

Leaflet



Greenbank Parish Church
Braidburn Terrace, EH10 6ES

No 634 April 2014

Pulpit Diary

Apr 6 Fifth Sunday in Lent

9.30am First Sunday Service
led by World Mission

10.30am Morning Worship
(special activity for children)

Apr 13 Palm Sunday

10.30am Morning Worship (All Age with
special activity for children)

Apr 14-18 Monday - Friday United Holy Week Services

7.30pm Greenbank Parish Church

Apr 19 Saturday

Readings and Music for Easter

7.30pm Morningside Parish Church

Apr 20 Easter Sunday

9.30am Communion

10.30am All Age Easter Celebration
followed by egg-rolling in
Braidburn Valley Park

Apr 27 Stewardship Sunday

10.30am Morning Worship (Springboard
and Spectrum start of third term)

May 4

9.30am First Sunday Service
led by Help the Homeless

10.30am Morning Worship

For information about church organisations,
please contact the Church Office (Mon-Fri,
9.00am-12.00 noon, 1.30pm-3.30pm):

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

Minister's Letter

Dear Friends

As most of you will be aware, for the last 2 years 6 months, thanks to the very generous legacy of the late Miss Mary Brown, we have been able to employ a Youth Minister to help us focus on and develop our work with young people. During this time we have been greatly blessed by



the ministry of the Rev Bill Stone. Parents and young people, as well as the rest of us, have enjoyed having Bill amongst us and have appreciated his leadership and encouragement in our faith journey.

Towards the end of last year the Kirk Session started thinking about the future direction of our work with young people and there was wholehearted agreement that for the sake of the wider Church as well as our own congregation, and most importantly the young people themselves, this work should continue to be a priority for us here in Greenbank. Session also believed that if Bill was willing to stay we should offer to extend his contract for a period of two years as this would enable him to develop further the work already begun. Such is Session's commitment in this regard that they are prepared to underwrite the costs of this ministry themselves should the congregation as a whole not be in a position to meet them. I am delighted to say that Bill has indicated a desire to stay at Greenbank to continue and develop his ministry amongst the young people.

Session in their discussions also looked at the long-term future of our work with young people. They concluded that it was not really satisfactory that we should go from year to year on an ad hoc basis and that as a congregation we should seek to

put in place a substantial fund to support this area of work for the foreseeable future. Plans for achieving this aim are currently under consideration by Session and Board and you will be hearing more in due course. It is my hope that the Congregation and Parish will share Session's

commitment to working with the young people and children in our community and that together we will be able to rise to the challenge that lies ahead - watch this space!!

In the meantime we are grateful for the generous giving that allows us to meet our usual running costs and our contributions to the wider work of the church. Three years ago after our last Stewardship Campaign we introduced a system of pledge cards to encourage people to review their giving annually and there is a pledge card accompanying this Leaflet. I hope that you will give prayerful consideration to this matter and return your pledge card to the Treasurer prior to the June Communion when these will be dedicated at the 10.30am service. We will be thinking further about the gift of money and the right use of our finances on Sunday 27th April which is our Stewardship Sunday.

But before then we will be celebrating Easter when we reflect on the sacrificial commitment of God to the world and celebrate God's gift of new life through his Son Jesus Christ. Details of our Holy Week and Easter Services are shown in the Pulpit Diary and you are welcome at any or all of these services.

With warmest wishes

Alison I Swindells
Minister

Greenbank's Local Church Review

You might be thinking this is an article about an entertainment in the Church Hall but this is not the case! **Local Church Review** is a new process for congregations to assess how they are doing and plan for the future. It is overseen by the Presbytery and replaces the 5-yearly visits they used to make. It is our turn for Review in 2014. There are 5 people in the Presbytery team, led by the Rev Moira McDonald (Corstorphine Old Parish Church).

There was a first meeting with the Review team on 25th February with our Minister, office bearers and committee conveners when the Team introduced themselves and described the process. It is now over to us to complete some standard paperwork ahead of another meeting on 27th May. After that the Review team will write a short report and present their findings to the Presbytery. We will get feedback at all stages and a follow-up in a year. At some point members of the Review Team will attend Sunday worship.

The Review comes at a good time for Greenbank. It is now nearly 5 years since we launched our Roadmap with the aim of helping the congregation participate in God's mission more fully in a 21st century context. We would have been ready to review it this year anyway and Local Church Review gives us a framework to do that.

The Review is in three parts:

- Facts and Figures;
- Where we are today – in terms of Worship, Evangelism, Service, Discipleship, Fellowship, Communications and Use of Resources;
- Our Action Plan for the future.

The Minister, Kirk Session and Congregational Board will be working on the Review over the next couple of months ahead of the May meeting. Once the Review is finished and we have feedback from the Presbytery, the Kirk Session will decide what we then need to do to update or replace the Roadmap, including getting views from the Congregation.

There will be further updates on the Review and its follow-up in the *Leaflet* later in the year.

Valerie Macniven

Friendship Club

Our Wednesday afternoon meetings have now come to an end for this session but they have left us with much information and many memories of the varied topics and the fellowship which we've enjoyed.

However we now look forward to our Outing when on Saturday 10th May we are going to enjoy Afternoon Tea in the Restaurant car of the Steam Train as it travels from Bo'ness to Manuel and back. We meet outside the Church at 12.15pm and will return at around 5.30pm.

There may be a few places left on the bus so if you are interested in joining us please contact me.

Val Smart

To make contact with any of the organisations referenced in this *Leaflet*, please use the telephone number given, if there is one. Otherwise please contact the Church Office.

Website: www.greenbankchurch.org

Running for Christian Aid

On Sunday 13th April I will be running the London Marathon to raise money for Christian Aid. If you happen to be in London, please come along and wave – I will need your support!

If you'd like to sponsor me for this great charity, I will have my sponsor form in church each week or you can access my Just giving page (<http://www.justgiving.com/Helen-Barnes40>).

Thank you.

Helen Barnes

Christian Aid House-to House Collection 2014

We urgently need a few more collectors if we are to cover the whole parish so if you can spare a few hours during the week 11th–17th May to join us in collecting, please contact me.

Many thanks to everyone who has already agreed to help with house-to-house collection. You have the gratitude of the charity and indirectly of the many beneficiaries throughout the world, including many victims of conflict. This year's theme is *Peace and Reconciliation*.



Pam Jack

(Email pamelajacko6@gmail.com)

Church and Society

Society, Religion and Technology Project

The Society, Religion and Technology Project (SRTP) was set up by the Church of Scotland in 1970 to examine some of the vital issues in the interaction between science, religion and technology. It aims to provide informed commentary and understanding on how technology is affecting our lives and the issues it raises.

This has never been more important than today. Technology has brought many great benefits to society, but it also poses ethical dilemmas. There are the ethical challenges like cloning and GM food, and the environmental impacts like global warming. There is now recognition that we need to take the wider ethical and social values into account in technology.

The SRTP are involved in two ethical debates at the Edinburgh International Science Festival (EISF) in April:

- **15th April: Artificial Intelligence (AI) – What do you think?** The panel explores what AI means to their disciplines and considers its implications for the way we understand the world, humanity and meaning.
- **16th April: Faster, higher, stronger: technology and competitive sport.** The SRTP present this event where the panel explore the benefits, problems and ethical questions arising from the use of technological advances in competitive sport.

For more information on these events, visit the EISF website (<http://www.sciencefestival.co.uk/>).

Robin Nimmo

Mission and Service Committee

Annual Business Meeting : Sunday 16th March 2014

In his introductory remarks the Preses reminded the congregation that the Annual Business Meeting was required by the church's constitution and was an opportunity for The Board to report to a broad spectrum of the congregation on its work in 2013. He commended the work of the Property Convenor and the Treasurer and thanked them for their efficiency and dedication. He recorded his thanks to the Health and Safety Committee, the Halls Convener, the Clerk to the Board, the Beadle, Caretaker, Cleaner and the Church Administrator Ginny Johnston. He also thanked all members of the Board for their contribution in the course of 2013.

The Property Convenor reported on maintenance work undertaken in the manse, the Church flat (including replacement and resealing of an internal wall to resolve a dampness issue), and in the Church buildings (including work on external and internal doors in the Centenary Hall, and work on the roof and boilers). Thanks to a donation, it had been possible to upgrade the main kitchen, which now had an industrial standard cooker, a new microwave and a dishwasher. Maintenance remained a concern, and the Property Convenor's wish-list included two volunteers to work on the seriously overgrown west garden, £1500 for removing, cleaning and resealing the safety coverings to the windows on the north face, and £800 to upgrade the Ladies' facilities in the cloakroom off the office corridor. With climate change in mind, the Board was considering additional insulation in the Main and Upper Halls, replacing halogen lights with LED equivalents, and installing Optimum controls to heating and hot water systems. It was hoped to obtain a 100% grant from the Scottish Government Climate Challenge Fund. If these proposals were progressed, there would be major disruption in church buildings during works.

The Health and Safety Committee had been working on H&S policies which would shortly be submitted to the Preses for approval. It had also completed a risk assessment whose findings were being discussed with the Property Convenor and (where there was a need for staff training) with the Staff Elder. In implementing policies and training the skills and experience of members of the congregation would be used where appropriate. As part of Health and Safety awareness, members of the congregation and hall users should bring to the attention of the Church Administrator defects in furniture, equipment or fabric requiring repair. The statutory annual update to the Church's Fire Risk assessment had been carried out in May/June 2013. Appropriate action had been taken on the findings. A Fire Safety Policy had been drafted and a revision of the Fire Emergency Plan would shortly be circulated for wider comment.

The Treasurer reported on financial matters, noting first the statutory accounts which were prepared for the wider Greenbank Church, including the financial statements for the church itself but also for many church-related groups including the Pre-school, the Guild, QII and other church organisations. These had been approved by the Trustees and the Independent Examiner and copies were available for consultation. His report to the meeting related, however, to the accounts for 2013 which had been presented to the Board on 21st January, copies of which had been distributed with the March *Leaflet*. These accounts gave a clearer position of the finances of Greenbank Church itself. The Treasurer reported a deficit before one off items of £21,000

and a deficit after one off items of £10,000. The £21,000 deficit included the cost of the Youth Minister but did not take account of the funding set aside for this cost.

Key points were:

- Ordinary general income for 2013 had been £276,000, being an increase of £5,000 over 2012
- Total ordinary expenditure for 2013 had been £297,000 (some £10,000 less than 2012)
- Total offerings including Gift Aid were £240,000, an increase of £6,000 (3%) over 2012
- Other ordinary general income (from organisations, use of premises, etc.) was £36,000 (£37,00 in 2012)
- The biggest item of expenditure, as always, was the contribution to Ministries and Mission (£142,000, an increase from the 2012 figure of £137,000). The Church had also paid £4,000 as its contribution towards the Presbytery of Edinburgh, which was in line with the 2012 level.
- Salaries and staffing costs were £85,000, broadly in line with 2012
- Premises costs were £12,000; this is lower than in 2012
- Other costs were £3,000 lower in 2013 at £21,000
- A donation of £7,500 had been received for upgrading the kitchen, of which £4,600 had been spent in 2013
- A further £8,000 had been received in legacies.

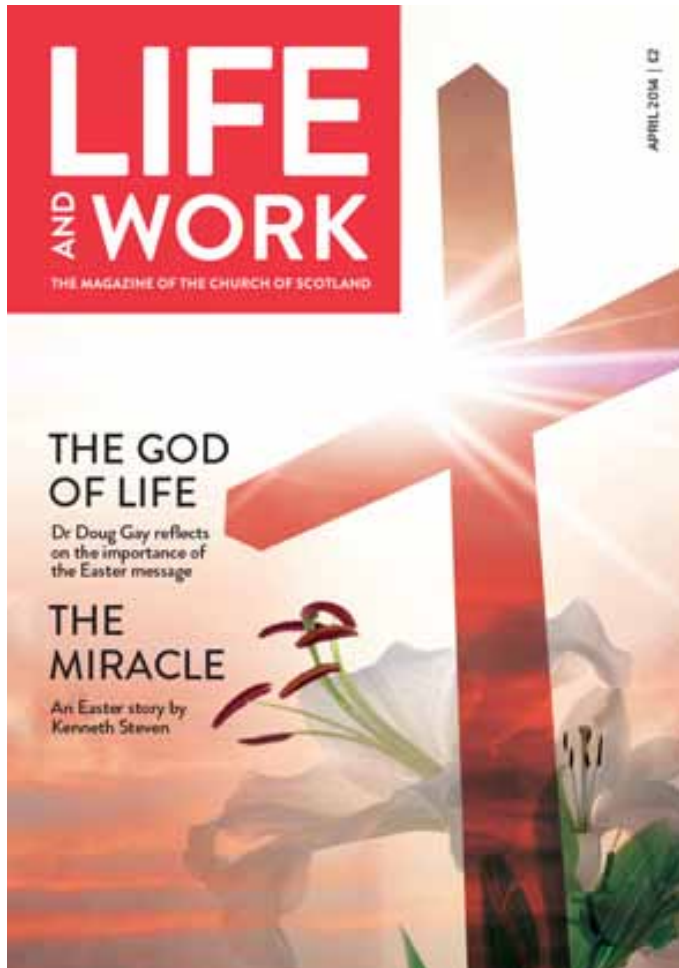
In the budget for 2014 a £26,000 deficit was forecast (£5,000 more than the 2013 actual deficit of £21,000 before one off items). Budgeted income is £1,000 less than the 2013 level. Budgeted costs are £4,000 more than the 2013 level. This is because assumed increases in staffing, premises and other costs more than outweigh the reduction that has been achieved in The Ministries and Mission contribution. The budgeted cost for the Youth Minister would be about the same as the deficit budgeted for 2013. The Treasurer noted that a stewardship Committee had been set up to consider how to fund the future cost of youth ministry.

In response to questions the Treasurer confirmed that income from the Church flat was shown in the accounts under Other Ordinary income and that 87% of the Ministries and Mission contribution was spent in support of ministers in the wider Church of Scotland. In conclusion the Treasurer thanked the Assistant Treasurers for their dedication and hard work throughout the year.

The Preses noted that the Congregational Board had selected, from nominations from the congregation, Myeloma UK to be the recipient of the Lent and Easter Appeal. Myeloma UK is based in Edinburgh and is the only organisation in the UK supporting the treatment of a rare blood cancer.

Turning to Board changes and the election of new Board members, the Preses intimated that Ulrike Buchan had indicated her willingness to serve on the Board for a further three year term subject to the approval of the congregation. Rachel Cadell, Eileen Campbell, Jean Denison, Catherine Hardie and Anne Oxbrow were retiring as Board members nominated by the Kirk Session. The Preses thanked all for their contributions to the Board. He then invited further nominations. In the absence of further nominations, the congregation agreed the re-election of Ulrike Buchan to the Board.

The Minister expressed warm appreciation to the Preses Roddy Morrison for his role in leading the Board.



Acting on Acts

“Acts and Actions” is the title of a study series in *Life and Work* by the Rev Dr Martin Fair. In the February edition, Dr Fair challenges us to find ways to follow the example of the early Christians as they are described in Luke’s account in Acts 4: 32–35.

The whole congregation of believers was united as one – one heart, one mind! They didn’t even claim ownership of their own possessions. No one said, “That’s mine; you can’t have it.” They shared everything. The apostles gave powerful witness to the resurrection of the Master Jesus, and grace was on all of them. And so it turned out that not a person among them was needy. Those who owned fields or houses sold them and brought the price of the sale. (The Message)

This passage speaks of the first believers sharing their possessions with one another, according to what they had, so that those who were most in need had help and support.

It is of course very probable that our lives – or at least our economic lives – are very different from those of the first Christians. The need to share may also have been much more urgent for a minority group who were seen as potential troublemakers both by the Roman and Jewish authorities. But Luke’s words take us beyond the day-to-day need to share, making it clear that these first followers of the risen Christ are living out in unity the “new covenant” promised by God through the prophets – “They shall be my people, and I will be their God, I will give them one heart

Easter 2014

Easter reflection by Dr Doug Gay

The Miracle: An Easter story by Kenneth Steven

The Big Question: Should Easter be a fixed date?

A Night in the City

Thomas Baldwin spends an evening at Powerpoint, a Christian gathering in Edinburgh which attracts hundreds of teenagers.

Written in the Landscape

Jackie Macadam charts the life and Christian influences on the Scots-born naturalist and author John Muir.

The Forgotten Genocide

Seonag MacKinnon reports from Bosnia, where the Moderator of the General Assembly learned at first hand the horror of the massacre which continues to haunt families today.

The Dementia Friendly Church

How a Glasgow church became the first in Scotland to be accredited dementia friendly.

A Role to Play

In her final column, the Moderator highlights the importance of the role of the Church in the life of Scotland.

Passing on the Light of Christ

The Rev David Scott describes how his church held a ‘Welcome to the Lord’s Table’ ceremony for children’s first communion.

The Gift of the Spirit

The Rev Dr Martin Fair asks why we have marginalised the Holy Spirit.

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

Online: Visit www.lifeandwork.org for the latest news and exclusive features.

and one way...” (Jeremiah 32:38–39)

While not wanting to encourage us to adopt what he calls “full-on community living”, Dr Fair asks “What can we do with this passage other than ignore it because it seems to us to be extreme, and therefore unattainable?”

To help us find positive answers, Dr Fair gives, as one example of sharing, “if we never drove to church with empty seats in our cars because we had made our cars available to the congregation generally”. Many people at Greenbank and in other congregations already share in this way.

What other ways of sharing can you think of that would ensure our church reflects the spirit of the first Christians?

Send your suggestions to greenbankleaflet@googlemail.com or put them in the editors’ box in the Main Hall. There is no age limit – upper or lower – for contributions. If you don’t want to use words, send us a picture!

Material for the May *Leaflet* should be delivered to the Church Office or to the Editors’ pigeon-hole in the Main Hall by Sunday 13th April, or sent by e-mail by 9am on Tuesday 15th April to greenbankleaflet@googlemail.com

World Mission – Matters in Africa

Modern Slavery: We have recently been made aware again through the ‘media world’ of the “abominable trade in human beings” and the legacy still felt today by the people in Africa and the Caribbean. Here in Edinburgh we had our own champion, the Rev. Robert Walker, well known to visitors to the National Gallery – but he certainly did not skate over the horrors of the slave trade. His petition to the Edinburgh Presbytery to support William Wilberforce’s campaign to put an end to slavery was accepted, and was passed to Parliament. Indeed, the Rev. Robert Walker is still revered in Ghana.

Sadly, South Africa is still a source and destination for trafficked men, women and children from poor rural areas to urban centres. Trafficking is however a global issue: Greenbank Church Guild raised funds for a Project organised by the International Justice Mission which sent people on a very risky mission to rescue children from trafficking in Cambodia.

HIV/AIDS: The Church of Scotland is still the only UK denomination which has a dedicated HIV programme and, of course, we in Greenbank Church have just had a souper Sunday in aid of this cause. The following report is from Kay Collin, who is on sabbatical leave from her teaching post in Edinburgh. “For the last seven weeks I have been working as a volunteer with the Jabulani project in Durban, South Africa. The Jabulani project was set up by Alex Wallace who is a former Head Teacher at James Gillespie’s High School in Edinburgh. One of the aims of the project is to help young people from difficult backgrounds to improve their own lives and the lives of people in their communities. I have been working with young people in

high schools in Umlazi, a township on the outskirts of Durban, street children in Durban, and younger children who are at risk of HIV/AIDS. One of the real challenges is that the state does not provide vital services to so many vulnerable young people. This weak state provision is a real challenge to democracy, as so many people are dependent upon unelected non-governmental organisations for their basic needs. Despite these difficulties the young people I have worked with have been determined to make a real difference to the lives of the most disadvantaged people in their communities. I am working with young women in Durban who would like to set up a safe place for girls living on the streets.”

Hope and Progress: In spite of all the problems, it is encouraging that the World Bank sees the economic outlook as positive for resource rich countries such as Ghana, Mozambique and Nigeria as well as others such as Rwanda and Ethiopia. Africa’s use of technology means that the mobile phone market of some 650 million subscribers is now larger than that of the EU or the United States. “No Progress without Change” A heartening sentiment? But this was emblazoned on the side of a *taxi*... Ah well...

Dates for your Diary

Sunday 6th April: First Sunday Service at 9.30am, led by World Mission.

Sunday 27th April: One World Stall in the Main Hall after the 10.30am Service.

We are grateful to everyone who supported the One World Stall during Fairtrade Fortnight. Takings were almost double the usual, with chocolate a particular favourite!

Enid Mowat

Book Review: Looking through the Cross

by Graham Tomlin, Bloomsbury 2013

217 pages, ISBN 978-1-4081-8847-7

“Looking through the Cross” may have been designated as the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Lent Book for 2014, but its value and usefulness are not restricted to the weeks leading up to Easter. Because the Cross of Christ is central to Christianity, this is a book for all seasons. And for many reasons.

This book is well planned. The short introduction draws a distinction between *looking at* and *looking through*. The first two chapters encourage the reader to look at the cross and its message. Using St Paul’s language Graham Tolmin argues that, although humanly speaking the cross is a scene of devastation and failure, it is the place where God’s wisdom and God’s love are made known and most clearly revealed. The cross makes us start all over again in our understanding of God and of God’s character. The remainder of the book helps us to look *through* the cross, through the lens of the cross as it were, to consider various aspects of life in the light of the cross.

This book is easily understood. There are very few “big” words or difficult concepts; and where they do appear, they are clearly explained. Attentive listeners to the minister’s sermon on the last Sunday of February would have heard a reference to this book and to the author’s remarks about an approach to life called Pelagianism. In almost every chapter Graham Tolmin gives succinct and helpful explanations of people and places and ideas in the ancient world.

This book is pastorally sensitive. At various points Graham Tolmin displays a sure personal touch, not least in his chapter on

“The Cross and Suffering” where he argues that God not only stands with us in our suffering but also defeats it. In “The Cross and Failure” he uses the experience of Peter to show how failure can lead to greater self-knowledge and to a greater knowledge of God’s love for what Tolmin calls “lousy Christians”. “Our true value” he writes, “lies not in our achievements or successes but in the fact that we are addressed by a God who says, regardless of our failure, ‘Follow me.’”

In the penultimate chapter, “The Cross and Reconciliation”, Dr Tolmin writes about the Church. What he says may not be new, but he gives fresh expression to old truths. “If the Church is anything, it is intended as a nursery for the new humanity.” A nursery, he continues, is not just for child-minding: it is a small community of development and maturing. The Church is to care for, nurture and develop people into a new way of being truly and fully human, marked by harmony and self-sacrificial love.

In his introduction the author tells us that this book originated in a series of meditations given on successive Good Fridays over a period of years in Holy Trinity Church, Brompton. Much of the material retains the immediacy and freshness of the spoken word. And there are passages in the book, indeed at least two whole chapters, where it is obvious that the audience the writer has in mind may very well be similar to that found in Holy Trinity Brompton. The chapters on “The Cross and Power” and on “The Cross and Ambition” have much to say to young urban upwardly mobile professionals, not only in London but also in Edinburgh.

Peter Graham



News about the Electrical Re-use Service and Dates for your Diary

Please note that the next dates for Fresh Start collections are **30th March** and **11th May** at the Sunday service (table in Main Hall). There is a continuing need for good quality items for the starter pack scheme. 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

The **Fresh Start Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)** service to businesses and charities continues to operate, and the Fresh Start electrical re-use service, which provides people who have been homeless with small electrical appliances, like kettles, toasters, lamps, radios and irons, is also operating very successfully. The appliances are tested by trainees, so as well as helping people who have been homeless in Edinburgh, the re-use service creates opportunities for the training initiative. There is an environmental benefit too. Every year, goods are being diverted from landfill.



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

Alison Ambler

Christian Aid

Church Service

The Church Service to mark the start of Christian Aid Week will be held in St Fillan's Scottish Episcopal Church on Sunday 11th May 2014 at 6.30pm. The speaker will be Crispin Longden who will speak about The work of Christian Aid.

Spring Fair

The Spring Fair will be held in Morningside Parish Church Halls on Saturday 24th May 2014 from 10am–2pm. The Morningside Youth Pipe Band will welcome you to the Halls.

The independent stall holders are:

- Nicola Loutit has her stall of jewellery, scarves and bags
- Breadshare with their popular breads and oatcakes some made from seaweed
- “Glasslights” by Fred Pringle with designs in fused, foiled and leaded glass
- Katy Wilson is an independent Phoenix Trader with her own stall
- Grant Mowat will be happy to offer you a relaxing head and shoulder massage.

Christian Aid Stalls

- The Baking and Home Produce stall, for which we would very much appreciate items
- The New and Nearly New stall also requires suitable items
- Books, DVDs, CDs and jigsaws would be appreciated for the Book Stall. There will be a wide variety of perennial, indoor, outdoor and bedding plants.



- The Fair Trade, Food and Craft Stall.
- Prizes for the Tombola would be welcomed; tickets for the raffle, which has excellent prizes, will be on sale.
- Aileen Patterson, author of the Maisie of Morningside books, will entertain the children.
- From 12 noon–12.30pm there will be a flower arranging display by Eleanor Watt.
- It is also hoped to have a one-hole indoor putting competition.

Refreshments – coffee, tea, juice, biscuits – and soup & bread will be available.

Morningside Heritage Association

Running concurrently will be *Morningside in the Great War*, a Morningside Community-run project exploring the impact of the Great War on everyday life in Morningside. There will be information and displays. Anyone with memorabilia or photos available for display should contact Jill Powlett-Brown .

Admission is free to both events, so do come along.

David Ferguson, Pam Jack, John Mowat

Congregational Register

Omitted from the on-line version of the Leaflet

Welcome Teams

April

- 6 **John George**, Rhian Ferguson, Alastair Hunter, Hazel Macaulay, Kathleen Patrick, Jill Powlett-Brown, Dorothy Whitehead, Tony Foster
- 13 **Alan Armit**, Edith Armit, Louise Coghill, Iain Davidson, Hugh Cowan, Susan Black, Malcolm Watters, Nora Kellock, Elizabeth Mackay
- 20 **Donald King**, Brian Barron, Walter Crosby, Donald MacLeod, Roderick Morrison, Mairi Stevenson, Jim Young, Kathryn Sangster
- 27 **Roger Bland**, Eileen Campbell, Richard Dunbar, Clifford Hastings, Chris Horne, Doris Laing, Enid Mowat, Robin Nimmo, Keith Winton

May

- 4 **Stuart Sanders**, Moira Davidson, John Murison, Rachel Cadell, Jenny Wright, Sandy Cameron, Carrie Reid, Moira Land

Coffee Rota

April

- 6 Scouts
- 13 Clifford Hastings (D61A)
- 20 Jill Powlett-Brown (D12B)
- 27 The Flower Group

May

- 4 Richard Denison (D59B)



The Guild

One last Guild news from me as I am now retiring as Convenor after six happy years. I have just returned from our ABM at which Kathleen Patrick was voted in as the new Convenor. We are all very grateful to her for taking it on and I hope she will enjoy it as much as I have.

We would like to thank those of you who supported our fund raising event allowing us to send the Julius Project £520 after expenses.

The Guild session is now finished but we have our trip to look forward to – lunch at Hopetoun House followed by a house tour on Wednesday 14th May. An extra coffee morning this year – it is on **1st April** at 10.30am in the hall and is in aid of the MS Society. It is a *Mad Hatter's Coffee Morning* so do wear a hat if you can.

The summer coffee mornings begin on **Tuesday 3rd June** and we hope to see you then for a scone and a blether.

Ann Pirie

Crèche Rota

April

- 6 Sharon Hamilton
- 13 Lucy Teall
- 20 Jenny Wright
- 27 Rosemary Collier

May

- 4 Liz Foster



Flower Rota

Provided by

Delivered by

April

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|---------------|
| 6 | Rona Sommerville | Joan Cameron |
| 13 | Jill Powlett-Brown | Janet McAinsh |
| 20 | Moira Davidson | Margaret Mack |
| 27 | Jenkinson/Campbell wedding | Fiona Watt |

May

- | | | |
|---|----------------|--------------------|
| 4 | Caroline Kehoe | Catherine Ferguson |
|---|----------------|--------------------|



Blokes At Greenbank (BAGs)

Are you a bloke who lives in or around Greenbank parish? Are you aged 18–118? If so then BAGs is for you! BAGs allows a time for fellowship for men with any connection with Greenbank church to come and use the halls and meet others in the area. Events have ranged from games nights, quiz nights, curry tasting, wine and ale tasting...

On **Thursday 15th May** BAGs are holding a whisky tasting evening and Scottish Quiz. Alan Wardrop from Ian Macleod Distillers is coming along to lead the event. Even if you don't know your nose from your palate, all will be explained, and if you're not a Whisky fan do come to test yourself in the quiz.

The event starts at 8pm with a donation at the door. Feel free to bring a friend.

If you could add your name to the list outside the church office or email GreenbankBags@gmail.com this will help with catering arrangements.

Slainte!

John Ferguson

Morlich House Residential Home for Older People



COFFEE MORNING

variety of stalls



Morningside United Church Hall

Holy Corner (enter off Chamberlain Road)

Saturday 26th April 2014

10am–12 noon

£2 entry includes coffee/tea/juice

Tickets available from Anne Oxbrow

CrossReach is the Social Care Arm of the Church of Scotland a charity registered in Scotland No SC011353

Some Prayers of the Old Testament

More than ten years after his death, the comedian and actor Rikki Fulton is still remembered with great affection. For many he will always be associated with his portrayal of the dour Church of Scotland minister, the Rev I M Jolly. Who can forget his increasingly lugubrious face as he presented *Last Call*, a parody of Scottish Television's late-night 'God slot' programme *Late Call*? Even when talking about joy, he succeeded in looking extremely sad. He was the embodiment of the real-life hangdog preacher of whom it was said that he often spoke about joy, "but he forgot to tell his face". Certainly I M Jolly had a lot to be miserable about — falling church attendances, ultimatums from 121 George Street, even his wife the dreaded Ephesia — and he was ready to spread his misery to others. Such consistently pessimistic communication as Mr Jolly's can be described as a "jeremiad".

The word "jeremiad" is obviously related to the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah has the reputation of being a sad and tearful figure, grieving at the misfortunes of his fellow people and unable to do more than comfort them in his many utterances. However, this reputation is unfair and does less than justice to this courageous and vulnerable, sensitive and passionate man who was misunderstood even in his own lifetime. There is at least one incident in his life which shows him to have had hope in the face of the most unpromising of circumstances.

In 587 BC the Babylonian army under King Nebuchadnezzar was besieging Jerusalem. Jeremiah was in prison, accused of defecting to the enemy and treasonable activities. He was commanded by God to buy a plot of land on the family estate at Anathoth. Although not far from Jerusalem, it could very easily already be occupied by the enemy. It was not a good time for the property market. There was no confidence in the future. But Jeremiah went ahead with the purchase and completed the transaction with all the necessary legal formalities. He bought the land not because he was a foolish optimist nor because he was ignoring the obvious, but as a sign of hope in an unpromising time and place. It was as if he were saying to his fellow Jews, There is more here than the Babylonian army at the gates; there is God in your midst. This was reinforced by an assurance from God, *Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.* Land currently worthless would become valuable. And then he prayed to God.

Jeremiah's prayer begins and ends with the purchase of the field against the dark background of national disaster. It is largely a prayer of adoration and thanksgiving, praising God for all that he is and for all that God has done for his people in the past. *Lord God, you show steadfast love to the thousandth generation.* This surely tells us something about our priorities in prayer. We are often tempted to rush into God's presence in prayer, to bring to God our immediate problems and concerns. But this may be to try to use God for our own purposes, as if God will do what we want and then withdraw from the scene. Prayer brings us into the presence of a God who is always there, to a God whose greatness and love are beyond our feeble understanding,

a God before whom we bow in adoration, knowing we exist to serve God's purposes. As is often pointed out, the first half of the Lord's Prayer focusses on God and the things of God — God's name, God's kingdom, God's will — before expressing our needs for food, forgiveness and guidance.

Jeremiah's prayer attributes to God the capacity to be creator of heaven and earth. *Ah Lord God! It is you who made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm!* If that is so, then the prayer rightly continues, *Nothing is too hard for you!* The emergence of creation — heaven and earth, the whole universe — signifies that the Lord God has the competence and power to do whatever he wills, including possibly the creation of a new people after the destruction of the old. The prayer goes on to acknowledge God's decisive, generous actions, citing the rescue of a slave-nation from the oppressive regime of the Pharaohs and subsequent events as evidence of God's steadfast love for his people.

This God who is generously committed to his people Israel is not to be taken for granted. After praising God for being so patient and so kind, Jeremiah admits how Israel has responded so miserably to the divine generosity. *But they did not obey your voice or follow your law; of all you commanded them to do, they did nothing.* Praying amid the wreckage and grief of Jerusalem, Jeremiah sees a connection between the people's failure to do God's will and what is happening to them. *Therefore you have made all these disasters come upon them.*

The prayer ends with a remarkable utterance of hope. In spite of all that has happened, Jeremiah trusts in God's assurance that currently worthless land will again be occupied and productive. This is why Jeremiah can dare to pray boldly, in the face of all the evidence to the contrary, that God will continue to do good to his people. Even in his nation's darkest hour Jeremiah dares to believe that God would not be absent and God's purpose never thwarted. Jeremiah believes that God can do what humanly speaking is impossible. God is hope; God brings hope; God can transform a seemingly futile and meaningless business transaction into a sign of hope.

This belief in God's capacity to do the impossible, this hope, runs through the Bible. Responding to his followers' question about the scope of God's salvation, Jesus said, *For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.* In the garden of Gethsemane, on the eve of his execution, Jesus prayed to God and affirmed, *For you all things are possible.* In the end the one thing that was not possible was that an obedient Jesus should be rescued from suffering. However, as St Paul puts it, God is the *One who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.* God knows what it is to suffer, but suffering does not have the last word.

For further reading:

The story of the purchase of the field at Anathoth and Jeremiah's prayer are in Jeremiah chapter 32, verses 1–25.