

Leaflet



Greenbank Parish Church
Braidburn Terrace, EH10 6ES
No 652 May 2016

Pulpit Diary

May 1

9.30am First Sunday Service led by
Help the Homeless

10.30am Morning Worship

May 8

10.30am Morning Worship

May 15

9.30am Pentecost Communion

10.30am Morning Worship for Pentecost

May 22

10.30am Morning Worship

May 29

10.30am Morning Worship

Jun 3 (Friday)

7.30pm Pre-Communion Service

Jun 5

9.00am Communion

10.30am Communion (Springboard and
Spectrum meet as usual)

3.00pm Communion (Braid Room)

For information about church organisations,
please contact the Church Office (Mon–Fri,
8.30am–12.00 noon, 1.30pm–3.00pm):

Mrs Virginia Johnston

tel and fax: 0131 447 9969

e-mail: greenbankchurch@btconnect.com

The pastoral team can be contacted through the
Church Office:

Rev Alison Swindells

tel and fax: 0131 447 4032

e-mail: alisonswindells@blueyonder.co.uk

Rev W. Peter Graham

tel: 0131 445 5763

Youth Minister: Rev Bill Stone

tel: 07883 815 598

e-mail: billstoneiii@gmail.com

To make contact with any of the organisations refer-
enced 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

Those of you familiar with Dunkeld may be able to picture the tall larch tree situated to the north west of the Cathedral. It is known as the parent larch or more poetically as the mother of millions. It is past its best now but that is because it is almost 300 years old. In the 1730s a family friend of the Duke of Atholl brought



back a collection of seeds from his travels. He gave some larch seeds to the family who planted five in the grounds of the first Dunkeld House, adjoining the cathedral. Fifty years later one of these trees was cut down to provide an axle to work the local millstones. Seventy years later two more were cut down – they provided the wood for sailing ships. In 1904 another one was struck by lightning and it was used as wood panelling in the interior of Blair Castle. That left one, which still survives today. But these few trees have produced a huge harvest – not only in the uses to which they were put, but also in the way in which their seed was scattered to the four winds and gave birth to future generations of trees. Their descendants still grace the hillsides of Perthshire today with their beauty.

And perhaps the location of that parent larch, the mother of millions, right beside the cathedral, is appropriate because surely in that story of the larch forests of Perthshire we see echoes of the story of the Church itself. In the Bible, in John's Gospel, we read of how the risen Jesus takes a group of terrified disciples, breathes his Spirit into them and sends them out to carry God's message of peace and reconciliation to the world.

It is far from plain sailing for the early Church as she struggles to share her message of good news. She will face opposition and persecution. The disciples will be scattered to the four winds. Many will remain faithful

through suffering and death, like Jesus before them. Others will misunderstand and make mistakes that lead to divisions that still split the Church today. Yet the seeds of God's love sown in the hearts of that original handful of disciples have continued to bear fruit even in the darkest days of the Church's history.

And 2000 years on those seeds still bear fruit as followers of Jesus grace the world with words and deeds of love and kindness, bringing healing and peace where before there was none. Our Church hymn book includes this hymn (Number 527) based on the words of a prayer of St Francis:

*Lord make us servants of your peace;
Where there is hate, may we sow love;
Where there is hurt, may we forgive;
Where there is strife, may we make one.
Where all is doubt, may we sow faith;
Where all is gloom, may we sow hope;
Where all is light may we sow night;
Where all is tears may we sow joy.*

*Jesus our Lord, may we not seek
To be consoled, but to console,
Nor look to understanding hearts,
But look for hearts to understand.*

*May we not look for love's return,
But seek to love unselfishly,
For in our giving we receive,
And in forgiving are forgiven.*

*Dying, we live, and are reborn
Through death's dark night to endless day;
Lord make us servants of your peace
To wake at last in heaven's light.*

As our thoughts turn towards Pentecost and the celebration of the birth of the Church, may this song be our prayer.

With warmest wishes,

Alison I Swindells
Parish Minister

YACHT News

In this issue of the *Leaflet* you will find a flyer describing both our Photographic Competition, leading to the production of the *Greenbank 2017 Calendar*, and a Request for Recipes, to enable us to publish the *Greenbank Recipe Book*.



Both Calendar and Recipe Book will be on sale later in the year but please take time now to read the flyer and submit your entries to both as soon as possible – *in particular the deadline for recipes is end-May*. The more contributions we receive the better! The photographs entered last year were outstanding and we just know there are more out there. We also know that you have favourite recipes for all sorts of occasions just waiting to be shared – so don't hold back.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Greenbank Scouts who have contributed £994 to the YACHT fund, being a share of the amount realised from the sale of Christmas trees last December. Quite apart from the funds raised there has been very positive feedback on the quality of the trees and friendly delivery! We know this involves a lot of work but hope it can be repeated...

And we have some dates for your diary. For our YACHT week later in the year we plan:

Saturday 24th September 2016 – the popular **YACHT Ceilidh** – with music from the Ceilidh Band, musical performances, refreshments and buffet for young and old. Watch out for the tickets coming on sale and be sure to book your place.

Saturday 1st October 2016 – the **YACHT Family Treasure Trail** around Morningside. This will be a walking event on that afternoon – again for young and old: start at the Church and follow the mystery trail of clues to get you back to the Church for tea/juice and cakes, answers and prizes, sale of Calendar and Recipe Book and more! Not to be missed – so look out for these entry forms.

And later in the year we plan a **YACHT St Andrews Night Fundraising Dinner** – an elegant occasion in the Church Halls with much entertainment in the planning. Keep an eye out for more details to come.

At end February 2016 the amount collected in the YACHT Fund stood at £175,000, towards our ambitious target of £500,000 by end September 2019. The above fun events will help the Campaign, but as we have said before *the target can only be achieved by members making individual donations and pledges* – so please do contribute.

YACHT Campaign Committee

Stewardship Sunday

Christian Stewardship is a fundamental part of Christian Discipleship. It is concerned with the gifts of God and the way we use these gifts. It is concerned with the love and commitment of God to the world and its people, and with our response to God's love and God's commitment. Worship has a pivotal role in any consideration of Christian Stewardship in the life of the Church. In worship we give thanks for the gifts of God; we confess our failure to use these gifts as God expects them to be used; we explore the pages of the Bible and engage in theological reflection on God's giving and our response; we offer to God our time, our talent and our money to advance the kingdom.

This year **Stewardship Sunday** fell on 24th April. We are very grateful for the generosity shown by all our members in the giving of their time, talents and money. Many changes can take place within a three year period and so we encourage you to review annually your financial support of the work of Christ's Church.

Pledge cards to assist with this review accompany this *Leaflet*. They should be completed and returned to the Treasurer by the beginning of June. They will then be brought into Church and dedicated at the 10.30am Communion Service on **Sunday 5th June**.

John Ritchie

Friendship Club

Outing on Wednesday 11th May

We meet outside the Church at 11am and will return around 5pm. We go by coach to Callendar House for lunch then to the Helix Park for a tour of the Kelpies, followed by tea and cake for those who wish it. There are still a few places remaining.

Cost £20 (by cheque please). Final date for payment: 1st May.

Val Smart

Sharing the Light

(Further reasons for supporting the *Light a Light* initiative.)

A light will shine for each one:

In thanks for the joy I find in every day after surviving a critical illness.

For the good friends whom I met through the house Group when I came to Greenbank over thirty years ago. The meetings for Bible Study and discussion which I enjoyed over so many winters gave the opportunity for meeting so many people and I am very grateful to those who ran the House Group.

For the kindness of my friends with their cars and my daughter who is in and out often to shop with me.

For the care and kindness shown by the Minister through the illnesses and deaths of my parents, neither of whom was a member of Greenbank.

Thankfulness for simply being a member of such a lovely and friendly congregation with so many delightful people.

In gratitude for a long and happy marriage to my husband, who illuminated so many lives.

For the Church Guild which is so worthwhile an organisation having raised over £775,000[†] for designated charities of all kinds. Also its welcome and friendship to me over the past 35 years.

For making our family so welcome during the years that one of our family was coping with mental illness.

For the love and understanding shown to me by my two sons and my wife. May this light shine upon you all for ever.

[†]The Church of Scotland Guild raised £775,076 over three years up to 2015 for national and international projects; and up to February 2016 a further £54,000 has been raised.

Data Protection at Greenbank

There are laws in place to make sure that organisations (including churches) are careful and sensitive in the way they look after information about their members. This article explains what this means in Greenbank Parish Church.



Under the direction of the Legal Department of the Church of Scotland, the Greenbank Kirk Session has adopted a set of data standards – which are on the Greenbank website. They have been designed both to comply with the Data Protection Act's requirements about the protection of people's information and privacy and to allow us to continue to proclaim our faith and to look after our members and community according to Christian principles.

Greenbank Church needs to record and use certain personal information for our administration. Examples are the paper and electronic registers of all members' names and addresses. We also hold many members' bank account details. We publish, in the Directory, details of office bearers and leaders of organisations; and in the *Leaflet*, a note of key changes to the Congregational Register and contact details for rotas and events.

In future whenever we collect new personal information about you or you are a new member, we will

- Let you know the reason and how we will use the information
- Ask for only what is necessary
- Make sure no one has access to it who should not
- Share it only with your permission
- Keep it only for as long as it is needed

There will be some small changes to the *Leaflet* so that addresses (including email addresses) and telephone numbers will appear only if people have agreed. We already get consent for information published in the Directory. When you get a new Directory please destroy the old one or hand it in to the Church Office for destruction.

If you wish to see what data we hold on you, please contact the Session Clerk.

Valerie Macniven

Gift Aid: A Reminder

The 2015 Accounts for Greenbank Church (a registered Charity) disclose that the aggregate amount of Gift Aid reclaimed from HMRC last year was in excess of £50,000. Grateful thanks are due to all who have helped to contribute to this significant sum which greatly augments the Church's finances. Going forward it is important that, individually, we continue to maximise the value of our donations. The key elements of Gift Aid are:

- It increases our giving by 25 per cent – at no additional cost to the donor
- No minimum contribution is required
- No particular amount has to be promised
- There is no fixed term during which contributions must be made
- Tax may be recovered retrospectively

All that is required is that the donor must pay UK income tax or capital gains tax, at any rate, at least equal to the amount of tax being reclaimed, and give their donation through offering envelopes or by bank standing order or by cheque to establish the necessary audit trail.

Donors must also sign a Gift Aid declaration form, which gives the name of the congregation and the donor's name and address (including postcode).

There are therefore two matters to consider:

1. If you currently do not give through Gift Aid, check if you are eligible as a taxpayer, and if so please consider giving by this means. Gift Aid declarations are available in the vestibule or from any of the undernoted.
2. If you do currently Gift Aid your donations, check that you are still paying as much or more tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on your donations (to ALL charities) in the corresponding tax year. If the answer is no, please inform the Treasurer or one of the Assistant Treasurers.

giftaid it

If you wish more information or assistance on any of the above, please get in touch with one of the following contacts:

John Ritchie (Treasurer)
Kathryn Sangster, Michael Struthers (Asst Treasurers)

Jumble Sale

4th Braid Scout Group and Greenbank Explorers

We are delighted to say that the 2016 Jumble Sale was again highly successful with nearly **£9,000** raised after costs. Months of planning, weeks of background activity; an intense week of constructing the stalls, collections throughout the Parish, sorting (and disposing of rubbish on a daily basis), and displaying on stalls followed by a frenzied Saturday, all brought home another fantastic result.

No less impressive however was the wind down; the clearing of the halls, the separating of better quality items for Fresh Start and the Charities, for collection or for delivery by a team of our



volunteer drivers, removal of rubbish and unsold/unsaleable items to an industrial skip which arrived and departed within an hour, taking down and storing the entire network of stalls and the washing down of all the halls, returning them to their previous calm serenity.

The proceeds from the jumble sale are a principal source of income and are used to defray costs, which range from central levies to the National, Regional and Area Scout Association, Public Liability Insurance, Training, First Aid, maintaining and replacing equipment, donation to Hall costs, to support weekly activi-



Dates for your diary

Please note that the next dates for Fresh Start collections are **22nd May** and **19th June** at the Sunday service (table in Main Hall).

There is a continuing need for good quality items for the starter pack scheme, and cleaning things such as jay cloths, dish cloths and yellow dusters are in short supply. See below for a full list of household goods wanted.

Thank you to everyone who donated items in good condition or indeed new items, last month.

Dishes and Crockery

Dinner plates, side plates, bowls, cutlery, mugs, glass tumblers, tea-towels.

ties for each section, to provide some subsidy for major events such as camps, and to help maintain subscriptions at an affordable level. The success of the jumble sale is therefore a hugely important issue for the Group and we are very grateful to the support from the Church for the use of the Halls and to everyone who supported the Group through donations of goods, collecting and sorting and in taking part in the sale. Books, clothes and furniture all remain big sellers with a noticeable rise in donations of costume jewellery, lamps and pictures but really all stalls showed increased volumes, reflecting how our jumble sale has become a calendar fixture.

Throughout it was a slick and impressive operation (although it would not be a jumble sale without some scary moments) led by the Leaders and senior unit members, and the Explorers and Scouts. Where appropriate, the Cubs and the Beavers once again rose to the occasion. They were as always backed up by Parents and Volunteers drawn from former members or parents and from the Congregation where we have some new converts who have already signed up for **8th April 2017**.

Stuart Sanders, Hon Secretary

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.

For more information about the work of Fresh Start, pick up a leaflet from me, see www.freshstartweb.org.uk or telephone 476 7741.

Alison Ambler

Christian Aid Spring Fair

Saturday 28th May, 10am–2pm



A colorful poster for the Christian Aid Spring Fair. At the top left is a sun icon. A blue banner says 'Spring' and a pink banner says 'Fair'. Below this, a yellow box contains 'Sat 28th May' and '10am – 2pm'. A green scroll contains the schedule: '10.30 Choral scholars led by Morley Whitehead', '11:30 Mara tells an amazing children's story', and '12:15 Colours in your garden through the seasons'. A blue scroll below lists 'Coffee' and 'Soup and crusty bread'. A blue heart shape contains 'Plant Sale', 'Stalls', 'Baking', and 'Raffle'. A yellow box at the bottom right says 'Morningside Parish Church Halls (Foot of Braid Road) Admission free!'. At the bottom left is the Christian Aid logo. At the bottom right is the text: 'Morningside & Fairmilehead Christian Aid Committee www.carewell.org The Christian Aid name and logo are trademarks of Christian Aid. © Christian Aid April 2016. Scottish charity number SC038132'.



Christian Aid Week

15th May to 21st May

Thanks once again to all 46 of you who have agreed to carry out the important work of collecting for Christian Aid.

The priorities in 2016 are, as always, Christian Aid's direct attack on poverty worldwide, as well as work on relief and development. A particular feature in this year's programme is flood relief in Bangladesh.

I would ask collectors to come to the Main Hall, please, on Sunday morning 15th May, before or after the service, to pick up their collecting bags with their envelopes etc. If this is not convenient for anyone, please contact me to arrange to get these before that date.

Pam Jack
(email pamelajacko6@gmail.com)

At the Spring Fair the Morningside Heritage Association will present an exhibition: *A hundred years of the 55th Boys Brigade Company.*

David Ferguson

Spectrum and Springboard Lunch

A Huge Thank You to everyone who supported our Spectrum and Springboard Lunch on 13th March. I am grateful for the hard work of our young people who sold tickets, prepared the food and then served it. Thanks are also due to all of the Spectrum and Springboard leaders who were on hand organising and

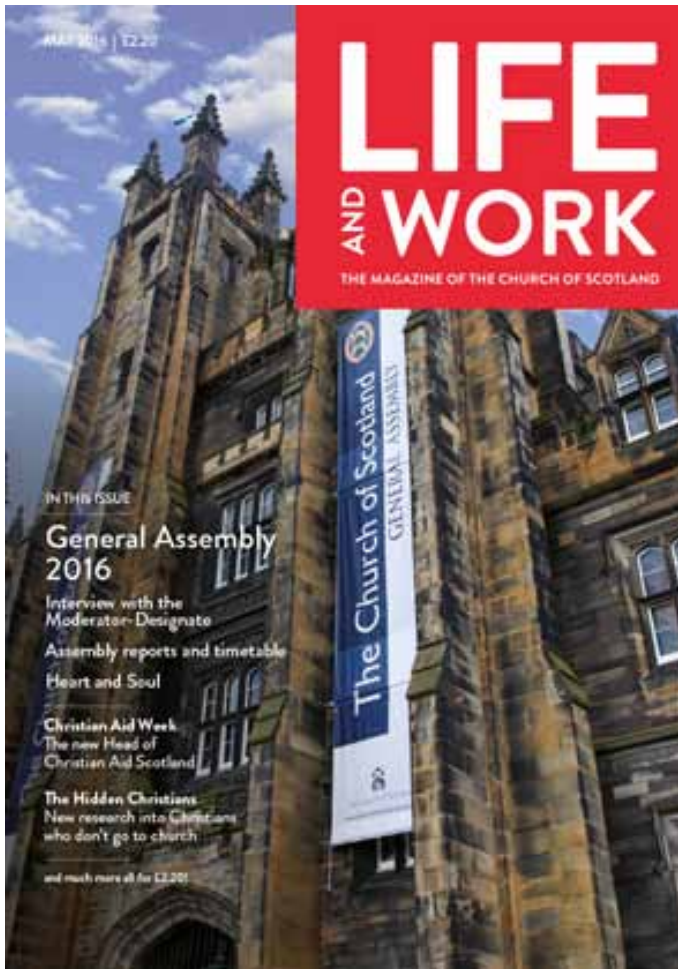
working behind the scenes, and who also contributed the home baking that we all enjoyed.

Thanks to the generosity of Greenbank members we have contributed more than enough money to provide a house for a needy family in Nepal.

Bill Stone



May Issue of *Life and Work*



General Assembly 2016

Nine pages of previews, including Assembly reports, timetables, interview with the Moderator-Designate and looking forward to Heart and Soul

Give, Act and Pray

Marking Christian Aid week, an interview with the new Head of Christian Aid Scotland, the Rev Sally Foster-Fulton

The Hidden Christians

The author of a new book on Christians who don't go to church tells how it came about

Circle of Care

How the local community rallied round a terminally-ill minister

The Changing Seasons

The Rev Alastair Duncan considers the message of Pentecost and the challenges of preaching the Gospel in contemporary Scotland

Jesus, Makar and Maker

Ron Ferguson reflects on the need for dreamers and poets, as well as practical people, within the Church

Scotland and the Faithful Few?

Hannah Mary Goodlad argues that there is 'a spiritual hunger' within Scotland

Little Failings, Big Consequences

The Very Rev Dr James Simpson highlights the dangers of convictions without courtesy

Plus news, letters, reviews and crosswords, all for just £2.20.

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

Summer Bookstall

Come and see what's new from the Cornerstone on **Sunday 8th May** and stock up on holiday reading. After the 10.30am Service we will have a selection of books for all ages in the Main Hall to help you on your faith journey. If you have any suggestions for books you would like to see, please contact us before 6th May.

Joan and John Ritchie



The Cornerstone Bookshop has moved up meantime onto St John's Terrace

Omitted from the on-line version of the Leaflet

Welcome Teams

May

- 1 **Rosemary McCulloch**, Rona Ferguson, Fiona Grant, Christina Morrow, Alison Murison, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Toby Tucker, Alastair Ross
- 8 **Keith Winton**, Eileen Campbell, Richard Dunbar, Clifford Hastings, Chris Horne, Doris Laing, Enid Mowat, Robin Nimmo
- 15 **Stuart Sanders**, Moira Davidson, John Murison, Rachel Cadell, Jenny Wright, Sandy Cameron, Carrie Reid, Moira Land, Julia Dunbar
- 22 **John Ritchie**, Eric Brown, Ralph Davidson, Susan Inch, Gillian Sweetman, Ian Thomson, Clare Campbell, Susan Jackman
- 29 **Alan Armit**, Edith Armit, Louise Coghill, Iain Davidson, Hugh Cowan, Susan Black, Malcolm Watters, Nora Kellock, Elizabeth Mackay

June

- 5 **Donald King**, Brian Barron, Walter Crosby, Donald MacLeod, Roderick Morrison, Mairi Stevenson, Jim Young, Kathryn Sangster

Greenbank Pre School



Greenbank Pre School occupies the Centenary hall on weekdays with places offered for mornings or afternoons for children from their 3rd birthday. You can register your child from their 2nd birthday. In March a number of parents worked in the garden, making new planters and planting a willow arch. This term the children will be planting and tending the garden, and walks to the Hermitage and Braidburn parks are planned to give the children more opportunities to learn about the great outdoors. Space and Travel will be the focus this term. Please see our website www.greenbankpreschool.org for further information.

Joan Ritchie

Flower Rota



Provided by

Delivered by

May

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Caroline Kehoe | Catherine Ferguson |
| 8 | Margo Fraser | Liz Foster |
| 15 | Marjorie Thomson | Susan Black |
| 22 | Ruth Johnston & Rosemary McCulloch | Fiona Kelly |
| 29 | Janet Ferguson | Charlotte Tucker |

June

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------------|
| 5 | Ina Weir | Irene Horne |
|---|----------|-------------|

Crèche Rota



May

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Isobel Thom | Jenny Wright |
| 8 | Ailsa Cameron | Janet Ferguson |
| 15 | Lorna Perriss | Eileen McKinnon |
| 22 | Lorna Htet-Khin | Ailsa Cameron |
| 29 | Hazel McLachlan | Pauline Walker |

June

- | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------|
| 5 | Ailsa Cameron | Jenny Wright |
|---|---------------|--------------|

Coffee Rota

May

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Janet and David Ferguson (D13, D26, D28) |
| 8 | Anne Kinnear (D9) |
| 15 | Neil Ross (D24) |
| 22 | BAGs |
| 29 | Caroline Kehoe (D70) |



The Guild Summer Coffee Mornings



The monthly summer coffee mornings organised by the Guild start on **Tuesday 7th June** from 10.30am to 11.45am in the Main Hall. These are open to all members of the congregation, friends and visitors. The other dates (all Tuesdays) are **5th July, 2nd August** and **6th September**.

Kathleen Patrick

Material for the June *Leaflet* should be delivered to the Church Office or to the Editors' pigeon-hole in the Main Hall by Sunday 15th May, or sent by e-mail by 9am on Tuesday 17th May to greenbankleaflet@googlemail.com

CONCERNING WORSHIP – THE SOUNDS OF MUSIC

Every Sunday when we gather for worship, we sing hymns to the accompaniment of an organ and with the help of a choir. But it was not always thus. Up until around 150 years ago the typical Scottish congregation would sing nothing but psalms, recast in a singable, metrical version and set to a fairly restricted number of well-known, simple tunes.

At one time the psalms were sung in a most astonishing manner. The Uptaker (also known as the Lettergae, or Liturgy Man, and latterly as the Precentor) would chant the first line in a monotone, before singing over the first line of the psalm with the congregation joining in. This process would be repeated line by line to the end of the psalm. The congregation remained sitting for this – a complete psalm, lined out and sung with due reverence, might last twenty minutes. The poet Charles Murray captured this in his poem *The Lettergae*, when he described the precentor making his way down the aisle to his own lectern to lead the congregation in singing a psalm:

What uncton in his varied tones,
As aff the line he screeds [=recites to] us,
Syne bites the fork, an' bums [=hums] the note,
Ere to the tune he leads us!
Plain paraphrase, or quirky hymn,
Come a' the same to Peter,
He has a tune for ilka psalm
Nae matter what the metre

Eventually the precentor and his tuning fork would give way to the organ. Although before 1800 there were organs in Scottish Episcopalian and Roman Catholic churches, there were none in Presbyterian churches. Attempts to introduce organs were often vigorously opposed, but cautious conservatism yielded to pressure. From the 1850s onwards almost all large Free and United Presbyterian churches had a great pipe organ as their dominating feature, very often with the pulpit fitted into it above the console and below the pipes. Change came more slowly within the Church of Scotland, but here again opposition to the introduction of organs died down. On Easter Sunday 1879, despite nine inches of snow lying on the streets, Glasgow Cathedral was packed with a huge congregation an hour before the service began, so attracted were people by the new organ being played for the first time in that ancient building. Sadly, the effect in drawing people to worship was only transitory.

The proposals for organs had followed close on the heels of a demand for hymns. In England and Wales there was a well-established custom of hymn singing in public worship long before hymns became generally acceptable in the mainstream Scottish churches. The emphasis of the psalms on the unity of God, on God's providence, authority and goodness, and on the need for God's people to follow God's laws had been acceptable to many older Calvinists, but the lack of explicit reference to Christ and what he had done and to eternal life failed to meet the needs of the Evangelicals. The Evangelicals stressed the importance of the Bible, the doctrine of atonement, the need for conversion and the consequent responsibility of believers to practise and

spread the gospel. Although in 1781 a collection of passages from the Bible turned into verse, the Paraphrases, had been published, this was resisted by the conservative element and regarded as not going far enough by the more radical. It was not until 1851, four years after the union of the United Secession Church and the Relief Church to form the United Presbyterian Church, that *The United Presbyterian Hymn-Book* was issued. *The Church Hymnary* was first published in 1898. Revisions appeared in 1927 and in 1973. Our present book, *CH4 (Church Hymnary: Fourth Edition)*, came into use in 2005.

CH4 contains within its covers a wide variety of texts and tunes. These range from the psalms and paraphrases through versions of medieval hymns to the products of the 18th and 19th century right on to compositions by authors still very much alive. As well as compositions by the highly prolific writers of previous generations, including Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, James Montgomery and John Mason Neale, we have the opportunity to sing hymns by contemporary authors. These include John Bell and Graham Maule of the Iona Community's Wild Goose Resource Group from Scotland, Shirley Erena Murray from New Zealand, and Marty Haugen from the USA, as well as hymns and tunes from less familiar traditions in Africa and Asia.

But why do Christians sing? *Singing the Faith* is the title of the new hymn collection authorised by the Methodist Conference in 2010. But is singing the faith not what all our hymns should be about? In the 16th century Martin Luther said, "If any would not sing and talk of what Christ has wrought for us, he shows thereby that he does not really believe." Music is a more expressive medium than ordinary speech. It enables us to express an intensity of feeling through variety in tempo, pitch, volume, melody, harmony and rhythm. Music can, and often does, convey a greater intensity of feeling than would be expressed in its absence. As the twentieth century Fred Pratt Green reminds us in one of his hymns:

*How often, making music, we have found a new
dimension in the world of sound, as worship moved us*
(CH4: 203)

Congregational hymn singing gives every worshipper the opportunity to offer to God the best sounds she or he can create. This cannot be replaced by someone else's effort. Often we wish to praise God at full volume, with joy in our hearts, but there are times when we wish to express our awareness of the brokenness of the world in general and the troubles affecting many of those who are worshipping. And so it is good to have at our disposal a variety of musical styles and a range of contents so that we may offer all our feelings and emotions as part of our response to God. We can then say, and sing, in Robert Lowry's words:

*My life flows on in endless song above earth's lamentation:
how can I keep from singing?*
(CH4: 565)