

# Greenbank Connections



March 2025

Issue 732

Scottish Charity SC011325



*The Ladies of Forth Valley Chorus gave a concert in aid of Christian Aid. See p8*

## Greenbank Parish Church, Edinburgh

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

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## Afternoon Service

The next Dementia-Friendly Afternoon Service will be held on **Sunday 13th of April at 2pm.**

Tea and cake will be available in the Main Hall after the service. All Welcome!

**Jan Corbett**

## From the Locum



### Letter to a President

When I was in Leith, I found through studying the congregation's long history, several ministers had engaged with the monarchs or key politicians over the centuries. Dr John White, for example, had taken a trip to London around the time of WW1. He was able to knock upon the door of 10 Downing Street and speak to the Prime Minister in person to express his concerns. I too have taken the view that the church should engage on matters when faith and politics offer divergent perspectives. I think we are in such a situation in America and so have penned a letter to President Donald Trump. If you wish to have your name associated with the content of the letter opposite, then please contact me before the end of March on

[IGilmour@churchofscotland.org](mailto:IGilmour@churchofscotland.org).

## Dear President Trump. A plea from Scotland

Congratulations on, in political terms, becoming the world's most powerful individual. You will certainly have learned during the last year how quickly things can change and how vulnerable we all are to the actions of others. We pray you will be interested in doing something for the children of the world during your second term. You have the power to make a huge difference to all young people. They all live on the same planet as you and will live on long after you have ended your term in office. This year, you can demonstrate your commitment by improving their chance of enjoying longer lives. Our suggestion is simply to follow the research of the top United States scientists and acknowledge the havoc that climate change is creating. It will have deadly con-

sequences for millions of children from Bangladesh to Brooklyn, from New Orleans to Nairobi. The Bible teaches us to build our house upon a rock so it can withstand storms and floods (Luke 6, 46-49). We ask you to show wisdom by listening to your best scientists' findings. Please do not withdraw support from the Paris Agreement but instead rejoin most nations in the battle against climate change. This action will lighten the gloom hanging over the world's poorest people. It will provide hope for the future as they see the United States President thinking about all of the world's people. The future of our joint home, Planet Earth, is at stake.

We, the undersigned, of the church in Scotland invite you to act as your long-term commitment to the world's children.

**Ian Y Gilmour**  
**Locum Minister**



*Secret Snowdrops at Newbattle, Ewan Hastings*

## Guild



It seems incredible that our session is coming to an end already. Since October we have had excellent talks on a range of subjects from *Scottish Love in Action* and the amazing *Making of the Elizabeth Sword* by way of well-illustrated travels by Kathleen Patrick plus a video presentation about our current *Crossreach Project*.

We held a coffee morning at the start of 2025 raising money for the Work Party's extraordinary production of much needed woollens and by the time you read this we

will have had a talk about *Being a University Chaplain*.

We have two meetings in March; on 4th March we will have a speaker from The Friends of the Pentland Hills

to tell us about their work in *Conservation, Protection and Enhancement* of the area. On 18th March we have the ABM which is for members only.

After that we will all be looking forward to our Outing in May and planning an interesting and worthwhile programme for the next session.

**Edith Armit**

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## Friendship Club

On 12th March at 2pm in the Braid Room, our Minister the Rev Ian Gilmour will share his "Desert Island Discs". It will be an opportunity to learn more about his faith, life and musical tastes. All are welcome to come and join us at this meeting.

The final meeting of our winter programme is on 26th March when, at 2pm in the Braid Room, we will learn about the current conservation work of Edinburgh Zoo.

Both meetings will be followed by tea, biscuits and chat in the Hermitage Room.

**Gillian Sweetman  
David Allan**

## Church Flowers



A heartfelt **thank you** to all church flower givers, arrangers and distributors from a grateful recipient who wants all involved to see the 'end destination' of the flowers and the joy they bring!

**Gillie Davidson**

## Thought for the Month

Around the time of the shortest day, I read of a monk, who at midnight would light a candle and say to the darkness “I beg to differ.” It created a lasting image in my mind of someone who, having spent time in contemplation, facing light and shadow, both within and without, expressed his commitment, in a gracious disagreement with the forces of darkness. A choice of focus really, like the person in a concentration camp, who scratched on his wall “I believe in the sun, even when it is not shining.”

Many things continue to speak of suffering in the world – wars and revenge killings, disasters due to climate change, memories of the Holocaust and much political unrest. A leading article in *The Times* this month, quoting the parents of children murdered at Southport, began with “We’re looking for the light in the darkness.” We share the longing for the filter that will let us see light in the darkness. Remember how on Holocaust Memorial Day the Guildhall in London was flooded with candles? A moving reminder to the world that the light could not be extinguished, even in the face of unspeakable horror. The candles spoke of a united “We beg to differ” from the community of faith.

I am reminded of Studdert Kennedy’s poem *Faith*. Studdert Kennedy was an Anglican priest and army chaplain whose poetry captures not only the horrors of war but the humour and camaraderie and courage he witnessed among the soldiers. The poem *Faith* captures his choice of focus, commitment to the values of faith, despite the realities that would seek to wreck it.

*“How do I know that God is good? I don’t.  
I gamble like a man. I bet my life  
Upon one side in life’s great war. I must,  
I can’t stand out. I must take sides.”*

In the poem, he goes on to explain what he believes and why, naming the reality of both good and evil, of light and darkness. His words, born not of naive optimism, but of a steady commitment, echo those of the ancient monk –

*“I bet the scent of life against its stink.  
That’s what faith works out at finally.*

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*Such as my faith, and such are my  
reasons for it, and I find them strong  
enough. And you? You want to argue?  
Well, I can’t. I choose the Christ.”*

Studdert Kennedy, like so many of those who have sought to be faithful, echoes the affirmation “I beg to differ.” It’s maybe not a bad mantra for today’s People of the Way?

**Mary McMahon**

## The Edinburgh Repair Café comes to Greenbank

Got something that is broken? Want to try fixing it but not sure how?

Repair Cafés are free community events where you can bring your item and volunteer fixers will guide you through your repair.

**On Sunday 9th March from 2-5pm, Repair Café Edinburgh** will come to Greenbank Church for the first time. Their volunteers will be on hand to help you to repair your broken electrical, electronic and mechanical devices such as toys, small/low voltage electricals and laptops, as well as fabrics, clothes and bicycles.

Not everything is fixable at the events – they're limited by time, spare parts, safety and capacity, so to

avoid disappointment they encourage you to contact them beforehand. So if you've got something that you want to fix, **email**

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

**to confirm suitability and to reserve your place.** Or just turn up on the day and they will try to take a look.

Please note: At busy times you might need to wait for a volunteer to become available. Priority will be given to local residents and those with reserved places.

And to add to your afternoon, we will be providing the “Café” part of the Repair Café, so come along for coffee and a cake, and see what is going on.

**Karen Young**  
Convenor  
Eco-Group

**REPAIR CAFÉ**  
**SUNDAY 9TH MARCH**  
**2PM TO 5PM**

@Greenbank Church  
Braidburn Terrace, EH10 6ES

REPAIR CAFÉ  
EDINBURGH  
TOOL LIBRARY

SPRING  
POP-UP!  
FREE!

If it's broken, let's fix it!



# Holy Corner Booksale 2025

Saturday, May 10; Sunday, May 11; Monday, May 12

# WANTED!

## Book Donations

- We will be accepting book donations from Wednesday, January 22 until Saturday March 29, 2025
- No home pick-ups, drop-off only, to:  
Morningside United Church, Chamberlain Road entrance, at the following times:  
Wednesdays 10 am - 12 noon  
Saturdays 10 am - 12 noon

## We Want

- Non-fiction
- Scottish books
- Paperback fiction
- Children's books



## We Cannot Accept

- Encyclopaedias
  - Academic journals
  - Reader's Digest
  - Books in poor condition, due to mould, water-damage
  - CDs, DVDs
- (These won't sell, and would incur disposal costs.)

Morningside United Church, Holy Corner, EH10 4DJ

In aid of Christian Aid: Charity No. SC039150

Booksale website: <https://holycornerbooksale.wordpress.com>

## Songs and Sparkle Concert in aid of Christian Aid

On Saturday 1st February we hosted a 65-strong group from the all-female Forth Valley Chorus who gave us a wonderful performance of barbershop a cappella arrangements. The songs ranged from Adele's "Rolling in the Deep" to "You'll Never Walk Alone" and medleys combining traditional Scottish songs with more contemporary tunes.

The singers sparkled throughout, particularly in their blue and white saltire outfits for the second section, and their musical director David was full of energy and fun. We had an audience of around 170

people and there was great enthusiasm and appreciation of the show. Many volunteers were involved both in planning and on the night, I hope that I have thanked them all. During the interval we had tea and cakes in the hall and there was a lovely buzz of conversation. The catering team did an amazing job, serving everyone so quickly.

We raised just over £1,700 after expenses, and our congregation also gave a great welcome to all our visitors.

**Fiona Watt**  
Christian Aid Co-ordinator

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## Giving to Christian Aid

Thank You to our wonderful congregation for your support of Christian Aid for three ways of giving.

1. The Advent and Christmas appeal raised the amazing sum of £9,815 including Gift Aid.
2. The Songs and Sparkle Concert after making a donation to Forth Valley Chorus and covering other expenses, we raised over £1,700.
3. In May 2024 we asked for donations of surplus foreign currency. We have now heard that Christian Aid recently raised £2,850 from foreign notes and coins, with a sub-

stantial part of this being money donated by Greenbank and Morningside Parish churches.

**Fiona Watt**  
Christian Aid Co-ordinator

P.S. Information about donating books for the Holy Corner Book Sale can be found on page 7.





# LIFE AND WORK

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND



Rachel and her minister daughter, Vanessa

## My church

Rachel McWilliam, an elder at Edinburgh: Greenbank, reflects on the impact of church life, both personally and in the community.

Rachel McWilliam, one of our elders, has written a charming article for *Life and Work* about Greenbank Church and what it means to her and the community. The full article is on page 30 of the current issue.



The Forth Valley ladies changed from their first half outfits, above, to their blue and white glitter, below, for the second half of the concert.



## Changing the World a Bite at a Time

Thank you to the Greenbank World Church Group for inviting me to update you on the situation at **True Origin**, the not-for-profit Fair Trade social enterprise that Greenbank Church kindly supports.

Many of you know we had a food standards issue with one of our long-term suppliers, Eswatini Kitchen, late last year. We had to stop selling their products, putting us in a crisis. We are working together to resolve the issue and with support from many individuals True Origin will survive. We hope to be able to sell Eswatini Kitchen products again late in 2025.

Fair Trade really matters. Last year we sponsored a visit to the UK from Howard Msukwa, a small-holder rice farmer from Northern Malawi. Howard visited Greenbank with me around seven years ago. This time he spoke at the Cornerstone Centre and talked about Climate Change and the lack of resilience in poor, rural communities, and the support that Fair Trade has brought. He asked that we seek out and buy Fair Trade products when we can and think about the lives of those who produce our food.

Please continue to support True Origin so that we can continue to support farmers like Howard. Buy

our products from your church stall or directly from our online shop.

[www.trueoriginfoods.co.uk](http://www.trueoriginfoods.co.uk)

Thank you so much for your help.

**Mary Popple,**  
Chair, True Origin



*Howard Msukwa in a rice field, Karonga, Northern Malawi*

## Coffee Rota

### March

2	Communion	Joan Ritchie
9	Hazel Macaulay	D89
16	Neil Ross	D24
23	John Ferguson	D60
30	Diana Hastings	

### April

6	Caroline Kehoe	D70
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# Welcome Teams

## March

### 2 Communion

**John Ritchie**, Susan Inch, Gillian Sweetman, Clare Campbell, Stephen Hadden, Mary Hadden, Catherine Cameron

### 9 Rosemary McCulloch, Moira Land, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Fiona Grant, Martin Struthers, Barbara Middleton

### 16 Keith Winton, Richard Dunbar, Chris Horne, Robin Nimmo, Hazel Macaulay, Moira Small

### 23 Ian Thom, Keith Clark, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Isobel Thom, Charles Black

### 30 Caroline Kehoe, Ian McWilliam, Anne Kinnear, Kathryn Sangster, Rosemary McLeod, Lyndsay Kennedy

## April

### 6 Christina Morrow, Edith Armit, Louise Coghill, Susan Black, Nora Kellock, Margot Gillon



## The Ministry Team can be contacted directly

Locum Minister: Rev Ian Gilmour  
phone: 07794 149852  
email: [IGilmour@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:IGilmour@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 **April** issue of *Greenbank Connections* should be delivered to the Editors' Pigeonhole by **Sunday 16th March** or sent by e-mail by **8pm on Thursday 20th March** to:

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

## Flower Rota

*provided by*      *delivered by*

### March

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2 Alan Ramage      | Jill Mundy         |
| 9 Jan Corbett      | Jill Powlett Brown |
| 16 Ishbel Clark    | Helen Aitken       |
| 23 Anne Oxbrow     | Rosemarie Crawford |
| 30 Alison Hamilton | Jane Harkin        |

### April

- |                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 6 Jill Powlett Brown | Margaret Mack |
|----------------------|---------------|

# GREENBANK FOREST CHURCH



**SATURDAY**  
**15th MARCH**

MEET AT GREENBANK CHURCH

2 BRAIDBURN TERRACE  
ALL FUN & ACTIVITIES  
WILL BE OUTDOORS

2 - 4pm

CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A RESPONSIBLE ADULT