

Leaflet



Greenbank Parish Church
Braidburn Terrace, EH10 6ES
No 644 June–August 2015

Pulpit Diary

Jun 5 (Friday)

7.30pm Pre-Communion Service

Jun 7

9.00am Communion

10.30am Communion (Springboard and Spectrum meet as normal)

3.00pm Communion (Braid Room)

Jun 14

10.30am Morning Worship

Jun 21

10.30am 'Moving on' Service, followed by Congregational Picnic in Braidburn Valley Park

Jun 28 – Aug 9 inclusive

9.30am Summer Early Service

10.30am Morning Worship (Crèche and special activity for children)

Aug 16

10.30am All Age Worship with children from Polar Explorers Holiday Club, followed by Barbecue

Aug 23

10.30am Morning Worship (Springboard and Spectrum start of 1st term)

Aug 30

10.30am Morning Worship

Sept 4 (Friday)

7.30pm Pre-Communion Service

Sept 6

9.00am Communion

10.30am Communion (Springboard and Spectrum meet as normal)

3.00pm Communion (Braid Room)

To make contact with any of the organisations referenced in this *Leaflet*, please use the telephone no given, if there is one. Otherwise please contact the Church Office. Website: www.greenbankchurch.org

Minister's Letter

Dear Friends

As I write this letter I am looking forward to beginning a course of part-time study towards a Doctorate in Ministry. The Church of Scotland encourages its Ministers to take study leave and offers them two weeks a year for this purpose. You can save these weeks and take a more intensive course of study and this is what I have chosen to



do. With the support of Session I have now registered for the DMin programme.

This course in Reformed Theology is taught by Edinburgh University School of Divinity and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and lasts for 3 years. It is aimed at those with some experience in Ministry and is designed to encourage us to reflect theologically on the practical aspects of our ministries. During each of the first two years of the course there are two two-week schools – one held here in Edinburgh in June, the other in Pittsburgh in January. During the third year we are required to produce a more in-depth piece of work relating to our ministries. The first school here in Edinburgh begins on 8th June.

At the moment while I am excited about returning to University and very much looking forward to the school, which will be led by names familiar to most of you – David Fergusson, Iain Torrance and Alison Jack – there is also some trepidation. It is now almost twenty years since I graduated from Aberdeen University and I'm not sure how I'm going to get on in this area of study which has a different focus from that of my BD. The reading list is somewhat daunting! It was quite reassuring to bump into a colleague at the General Assembly *Heart and Soul* event in Princes Street Gardens, who has also enrolled for the course, and to discover that he shares my concerns!

So it is with a mixture of excitement and trepidation and also a real sense of privilege at having this opportunity that I am embarking on this course. But then that excitement, trepidation and sense of privilege are always characteristic of the role of minister. There is the excitement over the changing face of the Church, the develop-

ment of new aspects of ministry – like our YACHT project. There is the trepidation that comes as you mount the pulpit steps every Sunday. There is the privilege of being invited into people's lives and homes and journeying with them through times of joy and sorrow as together in the presence of God we seek to make sense of all that life brings.

This coming Sunday we will celebrate Pentecost – the birthday of the Church. There was excitement then too as God's Spirit swept the disciples out of their comfort zone into the world. But I'm sure the disciples were full of trepidation as they waited in Jerusalem for God's promised gift. What were they going to do? Where were they going to go? What would be demanded of them as followers of Jesus? These first followers of Jesus had enjoyed the special privilege of sharing his earthly ministry. After Pentecost, empowered by the Spirit, they had the privilege of sharing the good news of God's love with the world.

Still today the community of faith is an exciting place to be as God's Spirit challenges all of us to new ways of thinking, new ways of serving Jesus Christ, new ways of sharing the good news of God's love with the world. May the Holy Spirit give us the grace to overcome our trepidation and remind us of the privilege of service.

With warmest wishes

Alison I Swindells
Parish Minister

GREENBANK PARISH CHURCH

Programme for Session 2015/2016



2015

9 Aug (Sun)	9.30	Last of Summer Family Services	12 Jan (Tues)	19.30	Kirk Session Meeting
10 Aug (Mon) – 14 Aug (Fri)	10.00–12 noon	Holiday Club	19 Jan (Tues)	19.30	Congregational Board Meeting
16 Aug (Sun)	10.30	All Age Worship with Holiday Club	23 Jan (Sat)	16.00–18.00	Messy Church
20 Aug (Thurs)		Pre-school start of 1st term	7 Feb (Sun)	9.30	First Sunday Service led by the Kirk Session
23 Aug (Sun)	10.00	Springboard start of 1st term		10.30	Uniformed Organisations Service
	10.30	Spectrum start of 1st term	14 Feb (Sun)		First Sunday in Lent
1 Sept (Tues)	19.30	Kirk Session Meeting			No meeting of Springboard or Spectrum (Special activity for children)
4 Sept (Fri)	19.30	Pre-Communion Service	15 Feb (Mon) – 22 Feb (Mon)		Pre-school closed
	20.00	Pre-Communion Kirk Session Meeting	16 Feb (Tues)		Guild Fund-raising event
6 Sept (Sun)		Communion Services at 9.00, 10.30 and 15.00	21 Feb (Sun)		Second Sunday in Lent
		Springboard meets at 10.00, Spectrum at 10.30	28 Feb (Sun)		Third Sunday in Lent
15 Sept (Tues)	19.30	Congregational Board Meeting			Start of Lent/Easter Appeal
21 Sept (Mon)		Pre-school closed	4 Mar (Fri)	10.30	World Day of Prayer
26 Sept (Sat)	18.30	YACHT Ceilidh		19.30	Pre-Communion Service
27 Sept (Sun)	10.30	All Age Celebration for Harvest (Quest/QII 70th Anniversary Thanksgiving)		20.00	Pre-Communion Kirk Session Meeting
3 Oct (Sat)	14.00	YACHT Auction of Talents	5 Mar (Sat)	16.00–18.00	Messy Church
4 Oct (Sun)	9.30	First Sunday Service led by Springboard	6 Mar (Sun)		Fourth Sunday in Lent
11 Oct (Sun)		No meeting of Spectrum or Springboard (Special activity for children)			Communion Services at 9.00, 10.30 and 15.00
12 Oct (Mon) – 19 Oct (Mon)		Pre-school closed	8 Mar (Tues)	19.00	Trustees Meeting
1 Nov (Sun)	9.30	First Sunday Service led by The Guild		19.30	Kirk Session Meeting
	11.45	Christmas Card Sale	13 Mar (Sun)		Fifth Sunday in Lent
8 Nov (Sun)	10.45	Remembrance Service (Springboard meets as usual, Spectrum 2 and 3 begin in church at 10.45, Spectrum 1 meets in Upper Hall at 10.45)	16 Mar (Wed)	19.30	Congregational Board Meeting
10 Nov (Tues)	19.30	Kirk Session Meeting	20 Mar (Sun)		Palm Sunday
14 Nov (Sat)	16.00–18.00	Messy Church			Springboard and Spectrum end of 2nd term
15 Nov (Sun) – 22 Nov (Sun)		Guild Week	21 Mar (Mon) – 25 Mar (Fri)		
29 Nov (Sun)		First Sunday in Advent		19.30	Holy Week Services (Greenbank Parish Church)
	10.30	Start of Christmas Offering for Christian Aid	23 Mar (Wed)		Pre-school end of 2nd term
4 Dec (Fri)	19.30	Pre-Communion Service	27 Mar (Sun)		Easter Day
	20.00	Pre-Communion Kirk Session Meeting		9.30	Communion
5 Dec (Sat)		Christmas Event for Children		10.30	All Age Celebration (followed by egg rolling in Braidburn Valley Park)
6 Dec (Sun)		Second Sunday in Advent	3 Apr (Sun)	9.30	First Sunday Service led by Monday House Group
		Communion Services at 9.00, 10.30 and 15.00	9 Apr (Sat)		Scout Jumble Sale
		Springboard meets at 10.00, Spectrum at 10.30	10 Apr (Sun)	10.00	Springboard start of 3rd term
8 Dec (Tues)	19.30	Congregational Board Meeting		10.30	Spectrum start of 3rd term
13 Dec (Sun)		Third Sunday in Advent	12 Apr (Tues)		Pre-school start of 3rd term
	10.30	Lessons and Carols	24 Apr (Sun)		Stewardship Sunday
	15.00	Blue Christmas Service	25 Apr (Mon)	19.30	Kirk Session Meeting
20 Dec (Sun)		Fourth Sunday in Advent	1 May (Sun)	9.30	First Sunday Service led by Help the Homeless
	10.30	All Age Gift Service	2 May (Mon)		Pre-school closed
		Springboard and Spectrum end of 1st term	15 (Sun) – 22 May (Sun)		Christian Aid Week
22 Dec (Tues)		Pre-school end of 1st term	15 May (Sun)		Pentecost
24 Dec (Thurs)		Christmas Eve		9.30	Pentecost Communion Service
	19.00	Christmas Eve Family Service		10.30	Morning Worship
	23.30	Christmas Eve Watchnight Service, (Carol Singing from 23.10)	23 May (Mon)		Pre-school closed
25 Dec (Fri)		Christmas Day	31 May (Tues)	19.30	Congregational Board Meeting
	10.30	Family Service for Christmas Day	3 Jun (Fri)	19.30	Pre-Communion Service
2016				20.00	Pre-Communion Session Meeting
7 Jan (Thurs)		Pre-school start of 2nd term	5 Jun (Sun)		Communion Services at 9.00, 10.30 and 15.00
10 Jan (Sun)	10.00	Springboard start of 2nd term			Springboard meets at 10.00, Spectrum at 10.30
	10.30	Spectrum start of 2nd term	7 Jun (Tues)	19.30	Kirk Session Meeting
			19 Jun (Sun)	10.30	All Age Moving on Service
					Springboard and Spectrum end of 3rd term
			26 Jun (Sun)	9.30	First of Summer Family Services
			30 Jun (Thurs)		Pre-school end of year

Crèche and Children's Activity during 10.30 Service every Sunday

Christian Aid 2015

Thank you once again to all those who helped in the preparation of Christian Aid Week, to those who volunteered to go out and collect, and to all the 'counters' and the 'banker'. Together we made about £4,690 from the house-to-house collection which is about £800 up from last year – a magnificent total. In addition, another £115.61 is also going to Christian Aid from the pancake sales and coffee sales on the 10th and a small amount from the sale of the Christian Aid songs quiz.



Pam Jack

On the Doorstep

Well, another year seems to have flown by, and I'm back in my street, collector's bag in hand, trying to get psyched up for the annual outreach and pavement tramp that is Christian Aid week collecting.

Buoyed up by the Collectors' Guide text from Ephesians "So stand ready, with truth as a belt tight around your waist, with righteousness as your breastplate...", I set off. Early reverses are to be expected. The first three are 'no answers' and a refusal, so the breastplate is already dented by the time a stinging rain shower comes and soaks my collector's badge into the bargain.

However, rhythm is soon established. A few older folk have their envelopes ready, and a couple of doors yield big notes and gift aid chits filled in as well! But then it all goes into reverse. I hit a run of "I never got an envelope" doors (in spite of my delivery 24 hours ago), and excuses which stretch credibility "it's my parents' house – do you want a donation from me?" Finally the home straight gives the usual mix of no answers and donations, leaving about 8 call backs for another evening. Later in the week this chases in only one other donation, and not one from the household who had asked me to come back later!

Reflections – I suppose the same as last year. It felt like a rewarding mission once you got over the starting fence and got under way. Certain rules are always proved – the larger the car in the drive, the less the prospect of a returned envelope. Strange cooking smells emanate from 10% of all houses – what on earth are they having for their meal? Most younger households don't really want to know; they don't want hassle on the doorstep. The weather in May gets worse every year. Together though, we collectors brought in over £4,600 for people who are dirt poor and have nothing, so have "as your shoes the readiness to announce the Good News of peace" – and do it again next year!



Our *Annual Moving On Service* on **21st June** will be followed by a *Picnic for the entire congregation* in Braidburn Valley Park. The picnic will kick off at 12 noon with a YACHT race in the burn, and will be followed by a BBQ lunch.

Everyone is invited to join us for what promises to be a wonderful afternoon of fun and fellowship.

Springboard and QII Go Adventuring

This July the youth of Greenbank are taking two very exciting journeys, one to Iona and another to Taizé, France. Both of these places attract young people from all over the world who come seeking community and spiritual nourishment.

Our Springboarders are joining the Pathfinders youth group of Fairmilehead for a week at the Macleod Centre on Iona. "The Mac" hosts young people and families throughout the year, and we will be joining other youth groups in a programme planned by the Iona Community's youth workers. It will include worship in the restored 12th century abbey, workshops and discussions with other teens, and fun exploring the island, which has been considered a sacred place for centuries. We are very excited to meet other young people, and to spend a week together in this wild and beautiful part of the country.

Later this same month Bill Stone and Lyndsay Kennedy are taking QII on an international adventure to spend a week with the Taizé Community in the Burgundy region of France. We will



Taizé

be travelling by train, stopping in London to rest, and joining many other teenagers and young adults for a "Schools and Colleges Week". Here we will live in community together, helping to prepare meals, look after the facilities, and each other. We will join in daily worship, have discussions and reflections with teens from many other countries led by members of the community, and time to rest and enjoy this beautiful place.

Both of these trips promise to be meaningful experiences for the young people in our church and we look forward to telling you more about them once we return.

Bill Stone

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

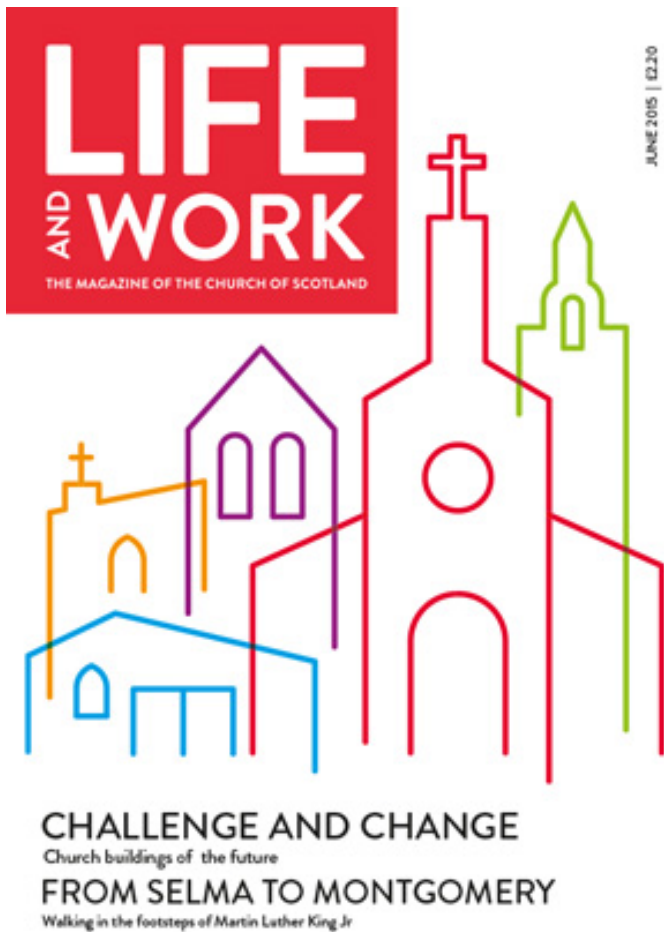
tel: 0131 445 5763

Youth Minister: Rev Bill Stone

tel: 07883 815 598

email: billstoneiii@gmail.com

June Issue of *Life and Work*



Challenge and Change

Iain Douglas, Chair of the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland, highlights some of the key issues facing the Church over buildings and ministry.

Transforming Communities

Jackie Macadam looks at the role of volunteers both inside and outside the Church.

From Selma to Montgomery

The Rev Dr Iain Whyte walks again in the footsteps of Dr Martin Luther King Jr.

The Poet Laureate Elder

Jackie Macadam speaks to Glasgow's Poet Laureate – Church Elder Jim Carruth.

The Napoleonic Legacy

Jackie Macadam charts the 200-year-old relationship between the Church of Scotland and the Royal Caledonian Educational Trust.

The Shoeshank Redemption

A new anti-sectarianism resource from a Church of Scotland minister and a Roman Catholic priest, produced behind bars in Greenock.

An Undiscovered Heritage

Kirkpatrick and Rachel Dobie reflect on the ten-year audit of silverware in the Church of Scotland.

'The Spirit of God'

The Very Rev John Chalmers describes an emotive personal visit to the Royal Marine Training Centre.

The First Step

Professor Matthew MacIver reflects on a change in Church attitudes to Gaelic.

Plus news, letters, reviews and crosswords, all for just £2.

Online: Visit www.lifeandwork.org, or find us on Facebook and Twitter.

The Guild

The Guild's annual outing on 12th May took the form of a meal at the Old Chain Pier Pub and Restaurant in Newhaven – an establishment with a historic past. It was originally the booking office for steamer services operating from the Chain Pier in the 19th Century – the Pier was destroyed in a storm in 1898 but steamer services had ceased earlier in the century and the building thereafter became a public bar. It was a sunny evening with splendid views over the Forth to Inchcolm and Fife, and 22 members were able to attend and enjoy a convivial evening.



Details of the six Central Guild projects for the next three years have now been published and are being distributed to members so that they can choose three to which we shall give support – one per year.

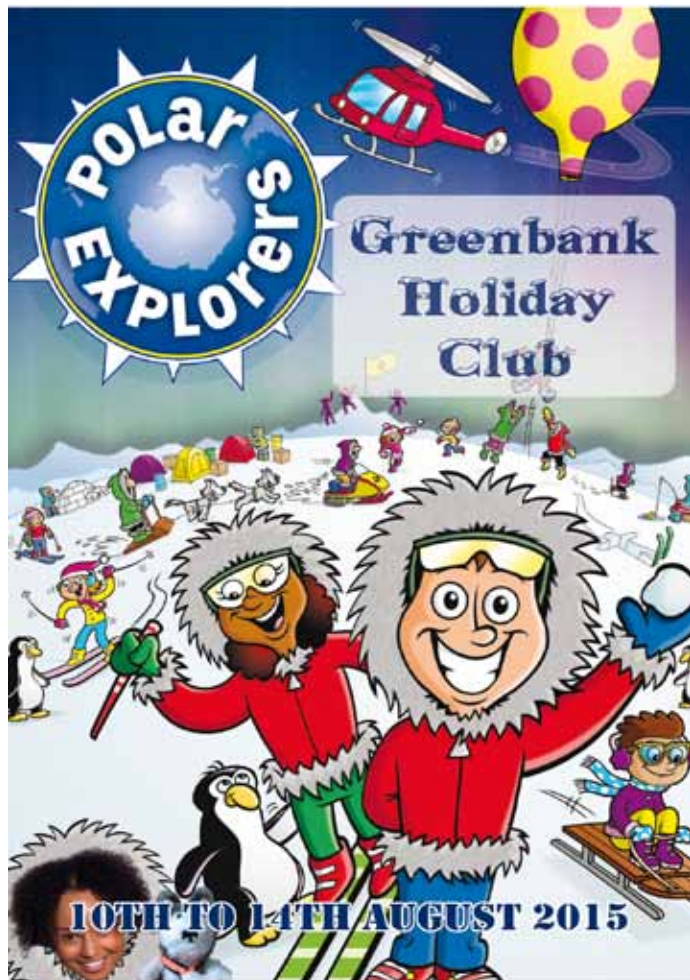
Our first meeting for Session 2015–16 takes place on Tuesday 6th October at 7.30pm when we shall hear a talk entitled "*Laughter is the best medicine*". Our syllabus will in due course be published on our page on the church website, together with any up-to-date information garnered over the summer. Meanwhile our monthly summer coffee mornings start on **Tuesday 2nd June** and continue on the first Tuesday of July (7th), August (4th) and September (1st). These take place in the Main Hall from 10.30am to 12 noon and are open to all members, friends and members of the congregation.

Kathleen Patrick



Holiday Club

10th–14th August 2015



Summer holidays will be here soon and once again we are planning to get together to have fun at Greenbank Holiday Club. If you are at primary school now or are starting in August, come along and join the fun – Monday to Friday, 10am till 12 noon, 10th to 14th August.

Bring a friend, bring lots of friends or come by yourself and meet lots of new friends! Everyone is welcome, but book soon to be sure of a place.

For more information, and to register, look on the Greenbank Church website (www.greenbankchurch.org) where you will find forms to be completed on-line.

You can also obtain a form by contacting the Greenbank Church Office (Tel 447 9969).

Alison Reid

From the Past

A Poem by the Rev Dr David H C Read

Towards the end of last year, the Church Archive received the gift of a slim, hardback book, originally published in 1944, bearing the title “*Backwater: OFLAG IX A/H*”. The donor was Mr Andy Drummond of Dalhousie Terrace, who had inherited the book from his mother, Mrs Jeanne Drummond, teacher of French and German at St Hilary’s School between 1954 and 1971. Mr Drum-

mond had no idea why or whence the volume had come into his mother’s possession and, as he didn’t wish to retain it, he kindly gave it to Greenbank because of a certain local connection.

Backwater is a 30-page anthology containing 16 contributions – poems, prose and illustrations – from a few of the 200 British officers imprisoned in Oflag IX A/H in Hesse, Germany, during WWII. The project of collecting items for publication in aid of a charity devoted to the welfare of prisoners-of-war was in gratitude to the European Student Relief Fund which had given the prisoners help in many ways, mainly by providing materials for various artistic and scholastic pursuits. The aim of the book was to give a flavour of camp life.

One of the contributors to this anthology was the Rev David H C Read, the Camp Chaplain and Minister, initially *in absentia*, of Greenbank from 1939 to 1949. It was as a result of his experience in running religious discussions in the camp that the idea of “Quest” was born, the Greenbank group being founded on his return to Edinburgh in 1945. Older members of Greenbank have fond memories of those early “Quest” meetings. Subsequently, members of “QII” may remember meeting Dr Read when he attended the 50th anniversary dinner at Napier University in September 1995.

Dr Read’s poem “*Nous autres*” is reproduced here.

Alison Berrill

Nous autres

Stretched in the sun, an idle finger flipping
The glib evasions of the Oh Kah Vay –
A lazy voice emerges from the sipping
Of tepid beer: “Well, what’s the news today?”
“Attacks repulsed; some tanks and planes and shipping;
Nothing at all: a dull Communiqué.”
By Bjelgorod a thousand tanks are churning
The peasants’ acres into crimson mud –
Mechanic genius of an age returning
To Mother-nature by the path of blood –
And this same sun, high above Etna burning,
Stares on the fury of invading flood.
A mile above the northern coast, a roaring
Of heavy bombers racing through the Flak:
Across their path a lonely fighter soaring
Drops like a dewdrop in a silver track:
Onward, like swans – but, snug beneath the flooring,
Pendent destruction on a flimsy rack.
Far out at sea a convoy slowly homing
Rides the Atlantic with a wary eye;
Restless destroyers diligently combing
Pounce to a message from the watching sky:
Soon on the waves a sullen oily foaming
Betrays the tomb wherein the U-boats lie.
Inside the wire a nineteen-forty fighter
Removes his pipe and waves a wasp away:
“You must admit that things are getting brighter –
A box of matches every fifteenth day!
But what’s the news?” “I’ve told you all, you blighter –
Nothing at all: a dull Communiqué.”

David H C Read

A Word of Thanks

Brian Barron, who has served as Coordinator of the *Leaflet* Team for several years, is retiring this summer. We are grateful for the willingness, care, patience and sensitivity which he has brought to this role. These qualities have helped to ensure the regular production and high standard of the *Leaflet* which remains, even in a digital age, our primary means of communicating with the majority of the congregation. We wish him every blessing in his retirement from this role. No doubt new challenges await his attention!



Our thanks are due also to the remaining members of the team for all the work which goes on quietly throughout the year.

Beadle/Church Officer

We are looking for a new Church Officer/Beadle to take over from Hongsuk Um, who has carried out this role with great diligence for the last few years. The duties include preparing our Church and Halls for worship on Sundays and other occasional services such as weddings and funerals, as well as supporting in practical ways the Minister, the welcome teams and Spectrum and Springboard leaders. An honorarium accompanies this position.

For further information, please contact Rev Alison Swindells or our Staffing Elder, Mrs Rosemary McCulloch.

YACHT Campaign News

Readers of the *Leaflet* should be well aware of our YACHT (Youth At CHurch Today) project, Greenbank's ambitious 5 year fundraising campaign to resource our youth work.

With this issue of the *Leaflet* there is a flyer describing a major YACHT fundraising activity taking place on **Saturday 3rd October** – namely an **Auction of Skills and Talents**. Please read it, and please consider how you might help.

This year we are also running a **Photographic Competition**, towards the production of a Greenbank Calendar for 2016. As Summer approaches, please get your camera out and submit your entries for the competition.

To find out more about the YACHT campaign, please go to the Greenbank website (<http://www.greenbankchurch.org/>) and click on the 'YACHT' button.

If you haven't yet supported the YACHT campaign, please consider doing so now.



Welcome Teams

June

- 7 **Stuart Sanders**, Moira Davidson, John Murison, Rachel Cadell, Jenny Wright, Sandy Cameron, Carrie Reid, Moira Land, Julia Dunbar
- 14 **Ian Thom**, Keith Clark, Ray Dely, Catherine Hardie, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Anne Oxbrow, Isobel Thom, Kay Ellis, Charles Black, Greig Scott
- 21 **John Rutherford**, David Allan, Richard Denison, Caroline Kehoe, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones
- 28 **Donald King**, Brian Barron, Walter Crosby, Donald MacLeod, Roderick Morrison, Mairi Stevenson, Jim Young, Kathryn Sangster

July

- 5 **Rosemary McCulloch**, Rona Ferguson, Fiona Grant, Christina Morrow, Alison Murison, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Toby Tucker, Alastair Ross
- 12 **Keith Winton**, Eileen Campbell, Richard Dunbar, Clifford Hastings, Chris Horne, Doris Laing, Enid Mowat, Robin Nimmo
- 19 **John Ritchie**, Eric Brown, Ralph Davidson, Susan Inch, Gill Sweetman, Ian Thomson, David Easton, Susan Jackman
- 26 **Alan Armit**, Edith Armit, Louise Coghill, Iain Davidson, Hugh Cowan, Susan Black, Malcolm Watters, Nora Kellock, Elizabeth Mackay

August

- 2 **John George**, Rhian Ferguson, Alastair Hunter, Hazel Macaulay, Kathleen Patrick, Dorothy Whitehead, Tony Foster, Bernard Mukwaira.
- 9 **John Rutherford**, David Allan, Richard Denison, Caroline Kehoe, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones
- 16 **Ian Thom**, Keith Clark, Ray Dely, Catherine Hardie, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Anne Oxbrow, Isobel Thom, Kay Ellis, Charles Black, Greig Scott
- 23 **Donald King**, Brian Barron, Walter Crosby, Donald MacLeod, Roderick Morrison, Mairi Stevenson, Jim Young, Kathryn Sangster
- 30 **Stuart Sanders**, Moira Davidson, John Murison, Rachel Cadell, Jenny Wright, Sandy Cameron, Carrie Reid, Moira Land, Julia Dunbar

September

- 6 **Alan Armit**, Edith Armit, Louise Coghill, Iain Davidson, Hugh Cowan, Susan Black, Malcolm Watters, Nora Kellock, Elizabeth Mackay

Material for the September *Leaflet* should be delivered to the Church Office or to the Editors' pigeon-hole in the Main Hall by Sunday 16th August, or sent by e-mail by 9am on Tuesday 18th August to greenbankleaflet@googlemail.com

Congregational Register

*Omitted from the Online
version of the Leaflet*

Coffee Rota



June

- 7 Communion – *no coffee*
- 14 Iain and Moira Davidson
- 21 Anne Oxbrow and Doris Laing
- 28 Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Rachel Cadell and Sharie Perks

July

- 5 Louise Coghill
- 12 Christine Willis
- 19 Edith Armit
- 26 John and Joan Ritchie

August

- 2 Rosemary McCulloch
- 9 Isabel Graham
- 16 Rona Sommerville, Margot Fergusson, Vivien Hutchison and Roddy Morrison
- 23 Liz Shiel
- 30 John and Enid Mowat

Crèche Rota



June

- | | | |
|----|------------------|------------------|
| 7 | Lorna Htet-Khin | Hazel McLachlan |
| 14 | Lucy Teall | Vivien Hutchison |
| 21 | Rosemary Collier | Shona Murray |
| 28 | Liz Foster | Isobel Thom |

July

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----------------|
| 5 | Carrie Reid | Jenny Wright |
| 12 | Vivien Hutchison | Janet Fergusson |
| 19 | Lorna Perriss | Eileen McKinnon |
| 26 | Lorna Htet-Khin | Lucy Teall |

August

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|------------------|
| 2 | Hazel McLachlan | Lorna Perriss |
| 9 | Shona Murray | Jenny Wright |
| 16 | Isobel Thom | Rosemary Collier |
| 23 | Janet Fergusson | Carrie Reid |
| 30 | Eileen McKinnon | Liz Foster |

Flower Rota



Provided by

Delivered by

June

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|----------------|
| 7 | Ina Weir | Irene Horne |
| 14 | Anne Oxbrow | Joan Cameron |
| 21 | Janet McAinsh | Caroline Kehoe |
| 28 | Isobel Brown & Anne Morham | Anne Morham |

July

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|------------------|
| 5 | Janet Fergusson | Alison Murison |
| 12 | Kathleen Patrick | Margo Fraser |
| 19 | Dorothy Whitehead | Moira Davidson |
| 26 | Rutherford Family | Cathie Maclennan |

August

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 2 | Margot Fergusson | Kay Ellis |
| 9 | Betty Hutson & Family | Ishbel Clark |
| 16 | Gillian Sweetman | Pam Adair |
| 23 | Jean Denison | Janet Walker |
| 30 | Hutchison Family | Catherine Denholm |

September

- | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| 6 | Hazel Macaulay | Alison Berrill |
|---|----------------|----------------|

Scout Jumble Sale

The Scout Group would like to thank everyone who assisted with time and/or donations at our annual jumble sale in April. It is our major fundraising event and a worrying time as the pro-

ceeds are a key element of our funding. Again however, for another year, a major success, raising £8,000. We project outlays rising to £40,000 for next session, and while much of the cost of trips and camps is recovered from members, there is always a need for some support. Central costs such as Scout District, Area and National levies, and equipment, training, health and safety, first aid, etc., which we believe should be maintained to the highest standards, all continue to rise. Our fundraisers are therefore essential to keep subscriptions at a sensible level to attract members to the movement.

There was little waste, with deliveries to and collections by other charities, but we continue to work on ideas to improve on this. That said, the team was very busy the prior week transporting to the rubbish tip torn and broken items which apparently “can be used for something” – honestly they cannot!

The variety of goods, however, continues to astonish. Books continue to thrive. Our Christmas stall is still flourishing and jewellery, lamps and paintings continue to expand, requiring larger stalls. Videos are history but it now looks as if DVDs will go that way as well. I felt my age explaining to a Cub what a music cassette tape was, but even CDs seem to be at risk. Whatever will we do without our *Readers Digest Classic Collections*? Are we seeing a revival in vinyl records though!

Stuart Sanders,
Hon Secretary

A QUESTION OF VISION

Many people visit an optician for a regular sight test. The optician examines each eye to check for signs of injury, disease or abnormality. Sight tests determine what our level of vision is and whether or not we require spectacles to correct our sight. In the course of these tests, the optician will very often ask what letters or shapes, if any, we can see and will then try out different lenses to ensure that we can see as clearly and as sharply as possible.

In the Bible Mark tells a story about a blind man being brought to Jesus. Jesus takes the man by the hand and leads him out of the village. Jesus puts saliva on the man's eyes and lays his hands on him. Then he asks, *Can you see anything?* The actions are very simple. Jesus acts like a mother comforting a sick child and smearing the sore place with spittle. Just as a mother reassures an anxious child with mouth and hands that it's as safe and sound as if the child were still in her womb, so too Jesus is near to this man, with mouth and hands. He touches him and smears with saliva his eyes, the place where the pain of his life is. In that way he gets through to this human child that he is a child of God, safe and sound. After all, had not Jesus's own mission also begun with such an experience, *You are my son; with you I am well pleased?*

But it is difficult for a blind man to gain perfect sight from one moment to the next. Sight has to develop. And development takes time. *Can you see anything?* The man looks around: *I can see people, but they look like trees, walking.* It's beginning to dawn on him. But people are not trees. He cannot yet see people as people, as brothers, sisters. He still stands apart, and is not yet one human being among others. But in the presence of Jesus he will gradually be able to sharpen his gaze. Gradually his sight will become clearer. So Jesus lays his hands on the man's eyes again. Then the man realises that he has recovered perfect sight, 20/20 vision, and can see everything clearly.

This healing of a blind man is more than a miraculous tale of a physical cure. Like all the stories in the Gospels this is about much more than an isolated incident which took place nearly two thousand years ago. It is not only a story about the way Jesus treated this man as a unique individual, taking time to think his thoughts and feel his feelings. Nor is it only a story about Jesus using methods this man could understand, based on the ancient belief in the curing power of saliva. It is a story about something more than the recovery of the blind man's sight, marvellous, indeed miraculous, as this may be. It is as much about the healing of a spiritual sense as it is about the restoration of a physical sense. It is a parable about the gradual enlightenment of all followers of Jesus – at the time of Jesus and when Mark was first written and now.

The two-stage healing of the blind man reflects in miniature the plan of Mark's Gospel as a whole. Up to this point in his Gospel Mark has told stories about Jesus in action, while at the same time indicating that his friends and followers still seem unable to grasp the meaning of what they see. This failure is the consequence of their spiritual blindness. After this little story there is much more direct teaching by Jesus about the nature

of his ministry and mission and the necessity of the cross. This little story about the healing of the blind man reminds us that illumination is very often only partial and gradual, but at the same time promises that Jesus can continue to open our eyes until we see clearly.

Spiritual blindness is part of the human condition. The language of the Church, both in worship and in preaching, has often failed to reflect the rich images the Bible uses to describe our predicament and to offer a remedy. Not only are we sinners in need of forgiveness, but we are exiles in need of a return to our homeland; we are prisoners in need of liberation; we are hungry and thirsty and need food and drink; we have closed minds and need to have them opened; we are lost and need to be found; in the terms of this story we are blind and need to see.

It takes a miracle to pierce through this spiritual blindness. It is not that God has ever left the world completely in the dark. To a greater or lesser extent, in every age and culture people have seen something of God's light and reality. In Christ the fullness of that divine light, the completeness of that reality, broke into a darkened world and lived a human life. One outcome of all that Jesus was and did and said is the opening of our spiritual eyes to the reality of God's reality and presence with us. But this is partial and gradual. With St Paul we recognise that in this life we walk by faith not by sight.

If we imagine Jesus asking us if we "see anything", how would we respond? What do we spend our lives seeing? We watch television. We spectate at Tynecastle or Murrayfield. We flick through the newspapers and the glossy magazines. Do we see anything worth seeing? Do we want to see with the eyes of Christ himself, to see with the vision of God? Dare we look at the world from the perspective of God? Jesus surely wants all his people to see with the eyes of love which recognise all others as our brothers and sisters. Ultimately, he wants us to see him, the Christ, present in every human being.

Can we see anything? Hard though it may be, we need to recognise our "blindness" and let Jesus bless us with his healing touch. Only so can we begin to enjoy his gift of vision.

What is true for us as individuals applies to the church as a whole. We have to face the disturbing fact that, as individuals or as a church, we can lose the light of faith. In every age the church and every Christian desperately need new vision and may frequently pray for it – but can sometimes not want new vision at all, simply wanting more energy to carry on doing the same old things in the same old way. Real new vision, God's new vision, always brings challenge and change.

For further reading:

The story of the blind man is in Mark's Gospel, chapter 8, verses 22 to 26.

A longer, more detailed story about gradual enlightenment is found in John, chapter 9.