

Greenbank Connections



May 2021

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Scottish Charity SCO11325



Sanctuary, Easter 2021. Large flowers and insects courtesy of Pre School. See also page 7.

Greenbank Parish Church, Edinburgh

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

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***Have you looked
at the Greenbank
website recently?***

www.greenbankchurch.org

From the Manse



Coming from the depths of our being

I wonder what for you summons up a response of deep connection and identity? I know that this will be different for all of us, which is one of the glories of our humanity. A fabulous part of this is when we discover other people who share the same perspectives. This experience is one of finding kindred spirits – it can make us feel that we are not alone. Someone else sees things in a similar way to us, and we can share things that are important to us.

As a minister, I work across a glorious range of personality types. People with all sorts of backgrounds who have been drawn to this congregation for a range of reasons. Every person deserves to be valued and shown the same degree of respect, no matter how much their views and experiences are different to my own. As you can imagine, this is one of the challenges as well as one of the rich privileges of ministry. We do not live in a ghetto where all are alike, even if we may not be as culturally diverse a community as we could be. On Sunday 11th April the Psalm set for the day was Psalm 133, a compact and

aspirational Psalm looking towards the reunification of the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel and Judah. In the Scots metrical version that we heard from my 2016 *Singing the Reformation* project, the 1596 Scots version was rendered as

*“O, hoo happie a thing it is an’ joyfu’ for
to see, breithren the gidder faist tae
haud the baun’ o’ amitie.”*

In our own NRSV translation, this verse is rendered as

*“How very good and pleasant it is when
kindred live together in unity.”*

The 1596 version seems to me to do a far better job of getting at the heart of a very important emphasis of the late 16th century Reformed church and wider culture. It stresses the need to hold together the bonds of friendship in a time when there was effectively no sacred and secular divide. Bonds of friendship is a much stronger notion than the rather bland “unity”. Of course, the culture of the sixteenth century in Scotland placed great

emphasis on friendship, ritualising reconciliation in both church and wider culture. The ceremonial drinking of wine from a deep and wide mazer cup passed around in civic, family, and clan gatherings was taken forward into the Reformed church’s celebration of the Lord’s Supper, where in some churches the common cups were modelled on the ritual mazer cups. Take a look at the Galloway Mazer in the National Museum of Scotland’s Scottish section sometime and you’ll get the idea.

Do you imagine that such reconciliation rituals wiped out all differences? I doubt it, and that would be undesirable. Its strength was that a place of mutual recognition could be arrived at, where it was felt that to be on good terms with one another despite our differences was what God wanted for us. Of course, you can’t command unity. It has to be the result of mutuality, respect, and consent.

Now that we are fully into election season I have a dream where there are no Covid-19



Galloway Mazer



Greyfriars Communion Cup

From the Manse (cont'd)

distancing and hygiene worries. In this vision, our political party leaders sit down together after sharing a time of quality debate and exchanges of deeply felt views about the future of our nation. They pass the cup of friendship and pledge a “baun o’ amitie” amongst themselves. They will continue to engage the debates about how to shape our living together in a deeply respectful way. They acknowledge that there are merits in all of our deeply held convictions that we share with our kindred spirits, as well as some blind spots that need to be challenged.

An idealistic vision, for sure, and one that often seems far away in both church

and civic life. But does that mean that we shouldn’t hold it up as something to aim at? I rejoice in the many times that I have experienced this dynamic at Greenbank and pray that in the future this community will show the “baun o’ amitie” even more, so that people will say of Greenbank that it is a model for the wider community.

With my love to you all –
in your glorious diversity!



Martin

Presbytery of Edinburgh Plan for 2022–2032

Greenbank’s Contribution

In a weekly newsletter at the end of January we reported on how Greenbank church was contributing to the new ten-year plan for Edinburgh Presbytery. Greenbank is in a cluster of local churches with Morning-side Parish and Fairmilehead Churches. We held meetings with the other churches from last autumn until March, when we completed our report and sent it in to the Presbytery. We had already agreed and made known our statement that –

The congregations of Fairmilehead, Greenbank, and Morningside recognise the unique histories that have led us to inherit three dynamic congregations with distinctive strengths and buildings which are

tremendous centres for mission.

We commit to support and encourage each other in our uniqueness, to learn from one another in our differences, and to collaborate where we can be more effective in our mission together than apart.

If you are interested in seeing our full report you will find it on the website at

www.greenbankchurch.org/church-business/parish-cluster/

We wait for a response from the Presbytery but, meantime, the Session Clerks of the three congregations will start to develop ideas of how we can work more closely together.

Valerie Macniven

Youth At Greenbank

How beautiful the weather has turned!

Over the last year, despite lockdown, I've been able to get greater engagement with the Scouts as an assistant leader. Last week this included a glorious two days of hiking around Bonaly Scout Centre with Greenbank's own Duncan Macniven! I've also been able to help out with



South Morningside Primary School's outdoor curriculum, be they hikes or their Bikeability programme. It's been great fun!

The online Young Church has taken a breather for the Easter holidays, but is now back on Zoom at 9.45am for the younger kids and 4.30pm for the older kids on Sundays. Thankfully, we've recently heard news of the possibility of in-person gatherings for young people indoors, and so we are thinking about how we might respond with our programme. The warmer weather and changing of

the clocks means that we can now plan some QII outdoor gatherings on Sunday evenings. At the moment a Kirk Session review of Greenbank's Youth and Families ministry is ongoing. As part of that, Brian Barron and Lorna Perriss are working with the QII leadership team as they plan towards a relaunch later in the year. Meantime,

we also try to stay in touch with our existing teens and the things that are going on in their lives. It has made for some very stimulating conversations as we reflect on where we are now, and plan for the future. I am eager for some of the upcoming events we're considering, and it has been good to have feedback from QIIers past and present that is helping us to design the programme for next year. Stay tuned for more details of the new-look QII! I look forward to seeing how and where God will give the growth!

Steve Chaffee

Visiting Preachers

We will welcome **Fiona Buchanan** from Christian Aid to preach on **9th May**, and to talk about the current work and the priorities of this year's Christian Aid Week.

Scott McCarthy, Minister of Garthamlock and Craigend Church in Glasgow, will come to preach on **16th May**, to talk about the life of his congregation in the east end of Glasgow and to acknowledge the fantastic generosity of our congregation when we appealed for funds to support them in their Covid-related financial crisis.

Martin

Christian Aid Week

10-16 May 2021

There is further information about the Christian Aid Week campaign here –

www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week

The main focus is on the climate crisis and how unpredictable weather is affecting struggling communities.

We are looking forward to having a speaker from the Christian Aid Scottish team at our service on **Sunday 9th May**, and we hope that you will be able to join us.

Due to current restrictions we will not be doing the normal house-to-house collections but we intend to distribute delivery-only envelopes. Thank you to the volunteers who have 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 fundraising page – tinyurl.com/49n8x7zt
- By posting the envelope through the church letterbox in Braidburn Terrace
- Direct to Christian Aid

From speaking to representatives of our neighbouring congregations at Morning-side Parish, St Fillans and Fairmilehead, we know that they have decided not to distribute envelopes but will ask people to donate directly to Christian Aid. If you live outside Greenbank Parish please consider making a donation through our fundrais-

ing page (see above), or if you would like an envelope, please contact me – I ordered a few extra!

This is an unusual year for us all and we are having to be innovative. I hope that you will support our Christian Aid Week appeal.

Fiona Watt

Fiona.watt@blueyonder.co.uk

Christian Aid Climate Justice Petition 2021

As well as looking for ways to reduce our own individual impact on climate change we can also help by adding our voices to influence government policy on matters such as financial support/debt cancellation for the poorest countries, investing in a green recovery and encouraging the change from fossil fuels to clean energy. Please consider signing Christian Aid's petition at

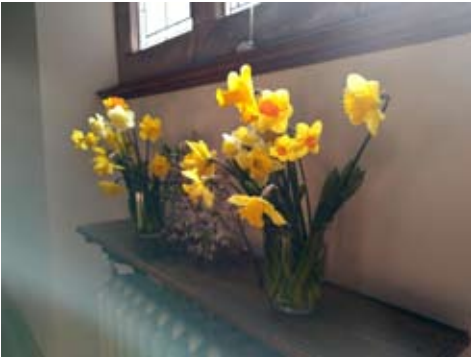
www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/climate-justice-2021

Janet Edwards, Eco-Group



The Sanctuary at Easter-time

The Spring flowers in the Sanctuary this Easter were particularly lovely. (See also cover photograph.)



Thought for the Month: Past Misdemeanours?

Wokeness and Climate Change

The *Spectator* magazine published an article by Sam Leith in October 2020, *In Defence of Wokeness*. Here is an extract, to give the flavour:

In its original sense, as minted in black activism in the States, to be 'woke' was to be aware. It was to show just that curiosity about the world that its use as a sneer declines to bother with. One of the basic contentions [...] is this: a social set-up that systematically gives some people a raw deal doesn't always make it obvious that it's doing so. We get used to it. [...] To take a well-worn analogy, we swim in a world-view like a fish swims in water: the fish doesn't have a concept of 'water' because it's all the poor thing has ever known. To be woke is to go, aha: this is water.

So, to be woke is to be aware. But lately this has been taken to extremes. Historical figures have been measured against modern sensibilities, found wanting and 'cancelled' (repudiated). The results, among other things, are statues daubed with slogans or pulled down, and streets and buildings renamed, such as Edinburgh University's David Hume Tower. In one ridiculous case, given the repudiation of the imperialist Cecil Rhodes, there was a demand to rename Rhodes Avenue Primary School in London. However, the school and avenue were named for Thomas Rhodes, a great-uncle of Cecil Rhodes, who died when Cecil was three. According to the activists, Thomas cannot be 'disentangled' from Cecil despite the fact that they are different people separated by two generations.

Faced with such an example, it is tempting to dismiss the whole 'wokeness' business. But this is not good enough: the instinct to be sensitive to others is surely sound, even if some responses have lacked moderation. How should we as Christians respond to this societal movement?

It was natural for 'the woke' to ask how we got here – where and when did we go wrong? From their viewpoint, the past was an alien, deeply unjust place, and this leads to their repudiation of historical figures whom we may previously have viewed positively. Do they have a point? Their adversaries, of course, accuse them of historical illiteracy, of judging historical figures by modern criteria.

I believe there is something in common between this controversy and the longer-running climate change saga. Climate change proponents believe that we should strive to become carbon-neutral: we should stop digging and drilling the Earth to extract coal, gas and oil as soon as we can. But consider again the past: was it wrong for our forebears to start extracting coal, then oil and gas from the earth? If this had been the prevailing view in the 18th and 19th centuries there would have been no coal to fuel the industrial revolution, no huge expansion of the economy in Victorian times, and – very likely – no concomitant development of modern science. It may be tempting to think of fuel extraction simply as a violation of Mother Earth. But consider how lives were transformed by the availability of affordable transport, lighting for homes and streets, energy for industry, heating and cooking.

If it was not wrong for our ancestors to mine coal, why is it wrong for us? One answer might be that scientific developments, which have been steadily going on for many centuries, are now giving us alternatives to digging into the Earth.[†]

I believe that, in both these cases – wokeness and energy – we should show sensitivity to our forebears, not condemn them for lacking our world-view and our advantages.

[†]This makes it an exciting time to be alive, although it is tempting to anticipate, and then end up depending on, discoveries yet to be made.

“Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” – one should not worry about the future, the present is enough to be going on with. But it is also true that we should not worry about the past. We can learn from it, of course, but condemning our ancestors betrays a lack of historical perspective, and leads to an irretrievable dissatisfaction with our society and its creation.

Our task, surely challenging enough, is to seek to improve the present – and the future.

John Murison

World Mission

With the coming of spring our eyes are lifted up to see the buds and blossoms emerging all around us. On our daily walks and outdoor activities we are greeted each day with new sights and sounds heralding the change of season. An article in this month’s Church of Scotland *World Mission Magazine* talks of a reciprocal orchard planting project with the Reformed Church in Hungary coming into bud and sustaining relationships.

Begun in 1851, the relationship between CoS and RCH has evolved and new links are being found in both churches’ passion in caring for creation. Through the establishment of eco-congregations, the Reformed Church in Hungary has worked with the State to plant native fruit trees

in their church gardens. These orchards provide a haven for wildlife and biodiversity, and also a place for the community to enjoy and benefit from. Inspired by this action, the Church of Scotland has established the Church and Community Orchard Project, and twinning between both churches is beginning to flourish.

The article concludes by suggesting that ‘in the response to the climate emergency, planting trees is a simple and pro-active way to take action and tell our communities that even if the world was going to end tomorrow, the church remains a place of hope’. You can read more by visiting the published article in this month’s World Mission Magazine.

Clare Campbell
World Mission Team



Pre School Eco Report, April 2021

Over the last year, much of our eco-effort has unfortunately been hampered by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, we are now fully re-opened and our Pre School eco-warriors have been back in action! This term our main topic has been *learning about animals*. We have spoken about where animals live and have had a strong focus on discussing how we can look after animals and their environment. The children have learnt about endangered animals, realising that some of our favourite animals are in this category and why it is so important to help protect these animals so that they don't become extinct.

During lockdown, some of the children were given litter pickers and went out and about with their families picking up rubbish from our local parks and streets. One member of the public was so impressed she gave one of the children £2 for his efforts! In Pre School we have spoken to the children about the importance of not dropping litter and why.

We have spent a lot of time looking at where our food comes from and why it is a good idea to buy local produce as much as possible. We have introduced the idea of "food miles" and spent time comparing where some of our food comes from. Two of our children have an allotment with their family and have told us what they grow and explained how an allotment works. We have worked on reducing our food wastage. We

weigh and chart our leftover food waste. We have discussed how we can reduce our waste closer to zero. Miss Allan takes home most of our food waste and feeds the foxes in her garden. She reports that the next morning there is absolutely nothing left as the foxes have devoured the lot! This helps

reduce the amount going into landfill and also helps the wildlife. We have our wormery where we discard our fruit and vegetable waste. The children are involved in helping to feed the worms. (Some are more into it than others!)



We then use the compost that the worms produce in our Pre School garden.

We also recycle as much as we can. We speak to the children about the importance of using only one paper towel to dry our hands and not wasting them. We have also spoken about the importance of not wasting water and making sure we turn the taps off when we are not using them. As a group, the children are learning about the importance of not wasting resources. We have introduced "pen monitors" to make sure all the tops are back on the pens. We spoke about why it is important to do this; if the pens run out it would be wasteful and we would have to throw them away.

Overall the children have shown a great interest in learning about eco-matters and we look forward to continuing to help look after our planet.

Fiona Perris

Life and Work, May 2021

The Privilege of Democracy

Thomas Baldwin explains why churches have a key role to play in this month's elections to the Scottish Parliament.

'A Cherished Part of the Church's Tradition'

The Rt Hon Baron Wallace of Tankerness QC looks ahead to his year as Moderator-Designate.

Assembly 2021

Timetable and reports to this year's General Assembly, which will be held online.

God's Table

The first in a new series of Bible studies by the Very Rev Dr Derek Browning, focusing on hospitality.

Kirk Session Records Launched Online

More than a million pages of local Church of Scotland records have been published online for the first time.

New Guild Partner Projects Unveiled

The six new three-year projects adopted by the Church of Scotland Guild.

Our Planet is Changing

Val Brown of Christian Aid Scotland introduces the campaign for this year's Christian Aid Week.

www.lifeandwork.org



Church Beadle: Job Share Opportunity

If you are cheery and friendly, enjoy assisting others and have good organisational skills this may be the part time opportunity you are looking for.

We are looking for someone to carry out Beadle duties on alternate Sundays, due to Joshua's other work patterns changing. The duties currently involve preparing the Church for worship and supporting the Minister and Welcome Teams as required. The commitment is between three and four hours each week. In the longer term the role may expand. A small remuneration will be offered.

If you are interested in the role and would like further information please contact Rosemary McCulloch (phone 07597 358 319) or colin.mcculloch1@btinternet.com.

Guild



The Easter Service with the children's decorations was much appreciated by those members who watched it and our 'Chickens' and eggs amused our families and friends who received them. Some of us may now be considering baking for SLA; if the baking spices are as good as the ones which came with the Diwali Dinner they should provide us with some excellent cookies.

Our doorstep chats have continued and letters, quizzes and puzzles have kept us occupied, while e-news keeps us up to date with what is happening in other Guilds.

Early in May we will be learning about the six new Projects which the Guild will be supporting nationally for the next three years – always an exciting moment.

As the restrictions ease off, we can all look forward to meeting more friends and planning our road back to coffee mornings, perhaps in small groups. Our Committee may need to have garden meetings as we did in May last year. We somehow always manage to combine business with cake, biscuits and coffee.

Edith Armit

Some of Edith's doorstep encounters, below and opposite.





Attending Church

Sunday Morning Worship

In line with Scottish Government and Church of Scotland guidance, Greenbank Church is now holding “in-person” morning services every Sunday at 10.30am. *The services are also livestreamed, as before.*

The Government limit of 50 people on our premises at any one time remains in place. This means we have to have a booking system. You will be able to book by email or phone from 2pm on the Sunday a week ahead. It will close at 5pm on the Friday evening, or earlier if all the places are taken. If you don't get a place on a particular Sunday, you'll be offered one for the following Sunday. The email address is bookgreenbank@gmail.com and the telephone number is 0771 883 6683.

The church will be open from 10.10am. When you arrive, you will be met by a steward at the door and shown to a specific seat. You will be asked to apply hand sanitiser and wear a face covering, to maximise the protection of other people. The church will be marked out so that family groups of up to three people can sit together but be two metres distant from other individuals or groups. We will record your name and telephone number so that, if asked, we can give this information to the NHS as part of the Test and Protect system.

It will be up to you to make your own decision about coming to these services of worship – but we will do all we can to protect you once you arrive. We will have in

place an extensive system of disinfection and cleaning. Toilets will be available. Sadly, there can be no live singing, although



the music videos running on the livestream will be simultaneously played in the church. There will be no cash offering taken during the service but, if you wish to donate on the day, there will be a plate for cash, cheques or envelopes as you leave. Unfortunately it is not possible to restart coffee after the service. Indeed, it is important that the congregation leaves the

area around the church as soon as possible and does not linger to chat. Zoom coffee will continue after the livestream for as long as there is demand for it.

Wednesday Quiet Time, 1pm–2pm

The church is open again for quiet time in our beautiful sanctuary, 1pm–2pm each Wednesday.

This takes a bit of organisation to make sure that we follow the guidelines of Covid times, so we need to be sure that there is a demand for it. If you would like this to be a feature of our church life going forward, then drop in for a few minutes or an hour and enjoy the beauty and peace of our church. Nothing will be asked of you – use the time as you wish. Remember, too, that anyone in the community is welcome to come in for some quiet time, people of all faiths and none.

We'll review things after six weeks and then make a decision for the future.

Martin

Welcome Teams May

Sundays (10.30am)

- 2 **Donald King**, Elaine McRae, John Adair, *tbc*
- 9 **Roddy Morrison**, Stephen Hadden, Mary Hadden, Donald King
- 16 **Jill Powlett Brown**, Alison Murison, John Murison, *tbc*
- 23 **Caroline Kehoe**, Jill Powlett Brown, Keith Clark, Louise Coghill
- 30 **Hazel Macaulay**, Jane Harkin, Elaine McRae, John Adair

Wednesdays (1pm–2pm)

- 5 **Isobel Thom**, Susan Inch
- 12 **Alison Kerr**, Louise Coghill
- 19 **Susan Black**, Ray Dely
- 26 **Isobel Thom**, Susan Inch

Zoom Coffee

Join us for a Zoom ‘coffee hour,’ for chat on Sunday mornings following our livestreamed 10.30am service. It will be an informal gathering in small break-out rooms for about 20 minutes. It will begin around five minutes after the end of the livestream, giving the chance to go and make yourself a cuppa before joining the call. Please note that the Zoom is separate from the livestream.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://tinyurl.com/yxvpwpzy>

Meeting ID: 681 532 4082

Passcode: chitchat

Congregational Register

*Omitted from the online
version of Connections*

Flower Rota

Provided by *Delivered by*
May

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|--------------|
| 2 | Flower fund | – |
| 9 | Land Family | Joan Cameron |
| 16 | Barnes Family | Fiona Kelly |
| 23 | Rosemary
McCulloch | Susan Black |
| 30 | Diana Hastings | Irene Horne |

Annual Business Meeting

As in 2020 it will not be possible to hold the normal Annual Business Meeting this year. There will instead be a set of written reports covering finance, property and general matters which will be ready in time to go out with the June edition of *Connections*. Before then a summary of the accounts will be put on the church website and notified in the Minister’s weekly newsletter. Members can ask questions ahead of the Trustees’ meeting to consider the accounts on **2nd June** by emailing treasurer@greenbankchurch.org. If you cannot access the summary on the website or email the Treasurer, please telephone the Church Office (0131 447 9969) and another arrangement will be made for you.

Alan Ramage

Contactless Terminal at Greenbank Church

A contactless donation terminal has recently been acquired by Greenbank Church, and will soon be available at services and other events on the premises. There will be further information in the weekly newsletter and on the website when it is ready. The terminal will be set up to accept £5 as the default with an option to change to £10 or £20. To make a donation, you just swipe your credit or debit card over the terminal. This is an additional way of giving to Greenbank. It does carry a small commission charge which the church will pay, and will not be set up for Gift Aid, but it does allow us to avoid handling cash.

Tony Foster, Congregational Treasurer



The Ministry Team can be contacted directly

Rev Dr Martin Ritchie (Minister)

phone: 07984 466 855

email: MRitchie@churchofscotland.org.uk

Mr Steven Chaffee (Youth Associate)

phone: 07729 000 788

email: stevechaffee@greenbankchurch.org

Due to COVID-19 precautions the Office is closed to personal callers. Contact the Administrator by phone or email in the first instance until further notice.

Administrator: Mrs Virginia Johnston

phone and fax: 0131 447 9969

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 June–Aug 2021 issue of Greenbank Connections should be delivered to the Church Office by **Sunday 16th May 2021**, or sent by e-mail by 11.59pm on **Thursday 20th May 2021** to greenbankconnections@gmail.com*