

Leaflet

Greenbank Parish Church
Braidburn Terrace, EH10 6ES
No 581 May 2008

Pulpit Diary

May 4

9.30am First Sunday Service: Rev Cogitator
Mpala, Faithshare Student
10.30am Morning Worship

May 11

9.30am Pentecost Communion Service
10.30am All Age Worship for Pentecost
7.00pm United Christian Aid Service (at
Fairmilehead)

May 18

10.30am Morning Worship

May 25

10.30am Morning Worship

Jun 1

9.30am End of Year Service led by
Spectrum 3
10.30am Morning Worship

For information about church organisations, please contact the Church Office (Mon–Fri, 9.30am–12.30pm):

Mrs May Brown

e-mail: greenbankchurch@btconnect.com

The pastoral team can be contacted through the Church Office:

Rev Alison Swindells

email: alisonswindells@blueyonder.co.uk

Mrs Anne Oxbrow

Please deliver material for the June Leaflet to the Editors' pigeon hole by 10.30am on Sunday 11th May, or to 17 Jordan Lane, EH10 4RA or by email to alison.murison@googlemail.com or j.murison@ed.ac.uk by 6pm on Tuesday 13th May.

Minister's Log

Dear Friends,

I recently came across the following story which appealed to my sense of humour.

It was about a huge ecumenical rally, which was being held in a large city. Every imaginable denomination was in attendance for this unprecedented event. One afternoon the gathering was in session when all of a sudden a secretary rushed in shouting, "The building's on fire! The building's on fire!" Confusion reigned as each church group came together and did what came naturally:

The Methodists gathered in the corner to pray. The Baptists cried, "Where's the water?" The Quakers quietly praised God for the blessings that fire brings. The Lutherans posted a notice on the door declaring that the fire was evil. The Roman Catholics passed a plate to cover the damages. The Unitarians reasoned that the fire would burn itself out if just given the chance. The Congregationalists shouted, "Every man for himself." The Fundamentalists proclaimed, "It's the vengeance of God." The Episcopalians formed a procession and marched out. The Christian Scientists concluded that there was no real fire. The Presbyterians appointed a chairperson to appoint a committee to look into the matter and make a written report.

And the church secretary grabbed a fire extinguisher and put the fire out!

I have to say that I couldn't help but smile as I read that, which probably means that there is, at the heart of that story, a certain element of truth, at least as far as Presbyterianism is concerned. I cannot speak from experience of the other denominations and hope that no offence is caused. Thank goodness for



the common sense of church secretaries – our own included!

As you receive this Leaflet we will be preparing to celebrate Pentecost, the birthday of the whole Christian Church. There was fire on that occasion too, as the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the friends

and followers of Jesus Christ, kindling a flame of enthusiasm within their hearts that would take them out to the ends of the earth with the good news of God's love for the world.

At this time of year our worship is focussed around the beginnings of the Church and we are reminded that the purpose of the Church in all its various guises, is mission. The hymn-writer, Ruth Duck, put it like this

As a fire is meant for burning
with a bright and warming flame
so the Church is meant for mission
giving glory to God's name.

Preaching Christ and not our customs,
let us build a bridge of care,
joining hands across the nations,
finding neighbours everywhere.

Sometimes we can become so caught up in what is happening within our own congregation or denomination even, that we have difficulty in seeing the broader picture. I hope that each of us might take the opportunity this Pentecost to reflect on what it means to be the Church of Jesus Christ, loving and serving the world in His name. How can we play our part in reaching out to our own friends and neighbours with the good news of God's love?

Wishing you every blessing,

Alison I Swindells
Minister



Christian Aid Week

11–17 May 2008

The Collectors' material will be available in the Church Main Hall on **Sunday 11th May** from **10am** onwards. The Committee would like to express sincere thanks to all who help with this worthy cause.

The Christian Aid service will be held on **Sunday 11th May at 7pm in Fairmilehead Church**, the address being given by the Rt Rev. Brian Smith, Bishop of Edinburgh. This will be held jointly with an Ecumenical Pentecost Songs of Praise service.

Tom Walker

Oberammergau 2010

I now have a supply of brochures from McCabe Travel, and we have three pilgrimage options available to us, flying from Edinburgh to Munich:

- **23 June–2 July** 10 days, with 7 nights at the Romisch Deutscher Kaiser (RDK) Hotel, Meiming (£1245 pp; single supplement £75)
- **28 June–5 July** 8 days, with 5 nights at the Alpenland Hotel, Maria Alm (£1095 pp; single supplement £95)
- **28 July–4 August** 8 days, with 5 nights at the Mohrenwirt Hotel, Fuschle (£1095 pp; single supplement £60).

Each pilgrimage will culminate in a two-night stay in or near Oberammergau. For the first time, the Passion Play will be performed in the afternoon and evening in 2010, starting at 2.30pm and concluding at 10.30pm with a three-hour break for dinner between 5pm and 8pm.

Prices quoted are accurate at Easter 2008, and may be subject to surcharge. McCabe Travel has requested payment of the first deposit of £200 per person, plus the optional insurance premium of £34 per person, before the end of May 2008. A second deposit of £300 per person will become due in July 2009.

What to do next

If you would like to register interest in the pilgrimage, please contact me and I will provide you with a brochure and Booking Form. I will also ask that you contact me by **Monday 5th May 2008**, indicating (in addition to your name and full contact details – address, telephone number and email if possible) the number of places you would like to request on the pilgrimage; and ranking the three departure dates in order of preference. The departure date will then be confirmed to you and if you are still interested in joining the pilgrimage on the chosen date you will be asked to complete the Booking Form and return this to me by **Friday 23rd May**, with a cheque made payable to McCabe Pilgrimages to cover the deposit and insurance premium. McCabe Travel will confirm your booking with you direct.

Jill Powlett Brown

18 Craighouse Terrace, Edinburgh EH10 5LJ
Email: jillpowlettbrown@hotmail.com

Lent and Easter Appeals

I am delighted to advise you that the total collected for Jamaica Education Support over the Lent period was **£5540**. This includes Gift Aid claimed on donations and has been sent to support the work of Roy and Jane Dodman.

Retiring collections taken at the evening services during Holy Week amounted to **£392** and this sum has been donated to The Open Door.

Fiona Watt, Treasurer

World Mission

One World Stall

The next One World stalls will be in the Main Hall after the morning services on **4th May** and **25th May**.



A Different Good Friday

The Care Shelter provides an evening meal, a warm place to sleep and a breakfast for up to 40 homeless in Edinburgh for November through to the end of March. Bethany Christian Trust performs a major feat of organisation involving over sixty churches of different denominations who between them provide the church hall and the catering teams. The halls are mainly near the City Centre and so Greenbank's involvement is to provide the catering team on three or four nights a year. Three members of staff from Bethany provide the professional staff for the night.

The church hall becomes a hostel by providing mattresses and blankets. The food which has been mainly prepared at home is put onto cook. There is then a short time for devotions (when it is difficult for the mind not to wander and worry whether the carrots will be cooked!).

It was very moving to have John 3 v.16 read on Good Friday, a reinforcement that the gift of Jesus is for everyone.

The minibus then makes two trips into the City Centre to pick up clients, some make their own way on foot and even an occasional bicycle has been seen. The catering team provide the driver for the minibus whilst other members prepare and serve hot drinks and the meal.

Each client is treated with respect and the majority of the time the catering team are thanked for the meal. Once the rush is over clients may want to sit and chat or are now ready to go to sleep. Some clients who have recently moved into their own accommodation come simply for the meal and for company. The reasons for homelessness are varied but often include family breakdown, mental health problems and alcohol and drug abuse.

Bethany staff are there to support clients and to help those who want to move into more stable accommodation. Bethany supports clients in different ways at different levels up to living independently in their own flat. The Care Shelter is helped financially by the sale of Christmas trees.

It is a different way to spend a Friday evening - but as one of our team said on the way out it is very humbling how our little effort means that everyone in Edinburgh can choose to sleep inside a warm hall. It also makes you very appreciative that, after clearing up and leaving cereal and milk for breakfast, you return not only to a warm bed but the love and support of your family.

Gillian Sweetman

Book of the Month

Take this Bread, by Sara Miles

Ballantine Books, Price £7.21; ISBN 978-0-345-48692-9

This is an account of the author's conversion from atheism to Christianity, and how that is translated into action. Sara Miles' parents railed against their upbringing as children of missionaries and raised their own children as atheists. Leaving home in the early 1970s, Sara extended her education at a radical college founded by internationalist Quakers and Communists. She earned a living from teaching illiterate adults to read, travelling and writing accounts of the conflicts in places such as El Salvador and Nicaragua, and working as a cook in the restaurant business.

Having settled in San Francisco, one morning, she went into an Episcopal Church called St Gregory's. As she describes it, she was not seeking Christianity, but was rather fascinated by the beautiful modern wooden building which she'd passed on walks. The church had been founded by priests looking to be inclusive and incorporating open communion and baptism. So it was that Sara, who had never heard a Gospel reading or said the Lord's Prayer, gathered with the others at the table and took the bread and the wine offered. That first communion was to change her life.

As she became more involved at St Gregory's she translated her beliefs into action by persuading the congregation to open up a Food Pantry. Poor people choose wholesome produce free of charge so that they can prepare it for their families at home. From thirty on the first morning, the numbers grew to nearly three hundred. People come to the Pantry looking for something to eat; they want, and receive, much more. They are being drawn into a community where they are accepted and loved. In time, the food pantry becomes staffed by the very people who had come to receive food. Sara and other members decide to cook feasts for all the volunteers to share at the end of their shift. The poor and marginalised who'd felt disconnected to conventional church, share their fears, failures, hopes and thoughts of God at the pantry. Food for thought!

Alison Ambler

Local Charity Organ Recital

Thursday 5th June, 7.30pm, Barclay Church

Once upon a time I had a fleeting connection with Greenbank.

It was many years ago now, but I applied for the post of organist and choirmaster – and what an awesome occasion that was! After being grilled by a committee I had to give an audition at the organ and then take a choir practice with your (excellent) choir – and all in the presence of the Olympian Dr John Kitchen, who had been drafted in to add gravitas to the proceedings and instil fear into the already terror-stricken candidate. So shell-shocked was I after the ordeal that, on returning home, I immediately wrote a letter withdrawing my application!

In the event I believe it was for the best. You were successful in gaining a new organist while I, in the course of time, ended up as organist at Barclay Church, just 5 minutes' walk from my door. Funny how things turn out!

From what I recall through the mists of panic I actually enjoyed the organ itself at Greenbank and was impressed with its versatility. The organ at Barclay is a different animal entirely, being a happy giant with 3 manuals, 41 stops, lots of attitude and charisma and an imposing organ case which directs the eyes up to the painted ceiling. It is on this intriguing instrument that I have been persuaded to give a recital on **Thursday 5th June at 7.30pm**. What lay behind the persuasion was the fact that the recital would be in a good cause. No fewer than 26 members of Barclay are heading off on a Summer mission to Peru† in connection with a project to help street kids there. As the concert is designed to help raise funds for this venture there will be a charge of £5 which I hope will not cause anyone immediate bankruptcy!

I am only too aware that not everyone is a fan of organ music and with this in mind I have put together a programme that should cover a wide range of tastes and avoid the esoteric fare often served up by organ buffs. Using the extensive resources of this organ which can whisper, seduce, impress or blow the roof off along with the best of them I hope to have enough of the 'easy listening' category to make the content accessible to all.

All I can do is invite you to consider coming along to Barclay – yes, the mad building



Help the Homeless



Fresh Start – Starter Packs

Sunday 11th May is the last date for donating items until September.

Items can be left on the table in the main hall on that date. Please keep the donations coming! Fresh Start is desperately short of Tupperware type plastic storage boxes, in excellent condition.

For more information about items needed for packs, or on volunteering for any of the Fresh Start projects, see www.freshstartweb.org.uk or contact me.

Alison Ambler

Board Notes

At its meeting on 15th April the Board appointed Mr Jim Young to serve as Preses for the forthcoming year. Approval was given to proposed expenditure to paint the Lower Hall and to replace slates on the south side of the church roof from the gable end to the ridge of the south transept. It was noted that the street doors beside the Office were in the course of being altered to open outwards to comply with Fire and Safety requirements. The financial position overall was close to what had been anticipated at this stage of the year.

The next meeting of the Board is on **3rd June**. Board Notes will resume in the autumn.

Kathleen Patrick



just up the road from the King's Theatre – where you could spend a relaxing hour in this most eccentric church, then enjoy refreshments afterwards, socialise and criticise the recital to your heart's content! It could be a fun evening and you would receive a very warm welcome at Barclay. Please give it a thought.

David Deas
Organist, Barclay Church

†Sounds familiar! (*Eds*)

NATIONAL GATHERING 3rd–5th MAY at INGLISTON

The Church across Scotland is holding a national gathering at the Royal Highland Centre at Ingliston from 3rd to 5th May. Why would you want to go? Well, if you do, you will hear how God is working in Scotland and elsewhere. You will be able to listen to well known speakers raising key issues – The Dawkins Delusion, The Rise of Militant Atheism, World without Walls, Islam: Exploring the Myths, Conflict and Resolution, Christian Values for the 21st Century.

There are also worship sessions, a KidZone for primary age children and their families, a YouthZone for secondary aged children and youth groups, an exhibition of resources and a Prayer-Zone. In fact, it offers a great day out with something for everyone!

It costs £10 for a day ticket, £17.50 for a weekend ticket and £30 for a family day ticket (2 adults and children under 16). Children under 5 go free (but need a ticket). So how do you get a ticket? The simple way is to book online. You can buy tickets at the gate but will have to pay a 10% manual handling charge.

If you'd like more information, go online: www.cwwresources.org.uk, or contact me.

David Allan
(email david.999@blueyonder.co.uk)

Bookstall

The next **Bookstall** will be in the main hall after the 10.30am service on **Sunday 18th May**. We will have a selection of books suitable for summer reading for all ages, and bible study guides, available for you to browse through and purchase if you wish. The *Book of the Month*, reviewed on page 3 of this *Leaflet*, will also be available. If you have any recommendations for the *Book of the Month*, or for titles you would like to see on the Bookstall, please contact us.

If you wish to donate Bibles for India (see poster), you can leave them with us.

We will be taking a break over the summer but the Bookstall will be back in the autumn.

John and Joan Ritchie

The Guild

The Guild ended its session in happy mode with a splendid concert by The Southern Light Seniors at which **£615** was raised for the Leprosy Mission, the Guild Project we are supporting this year.

Our annual night out is on **13th May** when we go to see the Phoebe Anna Traquair murals followed by a meal at the Bella Mbriana Restaurant, which is just across the road in East London Street. The cost for the evening is £20. If you haven't put your name down and would like to come contact Val Smart.

Val retired as co-ordinator of the Guild at the end of the session. She has led the Guild very ably – so much so that it is taking three people to replace her! We are delighted that she is moving onwards and upwards to become Convener of the Presbyterial Council.

Guild Committee 2008 – 2009

Co-ordinator	Ann Pirie
Assistant Co-ordinator	Edith Armit
Secretary	Grace Fowler
Minute Secretary	Margaret Macrae
Treasurer	Kay Ellis
Members	Kenneth Macrae, Gina Millar, Chrissie Munroe, Isabel Rae, Sheila Uren



Over the Summer there will be coffee mornings in the Church Hall on **3rd June, 1st July, 5th August** and **2nd September**. Do come along and catch up with all the news!

Ann Pirie

Friendship Club

At the final meeting of the Friendship Club on 19th March our speaker was the Rev. Donald Scott, Chaplain to the Young Offenders' Institute in Polmont. It is a brave man who can devote his life and skill to finding a purpose for youngsters whose offences are so serious that they find themselves serving a sentence in Polmont. We were greatly impressed by Mr Scott's devotion, and conviction that he could help them find a purpose in their lives, and with direction enable them to live equably with

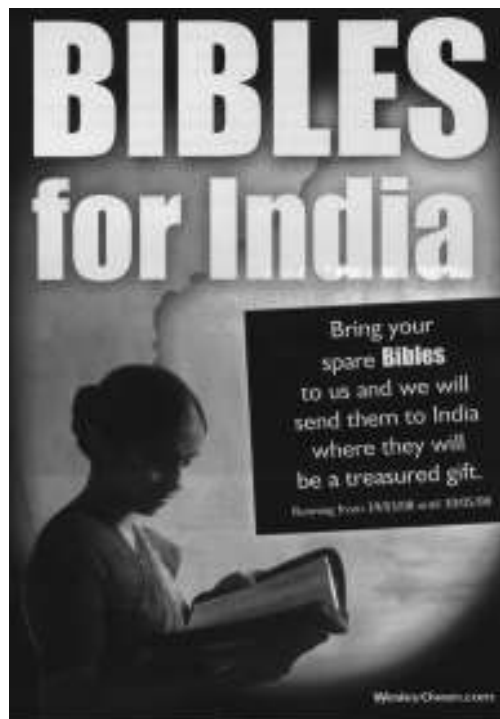
others on their release.

It wasn't all success of course, but his patience, interest and hard work has changed for good the lives of many and we were full of admiration for his commitment and help.

The Club has enjoyed another successful and happy session with good attendances at all meetings, ably and kindly led by Hope Hunter, lately coping with ill health. The members wished him well in the weeks ahead and a swift return to better health.

We look forward to our annual outing to Abbotsford on **Wednesday 7th May**.

Eileen Crawford



Walking Group

The Social Committee is proposing to lead a further walk (less than 5 miles) on **Monday 12th May**. Anyone interested in taking part should meet in the Hermitage Room at **11.45am on Sunday 4th May** to discuss arrangements, or contact Clifford Hastings or Stuart Macmillan.

Congregational Register

Omitted from the on-line version of the *Leaflet*

Roy and Jane Dodman

The church has received a letter from the Dodmans, dated March 2008. A copy has been posted on the Hall corridor notice board.

Roy and Jane will arrive in Edinburgh on furlough on Wednesday 23rd April and will be based here until the first week in July. Their address in Edinburgh is:

Flat 3, 28 Springfield Street, Edinburgh EH6 5DU
Email: rdodman@cwjamaica.com

They look forward to seeing and sharing with as many of us as possible over the next few months.

Editors



SPRING FAIR

Saturday 24th May 2008, 10am-2.30pm

Stalls: Home Baking & Preserves

New, Nearly New Goods & Crafts

Plants: Indoor, Outdoor & Bedding Plants

Books, DVDs, CDs & Jigsaws

Traidcraft & Fairtrade

Quality Toys & Games

Children's Activities & Face Painting

Various Craft & Design Professional Stalls

Music by Boroughmuir H.S. Big Band

& Greenbank Church Praise Band

Refreshments: Coffee, Tea, Juice, Soup

with a variety of filled Rolls and Biscuits

The Committee will be happy to receive

donations of quality goods and crafts at

any time prior to the event and home

baking during the day.

All Welcome - Admission Free and proceeds
to Christian Aid's "Healthcare Work".

For further information contact

Tom Walker, David Ferguson or John Mowat.

Duty Teams

4 May (First Sunday) Walter Crosby, Brian Barron, Donald King, Donald McLeod, Roderick Morrison, Mairi Stevenson, Jim Young and Kathryn Sangster.

11 May (+ 9.30 Communion) John Rutherford, David Allan, Richard Denison, Kenneth Htet-Khin, Caroline Kehoe, Anne Kinnear, John Mowat, Jean Roynon-Jones and Colin Winchester.

18 May John Ritchie, Eric Brown, Stewart Coghill, Ralph Davidson, John Htet-Khin, Susan Inch, Gill Sweetman and Ian Thomson.

25 May Alan Armit, Edith Armit, Patrick Cadell, Iain Davidson, David Ferguson, Michael Pearson, Neil Ross, Malcolm Watters and Elizabeth Mackay.

1 Jun Tom Walker, Stewart Hunter, Frank Hutson, Alison Murison, Valerie Macniven, Paul Maxwell, Bill Frazer, Fiona Grant and Leslie Stokoe.

Coffee Rota

May

4th D53, D54 & D56 – Ian & Isobel Thom

11th D89 – Hazel Macaulay

18th D12A – Edith Armit

25th D40 – John, Elizabeth & Kenny Htet-Khin



Crèche Rota

Supervisor

May

4th Jean Roynon-Jones

11th Anne Oxbrow

18th Janet Inglis

25th Cathie Maclennan

June

1st Sandra Farrer



Helper

Fiona Trew

Christine Wallace

Flora Pollock

Catherine Webb

Fiona Trew

Church Flowers

Provided by

May

4th Nancy Wilson

11th Martin Jones Family

18th Marjory Thomson

25th Rosemary McCulloch

June

1st Weir Family

Delivered by

Winnie Milne

Isobel Brown

Janet McAinsh

Margaret Mack

Fiona Watt



For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to plant...

In the spring of the year garden centres do a roaring trade. Whenever there is a spell of dry weather and the ground begins to warm up, even the most reluctant of gardeners realise that no more excuses can be made. In gardens and allotments the soil is turned over and broken down; fertiliser is applied; and the ground is raked ready to receive seeds for all sorts of vegetables. Those with greenhouses will already have plants well-established and ready for planting out whenever the conditions are right. Trays of annuals are bought to fill empty borders, window boxes and hanging baskets. There is a time to plant...

The annual cycle of the seasons determines not only the activities of the domestic gardener but the work of the farmer. Although some fields are already green with crops sown in the autumn or even in the late summer to stand over the winter, farmers with arable land will work all day and every day to sow seed and plant potatoes. And in market gardens and smallholdings there is a burst of activity to make the most of the lengthening days and growing warmth. There is a time to plant...

There is nothing new in any of this. There may be a greater use of sophisticated technology on farms; we have a deeper understanding of the delicate balance to be maintained in the composition of the soil; there is an ever-expanding range of varieties of vegetables, flowers, fruits and grains to be sown or planted. However, for millennia humankind has recognised its dependence on the recurring cycle of nature, as promised long ago in the ancient story about the Flood: *As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.* And in this annual cycle there is a time to plant...

Jesus was familiar with the farming practices of his time. Some of his best-loved stories are set against an agricultural background: two brothers lived with their father on a big farm; casual workers were hired by the day to harvest grapes; sheep could wander away from the flock. Many of his memorable sayings refer to everyday farming activities. But what seems to have attracted Jesus most of all was the mysterious process of sowing and germination and growth. From his observation of these phenomena he made up little stories which can speak to us still down through the centuries.

There is a delightful homeliness to Jesus' stories about sowing and growth. The Old Testament said that God was more powerful than even the majestic cedars of Lebanon, the biggest trees any one at that time had seen. Jesus brought divine things down to earth, to grains of wheat and mustard seeds, proverbially the tiniest of all. In the same way when the Old Testament pictured God's care for his people as like that of a mighty eagle carrying its young; Jesus compared himself to a farmyard hen with its chickens. Jesus wants us to look afresh at familiar sights: at our gardens, orchards, fields, and to learn from what we witness.

What we see may speak to us of the divine power working in all the growth and life that surrounds us. More importantly, the processes of nature point beyond themselves to insights into the nature of God's ways. This emerges from two stories told by Jesus. In the first he said: *A farmer went out sowing. He scattered seed on the earth, and then didn't bother about it any more. Every day he got on with his farmwork, and every night he went to bed and slept. The days went by, and the seeds sprouted and grew tall. The farmer didn't know how it happened, but he knew what the soil itself could do...* And the second is even shorter: *The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs...*

Jesus reminded his hearers of two simple facts everyone knew. The first was, that once the farmer has sown his seed it grows in ways that are none of his doing. The farmer is not lazy nor does he neglect his duties. The seed grows without him, whether he wakes or sleeps. And he does not know how it grows. The whole process goes on by itself, automatically, until the grain is ripe and ready for harvest. That was one well-known fact. The second was this. When a tiny mustard seed is sown it can grow into a plant bigger than all the rest, ten or twelve feet high. Jesus used these

two simple everyday facts to set before his first followers long ago and his people in all generations ever since the mystery of something we would otherwise find difficult to grasp.

In these stories Jesus was helping people see what was going on. People expected God's new world to be massively powerful and all-embracing and may have been disappointed with the tiny revolution inaugurated by Jesus. Jesus

was suggesting that the mystery of God's activity is like the mystery of growth: it is not dependent on anything we can do, but on God alone. In the world of nature the gardener sows and harvests, but in between it is no human power which makes the seed grow. So too Jesus came, preaching and healing, and was crucified and buried. How could that alone produce a new world? But look at the tiny mustard seed, so insignificant. Look at Jesus sowing his words in the earth and being finally buried in it himself, again seemingly insignificant. There is a time to plant...

Is this a mystery being used to explain a mystery? Jesus was not trying to explain but to generate faith, "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" as another writer puts it. Just as the gardener has to trust that the seeds sown in the black earth are germinating, in the same way we have to trust that God's new world is on the way. And everybody knows that a grown plant is much bigger than the seed from which it comes. In our own experience we know that from tiny beginnings there can be startling and fruitful conclusions. It should not be so difficult to believe that the comparatively small events of Jesus' life and death could have a result which transforms the whole world!

