

Leaflet



Greenbank Parish Church
Braidburn Terrace, EH10 6ES

No 649 February 2016

Pulpit Diary

Feb 7

9.30am First Sunday Service led by Kirk Session

10.30am Uniformed Organisations Service

Feb 14 First Sunday in Lent

10.30am Morning Worship

Feb 21 Second Sunday in Lent

10.30am Morning Worship

Feb 28 Third Sunday in Lent

10.30am Morning Worship

7.00pm Night Light with John Bell (at Morningside Parish Church)

Mar 4 Friday

7.30pm Pre-Communion Service

Mar 6 Fourth Sunday in Lent

9.00am Communion

10.30am Communion (Creche, Spectrum and Springboard 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

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

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

Earlier this week with the Kirk Session I was looking back over the busy Christmas season. And I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who contributed to our Christmas events and services. From those who decorated the Church so beautifully (*see photo on page 5*), to those who stood at the doors to welcome people into the building, from those who



handed out glowsticks on Christmas Eve to those who counted our offerings for Christian Aid, from those who led our children's holiday club Christmas event to those who participated in our Blue Christmas Service, from the children who led us in our Gift Service to those who sang and played and read in our Advent service of lessons and carols, thanks to you all for making the Christmas story speak to us again in so many different ways.

There were also a couple of innovations during the season. Changes in the timing, venue and style of the carol party meant that the event was more accessible to those members of our congregation who prefer not to venture out in the dark evenings, as well as to many young families who are associated with our pre-school, Nile Grove Nursery and the Toddlers groups who meet in the church. The efforts of those who organised and hosted it were much appreciated. When I went into South Morningside Primary School the following week for their carol-singing time, my familiarity with the lyrics for the Twelve Days of Christmas was noted – but that was thanks only to the lively rendition which we had enjoyed at the party two days before!

Another innovation this year was the involvement of so many people in our service on 27th December. The words of the elders who chose their favourite carols for us to sing and who shared with us something of themselves as they told us about the carols and

what they meant to them were, I know, appreciated by many. We were encouraged to think more deeply about what we were singing and what these carols have to say to us about the significance of the birth of Jesus. Once again thanks to all who contributed to our Christmas season.

But if I have been looking back over the Christmas season I have also

been looking forward to 2016. Lent begins early this year and we will be running another shortened version of the Alpha course beginning in February. When we ran this course last Spring a number of people found it helped them to reflect on their faith and if you are interested, further details are available elsewhere in this *Leaflet*.

For me personally 2016 holds the challenge of two further schools in the DMin programme to which I have dedicated my study leave. The first of these schools takes place in Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in January/February, the second takes place in June at Edinburgh University. I'm particularly looking forward to the one in Pittsburgh even if it might not be the best time of year to travel there – last week the temperature was -10°C at midday. However we are staying in student accommodation which is on campus. And if the last school is anything to go by there won't be much time to worry about the weather, as we look at the Church and mission through the eyes of Reformed theologians and reflect on how this impacts on our practice of ministry.

No doubt 2016 will bring many other challenges for all of us but we can be assured that in Christ God is with us in the midst of all that happens and I wish you every blessing for 2016.

With warmest wishes,

Alison I Swindells
Parish Minister



ALPHA IS A SERIES OF INTERACTIVE SESSIONS
EXPLORING THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.
THERE IS NO PRESSURE, NO FOLLOW UP AND NO CHARGE.

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EACH SESSION BEGINS WITH A MEAL.

ALPHA IS OPEN TO EVERYONE AND IS FREE.

TO REGISTER CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE AT

447 9969 OR VISIT WWW.GREENBANKCHURCH.ORG

Help the Homeless

Greenbank Help the Homeless Group provided the catering at our first Bethany Care Shelter for this year at Gorgie Parish Church. The event went very well; there was plenty of good warm wholesome food for the users and when we all left shortly after 11pm the shelter was warm and people were quietly settled down for the night.

There were the one or two usual little hiccups which were all easily dealt with. The main one was nothing to do with us – the room in which the boiler was kept was locked and so we had to ring up the beadle and get her to come and unlock it so that Bethany could switch the heating on. Although a small oversight, this wasn't particularly good, as the hall took a long time to heat up even once the boiler was switched on. Quite apart from this, the night was exceedingly cold and some users outside the shelter were frozen cold awaiting admission from 6pm.

We gave the group a nice dinner of mince, tatties and peas or a vegetarian option of pasta with tomato sauce. The latter was very well received and all scoffed quickly. For dessert there was hot lemon pudding or ice cream. It is interesting to know that the full cost of the mince would have been over £80 but our local butcher gave us a reduction to £50.

Well done to the volunteers on duty – they were Richard, Abi, Mike, Angus, Alison, Douglas as well, of course, as myself. Pauline also came down for a short while and dropped off the socks, vests, gloves and other clothing kindly donated by our

Sharing the Light

“For blessings too many to list”

The best and most humbling thing about *Light a Light* has been reading the reasons so many people gave for feeling thankful. One donor said, “For blessings too many to list”. It demonstrated that, despite sometimes difficult or very difficult circumstances, many people could see reasons to be thankful. People who had undergone difficult medical situations, had been bereaved but, through the loss, were still very thankful for what they had had. For others the thanks was for the fellowship, friendship, support and prayers which they had received from the Greenbank community. For others it was the witness of parents and friends who had helped them on their own Christian journey. And finally for some it was the support and witness of organisations such as the Guild and Quest. In the next few months I will *Share the Light* and share some reasons given by contributors for being thankful.

In memory of my husband for I believe that since he died there is a light shining in Greenbank Church.

For my parents who were committed lifelong Christian worshippers and guided my own Christian journey.

Since arriving here we have seen God in our family in so many ways. Our children receive good education and my husband and I have jobs to earn our living. We don't take any of that for granted and see it all as a gift from God.

From my daughters in lieu of one of their Christmas presents in memory of their two grandparents who would have approved.

And finally, “Thank You!”, for so many contributions to *Light a Light*. You have raised nearly £2,500 which, with Gift Aid, will increase to nearly £3,000. Greenbank will become a brighter place, with lights of thankfulness shining around our buildings. There will be no more appeals for contributions but it will always be possible to contribute.

David Allan

congregation. The Bethany workers were really delighted with every piece of donated clothing and were going to distribute it on a fair basis in the morning. All of it was very much wanted and appreciated.

The next Care Shelter is due to take place on **Wednesday 17th February**, again at Gorgie. We have been asked to cover an additional evening – Easter Sunday – **27th March**.

Many thanks to all the volunteers and especially to our new recruits – they all just cheerfully got on with the job as if they had done it many times before – indeed Angus had done it before and is a returning volunteer – brilliant.

I think as we left the church in the bitter cold of the night we would all have reflected on the fact that we had at least done a little bit to help and also on how fortunate we all were.

Nora Kellock

Christian Aid Collection 2016

Christian Aid Week 15th – 21st May 2016

Christian Aid continues to be well supported at Greenbank through local events and our annual Christmas collection, but we need to sustain this momentum as our thoughts turn to this year's house to house collection in May.

Last year's total for the house-to-house collection amounted to £4,731.53 which was nearly £1,000 up on 2014, despite only the same number of envelopes being collected. The amount gift aided was estimated to have been slightly less than the previous year but still helped to give an additional amount over and above what was put into the envelopes. I was very grateful for all the support and help you gave me in the preparation and carrying-out of the collection, and of course, to all the donors.

Although Christian Aid week may seem far away, preparation work is starting now and we need a team of collectors to cover all the streets in the parish. Thank you again to those who collected last year and I hope that most of you will be able to collect again. I shall be contacting you over the next few weeks but for anyone who is thinking of 'retiring' as a collector and/or has already booked a holiday for the above dates I would be very grateful if you could "ask a friend" to take over your houses, preferably before I speak to you!

I know that I will need some new collectors to share the load. Please contact me if you would like to play a part in this important mission.

It may seem a bit daunting to take a collection on for the first time, and I can't legislate for the weather, but most people actually enjoy the experience, which makes new connections in the community and boosts our presence on a wider front in Greenbank. It takes up to about an hour to deliver the envelopes and about three hours collection time through the week. Most people do this over two early evening slots and sometimes couples take on an area between them. There is a Collector's Guide with plenty of useful information given to every collector. I am also looking for administrative help nearer the time to assist me in preparing the bags/envelopes for collectors and also for counting up on the 22nd May, after the 10.30am service.

Pam Jack

(Email pamelajacko6@gmail.com)

Friendship Club

Our December and January meetings included a 'magical' Christmas Party, a walk of discovery in *The Park* and discovering *Lost Edinburgh*. At our first February meeting on the 10th we welcome Ian Tennant to talk about *Harry Lauder*. Ian, now retired as a planning engineer with British Leyland Motor Corporation and then a high school teacher passing on his skills, joined his local Probus club and so acquired an interest in giving talks. On the 17th as it is close to Valentine's Day, Kathleen's music will have *Elements of Romance*, then on the 24th we will dig into the Smarts' wardrobe to discover their favourite *Top Gear*.

Val Smart

Christian Aid event

christian aid
Morningside & Fairmilehead
Christian Aid Committee
Presents
Jim and Ellie Naughtie:
Living in the Spotlight
On Thursday, 25th February 2016 commencing at 7.30pm
(doors open at 7pm) at Fairmilehead Parish Church,
Frogston Road West, Edinburgh.

Jim Naughtie, born and educated in Aberdeen, was a main presenter for BBC Radio 4's breakfast *Today* programme from 1994, having previously been 8 years presenting the *World at One*. He presents arts programmes, both on Television (the Proms) and Radio, and is probably most well-known for hosting *Book Club* on Radio 4. He is about to semi-retire but will continue as a 'Special Correspondent', meaning he will still be on the radio covering the Scottish, USA and French elections this year.

His wife Eleanor, who in her own right is an author (as Eleanor Updale) of both children's and adult fiction and used to be a producer on *The World at One*, will be in conversation with him. This will apparently be their first time onstage together. They have recently moved back to Edinburgh to live.

This is an exciting opportunity to hear and see a man who has shown himself to have a deep understanding of politics and has been both feared and respected as a presenter for all this time:

Thursday 25th February at Fairmilehead Church, doors open 7pm, event starts 7.30pm. Tickets, priced £7 including refreshments, are available from

David Ferguson, Pam Jack and Helen Barnes

Spectrum and Springboard Offerings in 2015

The Offerings collected at Spectrum and Springboard during 2015 totalled £500.

As is the custom, the members of Springboard and Spectrum 3 were asked how they wanted the money to be used. This year, Spectrum 3 again chose to sponsor a child through *Plan International*, and then nominated that the balance available go to support the *Save the Children Syrian Appeal*. Springboard chose to allocate amounts to *Teenage Cancer Trust*, *Make a Wish Foundation* and *Christian Aid*. £12 per month has been paid to *Plan International*, £131 to *Save the Children* and £75 to each of *Teenage Cancer Trust*, *Make a Wish Foundation* and *Christian Aid*.

In addition, as previously reported, the children's *Talents Initiative* raised £162.71, during October for the YACHT Campaign.

Thus, in total our young members must be congratulated for having raised £662 for charities during 2015.

Ian Thomson

Christmas Event for Children

Did you know that Christmas trees were hung upside down from the rafters when they were first used to decorate houses at Christmas? Neither did I, until we learned about Christmas customs and talked about the true meaning of Christmas at our special event in December. Seventy children had a happy and productive afternoon judging by all the smiling faces. Feedback from parents was good too, as you can read in messages we received,

“Wanted to drop you a wee note to say how much our son and daughter had enjoyed yesterday at Greenbank Church. They have been talking about St Nicholas and the meaning of Christmas in such detail during our dinner tonight that they have both clearly taken a lot away from the afternoon.

The decorations are beautiful too.

Thank you for all your hard work and please pass on our thanks to the rest of the team.”

“Hectic but fun!”

“Thanks for a great afternoon yesterday, B had a lovely time. Best wishes”

The icing on the cake is that all the adult helpers had a wonderful time too! Thank you everyone.

Alison Reid



The Guild

The illustrated talk on 1st December on the history of Scottish cooking in Scotland was greatly appreciated by those attending and the following Tuesday at 7pm our buffet meal with in-house entertainment was much enjoyed. Our coffee morning on 5th January was well attended by members and visitors; the volume of sound indicated that all had much news to exchange following the Festive Season. By the time this report is printed we shall have heard a talk entitled *“Go in Peace”* from the Rev Peter Graham; this is the subject of our theme for the year within the overall National Guild strategy *“Be bold, be strong”* and can be viewed from a number of different aspects.

On **2nd February** at 7.30pm we shall learn about one of the National Guild projects, Christian Aid’s programme in Bolivia *“Caring for Mother Earth”*; this supplies solar-powered ovens to villages which had been destroyed by severe floods. As well as helping to reduce deforestation because wood is no longer required to cook, the project also provides assistance with adapting agricultural practice to improve health and living standards.

We shall be holding a fundraising concert in the Church at **7.30pm on 16th February** to support this project. It will be given by the *Auld Spice Ceilidh Band* and a singer, Kate Gieben, and will be followed by cake, shortbread and tea and coffee in the Main Hall; tickets for this event priced at £6 will be available after Sunday services in the Main Hall or can be obtained from the Church Office. We hope that many of you who read this *Leaflet* will come to support this event which is part of the Guild’s outreach beyond its members and the congregation.

The National Guild has recently developed new methods of communication and a revised multi-colour format for its printed newsletter and has gone live with a monthly e-bulletin. Facebook and other modern media forms of communication are also being promoted along with some new merchandise. There is also an updated presence on the Church of Scotland website – www.churchofscotland.org.uk – click on “Serve” and then “The Guild” for further information about this national organisation.

Kathleen Patrick

Guild Fundraising Concert
at Greenbank Parish Church
7.30pm on 16th February
Auld Spice Ceilidh Band
and singer Kate Gieben
in aid of
“Caring for Mother Earth”
(Christian Aid project in Bolivia)
Tickets £6
includes cake/shortbread, tea/coffee

World Day of Prayer

Prepared by the women of Cuba



'Where two or three are gathered together in my name... there I will be also.'

Will you join us?

Every year on the first Friday in March, Christians around the world of all ages gather in small groups and large congregations to use the same basic form of worship. This is written by women of a different country each year on a theme chosen by the World Day of Prayer International Committee. This year the service is on **Friday 4th March 2016** and will be held in Morningside Parish Church at 10.30am. It has been prepared by the women of Cuba and has the title "Receive children, receive me".

There are two bible studies in preparation for the service, one on **Friday 12th February** and the other on **Friday 26th February**; they will be held in 121 George Street at 10.30am. Everyone is very welcome to come to the bible studies and especially to the service itself on **Friday 4th March 2016**.

Margaret Barrowman

World Mission Committee

The convener of the Church of Scotland's Church and Society Council, the Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, associate minister at Dunblane Cathedral, has been appointed the new head of Christian Aid Scotland. On 1st March she will take over the helm of this ecumenical charity, which tackles the effects and causes of poverty with partners around the world. Christian Aid is all about relationships and works on behalf of partner churches in Scotland and wider afield in an attempt to eradicate poverty. Sally says that this is what we consistently work for and "it resonates in my bones". Climate justice, gender justice and tax justice are three of the big aims of Christian Aid and she looks forward to continuing this work. There is more on Greenbank and Christian Aid elsewhere in the *Leaflet*.

Fairtrade. Sit down for breakfast, stand up for farmers!

– is the theme this year for Fairtrade Fortnight, which is 29th February – 13th March. As Martin Luther King famously said, 'before you finish eating breakfast in the morning, you've depended on more than half the world'. Despite our dependence on farmers and workers for the foods, drinks and products that we love, about 795 million people are undernourished globally. "It's a sad irony that millions of farmers and workers who are feeding the world are themselves going hungry. We can support farmers and workers to put food on the table for their families by harnessing the power of a Fairtrade breakfast."

When people are paid a fairer price, they can have more control over their lives when times are hard, and worry less about how they will feed their families. Whether it's the extra cash in their pockets or being able to expand their farms to grow more food to eat, Fairtrade means many farmers and workers are able to fulfil a basic human need – to put enough food on the table for the people they care about, all year round.

Our own One World Stall will be held on Sunday 28th February, where there will be a selection of 'breakfast items', Easter eggs etc, chocolate and some gifts.

Pam Jack

Dates for your Diary: Please note that the next dates for Fresh Start collections are **21st February** and **17th April** 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.

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.

Small Household Electrical Items (Not TVs).

Pick up a leaflet on a Fresh Start Sunday, telephone 476 7741, or see www.freshstartweb.org.uk, to find out more about Fresh Start.

Alison Ambler



The tree decorators



Guild Coffee Morning helpers

February Issue of *Life and Work*



The Changing Face of Worship

Thomas Baldwin looks at the patterns of worship evolving in the Church of Scotland today.

On the Streets and Overseas

Part two of our focus on the Guild's latest partner projects, looking at the Street Pastors and Mission International.

'Life with Jesus is Never Dull'

Kirsty Wyllie, a Christian writer, tells Jackie Macadam about her life in the church, her career and living with cerebral palsy.

Credit Unions and the Church

Charles Sim calls on churches and members to consider credit unions as an ethical form of finance.

Church Census Day

The Rev Dr Fiona Tweedie highlights the importance of Church Census Day in Scotland.

'Big Sing' Success in Dunfermline

Lynne McNeil reports from the Guild's praise event.

'Too Important Not to Share'

The Moderator, the Rt Rev Dr Angus Morrison, offers a clarion call to mission.

Jesus and Women

Youth Moderator, Hannah Mary Goodlad, argues that Jesus was a feminist.

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

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

Night Light

Night Light is a new initiative that brings together members of Greenbank, Fairmilehead and Morningside Parish Churches for creative and alternative worship. Services focus on the intersection of faith and society, and have included topics like World Mental Health day and World Aids day. Most recently, Greenbank hosted a service marking the beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The style of worship was based on that of the Taizé Community which QII visited last July. The service was led by our praise group and included several chants in addition to time for silent reflection.

The next Night Light service will be held at Morningside Parish Church on **28th February at 7pm**. The service will feature **John Bell**, who will offer an interactive session on *Psalms of Lament* tying into the season of Lent. For more information, or to get involved, contact Rev Bill Stone.

BAGs

Blokes at Greenbank would like to invite all men aged 18-118 to the return of the popular "*Curry and Quiz Night*" on **Thursday 10th March** at 8pm in the Centenary Hall, Greenbank. Come along as a team, with friends or on your own – all very welcome! For more information or to sign up, speak with

Kenny Htet-Khin or Rev Bill Stone



Heads, Hands and Feet

Once again I would like to thank people in the congregation who have so generously donated a lot of new and nearly new men's socks, gloves, hats and underwear for the homeless of our city.

By now two large bags of goods will have gone to the first night shelter in January (see article on page 2). We will be in attendance providing meals at three more shelters in February, March and April.

Bethany **so** appreciates all we donate.

Pauline Walker

Congregational Register

Omitted from the online version of the Leaflet

Welcome Teams

February

- 7 **John Rutherford**, David Allan, Richard Denison, Caroline Kehoe, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones, Ian McWilliam
- 14 **Ian Thom**, Keith Clark, Ray Dely, Catherine Hardie, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Anne Oxbrow, Isobel Thom, Kay Ellis, Charles Black, Greig Scott
- 21 **Donald King**, Brian Barron, Walter Crosby, Donald MacLeod, Roderick Morrison, Mairi Stevenson, Jim Young, Kathryn Sangster
- 28 **Rosemary McCulloch**, Rona Ferguson, Fiona Grant, Christina Morrow, Alison Murison, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Toby Tucker, Alastair Ross

March

- 6 **Keith Winton**, Eileen Campbell, Richard Dunbar, Clifford Hastings, Chris Horne, Doris Laing, Enid Mowat, Robin Nimmo

Crèche Rota

February

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|---------------|
| 7 | Ailsa Cameron | Jenny Wright |
| 14 | Isobel Thom | Shona Murray |
| 21 | Janet Ferguson | Ailsa Cameron |
| 28 | Eileen McKinnon | Lucy Teall |

March

- | | | |
|---|---------------|-------------|
| 6 | Ailsa Cameron | Carrie Reid |
|---|---------------|-------------|



Flower Rota



	<i>Provided by</i>	<i>Delivered by</i>
February		
7	Innes Family	Janet Edwards
14	Chrissie Munro	Katy Maguire
21	Grace Maweu	Diana Hastings
28	Ray Dely	Helen Aitken
March		
6	Winton Family	Eleanor Winton

Coffee Rota



February	
7	SLA
14	Choir
21	Joan and John Ritchie (D5, D27 & D45)
28	Springboard
March	
6	Communion (<i>no coffee</i>)

Book Café
for Scottish Love in Action

Get a warm glow
browsing books for sale
with coffee and soup

Saturday 27th February
10.30-2.30
Morningside Parish Church, Cluny Gardens

Tickets £7.50 Children £5
To include 2 books, soup and bread
(coffee or tea extra)

Tickets available at
www.sla-india.org/product/book-cafe/
or email slabookcafe@gmail.com or on the door

Material for the March *Leaflet* should be delivered to the Church Office or to the Editors' pigeon-hole in the Main Hall by Sunday 14th February, or sent by e-mail by 9am on Tuesday 16th February to greenbankleaflet@googlemail.com

CONCERNING WORSHIP – SABBATH TO SUNDAY

For many people Sunday is no longer a special day. Within the lifetime of many reading this, there has been a tremendous change in the way Sunday is regarded and used. Less than fifty years ago, very few organised games or sport took place on a Sunday. Although never illegal, Sunday shopping was regarded as socially unacceptable and so shops did not open on a Sunday. Nowadays strict Sunday observance has become a thing of the past. City centres and out of town shopping malls are just as crowded as on any other day; the roads are busy; newspapers swell to grotesque proportions. What was once a day different from the rest of the week is now for many people simply the time to catch up on the previous week's unfinished business in the home, in the garden or at the leisure centre. We may not wish to return to the grim Scottish Sunday of long ago, even if the pictures we have of it are caricatures rather than truth. However, there is much to be said for having one day in the week that is different and special.

In the past many relied on the Fourth Commandment to protect the special nature of Sunday. *Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.* The Jewish Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, was a regular reminder both of creation and of the Exodus. Following the divine example, it was to be a day of rest and refreshment. *In six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, but on the seventh day he ceased work and refreshed himself.* Obviously the one who does not weary or grow faint needs no such break, but this was the way the ancient writer described the practical function of the Sabbath. It was God's gracious gift to God's people, an invitation to lay aside the work of the week and to rest. It was a healthy reminder that human beings do not live to work, but work to live. A person must know when to stop. Remembering what it had been like to labour without rest in Egypt, heads of households were to ensure that everyone enjoyed a day off: sons and daughters, male and female servants, even foreigners in their midst. By granting Sabbath rest to all, heads of household were to imitate what God had done for them.

The Sabbath became one of the distinguishing marks of Jewish identity. In a hostile world it was a sign, even a political symbol, both to the Jews themselves and to their neighbours, that they were God's special people. A considerable body of Jewish law and custom grew up around its observance. Sadly, some extremists regarded the keeping of the law and the maintaining of customs more important than loyalty to God and God's will. The seventh-day Sabbath was not a burden to be carried but a gift to be celebrated. Since the first followers of Jesus were all Jews, it would have been natural for them to observe the Sabbath, but at a very early stage there was a radical departure from observing the seventh day, the Sabbath, to making the first day of the week special.

So why did Sunday become special? This decisive move to the first day of the week was to act as a weekly reminder of the day when Jesus rose from the dead. The Christian Church came into being following the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the first day of

a new week. From the very beginning the Christian church has treated it as the principal day for worship. As early as one week after the Resurrection the disciples of Jesus gathered together: from then onwards Christians have assembled as and when they could on the first day of each new week. It even acquired its own title, the Lord's Day. (This is reflected still in the French and Italian names for this day.) In the middle of the second century Justin Martyr, who taught and defended Christianity, refers to the day when Christians worship: *Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, transforming darkness and matter, made the universe, and Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead on the same day.* Very soon the newly coined pagan term "Sunday" was adopted by Christians who compared Christ rising from the dead to the rising sun. And Sunday was sometimes called "an eighth day, that is the beginning of another world... in which Jesus Christ also rose from the dead".

Sunday was not observed as a public holiday until the time of the Emperor Constantine in the early 4th century. For the first 300 years of the Church's existence Sunday was a day on which Christians worshipped, but it was not yet a day of rest. Meetings for worship were either early or late in the day. When Christianity became a tolerated religion, Constantine ordered that Sunday was to be a public holiday similar to other Roman holidays. After his conversion to Christianity he issued a decree in AD 321: *All judges, city people and craftsmen shall rest on the venerable day of the Sun. But countrymen may without hindrance attend to agriculture.* This made possible wider development in worship and larger congregations.

In the past there have been many controversies regarding the Christian use of Sunday. Jesus himself was accused by his critics of adopting a too relaxed attitude to the Jewish Sabbath. In response he claimed to be Lord of the Sabbath. That is, Jesus determines the kind of behaviour suitable on the Sabbath. He demands that the Sabbath be oriented towards, interpreted by and obeyed in accordance with, his own person and work. Despite this, at various times in the history of the Scottish Church rigid rules were devised to ensure strict observance of the Lord's Day. Gradually these became more relaxed, but in the nineteenth century there were public debates about the running of trains on Sundays and the opening of the Botanic Gardens here in Edinburgh, while in the 1930s the churches were concerned about the effect on public morality of the staging of air displays, the opening hours of the Open Air Pool at Portobello and cinema performances on Sundays. Few, if any, would wish to return to the times when Sundays were marked principally by total abstinence from what were deemed to be frivolous or unnecessary activities. However, if we can treat Sunday as a day for worship and for rest, for spiritual and for physical renewal, then we may be making it a sign of our identity as the Lord's people keeping the Lord's Day.

To read about Jesus and the Sabbath, see St Mark 2, verses 23–28