

Greenbank Connections



May 2026

Issue 743

Scottish Charity SC011325



Isobel Brown received her card from the King on her 100th Birthday see pp 3 and 12

Greenbank Parish Church, Edinburgh

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

Contents

Letter from the Locum	2
Guild	3
Thought for the Month	4
Lifts to Greenbank	5
Friendship Club and Singing Group	5
Plant Stall	6
Dead Hedges	7
Christian Aid Week 10-16 May 2026	8
Gleanings from The Scotsman Archives	10
Open Hand's New Website	11
Isobel Brown's 100th Birthday	12
Holiday Club	12
CA Holy Corner Book Sale	13
Wedding	14
Congregational Register	14
Try Bowling	14
Welcome Teams	15
Coffee Rota	15
Flower Rota	15
Contact details	15
Election Hustings	16

Letter from the Locum



Standing Firm!

Have you ever been involved in a tense conflict with someone? If so, I think that the apostle Paul has a different understanding of what it means to stand firm in a dispute from the positioning that is most common today.

In the middle of a dispute he says, "*Stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!*" (Phil 4:1)

We might think standing firm is exactly the wrong thing to do to overcome a thorny issue, but he is suggesting here that "standing firm" is the opposite of polarisation. He is suggesting that through our relationship with Jesus we are reminded:

1. To look for the peace of God together
2. It is a shared peace, not a personal feeling
3. That this kind of "standing firm" means sticking



together despite differences.

Often we fret over who said what, and what they meant. It can easily become a deep trough of unpleasantness. Paul's suggestions towards unity in the letter to the Philippians are:

1. Solidarity
2. Prayer
3. Joint working
4. Being thankful

God always gives the strength to pursue this healthier model and these spiritual disciplines can bring relief, healing and peace.

Paul finishes his section of chapter 4 with a positive comment.

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (vs. 7)

Enjoy life,

Ian

Ian Gilmour
Locum minister

Guild

There will be no more Guild Meetings until October, but there will be Monthly Coffee Mornings open to all with our usual coffee, tea, and home baking.

The dates are **5th May, 2nd June, 7th July, 11th August** and **1st September**.

All will be held at 10.30am in the Main Hall except for 5th May which will be in the Hermitage Room.

Looking forward to keeping in touch with friends over the summer!

Edith Armit



Isobel Brown celebrating her 100th Birthday at the Guild with her friend Chrissie Munro



Thought for the Month

Last week, JD Vance urged the Pope to be careful when bringing up theology in relation to politics. Prominent non-politicians are often scolded and told to keep out of politics after an intervention – football manager Pep Guardiola should stick to football instead of commenting on Gaza; Taylor Swift should stick to singing. I find that odd: surely politics is the job of everyone in a liberal democracy?

And if so, how should we, as Christians, be political? Questions of social justice and care seem to be central to our faith and to the life of Christ himself. They are also lived in so many ways in our parish: in the short time since we came to Greenbank, we've seen how the church community lives a community politics in events like the Jumble Sale, in the work with affiliated charities, the various groups and committees that work in the Greenbank building.

With elections round the corner, the question seems particularly relevant. The answer is not so simple. Contemporary politics are

so divisive and polarised, and the world is ever more complex. We tend to avoid politics in our communities and our homes – as something to be avoided for fear of offence. It's a matter of simple courtesy.

So, my thought for this month is more of a question: is there a way for open, tolerant sharing of views that helps develop our faith?

Brendan Whitty



The Jumble Sale is a community event

Lifts to Greenbank

Currently we have several people who benefit from assistance in getting to Greenbank. Most people who find a lift helpful on Sunday mornings to the service have their needs met by friends. However, an increasing number find it helpful in attending the *Friendship Club* and the *Singing Group*.

The *Friendship Club* meets fortnightly on twelve Wednesday afternoons from mid-October until the end of March. We meet at 2pm and finish by 3.45pm. If you can help, you're welcome to stay for what have proven to be very interesting talks. We currently have four members who find a lift helpful.

We need more volunteer drivers who can help on a regular or occasional basis. If you volunteer to help regularly you might be required about four times through-

out the year. Of course, we realise that volunteering has to fit in with your life.

There are also five tea and coffee events, one each month from May until September.

The *Singing Group* meets on the alternate Wednesdays with the same timings as the Friendship Club. Currently we have only two members who find a lift helpful.

Finally, there are occasional requests for assistance to get to the four short afternoon communion services.

Could you volunteer? The more people who volunteer the fewer the occasions on which you'll be needed. If you're willing to help out, please contact me.

David Allan

Friendship Club and Singing Group Afternoon Tea

An Afternoon Tea will take place at 2pm on Wednesday 13th May, jointly between the Friendship Club and the Singing Group with the theme, *Songs from the Musicals*.

The next meeting of the Singing Group will be on Wednesday 27th May at 2pm in the Braid Room.

David Allan





ECO-GROUP SURPLUS PLANT STALL

In support of Christian Aid

Sunday 10th May 2026

After the church service

Got too many plants?

Let them find a good home while supporting a great cause!

Bring along your:

- Seedlings
- Plants
- Seeds
- Homemade jams & preserves
- Homegrown produce

Sell your surplus & support Christian Aid

Collection available by arrangement

Contact: kareny219@gmail.com



Dead Hedges

If you have been to Braidburn Valley Park recently, you will see that *The Conservation Volunteers* (TCV) have been busy creating dead hedges. Although a dead hedge may look humble, this natural feature offers rich benefits for wildlife while making good use of pruning and excess material. You can create one in your garden too.

Dead hedges are excellent for recycling woody stems and cuttings that might otherwise be thrown away or

burned. Instead of discarding prunings, turn them into a living habitat. Over time, a dead hedge creates a safe home and shelter for nature. Hedgehogs can find refuge at its base, insects benefit from the protection it provides, and dead wood is excellent habitat for lichens and fungus. In this way, what seems “dead” becomes full of life.

Creating a dead hedge is straightforward. Begin by hammering a line of sturdy wooden stakes or trimmed branches into the ground about a metre apart. Then place a second, parallel line of stakes roughly one metre away, positioning them in a zigzag pattern between the first row. This forms a corridor. Gradually fill this space with woody cuttings and pruning, layering as you go. Heavier branches placed on top will help compress the material and keep it secure. Plugging some gaps with turf provides additional habitat.

As the hedge settles, you may also choose to grow climbers such as clematis or honeysuckle along it, adding beauty and further habitat value, particularly for pollinators.



Karen Young
Convenor
Eco-Group

Christian Aid Week 10-16 May 2026

the story behind the pictures

Christian Aid Week in May each year is a huge opportunity for the charity to raise funds. The money goes to the general fund, thus giving flexibility as to how it will be spent, particularly if an emergency arises. However each year the campaign focuses on **Christian Aid's** work in a particular country and this year it is Kenya, and in particular a project called Beacon of Hope.

I recently attended a talk by Purity Osumba, the programme and partnerships coordinator in Kenya who spoke movingly about the two women Fridah and Belinda who feature on the envelopes and posters. They live in the “informal settlements” in Nairobi where people crowd together in small mud and timber homes with little access to water or sanitation. Life is precarious due to disease, fire, crime, drugs and femicide.

Christian Aid works by identifying partners and consulting with the community to support sustainable programmes. Beacon of Hope teaches the women urban farming techniques, encouraging them to grow nutritious food in small spaces. This leads to improvements in health and there is also an opportunity to sell surpluses. Other



money-generating enterprises such as making jewellery are also supported and there is a community lending committee.

Purity also spoke about the problems Kenya faces in the context of its wider political and economic situation. It has the biggest economy in the Eastern part of Africa, but a huge debt crisis. Cutbacks have been made in areas such as health and education in order to service the national debt, and additional taxes on items such as bread and sanitary products mean that the poor cannot afford these. This situation is compounded by reductions in international funding programmes such as USAID.

Christian Aid is campaigning to “put life before debt” and you can find out more about the Restore campaign here:

[www.christianaid.org.uk/
get-involved/campaigns/
restore-campaign](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/restore-campaign)

Fundraising at Greenbank Envelopes and web pages

Greenbank Church volunteers will be distributing delivery-only envelopes to around 1,400 houses in our parish during the week. Thank you to everyone who has agreed to help with this. There will also be envelopes available in the church vestibule.

The envelopes include a flyer to say that they have been delivered by a volunteer from Greenbank Church and to invite people to donate –

- To our special e-envelope:
[caw.christianaid.org.uk/
envelope-2026/
greenbank-church](http://caw.christianaid.org.uk/envelope-2026/greenbank-church)
- By posting the envelope through the Church letterbox on Braidburn Terrace
- Direct to Christian Aid.

Destination John O'Groats Ian and Jennifer pedalling again for Christian Aid

The Rev Ian Gilmour and his daughter Jennifer have set themselves a huge challenge, cycling from Edinburgh to John O'Groats over five consecutive days, starting on Monday 11th May. The total distance will be around 320 miles, including over 11,500 feet of climbing.



Ian and Jennifer have generously offered to ride in support of Christian Aid and we have created a separate fundraising page connected to the Greenbank appeal for Christian Aid Week.

If you would like to sponsor them, please follow the link:

[caw.christianaid.org.uk/
fundraiser-2026/
destination-john-ogroats](http://caw.christianaid.org.uk/fundraiser-2026/destination-john-ogroats)

Thank you, however you choose to support Christian Aid Week.

Fiona Watt

Gleanings from *The Scotsman* Archives

Part 3 – The Minister returns from war

Articles in two previous issues of *Connections*, drawing on back numbers of *The Scotsman*, have described the arrival of the Rev David H C Read as minister at Greenbank, his immediate departure to serve as a Chaplain to the Forces, and his subsequent capture and imprisonment by the Germans.

The Scotsman quoted some of his letters to the congregation. Unfortunately, there are no further references to letters from David Read to Greenbank. Perhaps *The Scotsman* no longer considered them newsworthy! However, a lengthy book review of *Prisoners' Quest* by D H C Read appeared on 27th July 1944. The script of talks given in the Prisoner of War Camp had been smuggled out for publication in the UK.

In an article about David Read, written to mark VE Day 2020, Professor David Fergusson reminds us that *Prisoners' Quest* “remains a moving evocation of faith and community in a time of intense struggle.” And today’s QII owes its existence and name to the highly successful youth group, Quest, founded on his return to Greenbank.

On 14th April 1945, *The Scotsman* intimated his return from imprisonment. Under the headline “Freedom from PoW camp” the brief article states:

“News has been received in Edinburgh of the arrival in London of the Rev. David HC Read, minister of Greenbank Church, who for almost five years has been a prisoner of war in Germany. Mr Read was flown to London where he arrived last Wednesday, after broadcasting from Germany an account of how his camp was liberated by the Americans [on 30 March 1945]. Introduced as ‘a Scottish minister,’ he described how he was conducting a service as the camp was overrun...Mr Read is expected to reach Edinburgh sometime next week and may preach in Greenbank Church on Sunday week.”

On Sunday 29th April, Mr Read was indeed back in Greenbank, preaching to crowded congregations. According to *The Scotsman* at the morning service he preached from the text ‘My God shall supply all your needs,’ illustrating it with special reference to prison camp experiences. In the evening, the church was so full that the service had to be relayed to the hall. The congregation heard more about David Read’s experiences as a chaplain in a prison camp, including a series of



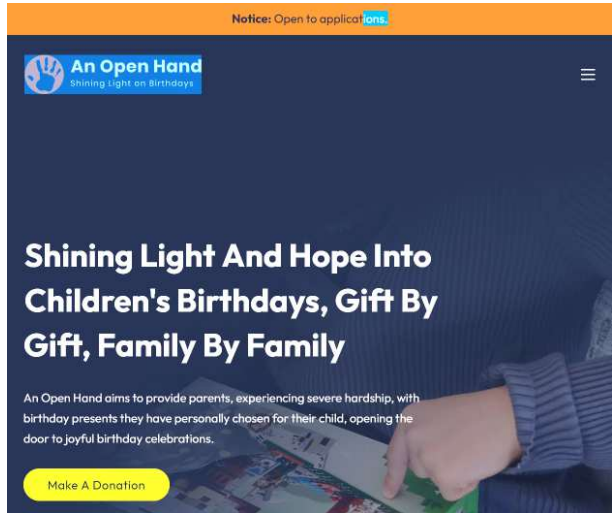
Open Hand New Website

We are delighted to announce that we have a new website. Our aim was to create a website that was engaging, informative and easy to navigate.

There is a donate button on the website giving various donation options We invite you to take a look!

anopenhand.org.uk/

Rona Ferguson



From the archives (contd)

services held at Stalag IXA, which he had received permission to visit shortly before its liberation by the American army.

After his release from his role as a Chaplain to the Forces, David Read was to remain minister at Greenbank until he was appointed as the first chaplain of the University of Edinburgh in 1949. He left Edinburgh in 1956 to become minister of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, where

he remained until he retired in 1989. He died at his home in New York in early January 2001, less than a week after his 91st birthday.

Peter Graham

NORMAN FRASER, BD	1902 - 1913
T. RATCLIFFE BARNETT, BD, PHD	1913 - 1938
DAVID H.C. READ, BD, DD	1939 - 1949
DONALD G.M. MACKAY, BD, STM	1950 - 1982
IAN G. SCOTT, BSc, BD, STM	1983 - 2006

Isobel Brown's 100th Birthday

Isobel Brown turned 100 on Sunday 12th April.

In church everyone clapped and sang *Happy Birthday*.

In the Hall after the service she cut one of her cakes to more applause and singing.



Holiday Club

Greenbank Holiday Club is open to all children of Primary School age, including children starting Primary 1 this August. It will be held in the Greenbank Church premises in Braidburn Terrace, from Monday 3rd August to Friday 7th August, 10am–12.15pm daily.

KINGDOM BUILDERS

Greenbank Holiday Club, for P1 to P7
3-7 August, 10am-12.15pm each day
To register, go to:
www.greenbankchurch.org

Only £25
(£5/day)

Please register at

tinyurl.com/

Holiday-Club-Registration

by **Monday 27th July** to guarantee your child's place at Holiday Club.

Helen Barnes



Holy Corner Booksale

2026

Saturday, 9 May: 10am - 5pm

Sunday, 10 May: 1pm - 5pm

Monday, 11 May: 10am - 3pm

Refreshments available Saturday, 10am - 4pm

Wide variety of categories, including:

- Hardback & paperback fiction and non-fiction
- Art, antiquarian & vintage
- Children's section

Entrance on Bruntsfield Place

Payment by cash or card



Morningside United Church, Holy Corner, EH10 4DJ

In aid of Christian Aid: Charity No. SC039150

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

Wedding of Eleanor Hutchison and Niall Quinn

Fostering Scottish/Irish relations!
Vivien Hutchison's daughter,
Eleanor, married Niall Quinn in Ire-
land on Saturday, 4th April. A very
happy occasion!



Congregational Register Deaths March

23 Mrs June Craig, Ashley Court
Nursing Home (D40)



June on her 90th Birthday

TRY BOWLS

As part of the National Try Bowls Weekend Braid Bowling Club
are offering **FREE** sessions.
Tuition provided, no need to bring anything.

2-4 May, 10am-4pm

Braid Bowling Club
Midmar Drive
Edinburgh EH10 6BR
07716 804 802
info@braidbc.co.uk



Welcome Teams

May

- 3 **Donald King**, Jan Corbett, Roderick Morrison, Jim Young, Jane Harkin
 10 **Stuart Sanders**, Moira Davidson, Julia Dunbar, John Murison, Alison Muri-son
 17 **Keith Winton**, Richard Dunbar, Chris Horne, Robin Nimmo, Hazel Macaulay
 24 **Rosemary McCulloch**, Moira Land, Fiona Grant, Martin Struthers, Barbara Middleton, Tony Rose, Rosie Rose
 31 **Joan Ritchie**, Susan Inch, Gillian Sweetman, Clare Campbell, Stephen Hadden, Mary Hadden, Catherine Cameron

June

- 7 **Communion**
Keith Clark, Elizabeth Htet-Khin, Isobel Thom, Charles Black, Pauline Walker, Catherine Denham

May Coffee Rota

- 3 Richard & Julia Dunbar D10, D11, D55
 10 Hazel & Angus McLachlan D43
 17 David & Janet Ferguson D13, 26 & 28
 24 Susan Inch & Chris Horne D37, 48, 66, 67 & 89
 31 Christina Morrow D40 & 41

June

- 7 **Communion**
 Gillian Sweetman Singing Group



The Ministry Team can be contacted directly

Locum Minister: Rev Ian Gilmour
 phone: 07794 149852
 email: IGilmour@churchofscotland.org.uk

Administrator: Jackie Wilson-Tagoe
 phone: 0131 447 9969
 email: 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

Postal address:

Greenbank Parish Church
 Braidburn Terrace,
 Edinburgh EH10 6ES

Items for the *Weekly Newsletter* should be sent by **Thursdays** to:

greenbankweekly@gmail.com

Material for the **June/July/August** issue of *Greenbank Connections* should be delivered to the Editors' Pigeonhole by **Sunday 17th May** or sent by e-mail by 8pm on **Thursday 21st May** to:

greenbankconnections@gmail.com

Flower Rota

provided by

delivered by

May

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| 3 Hazel Macaulay | Jennifer James |
| 10 Land Family | Sarah Whitty |
| 17 Rosemary McCulloch | Heather Kay |
| 24 Diana Hastings | Irene Horne |
| 31 Katy Maguire | Fiona Kelly |

June

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 7 | Alison Kerr |
|---|-------------|



GREENBANK PARISH CHURCH

Scottish Parliament Elections 2026

Edinburgh Southern Constituency

Hustings

Thursday 30th April 2026

7.30pm – 9pm

Greenbank Church,
Braidburn Terrace,
Edinburgh

Meet the candidates
and hear what they
have to say

Email your questions to
hustings26@greenbankchurch.org
asap



Greenbank | Parish Church Scottish Charity No. SCO11325