

Greenbank Connections



October 2021

Issue 701

Scottish Charity SCO11325



Greenbank's Eco-Group is donating funds to expand the orchard in Braidburn Valley Park

Greenbank Parish Church, Edinburgh

Online version: www.greenbankchurch.org/about/the-newsletter/

Contents

From the Manse	2
Re-Use by Refilling	3
Pastures New...	4
Recycling Ink Cartridges	4
World Mission Team	5
An Open Hand	6
Help the Homeless	6
Families Together	7
Friendship Club	7
Thought for the Month	8
The Guild	9
Congregational Register	10
Flower Rota	11
Welcome Teams	11
Coffee Rota	11
Contacts and Deadlines	11
An Open Hand Poster	12



From the Manse



The copy deadline for Connections means that this letter is being penned whilst I'm thinking about the upcoming harvest festival on 26th September and the Greenbank Big Weekend.

As I write, I'm sitting in our rental house at New Milford, New Jersey, and getting ready to return to Scotland this evening on an overnight flight. The hurricane led to severe flooding for some of our new neighbours and Rowan wasn't able to start at her new nursery because the building was flooded and all of the flooring had to be ripped out and replaced! Fortunately I was able to change my flights in order to stay a few extra days here and to look after Rowan whilst Sarah started her new job. So many changes, so many complications, and looking in two directions at once as the visa delay means that

my head and heart are holding two rather wonderful congregations at the same time, with all the unique challenges and opportunities that each faces.

In your lives I know that many have been experiencing complexity in relationships, ill health, change, challenge of all kinds. It's part of the churn of life, but it's still demanding to deal with. Advice to step aside and to connect with God in the midst of the "whirlwind" might seem insensitive when there are so many things to deal with all at once. However, I'd like to mention the words "be still and know that I am God" and some of Psalm 46: "God is our helper, God our strength, in troubled times our aid; therefore should earth itself be moved, we shall not be afraid."

Take a moment in the midst of any turmoil to bring yourself before God and simply breathe in the connection which is beyond what we know and understand, and trust that God is there for all of us, that God "has our backs" and loves and holds us like beloved children.

Sending my love to all of you.

Rev Dr Martin Ritchie, Minister

Re-Use by Refilling

Easter Greens opposite Morning-side Library have a good range of products that can refill your bottles of shampoo, conditioner and cleaning products. The Refillery across at Newington has an even wider range. therefillery.co.uk

Easy to do, and every little helps!

Alison Murison
Convener
Eco-Group



Pastures New...

After nearly five years at Greenbank Parish Church, I will be transitioning to St Michael's in Linlithgow this very month. Naturally, I have spent the past weeks thinking on all the Young Church Sundays, Nativity Plays, Easter Tomb sets, Holiday Clubs, Babies and Toddler Mornings, QII Evenings, and Advent or Lent reading groups I have had the great privilege with which to be involved. Let's not forget too, the many conversations with the people and families of Morningside on the street, through texts and at coffee after Sunday services.

They have been a blessing.

In the past I have remarked that I think ministry is reciprocal – one cannot be a minister of any sort without being changed too. I hope that, in some small ways, in moments and conversations, I have been a blessing to you and to Greenbank as a whole. You have undoubtedly been a blessing to me.

We have all taken a few lumps these past 18 months – and I am no exception! Yet I have been encouraged many times and in many ways by this faith community. Keep that and work diligently to share that out. At the individual and neighbourhood level, we all need a hand just now. To that end, I'd share you with Teresa of Avila's poignant prose:

'Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which He blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are His body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.'

You are the Body of Christ. And that is good news.

Steve Chaffee

Recycling Ink Cartridges

Since we started recycling ink cartridges (sorry no laser or toner cartridges) we have saved 122 ink cartridges from landfill and raised £21.25 for the charity, Poverty Child.

I appreciate it is small beer but it all helps and this is just one Church congregation. The recycling box is in the vestibule along with the other Charity collections.

Stuart Sanders

World Mission Team

In September's Connections, the Eco Group wrote a very good article on the upcoming COP26 conference in Glasgow in November (page 8, September issue).

Last week Carol Finlay, a staff member of the Faith Impact Forum of the Church of Scotland and member of the 'Glasgow Churches Together COP26 Group', wrote a reflective article on faith, climate, caring for creation and loving our neighbours. As an example, she compares the heavy downfall and flooding in Glasgow (the latter partly due to blocked drains), and the continuous rain and flooding in a rural area of Nepal. She says "Scotland is used to rain but not to floods, Nepal waits each year for the monsoon and welcomes it with dread".

Of course, these are not the only areas affected by climate change and global partners of the Church of Scotland have been sharing their stories for many years of unprecedented increase of floods, bush fires and droughts, and erratic weather conditions.

She continues "in Scotland we do not just need to unblock our drains, but we need to unblock our ears,

eyes and heart to this global crisis which we are in the midst of". You can read more at: [From Nepal to Glasgow our faith calls us to care for Creation](#) – Church of Scotland

The Eco Group have shared with us before of ways we can help individually in the battle against climate change. I commend to you now Christian Aid's 'Climate Justice Petition' to consider; it is calling on our government to 1) increase financial support to the world's poorest countries and push for their debts to be cancelled, 2) invest in a green recovery that leaves no-one behind, and 3) stop the expansion of fossil fuel energy and support clean energy. There is more information on their website petition page at: [Climate Justice Petition 2021 – Christian Aid](#)

There is also a link to sign up for [Prayer for the climate](#) – Tearfund

Pam Jack

World Mission Team



An Open Hand

Many thanks to everyone who has given so generously to An Open Hand over the last few months. Because of your wonderfully positive response to our fundraising appeal, we are now in a position to get started!

We have been in touch with **Safe Families** which is going to be the initial agency we accept applications from. This will be for a pilot period, to check our processes are all working well, and then we hope to open up further to other agencies.

Local businesses including Toys Galore, The Edinburgh Bookshop, Waitrose and John Lewis have all either given, or offered in the future, donations to An Open Hand.

We are very grateful for their kindness, especially in these unsettled times.

From speaking to more and more people around the city it is clear there is massive need within Edinburgh. We would be very grateful for your continued prayer for this project, that our processes work well, and we continue to have the funds needed to match the applications we receive.

If you would like to make a donation please visit our webpage in the Youth section of the church website. Do get in touch with any comments or suggestions to katie@edinburghcitymission.org.uk

Katie Bogie

The Help the Homeless Team Need You!

For many years teams from Greenbank have been involved in catering for the Homeless. Our input last year was sadly limited due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Bethany Care Shelter has now been renamed **'The Welcome Centre'** based at the Haymarket Hub Hotel and provides accommodation for approximately 60 homeless people. It is open from 4th October 2021 until the 1st May 2022.

We at Greenbank have agreed to participate in a rota cooking and serving hot evening meals on 4-5 nights during this period. We would

really appreciate any donations towards the costs of the food and are also keen to recruit some new team members. Could you make a financial donation or would you like to get involved in the cooking?

The evenings are an extremely rewarding experience and also a good way to get to know other members of the Greenbank family.

Please email me if you could help in any way or if you would like more information. You do not need to be a master chef – just a willing participant!

Abi Moran
abi.hunter1@gmail.com

Families Together

The Families Together coalition started in 2017 when a small group of organisations led by Amnesty International, British Red Cross, Oxfam, Refugee Council and UNHCR joined forces.

For many thousands of refugees in the UK, safety from conflict has come at a heavy price. The UK Government's rules have forced parents apart from their children, sisters from brothers, with elderly parents left behind. Some may have reached safety but, instead of feeling relief, the guilt of separation from loved ones bears down on them. Inevitably, people are left feeling isolated, traumatised and alone as they grapple with a new language and try to find their feet in a foreign country with minimal support. Through in-depth research, real life experiences have been uncovered of refugee children living alone in the UK.

The coalition is continually growing, reaching across the country and providing frontline services for refugees. The organisation supports an expansion of refugee family reunion based on their first-hand experiences of the current rules. To find out more about the campaign look at

famielsttogether.uk

or to join the coalition please email famielsttogethercoalition@gmail.com

Hazel Macaulay

Friendship Club

This summer, in August and September we had two highly successful "Coffee and Chat" mornings when the chat was excited and non-stop and no one wanted to go home.

Now we begin this session proper, meeting on Wednesday 13th October at 2.30pm in the Lower Hall. We already have one new member and, of course, are looking for other senior citizens to join us when you would be most welcome to hear The "Magical mystery of the Yew". The whole talk is magical and very unexpected – the speaker is Paul Greenwood.

Dr Peter Kendrick, a favourite of the club members, is the speaker on October 27th, when we will watch fascinating vintage film about James Cagney and his history.

We begin November on the 10th, with "Choppers", not lumberjacks!

For further information call:

Val Smart
447 6001



Thought for the Month

Because I am shortly going to spend a few days on Lindisfarne, my thoughts are inevitably tilting towards islands at the moment. I enjoy islands, but perhaps most especially both Iona and Lindisfarne, which have history written into every cobblestone, and which Richard Holloway refers to as 'thin' places – places where the boundary between earth and beyond is very porous. Whether reached by CalMac ferry or tidal causeway, there is a sense of both moving away from the routines and responsibilities of daily life, and towards an as yet undefined 'newness' on arrival. I've been reflecting about what it is that impels people of our time to move towards places of stillness, removed from the comforts of our Western lifestyles?

The Desert Fathers did it in their time, Julian of Norwich did it in her little cell, contemplative communities continue to do it, and increasingly many today seek a place where they can explore what they understand to be their deepest values. Paul Tillich called that 'the Ground of our Being,' and John Robinson 'ultimate reality.' We're challenged to see beyond the material reality to grasp, however briefly, the sacred in everything.

There's surely something in these 'sacred places' that draws us to-

wards silence and a heightened awareness of the reality around us, from which we easily become distracted. Meister Eckhart, the famous mystic, said 'Nothing in all creation is so like God as stillness.' Might it then be possible to 'be still and know...?'

It's one of the lessons of the pandemic that, at the time of greatest threat, most of us became more aware of our vulnerability, and our dependence on key workers and others to keep us safe. Our bins were emptied, our groceries delivered, our necessities were requested on-line and brought to our doorstep.... The web of life held fast. Our interconnectedness was strengthened. Now we move into new possibilities – together...

*'To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower....'*

William Blake

Mary McMahan



The Guild

The Guild is a church-based organisation for men and women. Our motto is '*Whose we are and whom we serve*'. We work in three year blocks to support projects in Scotland and abroad and have a wide programme of talks, an outing and a Christmas party. On offer there is always friendship, support, chat and tea and biscuits and usually a lot of laughter.

After the two very cheerful Coffee mornings in August and September we are looking forward to starting the next session on Tuesday 5th October.

This year we have changed from evening meetings to afternoons



starting at 2.30 pm. Our first meeting will be an update on the work of Scottish Love in Action during the time of the Covid outbreak.

The second meeting we hope will be Martin (visa permitting) leading us in considering the Guild Theme for this session Lights and Bushels. For the rest of the year we have a full programme of topics from projects, through travel and history to fun (Haggis Breeding anyone? no - me neither!)

Non-members are always welcome to our meetings.

Edith Armit

Further coffee morning photos overleaf



Congregational Register

Omitted from the online
version of *Connections*



Further photos from the Guild Coffee Morning

Flower Rota

	<i>Provided by</i>	<i>Delivered by</i>
October		
3	Joan Ritchie	Fiona Connal
10	Grace Maweu	Rachel Cadell
17	Valerie Macniven	Rona Ferguson
24	Isobel Thom	Mary Hadden
31	Flower Fund	Isabel Graham
November		
7	Louise Coghill	Gail Beveridge



Welcome Teams

October	
3	Ian Thomson , Kathleen Patrick, Dorothy Whitehead, Tony Foster, Diana Teasdale, Jill Powlett Brown, David Bogie
12	Donald King , Jan Corbett, Roderick Morrison, Jim Young, Elaine McRae, Jane Harkin
17	Caroline Kehoe , Ian McWilliam, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones, Lyndsay Kennedy
24	Ian Thom , Keith Clark, Ray Dely, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Isobel Thom, Charles Black
31	Christina Morrow , Edith Armit, Louise Coghill, Susan Black, Nora Kellock, Malcolm Watters
November	
7	Keith Winton , Richard Dunbar, Chris Horne, Robin Nimmo, Hazel Macauley, Moira Small

Coffee Rota

October	
3rd	Joan Ritchie(Pre-School)
10th	Rosemary McCulloch(D49,50)
17th	Alison and John Murison(D62,60)
24th	Jill Powlett Brown(D12B)
31st	Susan Inch(D48,89) Chris Horne(D37,66,67)
November	
7th	Rona Somerville(D69)



The Ministry Team can be contacted directly

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Administrator: Mrs Virginia Johnston
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email: greenbankchurch@btconnect.com

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

Postal address:
Greenbank Parish Church
Braidburn Terrace,
Edinburgh EH10 6ES

Material for the November 2021 issue of Greenbank Connections should be delivered to the Church Office by Sunday 17th October 2021, or sent by e-mail by 8pm on Thursday 21st October 2021 to greenbankconnections@gmail.com



An Open Hand

Helping families in Edinburgh celebrate

An Open Hand is a ministry that aims to provide parents in severe hardship with a present for their child's birthday, along with books and items for the family to play with together, such as simple games and stationery.

We hope to give more children the opportunity to celebrate their birthday by **reducing the financial burden it places on their family**. The present given to each child will be specific to that child's interests and tastes so that they receive a gift that they will really cherish and enjoy.

Referral agencies across Edinburgh can apply to **An Open Hand** on behalf of families who are **eligible**, indicating on the application form specific toys the child would wish for.

This will then be delivered, with the other birthday items, to the family's home, or the family can collect it from Greenbank Parish Church if they prefer.

A partnership between Greenbank Parish Church and Edinburgh City Mission

It would be wonderful to have your support in backing this project to help as many families who are in need as we can in our city.

One way you can contribute is through the **'donate'** button on the **Greenbank Parish Church website**.

Alternatively, we have begun an initiative called **'My Birthday - Your Present'**, where a donation leaves your bank account once a year on your own birthday, meaning that **whilst you are celebrating your own birthday, you are also enabling a child in Edinburgh to celebrate their birthday - a double celebration!**

Please head to the Greenbank Parish Church website to donate or set up your standing order - www.greenbankchurch.org

