

# Greenbank Connections



May 2024

Issue 725

Scottish Charity SC011325



*Easter Sunday at Greenbank*

## Greenbank Parish Church, Edinburgh

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

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## Minister's Letter



“And when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left, your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way; walk in it.’” (Isaiah 30:21)

Since my sons, Hamish and Max, and I first started walking to and



from nursery at our local primary school, there has always been a decision to make at a particular crossroads on the way home: do we continue straight ahead, or do we turn right to go up the steeper hill along “The Piggy Way”? The Piggy Way, although the “harder” path, meant we passed a wee front garden decorated with colourful bunting, pinwheels, and many ceramic pigs of all shapes and sizes. (right)

These piggies were tucked away in little nooks and crannies of the garden and counting them from over the fence after nursery or school always cheered up a grumpy child (and his mother). We once timed walking home both ways and it turned out both were about the same distance – although one seemed longer and the other harder. The revelation for wee Hamish one day was that both paths eventually led Home.

As we travel the path of life, we will often come to a fork in the road and face the decision: Left, or Right? We might be tempted to think that one path is the right one and so by default the other path would be the wrong choice. But which is which? With that mindset, it can be agonizing to make a decision and then take the first step. The reality is that some paths will be longer, others harder, but there are always gifts revealed along the way if minds and hearts are kept



open. God travels with us whether we turn left or turn right. Eventually, all paths will lead Home if God is our compass.

We are approaching the time for me and my family to say goodbye to Greenbank Church, to The Piggy Way, and the many familiar faces and places that have been our home for years up here above the snowline. I came upon a fork in the road and felt God calling me in a direction that will take me and my family down the hill to a parish by the sea. Isaiah’s words remind me of God’s voice encouraging us to move forward and walk the



way laid out before us with purpose and intention. And joy!

As I prepare to wrap up my time at Greenbank Church, I am filled with gratitude at the time we have spent together in worship, fellow-



*Julia and her family on Easter Sunday*

ship, and service. I leave a changed person, a stronger and more faithful Christian, and a better minister now more able to lead my soon-to-be new charge, Edinburgh North-west Kirk, well. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

Exciting times lie ahead for us all, and so I end with a blessing:

*May the road rise up to meet you.*

*May the wind be always at your back.*

*May the sun shine warm upon your face;  
the rains fall soft upon your fields and  
until we meet again,*

*May God hold you in the palm of His  
hand. Amen. (Irish Blessing)*

*Julia A Cato*

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## The Guild

2023-2024 has been a pretty good year for us, we have had some serious meetings, some very interesting ones, some more challenging and some which were great fun. Now we are booking speakers for the next session starting in October and we have some very good ones lined up. We also have an Outing planned for May which should be very enjoyable: an Afternoon Tea Out.

Then starting in June we will have our Summer Open Coffee Mornings with our usual array of homebaked



cakes and biscuits. Everyone is welcome to these. The dates are 4th June, 2nd July, 13th August and 3rd September. June, July and September are all the first Tuesday of the month, the August one is later to avoid clashing with the Holiday Club. Information about the next session will be published in the September issue of *Connections*.

Have a Good Summer and see you at Coffee.

**Edith Armit**



## Christian Aid Week 12–18 May 2024

The Christian Aid Week appeal this year will focus on Burundi where in some areas more than 70% of people live in poverty and many children are underweight, underdeveloped and vulnerable to life-threatening diseases. For many people it is a fragile existence; they are dependent on casual work, and most only eat once a day. Christian Aid programmes help communities to establish steady incomes, save for the future, and set up small businesses.

Greenbank Church volunteers will be distributing delivery-only envelopes to around 1,400 houses in our parish during the week. Thank you to everyone who has agreed to help with this.

The envelopes will include a flyer to say that they have been delivered by a volunteer from Greenbank Church and will invite people to donate:

- To our special “e-envelope.” (the link is also on the church website):  
[fundraise.christianaid.org.uk/envelope-2024/greenbank-church](https://fundraise.christianaid.org.uk/envelope-2024/greenbank-church)
- By posting the envelope through the church letterbox on Braidburn Terrace;
- Direct to Christian Aid.

I understand that our neighbouring congregations will not be distributing envelopes this year. If you live outside Greenbank Parish and would like an envelope, there will be some available in the church vestibule or please contact me, I have some extra.

Please support Christian Aid Week. There is further information here :  
[www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week)

### Coffee Morning 18th May

Please come along to the Christian Aid Week coffee morning we are organising with other local churches. It's on Saturday 18th May 10am to 12 noon at Morningside Parish Church, Braid Road. Cost £5, all welcome.

There will be several stalls including a plant stall run by the Greenbank Eco-Group. There will also be a musical performance in the church sanctuary at around 10.45am (included in ticket price). Tickets will be on sale beforehand or just pay at the door.

We will also be asking for donations to the home baking and tombola stalls nearer the time. Thank you in advance for your support.

**Fiona Watt**



## Thought for the Month

### 'Head Hand Heart'

This is the title of a book (ASIN B0863BSRXF) published in 2020 by the political commentator David Goodhart.

He divides human aptitude into three: **Head** (cognitive), **Hand** (manual and craft), and **Heart** (caring, emotional). His argument is that a well-balanced society needs to recognise the value of all three, but in recent decades our society has got these badly out of kilter, and cognitive ability has become the gold standard of human esteem. As a result the cognitive class now shapes society, largely in its own interests.

I observed this division growing up. We were streamed at school in the 50s and 60s; I was in the group expected to go to university – my class in the first year of secondary school was called '1U'! Friends are largely made within the classroom, among those similarly streamed, and the separation and reasons for it were thereby quietly emphasised. I believe most of my group ended up thinking that those in other ('lower') groups were in some undefined way inferior.

Such bias is extremely damaging. It took me a while to realise that such a division – when it came to judging the worth and character of others – was utterly false. It is also at odds with the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

Suppose, however, that someone in the 'cognitive class' continues throughout life to regard himself as special, a cut above most of the population. Suppose that as this person goes into old age he becomes more vague and forgetful, and eventually receives a diagnosis of mild dementia. He would likely receive this diagnosis with horror – as a living death sentence – since his self-esteem is largely based on his cognitive ability. The thought of it waning or disappearing would simply be intolerable.

As I get older (I am now in my late 70s), some of my contemporaries, and members of my family of a similar age, have indeed shown signs of dementia. It is possible – perhaps even likely – that I may also go down this path. How should I view this possibility? A few years ago I might indeed have been horrified. Now, however, having observed the condition at close quarters I realise that acceptance of reality, pleasure in the simple joy of being alive, and gratitude for the love of friends and family – in other words, Christian resignation – may sometimes be a difficult path to follow, but it is the correct one.

As for arbitrary divisions, ignore them: God loves us **all** – we must do likewise.

John Murison

## Eco-Congregation Strategic Plan 2024-2028

Greenbank has a very active Eco-Group which supports the congregation in its care for creation. Each month we contribute an article to *Connections*. There is, though, a bigger picture as may be seen in Greenbank's Eco-Congregation Strategic Plan. The Plan is, in turn, consistent with Greenbank's full Strategic Plan and shows too how we contribute to the criteria that Eco-Congregation Scotland uses to evaluate the work of its members. In September 2021 Greenbank gained our Eco-Congregation Scotland Gold Award.

The second version of the Eco-Congregation Strategic Plan has now been approved by the Kirk Session and the Congregational Board. It is a plan for the whole congregation, not the Eco-Group. It will run until 2028. There is also an annual action plan which shows priorities for delivery of the plan. While some of the action will be led by the Eco-Group and they will monitor its progress, other items will be led by different groups, such as the Property Committee of the Board. Progress will depend on resources, human and financial.

The Plan is structured round three main strategic aims – spiritual living, practical living and global living. The action plan covers all three. The top four actions for this year are - the promotion of measures for climate change (global living); works on the

church building to make it more eco-friendly (practical living); and, again on the practical front, greening of the church frontage. Supporting the minister on care for creation is part of the spiritual living aim.

Here is a link to the Plan's executive summary, the full Plan and the action plan.

[www.greenbankchurch.org/adults/eco-group/](http://www.greenbankchurch.org/adults/eco-group/)

You can also get to it directly on the Greenbank website. Please read the material and give some thought to how you might get involved. There are lots of actions, some very simple, that you can take in your daily living; or you might be encouraged to take part in congregational activities such as helping to maintain the planters that will soon appear at the front of the church. If you want more information or would like to join the Eco-Group, please contact the Group via the Church Office or speak to Karen Young, the Group's convener.

Valerie Macniven



## Scottish Churches China Group Update

In 2023, the Scottish Churches China Group (SCCG) celebrated 40 years of working with Chinese partners. It was founded in 1983, with the Church of Scotland being one of seven ecumenical churches and fellowships involved.

A highlight of a recent SCCG trip to China was a moving visit to the Nanjing Rainbow Care Centre (NRCC) which specialises in caring for orphaned children with life-limiting illnesses. It may seem cruel that any parent would abandon their child in such circumstances but in China there is a private healthcare system which is only affordable for some people, and much of the system focuses only on conditions which are curable. Faced with that harsh reality giving your child up to an organisation that will look after them and provide symptom-relieving medical support may be the most loving thing a parent can do. SCCG will foster its relationship with NRCC and hopes to introduce them to organisations such as CHAS (Children's Hospices Across Scotland) for mutual support.

China is quite difficult politically at the moment, causing problems for international partnerships.

But SCCG is proud to be part of a continuing link between Scotland and China, dating back to the first medical missionaries to visit North East China in the late 1800s.

For more information, please pick up a copy of the Spring/Summer 2024 edition of the SCCG Newsletter, or visit

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

or email

[patricia.johnston@sccg.org.uk](mailto:patricia.johnston@sccg.org.uk)

Janet Edwards  
World Church Group





## Holy Week Services

It was Greenbank's turn to host the services in Holy Week, held jointly with Morningside Parish Church, and we were inspired by five excellent acts of worship.

On Monday, the service was conducted by Jacqui Lindsay from Morningside and Julia preached on "By the Roadside - learning to be the people of God" (Matthew 20, 29-34). Tuesday saw Derek Browning from Morningside leading worship, with Peter Graham preaching on "In the Temple - worship" (Matthew 21, 12-17). On Wednesday, it was Julia's turn to lead worship and Alistair Keil from Morningside preached on "In the Home - life at the sharp end" (Matthew 26, 6-13). Julia celebrated Communion with us on Maundy Thursday and Derek Browning preached on "In the Garden - Gethsemane betrayed" (Mat-

thew 26, 30-46). On Good Friday, Julia's sermon was "On the Cross - the place of suffering" (Matthew 27, 32-61) and the service was led by Derek Browning.

The music was also memorable, with Alberto and Morley Whitehead from Morningside sharing the organ - particularly on Good Friday when the joint choirs, led by Alberto, gave a moving contribution to worship.

The congregation grew in number in the course of the week, with about eighty present on Good Friday. The number of homes joining online rose from 7 on Monday to 23 on Good Friday, with those dipping into Facebook chalking up a further 46 to 59 views each day. I'm sure everyone would join me in thanking all those involved in leading the worship - a memorable experience.

**Duncan Macniven**



## Scout Jumble Sale

The Scouts would like to thank everyone who donated jumble or came along as customers on Saturday 13th April. A special thank-you is due to the people who staffed the stalls on the morning of the Sale, and those who helped clear up afterwards. At the morning service the next day, no-one would have guessed how the halls looked 24 hours before!

The final figure for takings was an incredible total of over £18,000 in two-and-a-half hours. Once expenses are deducted, over £14,000 goes to keep our lively Explorers, Scouts,

Cubs and Beavers well-equipped and accessible to everyone – as well as keeping Edinburgh’s charity shops well stocked with our unsold goods.

**Duncan Macniven**





## Easyfundraising

Many members will remember this painless way of raising funds for our work with young people at Greenbank.

By logging on to '*easyfundraising*' and selecting our original youth focused **Greenbank Yacht Project** as your favoured project when ordering goods and services for yourself via the internet, a percentage of the value of your order is donated by the retailer to our cause.

There are currently more than 50 people using this facility, and over £2,000 has now been raised in this way.

As the holiday season comes into focus, travel bookings, insurances, and many normal internet pur-

chases, including energy and telecoms contracts are often available with *easyfundraising*.

Please think of using this next time you make a purchase. It is very easy to use.

Contact me if you need advice or to send you an easy direct link to access the scheme.

David Jack



**Greenbank YACHT project**  
 51 supporters  
 £2,077.93 raised  
 📍 EH10, Edinburgh

## Holy Trinity Chapel

I was in Biggar on a Morningside Heritage Association visit to its Museum, and to Holy Trinity Chapel at Lamington.

For those who don't know it, the Museum is a hidden treasure – not only as a welcoming space, run by friendly volunteers and staff who are clearly devoted to it, but with its own compelling story and exhibits. I could wax lyrical about it for some time, but wanted to focus here on Holy Trinity Chapel in case it is of interest.

The Chapel was commissioned as a private place of worship by the first Lord Lamington and built

to a design by the architect John Henderson in 1857. By the early 1950s it had fallen into disuse and was closed. In 2013 the Biggar Museum Trust, led by its Chair, set about raising the funds to restore it, and I was lucky to be able to visit it just as the muralist was putting the final touches to its creatively stunning revival, illustrated here around the candelabra (right).

The chapel is open again, and used for multi-denominational services – an example of a revival at a time when so many churches are closing. Well worth a visit!

Jill Powlett Brown







## Greenbank Scottish Country Dance Club

Sadly, the remaining members of the Greenbank Scottish Country Dance club decided to close the club at the AGM last month. There are now so few members that it was not always possible to make up a set of eight dancers. The club was founded in the 1940s and was so popular that it was split into over 16s and under 16s. Gradually over the years numbers have dropped and since Covid lockdown some dancers have not resumed.



We are very grateful for the support Greenbank Church has given over the years. However, dancing continues at Greenbank with Edina (a former Edinburgh University group) dancing in the Main Hall on Wednesday evenings from 7.15pm to 9.15pm, and an RSCDS group meeting on Tuesday evenings.

**Joan Ritchie**

## Scottish Love in Action meets Sabash!



### New Year 1431

Sabash is the Scottish Association of Bengali Arts and Sanskriti Heritage, a Scottish charity which promotes the art and culture of the Eastern region of India, through Bengali music, dance, drama and by organising popular festivals.

On Saturday 20th April SLA and Sabash joined in a brilliant and relaxing celebration of the Bengali New Year and to raise money for SLA. The Bengali participants were in colourful traditional clothing with lots of children present, (the SLA supporters were in rather more subdued clothes). We learned to say 'Happy New Year' in Bengali and were treated to a splendid

evening of Scots and Indian music. The dancers were especially lively with vivid clothes and beautiful expressive movements. The two male dancers gave stunningly dramatic performances, particularly the sword dance. We were well fed with a Bengali meal of lamb, fish, pilau rice, salad and much more. The evening was rounded off by everyone singing 'Auld Lang Syne', hand in hand, in Bengali and Scots. It was a wonderful evening, a very friendly mix of people enjoying excellent music and dance and enjoying a celebration of two cultures.

**Edith Armit**



## Welcome Teams

### May

- 5 **Ian Thom**, Keith Clark, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Isobel Thom, Charles Black, John Kalu
- 12 **Caroline Kehoe**, Ian McWilliam, Anne Kinnear, Kathryn Sangster, Rosemary McLeod, Lyndsay Kennedy
- 19 **Ian Thomson**, Kathleen Patrick, Diana Teasdale, Jill Powlett Brown, Karen Young, Heather Kay
- 26 **Christina Morrow**, Edith Armit, Louise Coghill, Susan Black, Nora Kellock, Margot Gillon

### June

- 2 **Donald King**, Jan Corbett, Roderick Morrison, Jim Young, Elaine McRae, Jane Harkin

## Flower Rota

*provided by*                      *delivered by*

### May

- |                       |              |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| 5 Margo Fraser        | Ruth Wilkojc |
| 12 Land family        | Fiona Kelly  |
| 19 Rosemary McCulloch | Susan Black  |
| 26 Diana Hastings     | Irene Horne  |

### June

- |            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| 2 Ina Weir | Heather Kay |
|------------|-------------|

## Coffee Rota

### May

- 5 David & Janet Ferguson  
D13,26 &28
- 12 Ian & Isobel Thom D53,54 &56
- 19 Rosemary McCulloch  
D49&50
- 26 Hazel & Angus McLachlan  
D43

### June

- 2 Susan Inch & Chris Horne  
D48,89,37,66 & 67

## The Ministry Team can be contacted directly

Rev Julia Cato (Associate Minister)  
e-mail: [jcato@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:jcato@churchofscotland.org.uk)  
Administrator: Jackie Wilson-Tagoe  
phone: 0131 447 9969  
email: [office@greenbankchurch.org](mailto:office@greenbankchurch.org)

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

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

Postal address:

Greenbank Parish Church  
Braidburn Terrace,  
Edinburgh EH10 6ES

Items for the *Weekly Newsletter* should be sent by **Thursdays** to:

[greenbankweekly@gmail.com](mailto:greenbankweekly@gmail.com)

Material for the June, July, August 2024 issue of *Greenbank Connections* should be delivered to the Editors' Pigeonhole by Sunday 12th May, or sent by e-mail by **8pm on Thursday 16th May** to:

[greenbankconnections@gmail.com](mailto:greenbankconnections@gmail.com)

## Congregational Register

**Fundraising for  
Christian Aid**

**You're  
invited!**



**What:** Coffee Morning with Stalls and Music,  
organised by joint local churches group

**When:** Saturday 18th May 2024

**Where:** Morningside Parish Church Halls,  
Braid Road

**Time:** 10am to 12 noon  
Cost £5, includes coffee/tea and scone

All welcome, bring a friend.

We're raising funds for Christian Aid to help people in  
poverty around the world. We'd love you to join us!



We believe in life  
before death

**Your gift can change lives! Find out more at  
[caid.org.uk](http://caid.org.uk) or [christianaid.ie](http://christianaid.ie)**

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