

the monthly record

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ICRC IN PRETORIA

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

CONSENSUS ON ASSISTED DYING AND EUTHANASIA

CHINESE CHURCH LEADER JAILED

IMPRESSIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA



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COMMUNION DATES

January

- 1st Dumfries
- 15th Tain; Dunblane
- 22nd Livingston
- 29th Orlig

On the 9th of December, the first full length feature film version of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* goes on general release. There have been various attempts previously to bring this classic modern children's story to the screen—including a good animated version and the BBC series with a rather wooden Aslan.

So this is an event to be savoured by the several generations of those who have been captivated by C S Lewis' fairy tale when they were young (and some not so young). As far as can be judged from the trailer on the official Disney website (see below) and comments of those involved in producing the film, it should be up to the high technical standards set by *The Lord of the Rings* films, and hopefully will faithfully reflect the intrinsically Christian content of the original book.

Although *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* was the first written, it is the second volume chronologically in what became *The Chronicles of Narnia*. We hope that Disney will go on to produce the other six films as planned.

How did a middle-aged bachelor and Oxford lecturer come to write this best-selling series of children's books just after the middle of the 20th century?

Clive Staples Lewis was born in 1898 in Belfast. By the time he had emerged from various English boarding schools and experience in the trenches in the First World War, and had graduated with a triple First Class honours degree from Oxford, he was a convinced atheist. It was through friendship with JRR Tolkien and other Christians that he came to see that the ancient myths which he so loved in literature found their true fulfilment in the Christian faith. It was in this sense that he said that Christianity is the true myth. The ancient pagan myth of a dying God actually happened in the crucifixion of Jesus.

He had a lifelong fascination with myth and legend and became an expert in this genre of literature. So much so that he once gave a devastating riposte to modern biblical critics who claimed that the Gospel of John, for instance, was myth. He said, "I have been reading poems, romances, vision-literature, legends, myths all my life. I know what they are like. I know that not one of them is like this" (*Fern-seed and Elephants*).

However, when he came to write a book for his goddaughter, Lucy Barfield, it was a fairy tale that he chose to write, but a fairy tale infused with Christian emphases. This and the six other books that followed—*The Magician's Nephew* (first in the history of Narnia), *The Horse and His Boy*, *Prince Caspian*, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, *The Silver Chair* and *The Last Battle*—have enthralled millions of children, many of whom had no idea of the Christian dimension of the stories. However, the very reading of them has sensitised people to the gospel.

For those who read them as Christians, it is a special experience to discover Biblical insights about Jesus, faith and the Christian life in an imaginary world. I did not have the opportunity to read them as a child. It was only when my daughter Katharine was five years old that I read them for the first time as I read them to her. It was a special experience. I will always remember asking her, when we were well through *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, whom she thought Aslan was like. Without hesitation she replied, "God." So much for those child psychologists who think children that young cannot



understand such complex spiritual and linguistic concepts!

In spite of the obvious Christian lessons that can be drawn from the books, C S Lewis did not set out to write an allegory like *Pilgrim's Progress* (he did in fact write such an allegory earlier in his career, entitled *Pilgrim's Regress*). *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* arose naturally out of his imagination, and that is what gives it its strength. The world of Narnia began with a picture of a Faun carrying an umbrella and parcels in a snowy wood, and of a lamppost and a Queen on a sledge. He began to write a story to explain these, and he says, "At first I had little idea how the story would go. But then suddenly Aslan came bounding into it. I think I had been having a good many dreams of lions about that time. Apart from that I don't know where the Lion came from or why He came. But once He was there, He pulled the whole story together, and soon He pulled the other six Narnian stories in after Him."

Aslan is indeed one of the greatest creations in literature. He is a perfectly good figure, but not in the least boring or predictable, giving the lie to the oft repeated idea that, in literature and film, only bad characters are interesting.

If the film does even a little bit of justice to the book, it will be worth seeing and encouraging your children to see it.

Official Disney Film Website:

<http://disney.go.com/disneypictures/narnia/>

More information:

<http://books.narnia.com/movielanding.html>

www.walden.com

www.cslewis.org

Consensus on Assisted Dying and Euthanasia



Eric J. Mackay

Dr Mackay highlights pro-life responses to the present pressures towards euthanasia, such as MSP Jeremy Purvis' Bill before the Scottish Parliament.

On 29th October I was one of about 50 concerned parties who met in Edinburgh to consider a common response to the pressures present in society and in particular before both Houses of Parliament. Attendance was drawn from evangelical Christian organisations; a number of largely RC supported groups and a Muslim doctor. The meeting was chaired by an MSP and was addressed by a journalist, a lawyer, a RC ethicist, a Palliative Care Consultant and the Muslim doctor.

The Journalist, Katie Grant (Scotsman) approached the subject from a social and societal angle. She made the point that death faces us all and that if the cautions about killing and expediting death are withdrawn, there will follow much wider attitudinal changes in society.

She felt that even on a purely utilitarian argument, the introduction of euthanasia would have profound repercussions. She examined in whose best interests was this being promoted? Ostensibly it was for the patient and 'patient choice'—personal autonomy. But this concept was ultimately an illusion. Society operated on degrees of trust as regards goods and services and between individuals and especially within families. A death always affected others, with sorrow, guilt, transfer of responsibilities. She saw planned killing as introducing a widespread loss of trust in the doctor/patient relationship and within families. Double pressure could fall on the dying, in which 'duty' to avoid causing trouble, 'blocking' a bed, using up an inheritance, could all induce them to ask for action. She felt there was a silent boundary which if crossed would be

impossible to re-establish. The Abortion Act, introduced by Parliament on the basis of 'bad' cases and for a very carefully screened number has become a 'norm' with a total absence of screening. The 'slippery slope' was no illusion.

The contribution by a Christian Lawyer, Mary Kearns, was most helpful. She detailed the legislative processes involved in both Houses of Parliament. Lord Joffé was planning to re-vamp his Bill and to produce it within weeks. The Government had been equivocal in the question of 'giving the Bill time', and could be swayed by vote catching and not by any moral impetus. Mary made the point that the relatively small group comprised within the Voluntary Euthanasia Society and the Humanist Society, are strong-minded individualists who deny the existence of God and wish for themselves the 'right' to decide when their life appears to them to be unbearable. The 'bad' cases scenarios about unrelieved pain and developing motor neurone paresis are used as 'stalking horses' for the satisfaction of their own 'religious' demands, which they trumpet, as a 'release' and the emergence of true freedom for all.

This perhaps explains the blatant misinformation which is given about Holland and Oregon, where Euthanasia, or 'Assisted Death' are now legal. The 'strict' controls in both countries turn out to have no transparency. The reporting and documentation of doctor mediated 'killing' is only about 50%. There are no penalties for non-reporting. In Holland 1,000 deaths a year at a minimum, occur without either a patient or a relative's request. In Oregon Palliative care is at an all-time low and referral for

a psychiatric opinion on competence to demand death, lies at 5%. Patient and professional 'privacy' are used as excuses for minimalist annual reports. In Oregon, it is suspected that the 'second opinion' doctor actually arrives with the fatal dose in his pocket. The debate on 'Assisted Suicide' in the BMA this year, was introduced on the final morning when many had left and was passed by eleven votes (BMA membership 134,000 doctors). Jeremy Purvis MSP has claimed that the majority of submissions which he has received are in support of his proposed Bill. Yet he has chosen to record submissions from churches and professional groups representing many members as single votes. An interesting interpretation of 'Consultation!'

Purvis in his literature has chosen also to 'muddy' the waters by using the description of 'double effect' as an 'abominable Roman Catholic doctrine'. 'Double effect', the question of whether any treatment, be it medicine or a procedure, will benefit or by its complications, hinder, the welfare of the patient, is included in pretty well every medical decision. The anti-life group make the claim that 'euthanasia' goes on all the time as when opioids are prescribed to the dying who are in pain, ultimately they will die and they then claim that the heroin or morphine killed them. 'What's the difference?!' The fact is that the patient, relieved of pain and allowed good quality rest, has had good quality life and relationship extended, not shortened by effective pain control, and it was the disease which eventually killed them. There is a world of difference in intention between gradually increasing a dose of morphine to match increasing pain, over days and months as against administering a very large dose for non-therapeutic purposes.

Rev Joseph Keenan, examined the question as to why these ethical matters were being pushed, ever more stridently, now. He concluded that the Christian who knows Christ, has 'hope'. Christ took on a human form, died, rose again and now lives. He is the example and the guarantee that eternal life is real. So the Christian's hope goes beyond the grave. For those who have no faith and who postulate for themselves nothingness after death, their ultimate state is despair, even despair at the position they have chosen to adopt—and so they wish a quick and speedy exit. He and the Muslim speaker, both seemed to be involved in a confusion about 'merit' arising from suffering, with 'obedience' and 'acceptance' earning points for heaven. I don't think the Holy Spirit was mentioned.

Dr Lieper, a Palliative Care Consultant and a Christian, covered a lot of ground touched on by the other speakers. The recognition by a doctor of the point in the progression of a disease in a patient, when cure is not going to be attained, is not an easy decision. He only had a limited number of referrals from the hospital sector. Hospices had done pioneering work in identifying the need at that point, for a complete re-appraisal of priorities. He examined these in some detail. Pain and bodily discomfort were only some of many pressures producing reactions to suffering, such as anger, depression and anxiety. He touched on requests for death ('wee blue pill'), which were often tentative and opening up a franker discussion of prognosis as compared with a declared demand to be killed of which he met about 2 in 500 cases he supervised, each year. He pointed out that the precautions both proposers were talking of building in to their Bills involved a lot of doctor input as well as involvement of nurses and pharmacists. He himself gave notice that he would decline to be involved if such a process was brought in,

really to give the appearance of legitimacy to an illegal process. The College of GPs, the largest medical College with 34,000 members had reconsidered a 'neutral stance' advocated at their AGM, met twice as a Council, consulted with Faculties and came out strongly against Lord Joffé's Bill. The politicians can talk all they like, but it would be GPs whose relationship with their patients would be radically altered and who would be placed in the firing line and ordered to do the dirty work.

In the final discussion the MSP Michael McMahon, gave his opinion that there was not a great deal of support among MSPs for Jeremy Purvis' Bill. However it was important that as many as possible wrote to their MSP, their Westminster MP and the House of Lords. This should be done, giving full name and address. Number of letters mattered. One can be certain that the 'Voluntary Euthanasia Society' or 'Dying with Dignity' as they have now re-named themselves, will have every member writing multiple letters to create the impression of widespread support.

Scottish Parliament

Dying with Dignity?

Jeremy Purvis MSP lodged his proposal for a Bill in the Scottish Parliament on 25th October. The proposal is for a Bill to allow for a mentally capable, terminally ill adult the right to receive medical assistance to die.

www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/bills/membersBills.htm

House of Lords

Assisted Dying for the Terminally Ill Bill

The Select Committee Report on the Assisted Dying for the Terminally Ill Bill was debated in the House of Lords in October.

This Private Members Bill was introduced by Lord Joffé in March 2004 and was intended to "enable a competent adult who is suffering unbearably as a result of terminal illness to receive medical assistance to die at his own considered and persistent request", or put simply, to introduce voluntary euthanasia. Although the Bill 'lapsed' at the end of the last Parliamentary session, a Select Committee of the House of Lords had already been established to look at the Bill. The report of the Select Committee was published in April.

During the debate, which lasted over 9 hours, Lord Joffé again hinted that he is minded to introduce a Bill along the lines of the so called 'Oregon model', where doctors would be asked to prescribe a lethal dose of barbiturates which a patient would self administer. This practice is sometimes called, 'physician assisted suicide'.

Some press reports have indicated that the Government ministers may give the Bill time in the House, thus improving its chances of success.

Impressions o



It is impossible to do justice in a short article to South Africa, or even our mission work in the Eastern Cape, or even that small part of the work I saw there on a few days visit. But I must try.

I took advantage of being sent as a Free Church delegate to the ICRC conference in Pretoria to visit our missionaries in King William's Town, and particularly Douglas and Julia Campbell from my own congregation of Buccleuch. It was great to see them in situ. It is now easier to understand the joys and challenges of working there. It was great too to see the twins, Mari and Beth (who are not always as tranquil as in the photo!) and their big sister Ovi. It was especially good to see their joy at a new inflatable pool in their back garden!



South Africa is a beautiful country, and the area around King William's Town made me feel very much at home as it is on high ground like much of Scotland with higher mountains on the near horizon. It is mainly grassland plateau where the traditional way of life was pastoral with the rearing of sheep and goats and especially cattle.

The people who live there are the amaXhosa (the Xhosa people) who have this amazing 'clicking' language (the various clicks are represented in writing by X, Q and K). Next to the Zulu people, the Xhosa are the next biggest people group in South Africa and many of the black leaders of the country are from this area. Many of them studied at Fort Hare University in Alice.



King William's Town was the home of Steve Biko, who was a noted nonviolent anti-apartheid activist in South Africa in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1972, Biko became honorary president of the Black People's Convention. He was banned during the height of apartheid in March 1973, meaning that he was not allowed to speak to more than one person at a time and so could not make speeches in public. During that time he lived in an outhouse at the back of the Anglican Church which is now Dumisani Theological Institute (photo bottom left)! I was told that the police would watch him from the street as he sat outside his front door, not aware that he was addressing groups of people at the back of the church!



In 1977 he was arrested under the Terrorism Act. He suffered a major head injury while in police custody. Police loaded him into the back of a car and drove the 740 miles to Pretoria. He died shortly after the arrival in the Pretoria prison. I visited his grave in King.

Since the 1960s, the growth of industry and the attractions of city life with paid employment has lured many off the land to townships around the towns and cities (or else people travel

Words of Steve Biko:

"The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed."
"It is better to die for an idea that will live, than to live for an idea that will die."
"Whites must be made to realize that they are only human, not superior. Same with blacks. They must be made to realize that they are also human, not inferior."

f South Africa

long distances to work, relying on 'taxi' minibuses). The quality of housing in the townships range from good to very poor, but the Government is making great strides in providing electricity and water to all houses.

No matter how poor people are, they all make a great effort to ensure that their children are well provided for. I was fascinated to see the children going home from school, all immaculately turned out in school uniform. One girl I met, Pamela Ngqinitsa, lives in the green house (photo on right, second from top) with her grandmother Mama Khonzi in Zikhalini—Pamela's mother is dead and her father is away working—but she is studying hard to fulfil her ambition of becoming an accountant.

However, it is also a nation with huge problems. There is still a huge disparity between the rich and poor, not only between white and black, but now also between black and black. Some have benefited by the political changes, while for others the benefits are slow in coming. There is fear that the resentment over the slowness of development may boil over, particularly when Mandela is no longer around.

There is also a big crime problem. There are areas (as in any of our own cities) where it would be unsafe to walk. But Douglas said he never felt unsafe out in his rural parish.

But on top of crime there is a huge AIDS problem. I visited the orphanage from which Douglas and Julia adopted Ovayo. Many of the children (like the one on the front cover) are orphaned because their parents have died of AIDS, and some of them will have HIV too. The staff there are trying their best with little resources. It would break your heart.

To compound the problem, the idea has got around (it can only have come from the pit of hell) that you can cure yourself of AIDS by having sex with a child. Thus the child contracts HIV.

This is the society where the missionaries and black pastors and workers labour in the community and in Dumisani. They are doing a tremendous work, by the grace of God. Douglas, for instance is responsible for a district of seven churches scattered over the wide rural area of Knox.

The singing of the Xhosa people is out of this world. I think Willie Ruff should research the interaction between Psalm-singing and Black music in South Africa!

But not all is rosy in the Church. I attended a Presbytery and I felt as if I was back in the bad old days of the 1990s in the Free Church in Scotland! (See photo bottom right.) There are tensions, for instance, between those who worked for the police under the apartheid regime and those who were ANC. Great wisdom, firmness and love are required!



Photographs (clockwise from top right):

Ladies outside church; Mama Khonzi's house; shebeen in Dimbaza; Presbytery; Dumisani; Steve Biko inscription; Beth, Mari & Ovayo; Missionaries plus visitors (clockwise from top left): Douglas Campbell, Alistair Wilson, Norman Reid, Ronald Christie, the Editor, Julia Campbell, Angela Reid, Jenny Wilson, Morag Christie, David and Annabel Robertson



ICRC Pretoria

The Free Church of Scotland is a founding member of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) which meets every four years. This year the Conference met in Pretoria, South Africa, from 12th—19th October, and the Free Church sent their full compliment of four delegates—Rev Fergus Macdonald, Rev James Maciver, Rev David Robertson and Rev Alex MacDonald. The former three were accompanied (at their own expense) by their wives, and young Alasdair Maciver came along too (and it's a good thing he did as he kept the editor right on numerous occasions!)

It was a memorable conference. We were extremely well looked after by the local Free Reformed Church in “Jacaranda City” (the title given to Pretoria because of the prevalence of the *purple* flowering jacaranda tree—it was kind of them to flower at the right time to match the editor's shirts). The part we were staying in was very beautiful, but we also saw the other side of things when we visited one of the huge townships on the outskirts of the city to attend a service on the Sunday. It was an enthusiastic black church in a good building, but surrounded by poverty and squalor.

New Members

During the meeting, three new members were added to the Conference—the Reformed Churches in South Africa, the Reformed Churches of Spain, and the Reformed Confessing Church in Congo bringing the number of member churches to 25 and the combined membership of the member churches to almost 700,000. The basis of the fellowship among the member churches in the Conference is a commitment to the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as confessed

in the historic Reformed standards: the Three Forms of Unity and/or the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms.

FCC Application for Membership

Our readers will be particularly interested in one application for membership—that of the FCC. This got off to a bad start, in that the FCC had sent a paper to the ICRC to be circulated to all members, but due to a mistaken email address, Free Church delegates did not receive it. It turned out this paper was seeking to go over the events of the past 20 years, particularly matters relating to the internal discipline of the Free Church. This did not go down too well with the delegates.

In the end the Conference decided unanimously (apart from two abstentions) not to grant membership to the FCC at present. The decision was as follows:

1. *The ICRC does not accept the application for membership of the FCC at this time.*
2. *The ICRC urge the FCC as Christian brothers to cease from civil action against their brothers in the Free Church of Scotland.*
3. *The ICRC urge both the FCC and the FCS to seek biblical ways of reconciliation.*
4. *The ICRC encourages the FCC to attend our conference as observers*
5. *The ICRC will be most willing to receive a new application by the FCC when there is no longer any civil case between the churches.*

Grounds

1. *The FCC are currently engaged in civil action against the FCS. No Church should be accepted as a member church of the ICRC*

whilst it is engaged in taking a member church to a civil court on a matter of church discipline for the following reasons:

a) Taking a member church to court is contrary to the Reformed foundations of the ICRC in that it contradicts the teaching of Scripture to which we are bound. 1 Cor. 6:6-7 "But instead one brother goes to law against another—and this in front of unbelievers! The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means that you have already been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated?"

b) Taking a member church to court is contrary to the stated purposes of the ICRC, namely

i) To express and promote the unity of the faith that the member churches have in Christ.

ii) To encourage the fullest ecclesiastical fellowship among the member churches.

iii) To encourage cooperation among the member churches in fulfilment of the missionary and other mandates.

iv) To present a reformed testimony to the world.

2. Reconciliation is something that all Christians should seek.

The Free Church delegates were encouraged by this outcome, and it is to be hoped that the FCC will soon drop their court action and that relations between the two churches can begin to be normalised.

Missions

One of the main purposes of the Conference is to encourage cooperation among the member churches in the fulfilment of the missionary mandate. The Conference received the report of its Missions Committee, and noted the successful regional gatherings (Asia/Pacific in Thailand in February 2003 and Africa in the Democratic Republic of Congo in September 2003) since the last meeting. The Missions Committee also presented a summary of the results of the survey it had conducted regarding the worldwide missions work of the member churches. A new mandate for the Missions Committee was adopted, which included development of a list of mission contact representatives for each of the member churches, who will be responsible for disseminating ICRC missions information and materials to their respective churches.

Papers

The central theme of the Conference was "The Lordship of Christ," and four papers were presented to open up various aspects Christ's Lordship in the believer, the church, and the world. Discussions and workshops were conducted with respect to each of the papers.

The first paper was presented by Dr. A. J. de Visser on *The Lordship in the Life of the Believer*. Dr. de Visser started by giving a biblical perspective on the theme, including the fact of Christ's Lordship and its implications. He then discussed the question as to how the Lordship of Christ functions in churches in various parts of the world, and suggested that the Lordship of Christ is a powerful antidote against the widespread problems of both antinomianism and legalism.

The second paper was presented by Prof. J. W. Maris of the Netherlands on *The Lordship of Christ in the Life of the Church*. Prof. Maris began the development of his theme by discussing

Member Churches

- Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC)
- Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRC)
- Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC)
- Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (CGKN)
- Confessing Reformed Church in Congo (ERCC)
- Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales (EPCEW)
- Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland (EPCI)
- Free Church of Central India (FCCI)
- Free Church of Scotland (FCS)
- Free Church in Southern Africa (FCSA)
- Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (VGIKSA)
- Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA)
- Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC)
- Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (PCEA)
- Presbyterian Church in Korea (Kosin) (PCK(K))
- Reformed Churches in Indonesia – NTT (GGRI)
- Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated) (GKNV)
- Reformed Churches of New Zealand (RCNZ)
- Reformed Churches in South Africa (GKSA)
- Reformed Churches of Spain (IRE)
- Reformed Churches in the United States (RCUS)
- Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland (RPCI)
- Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA)
- Reformed Presbyterian Church of North East India (RPCNEI)
- United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA)

Observers and visitors

Ten other churches sent observers or visitors to the Conference, several of which introduced themselves or updated the meeting on current work:

- The Church of Christ in Sudan Among the Tiv (NKST)
- The Ethiopian Reformed Presbyterian Church (ERPC)
- The Evangelical Reformed Church in Sweden (ERCS)
- The Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) (FCC)
- The Heritage Reformed Congregations in North America (HRCNA)
- The Independent Reformed Church in Korea (IRCK)
- The Mehrete Yesus Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Eritrea (MYEPC)
- The Reformed Church in Japan (RCJ)
- The Reformed Churches of South Africa (Soutpansberg Synod) (GKSA—S)
- The United Reformed Churches in Myanmar (URCM)



the relation of Christ to the identity of the church. He then explored Christ's three offices, especially that of King, and the consequences of the Christ's Kingship for the church's obedience. The Lordship of Christ also drives the agenda of the church in its mission endeavours, in its quest for biblical unity, and in its government. He concluded by observing some implications for the future of the church, noting that there will be no end to Christ being King and Lord of His people.

The final two papers were presented by the Rev. Messrs. Y. Dethan of Indonesia and D. Robertson of Scotland on *The Lordship of Christ Proclaimed in the World*. Mr. Dethan focused on the proclamation of the gospel to pagans and on the suffering of persecuted believers. He challenged the meeting to bear in mind that, in bringing the gospel to pagans, we should not compromise, but rather confront them with the Scriptures, bearing in mind that this is our duty, the result is God's. He concluded by reminding the meeting that persecutions do not arise by chance. God allows them to test our faith, for our purification, and for His own glory. Mr. Robertson focused on the challenges of proclaiming the Lordship of Christ to a postmodern age, where institutions are suspect, the present is dominant, and there is no master story. In taking up this challenge, he encouraged Reformed churches to be real (rather than simply role play), to be radical (in the sense of taken everything back to the Scriptures), and to be genuine in developing relationships with unbelievers. He concluded with the plea that evangelism and church planting not be relegated to the peripheries in the life of the church, but to remember that the Lord uses the theology, government, and worship that arise out of our Reformed understanding of Scripture to build up His church, to bring sinners to Himself, and glory to His name—whether in a postmodern, modern, traditional, or whatever culture or age in which we happen to live.

Church Growth

One of the exciting aspects of the Conference was the opportunity to speak to people of many different cultures from many parts of the world, and particularly to hear about what God is doing. Some churches, such as those in Sweden and

Spain are very small, but some, such as the churches in Nigeria and Congo are large—much larger than the Free Church, for instance. One denomination has 250 churches, and all churches must have at least 300 members before they can be recognised as churches! When I asked one of the ministers what was the secret of their success, he said that they prayed and they told people about Jesus. He started his church with two men who came to mend a hole in the roof of his house! They invited family and friends and so it grew. I think we can learn a lot about simplicity from the church in the developing world. We don't need expensive schemes and complex strategies. We just need to go back to the simplicity of New Testament methods.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the ICRC is scheduled to be held in 2009 in New Zealand, with the Reformed Churches of New Zealand as host (New Zealand—the land of *The Lord of the Rings*—I think I'll volunteer as a delegate right away!)

Photographs: Page 8 – Jacaranda City! This page (top) – Rev James Maciver, Rev David Robertson, Rev Dr Mbanongon Kurugh Antiev (Congo), Rev Fergus Macdonald, the Editor (spot the Free Church minister!) Below - Rev Ngoy Nsenga, Rev Muamba Beya (Nigeria) Rev James Maciver.



Ian MacDonald, Elder, Perth & Pitlochry

The congregation of Perth and Pitlochry record with sadness the passing of their senior elder Mr Ian MacDonald on 14th May 2005. Ian was born in Stornoway in 1915 and educated in the Nicolson Institute. On leaving school he joined the Post Office as a telegram boy and with the exception of the war years, worked for them until he retired in 1975 when he received the Imperial Service Medal in recognition of his long service.

During the war Ian served as a Petty Officer in the Royal Navy and later as a Chief Petty Officer on minesweepers in the English Channel and the Mediterranean. He joined the R.N.V.R. and for many years went to London annually for a week's refresher course at Mill Hill.

Having moved to Perth when he was still in his teens Ian married Margaret Young in 1941 and in the goodness of God they were to enjoy 63 years of married life together

before she passed away only last November. In that sense it can be said that even in death itself they were only to be divided for a very short space of time.

Ian had a long and happy retirement and enjoyed holidaying both in the UK and abroad with his wife and with different members of their family. He attended Perth Technical College for joinery and he used the skills he learned there to make a dining room table and bedroom furniture. He was a good tradesman and he did a lot of work on the church hall, in his early retirement, which gave him a sense of purpose at that time of transition in his life.

Ian was a gifted man in many ways. Musically he had a powerful voice and he also played the accordion and mouth organ often picking out a tune on the piano without music. He had green fingers and over many years he worked a number of allotments providing family and friends with fresh vegetables and lovely tasting tomatoes, not to mention the vine that still grows in his greenhouse. He enjoyed all these gifts and was the first to acknowledge that they came from God.

Ian became a communicant member of Perth Free Church in 1958; he was elected as a deacon the following year and as an elder in 1962. He started presenting while

the services were still being held in North William Street and continued to lead the praise until last year.

His contribution to the church was faithful and practical, and representing both Perth and the then separate congregation of Aberfeldy, Pitlochry and Glenlyon, he frequently served as Presbytery elder and on occasion also was appointed an Assembly Commissioner. He was a welcoming host and faithful friend to many passing through the Perth congregation.

Words and phrases such as dedication, deep conviction, devotion, faithfulness, hospitality, interest in others, service, thoroughness, come readily to mind when I think of Ian. No doubt all who knew him can add a lot more to that very incomplete list!

Having lost both Mr and Mrs MacDonald within a few months of each other this has been time of felt loss both for the family and for us as a congregation. We do not however grieve as those who have no hope being assured of God's faithfulness and his promises that those who have been faithful have entered his rest and have heard the 'well done good and faithful servant—come and share your master's happiness.'

Duncan Macleod

Skye and Wester Ross Ladies Away Day 2005

On Sat 24th Sept around 70 ladies gathered in the Aros Centre Portree for our first official Skye and Wester Ross Ladies Away Day. The speakers for the day were Irene Howat, well known author and editor of the young peoples' magazine, the Instructor; Reta MacDonald, wife of Rev Kenny MacDonald (Rosskeen, rtd.); and Ali MacDonald from Inverness who is pastoral Assistant Community Worker with Smithton Culloden Free Church.

The theme for the day was Women in Society. After registration and coffee we began the day with worship and joyful praise. Our speakers reminded us of the important and valuable role women have in today's society, making us aware of the Lord being Sovereign in all things. Throughout the day we sensed His presence in our midst. After lunch a group of young children shared with us in a time of praise—from Gaelic presenting to Psalm 23 sung to the tune Tarwathie.

The day was enhanced by an excellent venue, with first class catering, a good bookstall and a works table. It also helped that the day was well organised with a wonderful atmosphere throughout.



Above all, the speakers spoke competently and their talks and the fellowship that followed was very stimulating.

Before finishing there was an opportunity to ask questions. The whole day proved to be both edifying and uplifting. We were all challenged afresh. It was particularly encouraging to have ladies from neighbouring denominations joining in a time of fellowship with us. "Serve the Lord with gladness; come before His Presence with singing" (Psalm 100:2).

Morag MacLean

Bracadale Induction

On a glorious summer's day on the 20th of August 2005 a large crowd gathered in the church at Struan for the induction of the Rev. Ian Allan. People had travelled from far and wide to witness not only the awesomeness of God's creation in the glimmering Cuillins in the background, but also the goodness and kindness of God to a people willing to wait patiently upon Him.

The congregation of Bracadale Free Church became vacant in January 2000. Although deprived of both churches and manse the majority of the people remained loyal to the Free Church. Initially many wondered how congregations such as Bracadale could be sustained and supplied in the circumstances - let's remember that only one minister on the Isle of Skye remained within the Free Church at the time. Any fears however were soon dispersed. Throughout the Church at large there was an overwhelming response from both ordained men and lay preachers alike to help out. Over the next five and a half years the pulpit of Bracadale was never empty. Not only that, many travelled very long distances to ensure continued supply, yet everyone did it eagerly and enthusiastically. The people of Bracadale will never forget the



kindness they were shown and they in turn showed their appreciation in the way they attentively waited on the preached Word. Of course such activity had a spin off for the visiting preachers: to a man they enjoyed preaching in Bracadale, and were willing to return again and again.

Looking ahead, five and a half years can seem a very long time but as the people of Bracadale look back they realise that these years ran swiftly by. And so they gathered on that summer's day in Struan to hear the Rev Marcos Florit (Lochcarron) preach ably and wistfully on Zechariah Ch 2:1-13, a passage which includes the words, "He that touches you touches the apple of his

eye". The Rev. John MacLean (Kilmuir) gave wise and considered instruction to the new minister whilst the Interim Moderator addressed the congregation. Thereafter the gathered crowd retired to the community hall in Dunvegan where a wonderful spread was made available to all. After a number of speeches and the presentation of various gifts the evening was brought to a close with enthusiastic psalm singing.

Although Bracadale is not out of the woods yet there is an upbeat spirit in the air. Despite having to find a further £6000 a year in order to provide an interim manse there is truly a feeling abroad that they are indeed on the road again. They were very appreciative that the church at Struan, which had been denied them for five and a half years, was made available for the induction. They thought that it was an indicator that the building would be made available to them every Lord's Day evening from now on but sadly there are still those who would prefer to see the premises locked shut and left unused rather than allow people who have worshipped there all their lives use the building for the glory of God. But the congregation is not despondent. The God who has done great things for them in the past will indeed attend to the needs of the future.

We wish the Rev. Ian Allan, his wife Jackie and all connected with the congregation God's richest blessing in that future. And we wish the same for the congregation of Bishopbriggs, now left without a pastor as a result of this new settlement. We trust that the God who provided for Bracadale will provide for them too.

Farquhar Renwick

Committee on Worship

One of the topics remitted to the Committee on Worship appointed by the 2004 General Assembly was the place of women in the worship of the church. An exegetical paper has been prepared by Prof Donald MacDonald, summarised in a series of conclusions. This paper, along with an article by Dr B B Warfield, referred to by Prof MacDonald in his paper, has been sent to all presbyteries for their consideration. It is a consultation document, and does not as yet represent the final views of the whole Committee.

The Committee is anxious to have as wide a response as possible to this paper, and is therefore making it

available to Free Church of Scotland members, who are willing to take the time to read it carefully and respond thoughtfully.

If you would like a copy of Women in Public Worship, you may request it by e-mail from the Committee Convener, Rev John MacPherson, at: johnmacpherson@compuserve.com

Or you may write to:
Clerk, Committee on Worship
Free Church Offices
The Mound
Edinburgh EH1 2LS

All responses to the paper must be in the Committee's hands by the end of February.

Churches back Inverness Food Bank Centre

Eight Inverness churches are supporting Blythswood Care's Food Bank Centre, which helps families and individuals in crisis. When Provost William Smith officially opened the new project at Madras Street Hall on Monday 3 October, it had already helped 15 people.

Food Bank coordinator Lorna Dempster says: "We are not a top-up for the benefits system, but we provide food in the short-term until benefits can be arranged."

"Family tax credits are a huge issue just now. When a lone parent takes a job, benefits stop and it may be a couple of weeks before wages are paid."

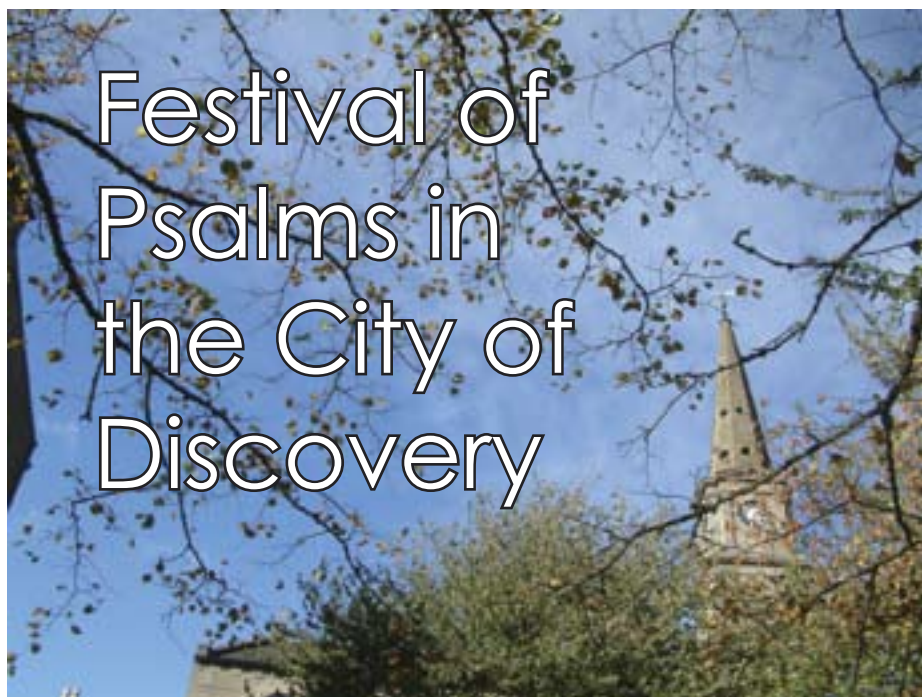
The Food Bank Centre depends on care professionals to assess those in need and the volunteers who staff the centre three afternoons each week can only give food to those who have a Food Bank voucher.

Already 14 organisations have signed up to distribute vouchers, including Inverness New Start, Highland Council's Money Advice Service and Social Services, the Salvation Army's resettlement project, some doctors' surgeries, community nurses, a women's organisation and a housing association.

Lorna Dempster describes the reaction of these groups as being "very positive" and points out that this confirms the need that exists in the Highland capital. City churches are contributing food and providing volunteers, and shoppers at Inverness stores have also shown generous support at food collections.

The Food Bank Centre is serviced by Blythswood's Deephaven depot, where emergency food boxes are filled for distribution by participating organisations.

Blythswood has experience of supporting Food Bank Centres in England, and chief executive James Campbell sees it as a simple and effective way to engage a community in helping those in need. "Everyone can become involved by donating an item of food," he says. "You don't have to be a social worker to help people around you."



Between three and four hundred people attended the Festival of Psalms in St Peter's Free Church, Dundee, on the 1st October. The programme, ably chaired by Rev. Alex MacDonald, included four Psalms from the Scottish Psalter of 1650 and eleven from Sing Psalms. Familiar tunes such as Gainsborough, Gräfenberg, and Newington were complemented by the less familiar Mannheim, Bunillidh and Dunblane Cathedral. Singers from many different parts of Scotland had been practising the 15 Psalm selections for many months, some with the help of specially prepared tutor CDs. They came together as a complete choir of 100 voices for the first time an hour-and-a-half before the Festival began for a short practice. It was encouraging to have so many young people, both in the choir and in the congregation. As we worshipped together, it was good to experience enthusiastic singing and warm fellowship.

Edited highlights of the Festival appear on the new DVD/video, *Discovery*, produced by

HCVF Television on behalf of the Psalmody Committee and available this month. The film also examines the lessons the church today can learn from the remarkable life and ministry of St Peter's first minister, the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne, in terms of preaching, worship, mission and youth work.

Copies of the video/DVD can be ordered from the Free Church Bookshop, 15 North Bank Street, Edinburgh, at a cost of £16.50 plus post and packaging. Please specify which format is required: either video [available in VHS/PAL (UK format) only], or DVD [available in UK or NTSC (USA) formats]. Those intending using the DVD in North America must specify NTSC (USA) when ordering. Those who have already taken advantage of the special offer advertised in last month's *Monthly Record* and who wish the DVD to be in the American format, should inform the Free Church Bookshop as soon as possible (Tel.: 0131 718 4141), giving their name and address.

Discovery – Psalms from St Peter's

A new video/DVD, published by the Free Church of Scotland and available this month, contains extracts from the Dundee Festival of Psalms, striking scenery of Tayside and Fife, a focus on the ministry of Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne and interviews on urban and overseas mission.

Available in video (UK format only) and DVD (please specify if USA format is required) at a cost of £16.50 plus post and packaging from the Free Church Bookshop, 15 North Bank Street, Edinburgh, EH1 2LS.

Tel.: 0131 718 4141, or

Email: bookshop@freechurchofscotland.org.uk

Thanks from Gulfport, Mississippi

We are grateful for your prayers and concern as we recover from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. The financial gift you sent to us recently is a tremendous encouragement. Such an outpouring of generosity amazes us, and we are thankful to the Lord for your partnering with us.

Even though our church building was basically destroyed and many of our church members lost their homes, businesses, or both, our faith is strong that the Lord will do a mighty work here on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Your partnering with us will, by God's grace, ensure that the light of the Gospel continues to shine forth and that the reformed faith continues to be proclaimed here in Gulfport.

The love that you have shown to us is a reflection of the love that God bestows on all His children. We are thankful for your testimony to His love and tender mercy.

Please extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all in the Free Church. We are thankful for you and will continue praying for the denomination in Scotland.

(Rev) Guy Richard

First Presbyterian Church, PCA
PG Box 6012
Gulfport, MS
USA

Thanks from 'Inasmuch'

I am very sorry that I am unable to acknowledge donations to the 'Inasmuch Fund' paid directly into the Bank. The reason is that the Bank is not allowed, and therefore does not give, the name and address of those who donate to the fund in this way. This is a recent policy of the Bank.

So I take this opportunity to thank all of you who support 'Inasmuch' and to assure you that your gifts are gratefully received by me, and monies sufficient to their need are sent regularly to Free Church in Southern Africa families who are in greatest need—need of food, clothing, school fees and books and of medical treatment. 'Inasmuch' could not continue without your generous and kind support. Every £1 converts to R11.25. Those who are supported appreciate your help more than I can say.

Joan Cameron
23 Holly Grove
Menstrie

Free Church Youth Camps 2005

This year 17 Camps were arranged, 2 at Easter and 15 in the Summer. The Peebles Mountain Biking camp was cancelled with only 5 bookings. Two of those who had booked went to another camp and we did not suffer a significant financial penalty. There were 5 Boys' Camps, 3 Girls' Camps and 8 mixed camps. The total number of campers was 353, which was slightly down on last year. The total number of leaders and cooks was 163.

I would hope that we can maintain or even increase our numbers if we all play our part in promoting the camps.

Mhairi Mackintosh (Camps Administrator) continues to cope very well with all the demands and expectations which are placed upon her.

This year's camps seem to have been very happy ones with a good spirit amongst the leadership teams and young people who enjoyed the programme, and a very encouraging response to the message of the gospel. This impression was gained by visits to the camps, reports and evaluation sheets from leaders and campers and anecdotal evidence.

We re-introduced a European Camp this year and the reports from the Sweden camp indicate the whole experience was a very positive one.

Given the circumstances in London this summer a considerable amount of time was spent evaluating our options. In the end we decided to go ahead with the camp but cancel trips planned for the centre of London and necessitating use of the

underground. This appears to have in no way detracted from the enjoyment of the camp by the campers.

Four new leaders were involved in leading camps and they performed very well.

Once again young people from a wide range of backgrounds, from this country and abroad participated in the camps.

We have identified a number of areas where we can improve and we will be addressing these in the coming year.

We are continuing to monitor income and expenditure and the sub-committee have scheduled a meeting to look at this more closely. As a result of a letter sent to Deacons' Courts almost £4,000 was received towards the Sponsorship Fund. This fund is used to support both campers and leaders who have difficulty in meeting the full costs of camp.

On Saturday 3rd September we held our first ever Thanksgiving Service. It was well attended, particularly by the young people and the leaders.

The Big Free Rally took place on October 8th at Culloden Academy. Colin Morison, Elgin & Alasdair MacLeod, Ullapool, spoke under the heading 'Staying on Track'.

Planning for next year is well advanced. We hope to run 16 camps. The significant changes are that the European Camp will be in Germany. We will have a third camp in Oswestry instead of a London camp and we will run a camp which takes in children from Primary 5 upwards. Most of the leaders have been recruited.

We record our thankfulness to Almighty God for his goodness to us and to all who have played their part in the work that is done to give young people a good holiday in a Christian environment and present the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Sandy Finlay, Camps Supervisor

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Called To Care

Care Centres Network (a department of CARE) have prepared a training course entitled 'Called to Care – a pregnancy crisis training course using counselling skills'. It provides the information and skills required to work in a Christian Pregnancy Crisis Centre. The Association of Christian Counsellors has given approval for the 50 hour course, covering biblical teaching on the sanctity of life, medical and legal information, how a centre runs on a daily basis, general principles of counselling and crisis pregnancy counselling.

The course will run over 6 Saturdays
from 10am – 4.30pm

4 February	11 March	8 April
18 February	25 March	29 April

It will take place in Olivet Evangelical Church, Kerse Lane, Falkirk (10 minute walk from train station & across road from bus station).

The cost is £90 (includes £30 for the training manual which you keep). You can pay in instalments if you prefer: £15 each Saturday.

No qualifications are required but certain qualities are vital.

Participants on the course should be:

- Committed, mature Christians, enjoying a personal relationship with God, and stable personal lives.
- Committed to a local church or fellowship where they can be supported for their involvement in this work.
- People who are good listeners and have a genuine appreciation of the difficulties men and women face with crisis pregnancies.
- Over 18 years of age.

Once a reference has been received you will be contacted by telephone for a brief chat before the course commences. Required reading for the course includes 'What's So Amazing about Grace' by Philip Yancey. Please try to start reading this book before the course starts.

At the end of the course there is an informal interview, and a certificate is awarded if you attend at least 90% of the course, complete all home assignments and the learning journal. The certificate is only for completion of the course—it is not a certificate of competence to counsel. The course trainers reserve the right not to use those who perhaps are gifted in other areas rather than pregnancy counselling.

For more details and an application form contact:

Fiona Brown, Centre Co-ordinator,
Amica Pregnancy Crisis Centre,
29 Nicolson Square,
Edinburgh EH8 9BX
Tel: 0131 667 7800
Email: fiona.brown@amicapcc.org

BOOK REVIEWS

Philippians for Today:

priorities from prison

Gerard Chrispin

Day One Publications. 347 pages PB

The author of this book has a special affinity with Paul's situation in writing Philippians, being involved in prison ministry himself. He also evidently loves the epistle and is anxious to share its message.

Chrispin describes his work as "a devotional and discipleship commentary", rather than an academic one. This does not mean that he is oblivious to the critical issues surrounding the epistle but that he chooses not to explore them—preferring to major on Paul's spiritual concerns for the Philippian church and, in particular, on their application to the Christian today. As such, the book has the immediacy and freshness of a newly delivered sermon. It is filled with anecdotes and bon mots from Christian leaders of the past and present. Chrispin's application of the text is balanced and never quirky, although he tends to address a readership which is missionary society—and "free church"—oriented rather than belonging to the mainstream churches.

In summary, the book is clear, easy to read, and heart-warming. It is not the commentary for everyone, but it will be a help to many.

Donald G Mackay

Dictionary of the Old Testament

Pentateuch

Alexander & Baker

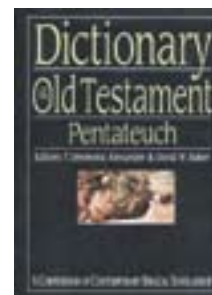
IVP. 954 pages. HB. £32.99

This dictionary gives us the work of evangelical scholars who have been engaged in the work of re-examining critical assumptions about the first five books of the Bible. As one scholar has said, "Old Testament scholarship suffers from the burden of too many received critical assumptions hung about the neck of its practitioners like Coleridge's albatross."

A volume like this can go into much more detail about issues relating to the text than the normal single volume Bible dictionary, and much of what is dealt with will be very helpful to theological students wrestling with those "received critical assumptions" in university theological faculties. However, this dictionary will also prove helpful to preachers who seek to take seriously the text of the Books of Moses. At the moment I am preaching through Genesis and have found it very helpful in many places, particularly in giving relevant background information about contemporary history and keeping me from unwarranted flights of fancy!

Articles cover a wide range from the social, such as that on the "Alien, Foreign Resident", to the knotty problem, such as "Sons of God, Daughters of Man" and nearly everything inbetween.

The Editor



Note of thanks

Mr John O Sutherland and family thank the many people who sent messages of sympathy on the passing of his wife Mary, and are sorry they are unable to reply individually to everyone.

(A tribute to Mrs Mary Sutherland will appear in the WFM section of the next issue.)

Women for Mission Day Away 2006

Date and venue: The 2006 Day Away is going to take place on **21st October** in an exciting new venue. The WFM committee look forward to introducing you all to our delightful new surroundings. In previous years the numbers have been limited to around 300 and there has been a strict time limitation at the end of the day, imposed by the needs of the hotel. This has meant that we have all felt under pressure to some extent in the afternoon session. Many ladies have expressed a desire to have a little longer, both for the programme and also to spend time with friends.

It is our great pleasure to invite you to join us at the **Macdonald Aviemore Conference Centre**. This is a modern, comfortable auditorium, seating 600, with state-of-the-art facilities. There will be no time limitation, except that of transport home. We are sure that many of you will want to linger with friends at the end of the day. The cost of the day will be £25.

Subject: The subject for the day is, ***Grounded in Love***. The main speaker will be Liz Ferguson and we will also hear from Marie-Christine Lux, Marjory MacKay and Maretta Sangster. We look forward to listening to, and singing along with, the praise group and enjoying the pictorial lessons from the drama group again.

Crafts: One other great advantage of our new venue is that, as well as the auditorium, we have the use of a very large exhibition area. This has huge potential for our sale of crafts and gifts. So, please get busy over the winter with your photography, painting, sewing, cutting, gluing... Let's take advantage of the excellent facilities to raise lots of money for the WFM project 2006.

Bed & Breakfast: We have often been asked to extend the "Day" to a week-end, or at least an overnight. We are excited to tell you that, for 2006, Macdonald Hotels has given us a very good rate for B&B—really an offer too good to miss! We have the opportunity to take over a whole hotel for the night of Friday 20th October. The price is £30 per person for B&B, based on two people sharing a twin room. The hotel can accommodate 120, so early booking will be essential. We will give the booking details in the New Year.

More Christmas Gift Ideas: As Christmas approaches, why not consider giving a gift voucher, containing the cost of the Day Away or the B&B accommodation to your mum, daughter, wife, cousin, friend...?



Testimonies from Lakhnadon

Lord Jesus saved me

50 years old Shyamkali Bai from the local township came with severe breathlessness, swelling all over her body, severe anaemia and chest pains and was unable even to stand up. She was treated in a multi-speciality hospital in Jabalpur city for more than 2 weeks and then discharged because of lack of money. She was very depressed and had no hope for her survival. We started treatment, sharing the Gospel and praying with her. Soon she started improving and also taking an interest in listening and enjoying God's Word and prayer also. She was touched by the Spirit of the Lord and then she started trusting in the Lord Jesus.

She says: *"Thanks to the Lord Jesus that he has given me opportunity to know him and now I know the true and loving God who has healed me when no other god could do anything. Thanks to all the staff of this hospital for their love, care and prayers. Now I am living for Him only."*



Hope for the Hopeless

26 year-old Jugal Yadav was brought to the hospital in a hopeless state—sent away from another institution to die after he was found to be HIV positive, with perforation and peritonitis from abdominal tuberculosis. The father's desperate pleas were heeded and, against all odds, surgery prayerfully performed, which the Lord blessed with success. Jugal has this testimony: *"I am convinced my surgery was successful because of the prayers of the hospital staff. I have been healed by the power of that prayer. I now believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and am alive because of Him"*.



Lakhnadon - a place of hope

From the Lakhnadon Christian Hospital Annual Report for the year 2004-2005

As we look back over the year we find that the Lord Almighty was always there like a shepherd to help and guide us in all situations. It is true what the Lord says: 'My grace is sufficient for you'. Many times we went through the valley of disappointments and discouragements but the Lord sustained and lifted us up to continue to do His will in this place. Once again the Lord has shown His faithfulness to us. He is the God who never fails. All glory and honour be to God alone.

Lakhnadon Christian Hospital functions as a secondary health care centre and serves a significant population in 538 surrounding villages in the state of Madhya Pradesh.



In the 1970's and 1980's, Dr Donald M MacDonald, a surgeon from Scotland served here. He was well known and even now people remember him.

This hospital is the place of hope for many, especially for people with surgical, medical, obstetrics and gynaecology and dental problems.

Lakhnadon is situated exactly at the centre of India. Located at the junction of two important national highways, between the cities of Jabalpur (85 km. north) and Nagpur (190 km. south). Overall the medical practice in and



Text on one of the hospital walls

around Lakhnadon is very poor, where most of the health providers are locally trained people or false doctors. In the township only a few qualified practitioners exist, but their practices are not satisfactory. Hence patients often come with complications and the consequences. Many of them even have to pay with their lives.

The hospital, which was handed over to Emmanuel Hospital Association (EHA) in 1974, maintains its relevance to this day, with the daily challenges of striving for excellence despite limited facilities, practicing ethically, being generous to the poor even in the face of financial difficulties—all in the environment of sharing the message and love of the Lord Jesus Christ.



Ward in Lakhnadon Hospital

This is basically a tribal area, with the Gond communities predominating. The general health status of the population is poor, due to malfunctioning governmental system for the same, poor accessibility due to lack of roads or of adequate transport. Poor soil fertility and inadequate irrigation facilities force a large percentage of the tribal population toward migration. Malaria, TB and diarrhoea are still major health hazards in this region.

In this past year there were 26,770 out-patients and 2,552 in-patients. There were 244 major surgeries, 106 eye surgeries and 512 deliveries.



Dr Adersh and Dr Lata

With the opening of a new 3-bedded Acute Care Unit in 2005, the bed strength at Lakhnadon has now been increased to 33. This year also saw the opening in the hospital grounds of a new Dharamshala (shelter) for patients relatives to stay in.

Lakhnadon Christian Hospital still remains the main surgical centre in the district and we will strive to continue to provide the best of facilities at a minimum cost.



As for church life and how I got on in the congregation in Moyobamba: what can I say? I was as much involved there as I am in my church here in Scotland and made the same kind of truly meaningful relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ that I'm blessed with and enjoy here. It all left me with a sense of belonging in a completely different continent and now that I'm home, a longing to go back some day. That's when experiences become confusing. Big questions arise that can't be brushed aside or answered quickly.....questions like "Where do I really belong?", "Where now is 'home'?" "What am I meant to do in the future?", "What does God want me to do?" These aren't just questions for me to answer—they're ones we all face and have to work through as we do everything for God's eventual Glory.

It's hard to believe that I've been back from Peru for over 2 months now; time does fly. The last time I wrote an article was 2 months into my stay in Moyobamba and it's surreal to read back on it and see just how much things changed after that update, up until the 25th of July, when I headed back to Scotland.

There are a few things I'd like to mention as I look back at my own personal experience of Peru.

My workload in the Annie Soper School increased as time went by and I found myself writing exams, taking classes and sitting in on interviews for potential new English teachers. As I integrated more with the culture and as my Spanish improved rapidly I found myself getting to know pupils and staff at a deeper level which made the whole working experience much more enjoyable while also decreasing the stress levels that came with previous and complete inexperience in the language!

Firstly that your prayers for me, my safety and the work I was involved in had such a visible effect and significance during my trip; I felt my time was so blessed with undoubtedly life-changing experiences and memorable events that I can see no other possible origin for them but in God's graceful and ever-faithful answering of the prayers of his people. Just as important as our striving to do God's work in our own lives is the prayerful support of others.

During my last few months in Peru I became more involved in the work of the San Lucas clinic and worked as a translator for Danish dentists who spent their few weeks in Moyobamba travelling to various villages etc and pulling teeth.....I quickly got over the light-headedness that comes with watching someone's eyes rolling as their teeth are pulled....I even had to help in a practical way although never touching the pliers or syringes...only cotton swabs thankfully. The first time we went out was to the local prison; the men's section no less, which was pretty daunting to say the least. The heat, general lack of space in the room and the overall nature of our work left me close to fainting a few times but I had to keep speaking to the patients; (inmates!!) and translating from Spanish to English for the dentists, which was enough of a novelty to keep me from visualising too often my own childhood experiences of the dentist's surgery. We also had to take a dirt track minibus ride and cross a river to get to a remote village where we set up another clinic in the local church. We treated over 30 patients.....almost all of them had to get teeth extracted; a basic treatment for underlying major problems. It reminded me yet again of just how much we have in the UK. Do we really appreciate how little others have? Do we think about it sometimes and just feel sorry for 'folk less fortunate than ourselves' or do we give of what we have?



I do hope to return to Moyobamba next summer, God-willing, hoping to focus more on work in the clinic this time as I've now started a course in nursing at uni.

The future can seem so daunting at times when we think of how complicated things may look, but it can also be an incredibly exciting prospect when we realise and accept that we don't know where we'll be, who we'll be with or what work we'll be doing to further God's kingdom; but as long as we are working entirely for God's glory and not our own, we have the promise of His hand protecting us in everything.

Mairi-Catherine Martin



Are you interested in serving God overseas?

Would you like to get experience of short-term mission work?

Or do you feel called to long-term work in another country?

If you are thinking about overseas mission work and would like to know more about openings for service now or in the future, the International Missions Board would like to hear from you.

Contact the Missions Board Secretary, Calum Ferguson at Free Church of Scotland, The Mound, Edinburgh EH1 2LS. Tel: 0131 226-5286. e-mail: calum@freechurchofscotland.org.uk

Responding to the South Asia Earthquake

The following are some of the messages we have received from our contacts in Pakistan and north India.

From Emmanuel Hospitals Association:

In the aftermath of the powerful earthquake (7.6 on the Richter scale) which struck Pakistan and northern India on October 8, EHA and its partners responded by sending its first team to Anantnag in Jammu and Kashmir to assess the situation.

EHA is also consulting other potential partners—Himalayan Evangelical Mission and Al Bashir ministries based in Srinagar and will probably set up base in Srinagar. Churches and Hospitals in Pakistan are also being contacted.

From the Indian pastor supported by the Missions Board: (see November Monthly Record page 17)

The devastating earthquake in Kashmir has really changed the thoughts and lives of people there. The stories of devastation related touched my heart; I broke down and wept. More than 5,000 houses have been flattened. The need there now is blankets and medicines and volunteers. We are planning to reach Kashmir on 5th of November when our contact will help and accompany us to Uri, the worst hit area. My wife has volunteered to come with us so that she can build relationship with women. Please pray.

From Shona MacPherson (Tearfund):

We can't get the aid out quick enough due to the huge logistics demand that is being put on the country. We had 1,000 tents on order and a few days ago the government took over all the tent suppliers so we were only able to procure 500 tents. Now we are trying to get iron sheets and tool kits out to people so they can salvage materials from their demolished houses to build new shelters to see them through the winter—but with a huge demand for this it takes about 2 weeks to get the items out to people. People are cold and exposed and the winter is setting in. We need to get supplies to people in communities above the snow line in the next 3 weeks or so. There are forecasts for a very bad winter here.

Disaster and Relief Fund

There have been many calls on the Disaster and Relief Fund in the past year with the result that we had very little available to respond to the earthquake in Pakistan and Kashmir. We would like to encourage congregations and individuals to make contributions to this Fund throughout the year so that there will always be funds at our disposal when a disaster occurs. Contributions to the Disaster and Relief Fund should be made payable to the *Free Church of Scotland* and sent to *Free Church of Scotland, The Mound, Edinburgh EH1 2LS*, marked clearly for the Fund.

Individual donations can be covered by existing Gift Aid declarations.

Am Facal

Mòd nan Eilean 2005

Tha am Mòd a-nis seachad agus tha mi an dòchas gum bi sibhse uile a leughas an duilleag-sa a' cur luach air an dìleab a dh'fhàg ar sinnsearan againn. Is ann anns a' chànan a tha cuimhne nan daoine, agus nach fhiach i a cumail air sgàth sin. Is iomadh duine a sgrìobh innte 's iad air an gluasad gu mòr aig na chuala iad den fhìrinn bho theachdairean an t-soisgeil. Tha mise an dòchas mar eaglais nach caill sinn sealladh air prìsealachd a' chànan. Ma chailleas, is mòr a chailleas sinn agus chan fhaigh sinn air-ais gu bràth e.

Tha sinn toilichte gu bheil searmoin a' Mhòid againn agus bidh a' chiad phàirt dheth anns an iris-sa. B' e an t-Ollamh Urramach I.D. Caimbeul a bha a' searmonachadh agus thagh e mar cheann teagaisg, "Cò dh'ionnsaigh eile an tèid sinn? Agadsa tha briathran na beatha maireannaich."

Bhruidhinn e air a' bhuaidh a bh'aig facail neo briathran, agus bha seo air leth freagarrach, oir cha robh Ceòl aig Mòd an toiseach ann. B' e cruinneachadh a bh'ann. Thug e iomradh air facail a chaidh ionnsachadh tron bhliadhna airson iomadh co-fharpais, agus sheall e mar a bha briathran cudromach do chreidimh cuideachd.

B' e Crìosd "Am Facal," agus rinn Dia E Fhèin aithnichte dhuinn Annsan.

Nuair a bha Crìosd air an talamh ghabh daoine iongantais gu robh na briathran a bha E a' labhairt cho gràs-mhor. Thuig an luchd-èisteachd gu robh A bhriathran eadar-dhealaichte.

Tha briathran Chrìosd gràs-mhor, ach cuideachd tha iad sìorraidh. Bha teachd Iosa don t-saoghal a' comharrachadh gu robh na nithean a thuir na fàidhean a-nis air tachairt. Bha cùisean mar a thuir iad.

Tha briathran Chrìosd maireannach, gràs-mhor agus beò. Bheathaich E an sluagh gu litireil 's iad le dìth a' bhìdh—bheannaich E am beagan gu bhith na mhòran, ach cuideachd, bheathaich E iad le biadh spioradail-le fhacail Fhèin.

Ann an Leabhar nan Salm leughaidh sinn,

"Lem bhlas cia milis o mo Dhia

do bhriathran ceart gu lèir.

Dom chàirean 's mìlse iad gu mòr

Na mhill air feadh mo bheul."

Nach e seo a tha fhathast a' cumail neart ri clann Dhè anns an t-saoghal-sa?

Aig deireadh bliadhna eile, tha mise a'dol a roinn beagan den chaidh a thoirt dhomh mu Là na Ceist ann an Nis, ann an 1933.

Seo mar a bhruidhinn fear à Griaies, is e a' dèanamh sgaradh eadar sluagh a' Chruithair agus an fheadhainn nach buin Dha idir.

"Tha dealachadh eadar spiorad an t-saoghail agus an spiorad-sa: chaidh a' mhuinntir-sa a chur ann am meidhean ceartas Dhè. An cuspair a thug dhaibh an spiorad, thug E cumadh air am beatha, gan dèanamh coltach ris Fhèin. Air cho lag sa tha gràs, bidh e ga shealltainn fhèin aig amaibh, mar an t-uisge a' ruith fon talamh a bhitheas a' tighinn an àirde an-dràsta agus a-rithist, agus ged a tha e fon talamh tha e a' ruith fad na tìde.

Tha cogadh a-ghnàth an taobh a-staigh, ach is e cogadh naomh agus aoibhneach a th'ann. Tha dà chinneach anns an aon bholg. Tha an obair bheannaichte-sa gan leantainn agus bidh iongnadh orra gu tric mar a tha an obair a chaidh a dhèanamh ann an là am fireanachaidh gan cumail suas fhathast, ach 's e am miann gum bi iad a-ghnàth ann an aonachd ris Fhèin. Faodaidh e a bhith nach eil comharran air am faicinn leo fhèin ach gidheadh tha iad air am faicinn len co-pheacaich."

Aig deireadh na bliadhna dh'iarrainn na thuir e fhàgail agaibh. Is dòcha gu bheil sibhse a' faireachdainn falamh, ach chì an Cruithair obair Fhèin agus is e obair Fhèin a mholas E.

SEANFHACAIL

Is math an
naidheachd a bhith
gun naidheachd idir.

Beul a labhras, ach
gnìomh a dhearbhas.

Free Church Bookshop

15 North Bank Street, Edinburgh EH1 2LS
0131 718 4141

On the First Day of Week. God, the Christian and the Sabbath. DayOne. £8. In an increasingly secular world, the personal and social benefits of Sabbath-keeping are being lost to us more and more. But the church, is finding it increasingly difficult to defend the traditional view that the fourth commandments is still binding on us, and that God wants us to honour the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, as a Christian Sabbath. This book examines some of the issues raised in this debate, and argues that, for the Christian, the Sabbath principal is one which is still binding, relevant, necessary and beneficial.

Every Day With Jesus Bible. The Bible in 365 readings with daily devotionals by Selwyn Hughes. Homan Christian Standard Bible. Paperback £8.99. Hardback £12.99

Hold Your Course. 22 Daily Readings form the book of Colossians. E.P. £7.95. Roger Ellsworth guides us through Colossians and shows us how to apply its truths in our life. You will be challenged, instructed and encouraged to 'hold your course' through the storms of modern life—all the while remaining faithful to the Christ of the Scriptures.

A Christian Guide to leadership for the whole church. Derek Prime. E.P. £7.95. This practical book is concerned primarily with leadership in the local church, and is relevant to any who hold positions of responsibility within the church.

After the Locusts. How costly forgiveness is restoring Rwanda's stolen years. Meg Guillebaud. Monarch. £7.99. The author tells accounts of extraordinary grace and reconciliation. "A growing body of people have discovered healing for their pain at the cross of Christ. They are forgiving those who caused them unbelievable harm. Only in such changed hearts is there hope."

Tales Of Persia. Missionary Stories from Islamic Iran. William McElwee Miller. P&R. £4.95 Timeless tales, brimming with details of the brilliant advance of the Gospel in Persia, now called Iran. We learn what Islam is and how it differs from Christianity.

The Books the Church Suppressed. Fiction and Truth in The Da Vinci Code. Dr Michael Green. Mon. £7.99. A well informed response to Dan Brown's Da Vinci Code.

Fuelling the Fire. Fresh thinking on Prayer. Dennis Lennon. S.U. £6.99. Here is a book on prayer that is both theological and practical, aiming to inspire readers about the value and privilege of prayer, with a wealth of fresh images and new light on Biblical passages.

Bible Bootcamp. Spiritual battles in the Bible: and what they can teach you. Richard Mayhue. CFP. £7.99. Warning: Some failed to win. Solomon, Jonah, Eve and Saul. Hope: Some fell but recovered. Elijah, Samson, Habakkuk and Moses. Encouragement: Some fought to victory. Joseph, Job, Ruth and Daniel. Wisdom: Gaining God's perspective—after basic training it's out into the battlefield.

BOOKSHOP MANAGER: Charles Douglas

OPENING HOURS: (Monday-Friday) 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
1:30 pm - 5:00 pm

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Arrangements for book agents, bookstalls and conferences
Book tokens issued and accepted

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bookshop@freechurchofscotland.org.uk

PRAYER DIARY

Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints (Ephesians 6:18).

- THUR. 1 At 9.30 tonight Buccleuch will be having its Late Night Bible Study, mainly for students, studying Matthew 23. Pray for them all, remembering the challenges facing them these days.
- FRI. 2 G2, a youth club for 12 – 16 year olds within the Glasgow Presbytery meets tonight in St Vincent Street. It has been well attended, and is fulfilling a real need. Pray for each one.
- SAT. 3 Let's pray for our minister as he prepares his mind and heart for what the Lord would have him preach to us tomorrow. No doubt he needs encouragement. How can we do this?
- SUN. 4 Nairn Free Church had a very good summer holiday club, and this is still yielding fruit in increased attendances in church and Sunday School. Thank the Lord for this answer to prayer.
- MON. 5 Today let's pray for the new small group ministry in Nairn started in November, called the 242 Club (after Acts 2:42). They ask for wisdom and direction as they decide how best to use their buildings and how best to reach out into the community. Also for God's grace to be evident in their lives.
- TUES. 6 The Tarbert ladies meet this afternoon with May Nicholson and some friends from Preshal Trust in Glasgow. Ask the Lord to give them every encouragement and to bless with his presence.
- WED. 7 Many give books as presents for Christmas. Pray for Charles Douglas as he stocks up on books and carries on the work of our bookshop day by day. Pray for the ministry of books.
- THUR. 8 Give thanks for the work of Scripture Union in our schools throughout Scotland. Some groups (e.g. Stornoway) are really encouraging, others are struggling. Pray for all the groups.
- FRI. 9 Thank the Lord for the four fellowship groups meeting within the Dundee church. They say, "We have been blessed richly by these, and continue to be blessed by them, and we would appreciate prayer particularly for those who lead the groups."
- SAT. 10 The Free Church College holds the Part-Time Course today, with video link to Stornoway. The attendances both at Edinburgh and Stornoway have been encouraging so far, with a good age range. Pray for blessing for speakers and students.
- SUN. 11 Let's meet with the Leith congregation at the 'throne of grace', asking for the Lord's blessing on their worship and praying that they might soon have a pastor of the Lord's choice.
- MON. 12 There are two evening clubs run by the church in Dundee. Tonight a club for primary children, and on Thursday one for secondary. Please give thanks and pray for the work that is being done through these clubs, relationships that are being built with the kids themselves, and indeed with their parents.
- TUES. 13 Pray for Christian doctors and nurses faced with ethical decisions which never needed to be taken in the past. May the Lord give them wisdom to know what to do.
- WED. 14 Pray for the Oban congregation, meeting for prayer tonight, and for the minister Rev James Beaton and family. There have been some encouragements lately, with increased attendances and the Youth Fellowship is in good heart. Let's give the Lord thanks for this.

- THUR 15 The first semester of the Free Church College ends tomorrow. Let's keep praying for our future ministers and others who will be ministering in the Lord's service in other areas of the world. Pray that they and all those who teach will be refreshed.
- FRI. 16 The second of the 'Lectures in the Faith' will be held in Falkirk tonight. The theme is 'Studies in Isaiah' and the speaker is Princ. Donald Macleod. Pray that God's word will come alive.
- SAT. 17 Pray for any in your church who are struggling with depression or addictions. May the members of your church show them the love of the Lord and full support and acceptance.
- SUN. 18 Leverburgh, Harris, has now been designated a 'redevelopment charge'. Pray for the congregation as they meet together today, asking that a suitable settlement will take place and the congregation will grow under God's blessing.
- MON. 19 Pray for our retired ministers, some of whom are battling with frailty and failing health. Ask that the Lord would continue to use them as 'prayer warriors' and would be very near to them.
- TUES. 20 Rev Donnie Smith, Lima, Peru, is the Moderator-Designate of the next Free Church General Assembly. Pray for him as he prepares for this, as well as his work in Lima.
- WED. 21 Remember the St Vincent St Milton congregation as negotiations for a new lease of the church building from Glasgow City Council have been underway for some time. Pray that the leadership may be guided to make the right decisions in relation to the provision of the best place of worship.
- If you have any request for prayer or praise for the February Prayer Diary please send now to Eliz. Graham tel 0131 336 4071 or e-mail: w.d.graham@btinternet.com*
- THUR 22 New knowledge about human genes and how our body works is coming to light almost daily. This can be used for good or ill. Pray for Christian voices to be heard and heeded.
- FRI. 23 As the Free Church Offices close today, thank the Lord for His goodness to us during this past year, and trust Him to meet all our needs financially, and especially spiritually, in the future.
- SAT. 24 Pray for overseas students, some studying in the Free Church College, who may be feeling very far from home and family today. Ask that they may find a home from home among us.
- SUN. 25 "(Jesus) shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me?" (Ps.116: 12)
- MON. 26 Rev Grant MacAskill has a vital teaching ministry in the University of St Andrews. May God give him great wisdom for this.
- TUES. 27 A day conference is planned for January 21 for young people in Lewis and Harris. Pray for Alison Campbell, youth worker, and for all the organisation involved at this stage.
- WED. 28 Ask the Lord to bless our Queen and members of the Royal Family, thanking Him for her faithfulness to Christian values.
- THUR 29 There are many difficult moral issues before parliament in Westminster and in Holyrood. Let's cover it all with prayer and ask that God would be glorified in the debates.
- FRI. 30 At this time of year our missionaries often feel very far from home and family. Pray for each one by name if you can.
- SAT. 31 "All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be" (Ps 139:16). Let's thank the Lord for this truth and for all his goodness during 2005.

Free Church Spring Conference

4-7 April 2006
at Aviemore Inn, Aviemore, Scotland

Speakers and Topics:

Rev Neil MacMillan, Kirkcaldy Free Church of Scotland
Topic: Building the Kingdom of God

Neil MacMillan is currently the minister of Kirkcaldy Free Church where he has been based for 12 years. Married to Louise, they have 4 children, Ceit, Sophie, Jessica and Douglas.

Pastor Geoff Thomas, Alfred Place Baptist Church, Aberystwyth
Topic: Serving God in the World

Geoff Thomas studied for 3 years at Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia before beginning his ministry in 1965 at Alfred Place Baptist Church where he remains the pastor today. He is the author of books on Daniel, Philip and the Great Revival in Samaria, Preaching and the life of Ernest Reisinger.

Missionary Speakers:

Rev Duncan and Mrs Christine Peters

Duncan is from North Yorkshire and has been working for the Free Church of Scotland's Asian Outreach in Glasgow for over 7 years. He has also worked in South Asia for 3 years. He is married to Christine and they have two children, Johanna and Nathan.

Booking Form

Conference assembles for dinner on Friday evening and disperses early Sunday evening. There will be a crèche facility available. Anyone who may wish to stay until Monday can book this through the Booking Secretary and pay the extra cost direct to the Aviemore Inn. Full payment will be required by 1 March 2006 to secure a place at the conference (also applies to day visitors please). In a change to previous practice the hotel now requires payment in advance to secure the conference and room bookings.

The Conference fees are as follows:

Adults	£109 for 2 nights (Single Occupancy £144)
Children 5-16 years	£35
under 5 years	Free
Rate for day visitors	£25 (including lunch, dinner and coffee)

Name

Address

.....

Post Code Telephone

Cot required yes/no*

If possible I wish to share a room with

If not intending to be present for the full time of arrival state first meal or bed required.

.....

I would appreciate a lift * to/from the conference if possible.

I would be able to offer a lift * to/from the conference.

*Delete as appropriate.

Special Dietary Requirements

I would be willing to help with the crèche

Book early to avoid disappointment! By email or by sending the completed booking form and full payment, not later than 1 March 2006 to the Booking Secretary:

Janice Ballantyne, 3 Eracht Road, Inverness IV2 4RE
Telephone: 01463 237875 Mobile 07768 913864
Email joejan.ballantyne@btinternet.com

CONGREGATIONAL REMITTANCES

Amounts received by Central Office towards Congregational Target Figures.
The first figure is the total for 2005 and the second is the total for October.

NORTHERN

	Total 2005	Oct
Assynt	5,231	500
Eddrachillis	0	0
Clyne	9,373	0
Creich	9,788	1,500
Dornoch	17,761	2,780
Fearn	11,896	900
Golspie	12,735	1,000
Helmsdale	12,500	1,200
Lairg	4,462	0
Lybster	3,761	700
Olrig, Watten & Bower	13,579	2,000
Rogart	1,903	0
Rosskeen	49,756	4,000
Tain	25,982	2,000
Tarbat	0	0
Thurso & Reay	17,000	1,662
Tongue	729	0
Farr	1,505	0
Strathly & Halladale	1,458	0
Wick & Keiss	6,808	2,300
Total	206,228	20,542

GLASGOW & ARGYLL

	Total 2005	Oct
Arran	3,173	300
Ayr	20,297	2,000
Bishopbriggs	13,505	1,032
Campbeltown, Tarbat & Islay	16,641	2,000
Coatbridge	15,649	1,500
Cumbernauld	15,137	1,500
Dumbarton	11,137	6,000
Dumfries	13,650	1,000
Dunblane	16,001	3,000
East Kilbride	10,616	1,000
<i>Glasgow</i>		
- Dowanvale	70,107	7,000
- Govanhill	14,861	0
- Partick	23,195	0
- St Vincent St	35,982	3,775
- Shettleston	0	0
Greenock	415	33
Dunoon	879	0
Strachur	612	0
Kilwinning & Saltcoats	10,908	40
Lennoxton	14,687	0
Lochgilthead & Lochfyneside	14,124	40
Mull	5,369	450
Coll	448	20
Oban	14,084	1,200
Paisley	6,555	0
Total	348,033	31,890

INVERNESS, LOCHABER & ROSS

	Total 2005	Oct
Acharacle & Strontian	1,350	0
Ardnamurchan	3,119	25
Burghead	16,585	1,533
Dingwall & Strathpeffer	31,346	2,360
Duthil Dores	9,023	0
Elgin & Forres	10,962	2,600
Fortrose	21,672	1,800
Fort William	9,579	800
Glenurquhart & Fort Augustus	7,500	0
<i>Inverness</i>		
- Free North	88,230	14,000
- Greyston		
Stratherrick	37,913	0
Kilmallie	17,851	1,500
Kilmorack & Strathglass	0	0
Kiltarlity & Kirkehill	6,600	0
Kiltearn	0	0
Kingussie	6,770	650
Knockbain	25,141	1,500
Maryburgh	13,400	1,150
Killearnan	10,740	1,058
Nairn, Croy & Ardersier	300	30
Resolis	4,813	0
Urquhart	15,137	1,000
Smithton-Culloden	63,341	3,458
Urray & Strathconon	33,828	5,800
Total	435,198	39,265

WESTERN ISLES

	Total 2005	Oct
Back	82,460	6,040
Barvas	32,873	2,005
Callanish	32,771	2,500
Carloway	23,913	3,020
Cross	44,207	3,836
Harris	10,813	1,000
Kinloch	34,702	5,400
Knock	40,945	4,445
Lochs	37,299	4,100
North Tolsta	18,445	1,500
North Uist, Grimsay & Berneray	14,173	1,100
Park	21,139	2,000
Point	22,307	2,212
Scalpay	16,615	3,500
Shawbost	26,360	2,250
South Uist & Benbecula	12,240	1,000
Stornoway	211,612	22,142
Total	682,874	68,050

EDINBURGH & PERTH

	Total 2005	Oct
Aberdeen	76,016	6,493
Dundee	25,196	3,080
<i>Edinburgh</i>		
- Buccleuch	52,000	4,000
- St Columba	15,062	1,050
Falkirk	24,516	1,900
Kirkcaldy	15,008	1,200
Leith	21,865	1,596
Livingston	17,256	2,000
<i>London</i>		
- Cole Abbey	31,012	3,330
- Cobham	7,684	500
Perth & Pitlochry	20,073	1,600
St. Andrews	2,879	160
Total	308,566	26,909

SKYE & WESTER ROSS

	Total 2005	Oct
Bracadale	10,641	40
Coigach	5,264	0
Duirinish	15,145	50
Gairloch & Kinlochewe	10,329	52
Kilmuir & Stenscholl	15,623	1,925
Lochalsh, Glenshiel & Glenelg	7,522	600
Lochbroom	19,063	1,500
Lochcarron	20,282	1,300
Plockton & Kyle	18,610	1,700
Poolewe & Aultbea	26,981	1,000
Portree	21,648	1,800
Raasay	1,895	170
Sleat & Strath	13,515	1,400
Snizort	4,230	125
Total	190,748	11,662

Private Donations etc.

Livonia	723	0
Evangel. Presb. Church	17,337	17,337
Private Donations	16,215	897
Total	34,275	18,234

GRAND TOTALS

	Total	Oct
2005	2,206,774	216,552
2004	2,190,071	185,762
% increase		0.76%

House Church leader jailed for three years as Chinese President visits UK

The photograph shows Pastor Cai Zhuohua and his wife, Xiao Yunfei and their son



There are estimated to be around 80 million Christians in China today. The majority of Christians in China refuse to register with the government as they consider the surveillance and constraints that come with such a move conflict with the teaching of the Bible.

On the morning of President Hu's arrival in the UK (8th November), Pastor Cai Zhuohua, a prominent Beijing house church leader, was sentenced to three years. He will appeal to Beijing Intermediate Court.

Pastor Cai was abducted from a bus stop and dragged into a van by three plain-clothed State Security officers on September 11 2004. According to a former fellow inmate, Pastor Cai was repeatedly tortured with electric shocks and forced to give false confessions to serious charges.

On July 7 2005, Pastor Cai, his wife, Xiao Yunfei, her brother, Xiao Gaowen, and his wife, Hu Jinyun were tried for charges relating to 'illegal business practices' at the People's Court of Haidian District, Beijing. The charges followed the discovery of 200,000 copies of the Bible and other Christian literature in a storage room managed by him. The case highlights the repression of freedom for religious groups to publish and disseminate literature, which runs contrary to international standards.

Pastor Cai's wife and her brother were sentenced to two years and one and a half years respectively. Hu Jinyun was exempted from criminal punishment and is expected to be released after her lawyer completes relevant legal papers.

President Hu Jintao, who is staying at Buckingham Palace, will be meeting senior Government and opposition parliamentarians over the next few days. CSW has urged these key figures to raise Pastor Cai's case.

Pastor Cai's case is of interest as it highlights both the restrictions on literature production and demonstrates a new tactic of restraining religious freedom under the guise of prosecution for 'economic crimes'. However, it is only one of the many cases in which believers are suffering for their faith.

The China Aid Association (CAA) reports that six house church leaders who were taking part in a service attended by some 100 Christians were arrested in Henan Province on November 6.

At about 10am the meeting was raided by eight officials from the Public Security Bureau (PSB) and Religious Affairs Bureau and ordered to stop, according to an eyewitness report.

Six of the church leaders were arrested at the "illegal religious gathering" and detained in the county detention centre.

Four of these church leaders have now been freed and two remain in detention. These two were told by PSB officials they

would not be released until their house church ended their meetings or registered with the officially sanctioned Three Self Patriotic organization.

Meanwhile, CAA received reliable reports that about 12 house church leaders have been arrested in various cities in Hunan Province since July this year.

These leaders are part of China Gospel Fellowship, a well-known house church group. CAA has information that for the first time, some of these church leaders were drugged with an unknown substance by the State Security agents. This was in an attempt to find out how the church is run and where the church's secret Christian literature store house was located. Some of the 12 were tortured and forced to report back to the security forces on church activities.

A female church leader was told the security forces would kill her family if she did not inform on her church for them. Several of these house church leaders were reportedly suffering severe psychological and mental strain.

"Once again the assault on unregistered house church worship in Henan Province shows a worrisome sign that the religious persecution in China is worsening," said Bob Fu, CAA President. "The acts of brutal torture and drugging are totally unacceptable to the international human rights norms and even contradictory to Chinese law."

Tina Lambert, CSW's Advocacy Director, said: "That a house church leader should be sentenced to three years for producing religious material the very morning of the arrival of the President surely demands comment. We urge those meeting with President Hu to press upon him the importance that the UK attaches to freedom of religion and speech, and to urge for reforms that will ensure true protection of these rights for every Chinese citizen."

For more information, please contact Richard Chilvers, Communications Manager at Christian Solidarity Worldwide on 020 8329 0045 or email richard.chilvers@csw.org.uk or visit www.csw.org.uk

CSW is a human rights organisation which specialises in religious freedom, works on behalf of those persecuted for their Christian beliefs and promotes religious liberty for all.