faith is present at all, even if it is no bigger than a mustard seed, proverbially the smallest of things, it can accomplish wonders. All that was needed to do astonishing things, even to rearrange the landscape, was an infinitesimally small amount of faith.

The tiny seed of faith is compared to the supernatural power to accomplish great things. Is this then simply an encouragement to make the most of our resources, to realise that from small beginnings there can be incredible results? Throughout history there have been men and women who have believed in a dream and have pursued it relentlessly. Undoubtedly, unlikely but profound changes have taken place because people had faith. The Reformation of the 16th century, the abolition of slavery in the 19th and the breaking down of barriers between black and white in the United States and in South Africa in the 20th would not have happened without faith. Nor will the elimination of injustice and poverty come about in this century without faith.

Did Jesus speak about faith that can move mountains with a twinkle in his eye? We tend to assume that Jesus was rebuking

his followers and friends for their lack of faith. We think that he was angry with them. Do we feel chastened and guilty when we hear the words of Jesus as words addressed to us? This may be our reaction to what Jesus said about faith. But what if Jesus was speaking these words in a voice of encouragement and love? He speaks with kindness and a smile, certainly with exaggeration and overstatement. *Even the tiniest amount of faith* — and perhaps he pinched his thumb and forefinger together to make the point — *is enough to do what has to be done.*

It is easy to misunderstand this saying. It is a gross corruption of the Christian Gospel to claim that God invariably rewards the faithful with success, wealth and health. There are countless faithful men and women and children for whom things are not going well. The last thing needy, disappointed, discouraged, grieving people need to hear is a rebuke. Faith is not the same as the power of positive thinking. It is not believing in certain goals deeply enough and working towards them hard enough and then reaping the benefits. Christian faith is something different.

Faith is at the heart of Christianity. Jesus spoke of it often. Sadly, many people regard faith as believing even when one has reason to think otherwise. They have adopted the attitude of the Queen in *Alice in Wonderland* who boasted, “Why, sometimes I’ve believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.” But faith is not solely a function of the intellect, believing all the right things. What we believe with the top of our minds is important, but faith is much more a matter of trust. As a famous Danish thinker once put it, faith is like floating on a deep ocean, with 70,000 fathoms of water under us. Such faith has been described as trusting in the buoyancy of God.

Faith requires the surrender of our hearts and lives to God. Faith means trusting in God in the face of personal crisis, doubt, loss and global catastrophe, venturing forward into the unknown future, believing that God has a future for us and for the world. The miracle in what Jesus says is not about overcoming natural laws but about the presence of *true* faith, a faith that takes hold of God with whom nothing is impossible. It is not so much having a greater quantity of faith but having faith of a different quality. Such faith enables the would-be followers of Jesus not to look inwards at themselves, no longer to rely on the strength of their own faith or to be scared by its weakness, but to look instead to the One we follow. Christian faith may be understood as hopeful, trusting, strong even in weakness, surprising and cheerfully active — not because of the believer, but because of the One we trust. It is not great faith that we need, but faith in a great God.

For further reading:

The *Letter to the Hebrews*, chapter 11, is all about faith in action and what some of God’s people were able to accomplish through faith. The story does not end with the end of the Bible, but continues whenever and wherever people of faith move whatever mountains obstruct and impede God’s purpose for humanity.