

Greenbank Connections



May 2023

Issue 716

Scottish Charity SC011325



Forest Church: Making Seed Bombs with Edith

Greenbank Parish Church, Edinburgh

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

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Minister's Letter



Encounters

We are in the midst of the season of Eastertide. For some, Easter may seem ages ago and almost forgotten in life's busy-ness. Some of us are still standing at the empty tomb wondering what Resurrection really means for our own lives. Jesus appears several times to his followers in the weeks after his resurrection. They, too, were trying to make sense of things as they struggled to piece their lives back together.

Jesus becomes present to them as an apparition, but he always interacts with matter, and even becomes matter again, briefly, to help the relatable doubting Thomas. Jesus meets two wandering on the road to Emmaus and they finally recognise him in the meal they share together. And, of course, there is a fish breakfast on the beach with a struggling Peter.

Whether they are out on the road, the sea, or huddled together in a locked room, Jesus finds his disciples and encourages them to expand their faith.

Christ continues to encourage us to encounter God in every place.

We are used to worshipping indoors in a sanctuary with walls, windows, and pews. Stepping outside the building to encounter God in nature is a familiar, welcome (and sometimes even preferred!) way of connecting with our Creator. Hiking, camping, walking the dog are just a few ways we can immerse ourselves in nature and just be.

At Greenbank we have been exploring a new way of gathering as a community in nature: Forest Church. What exactly is Forest Church? It is not just “normal” church that meets outside; instead

it attempts to participate with creation. The aim is to learn about God in the midst of nature - worshipping, meditating, praying in new, creative and playful ways. In fact, the worshipping, meditating and praying happens during the playing, pondering, crafting and exploring!

Worship happens when one is caught up in the beauty of the moment. Because of the playful exploration that is at the heart of Forest Church, something for all ages can be discovered anew. Our next Forest Church is coming up in June. Why don't you join us?

In the meantime, may we continue to ponder what Jesus' resurrection means for our own lives, opening ourselves to new encounters with God.

Julia A Cato

Greenbank Forest Church



10th June
2-4pm



Meet at the Hermitage Entrance
with stout shoes and a picnic snack

**Fundraising for
Christian Aid**

**You're
invited!**



What: Coffee Morning with Stalls,
When: Saturday 20th May 2023 10am to 12 noon
Where: Morningside Parish Church Halls,
Cost £5, includes coffee/tea and scone
All welcome, bring a friend.

We're raising funds for Christian Aid to help people in poverty around the world. We'd love you to join us!

**christian
aid**
APPEAL

**2023
BOOK
SALE**

at St Andrew's & St George's West Church
13 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PA

Saturday 13 May: 10am-4pm

Monday to Friday, 15-19 May: 10am-3.30pm

+ Thursday open until 7pm

**Donations welcome at the church:
Monday-Wednesday, 8-10 May: 9am-8pm**



Holy Corner Booksale 2023

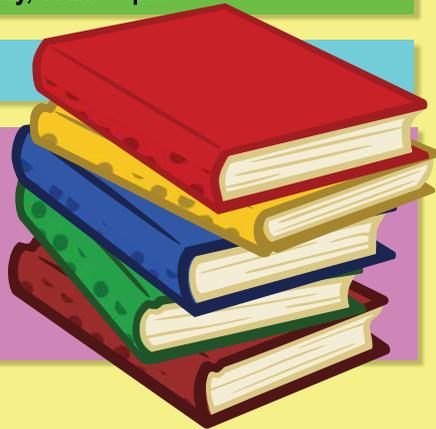
Saturday, 13 May, 10am - 5pm
Sunday, 14 May, 1pm - 5pm

Entrance on Bruntsfield Place
Refreshments available Saturday, 10am - 4pm

Payment by cash or card

Wide variety of categories:

- Hardback & paperback, fiction & non-fiction
- Antiquarian & Vintage
- Children's section



Morningside United Church, Holy Corner, EH10 4DJ
In aid of Christian Aid: Charity No. SC039150
Booksale website: <https://holycornerbooksale.wordpress.com>

Book Review

Being Mortal: Illness, Medicine and What Matters in the End,

by Atul Gawande

Wellcome Collection, 2014;

ISBN: 978-0-8050-9515-9; 297pp;

£9.75 ppb, £5.69 Kindle

This is a serious and profound book. The author is an American physician who writes with clarity and compassion. In spite of the subject matter I did not find it depressing.

From the introduction: *Modern scientific capability has profoundly altered the course of human life. People live longer and better than at any other time in history. But scientific advances have turned processes of aging and dying into medical experiences, matters to be managed by health care professionals. And we in the medical world have proved alarmingly unprepared for it...*

This is a book about the modern experience of mortality ... how medicine has changed the experience and how it hasn't, where our ideas about how to deal with our finitude have got the reality wrong.

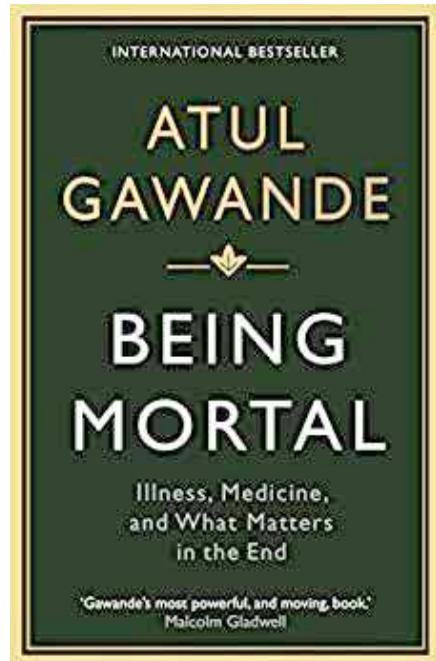
(I was tempted to quote more extensively, but there just isn't space.)

The author explains, with many illustrations, how heroic interventions may not be in the best interest of the patient. For example, an

American study of 151 patients with stage IV lung cancer concluded that those who saw a palliative care specialist stopped chemotherapy sooner, entered a hospice – or hospice-level care at home – far earlier, experienced less suffering at the end of their lives, and lived 25 percent longer.

If like me you are 'getting on in years' – or if this phrase describes a member of your family – I recommend that you read this book. It might just change your life.

John Murison



Thought for the Month – The Resurrection

The Resurrection of Jesus and the belief in life after death are perplexing enough for most of us but we are not helped by the Gospel accounts which are extraordinary and often contradictory, posing many questions:

- Was the tomb really empty?
- Did someone steal the body?
- Maybe Jesus didn't really die but recovered in the tomb?
- Maybe it was all a mistake made in the dark by hysterical women?
- If the tomb really was empty, why did more people not see and believe?
- If it was not empty, why did the authorities not produce the body?

And who would steal the body? Grave-robbers? The Romans? Why? Orthodox Jews would never tamper with a dead body. The disciples would hardly have stolen it to invent the resurrection story since that was the last thing they were expecting. Certainly, Gospel reports of the resurrection vary considerably. When Paul describes his experience of Jesus on the road to Damascus there is no mention of an empty tomb nor of the kind of "physical" appearances of Jesus which the Gospels relate.

Many ingenious efforts have been made to query the resurrection story

but these theories often raise more problems than they solve.

Did the women see the risen Lord at the tomb on Easter morning? Yes said Matthew, No said Luke, Yes said John but only one woman, Mary Magdalene. In Mark, the earliest Gospel, there is no mention of an actual appearance to anyone. So which was it?

Was the messenger at the open tomb a young man dressed in white, as Mark tells us, or an angel as Matthew asserts, and were there two angels as Luke and John state?

Paul claimed that Jesus appeared first to Peter. But did he first appear to the disciples in Galilee as Mark and Matthew say or in Jerusalem as Luke and John claim? What did happen?

Have you ever heard two or three people tell the same story in exactly the same way or describe an incident in similar words? Consider what might happen if the account was passed on by word of mouth through many different people over something like 35 or 40 years before it was written down? Inevitably, variations, interpretations and a bit of exaggeration might creep in – a phenomenon historians know well.



If all the resurrection accounts were the same, we might well think that someone had concocted the story. The fact that reports vary shows that something momentous happened in the days after Jesus' death and it was recalled and experienced differently by those who were around at the time.

Lives were changed in various ways. At first demoralised and scattered, the disciples had differing experiences that gave them courage and conviction which no threat of torture could diminish. Before Easter they fled, but after Easter, having realised the significance of Jesus' life and teaching, they were willing to die for him .

Albert Schweitzer summed it up thus:

"He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside, He came to those men who knew him not. He speaks to us the same word, 'Follow thou me' and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and they shall learn in their own experience who He is."

John Stevenson

Guild Summer Coffee Mornings

Having had an interesting and enjoyable year we are now planning our summer activity.

The Guild will be holding Coffee Mornings on **Tuesdays 6th June, 4th July, 1st August and 5th September at 10.30am** in the Main Hall. All are welcome to come and share coffee, home baking (lots of cake!), and plenty of chat. Entry is free but we ask that if you can, you make



a donation towards the work of *Home for Good*, the Guild Project we have been supporting this year. This is a Church based project aimed at providing a home for good for every child in need of one, by encouraging and supporting adoption and fostering. We are looking forward to seeing you.

Edith Armit



Christian Aid Week 14th-20th May 2023

The Christian Aid Week appeal this year focuses on Malawi and the struggle farmers face to survive due to the climate crisis. In Malawi, food, fuel, fertiliser and school fees have doubled in price in the last 12 months. Christian Aid helps families to grow food crops resilient to climate change and to trade these fairly, cutting out unscrupulous middlemen.

Greenbank Church volunteers will be distributing delivery-only envelopes to around 1400 houses in our parish during the week. Thank you to everyone who has 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 (the link is also on the church website)

www.justgiving.com/page/greenbank-edinburgh-or124450

- By posting the envelope through the church letterbox on Braidburn Terrace
- Direct to Christian Aid

I understand that our neighbouring congregations will not be distributing envelopes this year. If you live outside Greenbank Parish and would like an envelope, there will be some available in the church vestibule or please contact me, I have some extra.

Please support Christian Aid Week. There is further information here:

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

Coffee Morning 20th May

Please come along to the Christian Aid Week coffee morning we are organising with other local churches. It's on Saturday 20th May 10am to 12 noon at Morningside Parish Church, Braid Road. Cost £5, all welcome.

Fiona Watt

Scouts 90th Anniversary

The 4th Braid Scouts (Greenbank Scouts) are celebrating their 90th anniversary. For this they mounted a competition for a logo. Here is the winning logo on the right.



Greenbank Stained Glass The Pilgrim's Progress Window 1934

Alexander Strachan (1878-1954)

Sitting as I do in the Altos' pew, this is the window my eyes rest on during services. It is well worth studying. According to the late Rev Donald Mackay's book* "The theme of the window is the pilgrimage of Mr Valiant-for-Truth in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*." I have never managed to read all of *The Pilgrim's Progress* (I have tried). I have been aware of the story however, having read and reread *Little Women* where the girls enact *The Pilgrim's Progress* up and down the stairs of their sprawling house.

I've always loved the chap with the lovely red cloak who features in this window. The order of events puzzled me for a long time. It is obvious that there is progression upwards towards clear Celestial Rewards, but the Key** explains the sequence. See opposite.

The colours Strachan uses, as in his Revelation Window, are a rich delight. The archangel's wings in the Celestial City are the most wonderful green while the red of the cloaks of Valiant-for-Truth and Mr Greatheart are vividly rendered.

The two windows were memorials for the same generous family. The Revelation Window was given by Dr and Mrs Inglis Clark to commemorate their only son Captain

Charles Inglis Clark who died in 1918. The Pilgrim's Progress Window was given by Mrs Inglis Clark in memory of her husband.

Of the individual panes there are two that always strike me; The Hill of Difficulty, no 5, where we have all been at some point, and the Valley of the Shadow of Death, no 7, both rendered in sombre shades. (See Pages 18 and 19.)

Dr Inglis Clark was a keen gardener and the lovely Palace Beautiful, panel no 6, shows a view of his flowery garden and a distant view of the Pentlands. It speaks to me of Psalm 121 that I often recite to myself as I walk down Morningside Road: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."

*Full details of the panels are given in the second edition of the Rev Donald Mackay's *Guide to the Stained Glass Windows in Greenbank Parish Church, Edinburgh* which is available online:

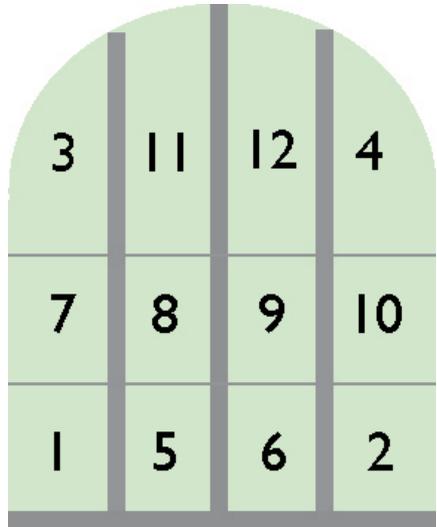
tinyurl.com/3nhszww4

Full colour print copies are available for £5 from the Church Office

Alison Murison



Palace Beautiful no 6



**Key to the order of stories

Scout Jumble Sale

Another year and another fantastic Jumble Sale with an incredible £13,000 (money still coming in) profit for Scout Group Funds. Lengthy queues with numbers at last year's level added to the excitement. Interestingly there is apparently a Jumble Sale circuit in the East of Scotland and we feature high on the list. One customer even stayed the night before to be early.



Takings at our traditional big-income stalls (Bric-a-Brac, Clothes, Books, Toys) were all up by a big margin. Jewellery, still a relatively new kid on the block, was again a star performer, raising more than any stall except Clothes. A major effort on the Home Baking front proved very successful. Are scarves coming back into fashion as we had a near sell out? A Tandem Bike raised a lot of interest and a quick sale.

Like everyone we are faced with rising costs in our key expenses such as central Scouting levies, insurances, rent, first aid and Leader training. The funds also go to replace and maintain equipment, to help us maintain an affordable subscription, to keep down the cost of our extensive range of activities and camps and to provide support for those who would otherwise be unable to take part.

As always we are so very grateful for the help of the members and parents, volunteers who assist every year, new recruits and members of the Church,

many with us for many years and now a little grey headed who still turn out year after year to assist – and to the Kirk Session which allows us the use of the halls. Special thanks to the volunteer admin team who worked so hard during the week (and in the months before) to make this a success. It is important to the Group to avoid waste and we were pleased to be able to send vans through Newington and Morningside to drop off surplus goods at various Charity Shops, selected toys to the Barnardo's family unit at Saughton Prison, baby clothes and toys to the Pregnancy Care and Counselling Centre and Books to the Edinburgh Community Bookshop (a charity we helped open shop last year). There were selected items for Fresh Start, the Clothing Store and Greenbank Pre School and (a new entrant) old blankets and towels for the All4Paws charity run by the "Dick Vet" to care for pets owned by homeless people.

We hope to see everyone again on 13th April 2024!

Stuart Sanders

Coronation Volunteer Event

Monday 8th May

10 to 11.30am

An hour of volunteer activity in Braidburn Valley Park followed by refreshments.

Meet at Greenbank Church.



**MONDAY
8TH MAY**



Dress for outdoor activity and the weather.

Tools will be provided but bringing your own secateurs would be helpful.

All Welcome!

Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Greenbank Eco-Group

Climate Resilience in Conservation Areas

Have you had planning difficulties when making your home well-insulated and energy efficient? Did you struggle to meet stringent guidelines or find a solution that works for you? Many of these issues have been for homes that are in a conservation area and about the limitations on what can and cannot be done and the type of materials that can and cannot be used. The Council is asking residents who live in listed buildings and/or conserva-

tion areas about their experiences of trying to maintain, repair or adapt their home to make it more climate resilient. Responses will be used to inform potential changes to planning guidance for adapting homes. The consultation runs till 11th June and is available on the Council's consultation page here

consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk

**Neil Ross
Greenbank Eco-Group**

Stewart Gillan – Israel March 2023

St Andrew's Jerusalem, PO Box 8619, Jerusalem 91086, Israel

Dear Friends

Last night I had the joy of presenting Rev Sally Azar with a Church of Scotland tartan scarf, assuring her of our prayers and best wishes as she begins her ministry as an ordained Lutheran Pastor in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. This took place in the happy company of visitors from Scotland, led by Marjorie Paton, who were vocal in their support of Sally, the first Palestinian woman Pastor, and also of Muriel Pearson and me in our ministries here. It means a great deal to us to hear and feel it.

Sally wore the scarf and spoke of her experience thus far as Pastor of the English-speaking congregation at the Church of the Redeemer in the Old City of Jerusalem, and as Co-Pastor of the Lutheran con-

gregation in Bethlehem. She gave thanks for the Church of Scotland's friendship over the years, noting that Palestinian women had formed the writing committee for next year's World Day of Prayer on 1st March 2024.

The idea of a Church of Scotland tartan originally came from colleagues in the World Mission Council including Carol Finlay, whose strong commitment over many years throughout the global church, from Malawi to the early days of the HIV and AIDS Programme, to Israel and Palestine and beyond, is truly commendable.

I woke up this morning to a pre-dawn call to prayer from the local minaret, which is no longer an unusual experience. The Christian population in Beit Jala is higher than in most places: 80% according to a 2017 report of the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics – mainly Orthodox, Latin and Lutheran. Though numbers have fallen in recent years, Christians still form the majority and have enjoyed a largely peaceful co-existence with Muslim neighbours. The Churches have no early-morning tannoy, however, and I have begun to feel the Muslim wake-up call as a reminder



Scarf, with Marjorie Paton & Stewart Gillan



St Mark's Syrian Orthodox Church, Old City, Jerusalem, during the Week of Prayers for Christian Unity 2023

that I live in a sacred space, and not just a site of struggle.

I spent yesterday afternoon in Jerusalem with Omar Haramy, Director at Sabeel, the ecumenical grassroots liberation theology movement in Israel and Palestine founded by Naim Ateek. Three hours of discussion left me challenged and encouraged. He made the point that we are not and must not be Good Friday Christians if that means we never arrive at the Sunday, the great resurrection 'Rise up!' of Easter. As for hope, we are hope, called to live our lives as expressions of God's hope.

**Best wishes
Stewart**

The full letter can be found at:
tinyurl.com/meh6zzcc



Kirk Session, St Andrew's Jerusalem & Tiberias

Coronation Lunch on 7th May



By the time you read this we will be gearing up for our community themed lunch after worship on 7th May.

Members, families and friends are encouraged to come along for an informal lunch after the service on the Coronation Weekend. We are aiming to reach out to our local area and invite some folk who might not normally come to church to join us for this celebration of our community of faith in Greenbank.

There will be a BBQ element, and a range of salads and cold dishes, home-made breads and cakes and sweet stuff. A competition to judge the best bread made in the parish will take place. Some members have of course experienced two Coronations!

Offers of help with food and serving on the day are needed, so please contact me on 07926812924.

Keep your diaries clear for this Greenbank version of the Street Party!

David Jack



The First Forest Church

On Saturday 25th March Julia and the Eco-Group hosted the first Forest Church. It was very well attended by families and friends. Several Pre School families came along and some of the children from previous children's events returned.

The first activities were adorning brown paper bags and making seed bombs with Edith; a lovely mixture of clay and compost was shaped into balls –some more spherical than others – and rolled in a wild-flower seed mix. Meanwhile the brown bags were decorated with the owner's name, and four words: Old, New, Surprise, Treasure. While flowers and rainbows adorned most bags, a couple included aliens.

The company wellied-up (it had rained all morning) and set out for Braidburn Valley Park where the children scattered to fill their bags with strange and wonderful finds to match their key words. The vast swathes of daffodils in the park took a mild hit, along with blossom, grass, sticks and stones.

During the afternoon potting up of plug plants and sowing seeds went on to produce plants for the Eco-Group's Plant Stall at the Christian Aid Coffee morning on 20th May. All the children helped and were able to take a small plant home to grow on.

On returning, tea, juice and cakes were consumed with pleasure and thanks to Fiona and Jean, while other crafts were pursued: Easter Cards on Wildflower Seeded paper, gold and silver leaf rubbings on black paper, cutting and sticking. The seed bombs had dried out enough to be carried home with the plants, cards and art work from the afternoon.

Julia's Surprise was when her sons used their scavenged flowers and blossom to fill pretty vases.

Building on this success the next Forest Church will be held from 2 to 4pm on **Saturday 10th June**, with another scheduled for **Saturday 7th October**.

Alison Murison



Friendship Club

We came to the end of the session with two diverse and exciting meetings; visiting Cramond Island with John Dods— who knew that so much history would be attached to such a small island? and with a fascinating exploration of Stained Glass, its history and its creation by our own Edith Armit. We will now admire our church windows with a greater understanding and appreciation.

And now we look to the summer with our Coffee Mornings (we squeezed in an extra one last month) and our Outing on Wednesday 10th May, meeting at 2pm at the church, for our cruise with the Seagull Trust on the canal starting from Ratho. We're hoping for a sunny day of relaxation and enjoyment.

Our next Coffee Morning will be on **Wednesday 14th June at 10.30am** in the Hermitage room but we will see you at the Outing before then.

Val Smart

Flower Rota

provided by

delivered by

May

7 Margo Fraser Susanna Waller

14 Land Family Fiona Kelly

21 Rosemary McCulloch Susan Black

28 Diana Hastings Irene Horne

June

4 Ina Weir Katie Bogie

Congregational Register

Ascensiontide Concert 20th May

On Saturday the 20th May at 7.30pm the **Greenbank Parish Church Choir** will be giving an Ascensiontide Concert singing

the Fauré Requiem

followed by the

Poulenc Organ Concerto

played by **Carlo Massimo** accompanied by

the **Edinburgh Chamber Orchestra** under the Director of Music **Alberto Massimo**.

Entry to the concert is free.

A retiring collection will be taken to defray the cost of all the music.

Refreshments will be served afterwards in the Main Hall.

Alberto Massimo



In the Valley of the Shadow of Death, no 7

Welcome Teams

May

- 7 **Ian Thomson**, Kathleen Patrick, Diana Teasdale, Jill Powlett Brown, Karen Young, Heather Kay
- 14 **Christina Morrow**, Edith Armit, Louise Coghill, Susan Black, Nora Kellock, Margot Gillon
- 21 **Donald King**, Jan Corbett, Roderick Morrison, Jim Young, Elaine McRae, Jane Harkin
- 28 **Rosemary McCulloch**, Moira Land, Malcolm Reid, Joan Ritchie, Fiona Grant, Martin Struthers, Barbara Middleton

June

- 4 **Keith Winton**, Richard Dunbar, Chris Horne, Robert Nimmo, Hazel Macaulay, Moira Small

The Ministry Team can be contacted directly

Ms Julia Cato (Associate Minister)
tel:

e-mail: jcato@churchofscotland.org.uk

Administrator: Ms Jackie Wilson-Tagoe
phone and fax: 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 2023 issue of *Greenbank Connections* should be delivered to the Editors' Pigeonhole by **Sunday 14th May 2023** or sent by e-mail by 8pm on **Thursday 18th April 2023** to: greenbankconnections@gmail.com



The Hill of Difficulty, no 5

Coffee Rota

May

- 7 Susan Inch & Chris Horne
- 14 Guild
- 21 Pre School
- 28 Nora Kellock

June

- 4 Communion, no coffee

Greenbank Holiday Club

For Primary School Children

Waste
Watchers

7th-11th August 2023

10am-12.15pm daily

£25 (£5/day)

To register, go to
www.greenbankchurch.org

