

# Greenbank Connections



December 2024 / January 2025

Issue 730

Scottish Charity SC011325



*The Light of the World (see p6)*

**Greenbank Parish Church, Edinburgh**

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

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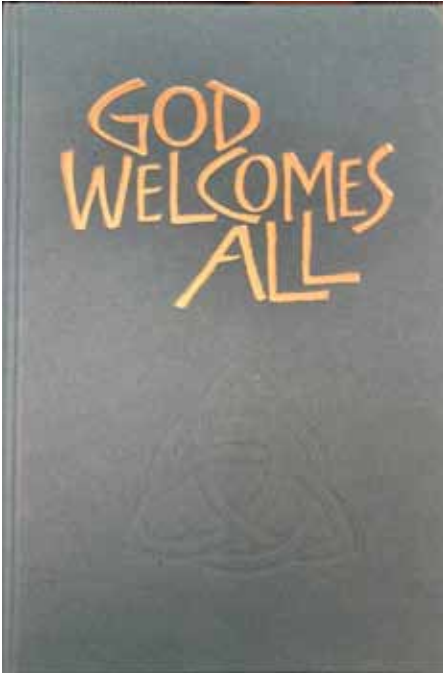
## From the Locum



### Singing a new Song

In pubs, clubs, football grounds and in church, people like to sing the 'golden oldies', familiar melodies, the tried and tested favourites. The only hymn I can recall from my early years in church was **Jesus loves me**, a good Victorian hymn; however we seemed to sing it every second week! At one time Isaac Watts, Fanny Crosby and Charles Wesley (famous hymn writers from previous eras) were the new kids on the block and even then not everyone appreciated their new-fangled musical ideas. Credit should, I believe, be given to the Church of Scotland for commissioning a new supplement called *God Welcomes All* to be used alongside the excellent Church Hymnary 4, which was published 20 years ago.





God Welcomes All brings together 226 songs written during those 20 years. It reveals a range of musical styles while exploring contemporary themes. It is not intended to replace the hymnbook, simply to complement it. The editors, Iain McLarty and Phil Mellstrom, hope that this resource will open up a journey of discovery into new ideas, new styles and new songwriters from around the world. The topics include the climate crisis, healing, living with dementia, migration, ageing, as well as worship and scripture. Songs are included from every continent and a huge effort was made to collaborate closely

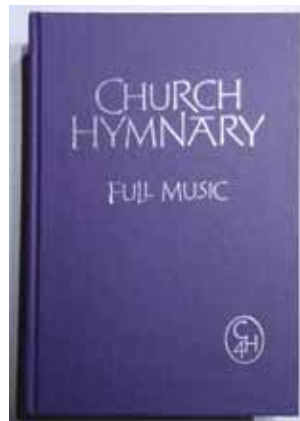
with the people who wrote the songs.

The hardback edition is expensive at £30 per copy, but one copy has been purchased for the excellent library at Greenbank Church and can be accessed after Sunday worship. Let us all be prepared to sing a new song to the Lord.

One example from New Zealand is a song that helps us reflect on Dementia. It was written by Shirley Erena Murray in New Zealand where the forget-me-not flower is the symbol of the Alzheimer's Society in that nation.

*Faces and places familiar are gone,  
clouds of unknowing descend,  
do not forget us when we forget you,  
cared for and carer have need of a friend.  
Help us accept what we cannot repair,  
Though our hearts hunger and ache,  
do not forget us when we forget you,  
give us the strength not to flinch or forsake.*

**Ian Gilmour**  
Locum minister



## Guild

We had an excellent Coffee Morning in October which raised over £120 in aid of the Work Party who create so many beautiful and useful articles.

At the beginning of November, we were delighted to hear from Sheila Cannel, the Chair of Scottish Love in Action about the progress of the three projects they are supporting in India: a **Rainbow Home** for the care and education of girls; **Voice 4 Girls** a mentoring project and **Livelihoods** a project to support young people into work. These are all valuable and effective projects. You will find an article by Sheila on page 9.

By the time you read this we will have heard about "The making of the Elizabeth Sword" which should



be fascinating. On 3rd December we will have an illustrated travel talk, "Island Hopping in the Hebrides" from Kathleen Patrick. The members are looking forward to the Christmas Party on 17th December.

In 2025 we will start with a Coffee Morning open to everyone at 10.30am in the Main Hall on **7th January**, and on **21st January** we will be hearing about "Disappeared Department Stores". (I am sure you will all remember quite a few – sadly missed)

This session has been very interesting so far and we have lots to look forward to next year.

We wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Edith Armit**

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## Friendship Club

We restart on 15th January with Kathleen Patrick transporting us away from Edinburgh with "A Travelogue". Tom Inglis will entertain us on 29th January with "Scottish Music". All are welcome to join us in the Braid Room at 2.00pm for the talk and then a cup of tea.

**Gillian Sweetman**

## Cookers for Christmas



[www.justgiving.com/campaign/cookersforchristmas2024](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/cookersforchristmas2024)

Not everyone enjoys a Merry Christmas. For those with little or no money, purchasing a cooker can be an unaffordable luxury. Fresh Start's Cookers for Christmas Campaign helps those in need by providing cookers and other essential white goods.

Donations of small electrical items, kitchenware or household items in good condition are always needed. Items can be taken directly to Fresh Start on Ferry Road Drive (see website for address details) or contact me to arrange a convenient time for collection or local drop off. There is also a box in the church vestibule just behind the door.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has donated to Fresh Start this year. Your support is appreciated.

**Eileen MacKinnon**

In the lead-up to Christmas, Fresh Start is once again running the Cookers for Christmas campaign which provides essential white goods to those in need across Edinburgh.

If you would like to donate to the campaign, further details can be found below on both the Fresh Start website (by following the **Cookers for Christmas 2024 donate** link) and on the JustGiving Cookers for Christmas 2024 page.

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## Lent / Easter Appeal 2025

Members are invited to nominate a charity / charities to be a recipient of the monies raised at next year's appeal. Nominations will be considered at the January meeting of the Congregational Board. Nominations should be made to me ([alandfio@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alandfio@yahoo.co.uk) or 07944 153893) by 4th January 2025.

**Alan Ramage**  
Joint Clerk to the Board



## Thought for the Month

### The Light of the World



A recent holiday included a visit to the National Tile Museum in Lisbon. One of its outstanding exhibits is the altarpiece of “Our Lady of Life,” considered one of the first masterpieces of tile art. Created in 1580, using a total of 1498 tiles, it was originally in a church dedicated to St Andrew and rescued when the church was demolished in the middle of the 19th century. It represents the birth of Jesus, using shading to create the illusion of depth.

At the centre of this amazing work of art is the newly-born Christ-child and immediately above him is the

figure of Joseph, holding a candle. I do not know what the intention of the original artists may have been, nor am I familiar with the symbolism of 16th century artists, but for me this spoke immediately of Jesus as the Light of the World.

Light shines brightly in the Christmas stories we hear, in the Nativity plays we watch, and in the carols we sing. Matthew describes the “star of wonder, star so bright,” guiding mysterious visitors to the infant Jesus. In Luke’s Gospel the darkness of the night sky is lit up as the heavenly messengers bring the news of Je-

us' birth to the shepherds: "and the glory of the Lord shone all around." Luke also includes light in hymns he puts on the lips of worshippers: "The dawn from on high has broken upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness," and Jesus is "a light to lighten the Gentiles."

Light is a universal symbol, found in many religions. That this should be so is obvious. Light is something to welcome: darkness is something to fear. Light shows us the way, illuminating the road we should take. All growth depends on light. Lack of light is unhealthy. Light and life are inseparable. All this, and more, is summed up in the opening section of John's Gospel.

John's Gospel does not tell us about the birth of Jesus. Instead, John goes back to the beginning, echoing the very first words of the Bible "In the beginning..." The story of Jesus starts not with the birth of a baby in Bethlehem, but with the absolute beginning of everything, with God. John claims that what was going on in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus was not some afterthought on God's part, but the full embodiment of the eternal purpose of God. As such Jesus is the light shining in the darkness, the true light, which enlightens everyone, indeed the Light of the World.

**Peter Graham**

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## Remembrance

On Tuesday 12th November at Greenbank Beavers, the Beavers made their own poppy wreath. Each Beaver made poppies, learning that the Scottish Poppy Appeal design has four petals whereas the Royal British Legion poppy has two petals and a leaf.



We placed our wreath, then had a moment's silence and we read out all of the names of those that had died in the two world wars.

**Neale Dutton**  
Assistant Beaver Leader

## Christmas Concert – Sat 7th December, 3pm

Edinburgh Chamber Orchestra's annual Festive Concert takes place this year on Saturday 7th December at 3pm at Greenbank Parish Church.

The programme is:

Mozart: *Exsultate Jubilate*

Domenico Cimarosa:

*Symphony in Bb Major*

Edwina Palmer & Agnes Best:

*Two Christmas Pieces for Strings*

Willcocks: *Carols*

Refreshments provided.

Tickets: £10 full price. £5 for students. Children: Free. For sale on the door or:

[www.justgiving.com/edinburghchamberorchestra](http://www.justgiving.com/edinburghchamberorchestra)

We hope to see you there!



## Online Advent Calendar

The Doors of the The Greenbank Advent Calendar begin to open on 1st December. It can be accessed at:

[tinyurl.com/bdz6eyjw](http://tinyurl.com/bdz6eyjw)

or on the Church Website,

Each window contains an image from past Christmases at Greenbank Church.

**Alison Murison**





## 25 years of Scottish Love in Action

It was excellent to speak with the Greenbank Guild recently to update them on the work of Scottish Love in Action. In the presentation, we focused on the start of Scottish Love in Action in 1999, when the congregation at Greenbank blessed Gillie Davidson, Brian Barron and the young people going out to India for the first time.

And now, 25 years later, we are still in Action, supporting many young people in India – and through them their families and communities as they share the knowledge that they have gained. We now partner with three projects: VOICE 4 Girls, the ASRITHA Rainbow Home and Livelihoods.

And next year, in 2025, we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of the charity. Who would have thought that, when the group of young people went out

to India in 1999, the charity would go on to support over 25,000 vulnerable children and young people into rewarding lives?

We are currently planning for the 25th anniversary of the founding of the charity next year; and hope that Greenbank will play a significant role in these celebrations.

In the meantime, it would be particularly good if any member of the congregation could share stories, recollections or anecdotes about Scottish Love in Action.

Thank you, Greenbank. This is an amazing achievement.

**Sheila Cannell**  
Chair, Scottish Love in Action  
[sheila.cannell@googlemail.com](mailto:sheila.cannell@googlemail.com)

**Janet Edwards**  
Board Member  
Scottish Love in Action  
[jedwards16900@gmail.com](mailto:jedwards16900@gmail.com)



*This group of girls, all 18 or over, are working in an Eye Hospital in Hyderabad, supported by SLA in the Livelihoods programme, which helps young people who have lived in Rainbow Homes into meaningful and independent adult lives*

## Annual Christmas Appeal for Christian Aid

Throughout Advent we will be having our customary annual appeal for Christian Aid. The 2024 Christmas appeal will focus on refugees in South Sudan, with the message “No room for comfort and joy, when you’ve left everything behind to survive.”

Many people have been forced to leave their homes due to deadly conflict and Christian Aid is supporting thousands in a refugee settlement. More than seven million people, over half the population, face hunger and food insecurity. There is more information at:

[www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christmas-appeal](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christmas-appeal)

In addition to this Christian Aid requires funding to continue its vital work with disadvantaged communities across the world throughout the year.

- The preferred way of donating is by bank transfer to the Collections account – see below. By using a reference including your name, the church can claim Gift Aid where appropriate, and this will be passed on to Christian Aid.
- We will also have Gift Aid Advent envelopes available in the church vestibule and in pews from Sunday 1st December. Any cheques should be made payable to “Greenbank Church.”

- There will be an opportunity to donate at the Christmas Eve services and on Christmas Day.

### Bank Details

Account name: Greenbank Church;  
Sort code 80-02-27;  
Account number 10786266;  
Reference – Your surname ADVENT

Thank you for your continued support and generosity. We regularly receive messages from our colleagues at Christian Aid Scotland expressing appreciation of our fundraising efforts and gifts, which help families around the world to transform their own lives.

### Fundraising Concert Saturday 1st February 2025 “Songs and Sparkle”

We will be hosting the fabulous Forth Valley Chorus who will be performing in aid of Christian Aid. Our church member Jane Harkin sings with the Chorus and has coordinated this opportunity. Visually and vocally stunning, this large choir of women singing barbershop harmony has won awards in the UK and internationally.

The concert will run from 7.30pm until around 9.45pm. Tickets are £13 for adults, £8 for children (including interval refreshments) and can be purchased from the church office, or from Fiona Watt, Jane



# Songs and Sparkle!

a performance by Forth Valley Chorus



Forth Valley Chorus – world renowned women's chorus singing barbershop harmony

**Saturday 1st February 2025, 7.30pm**  
**Greenbank Parish Church**  
**Braidburn Terrace, Edinburgh**



Scan the QR code  
to order tickets

**Ticket £13 (£8 children)**  
**Includes interval refreshments**

Tickets also available from  
the Greenbank Church office or from  
[ticketsource.co.uk/greenbank-parish-church](https://ticketsource.co.uk/greenbank-parish-church)

Proceeds from ticket sales to  
Christian Aid, Scottish Charity  
Number SC039150, with a portion  
going to support Forth Valley Chorus



Harkin, Helen Barnes and Rona Ferguson. See also the poster above. On-line tickets are available, with a small booking fee, from Ticketsource:

[www.ticketsource.co.uk/](https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/)

Please come along and help us to make this a marvellous sparkling evening.

**Fiona Watt**  
**Christian Aid Coordinator**

## Going Green:

### The Case for Sustainable Toilet Paper Alternatives

A few weeks ago, inspired by the late Dr Michael Mosley, Ian asked us to do “Just one thing”. Ian started with exercise but in our pursuit of making small, impactful changes, let’s consider an everyday product—our toilet paper. Popular brands often use virgin wood from plantations in Europe and the Americas to make their rolls. This is fine if forests are sustainably managed but often they are not. For example, eucalyptus trees, commonly used in toilet paper, are water-intensive and can lead to drought and biodiversity loss when grown irresponsibly.

Several environmental organisations, including the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), agree that using virgin wood for single-use products like toilet paper is unnecessary. Replacing traditional wood pulp with alternative materials, such as bamboo, can be a more sustainable choice. Bamboo grows quickly, is drought-resistant and regenerates without soil depletion. FSC-certified bamboo products, like those from brands such as Who Gives a Crap, ensure that natural forests aren’t sacrificed for bamboo plantations.



Beyond bamboo, recycled paper options provide an even more eco-friendly choice. Recycled paper uses no new wood, emits roughly a third of the greenhouse gases and requires half the water of virgin wood toilet paper. Many UK supermarkets offer fully recycled options and we have made this choice for the toilet paper in the church.

While some manufacturers argue that virgin pulp ensures quality and consistency, choosing recycled or alternative materials is a simple but significant step in reducing our environmental footprint. By opting for sustainable toilet paper, we can help preserve forests, reduce resource demand and contribute to a greener world—one roll at a time.

**Karen Young**  
Eco-Group

## Forest Church – October 2024

What an amazing autumn we had! The warm, calm conditions allowed the leaves to turn brilliant colours and stay on the trees, creating a stunning backdrop for Greenbank's Forest Church. Our theme of "Autumn Leaves" brought us together outdoors to connect with nature and God's creation through sight, touch, sound and scent.

In the Hermitage of Braid, we took part in a scavenger hunt, searching for vibrant leaves, helicopter seeds, feathers and twigs—a celebration of autumn's beauty. Afterwards,

we created leaf rubbing cards and crafted jam jar leaf lanterns, embracing the joy (and messiness!) of glue and creativity.



As the leaves now return to the earth, mulching into rich soil to nourish the trees, we look forward to the next Forest Church in the Spring with new seeds and new beginnings.

**Karen Young**  
Eco-Group





## District Visitors

In recent months, there have been many changes in our list of District Visitors. Several ladies have indicated that the time has come for them to “retire” from this role. Most of them have been visitors for a long time! We would wish therefore to record our thanks to Mrs Catherine Denham (D. 39, 40 & 44), Miss Kay Ellis (D.33), Mrs Chrissie Munro (D.12B), Mrs Catherine Ferguson (D.31B) & Dr Elaine Crummey (D.66). We are also grateful for the service which was given by the late Mrs Val Smart & Mrs Helen Allan.

I appreciate the time given by our visitors, keeping in touch with Greenbank’s members, and I’m grateful for the willingness of folks to take over the above districts.

Please make your visitors welcome!

**Janet Ferguson**

## Congregational Register

### Flower Rota

*provided by*      *delivered by*

#### December

1 Dunbar Family	Jill Powlett Brown
8 Advent/Christmas	
15 Advent/Christmas	
22 Advent/Christmas	
29 Christmas	

#### January

3 Flower Fund	Janet Edwards
12 Diana Teasdale	Win Kerr
19 Sally Anderson	Jennifer James
26 Pauline Walker	Aileen Thomson

#### February

2 Isobel Thom	Katy Maguire
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## Shops Christmas Opening after Christmas Tree lighting, 4th December

‘Local’, for many Greenbankers, means Morningside: the Church falls within the boundaries of the Council’s Morningside Ward and of Morningside Community Council.

We are very fortunate to have a vibrant hub with a village feel in Morningside, where we can have catch-up with friends over a coffee or buy

what we need. Local traders, including many charity shops, rely on our custom and are holding a **Late Night Shopping** evening on Wednesday 4th December, once the Christmas tree at the Clock is switched on at 5pm. Please do support and strengthen our community.

**Moira Land**  
Community Councillor

# Welcome Teams

## December

- 1 **Ian Thomson**, Kathleen Patrick, Diana Teasdale, Jill Powlett Brown, Karen Young, Heather Kay
- 8 **Donald King**, Jan Corbett, Roderick Morrison, Jim Young, Jane Harkin
- 15 **Stuart Sanders**, Moira Davidson, Julia Dunbar, John Murison, Alison Murison, Rachel Cadell
- 22 **Rosemary McCulloch**, Moira Land, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Fiona Grant, Martin Struthers, Barbara Middleton
- 29 **John Ritchie**, Susan Inch, Gillian Sweetman, Clare Campbell, Stephen Hadden, Mary Hadden, Catherine Cameron

## January 2025

- 5 **Rosemary McCulloch**, Moira Land, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Fiona Grant, Martin Struthers, Barbara Middleton
- 12 **Keith Winton**, Richard Dunbar, Chris Horne, Robin Nimmo, Hazel Macaulay, Moira Small
- 19 **Ian Thom**, Keith Clark, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Isobel Thom, Charles Black
- 26 **Caroline Kehoe**, Ian McWilliam, Anne Kinnear, Kathryn Sangster, Rosemary McLeod, Lyndsay Kennedy

## February

- 2 **Christina Morrow**, Edith Armit, Louise Coghill, Susan Black, Nora Kellock, Margot Gillon

# Coffee Rota

## December

- 1 Susan Inch & Chris Horne  
D48, 89, 37, 66 & 67
- 8 Katy Maguire D19 & 20
- 15 Christina Morrow D40 & 41
- 22 Gillian Sweetman Singing Group
- 29 Edith Armit Guild

## January 2025

- 5 David Jack D72
- 12 Lorna Perriss D61
- 19 Nora Kellock
- 26 Gillie Davidson SLA

## February

- 2 Niall Morrison Scouts

## 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 **February 2025** issue of *Greenbank Connections* should be delivered to the Editors' Pigeonhole by **Sunday 12th January** or sent by e-mail by **8pm on Thursday 16th January** to:

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



The Eco-Group had a very wet day for their end-of-season tidy-up

# COUNTDOWN to CHRISTMAS!

You are invited to bring gifts of non-perishable food during Advent, for donation to our nominated charities –



**StreetWork**  
(homelessness charity)

**Richmond Fair Share**

(these charities provide food to people in need)

**Edinburgh Northwest Kirk**



We would be very grateful if you would drop off your  
(unwrapped) gifts during Advent to

**Greenbank Parish Church, Braidburn Terrace, EH10 6ES**

For more information contact Julia Dunbar (Phone 07740 600119)

## Christmas Event for Children

At Greenbank Parish Church  
on Sunday 8th December, 2pm to 5pm



**Only £6  
per child**

An afternoon of **FUN** for Primary School Children  
Register Online at [www.greenbankchurch.org](http://www.greenbankchurch.org)  
or contact the Greenbank Church Office (447 9969)